

Shackles

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Chapter 1

Life as a supervillain wasn't easy in the optimistically-named Future City, which was exactly why the woman widely-known as the Shimmer was determined never to get too proud of being one. She'd made her friend Ramona promise to give her a swift kick in the head if she ever started making big, bold speeches, or sending self-important letters to the press. That never ended well. 'Supervillain', in her experience, too often meant someone too caught up in their own bullshit to be able to tell when to get the hell out of dodge. That, she could honestly say, wasn't one of her many flaws. She just needed one big score, and she was done for good.

Which was why she never thought of herself as the Shimmer, and only as plain old Trinity. 'Shimmer' wasn't a bad name, as names went. A little sparkles-and-fairy-magic for her liking, but much better than ending up christened as Lady Deathcakes or something by a particularly misguided journalist. Trinity's small-time villain buddies would have never let her hear the end of it. Not that she needed to worry about their opinions for much longer. Trinity was already on her way to that one big score she'd been longing for, making her way through the busy streets of Future City with her head down and a giddy smile on her face. This was it. She was finally going to get rich, and the best part was, she'd be stealing from a corporate asshole in the

process. It was going to be great.

It was going to be nothing like the previous dozen or so failed big scores she'd embarked on.

Trinity really believed that. She *had* to believe it, because she had to get out of this city. Trinity glanced around, taking stock of the neighborhood she was walking through and noticing all the hundreds of shitty ways it had changed. It was called Castron, and it was the place she'd grown up. She'd been born in the local hospital, twenty-three years before. Back then, it had been on the outskirts - poor, yeah, but at a safe distance from the identical, glass-plated, high-rise corporate buildings that dominated the heart of the city. It'd had soul. Now, though, those corporations were just a few blocks away, and inching closer every month.

The rot was already beginning to show. Local stores being bought out. Rents going up. Billboards about new developments plastered everywhere. Gentrification. Trinity hated it.

And unlike some, she wasn't arrogant enough to believe she could stop it. She just wanted enough money to get out and start a nice, comfy life somewhere completely different. Which was why she was currently on her way to steal a whole lot of money from an obscenely wealthy corporate bitch.

Trinity was just minding her own business, walking along the sidewalk, contemplating that happy prospect, when she felt someone grab her arm

roughly and peer in to look at her under her hood.

“Hey, aren’t you that-”

That was all Trinity needed to hear. She sighed once, heavily, and then put her fingertips to the woman’s temple and gave her a taste of her shimmer.

Trinity hated being recognized. At first, even after a couple of high-profile tussles with superheroes, she hadn’t needed to worry about it. She figured she looked pretty ordinary. She was a little short, and a little curvier than most people expected. Sure, she had a sidecut and a septum piercing, but hey, she was far from the only dyke in Future City. Apparently, though, after getting arrested half a dozen times, your mugshot got around. Fortunately, she’d done a way better job at keeping the details of her powers under wrap. It’s not like it made any sense to go around bragging about them, and putting a big ‘WEAKNESS HERE’ target on herself.

Most people didn’t know that one little touch was all she needed.

It usually took a moment, though, and Trinity enjoyed using it to get a good look at today’s lucky, nosy citizen of the day. Frankly, she looked just like almost anybody else. Nice, curly hair. Cute freckles. She was wearing a suit, but it looked a little cheap for her to be a corporate type. Maybe she was on her way to a job interview. Trinity didn’t really care. All she cared about was the woman’s pretty, green eyes, and the way they looked as they started to change color.

As soon as Trinity's fingertips made contact with the woman's temple, they started to glow a brilliant, warm purple. It wasn't just her skin; it emanated from Trinity's fingers in strange, cloudy streaks, like luminescent fluid spreading through water. Then, the glow started to spread to Trinity's victim, a bolt of it passing under her skin until it reached her eyes, darting for them like an electric current.

And then her green eyes started to turn a rich, bright purple.

It took a few moments for them to change completely. Little purple lights started appearing in her irises, more of them flickering to life as the seconds passed, until purple overwhelmed green. The purple of Trinity's shimmer was bright, but it was also flat and uniform, and before long, the poor woman's eyes were left empty and glassy, devoid of any spark of independent thought, and even the whites of her eyes seemed to reflect an eerie, cloudy glow.

Trinity shivered. It was so hot. It never stopped being hot.

Just as hot was watching her posture slump, and watching a big, dumb, vacant smile spread across her alarmed face. She looked like she didn't have a care in the world - because she didn't. All she was thinking was shimmer.

"What's your name?" Trinity demanded, quickly glancing around to make sure no-one had noticed. It had only taken a couple of seconds, and no-one had. This was Future City. People minded their own business.

Most people, anyway.

“Ellen,” the woman answered, and the big, dumb smile on her face got even bigger and dumber. She looked so pleased she was practically shivering with it. Trinity knew exactly what was going on in her head. With her thoughts utterly smothered by Trinity’s purple, mind-controlling light, being *good*, being *useful* was absolute bliss. Trinity shivered a little too. That was another thing that never stopped being hot.

Trinity was pretty sure that, when she used her power on someone, there was a little jolt of feedback that heightened her senses and got her juices flowing. She was also sure that most of the reason she was really turned on was that she was a kinky lesbian who got off on getting into the heads of other women. She wasn’t proud of it, but she wasn’t not-proud of it either. She was a villain, after all.

“Well, hey, Ellen,” Trinity whispered, putting a hand on Ellen’s hip and pulling her in close enough to whisper in her ear. Ellen moaned a little. Being moved around felt very *good* and very *useful*. “You’re going to forget all about me, aren’t you? You’re going to forget you ever saw me.”

“Yes!” Ellen whispered back urgently. She was nodding like crazy, and Trinity knew she was completely possessed by that delicious shimmer-eagerness. Trinity loved her power. Ellen really would forget, too. The mind could do incredible things, if it was eager enough.

“Good,” Trinity told her, and Ellen moaned again, almost loud enough to draw attention. The woman was practically melting into Trinity’s arms. She had no defenses. Almost no-one did.

Trinity knew the smart thing would be to set Ellen on her way immediately, so she could get on with her big score. But ‘smart’ had never been her strongest suit. And besides, she had a couple of minutes to kill.

“Listen, Ellen,” Trinity said, thrilled by the way Ellen noticeably perked up her ears. “You’re not going to remember seeing me, but you are going to remember what I look like. You probably saw it on a news site or something. And that’s gonna stick with you real vividly, especially when you dream. You’re gonna be having a lot of dreams about me from now on.”

Ellen nodded quickly. Her eyes were wide and feverish, and filled with iridescent shimmer. Trinity was crackling with pleasure at seeing her words pour into Ellen’s soul, shaping her, remaking her. It was effortless, with most people. They didn’t have any of the training or preparation it took to fight her off. The effects didn’t last forever, of course, but given the right *push*, they could last a damn long time.

“Dream of me,” Trinity urged, in hushed tones, to her new, hopelessly entranced friend. “Dream about how good this feels, Ellen. And as you do, touch yourself. Think about my lips. My hands. My hands all over you.”

“Yes!” Ellen panted, and Trinity knew she was already thinking about it.

Trinity stepped a little closer to her, putting her arms around her, giving the helpless girl a taste of her new wet dreams. She knew her hand resting possessively on Ellen’s hip would be the perfect forgotten memory, the perfect spark of inspiration. To anyone else, they might have looked like a couple embracing in the street. No-one was close enough to see Ellen’s eyes.

“I’m your fantasy,” Trinity breathed, and Ellen nodded again, neurons and synapses shimmering into place to make it the truth. “Your ideal. The hottest person you’ve ever seen.”

A dozen little changes came over Ellen; subtle shifts to her expression, to her body language. Trinity couldn’t help but notice each and every one of them, her hunger growing. Nothing gave her the same kind of thrill. She loved the way Ellen’s lips parted in faint awe, and the way her eyes started running over Trinity’s body, admiring her. She loved the way her plaything’s legs shifted as she pressed them together shyly - who wouldn’t be shy, in the presence of what they considered such perfection?

Trinity wasn’t sure if the woman she had hypnotized had been into girls or not, but her shimmer didn’t care. And soon, neither would Ellen.

She knew, of course, that getting into someone’s head and twisting their sexuality and fantasies around your fingertips in order to serve your ego wasn’t exactly the nicest thing in the world. Generally, Trinity preferred crimes

of the victimless variety. But everyone had a few guilty pleasures, she figured. This was one of hers. She was going to get called evil no matter what. Might as well enjoy one or two of the perks of the job. What was anyone going to say? 'How could you, supervillain'?

Anyway, it's not like anyone would notice a few more lesbians on the streets of Future City.

"You'll dream of me each and every night," Trinity purred right into Ellen's ear, each word proving more and more devastating as Ellen's thoughts and desires bent to Trinity's will. "And you'll wake up panting and sweating. Maybe you'll call my name. Maybe you'll touch yourself. You'll want to."

"Oh fuck," Ellen whimpered, as those fantasies seared themselves white-hot into her brain. The shimmer was in her eyes, her voice, her mind. It was everywhere.

"God, you've got it bad." A crooked smile spread across Trinity's face. Sometimes, it really felt like this was the part of her job that made life worth living. "Hornier than you've ever been in your life, for a girl you won't even remember meeting. For, as far as you know, a supervillain you've only ever read about online. What does that make you, huh?"

"A... a slut!" Ellen moaned. Trinity laughed. It was always best when her victims' own minds supplied the answers she was looking for. Trinity wasn't about to slut-shame anybody, but of Ellen wanted to slut-shame herself, and

get off on it in the process, well. That was pretty hot too.

“You sure are.”

“A slut,” Ellen repeated, almost babbling to herself. “A slut for... for supervillains... oh god!”

Trinity raised an eyebrow at the half-horrified, half-captivated note in the poor woman’s voice. Apparently, she really was every bit the upstanding, diligent citizen she looked to be, and the thought of being head-over-heels in lust for a supervillain was really doing a number on her. Trinity’s smile grew more twisted still. She could work with that.

“A slut for supervillains,” Trinity confirmed, and that was all it took for that to become gospel truth for Ellen. “You love them, don’t you, Ellen? The glamour. The danger. The wickedness. It really does it for you. It really gets you going. Always has, in fact.”

That last suggestion really sent Ellen reeling. She just froze up for a second, and teetered on her heels whilst her mind caught up with what Trinity was telling it. She looked like she was short-circuiting - and in a way, she was. Trinity’s shimmer was giving her new memories, and it wasn’t subtle. Her mind-control scorched a path through Ellen’s recollection of her life, littering it with traces of a devastating kink for super-powered villains and criminals. Anything that proved an obstacle was cast aside like mere detritus - crushes on superheroes, perhaps, or feelings of stern, sincere disapproval. Whatever

remained was warped and undercut without mercy. Perhaps she'd still remember nodding earnestly as her parents lectured her on the dangers of villains as a teenage girl, only now, she'd also remember blushing in shame and hypocrisy, and rubbing her legs together underneath the dinner table.

Ellen had *always* had a thing for supervillains. In that moment, she knew it more surely than she knew her own name.

And once her mind came to terms with *that*, she was all the more awestruck by Trinity's presence.

"Y-you..." she moaned, and almost collapsed.

Trinity had to reach for her to hold her up. She sighed. Maybe she'd overdone it a bit. She'd given the poor girl a lifelong kink for supervillains, and she'd made herself into her perfect fantasy of one. No wonder she was soaking her panties in the street. Trinity could feel Ellen clinging to her feebly, torn between wanting to push Trinity away in righteous horror and wanting Trinity to sweep her away, to kidnap her, to ravage her.

And Trinity wanted to. She really really did. She'd been laying low for a while. It had been weeks since she'd really let loose the way she'd just done with Ellen. Leaving a trail of brainwashed, zonked out fucktoys in your wake wasn't a wise move, if you wanted to drop off the radar before pulling off a big heist. Letting the heist slip through her fingers just because she couldn't keep her hands out of Ellen's pants would have been an even less wise one.

“That’s right, me,” Trinity said wearily. “But don’t worry, you won’t remember. Not outside dreams, anyway. Time to go, babygirl. Make your way home. Take a nap. You’ll enjoy it.”

There was just a hint of a pout in Ellen’s face before it was smothered by the unnatural compulsion of Trinity’s shimmer. Like a puppet on strings, she straightened herself, pulled a complete one-eighty, and started walking back the way she’d come.

Trinity was unspeakably disappointed, but she had bigger things to worry about. Maybe she’d get lucky, she told herself. Maybe there’d be someone cute and stupid at the charity event. Maybe she’d get to have some fun, as well as screw over some rich people. It was all in a day’s work, for a supervillain like her.

Chapter 2

As Trinity left Ellen behind her, wishful thoughts about finding another cute, eminently-brainwashable girl consoled her as she made her way through a few more streets, until finally, she arrived at her target. It was hard to miss. The old, mostly disused Castron Performing Arts Centre had been given a new lease on life, and now, it was drenched in adverts and banners, and swarmed with both hired security and the rich people they'd been hired to protect. The surrounding streets were crowded too, both with locals hoping for a look at some or other celebrity, and guests who hadn't managed to buy their way onto the VIP list.

Trinity loathed it all, immediately. Downtown pageantry like this didn't belong in her neighborhood. And what she hated most of all was the smug, rich-girl face plastered over every single poster and flyer.

Eleanor Quinn was the golden girl of Future City. A corporate heiress and billionaire, she'd come into her money at a young age, and emerged into adulthood as one of the city's richest and keenest minds. Since then, she'd worked tirelessly to expand her company's influence, and now, a huge portion of the city's population entrusted themselves to her safe hands, be it via technology, banking, healthcare, or any number of other sectors.

Which was exactly the problem, in Trinity's book. People shouldn't trust corporate types any further than they could throw them. Them and all their money.

The fact that Eleanor Quinn was hosting the event was part of what made it, in Trinity's book, a perfect target. Generally speaking, supervillains didn't go after charity events, no matter how much money traded hands at them. Some liked to pretend it was some kind of cool villain code of honor, but really, it was just the fact that stealing money from charity made you look like a huge, pathetic dick. Trinity was usually of the same mindset - usually. But this was different. Through a few subtle, well-placed applications of her shimmer, Trinity had come into some very, very interesting information.

It turned out that Ms. Quinn wasn't planning charity so much as a real estate scheme. With one hand, she was using her social capital to encourage people to donate to a local government redevelopment scheme - all run through a certified non-profit, of course. Her status as a philanthropist was beyond repute. But with the other hand, she was quickly buying up land via dozens of anonymous shell corporations. Land that would skyrocket in value as a result of the charitable redevelopment scheme she herself was sponsoring. Eleanor Quinn stood to make billions. Like she didn't already have enough of them.

It wasn't technically illegal, but it was definitely scummy and scandalous as hell, but since Eleanor Quinn's Quinncorp owned - directly or indirectly -

every single media outlet in the city, blowing the whistle wasn't going to cut it. Even if Trinity had been able to find a journalist brave and idealistic enough, she was confident a businesswoman like Quinn would have plausible deniability. So what else was a supervillain to do but set the world to right by playing Robin Hood? She could steal from the rich and give to the poor.

Meaning herself. Trinity was pretty broke, after all.

Despite all the security, Trinity didn't think it would be too hard. No-one was expecting supers, after all. All she had to do was get backstage and find the poor mook whose job it was to collect everyone's checks and run the electronic transactions. Give him a taste of the shimmer, tell him to reroute the money into an offshore account, and hey presto. Trinity was rolling in it.

Trinity checked her watch. It was almost all about to get started. With her hood pulled down over her head, she made her way down one of the small side streets adjacent to the performing arts center. There was a small side door, and a very bored-looking security guard standing outside.

"Hey!" Trinity said jauntily, as she approached him. "Does this taste like purple to you?"

One shimmering touch had him limp and drooling.

"Thought so," Trinity said to herself, grinning like a wolf. The adrenaline was starting to kick in. Showtime. "Listen, buddy. You're going to let me in, and

you're going to let me out again later, and then you're going to forget you ever saw me. But here's what you're going to do if I get caught..."

Once she was inside, things got almost stupidly easy. You had to pass through security to be there, so if you were there, everyone assumed you were supposed to be, and that you had to be someone-or-other's assistant ass-wiper. Just walk around like you knew where you were going, and no-one would bother you. If you wanted to be super serious, you could go around waving something that even so much as looked like a lanyard, and you'd be double-fine.

Trinity wasn't bothering, though. She just walked around purposefully until she had the layout of the place memorized, and then she found somewhere out-of-the-way to settle down and wait. Waiting swiftly proved boring as hell, it took all of Trinity's willpower to stop her from either falling asleep, or making some overworked assistant dance like a chicken for her amusement. Instead, all she had to distract her from the seconds ticking past was the dulcet tones of Eleanor Quinn, muted this far backstage, but nonetheless rendered inescapable by a vast and obscenely expensive sound system that had been installed specially for the occasion. From what Trinity was unable to

tune out, it was a whole load of self-serving drivel about giving back to the community, wanting everyone to profit from Future City's successes, blah blah blah. Trinity tried amusing herself by instead imagining all the awful things she could do to Eleanor Quinn if she ever got her hands on her. She'd have a field day.

After Quinn was done rambling, there was a series of other speeches by various celebrity guests - mostly musicians and actors, for the sake of drumming up media attention. Trinity didn't care about them one bit. She did care, however, about the very large checks they were depositing into Eleanor Quinn's tender care. Everyone loved being a highly-visible, highly-marketable giver. And that was the key to Trinity's plan - they were handing over real, irrevocable, legally enforceable checks. Once they paid out, the money was gone, be it to a fraudulent charity scheme or to Trinity. She simply had to wait until the last minute to mind-control the finance guy, so there was the least possible chance of anyone noticing or anything going wrong.

And, judging by the raucous applause now filling the building, the last minute was arriving. Trinity clambered to her feet, and started making her way over to the office of the finance guy (as she now thought of him). Head down, hands in pockets, not looking at all the people rushing everywhere. It was effortless. Without knocking, she opened the door and slipped inside, quickly closing it behind her. She didn't need any unexpected interruptions. That was when she got her first look at the finance 'guy.'

Trinity smiled, despite the deeply weary, irritated look on the face of the

woman sitting in front of her. Maybe there was such a thing as fate. The woman was clearly cut from the same mold as Ellen - strait-laced, severe and professional. The only real differences were that her hair was blonde and straight instead of dark and curly, and her suit looked every bit as expensive as Trinity would have expected from one of Quinn's assistants. The supervillain looked at her with hearts in her eyes. The strait-laced types were often Trinity's favorite. It was so much fun to watch them unravel. Trinity started entertaining fantasies of making her meet her at a bar later. She wasn't sure if the woman was gay, and she didn't like the corporate badge pinned onto her breast, but hey, no-one was perfect. Not until Trinity used her shimmer on them.

"Excuse me?" the woman said sharply, clearly affronted by Trinity's mere presence. "The door was closed for a reason, you know. This had better be important, or else I'll-"

"Quiet," Trinity said, her fingertips blazing with shimmer-light as she set them to the woman's forehead. Sometimes, she liked toying with people. Teasing them, letting them tie themselves in knots, knowing she had the power to turn the tables on them with a single touch. Not today, though. Today she had a job to do.

"I... I... w-what?" the woman managed, slurring, as her eyes changed color, bit by bit, until they were dominated by Trinity's purple. Trinity was impressed. That was more than most people managed to get out.

“What’s your name?”

“Hailey,” she replied, in an odd, quiet voice that she clearly wasn’t used to using.

“Hailey,” Trinity repeated brightly. “Listen, sorry, I don’t really have time to make this fun for you. I just need you to perfectly obey every instruction I give. Mokay?”

“O.. OK,” Hailey murmured. Mostly, her face still registered confusion, but there was a docile, dull tint to her eyes, and Trinity thought she could detect in her voice a little of the characteristic eagerness her powers inflicted on her victims.

“Good.” Seeing someone’s mind overpowered by her shimmer was proving as intoxicating as ever, but Trinity was a little too tense to enjoy it in the moment. “And, you’re the person that takes the checks and wires out the money, right?”

“Yes,” Hailey said. Trinity’s shimmer hit her with a burst of warm, smothering pleasure for answering so obediently, and she started to relax a little, settling into her new role as a brainwashed puppet. Trinity shivered. Good. That was good.

“Perfect,” Trinity continued. “So, here’s what you’re going to do: you’re going to take this card.” Trinity handed over a small piece of paper, with a set

of banking information written on it. “And you’re going to wire the money there, not to wherever you’ve been told to before. Understand?”

“I... I... but...” Hailey’s eyebrow twitched dangerously. Trinity sighed. Trust the biggest billionaire in the city to have hired people with some backbone.

“Do it,” Trinity said firmly. She focused, and the light shimmering at her fingertips blazed brighter. She didn’t have time to be subtle. “Obey. You *love* to obey, don’t you? I’m sure a middle-management-assistant-whatever like you just loves being bossed around. You love being told what to do. It’s your favorite thing in the world. So, you’re going to do exactly what I just told you.”

“Actually, she really won’t,” came a loud, confident, horrifyingly-familiar voice from outside the room, sending terrified chills down Trinity’s spine.

And that was when the wall exploded.

As Trinity had learned in her ignominious career as a villain, there were all different kinds of superheroes, with all different kinds of motivations. Some of them were in it to get famous. Some of them were in it for revenge, because a criminal stole their favorite pet hamster as a kid. Some of them were in it because the sponsorship deals were wildly lucrative. And then there were

those superheroes who had decided that dispensing justice was their personal fucking destiny. Those ones often died early, doing something really stupid, but those that didn't usually went far simply because they were too stupid to ever stop. The best of the best ended up on the Apex League, which was Future City's very own big-name superhero team, made up of the smuggest, most self-righteous, most insufferable assholes Trinity could imagine.

And the very smuggest, most self-righteous and insufferable of them all was a superheroine named 'Radiance'.

Who was now staring straight at Trinity from the other side of what had once been, but was definitely no longer, a wall.

It took Trinity a moment to even register what she was seeing. She didn't blame herself for reacting slowly. Radiance was dazzling. Everyone said so. Perhaps the most hateable thing about her was that she just looked so damn perfect. Her costume was all white and gold, and somehow, no matter what, it never seemed to get dirty or tarnished. Worse, it was almost skin-tight, and perfectly outlined all of Radiance's incredible muscles. Those muscles... Trinity knew more than a few villains who spent their off-hours fantasizing about them. Not that she would ever do something like that, of course. Nor would she ever fantasize about Radiance's flowing, platinum blonde hair, trimmed carefully to reveal a side-shave that had all of Future City's swooning. Nor, of course, her arched, high, classically-beautiful cheekbones, highlighted perfectly by her golden domino mask.

She had huge, feathered wings too. Dykes went wild for girls with huge, feathered, angelic wings. Apparently. Not that Trinity would know.

“The Shimmer,” Radiance growled, voice seething with contempt. “I knew only you would sink low enough to steal from charity. You won’t get away with it.”

Trinity had a million comebacks on the tip of her tongue. Totally. Some of them would have left Radiance quivering, humiliated and outwitted. But she didn’t say any of them.

She just bolted.

Nope. Nope, nope, nope. That was the only thing running through Trinity’s head as she sprinted out the door. She wasn’t doing this. Not today, not ever. She’d been kicked around by Radiance before, and it wasn’t pleasant. ‘One touch and you can mind-control someone’ sounded great, in theory, until you ran into a superhero with more willpower than wet tissue paper. Radiance had it in spades. And that was to say nothing of the angel-winged hero’s own powers.

She had what people liked to call the ‘standard suite’. Super-strength, super-durability, super-reaction time, et cetera. Personally, Trinity hated that term. Super-strength didn’t feel very ‘standard’ when the woman trying to tackle you to the ground had the strength to ram through a building, whilst you were just as fragile as every other pedestrian. Oh, and she could fly, of

course. That's what the wings were for. Trinity thought it was very unfair that some heroes and villains got to have, like, five powers, whilst she only had the one. Like, fuck, at least let her be a better mind-controller than Radiance.

Trinity didn't go for her planned exit. There was no point. She couldn't outrun the superheroine, and she didn't put it past Radiance to smash through a few more walls, if that was what it took to find her. Her only hope was to try and lose herself in the crowd, and the quickest way to the crowd was through the stage. Sprinting as fast as she could, Trinity made it to the nearest stage entrance, and without hesitating, ran out in full view of hundreds of attendees, and dozens of TV cameras.

The supervillain was greeted by a hundred shocked gasps, and equally as many flashing lights. It would have been dazzling, if she hadn't been running like her life depended on it. Trinity just wanted to make it across the stage, get into the crowd, and then hopefully create enough of a disturbance that she could lose herself amongst the mass of bodies. Foolish though it was, she couldn't resist taking a few moments to admire the huge, glass donation box on stage with her, currently filled with checks, hundred-dollar bills, and even things like jewelry and celebrity memorabilia. Trinity wanted to swipe it so bad, but she knew there was no chance that would work. She had seconds, and she needed to get into the crowd. The covetous look on her face might have made it obvious she was here to steal, but right now, everyone still seemed to be wondering if she was a celebrity they hadn't yet recognized.

Not Eleanor Quinn, though. Trinity would have recognized that smug, rich-

girl face anywhere. Right now, it was wearing a look of fury that was outraged enough to spoil the white, flowing, million-dollar dress she was wearing.

Trinity couldn't resist pausing for just a moment, to wink at her.

"Stop, villain!" Radiance's annoying, commanding voice bellowed as she too burst onto the stage, hot on Trinity's heels.

Trinity immediately regretted the pause. With one last, lingering look at the huge pile of money she was leaving behind, she threw herself off the edge of the stage, landing in an aisle that was immediately swarmed by frantic attendees. Trinity grinned. Finally, a stroke of luck. With everyone on their feet, she could easily tuck her head down and blend in.

It was Radiance's fault. She'd said the v-word.

Now, everyone was losing their heads, desperately trying to get the hell out of the room by any means necessary. It was perfect for Trinity. As hard as it was to move through the press of bodies, she managed to duck and weave a little, elbowing people out of the way where necessary. She just had to get away from the last place Radiance had seen her, and then make it to an exit. It was sure to be even worse chaos outside. Trinity wanted to get rich, but she knew it was always better to run away and live to brainwash another day. Already, she was starting to wonder about her next score. Maybe she could just-

“Where do you think you’re going?”

Trinity wheeled around, panicked, and all too late realized that she should be looking above, rather than around.

As she craned her neck back, her vision filled with pure white wings as Radiance descended upon her.

Just barely, Trinity managed to throw herself out of the way. She hit the ground hard, groaning as a jolt of pain shot through her leg. She knew there was no time to recover, though. At least it was better than being pounded into the floor by a superheroine who could lift a truck. Trinity scrambled to her feet and looked around for the nearest pack of scared, fleeing civilians for her to try and blend in to.

But there was nothing.

Radiance’s presence was like a beacon, warding all of them away. As packed as the space inside the theater already was, the crowd seemed to compress in on itself, leaving an empty, lonely circle around Trinity. She was stranded, and safety was retreating further and further away from her with each passing moment.

And Radiance was right there, walking towards her.

“This is, what, the dozenth time you’ve been hauled in?” The amazonian

superheroine cracked her knuckles nastily. “Most of them by me. Haven’t you learned your lesson?”

“Never,” Trinity spat. “Anyway. You haven’t hauled me in yet. I’m still standing right here.”

The smug, self-righteous look of absolute, unshakable confidence on Radiance’s face as she laughed was all Trinity needed to remind her of every single little reason she hated the superheroine.

Just on principle, Trinity hated anyone who thought they personally had what it took to ride around saving and punishing everyone else. You only got that kind of attitude if you were born lucky. Radiance had definitely been born lucky. She was strong as hell, and from the look of her, Trinity had a hunch she’d been born up in some downtown spire, looking down her nose at all the little people like Trinity. Still, most heroes like that ended up learning a little humility one way or another, either by getting their asses kicked royally or by screwing something up so bad they had to face up to the fact that they weren’t god’s gift to mankind after all. Not Radiance, though. As far as anybody knew, she’d never been beaten, and her eyes still blazed with the fires of purpose and bitter idealism.

Trinity wanted, more than anything, to wipe the satisfaction from her face. But as much as it grated on her to admit that she was scared of Radiance, a small shiver ran down her spine when she realized that the superheroine’s eyes were filled with anger, too.

“I’m sick of you,” Radiance growled contemptuously. “I’m sick of your twisted games. Do you know how many people we had to deprogram last time you pulled a stunt like this? And somehow, Shimmer, you managed to sink even lower still. Charity? Really? I thought even villains had standards.”

Trinity bristled at that. Nothing Eleanor fucking Quinn was doing should count as ‘charity’ - not that a tool like Radiance would ever listen, or care. “I could say the same to you,” she retorted, still breathing hard. Radiance wasn’t, annoyingly. “Your haircut looks like shit.”

Radiance just laughed. “Bullshit all you want. I’m bringing you in, Shimmer. And this time I’m going to make sure you can’t brainwash your way out of this. I’ll make sure the cops know how to handle you properly. You’re going away for good.

“Fuck you I am,” Trinity barked, and threw herself at the superheroine.

It was literally the only thing she could think of that might take the golden-haired hero off-guard. Actually tackling Radiance would probably have been about as effective as trying to tackle a tree, which was why at the last moment, Trinity lunged to one side, and instead slammed the palm of her hand into Radiance’s chest. And even that would have been pitifully futile, had it not been for the fact that Trinity had infused her hand with the full force of her shimmer.

