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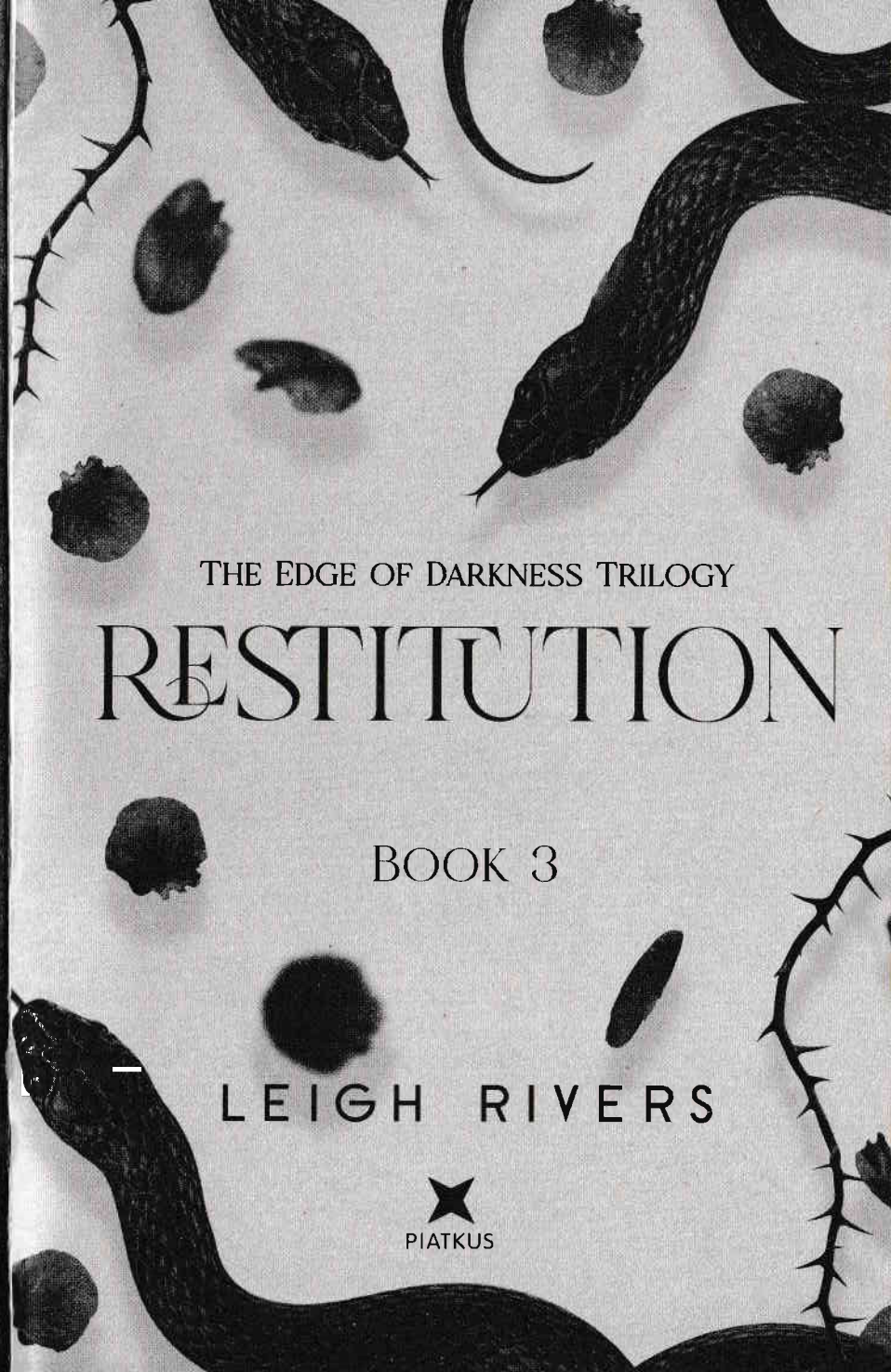
BY LEIGH RIVERS

Edge of Darkness trilogy
Insatiable
Voracious
Restitution

Psychotic Obsession

Web of Silence duet
Little Stranger
Little Liar



THE EDGE OF DARKNESS TRILOGY

RESTITUTION

BOOK 3

LEIGH RIVERS

PIATKUS

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1

KADE

The warm blood of my best friend seeps through my fingers as I keep pressure on the gunshot wound in his chest. His back arches, and he grits his teeth through the pain, pupils still fully blown from the drugs they forced into him. Into us. I can't fucking see properly, but I can see all the blood and his pale face as he gasps.

