

### 3.

She sat in her car and watched the ambulance take the body away. Her car was a Volkswagen Golf convertible, only a couple of years old and silver coloured. It was quite a nice car except for all the fast food wrappings in the back. One of these days she would clean that up, and one of these days she would start eating healthier food. She had a feeling one of these days wouldn't be anytime soon though. She started the engine and started driving towards the headquarters and the cup of hot coffee that was waiting for her there. She hated Glasgow in December.

She was driving through the streets of Glasgow, looking at the old buildings as she drove past them. It was very different from what she had been used to as a child. She was originally from London, and she had been living in a rather upper class area of the city. Her mum was an estate agent and had been earning a rather decent living at it as well; she had her own agency that she had inherited from her parents. Her dad used to work there as well, but he had to quit in the end. Turning up drunk at viewings was not really the way to attract clients. She had heard from a friend of the family that her mum had had to sell the business a couple of years after she had left home. Her dad's booze bills had become rapidly higher and she suspected so had his abuse of her mum, who in the end had suffered a nervous breakdown. She had been told that her mum had developed agoraphobia, and as a result hardly, if ever, left the house, nor would she see anyone. At the time she thought how foolish it all was, as she knew better. Her mum didn't have any phobias; she wasn't the sort of person who had them. She was just very proud, and the bruises from her dad's beatings had probably just become too difficult to hide.

She parked her car and grabbed her handbag that was lying on the passenger's seat. She emptied the contents on the seat, finding her makeup amongst keys, stray coins and her mobile phone. She hadn't minded not wearing make up when she was out in that alley, it had still been dark, and she had been wearing sun glasses. She suddenly thought to herself what an idiot she must have looked wearing shades in the middle of winter before the daylight had even made its appearance, not to mention any sun. She quickly put foundation on her skin, covering up the rings underneath her eyes before putting on her dark eye shadow and the black eye liner and dark mascara to go with it. She had beautiful eyes, one of the few things about her self that she liked. She put on some bright red lipstick and blew a kiss at herself in the mirror, then removed the hair band from her hair and let her long dark brown hair fall freely around the shoulders. She was ready to face the day.

As she locked her car she used the other hand to light a cigarette. Her lighter was made from silver, refillable one, and it had her initials engraved on one side, a dragon on the other. It had been a gift from an ex boyfriend, someone who had broken her heart. Or he had tried to at least. She kept the lighter to remind herself that you can't trust anyone but yourself. In the end, the bastards will hurt you, every single one of them. She took a deep drag of the cigarette, the smoke lingering on her lips as she let out a gentle sigh. Men, can't live with them, can't have great sex without them. She laughed to herself as she

finished off the last drag of the cigarette, letting it drop to the ground putting it out using the tip of her boot. Not that there was any point, as the snow would have killed the glow anyway. A smile was lingering on her lips, however bad she had been feeling the night before, she always felt better once she got to work. At least here she could concentrate on someone else's pain and suffering. At least here, she could help put someone's suffering to an end.

As she walked towards the entrance of the police building she could hear someone coming up behind her. She could smell the aftershave, Emporio Armani, Detective James McCullough. She turned around to look into the eyes of possibly the most handsome man on the force. His dark hair, brown eyes and tall muscular body was enough to drive most women who worked with him, or in most cases under him, wild. Personally, she thought there was something a bit dodgy about a man who had a tan in the middle of winter.

"Hello, gorgeous" he said grinning at her "heard they found another girl, chief wants us to work closely together on this one. Make sure we get somewhere, quick."

She looked back at him, giving him the look that she gave all men, letting him know that she was too good for him and that they both knew it.

"Oh joy" she couldn't hide the sarcasm in her voice as she continues "I feel well and truly honoured."

She could feel his eyes on her as she walked in front of him into the building. She knew she didn't look too bad in her black stiletto boots that went up to her knees, the black, tight knee length skirt and a white blouse that fit her body perfectly. For someone who was closing up on thirty she looked no older than in her mid twenties, at least not after she had disguised those dark rings under her eyes, and she took great pride in her appearance. It was not just pride though, she enjoys having men looking at her, and she knew that they did. It helped building her self esteem, which always had been very fragile. However, the last thing she needed in her life was to get involved with someone like Detective McCullough, she found that relationships with men who spent more time in front of mirrors than she did always lead straight down a dead end.

James had followed her into her office, stopping on the way to pick them both up a cup of coffee.

"You alright, gorgeous? You look a bit pale and tired."

She looked at him smiling her sweetest smile as she bit back

"Well, I would rather look pale than look like I spend all my spare time in a tanning salon".

He laughed at her; he must have thought she was joking. She hadn't been. That was the problem with men like him, they thought everyone fancied them. She figured it was

probably one of the side effects of being in love with oneself. He was probably a nice guy to be far, he was young so why shouldn't he enjoy life, even if it did mean having sex with every other woman within a twenty mile radius. He offered her a cigarette and she accepted. She couldn't help but look into those brown eyes of his as he lit it for her. She had been smoking a lot more lately, she always did when she felt stressed, and the lack of sleep she had encountered hadn't helped her bad habit.