Pleasingly, as her palm connected, she saw bolts of purple light spread across Radiance's body, and she felt the hero buckle backwards, just a little. Euphoria bubbled up in Trinity's mind. Maybe this was actually going to work. Maybe she really was going to be able to wipe that smirk from the obnoxious blonde's face. She knew that against someone of her caliber, she wouldn't be able to do more than stun, but that might be enough. She just needed to keep her momentum going. Trinity pounded one foot in front of the other, not looking back. The exit was so close. That was all she needed. A few more seconds. Then she could just-

Trinity's face slammed into the ground as she was yanked back by one of her ankles.

That fucking superhero willpower.

She looked down, hoping it would only be a hand. It wasn't. Trinity's stomach sank as she saw that, wrapped around her leg, was a golden manacle, fastened tight, at the end of a long, golden chain held at the other end by the superheroine who was now looking at her with an expression that was almost pitying.

It was over. That chain was Radiance's ace in the hole.

"That's enough of that," Radiance told her firmly. And it simply *was*.

In a single instant, all of Trinity's will to fight simply drained away, and it

felt like a ten ton weight was being draped all across her body. Trinity groaned as she slumped to the floor. She wanted to fight it, but she couldn't. No-one could fight Radiance's golden chain. She could manifest it out of thin air, and once it was wrapped around you, that was it. She was in control. Trinity balled up her fists. It wasn't fair.

Maybe the worst part was that she actually didn't want to fight. She couldn't. The chain wouldn't let her. It was in her head, and 'that's enough' felt like an iron commandment. Enough fighting. Enough struggle. Enough resistance. She wanted to want to fight, maybe, but what good was that? The first couple of times she'd fallen victim to Radiance's chain, she'd tried with all her mind to throw off its influence. It had earned her nothing but a vicious, throbbing headache.

Now, she'd all but given up.

"On your knees," Radiance commanded, striding towards her.

Through gritted teeth, Trinity obeyed. Again, she simply couldn't help it. Pushing herself upright by her hands and clambering onto her knees felt utterly inevitable. It was like she had chains around all her limbs, pulling her into place like a marionette, and trying to stop it would have been like trying to stop the tides coming in. Her limbs simply obeyed Radiance's wishes rather than her own. The superpowered villain did her best to keep her face even as Radiance loomed over her, but the sudden sense of powerlessness she now felt was making her nauseous. How had it all gone wrong so fast?

“Pathetic,” Radiance judged, face scrunched up in a look of ugly contempt.

In that moment, Trinity truly felt pathetic. She felt small, and Radiance felt every bit as invincible and indomitable as her reputation. She’d encountered the hero before, but every time, she forgot how it felt, just a little. Radiance walked through the world like she needed no armor but her own righteousness. In her presence, it was impossible not to feel like she was something legendary, like a divine hero out of some kind of fairytale. Before her, you were either innocent or guilty, and even the guilty quivered in fear at her judgment.

Not that Trinity was going to betray any of that. She did her best to arrange her face into a look that she hoped would come across as cool and subversive, in an underdog defeated villain kind of way.

“Yeah?” she shot back. “That’s pretty rich, coming from the girl who-”

“Shut up,” Radiance told her, and Trinity’s jaw slammed shut. “Someone like you has nothing worthwhile to say.”

Trinity recoiled like she’d been slapped. She swiftly discovered that she could open her mouth again, but she couldn’t speak. At most, all that would come out of her mouth was a weak, strangled gasp. Trinity wasn’t surprised that indignity left her seething, but she was surprised that it also made her cheeks burn with an unfamiliar feeling: humiliation. Trinity was used to being

defeated, but not to feeling like that. She didn't consider defeat humiliating. It was the way of the world. Heroes beating villains. Everyone knew that. But this... this was different, somehow.

Radiance was different.

She'd always had a massive stick up her ass, sure, but in the past, she'd been far more by-the-book. All about cuffing Trinity as quickly as possible and getting the cops to take her away. Not standing over her to call her 'pathetic' and glare at her with a strange look in her eyes. Trinity found herself squirming in a way she couldn't remember doing since childhood, trying to press her legs together, making her body small and closed. It didn't help. She felt like Radiance could see right through her.

"Why?" Radiance growled, stamping back and forth in front of Trinity, clearly agitated. "Why do you villains do this? You're like animals. Again, and again, and again, no matter how many times I stop you. Each time, sinking lower. Can't you just leave the good people of this city alone? I should just... just..."

For a moment, Trinity was afraid to see what the superhero might say. She'd never felt so utterly impotent. But then, Radiance seemed to recover a little of her composure.

"Ugh." She clenched her fists tight, and then made herself slowly relax them. "It doesn't matter. You don't matter. The cops can deal with you, just like

always.”

Trinity was almost relieved to hear that. An unhinged super-bitch was more than she ever wanted to deal with, thank you very much. But her relief turned to ashes when she saw movement on stage, behind Radiance.

It was the security guard. The one she’d bewitched. Trinity’s eyes went wide with panic as she remembered what she’d told him to do.

“You’ll- what?” Radiance was quick to notice where she was looking, and turned to find herself looking at a man in uniform, a big, mindless smile on his face and purple shimmering in his eyes.

Right as he dropped a lit match into the donation box.

‘If I can’t have it, neither can Eleanor Quinn’. That had been Trinity’s thinking. Some of it would be replaced, of course. Some of the checks that were now burning to cinders would be rewritten. But not all, and that was to say nothing of the cash donations, or the celebrity memorabilia to be sold at auction. Trinity couldn’t guess quite how much money was going up in flames, right there before their eyes, but it had to be tens of thousands of dollars. Maybe hundreds of thousands. The sight should have brought her satisfaction. It didn’t. All she could think about was the unnatural stillness that had come over Radiance.

She made no move to try and salvage the donations. Clearly, she knew it

was already too late. When she turned back to Trinity, her lips were pressed into a thin, cold, line.

“You...” she began ominously. Trinity wanted so badly to be able to say something, anything, but her throat was still as frozen as her body.

Radiance could do anything she wanted with her.

“Clearly, I was wrong,” Radiance continued slowly. Her voice was ice. “The cops can’t handle you. There are no depths to which you will not sink, and you keep slipping away from justice, again and again. The system can’t handle you. Only I can.”

And with that, she lifted the helpless Trinity into her arms, and carried her up into the sky, borne on angelic wings.

Chapter 3

Trinity considered it a further indignity, on top of all the other indignities, that she had to cling to Radiance for dear life as the two of them flew through the air. She preferred to think of it that way - the two of them, flying - because it sounded better than 'the superheroine had picked Trinity up in her arms, abducted her, and was now dragging her unceremoniously across the sky while she tried not to look down.' Really, anything sounded better than that.

At first, she'd tried screaming, but Radiance's golden, mind-controlling chain was still wrapped around her ankle, and it seemed that the command to 'shut up' extended to screaming, crying, whimpering, grumbling, and just about any other noise she could think of. Left without the ability to plead with, insult or annoy her captor, there was little for Trinity to do except try not to look down. Not that there was anything else for her to look at. She couldn't see Radiance's face, which was looking determinedly straight ahead as if she didn't notice the ways her captive was squirming and clinging. Trinity couldn't help but wonder what kind of expression the superheroine might have been wearing.

Mercifully, it was a short flight. To Trinity's surprise, they headed not towards the inner city, but outwards, towards a sleepy industrial zone on the

outskirts. Trinity flinched as they swept in low over the tops of warehouses, before eventually Radiance pitched backwards, wings stretching out to catch the air and bring them to a sudden halt. After an ominous pause, the two of them started falling from the sky, and for a horrifying moment Trinity was certain they were about to crash into the metal roof beneath them - before they instead plunged through an open skylight, and landed safely in the room underneath, Radiance's powerful legs bending to absorb the shock.

Trinity couldn't help it. She squeaked.

Radiance smirked at her, making her cheeks grow hot with embarrassment, before abruptly dropping her on the ground. Trinity winced. Like she wasn't already bruised enough. Fortunately, she had her new surroundings to take her mind off the pain.

Such as they were, anyway. The room around them was decidedly spartan. It was clearly a smaller space carved out of a larger warehouse, with a set of large skylights above and single door, dead-bolted from the inside. There was also an adjacent bathroom - no door for that, though. Frankly, Trinity would have struggled to say more than that. There was a bed, a desk, a laptop, a TV, and a mini-fridge. It looked like an uninhabited student dorm, except for the fact that the bed was so clearly slept in. It wasn't hard to tell what this place was: Radiance's safehouse.

Trinity felt decidedly uneasy about that. The only way a superhero would ever show a villain their safehouse was if they never thought they were going

to get a chance to tell anybody.

“You can talk now,” Radiance told her, after double-checking to make sure her chain was still in place. “Not too loud,” she added sharply.

At first, Trinity found she had nothing to say. Her stomach was still churning from their sudden, entirely unexpected flight. And anyway, what could she say? Eventually, she settled on simply: “Fuck!”

For perhaps the first time ever, Radiance seemed faintly amused by her. “Nothing to say, for once?” she asked. “No wisecracks?”

“W-wisecracks?” Trinity spat incredulously. She was so far out of her depth she couldn’t even see the bottom. On some level, she was always prepared for the boring old ritual of being clapped in handcuffs and hauled off to jail. But this... “What the fuck is wrong with you?”

“With me?” Radiance’s face immediately hardened again. “What’s wrong with me? No, Shimmer. Wrong question. What the fuck is wrong with *you*?”

“I’m not the one who went fucking renegade, abducted a criminal - away from the cops, I might add - and flew across half the city to your atrocious little love nest.” Trinity wasn’t sure why she felt the need to defend herself.

“Yes, because that’s *so* much worse than what you just did!” Radiance retorted sarcastically. Trinity noted she didn’t correct her about this being a

love nest. She'd really been hoping Radiance would correct her about this being a love nest. "So much worse than burning up thousands in charity money, just out of fucking spite."

"Yeah, spite for Eleanor fucking Quinn!" Trinity exploded, as loudly as Radiance's mind control would allow. "I've got no problem looking like a grade-A asshole if it means robbing that bitch of some satisfaction! Maybe you're too busy with your head in the clouds to see what she's done to this city, but I'm not! I know exactly what kind of person she is."

"Yeah?" Radiance rounded on her dangerously, and Trinity was suddenly reminded of just how much stronger the tall, gold-clad superheroine was. She could rip Trinity in half if she pleased, and not even break a sweat. "Go on. Tell me. Tell me what kind of person Eleanor Quinn is."

Trinity made herself take a deep breath, and look into Radiance's hard, ice-blue eyes. "Forget it," she said slowly. "Not like you'd ever listen."

"That's what I thought," Radiance snarled. "You know nothing, Shimmer. Believe me, Eleanor Quinn has done more for this city than you could ever understand. I know her a lot better than you do. She's made sacrifices. Not that you'd know anything about those. All you do is take. You go around, mess with people's heads, and take whatever you want from them. It's sickening. You're a parasite."

Trinity flinched. That stung. It really did. More than she cared to admit.

More than anything, though, she was scared - scared of Radiance might do. She'd never seen such a composed hero go this far off the rails.

"That's why I brought you here, in fact," Radiance continued slowly, after taking a few, long moments to catch her breath. "To see if I can teach you a real lesson, for once. Villains like you just keep getting worse. The cops are useless. The justice system is even worse. Unless I do something about you, nothing will change. I *need* to fix this."

Trinity's concern only grew. "And how are you going to do that? Huh?" It was all she could do to put on a brave face.

She expected Radiance to continue with some obnoxious, self-righteous screed. What she didn't expect was for uncertainty to flicker across the superhero's face. "I... we... you will..."

She trailed off, and a grin returned to Trinity's face. She might have still been up shit creek without a paddle, but seeing Radiance look so nervous was a victory all of its own. "You didn't think this through, did you, hero?"

Radiance flashed Trinity a glare that would have killed most mere mortals. "Of course I did. I'm just not going to tell *you* my plans."

"Uh huh," Trinity snorted derisively, slowly clambering to her feet. Apparently Radiance wasn't so perfect after all. She was a terrible liar. "Yeah. Bullshit. Let me take a better guess: you got mad, you flew off the handle, you

ended up kidnapping me, and now you're wondering what the fuck you're going to do about it."

"Nonsense," Radiance retorted, but there was a little pink in her tanned cheeks. Enough for Trinity.

"So, how *are* you going to fix this mess?" Trinity pressed. She knew Radiance could break her head open like a watermelon if she was mad enough, but she figured getting the superheroine unbalanced was still her best bet. "Drop me off to the cops? I bet they'd have a few awkward questions. Better hope none of them are feeling chatty. You know how much people on social media love rumors about heroes behaving badly. But what else is there? It's not like you can keep me locked up here forever, Radiance. Or were you just going to let me go? Nah. No way. Not your style."

Reverse psychology. Trinity flattered herself a genius.

"Man, you really fucked this up." Trinity got up real close to Radiance, grinning up at her. "All you had to do was bring me in by the book, and you couldn't even do that. What would your precious Eleanor Quinn say? Honestly, it's pretty gross of you to be lecturing me, when you're--"

"Shut up."

The angelic heroine's words were ice-cold, and when she spoke, the golden chain connected to Trinity's ankle glimmered and glowed. Trinity swore

violently - internally, of course.

“That’s better.” Radiance breathed a sigh of relief. “God. Shimmer, you’re worse than I thought. I... you know, part of me was hoping that giving you a scare by flying you here would have been enough to give you some perspective. Make you reevaluate yourself a little. But no. You don’t regret a single thing, do you?”

Trinity met Radiance’s gaze defiantly. Fuck that.

Radiance’s eyes hardened too. “I didn’t think so. Not from the woman who burnt up charity money.” She sighed, steeling herself. “So be it. If you won’t learn your lesson like a decent human being, I’ll have to teach you like an animal.”

Before Trinity could process that outrageous comment, Radiance’s golden, mind-controlling chain vanished from around her ankle. She had only a fraction of a second to enjoy the freedom, however. An instant later, the chain reappeared in Radiance’s hand, and with a simple flick of her wrist, she fastened it around Trinity’s neck, its end forming into a tight-fitting, golden collar. Trinity instinctively reached up to paw at it, knowing full well the gesture was useless, eyes bulging furiously.

“There. A collar and leash.” Radiance giggled, and that alone only added to Trinity’s shock. She’d never heard of Radiance being anything other than deadly serious. “It makes you look kind of cute, honestly.”

Trinity blushed. “Fuck you,” she spat, and then blinked. So when the collar came off, commands got wiped. That was good to know.

Just as quickly, Radiance turned serious again. “Less cute. Now, strip.”

Trinity froze, and blushed a much deeper shade of red. Her hands were already twitching to obey the irresistible command, but she managed to bring them to a halt, even though it made her head throb. “What? What the fuck?”

“For now, you’re my dog,” Radiance told her firmly, without a hint of irony or insincerity. “A dumb, badly-trained dog who doesn’t know better than to piss in the street and chase after cars. That’s why I have to train you. And dogs don’t get to wear clothes. Now. Strip.”

Trinity tried to keep fighting it. She really did, even as the pain in her head grew so intense she felt as though she was going to black out. Her body was shaking, hands already clutching at her clothes, betraying her. She wanted to hold on. She wanted to keep Radiance out of her head. It felt like a test of wills, hers against the hero’s. But with the command repeated, its force was doubled, and Trinity soon found her strength crumbling.

With her vision swimming and tears forming in her eyes, Trinity let go. The rest was automatic. Her hands went to her collar, unzipping the hoodie jacket she’d been wearing and shrugging it off her shoulders. Next was her pants. Trinity always felt defenseless without her baggy, safely nondescript clothing,

but being in Radiance's presence was making her infinitely more nervous. As silly as it was under the circumstances, she felt almost bashful. Her body was soft. Curvy, even. She had hips that would have been indecent in some of the tight-fitting spandex costumes other supervillains favored, and she had a distinct, chubby layer of fat across her stomach. Radiance's body, meanwhile, was like a finely-honed sword. If there was any mockery in Radiance's eyes, though, Trinity couldn't find it. The superhero was simply staring at her clinically and expectantly.

Trinity had been wondering, with no small amount of dread, if the command to strip included underwear. She quickly discovered that it did. Within moments, her bra and panties were efficiently removed and discarded. Radiance's monstrous power gave her no time to brace herself for nudity, but once it had run its course, she was at least able to shrink and cover herself with her hands, preserving just a little modesty.

"Embarrassed?" Radiance asked. A slight, cruel smile had come to her face, as if she was enjoying Trinity's speechless state. "I wonder if that's a first, for a shameless monster like you. You should be embarrassed, Shimmer. You should be ashamed of what you've done. It's my duty to teach you that feeling."

"W-what?" Trinity couldn't believe what she was hearing. It was as if Radiance had turned into some kind of dominatrix. Well. There had always been rumors, she supposed. All the other dyke villains would be delighted to hear that all their sordid little fantasies were that much closer to reality. Trinity just wished she was finding out under different circumstances. "Y-

you're crazy."

"No. I just know how to treat people like you." Radiance seemed to be warming to her role, something that concerned Trinity to no end. "Or at least, I'm learning. Now. Kneel."

"F-fuck you!" Trinity laughed in disbelief, even as her legs almost gave out beneath her.

Radiance laughed too, cruelly. "As if you would ever be so lucky. Now, do I need to repeat myself?"

As little as Trinity wanted to give the superheroine the pleasure, she couldn't find it in herself to endure another pointless headache. Gritting her teeth and trying her utmost to look defiant, she sank unsteadily to her knees. Right away, they started aching. She wasn't used to being the one in this position.

"Oh, very good!" Radiance clapped her hands a couple of times mockingly. "See? That's training. I'm glad we're off to a good start."

Trinity glared at her. With the way the white-winged valkyrie was talking, you could have been forgiven for thinking she was a villain, instead of a hero.

"But that's getting ahead of ourselves a little," Radiance mused. "You can stand up again. Truthfully, I just wanted to see the look on your face."

Trinity kept glaring as she stood. She'd never before manifested laser beams from her eyes, but she was going to give it a damn good try.

"Now, come here," Radiance ordered, turning her back on Trinity and walking over to the bed, letting the supervillain's golden, enchanted leash trail along the ground behind her. "The essence of training is very simple. Positive and negative stimulus. Reward and punishment. Carrot and stick. You've been bad, so you get punished."

"God," Trinity groaned. "You heroes really love the sound of your own voices, don't you?"

It was weak and cliché, she knew, but better than letting Radiance lecture her like a child without interruption.

"Bend over," Radiance instructed, as Trinity followed her, helpless to disobey. "Here, in my lap. I'm going to spank you."

At that, Trinity outright howled with laughter. It went beyond nervous disbelief. She didn't disbelieve Radiance one bit. The costumed hero was deadly serious. Trinity was about to receive a spanking from the most adored hero in the city. What the fuck. Honestly, she wouldn't have needed any mind control to convince her to adopt the position Radiance was describing. The heroine could have told her to do that anywhere, anytime, and even though she was no kind of submissive, she would have gone along with it, just to see

what the fuck she was talking about. It seemed more humiliating to Radiance than to her, in all honesty.

That was how she felt until she felt the palm of Radiance's hand connect with her ass.

Trinity had never been spanked before. It wasn't her style. She'd spanked other girls, sure - sometimes, not even girls she'd mind controlled - but she'd never once been on the receiving end. Which meant she was entirely unprepared for how it felt.

The naked, helpless supervillain let out a weak, sharp yelp as Radiance delivered the first spank. She felt her ass shake for a moment with the impact, a sharp, stinging pain spreading across her skin. It didn't hurt much. Not really. It was clear Radiance wasn't using any of her superhuman strength. But it still stung, and part of why it stung so much is that Radiance was hurting her *there*. Her ass. Trinity had been woefully unprepared for just how intimate the contact was going to feel. The spank made her feel vulnerable and violated in a way nothing else had, not even Radiance's collar. Trinity quickly managed to get her voice under control, but she was still left panting breathlessly, a blush spreading across her face.

In that moment, she knew she was in trouble.

"Not how you expected it to feel?" Radiance asked, smirking.

“S-shut up!” Trinity spat.

“C’mon,” Radiance wheedled. “It’s just a little spank. Nothing compared to what you’ve done to other people. What’s the matter? The big, bad supervillain can dish it out, but she can’t take it?”

“I... hey... that’s not...” Trinity started squirming in Radiance’s lap, as if trying to escape, but Radiance’s mind control held her there, turning her motions in futile little wriggles that accomplished nothing. “L-listen, you really need to- Ah!”

Radiance spanked her again. Caught off guard, Trinity let out another shameful whimper. It wasn’t fair. How was Radiance doing this? How was she making her feel so... so weak? It wasn’t right. She was a supervillain. Trinity didn’t care about ‘the Shimmer’ having a big, tough-girl reputation, but damn it, she was a criminal and she’d been in more than a few fights in her life. She should be able to stand up to this!

And yet she wasn’t, as she quickly discovered once Radiance started spanking her in earnest. At first, she did her best to settle into the rhythm of the blows, steeling herself before each one, biting down hard to make sure she didn’t give Radiance the satisfaction of hearing any more embarrassing noises out of her. Her strength, though, deserted her faster than she expected. Radiance’s blows weren’t hard, but they were constant, and it wasn’t long before her ass started to turn a bright, sore red, making each spank that followed more and more painful. Matters only got worse when Radiance

started mixing up her pace, delivering a series of three quick spanks that had Trinity yowling, or letting her fingertips linger on Trinity's tender ass for a moment, drawing out the seconds to the next spank in a way that had Trinity shivering and whimpering in anticipation.

Within minutes, she was reduced to little more than a quivering rag doll, letting out pained moans every single time Radiance laid hands on her.

It was the most humiliating experience of her life.

"That's better!" Radiance said, audibly delighted. She giggled, her voice distinctly uneven in a way that sent a shiver down Trinity's spine. She knew that voice. That excitement. She knew it because it had escaped her own lips many, many times before. Radiance wasn't just a self-righteous prick. She was a dominant, and right now, she was riding a dominant high. Maybe the superheroine really was just a pervert.

"S-shut u-up!" Trinity repeated, unable to keep her voice even no matter how hard she tried.

"No," Radiance retorted merrily. "You need to hear that more often. 'No.' You always get your own way, don't you, Shimmer? Not anymore. Not with me."

Trinity couldn't quite figure out why that made her heart skip a beat.

"You know, you really do have a great ass for it," Radiance commented,

delivering another sharp slap to one of Trinity's buttocks. "Speaking from experience. I wish you could see yourself. I'll make sure you get a good look in the mirror afterwards. You're turning nice and red. It's gorgeous."

Somehow, that made Trinity blush harder than anything before. She wanted to protest, but she couldn't find the words. It wasn't fair. What were you supposed to say to something like *that*?

"Not such a loudmouth now, huh?" Radiance paused for a few moments, and Trinity noticed the great heroine was breathing hard. From exertion? Or... "It looks like I was right. Punishment isn't good enough. Not for the likes of you. You need *humiliation*. You need someone to come and make you feel small for a change."

Her words made Trinity shiver. Radiance *understood*. She did feel small. She felt humiliated. She felt helpless. And mixed in with all those other feelings was a faint, but growing, wish: she was starting to wish she'd just stayed home that day.

"I want you to remember this moment," Radiance continued. "I want you to think about it every time you even so much as consider using your powers on some innocent, upstanding civilian. I want you to know that this is going to be the cost. You won't just have to deal with the law. You'll be dealing with me, even if it means I have to put you over my knee like a disobedient child. Understood?"

Red. Everything was red. Trinity was seeing red. She was furious, she was weak, she was so humiliated. Her ass was red and raw from the spanking. And she couldn't *think*. That was the worst part. She couldn't compose her thoughts. She couldn't spit out so much as a single sentence. Whenever she got close, Radiance's hand was spanking her ass again, leaving her thoughts in turmoil and her mouth doing nothing but spouting pathetic groans. She couldn't resist. There was nothing she could do. Why couldn't she at least snarl and growl and say 'fuck you'? What was happening to her?

And then she noticed it.

She was wet.

Mercifully, Radiance hadn't seen the distinct, wet stain on her inner thighs. Trinity was keeping her thighs firmly pressed together, and it was only then that she realized it wasn't just her ass that was burning red-hot. It was her pussy. When Radiance spanked her, it was like a little electric shock connected her ass to her pussy, making every part of her shiver and forcing all the air out of her lungs. She couldn't tell if it was pleasure or pain. It felt like both. But she knew that whenever it happened, she couldn't help but clench her thighs together tighter, and even that stimulation was driving her absolutely wild. She couldn't control that either, no matter how hard she tried. It was a reflex.

Radiance was spanking her. And she was getting off on it.

Trinity started shaking her head madly. No. No, no, no. This couldn't be

happening. This wasn't happening. There was no way. She wasn't... she wasn't like that! Trinity liked being the one in control. She always had. That was the *point*. Getting to win. Getting to have her way with someone. Her powers were perfect for it, and even when she didn't use them, she was good at topping. There was such a deep, primal satisfaction that came from seeing someone else utterly helpless and bent to her will, be it with mind control, rope, or anything else. No other pleasure had ever compared to that.

Until now.

One of Trinity's hands immediately flew to that damned golden chain around her neck, pawing at it ineffectually, hands shaking from the intensity of what she was feeling. What the hell was Radiance doing to her? She'd thought that Radiance's power was merely to compel obedience. Clearly, it was something much, much worse. Radiance was messing with her head somehow. Forcing her to enjoy this treatment. Turning her into some kind of submissive. The thought made Trinity's stomach tie itself in knots.

No. No way. She had to get out of here. She had to.

But she couldn't.

"What's the matter?" Radiance asked smugly, as Trinity started to thrash. "Had enough? Hurts, doesn't it? Well, too bad. This is about teaching you a lesson. Take your medicine, Shimmer."

And the spanks kept coming.

Breathing hard though she was, Radiance showed no signs of tiring or relenting. She was merciless. The tireless heroine of justice just kept raining down blows on Trinity's ass. For the subdued supervillain, it was quickly becoming a very different kind of torture. Suddenly, she was more than happy to moan and whimper, no matter how much amusement Radiance took from it, just as long as her moans didn't come out needy and desperate. She couldn't let Radiance know how her body was responding. She couldn't. She was sure now that Radiance was doing something to mess with her head, but she would never give her the satisfaction of knowing it had worked. As helpless as she was, she could still put up that much resistance.

It wasn't easy, though. Each spank made it harder and harder for her to hold onto even the tiniest shred of dignity. It took all of Trinity's strength not to throw up her hands in surrender and start grinding herself into Radiance's lap. Only the thought of the twisted, sadistic look of glee that was sure to appear on her rival's face held her back. She couldn't stand that. She'd sooner die. But still, it was hard. She was used to being the one in control. No-one had ever treated her like this before. Superheroes didn't have a lot of respect for villains, as a rule, but they usually still afforded them a certain level of dignity in defeat. Not anymore, apparently.

"S-stop!" Trinity whined. "Just stop already!"

"Begging?" Radiance asked coolly. "That's good."

"I... I'm not..." Trinity abandoned her denial once she realized how laughable it would sound. "Y-you've made your point! You... what are you even... what do you want from me?"

She hated how high-pitched and desperate her voice sounded, and she hated even more that Radiance dared to laugh at her for it. At least the superhero didn't seem to understand exactly *why* she sounded so desperate. "So you can give it to me?" Radiance mocked. "Is that where you're at, Shimmer? You'll give me whatever I want?"

"F-fuck you!" Trinity howled, as Radiance spanked her again, pushing her dangerously close to the edge. She couldn't let go of that little kernel of resistance, no matter what cost her. She was just going to try and figure out some way to hold on.

But why did it feel so fucking good?

Trinity couldn't stop wracking her brains, trying to figure that out. It must have been something Radiance had done. But what? Radiance hadn't told her it would feel good. She wasn't even sure if Radiance could tell people what to feel, or just what to do. Was it simply an effect of her chain? Something it did to people all the time? Then, why had it never made Trinity feel this way before? It didn't make sense. None of it made sense. Trinity didn't like being spanked. She didn't like being stripped and made to kneel. She liked being in control. She always had.

She knew that all her internal, mental gymnastics didn't matter at all, compared to the fact that she was quickly approaching an incredible, masochistic orgasm.

Smack.

Each spank now felt as intense as a thunderstorm. Radiance wasn't punishing her any harder than before. It was simply that Trinity's ass had become incredibly tender and sensitive, and her body was primed in torturous anticipation of each blow.

Smack.

Trinity squeezed her thighs together reflexively, shivering at how wet they felt. Even that tiny bit of direct stimulation had her tingling everywhere. She'd never felt so sensitive. Fuck.

Smack.

Trinity moaned. She'd long since given up trying to contain her voice, and even on being embarrassed about it. She was way past that now, just as she was way past trying not to squirm pathetically in Radiance's lap. There was only one thought on her mind. One single piece of dignity she was trying to preserve. Don't cum. Don't cum. Don't cum. Don't c-

Smack.

The red she saw each time Radiance spanked her was rapidly fading to white. Trinity caught herself biting her lip, and made herself stop. She didn't want to look like some kind of pouting, blushing submissive. She wasn't a masochist, damn it! She just... she needed Radiance to stop for a moment. Just a moment. She needed to catch her breath. Recover her composure. Yes, that was really all she-

Smack.

Fuck. Fuck. Every time Radiance's palm connected with her ass, her mind melted into a puddle. All her thoughts before that moment ceased to matter. All that mattered, all of a sudden, was the white-hot pleasure-pain currently roaring through her, making her cheeks burn with shame at how hard it made her cunt drip. It wasn't fair. It wasn't-

Smack.

Why wouldn't Radiance just stop? Why did she have to be so relentless? Why did it have to make Trinity feel so good?

Smack.

Smack.

Smack.

More.

The moment that thought, that craving, crossed Trinity's mind, she wanted to scream. Not like this. She couldn't let her body betray her like this. But she couldn't seem to help it, either. She was so close. So fucking close. All it would take is a little more. The helpless, humiliated supervillain could feel the dawning eclipse of pleasure in her mind, and she knew, somehow she knew, nothing else would even come close. She'd never felt anything like this.