None of the guards are helping me. They won't. They aren't allowed to. They all watch as I lean over him and try to slow the bleeding. He's not dead – yet – so the shot didn't hit his heart. But there's so much goddamn blood. If Dez was here, he'd pass out from the sight.

My other best friend is sunning it up on vacation with his girlfriend while we're all fighting for our lives. It was always best to keep as many people out of it as possible. Good for him for having

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the normality we can only dream of.

The fact Base got dragged into it all and is now lying in a pool of crimson fucking enrages me. I'm a protective dickhead – Bernadette knows this and used it against me. She just had to mess with my friends and family. If Base dies and I don't find my sister and Stacey, Bernadette better hide on a different fucking planet, because nothing, and I mean nothing, will stop me from ripping that rotten bitch to shreds.

Regrettably, or not so regrettably, I snapped the neck of the wanker who shot Base and hit someone else repeatedly with a chair until they were dead. Their bodies are in a heap beside me. And for some reason, despite the excess of drugs in my system melting my fucking brain, I'm fine and unharmed.

The eyelids of the Russian beneath me fall shut, and my chest caves. "No." I grip his chin. "Don't you fucking dare close your eyes, Base."

He doesn't open them, and my heartbeat accelerates. "Look at me. Fucking look at me."

I slap him across the face, staining his cheek crimson, and he blinks his eyes open. Groggily, his words broken, he mumbles, "Did you... just... fucking *slap* me?"

Words coming from him are a good sign. Relief rushes through me, and I sag against him, pressing my forehead to his while keeping my hand over his bleeding wound. "You need to help me find the girls," I say, whispering, emotional – I can't think straight. The room is fucking spinning still, and everything is glitching. Is this even real? "Stay with me. Please."

They have Stacey. My sister too. Sold them.

Bile rises in my throat – I try and fail to control the harsh breaths through my nostrils.

Base's hand reaches up, snatching at my collar feebly. "Lu-Luciciella."

My jaw tightens. "I'll find her. I promise."

Guards fill the room, two medics follow behind, and I move to the side to let them work on him while keeping his attention with a hand on his face – keeping him awake while they assess the damage. The bullet has an exit wound in his back, which is another

good sign, but he's still weak and losing quite a bit of blood.

Nothing they can't treat, as long as he gets urgent care *now*.

I hear them talking among themselves about whether to take him to a hospital or to one of Bernadette's dodgy doctors who works under her belt here in London. Someone injects him with morphine, sticking shit to him to check his obs, and his eyes fall shut as the pain meds take effect.

I sit back on my haunches and look up at where the nightmare rolled out before me only minutes ago. The fear in their eyes... That fucking sinking feeling in my gut repeats in my mind. I need to get there before it gets worse. I need to get the fuck away from these assholes and find my sister and my girl.

We aren't together – haven't been for a while – but Stacey is my girl.

Mine.

And people don't fuck with what's mine. I gave in to Bernadette, gave up my control and my life when she found out who Stacey was, so why is she now going back on her word? I've done everything she's asked. Every-fucking-thing.

I can't even think straight to figure out what I did wrong.

In Bernadette's ballroom, they auctioned off people. Me and Base too. But going by the state he's in, I doubt he'll be fulfilling any duties with his buyer anytime soon. Mine, annoyingly, will summon me in a matter of days. That's fine. I'll kill him like the last person who bought my time – right after I hang Bernadette's husband and make her watch.

I'm finally hitting my limit.

"Where did they take the girls?" I ask one of the guards I know hates his job. I point at the blank screen with a shaky, blood-covered finger. "The last two before the feed cut."

I have a feeling – I was never taken to initiation since I'm technically classed as "trained" to take orders and fuck on demand. But I've heard horror stories about the process.

His eyes flit to his colleagues, then he lowers his voice. "They'll go to the loading floor for induction. They stay there for about five days with their new owners before they leave."

The intense need to snap his neck like I did his colleague's is

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almost too much to handle, so I fist my hands at my sides.

"Why was the auction at the Sawyers' property and not in Edinburgh like it usually is?"

His gaze floats around the room again, to the guys lifting one of their dead friends, then back to me. "Stop asking questions," he grits.

My right eye twitches as their head of security enters the room. "We've got orders to lock you up, kid," he says, and I imagine him dead on the floor like the other two. "You're not to be released until the induction is over."

Base is lifted onto a stretcher and carried out while my eyes go between him and the guards. They won't let me go with him – they have guns pointing at me now, but I know he's not going to die.

Since I don't have my phone, I glance at the guard I just spoke to. "I want Bernadette on the line. I'll go to the cells, but I want to speak with her first."

We're in one of Archie's houses on the outskirts of London – somewhere they like to go when things get too heated and want to lay low.

The main guard huffs, and he pulls his phone out, taps the screen then puts it to his ear. "It's Polner. Yeah, everything is fine down here. Is the boss there?" He straps his gun away and turns his back to me while the others keep their aim on me. "The mouthy one wants to talk to her. No, not the Russian. Tobias Mitchell's son."

There's a pause, then the faint sound of the voice I despise.

"Good evening, Mrs Sawyer. I have Kade here. No, sorry, he isn't in the cells yet, but he said he'd go willingly if he speaks with you. Yes, the Russian is alive – he'll survive his injury."

He turns, his face red as he hands me the phone, and I snatch it from his grip. My body trembles with a mixture of everything I'm feeling. "Call off their deals," I demand when Bernadette stays silent, yet the sound of her nails pianoing on her desk echoes through the line. "My sister and Stacey. Call it off. Or I'll pay for them and let them go. Do *something*."

She hums, and I can tell she's smiling. "And why would I do that?"

"The only thing you hold over me is the people I care about. The only thing you ever held over me was those I loved. You fucked with my dad for years, and now you're fucking with my sister and my—" I stop, gripping the phone tighter. "You're playing a dangerous game here."

She laughs. "Is that a threat, Kade?"

"It's a promise. If they're inducted and leave with whoever fucking bought them, I will fuck you up. You'll no longer have anything to blackmail me with. You sell them, and I will make sure the last day of your life is a nightmare. Your daughter? I'll record her screams while I skin her alive and send you her fucking bones. I'll make you watch Archie suffer, and I'll leave you for last. If anything fucking happens to those girls, you better hide, you piece of shit."

"So feisty, my dear boy."

Then the line cuts out, and I throw the phone at the wall, smashing it to pieces.

"Nice one, asshole. You owe me a new phone. Now do as you're told and get in the cuffs."

Glancing up, I see the mouthy one – the main guard, head of security – unsheathing his gun. He's much larger than me and built like a fucking tank. I drive my fist into his face so hard, I hear a snap. I'm so blinded by rage that I think the snapping sound might have come from my hand, but when I look down at him on his knees, his broken jaw hangs as he cries in pain. I sigh and let them shackle me then drag me to the cells.

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2

STACEY

The room is dark and cold – icy air licks at my exposed skin. Compared to the elegance of upstairs, down here looks like one of those *Saw* movies.

Am I about to die? Where's Luciella?

The elevator dings behind me as it starts ascending, leaving me to tremble in fear and terror. There's a shadow of a guard standing by the door, his gun strapped to his chest, and I can hear light sobs coming from somewhere. Through the air vent?

"We have another one!" he calls out, and I flinch. "Should I send her through yet? Is the other one sorted?"

I have no idea what the person says in response. It's a mumble. Faint. An echo. The sobbing through the vent stops, or maybe it just gets quieter, or maybe I'm just imagining it in my state of shock.

I need to find Luciella. We need to get out of this.

"Stacey Fields," I whisper, shaking uncontrollably, a lone tear slipping down my cheek. "Pl-ease."

Then I flatten my lips and pause as the guard briefly shines a torch in my face before turning around again. "She's young, maybe early twenties. Appears unharmed," he says and then laughs. "Well, for now. How much did she go for?"

He whistles and laughs again. Glancing over his shoulder to me, frozen in place, he sneers. "She's tainted with ink though. It's a disgusting sight. Are you ready for her yet? Should I strip this one too?"

Strip...

Oh God.