And it was so fucking close.

Smack.

What if she just let go? What if she just stopped trying to fight it?

Smack.

Fuck. She might not have a choice. Her body needed this. She needed this.

Smack.

Fuck. Fuckfuckfuck.

Smack.

So close. Just a little more.

Smack.

Yes! Yes. Now, Trinity's moans really were coming out like screams. She didn't care. It felt so good. She was so close. Just a little more. Just one more. Just-

"I think that's enough."

Trinity turned her head dumbly, Radiance's voice only slowly penetrating the thick, masochistic mental fog that had descended around her. Enough? But she was so close...

"W-wha?" she babbled.

"You've had enough," Radiance said, slowly catching her breath. "I can tell. I'm trying to punish you, Shimmer. Not break you."

Trinity looked away again. More even than she hated Radiance, she hated how disappointed she felt in that moment. She cursed her pussy for being so damn sensitive. Traitor.

"So," Radiance continued, levelly. There was something in her eyes that might have been guilt, or concern. "Learn your lesson yet."

It took Trinity a long time to compose her answer. She put a great deal of thought into it, and made it as eloquent as she could muster.

“Go fuck yourself,” she spat.

Radiance sighed and cursed under her breath, eyes hardening once more. She stood up abruptly, tipping Trinity out of her lap and leaving the supervillain to collapse into a pile on the ground.

“Then, I guess you and I are in for a very long night.”

Chapter 4

Trinity's cheeks remained burning hot, even as she made the shower she was taking as cold as she could bear. She wasn't sure if Radiance ordering her to take a shower counted as a kindness or not. On the one hand, after the trials of the day and the rough treatment she had just received, she was grateful for the opportunity to wash off all of her accumulated dirt, grime, sweat and other stickiness. On the other hand, though, the bathroom of Radiance's safehouse didn't have a door. The superhero could still see her naked. And without any privacy, Trinity wasn't going to have the chance to touch herself and work off some of the miserable frustration Radiance had inflicted on her.

The memory of what had happened was as firmly seared into her head as it possibly could have been, and still, the captured supervillain had trouble convincing herself this wasn't all some kind of deeply twisted, horrifying wet dream. The knowledge that she'd never fantasize about a self-righteous prig like Radiance - no matter how hot her muscles were - was just about the only thing keeping her tethered to reality.

But what the hell was she supposed to do when *this* was her reality?

A superhero had swooped in to interrupt her heist, kidnapped her, taken

her to a safehouse, and then spanked her ass until it was bright red, all as some kind of weird, perverse punishment. Trinity's ass was still stinging from the beating, and she was sure it wouldn't be long until she was sporting some mean-looking bruises. But that wasn't the point. Trinity had taken some licks before. She could deal. The real problem was the fact that she'd been intensely, disgracefully turned on by the whole experience.

The only saving grace Trinity could look to was the fact that she'd, just barely, managed to hold herself back from very, very audibly cumming all over Radiance's lap. If that had happened, Trinity's heart might have stopped from shame alone, but by a stroke of good fortune, Radiance had relented just in time, and had mistaken the wetness on her thighs for sweat. Thanks to her denied orgasm, though, Trinity's pussy was aching just as much as her butt. The only thing harder to handle was the pressing, alarming question of *why* she'd been so turned on by being spanked.

Trinity could only think of one answer to that, and it was the golden, mind-controlling chain Radiance could manifest with her powers. She wasn't sure how it worked just yet, since as far as anybody knew, all it did was compel obedience, not pleasure. But clearly it had been doing more than that to the captured supervillain, and Trinity was going to figure out how to deal with the wretched thing if she wanted to get out of this in one piece - physically or mentally.

She was a little offended, though, that Radiance hadn't seen fit to keep her shackled as she showered. The superhero didn't seem to be keeping much of

an eye on her either, and that was doubly insulting. Firstly, it seemed like Radiance didn't really respect Trinity's ability to make some kind of miraculous escape. And secondly, well... Trinity knew she didn't have the same kind of Olympic-standard body as Radiance, but she fancied herself good to look at. And Radiance was a dyke, famously. Surely her tits were worth a peak.

Not that she wanted Radiance to think she was hot, of course. It was just the principle of the thing.

After a few more minutes spent washing herself under aggressively cold water in Radiance's spartan bathroom, Trinity got out of the shower and started drying herself with the nearest towel, trying to ignore how strongly her captor's scent was clinging to it. As soon as she was no longer dripping, she put her pants and t-shirt back on. Free of Radiance's mind control, she could at least do that much, and it made her feel better right away. Trinity hated feeling exposed.

"So, what now?" Trinity asked as she stepped out of the bathroom, drying her hair and trying to sound as confident and carefree as she could. "The rack? Do I get pelted with tomatoes? Any more totally fucked up and barbaric punishments you wanna-"

She looked up, and her lips froze at what she saw.

Radiance had just finished getting changed.

This, for Trinity, was earth-shattering. Epochal. Apocalyptic.

She'd only ever seen Radiance one way before. As far as she knew, so had everyone else. Whether she was in the flesh or on TV, she always looked just the same, in that obnoxiously-heroic white and gold costume of hers.

And now, here she was, standing there in jeans, Doc Martens, a tank top and a leather jacket. Like it was nothing.

The image simply didn't fit. There was something unthinkable about it. It felt silly, now that Trinity thought about it this way, but it was kind of like seeing your middle school teacher out at the mall. Just like your middle school teacher, Radiance wasn't supposed to be a *person*. She was a demigoddess. An ideal. She lived, ate and slept in her costume, mask and all. It was impossible to imagine Radiance any other way.

Casual clothes really did make her look unrecognizably different. Like this, she could have been anyone. Well, not anymore, maybe. She was still upwards of six feet tall, and muscular enough to turn every lesbian head in Future City. But still, no-one would have taken her for Radiance. The lack of wings helped with that, of course. Radiance's signature angelic, feathered pinions had vanished into thin air somehow. But it was the mask, most of all. The absence of a simple domino mask revealed all kinds of tiny lines and wrinkles around her eyes. They made her look so much less mythical. So much more human.

But she was still the superheroine who had taken Trinity captive and

humiliated her. Trinity wasn't about to forget that anytime soon.

"What?" Radiance asked ruefully, once she caught Trinity staring. "Do I really look that weird out of my costume?"

"It's not that," Trinity lied, averting her gaze. "Just surprised you'd show me your face. And where are the wings? Do they come off?"

"They appear and disappear. And I think I've been pretty clear about the fact you're not going to just walk out of this like nothing happened," Radiance told her, voice even. "By the time we're through, you're not going to be telling anyone any of my secrets."

"Yeah, yeah, whatever you say," Trinity retorted sarcastically, snorting. But she couldn't stop a chill running down her spine. Radiance had already gone much further than she ever would have guessed. Her bruised ass was proof of that.

"Speaking of which," Radiance continued smoothly, as if Trinity hadn't said anything. "That's long enough, I think."

She held up her hand, and with a flash of golden light, a long, coiled chain appeared, wrapped around her palm. She offered it towards Trinity, who winced reflexively.

"Is that really necessary?"

“What, because I was born yesterday? Yes. It’s necessary.” Radiance rolled her eyes.

Trinity sighed and slumped, extended her arms out to her sighs. “Fine. Go ahead. Not like I can stop you.”

Radiance smirked. “What? Not going to kneel so I can collar you, like I made you do before?”

At that, Trinity snapped, just a little. “Oh, go fuck yourself! I know you’ve decided I’m the scum of the Earth or something, don’t I still get to keep a tiny scrap of dignity? Just a little?”

“You don’t deserve it. Not after what you did.” But then the smirk fell from Radiance’s face, and to Trinity’s surprise, the superheroine looked away. “But. Fine.”

With her eyes cast slightly aside, she stepped towards Trinity and carefully fastened her magical collar around the villain’s neck. Trinity shivered when she felt Radiance’s fingertips graze her skin, and shuddered when the end of Radiance’s golden chain melted into itself, forming an unbreakable loop around her neck.

“S-so,” Trinity asked as Radiance stepped back. “What’s with the casual getup?”

“What?” Radiance asked, raising an eyebrow. “Can’t a superheroine get dressed down, once in a while?”

Trinity crossed her arms, unimpressed. “No.”

“I guess not.” Radiance laughed. “Well, I was thinking: clearly, you need a different form of punishment.”

Trinity’s mood curdled even further at the prospect of further torment. Especially if it made her react anything like how the spanking had. “Oh.”

“It seems like you and your pride don’t care much about pain. Or about how you look in front of me.” That wasn’t exactly true, but Trinity wasn’t about to tell Radiance. “So I was thinking something a little more public might prove more effective.”

Fuck. Trinity’s stomach was tying itself into knots. She wasn’t a huge fan of being the center of attention in public. Usually, her power was good for avoiding that. “Please don’t tell me I was right about the tomato-pelting.”

That got a genuine giggle out of the statuesque superhero. “Not quite. I had something less messy in mind.”

“Then what?”

The absurdity of Radiance's answer should have made her laugh, but instead, the hero's sinister smile sent a chill down her spine. "Put your jacket on. We're going on a date."

Twenty minutes, the pair of them were stood outside a lesbian bar, and Trinity was staring at Radiance with a deeply suspicious look on her face. She couldn't believe they were outside, let alone going out for a good time. Especially with Radiance dressed the way she was. There had to be some kind of trick. But for the life of her, she couldn't yet see it.

"So," Radiance said patiently. "One more time. What are the rules? Tell me."

Instantly, Trinity was hit with that now-familiar, gnawing, shivering compulsion to obey. The fact that Radiance's chain was out of sight didn't make it feel like any less of a violation. Radiance had made her slip it underneath her jacket, so that it ran from the collar down the back of her neck and out one of her sleeves, and into Radiance's waiting hand. It was a cute idea, almost. Trinity would have been a big fan of it, for anyone but her. If the two of them held hands - as Radiance had rudely insisted on - the chain disappeared up the sleeve of her own jacket, and was all but invisible as anything more than a slightly gaudy item of gold jewelry around Trinity's neck.

Trinity bristled at the very thought. Gold didn't suit her one bit. Too gaudy.

"One," she began tiredly, holding up fingers as she counted off. "No using my powers. Two, no trying to run. Three, no violence. Four, no yelling, screaming, or being generally obnoxious. Five, no telling anyone who we are, or what's going on. And six, follow your lead."

"Good!" Radiance said brightly, like she was praising a pet puppy. "I'm glad you remember."

Radiance had issued each one of those rules as commands before they left her safehouse. Trinity had already tried to break each and every one of them on the walk over. It wasn't happening.

"It's bullshit, if you ask me," Trinity grumbled mutinously, as Radiance led her inside. "I mean, 'no being obnoxious?' What kind of rule is that? It's so open to interpretation. Dumb as hell."

"You're just pissed it works," Radiance replied, distracted, as she started looking for a place to sit.

The dyke bar was dark and fairly dingy, but nonetheless impressively spacious. Outside, there had been little but a name and a sign advertising the intended clientele, and inside, there was none of the downtown glitz and glamour Trinity had been expecting from a place Radiance would take her to.

Despite the small storefront, the bar extended back a long way into the building, and there were only a few women there, in small groups of two or three, or even drinking alone. Begrudgingly, Trinity admitted to herself that it was her kind of place. This was exactly the kind of bar she headed to, whenever she was looking to unwind, and maybe hook up with a girl. She felt at home there - or at least she would have done, if not for the damn chain around her neck.

“Here,” Radiance said, gesturing to a couple of stools at the bar.

Trinity perched on one next to Radiance without quarrel, forced to stay on Radiance’s left side by the heroine’s enchanted collar and leash. She was still inspecting their surroundings, searching for any possible route to a quick escape, when the butch-looking bartender approached them.

“Hey,” she said, nodding to Radiance. “The usual?”

Radiance just nodded, while Trinity’s eyebrows shot into the stratosphere. The *usual*? Was Radiance actually a regular here?

“And for your, uh, friend?”

Trinity was about to ask for as many fingers of whiskey as the bar had to hand, when Radiance answered for her: “She doesn’t drink.”

The villain flashed her captor another mutinous look, but with the collar’s

compulsion itching at the back of her neck, she had little choice but to follow Radiance's lead. She nodded.

"Sure." The barkeeper headed off to grab Radiance's drink, and Trinity rounded on Radiance with urgent curiosity.

"This?" she spluttered. "*This* dive is Future City's greatest superhero's favorite haunt? Fuck, what a scoop! You really come here often?"

Radiance seemed distinctly irked by the question. "Yes. I know you don't care about other people, Shimmer, but they need to relax too. Me included."

"Jeez, I was just asking," Trinity sulked. A few long, awkward, silent moments passed. Then: "So, uh, I'm not really seeing the 'punishment' part of this whole deal."

"You will," Radiance told her grimly, as the bartender returned with her drink - a tall beer.

"What's that supposed to mean?" Trinity pressed in hushed tones. "C'mon. This is a bar. I mean, seriously, what could even-"

"Woah!" came a loud, brash, feminine voice from across the room. "Now, isn't this a surprise? I never thought I'd see the day. This is usually where you come to find girls, not the place you bring one."

Trinity turned her head sharply. At one of the tables, some distance away, a group of three women were looking and waving in their direction. As unbelievable as it was, they clearly recognized Radiance, who raised her beer and nodded in their direction to acknowledge them.

“Friends of yours?” Trinity asked incredulously, as they rose from their seats and headed towards the pair.

“I wouldn’t go that far,” Radiance replied. “They’re the punishment.”

Trinity frowned. She didn’t like the sound of that one bit.

“Going soft, Violet?” teased one of the women, a tall redhead in a punk jacket. “Finally got yourself a steady thing going?”

Violet? Trinity’s eyes went wide. “Not my real name, idiot,” Radiance hissed to her quietly.

“Never thought I’d see the day,” commented one of the other women, laughing. “She must really be something special.”

Trinity blinked when she realized they were talking about her.

“Oh, um, no,” Trinity said quickly, blushing furiously. “We’re not-”

“Special?” Radiance said to her friends coolly, interrupting the villain. “I

wouldn't go that far. But she was fun, and really eager to stick around. You know the type."

As the rest of the group laughed, Trinity's cheeks burned so hot she could have sworn steam was about to come venting out of her ears. She couldn't believe Radiance was trying this. It was childish. Pathetic. And totally, totally humiliating. Trinity opened her mouth indignantly, ready to chew Radiance out.

And then discovered she couldn't say a word.

It took a moment for the penny to drop. It was that fucking rule again. *Follow my lead.* She had to go along with this. She didn't have a choice.

"Isn't that right, babe?" Radiance said to her, smirking knowingly.

Trinity nodded miserably, before any sound or word of agreement could force its way past her lips.

Radiance's friends - or her bar buddies, or whatever they were - all seemed to mistake her silence and flushed cheeks for pleased embarrassment, rather than humiliated fury. One of them, the punk-looking redhead, reached over to clap her on the back.

"You're a lucky one," she laughed. "The name's Ruby, by the way. You know, she never usually bothers with the same girl twice," she added, indicating

Radiance. "She's a real playboy."

Now, it was Radiance's turn to look uncomfortable. Eager to even the score, Trinity looked over at her and arched an eyebrow. "Is that right?" she asked. "Babe?"

Infuriatingly, Radiance seemed to have no trouble salvaging her composure. She reached out to Trinity and brushed the back of her hand along her cheek in a devastating caress. "Don't worry your pretty head about it," she told her sweetly.

That was the end of Trinity's fun.

Once again, the other women mistook Trinity's reaction. They seemed to think she was squirming, flustered, rather than shaking with impotent, petulant rage.

"So, what makes this one so special?" asked one of the other women, peering at Trinity intently. "Did we finally find your type, Vi?"

"You're welcome to see for yourself, Daisy," Radiance replied. "She's a real good time, after all. What kind of buddy would I be if I didn't share?"

The other women all wolf-whistled appreciatively, as Trinity flashed Radiance an outraged, incredulous glare. Radiance ignored it.

“I didn’t realize it was that kind of party,” Daisy - a blonde with arched cheekbones, wearing a long sundress - quipped. “But who am I to refuse an invitation?”

Shivers ran down Trinity’s spine when Daisy licked her lips, and rested a hand on Trinity’s shoulder.

Suddenly, the other two women were staring at Trinity hungrily too. Trinity’s stomach was doing loops. *This* was Radiance’s idea of punishment? Bringing her to a quiet bar to hang out with a bunch of horny lesbians? That could have passed for a fun Friday night, most weeks. Only... only Trinity wasn’t used to being the party favor. She was used to being the one orchestrating the fun. She bristled at the way these girls looked at her, but she couldn’t say a thing. Radiance’s golden chain was keeping her just as silenced as if she’d had a gag in her mouth. No, worse. If she’d been gagged, she could have at least whined and growled and shook her head. Instead, she could only sit there, meekly and uselessly, and let it all happen.

Just like being spanked, it was infuriating and humiliating in equal measure.

And just like being spanked, it was making her wildly, wildly turned on.

Trinity just couldn’t help it. Her body was responding against her wishes. The searing heat in her cheeks was, slowly but surely, spreading throughout her body, and she found herself hyperaware of the delicate sensation of

Daisy's long fingernails resting on her shoulder. Each the pretty, looming femme squeezed or relaxed her grip a little, Trinity found herself shivering.

No. Not like this. Not again. Trinity tried as hard as she could to fend off the arousal, to snap herself out of this strange mood. But it was no use. She couldn't think, not with all these undeniably-attractive women salivating over her like a piece of meat. If she could only have a moment to collect herself... but the fallen supervillain knew that wish was just as futile as it had been when she was bent over Radiance's lap. It wasn't going to happen. The superhero had made it very, very clear that she wasn't in the mood to show mercy.

"She's pretty," one of the other women said thoughtfully. "Seems shy, though. Not the kind of girl you'd find cruising around here. Where did you pick this one up?" She looked at Radiance.

"That's a long story, Casey."

"Maybe she likes the shy types," put in Ruby, smirking. "That what really gets you going, Vi?"

Radiance shrugged, smiling knowingly. "Who knows? Though, trust me, she's not as shy as she looks. Not where it counts, at least."

That comment, accompanied by a wink, brought forth another chorus of raucous laughter. Trinity clasped her hands together, flushed and breathless,

trying to shrink further into her seat. It was too much. They were looking at *her*. Laughing at *her*. She felt like some kind of prized pet, being shown off and expected to do tricks. And the worst part was that she would, if Radiance told her to. She didn't have a choice. Trinity, despite her choice of occupation, had never much liked being the star of the show. One virtue of her power was that it made it effortless to step out of the spotlight, if she so chose. She could make people ignore her, or forget all about her. But now, there was no escape.

It was driving her crazy.

"So," Daisy said, licking her lips again. "When you say we can see for ourselves..."

"Well, taking into account that we're in public..." Radiance mused, looking around. "Pretty much whatever you feel like you can get away with."

Trinity's eyes grew wider still.

"She's the kinky type," Radiance explained, looking to Trinity. "Aren't you?"

Trinity let out a pleading little whine as Radiance's mind control took hold, and she was forced to nod mechanically in agreement.

"Oh, well, in that case," Daisy purred, drawing closer. "Why don't we-"

"Wait," interrupted Casey, a short, dark-skinned woman with impeccable,

elaborate eye makeup. "Before we get started on anything too wild, uh... what's her name, Vi?"

The other women had the decency to look a little embarrassed they hadn't thought to ask.

"She's..." Radiance was caught completely off-guard by the question, and Trinity took no small amount of pleasure in seeing her off-balance, for once. "It's... um..." She turned to Trinity. "What's your name? Tell me."

Rose face-palmed. "Wow, Violet. Wow."

Despite Radiance's discomfort, it was Trinity who found herself sweating. She'd really been hoping Radiance wouldn't learn her real name. She held back as long as she could, but the superhero had given her a command, and she could not disobey. Eventually, her breath forced its way out of her throat.

"T-Trinity."

Radiance looked at her strangely.

"Well, Trinity," Daisy said briskly, taking her hand away from Trinity's shoulder. "I think I need to go, ah, freshen up for a few minutes. I'll let Ruby and Casey get you nice and warmed up for me."

"How kind," Casey remarked as Daisy sauntered away towards the back of

the bar, rolling her eyes.

At first, Trinity was grateful for the momentary respite offered by the absence of the looming, handsy femme. But it wasn't to last. As soon as Daisy was gone, Ruby and Casey drew closer, pressing in on Trinity from either still. Still sitting on a bar stool, her hand held in Radiance's, they towered over her, and Trinity found herself blushing anew as she struggled not to stare at their chests. Damn it! Why did Radiance's power have to put her in such a fucked-up horny mood?

"Well, cute thing," Ruby said, her voice husky. "You're still looking like a deer in headlights. But you also seem like you're really into this. And, well, we can't exactly leave you cold for Daisy, now, can we?"

And with that, she reached out to rest a hand intimately on Trinity's hip.

Trinity's back immediately arched at the touch, and shivers raced across her whole body. She'd been trying to brace herself for it, but it had made no difference. Her body was so damn sensitive. Her nerves had been on edge ever since they'd entered the bar; now even this light, gentle groping was more than she could handle.

It only got worse once Casey joined in too. She did nothing more than start to toy with Trinity's hair, twirling around her fingers and running the tips of her nails across the villain's scalp, but even that had Trinity struggling for breath. She was squirming for real now, and the two women lavishing

attention on her were clearly loving it.

“You really weren’t kidding, huh?” Ruby remarked, in Radiance’s direction. “A real slut for getting felt up in public.”

Those words stung as hard and harsh as any slap. Trinity tried to muster some kind of withering retort, but all that came out was a moan that sounded way, way too needy for her liking. Before she could make another attempt, Radiance closed the door on her dignity.

“Absolutely,” Radiance nodded, smirking still. Trinity would have given anything to wipe the smirk off her face. “She loves this. Don’t you. Trinity?”

To the supervillain, it felt almost as if the golden chain around her wrist went taught as the compulsion to follow Radiance’s lead settled over her. Only, this time, it got the better of her before she could manage a nod.

“Y-yes!” Trinity whined, and then gasped at herself. She sounded just like every mind-controlled slut she’d ever brainwashed into something degrading and fun.

Casey laughed. “Not so shy when she gets in the mood, I guess. Just like you said.”

The black woman’s hand started traveling down, fingertips grazing her neck, before she slipped it down the loose neck of Trinity’s top. Trinity let out

a humiliating yelp as she felt fingers teasing at her bra, threatening to reach deeper.

“Really cute, too,” Ruby mused. “Especially like this. She’s got some nice curves.”

The appreciation in the red-haired punk’s voice was plain, as she brushed Trinity’s jacket aside and started feeling over her torso. Her hand was growing less and less gentle, prodding and squeezing at Trinity’s soft body. It was all Trinity could do to try and keep her moans under wraps. She felt like a pet - no, like livestock, being poked and toyed with, entirely for the amusement of others. She felt like meat. It wasn’t fair. Not for her. It wasn’t meant to be this way! *She* was meant to be the one in control. *She* was meant to be the one who turned people into playthings. There *had* to be something she could do. There had to be!

But there wasn’t. She was powerless. She couldn’t protest, even if she managed to speak. Radiance had made sure of that. Trinity looked over at the source of her torment, slowly sipping her beer as she watched the spectacle her friends were making out of Trinity. The look in her eyes sent shivers down Trinity’s spine. She was enjoying it, that was obvious, but not in some kind of lewd, leering way. No, she was enjoying Trinity’s impotence. Her frustration. Her weakness. She was enjoying the pained, embarrassed blush in Trinity’s cheeks, and the helpless, pleading look on her face. To Radiance, this wasn’t about sex. It was about power and justice, And clearly, the superhero took great pleasure in both.

She wasn't the only one watching, too. It seemed like, in this bar, a public display like this was common enough that it didn't create too much fuss. But even so, as Trinity looked around, she could spot half a dozen or so other patrons glancing her way, most of them with amused smiles on their faces. That made it all so, so much worse. Her body was hotter than ever, and she couldn't deny that most of the heat was concentrated between her legs.

"Yeah," Casey said slowly, appreciation audible in her voice. "Yeah, I can see why you like this one. I bet this nice, curvy body looks great in something nice and skimpy."

Trinity yelped. She didn't want Radiance getting any ideas.

"Well, if you want to see more of her, you're welcome to start taking things off," Radiance replied coolly.

At that, Trinity was seeing stars. They wouldn't. Would they? No. No, no, no. She couldn't handle that. She couldn't. She was already so goddamn horny. So fucking sensitive. Just the thought of all those pairs of eyes roaming across her naked body was enough to make her feel like she was going to explode. Surely Radiance was just joking. Surely-

"Gladly," Ruby said, and started to lift the hem of Trinity's top.

Trinity immediately started to panic. Fuck. This was happening. This was

actually happening. She had to make it stop. She had to lash out, swear, use her power - anything. But she couldn't. Radiance's chain was keeping her bound and passive, just as if it was wrapped tight around her whole body. There was nothing she could do. Ruby was going to take off her top, and Casey was going to take off her bra, and then the two of them would-

"I-I need to go to the bathroom!" Trinity blurted out.

Casey and Ruby both paused, and then both laughed.

"You're not trying to get away from us now, are you?" Casey teased.

"Or work off any tension where we can't watch?" Ruby suggested.

Trinity did her best to ignore them, as much as their taunts made her squirm. She was only looking at Radiance. The superhero's eyes were hard.

"P-please," Trinity whimpered, even though it killed her to beg. Finally, Radiance sighed.

"Fine."

Radiance stood, and Trinity was so surprised, she almost fell as she too lurched to her feet. She ended up reaching out to Radiance to steady herself, which was somehow just as humiliating as everything that had just happened.

“She needs you to escort her?” Casey asked, raising an eyebrow.

At that, Radiance lifted her sleeve and raised a hand, exposing the chain connecting them. For a moment, Trinity was shocked - but then she realized that Casey and Ruby were both merely giggling, eyes uncomprehending.

“Kinky,” Ruby whistled. “Well, hurry back, cute thing.”

Radiance swiftly led Trinity to the back of the bar, to the door for the women’s bathroom. At first, it seemed as if she was about to follow Trinity inside, so the villain rounded on her.

“Come on,” she pleaded. “Can’t you let me get one moment out of sight?”

The superhero considered the matter for a moment, before sighing.

“Very well,” she replied, and mercifully, let the chain unravel from Trinity’s wrist. “But if you’re in there too long, trust me, I will come in and get you.”

“Oh, fuck, thank you,” Trinity breathed, her gratitude all too genuine. Before her tormentor could say another word, she skipped into the bathroom, and headed for one of the stalls.

In truth, she didn’t have a plan. She hadn’t been able to think that far ahead. But at least, finally, she could get a moment alone. That was the first step. Just a couple of minutes, to collect herself and think. That was sure to help. Or at

least, it would stop her from making a humiliated slut of herself when she went back out there.

Trinity was so focused on her efforts to calm herself and get her breathing under control, she didn't even notice the sound of the stall door next to her swinging open. Which was why she was very, very startled when she heard a familiar voice.

"Hey there," whispered Daisy suggestively. "Mind if I join you?"

Mind racing, the supervillain opened the door. Daisy swiftly stepped inside with her, pressing her body close up against Trinity's.

"I have to be honest," Daisy purred. "I never liked sharing. I'm sure Vi's waiting, but how about you and me have some fun for a little while, right here? Just the two of us?"

Trinity's eyes went wide. She'd forgotten about Daisy - and so too, it seemed, had Radiance. This changed everything. She hadn't been expecting an opportunity like this to fall into her lap. But she was certainly going to take advantage of it.

"Sounds good to me," Trinity replied, keeping her voice down to make sure Radiance wouldn't hear. She lifted her hand, and the sight of purple, mind-controlling sparks once again flitting between her fingertips made her feel better than she ever could have imagined.

She had a plan now. Oh, yes.

Chapter 5

“How about you and me have some fun for a little while, right here? Just the two of us?”

It was all Trinity could do to stop herself delivering the hyena-like villain laugh she had sometimes practiced in front of a mirror. She couldn't believe her luck. The captured supervillain had been wracking her brains to come up with some kind of escape plan, and here, one had just fallen into her lap - all thanks to the miraculously foolish horniness of one woman.

Trinity never would have guessed that salvation would have come to her in a bathroom cubicle in a dyke bar, or that the angel of her deliverance would have been Daisy, a tall blonde with wandering hands and a lecherous stare. Or perhaps she had. She'd always hoped that if she met an angel, they'd have high, handsome cheekbones and great tits. After a few moments, she made herself stop staring at them. This still wasn't a plan. Not yet. Just an opportunity. And she had minutes at the most to make use of it.

As Daisy advanced on her, hips swinging, smile dancing, Trinity wracked her brains harder than ever before. What was she actually going to *do*? How was she going to use Daisy? It wasn't like two on one would make it any fairer

of a fight. Not given Radiance's strength. She'd have to be a distraction, then. But how? However begrudgingly, Trinity had to give Radiance some credit. If something was obviously wrong, especially if it was distracting, she was sure to pick up on it right away. She couldn't doubt the superhero's instincts. It would have to be a distraction that didn't look like a distraction. A distraction that didn't look like it had anything to do with her at all.

Within seconds, Trinity seized on an idea. It sounded crazy. It *was* crazy. But the more she turned it over in her head, the more she started to grin like a wildcat. It was exactly her kind of crazy. And it just might work.

Grinning at Daisy, Trinity lifted her hand and let mind-warping purple sparks fly between her fingertips. God, it felt good to see that again. She had almost been scared to try, after feeling powerless for so long. But now that she could see and feel them once more, all her old, swaggering confidence was flooding back. Yeah. Oh yeah. She could do this.