My punishment might be even worse if they find an earpiece on me, a wire attached to my body, hidden between my breasts. While the guard has his head down, trying to hear what his colleague is saying, I tug out the earpiece and try to pull at the wire – the glue sticks to my skin, and I silently sob as I rip it off and drop it on the ground.

The guard glances up at me through the darkness, finishing his conversation – I kick the wire behind a box and hug myself as he approaches me. He towers over me, the gun making me nervous as he chuckles at spotting Bernadette's blood on me.

"Heard you messed up the boss's face. She'll make you pay for that. Are you going to fight me like little blondie?"

My chin trembles. "Did you hurt her?"

"She's lucky I didn't," he says, grabbing my arm and pulling me towards the door. "Don't worry about her – you won't be seeing her again anyway." He shoves me out the room, into a corridor with pipes lining the ceiling and flickering lights that hurt my eyes. "Take her to room six."

I'm grabbed again, dragged down the corridor by another guard. I can already feel bruises forming on my skin from their deadly grips. I try to pull away, but he presses something hard and cold to the base of my spine. A gun?

"Walk, or I'll make sure you never use those pretty legs again."

As I pass doors, I can hear crying, screaming, and... moaning.

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Not the good kind either. Like forced moans – moans that indicate their bodies are betraying them in the middle of screaming for help. Both men and women are begging for help – for their attacker to stop.

My stomach twists.

I think I might be sick. Is Lu in one of those rooms?

"Is my friend okay?" I ask, using a pleading tone. "Please just tell me she's okay."

We stop at a door at the end of the corridor. "You should be more worried about yourself."

He swipes a card against the scanner, and the door beeps – a red light above it changes to green. I'm shoved inside, the lights automatically turning on, and my eyes widen at the sight before me.

"I suggest you shower. Your new master might not enjoy the sight of someone else's blood on his pet. Leave your dress by the door."

I turn to look at him. "He's coming here?"

"You thought you'd leave so easily? No, you need to be initiated. You'll stay in this room together until he's happy with your submissiveness."

The guard closes the door with a slam, leaving me in the torture chamber by myself. A four-poster bed sits in the middle of the room, leather cuffs at each post. There's a shelf filled with... My gut twists when I see the ball gag attached to a chained leash. There are loads of tubes of lube, other sex devices and a rack of different sizes of blades, the edges facing out.

I rush to them and freeze, my hand outstretched to the smallest. Instead, I grab the biggest one, like a mini machete, and hold it behind my back. Then I press myself into the wall opposite the door. When the person comes, I won't let him touch me. I used a smaller blade once, when Chris sold me to his friends, and I won't hesitate to do it again.

Even if the person who won my auction is a giant.

He won't be getting anywhere near me.

I swallow down a lump growing in my throat as I wait.

And wait and wait and wait. Until my legs are shaking and sweat

lines my face and chest. I think an hour passes with me being in my head, worrying about Luciella. Will Kade make sure Bernadette gets her back? Yes. He'll do anything for his sister, so I know he'll do what he can to save her. And Base was shot. He was shot in the chest and... and he might be dead.

My eyes water. How did my life come to this?

Where the fuck is Chris? He's a psychopath, but right now I wouldn't mind if the insane bastard got me out of this.

Voices pause my thoughts, and my hand tightens around the handle of the blade. The door beeps, and two guards walk in, a large presence behind them. In a white, faceless mask, taller than the others, with wide shoulders, my *master* walks in in only his white shirt, the jacket he previously wore discarded somewhere.

My breathing stalls as he walks between the guards and stands in the middle of the room – his eyes are the only things I can see as he watches me. Then his head tilts to the side. No words. No actions. Nothing.

"We will provide you with a key card that only you can use to come in and out of the room. The loading floor is the only one you have authorisation to walk freely. Your meals will be brought to this room three times a day. She's only to wear the white dresses provided in the dresser, but you are welcome to use our laundry system. Do you have any questions, sir?"

He doesn't respond, just stares at me, his hands in his pockets.

The guards glance at each other before one of them narrows his eyes on me. "We'll take your dress."

The blade's coldness is pressing against my spine thanks to my open-backed dress. Maybe I should just cut my own throat instead of trying to get out of this. Maybe it'll be easier than actually being fully awake while being raped this time.