"Sounds good to me," Trinity said, her voice as even as she could manage.

Her grin only grew wider when she saw an uncertain look pass over Daisy's face.

"What's that?" the tall femme asked. "Are you, like, some kind of-"

She trailed off into utter incoherence as Trinity pressed her fingertips to the poor girl's temple and hit her with it, full blast.

“Shut up,” Trinity told her, quietly but firmly. “No more talking.”

Instantly, Daisy was silent. She nodded; an odd twitching motion. This time, Trinity’s mind-controlling shimmer poured into her system, there was nothing slow or gradual about how her eyes turned purple. They flared bright all at once, the edges of her irises threatening to bleed out with bright violet as the woman was emptied of everything but the compulsion to obey. Trinity grimaced at the sight. Not her finest work. In all likelihood, Daisy would be seeing stars for weeks. But there was no helping it. Trinity didn’t have the time to be subtle.

Her power wasn’t like Radiance’s. Mind control came in all shapes and sizes. Trinity had made herself something of an expert on it, naturally. Radiance’s seemed to be all about rules. Giving people a command, and making sure that no matter what they wanted, they couldn’t disobey. Trinity’s power was, she liked to think, a little more subtle. She worked her way into people’s heads, rewiring their beliefs and desires, until doing whatever she wanted felt perfectly natural. There was always a certain amount of push and pull to it, as they struggled to integrate the new pieces Trinity added to their personality. It worked best with simple things, or if she had the time and the patience to slowly pull their mental house of cards apart and gradually fit everything back together around whatever she was inserting. It was far from an exact or perfect science.

But if she was desperate, instead of that, Trinity could form her power into

a sledgehammer and simply ram something into someone's head so deep and so hard they couldn't do or think or feel anything except what she made them.

"Daisy," Trinity began, and she immediately commanded the woman's full attention despite the vicious, mind-warping sparks coursing through her body and mind. "You're a dominant, right? A top. You like control. You like to be the one in charge."

Daisy nodded again, this time with frantic eagerness. Trinity was telling something she already knew, something she wanted to hear, and along with Trinity's shimmer, that left her bubbling with euphoria. That euphoria soon crashed back on itself like a wave, reinforcing everything, and soon Daisy was shaking and simmering with dominant urges. That was good. But Trinity was only just beginning.

"Yeah." Trinity pushed Daisy up against the wall of the cubicle. She was far too deep to resist, or even to notice. "You're hot shit, Daisy. You *love* being dominant. And everyone else loves it too. You make people feel so good. They crave it. They need it."

The tall femme's enchanted, purple eyes went wide with awe at her own swelling pride and magnificence. Trinity could easily imagine what was going through her head. The rawness of true self-esteem and ego was as intoxicating as any drug, and almost no-one ever had the opportunity to experience an utterly pure taste. There were always itching doubts, and buried insecurities. But Trinity's shimmer could smother all of those like they were nothing,

especially when she was forcing such a heavy dose of it into Daisy's head all at once.

"Yeah, good, that's it," Trinity encouraged, at the look of dawning, awestruck comprehension in her victim's eyes. "This is who you are. A *domme*. You're powerful. Commanding. You're in control. Always. That's what matters. That's *all* that matters."

Daisy was nodding, nodding, nodding like a metronome. But it wasn't an empty or automatic gesture. Trinity could sense her full, devoted agreement to each word the supervillain poured into her mind. Every poisoned, potent line that Trinity fed her was pounded deep into Daisy's consciousness and subconscious. She was picking apart the threads of Daisy's identity, seizing the one she wanted and magnifying it, while letting all the rest fade. Daisy was helpless against it. No-one - almost no-one - could resist her. Not once she really tried. Trinity had never been so blunt and forceful before. She'd never needed to. She felt like she was creating a monster, but maybe that was exactly what she needed.

"You understand, don't you?" Trinity kept it all flowing, words and shimmer both. She didn't want to give Daisy a single moment to catch her balance. She wanted the woman to tumble helplessly into her brainwashing. "You're the best. The strongest. You're *always* in charge. Who's more dominant than you?"

"N-n-no-one," Daisy panted. She sounded drunk, but her voice was overflowing with conviction. "Me. *Me*. I'm the- ah!"

She interrupted herself with a ragged moan as Trinity pressed her hand under the hem of Daisy's dress, running her fingertips against the tall woman's panties. They were already soaked. Thoughts of dominance had Daisy painfully aroused. That was good. In Trinity's experience, nothing was as potent as pleasure for reinforcing new ideas.

But that wasn't all. Trinity was turned on too. After all that Radiance had put her through, it felt *so good, so gratifying* to have power again. She needed to feel it. To revel in it, even if it was just for a few minutes. It was like a drug for her, one she'd been without for far too long. She wanted to see Daisy with that blissful, mind-fucked expression on her face, the one Trinity so loved giving people. She wanted to feel this powerful, confident dominant shuddering and slumping and clinging to Trinity for dear life as her mind rewrote itself according to the supervillain's desires. It was the ultimate pleasure. The ultimate trip. The ultimate-

"Hey! Sh- Trinity!" came an all-too-familiar voice, followed by a hard, rude knock at the bathroom door. "You better be out soon! I'm waiting. Don't make me come in and get you."

The reminder of her unfortunate circumstances brought Trinity, unfortunately, back down to reality. She didn't have time to indulge. The mere sound of Radiance's voice had the villain grinding her teeth. It did, at least, provide an ideal illustration. She jerked her head meaningfully towards the door.

“Hear her?” Trinity said to Daisy. “She’s a top too, isn’t she? A dominant.”

Daisy just nodded. She was too overwhelmed to speak unless Trinity made her.

“But,” Trinity continued, hand still at Daisy’s pussy. “Not like you. Right?”

“N-no!” Daisy moaned passionately, when she realized Trinity wanted an answer from her. Her eyes were almost nothing but purple now, and sparks danced under her skin. “I’m... the... b-best! Stronger... more d-dominant.”

“Good! Good.” Trinity nodded, and rewarded her victim by pulling her panties aside to rub her fingertips against the bare lips of her cunt. “But you need to prove it, don’t you? Everyone should know. Everyone should see. They have to see that you’re in control. Not her. Not Rad- I mean, Vi. You.”

Daisy was still nodding, and her eyes were wider than ever before. The look in them was different now, though. Through all the shimmering violet, Trinity could see something new. It was an absence, a need. Suddenly, the perfect, self-satisfied ego Trinity had given her was under threat of being undermined. She had something to prove. Something she needed to prove. It was already gnawing at her and eating her alive. Just like Trinity wanted.

“Do you know how to prove it?” Trinity let the question hang in the air, as Daisy twitched.

“H-how?” Daisy begged, and Trinity could see how much it chafed at her to beg, but she needed the answer even more than she needed her pride. “Tell me! How. How, how, how?”

“It’s easy,” Trinity assured her. She was starting to tire from the torrent of power she was pouring into Daisy’s mind. But she couldn’t stop. Not until it was through. “Especially for you. All you have to do is dominate her. Dominate Vi.”

Daisy went still for a moment as she contemplated the task Trinity had put before her. It wasn’t hard to see why. Radiance was indomitable. In combat, she seemed like a force of nature, and Trinity didn’t doubt that she was any different when she was cruising at dyke bars. But that was why Trinity was taking such pains to make sure Daisy was absolutely fearless and determined.

“You can do it,” Trinity told her firmly. “You *can* do it. You can seduce her. You can make her yours. Nothing will feel as good as that. Nothing, not ever. You crave it. You have to prove you’re better than her. You’ve seen her around. You know how she acts. How she flirts. How she fucks. You can use that. You can dominate her, Daisy.”

Daisy started nodding again, at first slowly, but then faster and faster. Trinity smiled.

“You’re so fucking turned on just thinking about it, Daisy,” Trinity

whispered. “Nothing gets you hotter. Picture her on her knees before you. Don’t you want that? I know you do. It’s yours. You just have to take it. Show me, Daisy. Show everyone what you can do.”

That was it, Trinity decided. Just a few more little suggestions, and her weapon was ready.

“That’s it!” Radiance cried out furiously from outside. “You’re going to regret whatever stupid prank you think you’re trying to-”

The superhero broke off when the bathroom door opened, and Trinity was standing right there. The villain made a big show of rolling her eyes and wearily offering herself for Radiance to cuff, hoping the sheen of arousal didn’t show too clearly on her forehead.

“Jeez,” Trinity complained. “Can’t a girl get two minutes to freshen up?”

Radiance said nothing, but her displeasure was plain to read on her face. She surreptitiously summoned her golden chain out of the air again, and deftly fastened it back just as it had been, around Trinity’s neck and under her clothes.

“Same rules as before,” Radiance told her sternly. “I know you know them. Don’t try anything.”

Trinity nodded and let Radiance lead her back out into the bar, and waited

for her weapon to appear.

Casey and Ruby were both still waiting for them at the bar, chatting to each other and looking bored. Once Trinity and Radiance returned, though, they brightened up considerably.

“Took you long enough!” Ruby exclaimed, smirking and leaning back on her bar stool. “What’s with the hold-up? You two getting busy without us?”

“Hardly,” Radiance replied coolly. “Don’t worry. She’s still fresh, and all yours.”

“Perfect,” Casey purred, taking Trinity by the arm and guiding her over.

Trinity felt suddenly timid, despite herself. After the dizzying, dominant headrush she’d just been blessed with, being under Radiance’s control once more was like the worst kind of ice-cold shower. She was keenly aware of her own powerlessness. All the tiresome rules Radiance had given her were lurking around in the corners of her brain, waiting to bite the moment she threatened to step out of line. Trinity hated it, and she hated the way it made her feel, all on-edge and hypersensitive. She was determined not to let Radiance’s sick brainwashing sink into her an inch deeper than she had to. Trinity had given Daisy a few last-minute instructions before leaving the bathroom, just so nothing seemed so suspicious. She hoped it wouldn’t be too long before her ace-in-the-hole dropped in.

“So, you’re all ready for us to have some fun.” Ruby pressed herself up to Trinity, fingertips already toying with the hem of the villain’s shirt. “That’s what I’m hearing, right?”

Bound by the obligation to ‘follow Radiance’s lead’, Trinity made herself give a small nod. Casey and Ruby both laughed at her shy, silent, nervous demeanor.

“God, she’s like a deer in headlights,” Ruby commented. “Yeah, Vi, I bet you had fun with this one. She probably never knew what hit her.”

That was kind of the understatement of the century, all things considered.

“For a minute, I figured you two were waiting for us to follow you out back,” Casey said. The black woman was already getting just as handsy as Ruby, her deep eyes, ringed by makeup that made them seem all the bigger and deeper, were shining with amusement. “I’m glad you weren’t. More fun out here, where we can get a nice audience going.”

Trinity threw a quick glance around the dyke bar. It had gathered a few more patrons in the time she’d been in the bathroom. The place was still far from crowded, but it was obvious that the spectacle of some public action was going to attract more than a few eyes. Now, though, Trinity could hope that she wouldn’t be at the center of it.

“We weren’t waiting,” Radiance told her. Now that they were back on

schedule, all her irritation and fury was once again submerged under ice-cool calm. “Like I told you, this one enjoys being watched. She loves the attention.”

There was nothing Trinity could say to that, so she just nodded again.

“Then let’s get going already,” Ruby said impatiently, leaning in to kiss Trinity’s neck. “Daisy wants to let us ‘warm her up’? Fine, she can miss out on some of the action.”

“Oh, I hardly think I’m missing out.”

All heads turned as Daisy made her entrance. Trinity took advantage of the moment to allow herself a smile. Daisy looked perfect. She hadn’t been wanting for confidence before, but now, it shone from her like the sun. There was a particular strut in her step that hadn’t been there until her visit to the bathroom, and everyone could sense it. She was turning heads as she moved through the bar, treating it like it was her own personal catwalk. Even Ruby and Casey looked impressed. Trinity couldn’t tell with Radiance, but the fact the hero was staring seemed like a good sign.

“You waited for me after all?” Daisy ran a hand through her hair as she reached the group. “How kind. You shouldn’t have. Really, you shouldn’t have. But if you’d like, I’d be more than happy to show you how it’s done.”

That absurd level of conceit should have grating, or perhaps simply laughable. It wasn’t. No-one was laughing at Daisy, just staring at her,

captivated. As prideful as her words were, they didn't feel like bragging. They felt like statements of fact. There was a kind of utter, self-assured serenity to Daisy's demeanor, and it was impossible not to get swept up in it. Trinity knew exactly what was running through the tall woman's head. The certain knowledge that she was the best, the strongest, the most dominant. The knowledge that she was in control.

"Well, uh..." Ruby glanced at Casey briefly, as if trying to judge from her whether this was a joke, and whether she should be laughing. "Hey, you're more than welcome to take first crack at Trinity, if you want."

"At her?"

Daisy looked straight at Trinity, and for a moment, the supervillain thought everything was going to fall apart. Daisy's veil of self-assurance slipped, and she went very still as an odd look of recognition and remembrance passed over her face. Trinity balled her hands into fists and prayed. She had made sure to erase Daisy's memory, naturally, but her mind control wasn't a perfect science. It left traces, and the brief, intense encounter they'd shared in the bathroom was difficult to forget. Daisy blinked like someone just waking up, and Trinity could have sworn she could see a thin but distinct shimmering, purple ring around her pupils.

But then, the moment passed like it had never been.

Daisy sniffed, and waved a dismissive hand. "Thanks, but no thanks."

Where's the fun in that? Oh, she's cute and all. But I don't need to take leftovers. Casey, Ruby, why don't you show her a good time? *We* have better things to do."

"We?" Radiance was looking bemused by Daisy's theatricality.

"You know," Daisy replied playfully, looking up at Radiance and grinning like that was exactly what she'd been waiting for. "You and me, Vi."

Radiance raised an eyebrow. "I'm not sure I see what you mean, Daisy."

"Come on," Daisy purred, drawing closer to the superhero. "What exactly were you going to do while the three of us were ravishing your little pet here? We both know sitting back and watching isn't your style. I wouldn't want you to get lonely, sitting on the sidelines all by yourself."

"There's a first time for everything," Radiance retorted, cool and calm as ever. "And I don't need anyone to hold my hand."

Daisy rested an elbow on the bar next to Radiance, leaning in close to her. Ruby and Casey had both fallen silent and were just watching, astonished. Everyone could sense what was going on. There was an energy in the air, like the two women were a pair of rival fencers stepping up to a duel. Shackled to Radiance, Trinity was mere inches away from each of them, and she could practically feel the heat coming off them.

“Of course not,” Daisy’s voice was low, sultry and flattering. “I know that better than anyone, believe me. I can’t remember a single night you’ve been here that you haven’t taken home a new piece of tail. Which makes me wonder... losing your taste for it, Vi?”

Radiance offered a thin smile, and laughed ruefully. “Daisy, what the hell are you talking about?”

“There’s no need to be shy about it.” Daisy made her voice soft, almost intimate, except that she was still managing to project it across the bar. A perfect stage whisper. “Everyone gets curious, right? Even you, for all your big, bad, tough-girl reputation. Ever thought about trying it out? Taking a dive on the other side of the slash?”

“No.”

Daisy brought her lips to within inches of Radiance’s ear. “Liar.”

That certainly got the domineering superhero’s hackles raised. She glanced sharply at Trinity, as if weighing something up. Trinity did her best to look timid and defeated. With Ruby and Casey flanking her on either side, it seemed to work. Radiance turned her attention back to Daisy, and Trinity could sense her stoking a furnace within her. She still looked calm enough, but she was wrapping the chain binding Trinity to her around her wrist to free both of her hands.

Perfect.

“Everyone gets curious, huh?” It was strange to hear Radiance sounding so like her superhero self, after watching her masquerade as a normal person for an evening. “Everyone. How would you know about that?”

Daisy shrugged, an easy, confident smirk on her face. “Experience. Never met someone I couldn’t get curious, with a little trying.”

“That includes you, then.” Radiance’s hands flexed.

“No,” Daisy corrected. “Not me.”

Radiance laughed a little. “Really. And what makes you so different?”

“Who knows?” Daisy shrugged again, and smiled wide enough to show teeth. “But, hey, someone’s gotta be the best, right?”

The way Radiance was resting against the bar still made her seem nonchalant, but after how many times they had crossed paths, Trinity had a sense of when something was pissing Radiance off. “And that’s you?”

“Yes.” Daisy’s eyes were unnaturally wide, and blazing with self-assurance.

Again, if anyone else had said it, it would have sounded obnoxious and ridiculous. But Daisy, in her current state of mind, carried it off effortlessly.

She made it feel true. Everyone could tell, although it was certainly hitting Trinity differently from the others. To Trinity, it was a weird little power trip by association. Daisy looked magnificent, but only because Trinity had made her that way. She was a magnificent tool, sitting in the palm of the supervillain's hand. She could get used to playing puppet mistress like that.

The only person who seemed entirely unmoved was Radiance, naturally. The superhero just sniffed.

"No," Radiance scoffed. "It really isn't."

Even she, though, couldn't remain completely impassive when Daisy surged forward and kissed her.

It was a hungry, passionate kiss, full of fire and need. Daisy looked like she was trying to devour Radiance, forcing her tongue into the superhero's mouth to try and invade her as deeply as possible at the same time. Even with her superhuman reflexes, Radiance ended up faltering, pulling away awkwardly in instinctive surprise before stopping herself and trying to catch her balance. She ended up yielding far more than she had intended; clearly, Radiance hadn't been expecting Daisy to be quite so insanely bold. Daisy, by contrast, looked energized by her own forwardness, snaking a hand around Radiance's body to trap her against the bar.

"You see?" Daisy whispered teasingly as she broke the kiss, drawing back slowly and biting Radiance's lip a little as she did. "The best."

“D-Daisy... what are you doing?” Radiance faltered. She actually faltered. Trinity could hear it in her voice, and see it in the way her eyes were darting back and forth, confused. Trinity delighted in it. So this was what the great superheroine Radiance was like when things didn’t go according to her perfect little plan. When she encountered something she couldn’t control.

“What’s the matter?” Daisy, by contrast, looked - ironically enough - radiant as she teased Radiance, her success only confirming all the ideas Trinity had already put in her head. “Don’t worry, babygirl. It won’t hurt. You’ll love it.”

“What the fuck...” Radiance kept turning to glance sharply at Trinity, gears turning her head as she tried - and failed - to figure out if this was, somehow, her captive’s fault. Daisy seized on each lapse in attention, using it as an opportunity to draw closer and further envelop Radiance. Radiance simply didn’t have time to think.

When Daisy kissed her again, Radiance was a little more ready for it. But only a little, only enough to pull back before Daisy could slip her tongue past the hero’s lips. Daisy merely giggled.

“What are you afraid of, Vi?” she taunted. “Afraid you might like it? Afraid your tough-girl reputation might take a bit of a dive? How cute. I *promise* I’ll make it worth it for you. Let me take the lead, and you won’t be afraid of a thing.”

Maybe that was the wrong thing to say, or maybe Radiance had simply reached her limit. Either way, though, it seemed to awaken something in her.

“I’m not afraid of anything!” Radiance hissed. “Go fuck yourself, Daisy.”

And then Radiance kissed her back, every bit as passionately.

The kiss truly was a duel. Both of them were fighting to set the pace and stay in control, and both of them were fighting to make the other yield to them. Radiance slipped her arms around Daisy’s waist, using them to pull her rival into a tight embrace. Daisy was clearly just as eager for it, pressing back against Radiance fervently. They kissed until they ran out of air, and both of them were panting as they drew back. Radiance still looked a touch confused and uncertain, but it was clear that her pride wasn’t going to let her take this lying down. Daisy, meanwhile, didn’t seem at all discouraged by Radiance’s sudden fire. Quite the opposite. This was the fight she’d expected. The fight she’d wanted. The fight she intended to win. Nothing could be more energizing.

And though it all, the chain around Radiance’s wrist grew looser.

Trinity shouldn’t have been watching her captor. She shouldn’t have been paying such close attention to the micro-expressions passing over their faces, or hanging on every honeyed word that dripped from Daisy’s lips. None of that *mattered*. All that really mattered was the golden chain around Trinity’s neck. All she had to do was wait for Radiance’s attention to slip far enough, and she

could slip away before the hero even noticed. It would be easy. A few gentle tugs, and the chain was sure to unravel from Radiance's wrist. All she had to do was wait for the perfect moment. But instead, she was glued to the spot, a single question running through her head.

What if Radiance actually *lost*?

It was almost unthinkable. That hadn't been part of the plan. Not really. Daisy was only ever meant to have been a temporary distraction. But now? Now, Trinity had seen Radiance pant and pull back, and had heard her voice turn higher-pitched, just a touch.

Maybe the heroine wasn't so invincible after all.

And if *that* was true? Trinity had to see it. She just had to. It was like hearing that an eclipse was happening, and that you were right there in its eye. You couldn't *not* go outside and look up, and watch the sun disappear.

"You know," Radiance panted, after she had caught a little of her breath. "I've wanted to do that for a long time."

"To kiss me?" Daisy was grinning maniacally. "Dreaming of my lips, babygirl?"

Radiance laughed. "I'm not your babygirl. And no. I've been thinking about putting your cocky ass in its place."

“That so?” Daisy licked her lips. “Cause, it feels like I’ve got *your* ass exactly where I want it.”

Illustrating her point, Daisy shoved Radiance back up against the bar again, and surged forward for another kiss. Radiance made as if to meet her - only to end up throwing her head back in shock as, instead, Daisy snuck a hand up Radiance’s top and started groping her perky, shapely tits.

Trinity’s eyes were bulging halfway out of her skull. She wished she had popcorn.

Daisy’s assault didn’t stop there. Instead of putting her lips to Radiance’s, she instead moved them to her rival’s neck, kissing and biting her there. The furious, strained, animalistic noises that leapt from Radiance’s throat made it clear she had caught the hero off-guard again, and maybe, just maybe, touched on a weakness.

“See, lover?” Daisy teased. “Feels good, doesn’t it?”

“Not...” Radiance grunted. She seemed unsure what to say. Trinity wondered if she was aware of the fact that, by now, the whole bar was watching. “God! Fuck off.”

“Make me,” Daisy replied, in a sing-song voice, and kept kissing her.

Trinity kept leaning forward further and further as Radiance squirmed - actually squirmed! - and panted. She couldn't believe this. Fuck, no-one would believe this if she told them. Unless... unless she showed, them, instead. What if she didn't run? What if she got Radiance's hateful collar off, and then used her shimmer to flip the script a little? Sure, it had never worked before, but she had never seen Radiance in such a state before. Maybe Daisy was her skeleton key into Radiance's head. The mere possibility had her rubbing her thighs together with glee. It seemed like more than a possibility, too. It seemed close. It seemed real.

"C'mon, babygirl." Daisy's tone was growing ever-more triumphal, and she was practically twitching with the thrill. "I know you want it. Why not just give in already? You better not wait too long. Or else, maybe I'll have to show your cute little pet here a good time after all. As a warm up, you know?"

"No."

That was it. That was all Radiance needed to say. She sounded like a different woman, full of iron and backbone. There was so much unbreakable sternness packed into that one word that even Daisy had to pause.

And that one little pause was the end of her.

Flexing her superhuman strength, Radiance hefted Daisy in her hands and spun her around, setting her down on the bar. Daisy made a little squealing noise; clearly, she hadn't been ready for this at all. Before she could say or do

anything at all, Radiance's hand was slipping between her legs and up under her dress, finding her just as wet as she had been for Trinity earlier.

"Listen," Radiance said calmly, as Daisy dissolved into weak, twitching moans under her skilled fingertips. "Daisy, I don't know why you felt like pulling this kind of crazy stunt. But it's not going to work. Not on me. Not tonight. I have more important things to deal with. So, if you apologize like a good girl, I'll let you pretend this was all some big joke and we can both walk away with our dignity intact. How's that sound?"

Trinity caught glimpses of some of the other dyke bar patrons fanning themselves, impressed. She couldn't blame them. Radiance's raw power and dominance was magnetic. Trinity couldn't look away any more than anyone else could.

It was clear to everyone that the little contest going on between Radiance and Daisy was over. Radiance had ended it. Daisy, though, seemed to have trouble accepting that. "N-no," she whimpered, clearly distressed. "I'm in control!"

Radiance scoffed. "No, you're not."

"I am!" Daisy wailed. "I'm the b-best!"

Radiance's hand went still, and the expression on her face started to turn concerned. "What are you talking about, Daisy? Are you OK?"

“Stronger!” Daisy pleaded, breaking down to the point of incoherence.
“Stronger than a-anyone!”

Trinity felt bad. That was a rare thing, but when it hit, it hit. She’d been rough on Daisy, and now, all those ideas she’d hammered home into her psyche were unraveling. It was like being told your parents weren’t really your parents, or that the sky looked purple to everyone else. It was destabilizing. Trinity started backing away. She would just have to hope her shackle was loose enough.

“The fuck...” Radiance drew closer to Daisy, and everyone else looked away, embarrassed. Everyone except Trinity. “Daisy, did you take something?”

Daisy couldn’t reply.

“It’s... this is... wait.” A look of dawning comprehension was growing on Radiance’s face, and it was making Trinity’s heart sink. All too late, she started to back away, Radiance’s golden chain unraveling from around the hero’s list. “Someone... someone did something to you, didn’t they? Someone like...”

Trinity ran.

And immediately, the chain snapped taut around her neck.

The force of it jerked Trinity backwards, sending her crashing to the

ground. She didn't try to get up. There was no point. She was mad at Radiance and mad at the pain, but mostly, she was mad at herself. She should have tried to slip away earlier, when Radiance and Daisy were still exchanging saliva. But no! She had to stick around, just so she could rub it in the big shot hero's face. Great going, Shimmer.

A few seconds later, as Trinity contemplated her misery, Radiance appeared, standing over her, a very, very nasty expression on her face.

"You're really, really going to regret that."

Chapter 6

As Trinity stared up at Radiance, looming over her, it was difficult not to feel as though she was looking into the face of an angry goddess. For a moment there, backed up against the bar with a seductive Daisy in her face, she had seemed mortal. But now, she was clad in power and fury again, and her invincible divinity was beyond doubt. Trinity, who prided herself on never giving up and never taking anything lying down, didn't bother trying to run, much less fight. What was the point? A golden chain was wrapped around her neck, and it led up to Radiance's hand. With that chain binding her, all it would take was a single word and she'd be defeated.

And from the look on Radiance's face, it was obvious she had a lot more than just a single word in mind.

Trinity trembled.

"God," Radiance spat, so angry she could barely speak. "Every time - *every* time - I think I've seen the worst of you, you manage to sink even lower. Fucking with Daisy's head for... what? For fun? Don't tell me it was just so you could sneak away. I know your type. I know you were getting off on it."

She wasn't exactly wrong about that.

"Like you're not?" Trinity retorted. "Look at what you're doing to me, right now! This whole evening!"

"I'm not a fucking supervillain." Radiance seemed to be steadily working herself into an even greater fury. "And you know what? Neither is Daisy! What did she do to deserve this? Sure, she's a little full of herself. Does that mean she deserves to get her mind scrambled by a pervert with a superpower? Fuck no!"

"She..." Trinity, admittedly, didn't have a great answer to that one.

"Are you proud of your handiwork?" Radiance demanded. "Huh?"

Unwillingly, Trinity felt her gaze drawn over to the bar, where Daisy was being comforted by Ruby and Casey. She looked like a husk. Just moments ago, she had been so tall and proud; now, she looked utterly defeated.

A hot blush of shame hit Trinity's cheeks, but right on its heels came anger. Was she proud? No, of course not. But what gave Radiance any right to judge her? She didn't have to worry about a thing. She was just some rich, privileged girl from downtown, who got off on enforcing all the shitty rules and laws that big corporations made for everyone but themselves. Trinity was just trying to get by, and maybe have a little fun along the way, and she tried not to hurt anyone unless she was really backed into a corner. Was that so wrong?

In Radiance's eyes, it was. And that was exactly the problem.

Trinity let out the breath she'd been gathering, long and slow. There was no point trying to argue back.

"Whatever," the supervillain said sullenly. "Do whatever you want. That's what you're gonna do anyway, right?"

"Oh, I will," Radiance replied, with a nasty expression on her face.

"Hey... uh... are you two... doing OK over there?"

At the same moment, both Trinity and Radiance looked across to the bar, where Ruby was standing and calling out to them, a wary look on her face. It wasn't hard to see why. Even though there was no way she could have heard the pair's hushed, furious conversation, the looks on their faces undoubtedly made it clear something unpleasant was going on.

"We're fine," Radiance called back. She didn't sound convincing, exactly, but she did sound far too authoritative to disagree with, so Ruby just nodded.

The superhero turned back to Trinity, and started roughly hauling her back to her feet, taking a pointedly tight grip on her magical chain in the process. "You tripped," Radiance told her. "And that's exactly what you're going to tell them. Nice and apologetic. Understand? Not a hint of what's really going on."

As she spoke, Trinity could feel invisible chains settling heavily around her mind and her thoughts, binding her just tightly enough that she could never quite forget about them.

“So, uh,” Ruby continued slowly, as Trinity was dragged back over to the bar, “what happened there?”

It was plain enough that she was referring to the way Trinity had ended up on the ground, with Radiance standing over her menacingly and holding her leash. They’d all been too busy staring at Daisy to see Trinity make a break for it, but still. It was a bad look. Rather than explain herself, Radiance just looked expectantly at Trinity.

“I just tripped, that’s all,” Trinity found herself. She was helpless to stop herself, and helpless to even control her tone. Radiance’s instructions forced her to make herself sound light and breezy, like it really was as innocent as that. “Just got, um... a little startled, I guess.”

Ruby nodded, seemingly mollified. “Makes sense, I think we all were. Speaking of...” She glanced towards Daisy, sitting huddled on a barstool. “Vi, what do you think is going on with her?”