One step forward from the large presence is all it takes for my heart to stop, and I lunge forward and try to stab him in the chest – but he captures my wrist before the guards can react, squeezes until I drop the weapon and tuts at me as he shakes his head.

"Little psycho bitch," one guard says.

The eyeholes of the mask are mesh, so I can't see his eyes that well. I know they're blue. The only detail of my attacker that I

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know. If he never shows me his face, how can I identify him to report him if I ever get free?

I shiver as I feel my dress torn from the back, cut from my body and pulled away as I stand before this man in only the underwear Chris made me wear. No bra.

Not that the man even looks at my body. His eyes are burning into my soul.

"First test, sir. Then we'll be out of your way."

"You're a bad girl," he whispers, his deep, gravelly voice muffled by his mask. He releases my wrist and snatches my jaw as the guards step away. "Kneel."

I stay still, standing my ground, refusing to drop to my knees. The guards stare, waiting to see if I'll successfully pass my first test of induction. If I refuse, they might make my stay here longer. They want me to be compliant – to be a good, submissive pet to my master.

But I'm dead already anyway.

I try to drive my knee between his legs, but he dodges it and forcefully shoves me down, so my knees crash into the floor, pulling a cry from me.

His hold on my jaw moves to my hair, and he tugs it, so I look up at him. "Take his belt off," one of the guards says. "Now."

I close my eyes as more tears slip free, and I try to control my breathing as I reach up to the buckle. My fingers tremble as I fail to pull it free twice before finally tugging the leather from the loops. The man snatches the belt before I can drop it, and I gasp as he wraps it around my neck, slots the leather through the buckle then tightens it till it settles against my throat.

He pulls tighter, and my air shuts off, burning my lungs, my eyes pressured.

The guards seem to be happy, so they pat his shoulder and tell him to enjoy his first night. The door opens and closes, then I hear a beep. I let out a choked, strangled sound as he lets go of the belt so I can breathe.

I bend forward, my hand pressing to the carpet as I cough and cry, wishing I hadn't let Chris force me to come to this stupid fake party-turned-auction. But when the mask drops to the carpet and

I see the man lowering to his knees, I freeze waiting for a blow or an order.

Hands grab at my face, forcing me to look up into the eyes of my new master.

Tobias Mitchell.

My lips part, all my fear washing away as I manage, "To-Tobias?"

Kade's father grabs the blanket right next to us, wraps it around me, then pulls me in for a hug I didn't realise I needed.

"I'm sorry. I'm sorry. You're okay. You're safe with me," he says softly as he strokes my hair, letting me cry into his chest. "I found you, little one."

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3

STACEY

Tobias pulls back, his eyes searching my face, refusing to let them drop lower even with the blanket covering me. "Are you hurt?"

I shake my head. "You were the one to win my auction?"

"Yes. Barry found out Bernadette's plan when she sent your insufferable asshole of a stepbrother the invitation and deal. We were halfway to London to find Kade but turned back. Are you sure you're not hurt?"

My eyes are burning given how hard I'm holding back a waterfall of tears. If I start bawling my eyes out, I don't think I'll be able to stop. "Barry's okay?"

He nods. "As annoying as he is, he's kept me hidden. His wife and child are in a safe house in Aberdeen."

A tear slips down my cheek, and he notices, wiping it with his

thumb. "I'm going to get you out of here."

"What about Luci—"

"Sebastian Prince's uncle won her auction. They're going to take her to Moscow and keep her under the radar until Bernadette is dealt with. It was the deal I made with the grandfather to get his help – I told him I'd kill his grandson's abuser in exchange for him protecting my daughter. There are Russians surrounding this building as we speak."

"They know about Bernadette having Base?"

"The underworld is a ruthless place. A war between the Scottish law enforcement and whoever else she has under her belt against the mafia would be a mess. A lot of lives would be lost. I offered to kill her and her husband."

I go to speak, but he cuts me off. "We need to get you out of here before they tell me to start the next task. They'll shoot me on the spot, and someone else will get you."

He turns, swipes the key card on the sensor pad, and when the door beeps and opens, he leans his head out but pulls back in quickly. He mutters a "fuck" then fishes a mobile from his pocket and puts it to his ear.

Pacing the room, Tobias huffs as it rings and rings and rings, until I hear someone answer.