Radiance made a big show of sighing. “She told me she took something. Probably why she was acting so... well, you know. Guess it turned into a bad trip.”

Ruby sighed too. "Yeah, that sounds like Daisy alright." She ran a hand through her hair, stressed. "You think we should call someone?"

"Why don't you give me and Trinity a moment with her?" Radiance suggested. "You and Casey give us some room, and we'll see if we can get through to her."

"Sure thing." Trinity couldn't blame her for deferring to Radiance. Who wouldn't? Even out of her superhero guise, she radiated authority.

Ruby took Casey's hand, and they shuffled a few paces away. Casey looked, if anything, even more stressed. Her makeup was looking a little less than impeccable now. Daisy didn't seem to notice either of them leave.

"Come here," Radiance said, and pulled Trinity along with her as they huddled around the crestfallen girl.

Daisy looked distinctly unhappy to see Radiance approach. One look at her was all Trinity needed to know that the dense blanket of brainwashing she'd given her was in tatters. The remnants were still clinging to her, but it wasn't quite enough to keep her going, and until more of her original personality resurfaced, she was probably feeling seriously out of it. As she glanced up at Radiance, she wore her wounded pride on her face, and it was obvious she was torn between that feeling and one of intense, bitter embarrassment.

“Hey,” said Radiance, as softly as she could muster given her mood. “How are you feeling?”

“Hey.” Daisy’s voice was so heavy. Trinity couldn’t help feeling bad for her. “I’m... uh...”

She trailed off, looking utterly lost.

“That figures.” Radiance reached out and gave Daisy’s shoulder a comforting little squeeze. It was kind of a corny gesture, but the superhero pulled it off. Trinity figured she’d had a lot of practice. “But you’ll be OK. I promise.”

She made it sound believable.

When Daisy didn’t respond, Radiance pulled Trinity aside a short way. “What did you do to her?” she hissed. “Answer.”

Trinity resented the command. It hardly seemed necessary. “I turned her dominant streak up to eleven,” she explained. “Or... more like fifteen. So after how things went down with you, she’s dealing with some major cognitive backlash.”

“Can you undo it?”

Trinity sighed. “Messing with her head some more? Does that sound like a

good idea to you?”

“So you can fuck people up, but not fix them? Typical.”

Trinity resented that even more.

Radiance returned to Daisy’s side, and as Trinity watched, she surreptitiously conjured another of her magical, golden chains out of the air and fixed it around Daisy’s wrist. Daisy was too out of it to notice. Radiance double-checked to make sure no-one was watching too closely, and then put her lips to Daisy’s ear.

“Listen,” she said quietly. “You *are* going to be OK. You’re going to calm down and be back to your usual self in no time. This? This doesn’t matter. You know that. Just a weird night. You had too much to drink. That’s all. So, you’re going to sit here and take a bunch of nice, deep breaths and sip some water, until you feel more like yourself again. Understand?”

Daisy nodded. There was a slight stiffness to her posture which betrayed Radiance’s mind-control at work. Trinity wasn’t quite sure how she’d respond to suggestions like that, but it *was* interesting. Not least because now she knew that Radiance could manage two chains at once.

When Radiance looked back round at Trinity, she caught the look in the captured supervillain’s eye. “Look, I know what I’m doing,” she insisted. “Unlike you.”

Trinity rolled her eyes.

“You really shouldn’t look so smug,” Radiance added, irritated. “I told you. You’re going to pay for this. Starting now.”

At that, Trinity went still. “What does that-”

“Shut up,” Radiance spat, silencing her. All the calm and tenderness she’d employed with Daisy was gone, replaced by that simmering anger Trinity had seen boil over so many times. “All you need to do is remember your rules. Go with the flow. But I’m going to add one more: whatever happens tonight, whatever I do, whatever anyone else says or does, you’re going to be nice and eager and enthusiastic about it. Got that?”

Trinity couldn’t help but nod, even as she was overcome with a very, very bad feeling about what that might mean.

Just as she had been each time before, though, she was helpless to do anything about her situation. Her one shot at an escape had failed utterly. So, Trinity simply let Radiance take her by the hand and lead her back over to where Ruby and Casey were waiting.

“How’s she doing, Vi?” asked Casey immediately.

“She’s fine,” Radiance replied confidently. “Just a little dazed. She was

having a weird day, and clearly overdid it more than a little.”

Casey nodded, seemingly satisfied with that. “Should we call her a ride home?”

“I think it’s better she stays here, where we can keep an eye on her,” Radiance assured her. “And... anyway, weren’t we meant to be having some fun here?”

All eyes turned to Trinity.

Ruby and Casey seemed surprised. After what had happened, they had probably figured the party was over. But equally, they had both been looking forward to having some fun with Trinity, and at the suggestion it was still on the table, smiles started to return to their faces.

“Well,” Ruby said to Trinity. “Are you up for it, babe?”

Trinity paled as she contemplated what that might involve. But she also knew she had no choice in the matter, and so, to avoid doing something worse, she reluctantly nodded.

And then she discovered that, thanks to Radiance’s newest command, that wasn’t enough anymore.

“Yes!” The word forced itself out of her mouth in a way that made her

sound breathless and eager. "Yes please."

Yes please? What the fuck.

Casey seemed to read the shocked, embarrassed look on her face as one of submissive excitement, and drew herself up into a proud, swaggering posture. "Ruby, surely we're not gonna disappoint this sweet little thing? She asked so nicely."

"Of course not." Trinity could see that Ruby's competitive fire was already burning. She wasn't Daisy, but she also wasn't about to be left behind. "How could I resist?"

"Great," Casey replied. Trinity was left staring helplessly between the two women as they discussed her fate. "Then, why don't we head back to the bar, get a couple more drinks, and then maybe-"

"Wait," Radiance interrupted. Trinity didn't like the look in her eye. Not one bit. "I have a better idea." She pointed towards the back of the bar. "The pool table is free."

Ruby whistled. "She's down for that?"

Trinity tried to hold herself back from speaking. It was hard - very hard - but she managed it. Her only reward for her exertion, though, was that she ended up nodding rapidly and emphatically, conveying nothing but meek

eagerness.

Ruby and Casey both giggled.

“Damn,” Casey offered. “Guess this is going to be a good night after all.”

Trinity couldn’t help but whimper as Radiance took her by the wrist and firmly pulled her along, leading her, with the others, over to the pool table at the back of the bar. It didn’t look like a lot of pool happened there. It was perfectly clean, but there was no sign of any balls or cue sticks. Trinity didn’t have to work very hard to imagine what they were about to do to her.

As soon as Radiance let go of her and stepped back, leaving only her chain connecting them, Ruby and Casey were by her side. Trinity trembled as she found that, whichever way she looked, there was a smug, smiling face, eyes filled with wicked possibilities. She yearned desperately to be able to use her power on them and put them in their place, or even just to be able to flex her sharp, snarky tongue. But she couldn’t. She couldn’t do a thing. She was trapped by Radiance’s words in her head. It was torment.

Her sense of powerlessness only grew as she felt one of them rest their hand on her back, taking a moment to trace over her form. Even through her clothes, it felt intimate and teasing. A moment later, though, she felt herself being sharply and suddenly pushed forward. With the pool table right in front of her, Trinity was sent sprawling against it, bent double, just barely managing to get her hands up to brace herself against the green cloth.

There were more giggles, and then a hand on her ass. Trinity froze instinctively, like a deer in headlights. Then, as the hand started squeezing and groping, none too subtly, she couldn't help but whimper.

"Wow," cooed Ruby in an amused, shameless voice that was clearly meant to tease Trinity as much as it was to express her sincere appreciation. "Yeah, this position is *much* better. Now we can get a real look at what she's got going on down here."

Trinity felt her face start to burn as she realized Ruby was right. She was bent over a table, with her ass pushed out. And she couldn't move. She couldn't hide herself, or pull away from Ruby's groping.

"Damn, you're right," Casey added as she joined Ruby in feeling up Trinity's soft, round butt. "I love girls with a little meat on their bones, if you know what I mean. It's a shame she's been hiding it under these clothes."

"We can fix that," replied Ruby, and before Trinity could process it, she felt Ruby's hand reach underneath her, unfastening her belt and starting to pull down her jeans.

Trinity couldn't think. She literally could not think. Her mind was screaming at her that she should do something, but there was nothing. She couldn't move, couldn't protest. The whole situation had her on edge enough that her fight-or-flight instincts were firing, but in light of her total

helplessness, she was left short-circuiting. It didn't feel right. It didn't feel fair. Trinity was the Shimmer. She knew she wasn't some kind of big scary badass, but still. She'd intimidated people, stolen from people, and bent people to her will. People were scared of her. But here she was, being treated like nothing more than a plaything. Somehow, it stung even worse that it wasn't Radiance doing it. Radiance was a superhero, at least. A worthy rival, and a worthy tormentor. Ruby and Casey were nothing. Just civilians. Letting *them* toy with her was stomach-churningly humiliating.

"Oh my god!" Casey giggled. "Look how wet she is!"

Fuck.

Trinity's eyes bulged, and she gripped her hands into tight fists because that was the only way she had to express her utter outrage. She wanted to scream at these women. It wasn't because of them! It was because of Daisy. Trinity had gotten turned on and wet from brainwashing her in the bathroom stall. She always got hot from bending a pretty girl to her will, especially when it involved taking someone down a few pegs. But of course, she couldn't tell them that. Radiance's infernal rules stopped her. So she was forced to let them go on believing that she was wet because she was being groped in public at a dyke bar.

And the worst part was, they weren't completely wrong.

As much as Trinity hated to admit it to herself, she couldn't deny that not

all of the wet stain in her panties had been there before. Once again, Radiance's mind control was doing something to her. The dexterous, insistent fingertips groping her ass were bringing heat to more than just her cheeks. Each time Ruby or Casey squeezed, fingers digging into her embarrassingly plump ass, it sent shocks of pleasure running all the way through her. Why? Why did she have to be so damn sensitive right now? The satisfaction she *hadn't* received earlier, when she'd been across Radiance's lap, was only making matters worse. Between that and everything else, her body was dangerously pent up, and was responding greedily to every little touch.

Traitor, Trinity thought at her dripping cunt.

"You're right," Ruby said, slowly running a single tip along the front of Trinity's soaked panties. "You're enjoying this, huh, babygirl?"

This time, Trinity didn't have the focus to restrict herself to mere nodding.

"Y-yes!" she whimpered, and the only thing more awful than saying that was how genuinely needy and eager her voice sounded. She sounded truly pathetic.

Radiance, though, wasn't satisfied with that.

"Yes' what?" the superheroine demanded coolly, from the sidelines.

Trinity whined in futile desperation, even as she felt the answer rising

within her throat. “Yes!” she answered pathetically. “I’m e-enjoying it!”

Ruby and Casey both giggled yet again. Radiance didn’t. Trinity managed to turn her head and get a long at her captor. Radiance wasn’t smiling. She wasn’t amused, or even satisfied. The look in her eyes was nothing but hungry. She wanted more, and this wasn’t enough. Not yet. Not even close.

That look made Trinity shiver just as much as anything Ruby and Casey were doing.

The two of them, though, were impossible to ignore for more than a moment. Radiance’s desire for retribution was scarier, but the hands currently running over her body were much, much more pressing. Ruby was pulling her panties aside so she could touch Trinity more directly, and Casey’s hands were moving up her body, pulling off her jacket and starting to lift the hem of her t-shirt. And all the while, they were taking plenty of liberties, groping and feeling her up as much as they wanted, making plenty of mocking, appreciative noises. They were both good tops, too. Trinity could tell that at once. They knew just how and where to touch her, responding effortlessly to all the little ways she squirmed and moaned, and they knew how to draw everything out a little, letting Trinity shiver in anticipation without ever leaving her alone long enough for her to catch her breath.

It was torment. Incredibly pleasurable torment.

As her t-shirt and her bra were removed, leaving her totally naked, Trinity

tried in desperation to look around, hoping to find something else to take her attention away from the humiliating pleasure wracking her body. That was a mistake. Everywhere she looked, she was met with watching, amused eyes. Almost everyone in the bar was looking, with varying degrees of interest, and most of them wore amused or envious smirks on their faces. Evidently, this kind of spectacle wasn't anything out-of-the-ordinary for this particular bar. Trinity wasn't sure if that made it better or worse. She resented the idea of being treated like nothing more than the evening's entertainment. But more than anything, she hated that people were seeing her this way at all.

"That's right, princess," Casey cooed, when she noticed where Trinity was looking. "You're the star of the show. How's that feel?"

"G-good!" Trinity whined, her voice turning perilously high-pitched. Her stomach churned when the words forced themselves out of her, and her pussy throbbed all the harder. "F-feels fucking good!"

Casey whistled. "You got a real slut here, Vi," she announced. "She's a fun one."

At that word, Trinity was permitted to let out a whiny little protest. Ruby seized on it at once.

"Oh? What's that?" Ruby's voice was dripping with honey and sweetness as she lowered her face to Trinity's level. She pressed a couple of fingertips past the lips of Trinity's pussy forth, and the captive supervillain couldn't stop

herself from moaning. "Let's see. You're dripping wet while we fuck you bent over on a pool table, while everyone watches. What kind of girl does that, huh?"

"A..." Try as she might, Trinity couldn't stop herself from providing the expected answer. "A s-slut!"

"Very good!" Ruby praised mockingly. "So what does that make you, huh?"

"I- ah!" This time, Trinity didn't bother trying. Her struggle was merely to get her words out through her own breathless moaning. "I'm a slut! I'm a fucking slut!"

"You sure are," Casey interjected. She was reaching underneath Trinity to grope her tits, every bit as sensitive and weak as her pussy. "A needy, submissive, exhibitionist slut."

"Yes!" Trinity found herself agreeing, in a voice that made it sound completely true. "A fucking p-pathetic, exhibitionist slut!"

At that, Casey and Ruby exchanged an amused look. "You're really getting in the mood, huh girl?" Ruby said. "From the way Vi was talking you up, I figured you had to warm up pretty good. Guess I was right."

To her horror Trinity realized that her mind was her own worst enemy. Radiance had demanded 'enthusiasm'. And, as someone who'd had plenty of

toppy, kinky sex, Trinity knew exactly what enthusiasm looked like. Her own interpretation of Radiance's orders was driving her to provide exactly the kind of response Ruby and Casey were looked for.

Fuck, that was devious.

And it was so hot she almost came on the spot.

Trinity couldn't understand what Radiance had done to her that made it feel fucking good, but clearly her body knew something her mind didn't. Her overwhelming sense of helplessness was curdling inside her, and becoming something altogether different: pleasure. More than even the way Ruby and Casey were groping at her, she couldn't stop thinking about the way Radiance had her bound in a multitude of mental knots, controlling her behavior, limiting her speech, and forcing her to play the role of an enthusiastic, desperate submissive. The realization of her totally and utterly she was being controlled burned through her like a fireball, further helping to reduce her into a mewling, drooling mess.

There was no doubt about it. Nothing compared to this. She'd never been so turned on before in her life. Nothing had ever been so wickedly hot, or so viscerally pleasurable. Trinity wanted to tell herself she hated it, but that felt like a lie.

What was happening to her?

“Wait a moment,” Radiance called out, breaking Trinity’s train of thought. “I’ve got someone else here who wants to join in.”

Ruby and Casey backed off momentarily, allowing Trinity to turn and look. She gasped. Radiance had extended the chain connecting them - was there anything she couldn’t do with that power of hers? - and was back over at the bar, and standing next to her, looking much, much better, was Daisy.

Oh no.

“Woah,” Casey exclaimed. “Daisy, I’m glad you’re feeling better, but are you sure that’s a good idea?”

“Completely,” Daisy assured her, with smooth, easy confidence. “Don’t you worry. I’ve never been better. Vi has got me completely evened out. She gave me... um... something, I think.” Her eyes turned glassy for an instant, but only an instant. “It really helped. Plus, hearing the fun you’ve all been having has got me really, really riled up.”

Looking closer, Trinity could really see it. Daisy was still blazing with a bit of the urgent dominance she had worked so hard to instill. It was just pointed in another direction: straight at her.

“Fuck,” Trinity whimpered quietly.

Radiance really was smarter than she’d given her credit for. Trinity realized

what she must have done. With a combination of words and her power, she had turned the unraveling of Trinity's mind control to her own advantage. It was all a matter of what to discourage, and what to reinforce. Radiance had already proven she couldn't be dominated. That particular impulse was already dashed against the rocks, in Daisy's mind. But the desire to dominate and the need to crown herself queen bitch through deed? That all remained. And Trinity would be willing to bet plenty that Radiance had sold her on the idea that the best way to prove her top cred was to put on the best possible show of dominating and fucking the bar's current resident exhibitionist slut.

It was exactly what Trinity would have done, anyway.

Ruby and Casey exchanged a look. "You know what they say," Ruby said brightly, after a moment. "The more, the merrier!"

Daisy wasted no time crossing the room to Trinity's side. Her movements were graceful and sure, and there was no hint of the broken girl Trinity had seen just a few minutes ago. She rested one hand on Trinity's head, petting her like an animal whilst keeping her firmly pressed down against the pool table at the same time, and used the other to start massaging Trinity's ass, squeezing her plump cheeks and rolling them between her fingers. Trinity felt like nothing but a piece of meat.

"Delightful," Daisy purred. "Thank you so much. I would have hated to miss out on this. She's gorgeous."

Somehow, the praise made Trinity blush just as hard as being called a slut had. She'd never been good with praise, and the arrogant, condescending note in Daisy's voice made it that much worse. It wasn't fair! She'd been the one in control. She'd had Daisy bent to her will. Now, it was all completely flipped. Her own pathetic inability to so much as protest left her gasping in outrage and arousal.

"And you got her all warmed up for me? Even better." Daisy's hand moved from cupping Trinity's ass to feeling at her cunt, pulling her panties all the way down to around her thighs. The stimulation was already almost more than Trinity could bear. She'd spent so much of the day worked up. She couldn't take much more of this. "You girls mind if I have the honor?"

"By all means," Casey replied, clearly pleased with Daisy's recovery.

Trinity turned her head from side to side, trying to get a look at what was going on behind her. Once she managed it, though, she went very, very still. Daisy had lifted the hem of her sundress above her hips and was swiftly fixing into a place a long, large strap-on dildo. Just looking at it made Trinity's mouth water, and had her clenching her thighs together so she could rub them against one another for stimulation.

"Now, now," Daisy chided. "None of that, princess."

Trinity hated how much being called that made her cunt drip.

A sharp spank on her ass robbed her of her ability to feel indignant.

Trinity yelped, the force of the blow pressing her against the table. Daisy hadn't struck her too hard, but her ass was still deliciously tender from the punishment Radiance had inflicted on her earlier. The pain, sweet and bitter and pleasurable all at once, was like a spark setting kindling ablaze. Trinity couldn't stop moaning now.

"My, my," Daisy mused. "Someone's already been having some fun, hm? These bruises are only just starting to come in."

She looked to Radiance for confirmation. The superhero remained impassive.

"Anyway," Daisy delivered another slap to Trinity's soft, sensitive ass, and then reached down to begin slipping her fingers between Trinity's thighs. "Apart."

With a whimper, Trinity obeyed. It was all she could do.

"Wider," Daisy commanded.

Trinity did her best to widen her stance, leaving her resting heavily against the pool table for support.

"Oh, come on!" Daisy jeered. "You can do better than that, whore."

With a groan that was both arousal and humiliation, Trinity splayed her legs apart as wide as they would go. She wasn't sure why she was obeying anymore; if it was Radiance's mind control, or simply her own will, beaten into submission. It was all the same. It all felt the same. She was nothing. Powerless. A slut, a whore. How could she be anything else when she was so turned on?

"Good girl," Daisy purred. "I knew you'd be good for me, once I showed you how. Isn't that right?"

The supervillain nodded furiously. The wetness from her pussy was leaking all the way down her leg to the floor, and the cloth beneath her face was damp with her own drool. She knew that with her legs spread so wide, she was showing everything to everyone. She looked utterly shameless. It felt so fucking good.

But that was nothing compared to how good it felt when Daisy pressed the tip of the strap-on against her pussy lips.

"You want this?" Daisy laughed in response to Trinity's keening moans. "Huh?"

Trinity wanted it. What was pride? What was pride compared to the absolute pleasure of getting filled and fucked? She could feel herself breaking, but she was past the point of being able to care.

“No, no, no,” Daisy mocked. “You gotta say it, babygirl.”

Trinity tried to tell herself that the words pouring out of her mouth were driven more by Radiance than by her own lust.

“Fuck me!” she babbled. “Fuck me, please, please fuck me. I want it! I want your strap-on! You gotta fuck me, I want it, I want it.”

She collapsed into moans. Laughter echoed around the bar, and Daisy’s laughter was loudest of all.

“Well, when you ask so nicely...”

With one single thrust, Daisy pushed her plastic cock all the way inside Trinity’s wet, welcoming cunt.

Immediately, Trinity saw white, and she screamed with joy. It was exactly what her body had been longing for. Trinity was used to being the dominant one, but she was no stranger to the joys of being penetrated. After being denied release for so long, it all crashed over her at once. Trinity came, every muscle in her body clenching and squeezing as she did. Then Daisy pulled back, and then ploughed her once more, and Trinity came again. And then again. And then again.

It was pure, humiliating bliss.

Trinity could *almost* stop caring about how degrading it was. The pleasure was almost overwhelming enough to drown everything. Almost. But not quite. Trinity couldn't quite forget about where she was, out in public, being watched by dozens of people. She couldn't quite forget about how powerless she was, or about all the things Daisy, Ruby and Casey had called her. And most of all, she couldn't forget about Radiance, standing close by, connected to her by a chain, eyes burning on her skin. Instead, all those things were churning around inside her, taking her pleasure to greater, more intense heights. The idea that she wasn't a masochist or a submissive, that she didn't enjoy being treated this way, seemed utterly absurd given that she was cumming over and over again around Daisy's strap.

Radiance had done this to her. Radiance had made her this way. Radiance had broken her.

That one thought, more than any other, echoed in her head as she lost count of her own orgasms.

"Fuck," Casey breathed from close by, voice thick with lust. "That looks good. I'm almost jealous."

Daisy didn't reply. She was just grunting rhythmically as she ploughed into Trinity, all her concentration devoting to riding the captive supervillain as hard and as perfectly as she could.

“No need for us to just stand here and watch,” Ruby mused.

And with that, two more pairs of hands started ravaging Trinity’s exposed, naked body.

They were everywhere. Her tits, her ass, her face, her belly, her hips. Trinity couldn’t tell them apart. It was all too much. Each sensation blended into the next, into the next, into the next, and greater than all of them was the feeling of that amazing artificial cock pounding in and out of her pussy, turning her thoughts to slush and melting every last little bit of her willpower. Nothing Trinity had ever felt before came close.

“Open up, whore,” someone said, as Trinity was panting through gritted teeth - Trinity couldn’t tell who, she was past being able to distinguish voices. When Trinity didn’t react quickly enough, a hand squeezed at her tits, cruelly twisting her nipple so that she opened her mouth to yelp. As soon as she did, her cries of pleasure and pain were stifled by multiple fingers shoved into her mouth. Trinity started sucking immediately. Everyone laughed.

“Holy shit,” said someone else - Ruby, maybe. “She really is a slut. You like this, huh?”

Trinity couldn’t answer, so she just nodded. Apparently, that wasn’t enough. “Answer me,” Ruby demanded, and slapped Trinity across the face.

The blow, though not serious, had Trinity seeing stars. She whimpered, and

tried to force herself to speak. All that came out around the fingers were a series of incoherent babbles. Everyone laughed again, more cruelly than before. It was clear they were all goading one another into a frenzy.

“P-p-please!” Trinity moaned, when the fingers retreated from her mouth to give her a chance to breathe. She wasn’t sure what she was pleading for. She just wanted more. She was running off pure pleasure and adrenaline. She’d had too many orgasms. Her vision was turning white.

“You *gotta* bring this one back another night for a second round,” commented Daisy, her arrogant, feminine voice clear above the din. “She’s perfect. I can’t believe you found yourself a submissive like this.”

Trinity kept nodding. She couldn’t process Daisy’s words, but she had to be eager. She had to. She was helpless. Powerless. Just a toy, just a slut. She couldn’t think. She could barely breathe.

“Wait!” came a different voice, concerned and authoritative. “Stop. I think she’s had enough.”

Trinity whined again, this time in protest. She had to be eager. Enthusiastic. She didn’t want this to stop.

Clearly, neither did anyone else. They were all too caught up in the ecstasy of the act. Daisy, in particular, kept pounding her strap in and out of Trinity, driving her to fresh heights of bliss.

“I said stop!” the voice repeated, and to her shock, Trinity realized it was Radiance.

The superhero’s voice brought her back to reality, just a little. Just enough to realize the fact that she was right. She was feeling dangerously light-headed, and her nerves were being driven to their limit. She needed air. But it wasn’t happening.

“Fine,” Daisy replied petulantly, as Ruby and Casey backed off. “Let me just...”

There was one more thrust, and then nothing. Trinity whined tearfully as Daisy pulled out of her. But then Daisy’s fingers were right there, furiously finger-fucking her cunt. Trinity humped and gyrated against them like an animal heat, desperately for just one last taste.

It proved to be too much.

As Trinity blacked out, the last thing she saw was Radiance scooping her up in her strong, perfect arms.

Chapter 7

When Trinity woke up, everything hurt. Her muscles ached like she'd run a marathon, and she could feel a dozen bruises welling up on her ass and her legs. But as she stretched out, eyes still too bleary to see, she was met with softness and comfort. The supervillain rubbed her face into the pillow underneath her head, and arched her back as she stretched against the bedsheets like a sleepy cat. It wasn't luxury, not by any means, but the bed she'd found herself on was far more comfortable than the cold ground or a hard pool table. Trinity was seriously tempted to roll over and go back to sleep. She sure needed the rest.

"You're awake?"

Radiance's voice, now horribly familiar, brought Trinity crashing back to reality. She blinked her eyes open as wide as they would go, and the room around her resolved into view. They were back in Radiance's depressingly spartan safehouse, and she was laid out on the superhero's bed. Judging from the darkness she could see out of the skylight Radiance used as an entrance and exit, it was the middle of the night. The woman in question, her captor, was sitting next to her on the one single chair in the entire place.

And that fucking chain of hers was still there, binding her wrist to Trinity's.

Trinity sighed, even though she hadn't been expecting anything better. She didn't really have it in her to put up more resistance than that. She was exhausted and aching, and it had been one hell of a long day. She wanted nothing more than to sleep for a week. Preferably alone, without her rival staring at her like she was some kind of dangerous, caged animal.

"How do you feel?" Radiance asked softly.

The question almost made Trinity laugh. It was just a little too precious, after everything Radiance had put her through. But then she noticed the sincere concern in the hero's voice, and the lines of worry on her brow.

"How do you think?" Trinity answered wearily, slumping on her back. "I'm fucking tired."

Radiance nodded sympathetically. It wasn't much of an answer, but the fact that Trinity was conscious and talking seemed to be setting her at ease.

"I..." Radiance began, with rare uncertainty. She seemed like she'd been working up to something. "I owe you an apology."

That was big enough to make Trinity sit upright. "You do?" She was so surprised to hear it, she momentarily forgot how wholeheartedly she agreed.

“Yes.” Radiance hung her head. “I went too far. I should never have taken you out to that bar. It was a mistake, and it put you in an unacceptable position. I’m sorry.”

“Damn,” Trinity breathed. It was oddly humbling to hear that, and the supervillain was filled with the absurd urge to disagree. Somehow, she still hadn’t quite managed to shake the feeling that Radiance was something more than human. Heroes weren’t supposed to apologize. Or were they? The urge passed, however, when she thought a little more about Radiance’s phrasing. “Wait, so... you’re sorry for the bar?”

Radiance nodded solemnly. “Yes.”

Trinity squinted suspiciously. “But... not for anything else?”

The look on Radiance’s face reflected a certain amount of inner conflict. Trinity was heartened to see that. But in the end, the superhero met her gaze squarely, and settled on: “No.”

Trinity rubbed her face with both hands, not bothering to hide her exasperation. “So, is all this over, or not?”

It felt like a long time before she heard Radiance’s answer. “I can’t just let you go.”

“God damn it.” Trinity couldn’t believe what she was hearing. “Then take

me to the fucking cops.”

“So you can enchant them and slip away, just like all the other times?”
Radiance’s voice was turning to stone. “No.”

Trinity snorted, a little of her sarcasm and vitriol returning to her. “A superhero who doesn’t trust the cops? Rich. I thought you were all about the rule of law.”

“Of course I don’t trust the cops!” Radiance snapped. “They can’t deal with someone like you. And frankly, they don’t even care enough to properly try. All they really care about is sweeping the crime out of downtown and into the suburbs, away from all their rich-” She broke off and sighed.

Trinity cocked an eyebrow.

“The point is,” Radiance continued slowly. “I can’t take you to the cops. I can’t let you go. So, no. This isn’t over.”

“Then what,” Trinity said, glaring at her, “is the *point* of apologizing?”

Radiance turned her head from side to side. She seemed to be grappling with the question. “I did something wrong,” she replied eventually. “I ought to apologize. I’m hoping to teach you things like that.”

That, more than anything else, set Trinity’s temper ablaze. “Oh, yes,” she

sneered. "You're setting such a good example, aren't you? By... what? Kidnapping me? Stripping me? Spanking me?"

"You're a supervillain!" Radiance retorted. "What do you expect? Don't play innocent. This is how the game is played. You hit. We hit back."

Trinity knew that well enough, but she wasn't buying it. Not here. "And whoring me out at a dyke bar? That's hitting back, huh? Yeah, Radiance, you're fucking spotless. Definitely not some kind of sick freak on a power trip."

"Then what would that make you?" Radiance shot back at once, her temper flaring. "How many people have you done something like that to? Hm? And worse, I'll bet. And I know for a fact you didn't always restrict yourself to people who deserved it."

"I... that's..." Trinity shook her head furiously. She was too tired for this. "That's not the point!"

"Why not?"

"Because..." *Because you're supposed to be better.* That was what Trinity wanted to say. *Because you had a real chance to be better.* "Because you're the one flying around in a pretty little cape and calling yourself a hero."

"I'm a hero because I help people. That's all it is. What do you do?"

“God, fuck you!” Trinity was quickly remembering all the reasons she hated speaking with Radiance. Taking her back here hadn’t been a kindness. Just another way to keep her prisoner. And now the hero was going to keep talking her around in circles, knowing full well that she had all the power. And she was going to accuse Trinity of being some kind of monster? “Who do you help, huh? Eleanor Quinn? You should be thanking me for trying to fuck over that corrupt bitch.”

Radiance sighed. Trinity was getting really, really tired of that. “Not this again. Eleanor Quinn is a good person. You don’t know her. I do.”

At that, Trinity just laughed. She was done. She was done with all of this.

Her captor seemed to sense as much. But with the two of them shackled together, Radiance could do nothing but sit there next to the supervillain, lips pursed, and wait for something to break the awkward, horrible silence that lay over the room.

The shrill, demanding whine of a cell phone ringing was, somehow, even more unpleasant than silence.

“Radiance here.” The superhero answered it at once, perhaps grateful for the distraction. She turned away and sat with her back to Trinity, as if that could provide some measure of privacy.

Pissed and feigning disengagement though she was, Trinity wasn’t above

eavesdropping. She couldn't hear whoever Radiance was talking to, but she could make out their tone, all stern and stressed, and from that and Radiance's half of the conversation, she could get a pretty good picture of things.

"Yes," Radiance said, and then: "Yes. Yes. I know." There was a pause. "I'm still working on it. Don't have a full account yet. Must have slipped away." Another pause. "Yes, I know. Madam president, I told you, I already know that. Yes, I *know*, and I-" Another pause. "Very well. I'll be on it. Get some rest."

She hung up.

Trinity waited just long enough that she could try - and fail - to seem idly curious. "So, who was that, huh?"

At first, she wasn't sure Radiance was going to reply. But then, eventually: "If you must know, it was Eleanor Quinn."

Trinity snorted. "Oh, of course the illustrious 'Madam President' Quinn has Radiance's personal number." Then, she thought a little harder about what had been said. "Wait... she was asking about me. Wasn't she?"

Radiance didn't say anything, but her face gave it all away.

"Which means," the supervillain continued slowly, "she doesn't know I'm here, does she? She doesn't know I'm with you."

“There’s no reason for her to know anything,” Radiance said, looking at the wall.

At that, Trinity let out an explosive, ugly laugh. “Great. Fucking great. Not a single person in the entire world knows I’m here. You’re lying to Quinn *and* to the cops. You’ve gone completely rogue and completely off-script, and you have no idea what you’re going to do with me.”

Radiance had the decency to actually look ashamed of herself. To Trinity, that felt like a monumental moral victory.

“I gotta admit though,” Trinity added unpleasantly. “Seeing you lie? It’s just a little bit delicious. It tarnishes that lovely immaculate glow of yours just a little bit.”

When Radiance said nothing at all, and just kept staring adamantly straight ahead, Trinity started to feel a little foolish, like a child who didn’t know when to let a joke die.

“And she just... calls you on a cell phone?” Trinity asked awkwardly. “I always figured you big-shot heroes had some special way of communicating. Something nice and private, just between you and people like Eleanor Quinn. I know how your type loves your gadgets.”

Radiance finally looked back at her, eyebrows raised in incredulity. “We do have communication gadgets,” she replied slowly. “They’re called cell phones.”

What could Trinity say to that? She laughed, slightly hysterically. She wasn't sure if she was comforted or pissed when she heard Radiance start to laugh with her.

But soon enough, the laughter died, and both of them were once again faced with the fact that they were shackled together.

"I... I just..." Trinity sighed. Her weariness made all the sarcasm and scorn drop out of her voice. "How can you trust someone like her? Like Eleanor Quinn?"

Radiance took a moment to weigh the question. But infuriating as always, she answered with another question. "Why do you hate her so much?"

Trinity didn't even know where to begin with that one. "Because she's fucking rich!"

The superhero just looked at her.

"Don't look at me like that," her captive huffed. She tried to fold her arms, although it proved awkward with a chain around her wrist. "That's a perfectly good reason to hate someone. At least, where I come from. Besides, she's not just any rich person. Eleanor Quinn and her Quinncorp buddies built this city, as they're so fond of telling everybody. The way I see it, that means they're responsible for the whole thing. The good parts, and the bad parts. And

they're doing a piss-poor job with the bad parts."

"That's a very socially conscious outlook."

Trinity couldn't tell if Radiance was being sarcastic or not, so she glared at her anyway. "Yeah, I think it is, actually!" Warming to her theme, Trinity started to deliver the rant many of her friends had already heard over a beer or something stronger - at least, the acquaintances she passed off as friends.

"Look, I know you might not be able to tell, seeing as how you spend all your time keeping rich people safe from purse-snatchers, but things actually fucking suck right now. For, like, a lot of people." Trinity's voice kept growing in volume. It felt good to finally be able to throw this in someone's face. Someone who deserved it. "And not because of crime or supervillains. Because rent sucks, jobs suck, and life sucks. There's a lot of people to blame for that, and none of them are the people getting hurt by it. Eleanor Quinn deserves more blame than most. Her companies are buying up apartment blocks and businesses left and right. No-one gets to fucking live anymore. Not unless she says so."

The look on Radiance's face was unreadable, but since she didn't interrupt, Trinity kept going.

"Some people want more out of life than that!" the impassioned supervillain shouted. "And *everyone* deserves more out of life than that. But who's fixing that injustice? Nobody. Certainly not you, and all your Apex

League superhero friends. It's funny, isn't it? You can steal from everyone in the city all day long, and as long as you make it legal first, you'll have useful idiots in capes lining up to protect you and call you a civic leader. But I know, you don't care. You don't care what I have to say. Your type never does. You haven't seen this. You don't know. You grew up in some downtown skyscraper, and when your powers manifested, you realized you could descend from the skies to smack around us little people whenever we get out of line. So, nothing I saw matters, no matter how right I am. You're not listening."

For a long moment, Radiance didn't say a word, and Trinity started to hope she might have actually gotten through to her, somehow. But then her face twisted up with fury, and when she spoke again, her voice was dripping with the self-assured contempt Trinity hadn't heard since waking up.

"What did I expect?" Radiance snarled. "You think you know it all. Don't you? That must be nice. It lets you go around doing anything you want to anyone you want, all day long. But now I've got you here, I can make you listen to someone else for once. And first of all, what you need to hear is: you don't know even one tiny thing about me."

As hard as she tried not to, Trinity paled in the face of the angelic heroine's rage.

"Where do you think I'm from?" Radiance demanded, and Trinity's eyes went wide as the superhero let her usual, formal accent drop. "Drop the bullshit. Listen. Where do you think I'm *actually* from?"

Trinity wanted the ground to open up beneath her and swallow her whole. She'd have recognized that accent anywhere. "Shit," she replied miserably. She thought about Radiance's commends about cops. She should have figured something was up.

"Yeah, that's right, asshole," her captor continued furiously. "I'm from Castron."

Castron. The poor, outer city, working-class neighborhood Trinity had grown up in, and the very place Radiance had captured her.

She couldn't believe this. She couldn't believe that she and her stuck-up rival were from the same neighborhood.

"Oh, *now* you don't have anything to say," Radiance snorted derisively. Her accent returned. "You don't feel like calling me a class traitor or something?"

Trinity really didn't.

She turned away from Radiance and stared resolutely at the barren wall on the opposite side of the bed. What else could she do? She knew it was a petulant gesture. Frankly, she wasn't sure if she was embarrassed or furious. But she knew one thing: she was *not* going to apologize. No way. Not ever. Radiance had kidnapped her. Tortured her. Humiliated her. So, there was no way she would ever, *ever* feel bad.

And clearly, the one apology Radiance had given was the only one she herself was going to get.

Bravely, though, Radiance was the first one to break the long, awkward silence that followed.

“Come on,” Radiance said wearily. “None of that matters. Let’s just... get some rest. It’s late.”

Trinity acceded with a stiff nod. Then, she looked around. “Fine. So, where are you going to sleep.”

Radiance, likewise, cast her eyes around the room. The floor was hard, and there was no couch, just the single, uncomfortable chair she was already occupying.

“Well,” the superheroine replied, with utmost reluctance. “There’s only one bed, so...”

Trinity was dumbstruck. “You’ve got to be kidding me.”

“Let me put this another way,” Radiance said firmly. “I’m sleeping in that bed. It’s mine, and I’m not giving it up for a supervillain. You can do whatever you want.”

That wasn't fair! That was totally unfair! Trinity looked over at the floor. Just the thought of spending all night on it, with her already sore body, made her wince. She was a prisoner! Wasn't she entitled to some basic comfort? "Well, let *me* put it *this* way." She folded her arms. "I'm staying right here."

"Suit yourself," Radiance shrugged. "Bed's big enough for the both of us."

Which was how Trinity ended up spending the night in the same bed as her hated rival.

The process of the two of them settling in to sleep was perhaps the single most awkward thing Trinity had ever had the displeasure of experiencing.

She quickly decided, in fact, that nothing could be worse. Not even the hard, wooden floor of Radiance's safehouse. But she wasn't going to back down. She simply wasn't. And so, clinging to the dying hope that Radiance would chicken out at the last moment, Trinity started undressing herself, and watched Radiance do the same.

Frankly, it pissed her off that Radiance was able to strip in front of her so

easily and shamelessly. It would have soothed Trinity to know that, at the very least, they were both equally mortified by the situation. No such luck.

Radiance had risen to her feet and started removing her clothes without any hesitation, disrobing quickly and efficiently, removing her golden, mind-controlling chain from Trinity for only as long as necessary. She stared into space as she did so, neither posturing nor hiding herself as she gradually revealed toned muscles and perfectly sculpted curves. She was obnoxiously hot, and she didn't even have the good grace to act like it.

And why the hell was she folding her clothes neatly as she took them off? It was inhuman.

Trinity, meanwhile, was stripping off underneath the blankets, trying to preserve some tiny, inconsequential fragment of her modesty. She wasn't ashamed of her body and she didn't care what Radiance saw, but in the contest of will between them, nudity had been used as a weapon against her. It made her feel vulnerable, now. She wasn't going to let Radiance see her that way. Not without a struggle.

Still, though, Trinity pondered, maybe she should try to get to the gym once in a while. Those muscles looked good.

"Move over a little," Radiance grunted, as she turned out the light and slipped into bed with Trinity.

"I'm already moved over," Trinity retorted mutinously, but she nonetheless

pressed herself up tight against the wall in the hopes of avoiding the existential superhero-supervillain lesbian horror of feeling her naked body touch up against her rivals.

It was a pretty small bed, so she lost that challenge right away.

She was hoping Radiance would flinch away as soon as their skin touched, but when she didn't, Trinity was forced to accept the uncomfortably intimate sensation of Radiance's shoulder against hers.

At least the superhero was warm. Really, really warm.

The sheer, monumental awkwardness of the situation had managed to smother their earlier animosity, at least for the moment. Suddenly, silence seemed like the absolute worst thing. Maybe casual conversation would make it feel a bit less like they were lovers.

"This, uh," Trinity began, feeling every bit as awkward as the atmosphere in the room. "This bed is pretty small. Must get real cosy, between you and the girls you bring back here."

When Radiance didn't reply, Trinity wondered if she'd already fallen asleep. But then: "I wouldn't know."

"What does that mean?" Trinity asked.

“Your assumption is mistaken,” Radiance told her. “Again,” she added pointedly. “I’ve never brought a girl back here before.”

Trinity blinked, and looked over. In the twilight, she couldn’t really see Radiance’s face. “But I thought...”

“Always their place,” Radiance replied abruptly. “Not mine. No-one else has ever slept here before.”

Trinity didn’t have a single clue how to feel about that.

“I guess it’s not much to show off,” she commented lightly. Maybe she shouldn’t have said anything.

“Can’t risk anyone knowing,” Radiance said. “Anyone seeing. It could put me in danger. Or worse, them.”

Trinity nodded. “Well, that explains why it’s, yknow, like this.” She gestured vaguely at the blank walls. “Wherever you’re from, a hero like you probably has some fancy apartment downtown. Am I right?”

“You’re right,” Radiance conceded. That could have been the end of the conversation, but after a whole minute had passed, she said: “I spent most nights here, though.”

That was really, truly appalling to hear. In spite of everything, Trinity

immediately found herself thinking about how it would feel, spending night after night in a small, empty room like this, all alone.

“Sounds lonely.” She couldn’t help saying it.

“It is,” Radiance agreed. There was a shifting motion under the covers that Trinity took for a shrug. “But that’s the life. Right?”

“I guess,” Trinity replied. But then she thought for another moment, and propped herself up on one arm. “Wait. No, it isn’t. Not for most heroes, anyway. Plenty of them are more public about it than you, and even if they don’t give their identities away, they clearly don’t live in holes like these. They date. They have fun. What’s up with that?”

“I...” The superhero seemed to be taking a few moments to compose her words. “Look. Being a hero is a hard job, at the best of times. It can be pretty thankless. I don’t begrudge anyone for seeking whatever comforts they need to make it bearable.”

“But not you?” Sincere curiosity was getting the better of the villain.

“No.”

“You’ve gotta be perfect, huh?” Trinity baited.

“That’s right.”

Trinity was floored by how serious Radiance sounded. There was no irony to her words. She thought about the room they were sleeping in. Radiance was determined to be perfect, and it had taken over her entire life. No wonder she was going off the rails.

“Don’t you think that’s a little...” Trinity couldn’t find the right words. Why was she even trying? She shouldn’t care.

“It’s my life,” Radiance replied tersely. “Look, Shimmer, maybe we shouldn’t-” She broke off, and laughed ruefully. “God. I know your name now, don’t I? It’s Trinity. I have absolutely no idea if I should call you that, or Shimmer.”

“God, just ‘Trinity’, please,” Trinity snorted. “I’m not like you. Not wedded to any cool codename. ‘Shimmer’ is just a lame moniker from the media.”

“You got it, Trinity.”

Hearing that felt very, very weird.

“Do I get to know your name?” Trinity ventured.

“Nope,” Radiance told her. And that was that, clearly.

Trinity could have left it there, but there was just one more pressing

question on her mind, and in the quiet, oddly intimate atmosphere that lay across them, she felt like Radiance might actually answer it.

“So... you’re done this before, right?” she asked slowly. “Not exactly like this, I mean. Not with a villain. But, um. You know. Kink. Domination.”

There was a pause. For once, Radiance actually seemed embarrassed. “Yes.”

“You’ve done this a lot.” It was a statement, not a question.

“Yes,” Radiance repeated.

With that bridge crossed, Trinity was a little unsure what she wanted to ask. “How does that work? For a superhero, it seems a little... I don’t know, dark?”

“Dark?” Radiance seemed bemused by that. “I wouldn’t say so. Neither would the people I play with. They always enjoy themselves. I make sure of that.”

A few butterflies danced in Trinity’s stomach.

“But, since you ask,” the hero continued, “I... I like control. It feels good. Out there? In the streets? I’m not in control. Not really. There’s always too much going on. Too many people. I’m just one woman, trying to make some kind of order out of it all. It gets confusing, sometimes. But I can control just one

person. I'm good at that. When I'm in control, it's all very, very clear."

There was a long pause as Trinity digested what Radiance had said.

"I don't know why I told you that," Radiance added quietly

Trinity didn't know either. But she got it, intimately. She often felt something similar. Future City, so big and busy, had a way of making her feel small sometimes. Domination was the perfect antidote. Who knew if she was ever going to be able to taste that again?

"Goodnight," Radiance said abruptly, and rolled over onto her side, facing away. Trinity decided that was a clear sign the conversation was over.

"Goodnight," she replied, and started making herself comfortable.

Trinity did her best to ignore it, when she heard the clear sounds of Radiance touching herself.

And the next morning, she tried to pretend she hadn't woken up to find the superheroine, her rival, the idol of Future City, clinging to her arm.

Chapter 8

When Trinity first woke, just before the crack of dawn, to find Radiance, the superhero who had captured her, clinging to her arm, she didn't know what the fuck to do. She had to rub her eyes with her other hand a few times just to confirm it was real and not some kind of twisted dream. Once she was sure she was awake, it was all she could do not to laugh. The situation was almost comical. If she wasn't seeing it with her own eyes, it would have been impossible for her to picture Radiance that way, at rest, eyes closed, clinging to her for... what? Warmth? Comfort? She couldn't know, but she couldn't help wondering.

And what was she supposed to do? Wake the hero up? Laugh at her? That seemed unbearably childish, somehow. Trinity didn't want to be the kind of petty asshole who crowed over things like that. She couldn't blame anyone for reaching out for something, or someone, as they slept. Not even Radiance. That didn't make the sheer awkwardness of the situation any easier to bear, though. Trinity swiftly decided that if Radiance woke up, it would only get more awkward, and that only left her one choice.

Do nothing.

So, the supervillain - not that she felt like much of a supervillain, in that moment - stayed as still as she possibly could, allowing her hated rival to sleep like a baby at her side as she stared up at the skylight in the ceiling, watching as the sun's golden light slowly inched its way up into the sky. It was a strange sight for a night owl like her, but not an unpleasant one.

Eventually, mercifully, Radiance released her and rolled over, the tanned, golden-haired, muscular hero still sound asleep and still blissfully unaware of what she had been doing. With that, Trinity was able to breathe a sigh of relief and shift into a more comfortable position. And, as she contemplated the strange way lying in bed next to Radiance made her feel, she slowly slipped back into unconsciousness herself.

When she woke next, the sun was higher in the sky, and Trinity was alone in bed. That, too, was a kind of mercy. The bed wasn't big enough for the both of them, not really, and Trinity was glad for the chance to spread out and stretch her weary body. A night's sleep had done her some good, but not enough good to completely take the edge off of all of her aches and pains. In particular, her ass was incredibly sore from the spanking Radiance had given her the day before. Rolling over and peering over her shoulder, Trinity could see that her ass cheeks looked like little more than a pair of huge, impressive bruises. Strangely, that made her blush more than it pissed her off.

When she didn't spot Radiance right away, Trinity swiftly checked to see if the hero's golden, mind-controlling chain was still in place around her wrist. She hated that she even needed to check; the feeling of being bound by it was

already becoming too familiar to notice. Unfortunately, it was, and when Trinity peered over the edge of the bed to follow it, she was greeted with the sight of Radiance engaged in a morning workout on the floor.

Totally naked.

For the second time in as many minutes of being awake, Trinity found herself blushing fiercely. She was, once again, filled with indignant resentment towards her captor for looking so damn perfect. Radiance's powerful, impressive muscles were so perfectly-formed they could have been cut from marble, and the way they flexed as Radiance completed a set of slow, deliberate push-ups was almost hypnotic. Her tanned skin seemed to glow in the morning light, and Trinity couldn't help but notice that Radiance's ass was every bit as perfect as all the rest of her.

She badly wished she could have been indifferent to the sight but unfortunately, she was far too much of a lesbian for that. The feminine urge to take those buns in her hands and squeeze them as hard as she could was all but irresistible. Normally, Trinity would have taken thoughts like those and repressed them as deeply and viciously as she could, but in her weary, groggy state, she was defenseless. It didn't help that Radiance looked so unearthly, so angelic. Even her hair looked perfect, her wavy sidecut lending her the perfect amount of personality to make her look like a hot, gay woman and not a mere mannequin. It was so unfair. Hair that perfect was supposed to be impossible so early in the morning.

But most magnificent of all were her wings.

For the longest time, Trinity had been unsure if Radiance's wings were totally real, or somehow part of her costume. When they hadn't been present whilst the two of them had been naked in bed, she'd assumed the latter. But now, she could see that they were absolutely, undeniably authentic. The hero's two huge, white, feathered wings connected to her back just beneath the shoulder blades, and flexed slightly as she moved. Trinity could see all kinds of small muscles and motions at work within them, feathers twitching and adjusting just as instinctively as any other part of her body. It was the first time she had seen the heroine's wings up so close at a peaceful moment, and the sight took her breath away. There was a genuine beauty to them, a beauty that transcended even how she felt about Radiance.

"Staring?" Radiance asked, amused, eyes still turned to the floor.

Trinity was glad Radiance wasn't looking her way to see the shade of red she was turning. She didn't realize the hero had noticed her wake up. "Just... curious," she answered lamely. "Where have you been keeping those things? They take up an awful lot of space."

After Radiance completed one last push-up, she raised herself to her knees and turned to face the supervillain. She made a small gesture with her hand, and her wings vanished into so much golden, shimmering dust that evaporated into the air within moments. It was just the way her chain vanished when she dismissed that.

“They do,” Radiance explained. “Which is why I keep them under wraps most of the time. But I like to spread my wings in the morning, when I’m warming up. Feels good.”

Trinity just nodded. The casual, conversational way Radiance answered her question had completely disarmed her. What was she supposed to say next? ‘How did you sleep?’ ‘Nice weather this morning.’ She felt like she was going crazy.

The fact that she could totally see Radiance’s tits wasn’t helping matters.

After a few moments and with an impossibly-irksome, knowing, lopsided smirk on her face, Radiance rose to her feet and broke the silence. “You hungry?” she asked.

Trinity instantly realized that she was. “God yes,” she replied. And then, since she felt like she was letting Radiance get the better of her a little too much: “So, I know you’re kind of going rogue here, but do I still get some rights as a prisoner? How about three square meals?”

Radiance merely laughed good-naturedly. “I’ll do my best.”

As Radiance rose to her feet and disappeared into the bathroom, Trinity took the opportunity to slip out of bed and hastily throw some clothes on. Being dressed made her feel less vulnerable - a little, anyway - but whatever

small pleasure she might have derived from that swiftly evaporated when she saw Radiance reaching into a cabinet in her bathroom to retrieve a kettle, a jar of instant coffee, and a small stack of granola bars.

“You’ve got to be kidding me,” Trinity muttered.

“Here,” Radiance said, plugging the electric kettle into a stray outlet. “Make me a coffee too. I need to put some clothes on.”

Trinity shook her head, but obliged. Searching around a little more, she discovered a pair of mugs, a teaspoon, and a small bag of sugar. Making coffee for both of them as Radiance slipped into a sports bra and a pair of panties felt morbidly domestic, but she didn’t have it in her to refuse. As the kettle boiled, she noticed that Radiance was donning her superhero costume, instead of the casual clothes she’d been wearing the night before. Trinity wasn’t sure what that meant.

“Thanks,” Radiance said breezily, taking one of the cups of coffee as she flipped back her hair. She took a sip, and then held out a fistful of granola bars. “Take as many as you want.”

Trinity paused, just to make sure Radiance understood that she was speechless in disbelief. “This isn’t breakfast.”

“Sure it is.”

“This isn’t what you eat for breakfast every day,” Trinity pleaded, appalled.

Radiance shrugged and started eating one of the breakfast bars. “It’s good enough.”

“No! It isn’t!” Trinity couldn’t believe what she was hearing. But when it became clear that Radiance had nothing more to say on the subject, she took one of the bars. Food was food, and her empty stomach was grateful for it.

The two of them stood in silence, sipping their coffees and trying not to look at each other too much. Food and caffeine was helping Trinity to feel a little more like herself again, but she couldn’t stop her mind turning to the conversation the two of them had held the night before, and what it implied about what was going to happen.

Radiance wasn’t done with her. Which meant she was about to face more punishments. More pain. More humiliation. Trinity was determined not to let Radiance know any of it was getting to her, but after all she’d been put through yesterday, she found herself filled with trepidation.

“So,” Trinity began, breaking the awkward silence as her anxiety got the better of her. “What’s next?”

Radiance took her time answering, slowly finishing off her granola bar and drinking the last few drops of her coffee. Once she was done, she let out a satisfied sigh and then slowly turned to Trinity.

“Well, I have a question,” she said. “Does your power work if you use it on yourself?”

“W-what?” Trinity froze. She didn’t like that one bit. “No. No. Of course not.”

Radiance tilted her head. “So, you’ve tried it?”

Trinity cursed her captor’s intuition. “It’s not... that’s just not how it works!”

“How do you know?”

“What?” Trinity threw her hands up in a huff and started pacing, at least as much as Radiance’s chain would allow. The hero seemed happy to keep her on a long leash while they were inside. “Of course I know! It’s *my* power! I know this stuff!”

“You don’t seem very sure.” Radiance cocked her head. “I’m just... wondering about the potential. Especially since your power seems to be more, shall we say, flexible than mine.”

Trinity swallowed. That was certainly true. Radiance’s mind control was certainly potent - seemingly irresistible, in fact - but it was limited to direct commands. Trinity’s could do much more. Her infamous shimmer could affect the mind on every level, manipulating emotions, memories, feelings. She could

melt your brain in surround sound, even if it was more of an art than a science.

“Well, stop wondering!” the villain snapped, turning her back to Radiance to make sure her face didn’t give anything away. “It doesn’t work.”

“Let’s find out.”

The way all the playfulness suddenly vanished from the superhero’s voice sent a chill down Trinity’s spine. She turned back to Radiance. Looking at her, dressed in her signature white-and-gold outfit once more, was a forceful reminder of who exactly Trinity was dealing with.

She looked her captor dead in the eye, sensing what was about to happen. “Fuck you, angel girl.”

Radiance ignored her and hefted the golden chain that was still wrapped tight around Trinity’s wrist. She pulled it taut, and it shrank to oblige her. “Come here.”

It wasn’t a request. Trinity obeyed, glaring mutinously at her captor as she did.

“Kneel.” Radiance’s eyes were cold.

Trinity lowered herself to kneel on the ground in front of Radiance, and as

she did, she cursed herself just as much as the woman on the other end of the chain. What the fuck had she been doing all morning? Sipping coffee and swapping banter? She should have been looking for a way out. How had she let her guard down so badly?

“I’m telling you,” Trinity said through gritted teeth. “It’s not gonna work.”

“We’ll see about that,” Radiance told her firmly. Her chain started to glow with a faint but brilliant light as she fixed her concentration on the captive supervillain. “Trinity, use your shimmer on yourself.”

Trinity tried to fight it. She really did. She tried to tell herself it would be different. Her power was something that belonged only to her. No-one else could touch it. Radiance could control her body, maybe she could even control her mind, but she couldn’t make her use her power. It was special.

She was wrong.

Beads of painful sweat were dripping down Trinity’s face as she tried and failed to prevent herself from lifting a hand to her own temple. The mere effort was unfathomably exhausting. She could feel her willpower being stretched inside herself like a muscle, and it wasn’t enough. She knew right away that no matter how hard she tried, Radiance was stronger. She couldn’t be resisted. That fucking chain of hers was wrapped tight around Trinity’s soul.

But that didn’t stop Trinity from trying. Not until her fingertips, already

glistening with shimmering, purple sparks, made contact with her skin.

The moment they did, she gasped. That feeling was all it took for all the fight to go out of her.

It was incredible.

Her shimmer felt nothing at all like Radiance's chain. Radiance's mind control was like a shackle around her neck that pulled and dragged her to wherever the hero wanted her to go. It was forceful, even violent. Trinity's shimmer, by contrast, was a calling and a beckoning. It felt magnetic and seductive, as it worked its way into her head. Trinity found herself panting faintly as she injected yet more shimmering beads of light into herself, feeling the way they danced underneath her skin. It felt good the way nothing else did.

More than just pleasurable, it felt *right*. There was something eerily reassuring about what her own shimmer was doing to her. It smothered away any possibility for doubt or concern. Instead, she could feel its sinuous, intimate voice nestled amongst her thoughts, whispering everything that she wanted to hear and more. Trinity knew she could kneel like this and listen forever. She understood now how her victims always succumbed so easily. She'd never known she was blessing them with a miraculous sensation like this. Trinity let out a satisfied sigh, and she barely even noticed it when a purple haze passed over her vision, leaving her eyes alight with shimmer.

“Trinity?” ventured Radiance. She sounded a little uncertain. “You in there?”

Trinity nodded, and even that small act of compliance was bliss. Everything felt good, so nodding felt good. It made sense. Everything made sense.

“Wow,” Radiance breathed. “That’s really something, huh?”

Trinity imagined what the superhero was seeing: the villain she’d hunted for and tormented was now kneeling before her, nodding obediently at her every word, a placid smile on her face and a dull, docile look in her eyes. With the small part of herself that was still capable of independent thought, Trinity realized that this was probably the first time Radiance had ever mind-controlled someone and seen them look at her so adoringly.

“Let’s see,” Radiance mused to herself, pacing a little. “How do we wanna do this?”

Trinity couldn’t help but eagerly await whatever the answer turned out to be.

“You know what your problem is?” Radiance began eventually, after several moments lost in thought. “You think you’re above the rules. I think that’s it. You think the rules apply to everyone but you.”

Trinity nodded again. Her mind was an open vessel, ready to receive

Radiance's words.

"You're going to listen to me and you're going to believe me," Radiance told her. The chain in her hand and the shimmer in Trinity's head lent extra force and compulsion to her words. "You think rules are things for other people," she continued. "You think everyone else has to be fair and nice and good. But not you. You're special. You're allowed to go around doing whatever you want to whoever you want, and everything else will magically fall into place to justify it. That's how it is, in your head."

"Yes," Trinity agreed breathlessly. If it hadn't been true before, it was now.