"When I call, you asshole, you fucking answer right away. I have her. Yes, she's fine and unscathed. There are four guards outside. Can you see on the footage the safest way for me to get her out of here without risking her life?"

I nibble my bottom lip as Tobias turns and fixes his gaze on me, his eyes burning into me. He goes to the dresser and pulls out white material. It's a dress. Short. Thin straps on the shoulders. Silky and actually really pretty, if I wasn't in the middle of a sex ring's hideout and trying to escape with my boyf— ex-boyfriend's father who's just broken out of prison.

"How did you escape?" I ask as I take the dress. "I'm mad at you for that, just so you know."

He scoffs as he turns round, letting me drop the blanket and pull on the dress. "You didn't come for visitation, and I got bored."

"Bored..."

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"I'm a little irrational and impulsive. Plus, I had a feeling something was wrong – call it a sixth sense."

The dress sits mid-thigh, and I hate it. I hate everything about this day.

"Kade and Base were auctioned off too," I say as I find a hair tie in the dresser and pull my hair into a bun on top of my head. "Are you going to help him?"

He turns around. "As soon as I know you're safe, yes."

I stand in the middle of the room, taking a deep breath. I still feel so overwhelmed. Only a matter of minutes ago, I thought I was going to be attacked and forced upon. I thought I'd end up dead, but no.

"Thank you," I say quietly.

He frowns, leaning against the dresser, crossing his arms and ankles while he waits for Barry to call back and tell him it's clear to go. "Why are you thanking me?"

I throw my arms out. "I accepted that I was going to die. I thought I was—" I stop, nearly choking. "Just accept my gratitude. I know your children are your priority, but I appreciate that you're here for me."

"You are also my priority. I would have always hunted for you to the ends of the fucking earth, little one. I know you didn't have the best relationship with your father, your brothers are useless pricks, and my son is shackled to a bitch on an insane power trip, but you have me."

The force of my body catapulting into his knocks him back a step, but he catches me.

My dad never protected me. He loved me, but as soon as Nora came into the picture, I was a second thought to him. As much as I miss him, as much as I love him, Tobias treats me better. And I never thought I'd say this, and forgive me, Aria Miller, but to be safe and sound in Tobias Mitchell's hold is a dream I never want to wake up from. I don't want to let go.

What if I pull away and he vanishes? What happens if this is a dream and I'm drugged? What if I'm imagining this entire scenario and I'm shackled to the bed with an old, overweight and sweating man claiming me?

"Don't hold it in," Tobias whispers. "If you need to cry, then you fucking cry, little one. Get it all out right here and now."

This *is* reality, and I have Kade's father's arms around me, reassuring me with slow strokes of my hair and tightening his hold as I tremble and let my emotional state loose.

Although I should be going crazy at him for breaking out of his institution and causing a worldwide fugitive hunt that's taken over the news and radio, all I can do is hug him, inhaling his scent. Not an old sweaty man. No. Cinnamon. A spiced cologne Kade's clothes always smelled like.

I used to stick his hoodie under my nose and inhale as I lay in bed, waiting for my stepbrother's next blow. I'd always take longer to get home, because I knew what was to come.

I was alive when I was around Kade. And now I'm alive because of his father.

And all Tobias is doing is hugging me back, his grip on my nape keeping me firmly to his chest. "I've got you," he assures me in his deep tone.

Those three words have my body shaking against his, tears of both joy and exhaustion making me sob uncontrollably until he's taking all of my weight.

"Shhh. I've got you."

He grips my shoulders and pushes me back enough to study my face. "Tell me you're okay, because we need to leave as soon as Barry gives us the go-ahead. Can you keep your emotions in check until we get out of here?"

"You told me to let it all out."

The slight tilt of his head shows his confusion. "There's more?"

I huff out a laugh and wipe my eyes. "Sometimes I forget you're an unfeeling idiot."

Smirking, he steps away. "You didn't answer my question."

I raise an unsteady shoulder. "I'm okay."

Apparently, I must still have tears running down my numb face, because he raises a brow at me and wipes my cheeks. "Don't cry any more tears because of them. You've got it all out. Dry your eyes and keep your chin up. They don't deserve your tears." He gives me a tight smile, which makes his dimple dent in. "No one does."