"You..." Radiance paused. There was a strange look in her eyes, perhaps from the raw eagerness to please that filled Trinity's voice. Trinity couldn't tell if the hero was repulsed or gratified. "Well, you're wrong. That's what you need to understand from now on. What you're *going* to understand from now on. It's what I'm going to teach you."

"Yes," Trinity repeated, this time even more urgently. She needed Radiance to teach her. She needed whatever Radiance wanted to give her. Her shimmer had made her mind malleable, and now it was shaping itself around the inevitability of what her captor promised.

Radiance licked her lips. Her mouth was dry. "I'm going to change you," she told Trinity. She sounded like she was finding her rhythm, regardless of what she felt about what she was doing. "Because you need to change. Whatever I

tell you is going to become the truth. Your truth. You'll make it that way."

You need to change. Trinity gasped as the implications of that washed over her, a cavernous, yawning need opening up with her. She needed to change. She needed Radiance to change her. It didn't matter how. It didn't matter into what. She just needed the superhero to start twisting her mind into whatever shape she pleased. Trinity wanted to beg for it.

"You..." Radiance faltered briefly, hesitation flashing in her eyes, but it was soon swept aside by a far more reckless, dangerous passion. A smile started to appear on her face as she decided to allow herself to take pleasure in what she was going to do. "You love to obey."

The room around Trinity started to spin as she struggled to absorb that command, instinctively responding to Radiance's command to make whatever she told her the truth. She was helpless to keep herself from directing her shimmer that way, echoing Radiance's words inside her own head, but laced with the supernatural power that made them utterly undeniable.

"I... I love to... to...?" The villain's head was hurting. She wanted to fight this. She just didn't know how. Radiance was too deep in her head. But in spite of that, in spite of how placid her own power had made her, the idea that she loved obedience was so foreign and repulsive that it aroused a fierce indignation within her.

But... wasn't that also what made it so good?

The thought was foreign, even as it whispered to her in Trinity's own voice. The supervillain was left swaying by their persuasive force, and by the way they made her burn between her legs. Why? Why did she think that? Why did she so suddenly, ardently love the idea of Radiance warping and twisting everything about her that she'd once known?

Because she needed to change.

Trinity let out a strangled gasp as the last remnants of her independent mind figured it out. Radiance's suggestion, whether meant as a command or not, had taken root deep within her. She wasn't just powerless to stop Radiance from brainwashing her. She wanted it. She actively craved it. She *needed* it. And even if she knew that need was fake, it demanded satisfaction just as much as the need for oxygen and food.

"I love to obey," Trinity whispered, and a thrill ran down her own spine as she felt herself change. With a single impulse, driven by Radiance's control over her, she made her own shimmer pulse within her head, fixing the new desire in place. Once it was done, she felt all the better. She was kneeling. She was listening. She was obeying. Just like she wanted.

As soon as she accepted that about herself, Trinity knew she'd lost, completely and totally. She couldn't fight anymore. Her resistance had been taken from her and twisted around into a desire for more. She wouldn't muster a single piece of resistance to anything Radiance said or did from now

on. The compulsion was total and irresistible. Something about the way her and Radiance's respective powers worked, layered atop one another, made them even more potent. It was all the deep, penetrating, persuasive magic of Trinity's shimmer, but with all the force and purpose of Radiance's chain. Together, they weren't quite like a shackle or like a voice. They were both at once, and they were even more than that. It was like a song, Trinity realized. It was as though she could feel music all around her, so loud and passionate it stroked her soul, and she had no choice but to dance to it, the rhythm pulling her onward and holding her in its grasp every bit as powerfully as Radiance's commands normally did.

It was breathtaking, and immediately, Trinity was hooked on the sensation. It made her obey, and she loved to obey.

She could see that Radiance loved her obeying too. There was a fire in the superhero's eyes as she claimed the control over Trinity she'd spent so many hours chasing. "You need rules," Radiance told her. "You love rules. Laws. You love those things because they tell you how to behave and how not to behave. They're important. You'd never break them."

Trinity nodded rapturously, absorbing this revelation with newfound eagerness. "I love rules," she repeated. She could feel herself being changed, and it made her throb with pleasure. "I need rules. Laws. I'll never break them."

She felt the words inscribe themselves on her heart, becoming a part of her.

She knew - absolutely knew - that she loved following rules. Nothing else felt better - except obeying, perhaps. Her shimmer worked deep, smothering and warping any facets of Trinity's personality that didn't match what she was being told. Her natural, rebellious urges were taken away from her. Trinity didn't mind that either. It made her better at obeying.

"Never," Radiance repeated. Her smile was growing, becoming slightly crooked as the joyful thrill of dominance took hold. "You love rules because you love being good. You want to be good. Rules and laws tell you how. Following them is good, and breaking them is bad. You want to be good, so you'll follow the rules. You love knowing that you've been good."

"I want to be *good*." The words felt like honey as they dripped from Trinity's lips. She hadn't been questioning Radiance before, of course, but it all made so much sense now. She wanted to be good. It was good to be good. It was so obvious. A tautology.

"You need to be good," Radiance insisted, and the feeling gripped the brainwashed villain even tighter. "And you'd hate to be bad. You hate breaking rules. You hate disobeying. It feels awful. It makes you feel so guilty. That's why you need to be good instead."

Trinity's mood flipped on its head in a single instant. Instead of merely feeling joyous at her new set of values, she felt a horrible, all-consuming sense of guilt at how she'd lived her life. She'd broken so many rules. It was awful. Perhaps she'd never be good. At least she was changing. That was some

comfort. She needed Radiance to keep changing her.

“P-please,” she begged. In the mind-warping fugue her shimmer had placed her in, it felt all the more pressing.

“You’ve been bad.” Radiance picked up on her mood at once. “But that’s why you need to redeem yourself. You need to be good from now on. You need to follow rules, and you need to help make sure other people follow rules too. You need to... to make people feel good. To keep them safe. That’s the most important thing of all. If you make people feel good, that makes you a good person.” Radiance paused for a moment, before her temptation got the better of her. “A good girl.”

That last phrase caught alight in Trinity’s mind like dry kindling. “Yes,” she echoed. “Please. I want to be a good girl. I want to make you feel good. I want to make everyone feel good.” The approval she saw in Radiance’s eyes only spurred her on. “I’ll be such a good girl from now on! Please, just give me a chance.”

Radiance licked her lips once more. Her eyes were shining every bit as bright as Trinity’s were. It was obvious to anyone that she was being driven by far, far more than just a noble desire to reform the supervillain - not that Trinity minded, of course. She could see that Radiance was feeling good, and she wanted to make Radiance feel good. She wanted to make everyone feel good.

“Yes,” Radiance breathed. “I think the new Shimmer is going to be much better for this city. The new, helpful, law-abiding Shimmer. Don’t you agree?”

To Trinity’s surprise, Radiance reached out and removed her chain from around Trinity’s neck. She felt it slip free for a moment, before feeling it vanish into nothing. She gasped in surprise - and in disappointment. She loved the feeling of Radiance changing her. Without the hero binding her thoughts and actions, Trinity’s shimmer quickly faded from her mind. It left her feeling dazed as she slowly recovered from the trance, and awed as she felt the many, many changes Radiance had made cementing themselves into her personality.

“You’re right,” Trinity agreed unsteadily. “Much better.”

Her head was churning with unfamiliar thoughts. There was so much to do. So many rules to be followed. There was so much she needed to atone for. And there were so many people she needed to make feel good.

Starting with Radiance.

Chapter 9

Trinity couldn't keep herself from swaying unsteadily as she rose to her feet. It felt as though the inside of her head had been run through a washing machine. Everything she was used to thinking, knowing and feeling had been churned up and chewed out, and the new creed Radiance had made her give herself was echoing like thunder through her mind, the words loud enough to make her head throb.

You need to follow rules.

You need to make sure other people follow rules.

You need to keep people safe.

You need to make people feel good.

She did. She needed all of those things now.

She needed to be a good girl.

After just a few moments, Trinity's legs gave out underneath her, and she

staggered over to the bed so she could sit herself down instead of collapsing onto the floor. In an instant, Radiance was right there beside her, a look of concern carved into the superhero's perfect face.

"Trinity?" Radiance called. The expression on her face was unreadable. "Are you OK?"

Trinity looked at her, and immediately forgot to answer. The sight of Radiance brought forth a tidal wave of new feelings, powerful enough to smother all kinds of old resentments that would have otherwise bubbled to the surface. She felt no bitterness at all as she stared at her captor and rival. No, not her rival. Radiance wasn't her rival anymore.

She was her savior.

Radiance had shown her the light. She had taken her and remade her into a new woman. A good, law-abiding, well-intentioned woman. Trinity couldn't imagine how to thank her enough. Furthermore, Radiance herself embodied everything Trinity now believed in. She enforced the law, and she saved people. She was an ideal. A hero.

Everything Trinity now found herself drawn towards.

She hadn't forgotten, of course, that Radiance had made her that way using mind control. She'd forced Trinity to turn her own power against herself, rewriting her most fundamental beliefs and personality traits. But Trinity

couldn't bring herself to feel anything but gratitude. Each one of the words Radiance had spoken to her while she'd been in her shimmer-induced trance was now inscribed in her soul like holy scripture. They were the truth. It was quite literally impossible for her to think otherwise. And how could you hate someone who had shown you such a vital truth? How could you want to do anything but repay them for transforming you?

But how? Nothing compared to the gift Radiance had given her, and nothing could even begin to make up for all the villainous acts Trinity had committed. The brainwashed villain wracked her mind, trying to think of anything that she could do.

Then, she thought about how Radiance had looked at her while she'd been brainwashing her.

You need to make people feel good.

Yes. She needed to make Radiance feel good.

"Trinity?" Radiance repeated. As Trinity just looked at her, not answering, a look of dawning horror and guilt descended on her face, and she started gently shaking her captive's shoulder. "Hey? Hey Trinity? Fuck, c'mon. Answer me, damn it!"

"I'm good," Trinity answered finally, and Radiance looked stunned at the utterly serene tone in her voice. But it was true. She was good now. She was a

good girl.

“Are... you sure?” Radiance didn’t look much less worried. “I was... for a moment there, I thought that...”

Trinity cocked her head, curious to see what the hero was going to say, but she just trailed off.

“Don’t worry,” Trinity assured her, doing her best to smile. Her head was still churning horrendously, but it was beginning to settle, and she was starting to regain her balance. It turned out that getting your entire worldview flipped on its head required a little time to adjust. “I feel fine. I’m just eager to get started, as soon as I can.”

“Get started with what?” Radiance asked.

Trinity’s smile widened, and she shivered with anticipation as the words passed her lips. “Making people feel good, of course.”

Just thinking about it filled her with warmth and pleasure. It was her purpose now. Her guiding light.

“Let’s hold back on that a little,” Radiance replied. Her tone was even, but she seemed decidedly anxious. “Until things, um, settle, it might not be such a good idea to have you out on the streets.”

Trinity nodded. "Very well. I can start right here instead."

Radiance blinked. "What do you mean?"

"With you, of course." Trinity patted the bed next to her. Radiance slowly sat down, looking at the reformed villain warily the entire time. "I've put you through hell, Radiance. Yesterday, and so many more times in the past. I've broken so many rules. The least I can do is try to make it up to you."

"That's..." Radiance's lips were parted slightly in surprise. Clearly, she hadn't expected this. "I don't think that's necessary."

Trinity frowned. "Why not?"

The superhero seemed momentarily dumbstruck by the question. "Because... because I'm a hero," she explained. "I'm not one of the ones who needs protecting. I can take care of myself."

Trinity nodded. She was starting to understand, but the burning drive within her couldn't be denied.

"Of course you can," she said, and drew a little closer to Radiance. "But you deserve to feel good too, Radiance."

"I..." Radiance looked at Trinity sharply, eyes widened.

"A little comfort. A little warmth. Everyone needs that much," Trinity continued. She spoke softly, but her voice was faintly breathy. She could hardly contain her excitement. "Even you. You're not a machine. You want things."

Radiance looked away. "I want to protect people."

"You want more than that," Trinity retorted, leaning in. As she thought about how she'd woken up that morning, with Radiance clinging to her arm, she could see exactly how to get through to the hero. "And that's OK! Everyone deserves a little pleasure in life. You wouldn't judge anyone else for that, would you? So why judge yourself?"

"I *just* want to protect people," Radiance insisted. Her whole body was tense.

Trinity drew closer, until her lips were just inches from Radiance's ear. "Liar," she whispered playfully.

At that, Radiance recoiled sharply. She looked at Trinity, horrified, perhaps even afraid. Trinity trembled. Perhaps she should stop. This wasn't what she wanted. What she needed.

You need to make people feel good.

You need to make people feel good.

You need to make people feel good.

Those words, echoing through Trinity's mind once more, stiffened her resolve. She *needed* to make Radiance feel good. And she knew exactly how, even if it was something Radiance was lying to herself about.

"No-one could be happy living like this." Trinity gestured around the room. "I'm not going to stop you from protecting anyone. But while we're here, you and me, why not let me make you feel good? What's the harm, Radiance?"

The hero lapsed into silence. Trinity sighed. She was going to have to twist the knife a little deeper. It pained her to do it, but she knew it would all be for the best. She could help Radiance feel better.

"You know, I saw the way you were looking at me," Trinity whispered, "while you were playing with my mind. You were so turned on, Radiance. It's OK, I'm not judging you. I know how it feels. We both do. You want me. You want to control me. Use me."

There was no doubt about it now. Radiance looked terrified. "You don't know me," she forced out.

"Then tell me I'm wrong," Trinity shot back.

Radiance didn't say anything.

Trinity didn't gloat. There was something far more important to be done. Instead, she reached out slowly towards Radiance, as if to a wary animal, and rested an arm around her shoulder. Radiance bristled, but didn't pull away.

"What..." Radiance's voice was quiet. "What are you even proposing?"

Trinity shivered again. She was getting so close. She needed this. She needed to make people feel good. That was her whole being now.

She looked at Radiance with big, open, honest eyes. "Anything you want."

At first, Radiance's lips curled up at the corners as if she was about to laugh, but her face froze when she realized how utterly sincere her captive was being.

"That's..." Radiance shook her head, but awkwardly, with conflict in her eyes. "Trinity. I don't think that's right."

"Why not?" Trinity demanded. She was careful to keep her voice soft, and her words insistent. "Why wouldn't it be?"

"Because I did this to you!"

As Trinity inched towards Radiance, the superhero retreated, but she was running out of room all on the bed. She was almost pressed up against the wall. For all her strength, for all her muscles, she seemed utterly powerless in

the face of an eager, pleasing, seductive Trinity. Her conviction that she'd turned the supervillain to the path of goodness was at war with her instinct that what was happening was very, very wrong.

Her words sent a wave of unease through Trinity too. Why *was* she doing this? Hadn't she viciously hated Radiance just minutes ago? Why was she now thinking about sex? Why was she OK with any of this? But an instant later, a far greater wave rose to meet it, formed of the irresistible compulsion she'd planted deep in her own mind. It swept the unease aside effortlessly, leaving Trinity swaying breathlessly.

You need to make people feel good.

You need to make people feel good.

You need to make people feel good.

That was her truth. Her religion. It overpowered everything. She wanted to make Radiance feel good, and she knew exactly how. She'd seen it in the superhero's eyes.

"That doesn't matter," Trinity said, as she swayed gently from the force of her hypnotic mantra. "I'm an adult. I want this. You want this. It doesn't matter what you did to me. It doesn't matter who I was before. People change, Radiance. You changed me. For the better. This is who I am now."

In the face of Trinity's passionate words and her huge, dilated, pleading eyes, Radiance was utterly helpless. "I... I... I..."

Conflict was writ large on the hero's face. Trinity could see that she couldn't bring herself to agree to what she was proposing. But she could also see that Radiance wanted it, and that was enough. She was almost there. The signs were clear; the tell-tale blush in Radiance's cheeks, or the tell-tale glances she cast down at Trinity's body.

Trinity started to fold herself around Radiance. She knew how to seduce people. She had plenty of practice at it. Trinity wasn't one to rely on her power when she was craving a little company. She brought her face close to Radiance.

"You deserve this," she told Radiance, and the hero flinched a little. "You can't go easy on yourself, can you? Let me go easy on you instead. I'm right here. I want to. It'll feel good. No-one will even know."

With Trinity so close, Radiance's voice was coming soft and breathy. "I..." she repeated hopelessly.

"It's OK," Trinity whispered, smiling. "You don't have to say it. Just let me."

And she kissed her.

At first, just as Trinity had expected, Radiance's lips were stiff and unresponsive as they met hers. But then, just as she'd hoped, Radiance

softened and pulled into her, becoming molten and impassioned. The kiss was hot, and it felt good, but not nearly as good as the bubbling, glowing satisfaction within Trinity at knowing what she was doing to the superhero.

She was making her feel good.

Trinity broke off the kiss after a few seconds, and the pair drew back and looked at each other. Trinity's eyes were impossibly wide as they drank in the sight of Radiance, flushed and panting. She was barely lucid. Her mantra had become a song that roared in her ears. She needed to make people feel good. She needed to make Radiance feel good. And now she had, yes, but that first taste of pleasure was instantly addictive. She needed more.

And so did Radiance.

The proud superhero looked barely more sober than Trinity did, with sweat drenching her brow and her lips still parted, a small bead of drool threatening to escape them. She looked weaker than Trinity had ever seen her. She looked needy. Trinity ached to fulfill that need for her. Once, she would have seen a weak Radiance as an opportunity. With such a mighty hero under the influence of her shimmer, she could have brought Future City to its knees. Now, Radiance was merely the woman she yearned to please.

The two of them kissed again, moments later, and this time Radiance seemed every bit as eager as Trinity. They both leaned into one another, both of them kissing hungrily, neither of them shy or reserved anymore. For Trinity,

it was impossibly satisfying to see Radiance give in to her desires. The knowledge that she was fulfilling her purpose gifted her a warm, unfamiliar kind of joy she'd never quite tasted before. But for Radiance, what was happening was perhaps even deeper. The superhero seemed almost manic, still torn between two halves of herself, but despite that conflict, the base urge to reach out and touch Trinity seemed to be winning out. The pair were soon wrapped up in one another, each running their hands over the other's body, touching each other as they hadn't dared to before.

But there was something missing. Trinity could sense that. Kissing was good, yes, but it wasn't what she craved - because it wasn't what Radiance craved. Not really. As much as she needed them, she wanted more than just touch and warmth. As they broke off their second kiss, she thought about the look in Radiance's eyes as she'd been brainwashing her, and formed an idea. Trinity pressed herself against Radiance's chest, letting the amazonian heroine feel her own greater height and greater strength.

"What do you want me to do?" Trinity asked her submissively.

Radiance blinked. Her thoughts in turmoil, she was probably dumbstruck by the question. "What?"

Trinity smiled. Enthusiasm was bubbling inside her. She couldn't wait. "Tell me what to do."

The heroine's eyes went wide, and even though she was shaking her head,

her sharp intake of breath made it clear Trinity had hit the mark. “No... that’s...”

“What you want,” Trinity finished. “And it’s what I want. You need to be in control of something for a change. Total control. And you want it to be me. So. Tell me what to do.”

Radiance kept spluttering mute denials that were entirely undermined by the burning lust in her eyes. Keen to break down the last of her defenses, Trinity decided to do something just a little unfair. As Radiance watched, she let herself slide off the bed and down to the floor until she was kneeling in front of her captor. From that position, she looked up at Radiance, a placid smile on her face and a desperate, single-minded look in her eyes. She didn’t know quite how to push Radiance’s buttons perfectly, not yet, but she could take a pretty good guess, judging from what she’d seen and what she knew.

“Please,” she said, keeping her voice sweet but allowing a little submissive desperation to purr in her throat. “Tell me what to do, Sir.”

That proved to be the last straw. Using that title sent lightning through the hero. Radiance’s resistance melted away and, faced with her deepest desires come to life, she slipped effortlessly into dominance. The changes in her posture were small, but they sent shivers down Trinity’s spine. Radiance straightened her back and drew herself back, and she was no longer retreating from the brainwashed villain. Instead, she took a moment to calm herself and drink in the sight of her rival on her knees. As Radiance settled, she let her

thighs open, spreading herself out languidly as her presence grew. Though she was silent for several long moments, Trinity didn't press the issue.

She could tell she'd already won.

"Take your clothes off," Radiance ordered.

Her voice was still quiet and a little breathy, but there was a new iron in it. It was clear that Radiance expected to be obeyed. She'd allowed herself to succumb to domspace, and now she was determined to reap the rewards.

Trinity sighed. This was perfect.

With an enthusiastic nod, Trinity reached over her head to start pulling off her top, but she was immediately stopped by Radiance's hand reaching out to seize her jaw. As Radiance glared down at her, Trinity could do nothing but freeze and whimper.

"Use your voice," Radiance warned.

"O-OK," Trinity panted.

Radiance gave her a warning squeeze. "Yes, *Sir*."

Trinity licked her lips breathlessly. "Yes, Sir."

Radiance curtly nodded and released her, leaving Trinity to obey her command with fresh haste. As Trinity started undressing herself, she was filled with simmering pleasure. This was perfect. She was obeying Radiance. Radiance was telling her what to do. What she wanted. She was telling Trinity how to make her feel good. By obeying her, she was making Radiance feel good.

And she *needed* to make people feel good.

With each item of clothing she removed, she could feel Radiance's eyes upon her. More than that, she could feel Radiance's desire for her, and she could feel the way the superhero was basking in the sensation of the control she'd long craved. The feedback loop was potent. The more she obeyed, the more she gave herself to Radiance, the better Radiance would feel. And the better Radiance felt, the more satisfied Trinity was.

The brainwashed villain was determined to take it as far as it could possibly go.

"Good," Radiance commented, as Trinity slipped out of her panties. There was no question of whether or not Radiance wanted her to remove *all* her clothes. Radiance wanted control. She wanted Trinity naked, exposed, vulnerable. And so that's what Trinity would give her.

Radiance was ominously still as she inspected Trinity's naked body. The brainwashed villain settled back into a kneeling position, legs parted slightly,

displaying every part of herself. She no longer cared enough about her own modesty to feel embarrassed. Making Radiance feel good was more important. It was difficult to read Radiance's expression as she drank in the sight of Trinity's soft curves, her impressive tits and her visibly wet cunt, but that didn't matter. What mattered was that Radiance wanted her this way.

Trinity was determined to be a good girl.

Eventually, though, her knees started to ache from kneeling. She wasn't used to holding that kind of position for so long. As she shifted to a sitting position, though, with her legs to one side, Radiance's lips curled with displeasure.

"What are you doing?" she demanded.

Trinity trembled a little, from nerves and excitement both. "My legs hurt," she replied, adding belatedly: "Sir."

Radiance's face betrayed no sympathy. "So? I want you to kneel."

"But, Sir, please-"

Now, Radiance's mouth pulled itself into a cruel, arrogant smirk. "If it hurts, then hurt."

Radiance's look of gleeful dominance was more than enough reward to

justify the ordeal. “Yes, Sir,” Trinity replied, and made herself kneel.

Kneeling in front of Radiance felt even better now that the hero had made her wishes clear. Trinity had never knelt like that before, and while the hypnotic impulses Radiance had given her made it impossible for her to be hesitant or apprehensive, she could still marvel at the new experience. She felt like a doll, or like a piece of art. She felt like every inch of her skin was something that existed for another’s pleasure. It was transformative. Even the pain felt good. It was what Radiance wanted. It was what made Radiance feel good. That was more important than anything. Trinity’s mind had completely warped itself around that one impulse. She felt so good she thought she might explode.

The wetness welling up from her slick cunt started to overflow, dripping on the floor.

After a minute or more had passed, Trinity realized that Radiance wasn’t just watching. She was waiting. She was letting Trinity’s anticipation build. She shivered. That was more than she could handle.

“Please, Sir,” Trinity begged. “Tell me what to do.”

Once, saying something like that would have been unimaginable, but now she was crashing deep into subspace. When Radiance smiled, her brainwashed mind bubbled with happy endorphins.

“First,” Radiance said. “You said ‘anything.’ What does that mean? No limits?”

Trinity didn’t even need to think about it. She shook her head. Making Radiance feel good was more important than anything. More important than food or air or water. “Anything, Sir,” she confirmed.

“Good.” Radiance nodded curtly. “Undress me.”

“Yes, Sir.”

As Trinity raised herself up to begin her task, she felt barely worthy of it. Like this, Radiance seemed even more formidable than usual. She exuded power and confidence, untainted by hesitation or self-recrimination. Trinity knew what was going on in her head. Domspace, made even more potent by the force of desires long denied. Trinity had found exactly the right way to weave her way through Radiance’s defenses and inhibitions. Now, the hero was doing whatever she wanted.

Just the thought of that brought a moan to Trinity’s lips.

Removing Radiance’s hero costume proved a slow and methodical process. After Trinity removed her boots and her cape, she discovered that the superhero’s armored bodysuit was held in place by half a dozen different sets of straps, all of which took time to unfasten. Radiance didn’t seem at all impatient with her, though, and so she took her time. Doing it slow felt right. It

gave her time to appreciate the heroic splendor of Radiance's costume, and the way it fitted to her magnificent body. Radiance really was hot, Trinity thought. She had the body of a demigoddess, with curves and muscles to leave any lesbian drooling. As high on endorphins as she was, Trinity couldn't help admitting it to herself. She was incredibly attracted to the hero. She always had been.

Pulling the torso of Radiance's suit away from her body exposed a plain, black sports bra, and underneath it, Radiance's hard abs, covered with a sheen of sweat that made Trinity want to bury her face in her captor's body. But she couldn't. Not yet. Still, her mouth went dry as she unfastened Radiance's belt. Doing that on her knees truly emphasized the role she'd slipped into - not that Trinity cared. She was feverish with need. Thoughts of dignity and pride were long gone.

She just needed to make Radiance feel good.

After removing her belt, Trinity was easily able to peel her thick leggings away from her sculpted legs, and just like that, she was staring at Radiance in her bra and panties and nothing more. The sight was gorgeous enough to stun her, but Radiance's expectant gaze kept her focused on her task. She couldn't help running her fingertips across the hero's tanned, rich, olive skin as she slipped the straps of her sports bra over her shoulders. Radiance moved her arms a little to facilitate her efforts, but she didn't help besides that. She just smirked at her. That was more than enough to drive Trinity crazy. She could tell she was making Radiance feel good. The way she slowly caressed Radiance

as she undressed her and reverently placed each piece of her costume on the floor at her side as she removed it felt like worship.

It felt *right*.

Trinity didn't care how badly her mind had been messed with. This was what she wanted. This was where she belonged.

Making Radiance feel good.

Serving her.

She hooked her fingers into the waistband of Radiance's panties and slid them down over her legs, allowing her thumbs to run over her toned thigh muscles as she did. And just like that, Radiance was naked. Just like before, she seemed utterly at ease with her own nudity, effortlessly confident in the image her body projected. She deserved to be, Trinity thought. She looked every bit as regal as she was behaving.

With her task complete, Trinity rested back onto her knees and waited.

Radiance was purring with satisfaction at her performance. "Good girl," she pronounced.

Trinity gasped and shuddered as she felt something like an orgasm hit her. It wasn't physical. It was deeper than that. Until now, she hadn't known how

badly she needed to hear those words.

“T-thank you, Sir,” she managed to stammer.

Like the good girl she now was, Trinity would wait for Radiance to give her an order before making any assumptions about what was expected of her. But nonetheless, her gaze strayed down to one, obvious place.

Radiance’s pussy.

Seeing that the superhero just as wet as her was almost as good as being called a good girl. Trinity was in heaven.

But still, she needed more.

Trinity looked up at Radiance with huge, manic eyes. “Tell me what to do again, Sir,” she pleaded. “I need it. I need to make you feel good.”

Radiance seemed amused by seeing Trinity so desperate. That didn’t trouble the villain at all. Whatever made Radiance feel good. And the superhero was very clearly feeling good. It was obvious that she was being swept up in the moment, her desires and urges having been set ablaze like dry kindling.

“You know, you have a pretty sharp mouth,” Radiance commented. “Show me what else that tongue can do.”

As she heard that, Trinity was practically drooling. She'd never wanted anything more. Looming over her, naked, legs spread, Radiance looked like a king. Trinity wanted to service her so badly. Nothing else seemed to matter. Not her name. Not the fact that she'd been brainwashed. Nothing.

She just *needed*.

When Trinity bent forwards to plant her lips against Radiance's cunt, though, the hero reached down and curled her hand into a fist in Trinity's short hair, jerking her upwards. Trinity yelped, surprised, but the sharp pain was nothing compared to how it felt knowing that she was going to be pleasuring Radiance.

"Here first," Radiance instructed, and used her grip on Trinity to force the girl's face into her chest.

Trinity's whining was immediately silenced as she found herself smothered by Radiance's tits. They weren't the most prominent of Radiance's assets - not compared to her muscles and her ass, anyway - but they weren't small either, and with Radiance using her considerable strength to hold Trinity in place, she quickly found that she couldn't breathe. Trinity didn't care. She just started planting worshipful kisses across Radiance's skin, wherever she could. She wanted to make Radiance feel good. With her tongue, her lips, with whatever she could. She needed it.

Once Radiance was satisfied Trinity was doing what she wanted, the hero released her grip on her captive and lent back, stretching her arms out behind her so she could rest on the bed. Trinity raised herself further up on her knees in response, pressing close to the tall, muscular woman stretched out in front of her. She moved her lips to one of Radiance's nipples, kissing and suckling until it was hard, and then moved to the other.

Radiance's low, pleased moans were music to her ears.

Sensing Radiance's wishes, Trinity started moving downward, planting passionate kisses across Radiance's toned abs. As eager as she was to have her face planted in Radiance's cunt, she took her time with it, making sure every part of Radiance's torso received worship. She could tell Radiance wanted to feel like the goddess she was; all-powerful, all-important. She wanted to be adored, and so Trinity adored her.

She moved lower still, spreading Radiance's legs with her hand so that she could start kissing her inner thighs, using her fingertips to trace and caress the muscular lines of her body as she did. When Trinity felt Radiance start to shiver and squirm, just a little, and heard her begin to pant, she could barely contain her joy. Her own pussy, still untouched, was dripping onto the floor beneath her. She was so excited to learn Radiance's body. To discover all her most sensitive places, and to learn the ways she most enjoyed being pleased.

She wanted to bring Radiance as much pleasure as possible.

That was what a good girl would do, wasn't it?

Being a good girl was the most important thing in the world.

Those words were buzzing through her head, filling her with feverish excitement, as she finally brought her lips to Radiance's slick, beautiful pussy.

Only to feel Radiance abruptly pushing her away.

Trinity looked up, shell-shocked, eyes like those of a wounded animal. The strange, twisted, disgusted expression on Radiance's face tore her heart in half.

"No," Trinity begged. "No, please! I need it!"

"No," Radiance said, as firmly as she could when she was still panting with arousal. "We... no. We can't. It isn't right."

"Who cares?" Trinity wailed. All of a sudden, her stomach was churning with nausea, and it was like someone had drenched her with ice water.

"Please, Radiance! Please! I can make you feel good. I *need* to make you feel good!"

"No!" Radiance said, still more firmly. She looked away. Hearing the ardent fervor in Trinity's voice was only sending her spiraling deeper into self-loathing.

“Please!” Trinity didn’t care how she sounded. She tried to crawl pitifully back towards Radiance. “I need it! You made me like this, remember? Let me have this!”

“Stop!” Radiance barked. She stood up. “I’m saying ‘no’, aren’t I? It’s a rule. A law.”

“Oh.” That put an end to Trinity’s tantrum. She slumped back on the floor, defeated. “Right.”

As much as she needed to make Radiance feel good, she needed to follow the rules too. That commandment, all but forgotten amidst her lust, was now burning in her brain. She couldn’t force herself on the hero. Radiance had said ‘no’, and that was the end of it.

Even Radiance couldn’t be unmoved by how wretched Trinity looked. “Sorry,” she muttered.

“I wanted it,” Trinity said quietly. “You wanted it too.”

“It wasn’t right.”

Apparently, there was nothing more to be said than that.

“At least let me have *something*,” Trinity said, after a long moment. “Let me

go out there. Let me save people. That's what you wanted, right? You wanted me to be good."

She needed to fill the aching void inside of her. Trinity had a purpose now. A calling. If she couldn't follow it, what was the point?

Radiance looked pained. "I... I don't know, Trinity," she replied. For once, she sounded so uncertain. "I don't think that's a good idea. Not right now, at least. Maybe never. Maybe this was a really bad idea after all. I..."

She trailed off, but Trinity could sense where her thoughts were going.

Radiance was regretting what she'd done.

Radiance was going to try and undo the brainwashing.

If Radiance undid the brainwashing, Trinity wouldn't care about making people feel good anymore.

She wouldn't follow the rules.

Trinity couldn't let that happen.

So, she used the only tool at her disposal to make sure it didn't.

Before the superhero could react, Trinity gathered her power into her fists,

making them blaze so bright with her shimmer the whole room was cast in purple light. Then, she surged forwards, seizing Radiance's head between her hands.

"No," Trinity told her, as she watched Radiance's eyes change color and fill with sparks. "You're going to let me be a hero."

Chapter 10

As Trinity watched Radiance succumb to her mind-controlling shimmer, she felt something close to rapturous, religious ecstasy. Even in Radiance's weakened, distracted, tumultuous state of mind, it took every bit of Trinity's strength to overpower the superhero's fierce will. Trinity found herself sweating and shivering for several long seconds as she strained herself like never before, pouring every last drop of her power into Radiance's mind in order to try and quench the outraged, defiant impulses fighting to well up inside of her. Normally, subduing someone who was as off-guard as Radiance had been would have been child's play, but the hero was still, despite everything, living up to her reputation and giving Trinity the fight of her life.

But it was all worth it.

When Radiance started to succumb, the image of her eyes slowly changing color was immediately seared into Trinity's memory. It was the kind of thing she'd barely dared to fantasize about. Even when she saw her glowing, purple shimmer start to bleed under Radiance's skin, spreading unevenly but inexorably through her own fingertips and into her rival, she couldn't bring herself to believe that it was really happening. But once Radiance's eyes started to flicker, her irises turning purple bit by bit as she stared up at Trinity

with a shocked, disbelieving expression, a thrill raced down Trinity's spine. Filled with adrenaline and emboldened by success, Trinity kept pushing. She could feel Radiance's mind shrinking and crumbling underneath her.

This was real. This was actually happening.

She was winning.

That realization prompted a nausea-inducing whirlwind of different, conflicting feelings within her.

The giddy euphoria of victory was carrying Trinity into blissful, intoxicating domspace. She felt more powerful than ever. This was the dominance she'd craved, after so long under Radiance's control. Brainwashing a helpless civilian in the bathroom of a dyke bar was nothing compared to this. Radiance was perhaps the most powerful superhero in all of Future City, and now she was in the palm of Trinity's hand. The intense submissiveness she'd felt towards Radiance moments ago was utterly forgotten. Trinity's mind was racing with the prospect of all the things she could do. She pictured Radiance, wearing marks of Trinity's brainwashing openly, ripping apart a bank vault and delivering its contents to her new mistress. Then she pictured Radiance in an altogether different kind of situation, naked and mewling, ready to be used however Trinity pleased.

The supervillain was instantly wet.

But then, there was the other part of her. The part Radiance had created. She couldn't suppress it, no matter how much mind-controlling Radiance made her feel like her old self again. That part of her simply wanted to be good. It wanted to obey, protect and serve. Taking advantage of Radiance in any way was wrong. It was against the rules. Those things were now concrete mental barriers in Trinity's head. The very thoughts she was having about Radiance were unthinkable, and she couldn't help feeling a reflexive disgust with herself. She was supposed to be a hero now! She wanted to help people!

So why did taking control of Radiance send these delicious shivers down her spine?

It felt just as wrong as it did right. For as much as Radiance had warped Trinity's mind, perhaps some part of her subconscious remained beyond the reach of even Trinity's own shimmer. Perhaps her body itself was rebelling against the conditioning, insisting on the kind of sinful pleasure she couldn't stop herself from daydreaming of, even as it made her stomach turn.

And then there was yet another voice in Trinity's head, this one tinged with a strange kind of regret. Did she really want to see Radiance like this? Did she really want to do this to her? It felt wrong, somehow. Not morally wrong. Something else. Trinity couldn't put her finger on it.

In the end, though, the force of what Radiance had done to Trinity won out. The commandments she'd forced into Trinity's head were iron. They were buckling under the weight of her urges, but they wouldn't break. Trinity let

out something of a sigh of relief as the storm inside her settled, and a single, simple idea grew to fill her mind.

She needed to be a hero.

“G-gguh,” Radiance groaned. She seemed to be trying to stir, but she was moving like she had lead weights wrapped around each of her limbs.

“Shush now,” Trinity soothed. Now that she’d figured out what she wanted, she couldn’t let this opportunity slip away. She focused herself on subduing Radiance. “No need for that. It’s too late. I’m already in your head. Just relax.”

“N-no,” Radiance protested. Her slurred, labored words betrayed how little resistance she had left. “S-stop.”

Trinity shook her head. That act of refusal, as she looked down at Radiance and held her head between her hands, felt unbelievably powerful.

“I’m sorry,” she explained. “But I have to do this. You made me that way. Don’t worry. You can trust me. I’ll do the right thing. I’ll help people. Remember?”

Radiance’s flickering eyes flashed with concern and confusion. They remained piercing and brilliant, but they were slowly, inexorably, being filled with purple shimmer. Glowing little pools of infection spread and expanded, joining up with one another until almost none of Radiance’s true eye color

was left. Then, even her pupils started to change color, until after a few moments more, her eyes were nothing more than glassy, shimmering, purple disks. She slumped, arms going limp as the part of her mind that worked her muscles gave up. Trinity's breath caught in her throat at the sight of her superhero rival going as limp as a rag doll.

That was it. It was over.

Now that she had Radiance completely entranced, Trinity could afford to take a moment to think about the enormity of what she'd just done. Once again, the siren call of her former life as a villain reared its ugly head. Until minutes ago, she wouldn't have hesitated to take ruthless advantage of the situation. Somehow, the knowledge that Trinity's mind had been altered against her will did little to undermine her resolve. It just didn't seem to matter. What Radiance had done to her felt like revelation. She couldn't close her mind to it, no matter what.

She had to embrace it.

"You're going to let me be a hero," Trinity told Radiance again. This time, Radiance didn't struggle. She just nodded dully. Trinity could barely contain her excitement. "Say it."

Radiance twitched a little, but she no longer had the mind or will to keep her mouth from obeying. "I'm going to let you be a hero."

Trinity let out a giddy little giggle. She couldn't believe how lucky she was. Becoming a hero was her dream. The fact it only been her dream for several minutes did nothing to diminish her enthusiasm for it. She wanted to enforce the law and the rules. She wanted to help and protect people. She wanted to make people feel good. Surely being a hero was the apex of each of those things, wasn't it? That was clearly what Radiance had been driving at. She'd been instructing Trinity in her own code of morals. It only made sense that she would now want to follow in Radiance's footsteps. She just wished Radiance had seen it that way herself. Mind-controlling her was wrong, but it was also necessary.

It was for the greater good.

As her fantasies of heroism started to blossom, though, Trinity realized that she was missing something.

She had absolutely no idea *how* to be a hero.

No matter. She had the best possible teacher, sitting right here in front of her.

"OK." Trinity perched on the bed next to Radiance, but kept a hand on the back of the superhero's head just in case she needed a shimmer top-up. "Also? You're going to teach me how to be a hero."

This time, Radiance didn't need any prompting. "I'm going to teach you

how to be a hero.”

Trinity shivered. Just hearing Radiance echo her like that felt sinful, in the best possible way.

“S-so,” Trinity continued, trying to keep herself focused. “Um... how do I be a hero? What am I supposed to do?”

“Go out and save people,” Radiance replied, unblinkingly.

“Right,” Trinity replied slowly, nodding and frowning.

It wasn’t a helpful answer. Of course, Trinity wanted to save people. She *needed* it. The need was burnt into her brain. But it wasn’t as simple as that. It couldn’t be. There were so many people in need, out there in Future City. How was she supposed to help them? Where was she supposed to start? What kinds of rules did she need to follow?

She *needed* to follow the rules, after all.

For a moment, Trinity was tempted, once more, to simply revisit her first impulse: to make Radiance feel good. Wasn’t that so much simpler? Radiance had refused her, of course, but now that her shimmer was in her head, that could be undone with a single word. But... could she really do that? She wasn’t allowed. Was she? She was almost sure she knew what Radiance wanted, deep down, and she was even more certain she could show her heights of pleasure

she'd never even dreamt of before. Wouldn't it be simpler that way? So, why shouldn't she? Just because it was a rule? A law? Trinity shook her head, frustrated. She wasn't used to these strange, foreign, moral dilemmas.

So, she decided not to think about it. Radiance and her inhibitions could wait. Becoming a hero was definitely the right thing to do. Everyone knew that. Superheroes were the embodiment of the law, and they were idolized for the good they did. With the importance of those things fixed firmly in her mind, Trinity couldn't help but be desperate to become one.

"When you go out and save people," Trinity asked carefully, "what do you do? What do you actually do?"

"I go and track down a villain," Radiance answered, in a slow, dreamy voice that seemed utterly alien to her. "Or I respond to a crisis. Otherwise, I just go on patrol."

"Patrol?" That sounded like a good place to start.

"Fly around," Radiance explained. "Wait until I see something happening."

"Right." That made perfect sense. Trinity could do that. Or at least, she could walk around. But she wanted to make sure she did every little step properly. She wanted to be a good girl. "When you're going to go out on patrol, what do you do? Step by step?"

“I pick a time and a place,” Radiance said. “Usually around dusk. Usually somewhere out of the way. A neighborhood no-one else is covering. Then, I put my costume on and go.”

Trinity snapped her fingers. That was it.

She needed a costume.

Trinity needed to do good. Heroes were the people who did the most good. And heroes wore costumes. In her hypno-addled mind, it all made sense. She’d always disdained flashy costumes, especially for villains, but getting one of her own was rapidly shooting near to the top of her hierarchy of needs.

“A costume,” Trinity breathed. “I need one. We need to get me a costume.”

Radiance said nothing, but she shivered as the urgency of Trinity’s words were transmitted to her through the shimmer. That thought was now as deeply embedded in her as it was in Trinity.

“Where do you get one?” Trinity demanded.

“Custom-made,” Radiance replied, her weak, dreamy voice now tinged with regret. “Takes time.”

Trinity’s heart sank. “Fuck.”

“But,” Radiance added, after a few moments. “I have spares.”

“What good is that?” Trinity replied unhappily. “There’s no way they’ll fit.”

It was true. Radiance stood several inches taller than Trinity, and her figure was entirely different. Trinity had nothing on her broad shoulders and visible muscles, and she doubted her curves would look particularly flattering crammed into anything of Radiance’s.

“We can try?” Radiance added hopefully. “They’re pretty adjustable.”

Trinity was skeptical, but she couldn’t quite dismiss the idea out-of-hand. She pictured herself, resplendent in the same gold that Radiance wore, looking every bit her equal - or perhaps even her partner. The thought made her blush. Radiance had become her idol. She was the very embodiment of heroism. Trinity was desperate to emulate her, and the opportunity to try and walk in her shoes was too much to resist.

“OK,” Trinity said, blushing faintly at the prospect that now filled her daydreaming. “OK. Yeah. Let’s try it. Where are they?”

Radiance showed her. Taking Trinity by the hand, she led her to a large closet in her safehouse’s bathroom. Opening it revealed not just Radiance’s civilian clothes, but dozens of superhero costumes, all tucked away neatly on hangers. Trinity had to restrain herself from fangirling at the sight. She felt sure that even if she hadn’t been mind controlled, it would have done

something to her. Seeing all of Radiance's costumes like this felt oddly intimate. She could only imagine how much some of the collectors or hero superfans out there would have paid for the experience.

"Wow," she breathed. "Why so many?"

"Some of them are spares," Radiance explained. Trinity's shimmer was keeping her placid, and she was happy to answer. "Some are for special situations."

Trinity nodded. That made sense. It was pretty normal for heroes to have some gear specially made to deal with a particular villain or threat. Usually something defensive - stealth gear, energy resistance, heat protection, et cetera. Trinity realized that if she was going to be a hero, she would need to think about that too. She very much wanted one of Radiance's suits so that she could go out on patrol right away, but she was inevitably going to need something of her own. That thought, in turn, led to more fantasies. What kind of costume would be right for her? She wanted very much to have something like Radiance, striking and sleek, but perhaps that wouldn't suit her. She didn't have Radiance's superhuman strength and endurance. Perhaps she'd need something more heavily armored, like the Peregrine, or maybe something stealthy.

"Wait, what's..." Trinity had been idly sorting through Radiance's suits as she daydreamed, but she was brought out of her reverie by the sight of something unusual. "What the fuck is this?"

“That’s...” Even in trance, Radiance managed to sound a little embarrassed. “It’s just an old prototype.”

“Huh.”

The costume was markedly different from any other Trinity had ever seen Radiance wear. The overall design and cut was roughly similar, although it seemed a little shorter and a little less body-confirming, and gold was still a prominent color. But instead of white, the remaining panels and trims were all a rich, vibrant purple. The color scheme was certainly striking - far more brazen and less austere than what the hero had landed on. Trinity shot Radiance a look that demanded further explanation.

“I had it made up in the early days, when I was still figuring things out,” Radiance explained, shifting a little. “It was meant to look regal. Purple and gold. That was the kind of theme I was going for.”

Trinity let out an amused little snort - amused not so much by the costume as by Radiance herself. The suit really wasn’t that bad, by superhero standards. A little bright and gaudy, yes, especially compared to her current image, but bright and gaudy wasn’t exactly unheard of for hero suits. It came with the territory, to some extent. Some would even argue it was a good thing. Superheroes were meant to be larger than life and all that. And that wasn’t even touching the topic of some of the costumes supervillains went for. There was a fine line between ‘edgy’ and ‘deplorably tacky’.

No, the amusing part was just how embarrassed Radiance must have been about this. It was a little surprising she'd kept it at all. Then again, it wasn't like it was smart to throw a costume away in any old trash can. Maybe it was for memory's sake. Either way, getting to see it - and Radiance's reaction to it - was kind of cute. It was like watching someone squirm over old baby photos. If it was showing through even in trance, Trinity could only imagine how much she'd squirm out of it.

The more she looked at the gold-and-purple prototype suit, though, the more Trinity started to like it. The colors were perfect. Purple, representing her shimmer, and gold, representing Radiance, the hero she aspired to be like. What could possibly serve to better represent the way she was turning over a new leaf? Plus, given the size, it might be the closest thing they were going to find to a good fit.

"I want to try it on," Trinity announced, and plucked the suit from its space on the hanger rack.

She couldn't tell if Radiance was pleased by that idea, or mortified. Probably, Radiance herself couldn't tell either. Probably, she was both. But it didn't really matter. She wasn't in any position to refuse anything. All she could do was nod obediently.

Trinity turned and stroked her hand down Radiance's face, to make sure she was thoroughly topped-up with mind-warping shimmer. Then, she started

hurriedly dressing herself in her newly-chosen hero outfit.

The first obstacle was her hips. Even this slightly-looser suit struggled to accommodate them. Trinity was forced to tug harder than she would have liked as she tried to fit herself into the leggings. After a few moments of effort, though, the material stretched, allowing her to slip the waistband up over her hips. The extra length should have provided some more slack, but it seemed that Trinity's curves needed all of it and more. The next obstacle was her tits. They were bigger than Radiance's, and it showed. Trinity was forced to bend and contort her body a little in order to slip the chestpiece over them comfortably. It was more than a little embarrassing, especially with Radiance standing right there, watching her. She was in annoyingly good shape, and while she was in no position to gloat now, she was sure to remember everything later.

Once the suit was in place, it was, predictably enough, loose in a few places too - mostly the shoulders. Fortunately, as Radiance had promised, the suit was adjustable. Trinity had to check over it a few times to figure out how, exactly, but once she got to grips with the right straps and fasteners, she was able to get everything how she wanted it. The result felt snug, certainly, but it wasn't absurdly baggy or suffocatingly tight. There was only one thing left for Trinity to do: step back, and take a good look at herself.

It wasn't quite the vision of heroic perfection it had been in Trinity's fantasies. If she'd been in a more lurid state of mind, she might have realized that it looked completely obscene. On her curvy body, the suit fit more like a

slutty Halloween costume than anything else. The way it stretched over her hips drew a shocking amount of attention to them, and made it look like the material was threatening to split at any moment. It was also so tight around her chest it ended up conforming almost completely to the shape of her tits, lifting them up on her chest like one of the many, perennially-popular fake hero costumes for strippers. All over her, it highlighted each and every one of Trinity's soft curves, baring every line of her body for all to see, and squishing some of her well-placed fat in ways that were sure to leave people drooling. The contrasting gold and purple colors didn't help matters, with the purple panels along her sides drawing even more attention to the shape of her body. Anyone impure-minded who saw Trinity was sure to find themselves wondering what it would feel like to sink their hands into those curves.

For someone like Trinity, who normally liked to keep her body under wraps, it should have been a deal-breaker.

Instead, it barely registered.

All Trinity saw were the sweeping panels of burnished gold and rich purple. All she cared to notice were all the little flairs and details that reminded her of Radiance. To her, that was blinding. It overshadowed everything else, and filled her with awe. Now, at long last, she was stepping into her idol's shoes. In her mind's eye, Trinity truly looked the part. She looked like a hero. Nothing could have been better, and she couldn't keep a glowing smile from her face.

“So,” Trinity said, turning to Radiance and striking a pose. “How do I look?”

Radiance’s mouth opened and closed for a brief moment. She was compelled to answer, but she seemed sincerely unsure what to say. “It’s... very...”

Tired of hesitating, Trinity prompted her: “It looks good, right?”

Immediately, the purple in Radiance’s eyes shimmered as those words worked their way into her head. She brightened at once, and replied in a calm, pleasing voice: “Yes, it looks good.”

Trinity blushed a little, as she realized what she’d just done. “No, wait, I mean, what do you really think?”

“It looks good,” Radiance repeated immediately.

Trinity cursed herself. “No, no, like...” Before she could figure out a way to rephrase her question, Trinity stopped herself. Hearing Radiance tell her she looked good was really nice. Really, really nice. Maybe it wasn’t so bad to make Radiance encourage her. Should she really be using her power for something like that? Probably not. But what was the harm? It was easy for Trinity to convince herself that it barely even counted as breaking any rules. She’d already hypnotized Radiance, after all. Making her say some nice things too was nothing.

"You think I look really, really nice," Trinity told Radiance, who nodded eagerly.

"I think you look really, really nice."

"You think your old costume suits me perfectly, and I look very pretty and heroic in it."

"I think my old costume suits you perfectly, and you look very pretty and heroic in it."

Even hearing Radiance echo her words back to Trinity was gratifying, especially since she could also see her blank eyes widening slightly with admiration.

"You *love* seeing me like this."

"I love seeing you like this."

Trinity blushed a little, and giggled to herself. She knew she should stop there, but she couldn't resist adding just one more suggestion: "You think it's hot."

"I think it's hot," Radiance repeated obediently, and it became her truth.

"So," Trinity said, striking another pose, "what do you think?"

She turned to face away from Radiance and threw her head to one side, resting her hands stoutly on her hips. She had her legs spread a little to make herself seem more imposing, and the pose made sure Radiance got an excellent look at her figure - and especially, at her ass.

"It's..." Trinity heard a sharp intake of breath from behind her, "*really* great."

Trinity purred and preened. She knew Radiance's emotions and reactions were probably a little muted from her shimmer, so hearing her breath catch and her voice drop a little was all the more satisfying. She turned and struck another pose, this time with a hand outstretched to lean against the wall, and her chest stuck out proudly. "Yeah?"

Radiance's eyes dropped to stare at Trinity's tits. "Yeah... you look amazing."

Trinity giggled like a schoolgirl. This was so much fun. More than anything, listening to Radiance praise her filled her with warmth and confidence. She wanted more. "And heroic?"

"Yes." Radiance nodded emphatically. "Very heroic."

There wasn't a trace of insincerity in her voice.

Somehow, hearing that really made Trinity's cheeks burn. She looked down. "I'm doing a good job, aren't I?"

"You're doing a good job," Radiance repeated after.

"T-thank you," Trinity whispered. She knew her shimmer was the only reason Radiance was saying that to her, but that didn't explain why it caused such a strong reaction. Why was her stomach doing loops? "Say it again."

"You're doing a good job."

Trinity retreated from her pose, folding her arms over herself bashfully. Her whole face was on fire. What was happening to her? Inexplicable desires were suddenly blossoming within her, and before she could get a grip on them, one of them made it to her lips.

"Tell me I'm a good girl."

The moments before Radiance obeyed felt like an eternity.

"You're a good girl, Trinity."

The word 'blushing' was completely inadequate to describe the shade of red Trinity turned upon hearing that. Somehow, despite everything that had happened to her since being captured by Radiance, this was perhaps the most embarrassed she'd ever felt. She was about to explode. Before anything more

could happen, Trinity rushed out of the bathroom and into what passed for a bedroom. She needed to catch her breath.

Once she did, she scolded herself for being so self-indulgent. There were far, far more important things than having fun with Radiance.

Like becoming a hero.

She turned her eyes to the door. Without Radiance or her chain, there was nothing to stop Trinity unlatching it and leaving. She looked back towards the bathroom, where Radiance was waiting. Probably, if she left her alone, much of her mind control would wear off after a few hours. Radiance was strong-willed, and Trinity hadn't made much of an effort to get too deep into her head. That was fine. Trinity had never intended to keep Radiance permanently brainwashed. That would have been wrong. She just needed to make the superhero give her a chance.

"I'll be back later," she called out, and slipped out of Radiance's safehouse and into the streets of Future City.

Candace sighed, as she watched the woman she'd just mugged run off out of the alleyway. She took little pleasure from it, especially when the rewards were so slight. She weighed the woman's purse. It was light. What had she been expecting? It wasn't like anyone carried cash these days. But if she was lucky, maybe there would be a few valuables she could pawn. She looked up at the sunset sky. Evening had just started to settle across Future City. Maybe she had time to hit up somewhere else before too many superheroes came out to play. Or too many supervillains. They were just as dangerous, whichever side of the law you were on.

The down-on-her-luck mugger rubbed her head. This sucked. Future City was a terrible place to be a petty criminal. Too bad it was also her home. Times were getting hard, and there weren't exactly a lot of opportunities for a girl like her. She didn't fit any of the recruitment profiles the big corps were looking for, but she had to make rent just like everyone else. The best she could do was try to only pick on people who looked like getting their wallet snatched would only ruin their week, not their life.

"Stop right there!"

Candace wheeled to face the direction the bombastic, feminine voice was coming from. She clutched at her knife, knowing full well she didn't know how to use it - and that it probably wouldn't be much help, if she was dealing with a super.

She lowered her weapon a little, though, when she saw the person who had

yelled at her emerge from the shadows.

It was a woman about her height. Candace couldn't have said anything about her hair or her face, because that wasn't what she was looking at. It was completely impossible not to stare at what she was wearing. Her outfit was something like a porn parody of a superhero outfit - Candace couldn't tell if it was just two sizes too small, or if it was actually designed to make her body look so lewd. Either way, this woman had curves for days, and she was showing all of them. But Candace knew she couldn't get too distracted.

"What do you want?" she shouted.

The strangely-dressed woman grinned, and rested her hands on her hips.

"My name is the Shimmer," she announced. "And I'm here to bring you to justice!"

Chapter 11

“My name is the Shimmer,” Trinity announced, with her hands rested proudly on her hips. “And I’m here to bring you to justice!”

Delivering a line like that to a criminal’s face, as corny as it was, made Trinity’s heart swell with pride. It made her feel like a real hero. The mugger she’d cornered, though, didn’t seem so impressed. Her face was doing an odd little dance, caught between fear and amusement.

“Are... you serious?” Candace asked cautiously.

Trinity couldn’t resist pouting a little. This wasn’t the first time she’d been met with a reaction like that tonight. She’d been trying to find people in need of help, but had mostly only succeeding on confusing everyone she came across. This was the first real crime she’d discovered.

“Yes!” she insisted. “Why does everyone keep asking that? I’m a hero!”

The corner of Candace’s mouth twitched. “Have you seen yourself?”

“What do you mean?”

“It’s... uh...”

Candace threw a meaningful glance down at Trinity’s outfit. The costume she’d borrowed from Radiance was far too small for her, in all the most unfortunate and embarrassing places. A few hours running across the city hadn’t done it any favors. The stretchy material was struggling to contain Trinity’s impressive hips, and the way it clung desperately to her tits and her thighs didn’t leave much to the imagination. It wasn’t a dignified look.

Not that Trinity, in her current, brainwashed state, was aware of that.

“Let’s just say you might need to give *that* another pass,” Candace commented dryly.

Trinity glanced down at herself. She didn’t see that she was dressed more like a stripper than a superhero. She couldn’t. The lingering effects of her own shimmer were warping her mind, filling her with fantasies and desires that were far more potent than mere reality. Candace’s comments did little to either enlighten or dissuade the brainwashed supervillain. On the contrary, she was a little pleased to be engaged in hostile banter with a villain - albeit a very petty one.

“Wait,” Candace said abruptly. “What did you call yourself?”

“Shimmer!” Trinity repeated proudly.

The mugger squinted at her. "That sounds kinda familiar."

Trinity blushed a little, embarrassed. "I-I doubt it."

"No, it does," Candace insisted. "I've definitely heard of a Shimmer online. I guess she got her ass kicked by Radiance a couple days ago, or something. And before that? I'm sure I can remember a bunch of other times she's been in the news."

Trinity turned a deeper shade of red. She hadn't prepared for this.

Candace's face registered a growing certainty. "You even look like the photo that was going around on social media yesterday."

"Shit," Trinity spat unhappily, under her breath. She'd been hoping she could simply turn over a new leaf and start afresh. After all, she was now horrified by her former, villainous escapades. Perhaps she should choose a new name. It simply hadn't occurred to her that anyone would recognize her.

"But," Candace continued. "You sure as hell weren't dressed like *that*."

"That's not important!" Trinity insisted. She needed to regain control of the situation. "What's important is that I saw you rob that poor woman. As a hero, I can't stand by and do nothing in the face of a crime like that! Put down your knife, and we can do this the easy way."

She smiled, satisfied that she sounded suitably heroic.

“Hold up,” Candace replied. She lowered her knife a little, but didn’t drop it. “Aren’t you actually a villain, though?”

Trinity tried her best not to look too ashamed or too crestfallen. “No!”

“No, you totally are!” Candace retorted. “That’s why you were fighting with Radiance!”

Trinity almost flinched. That fight felt like forever ago. A lifetime ago. It wasn’t pleasant to be reminded of what she’d done. Her feelings towards Eleanor Quinn and her ilk of billionaire hadn’t changed, exactly, but she couldn’t stand the thought that she’d set out to rob her of her money. Radiance had forcefully impressed on her that her previous way of doing things was selfish and foolish. She needed to change. She couldn’t just break the law whenever she pleased, or take money from whoever she thought deserved it.

That was against the rules.

“What is this, some kind of joke?” Candace demanded incredulously, now certain who she was dealing with. “C’mon, Shimmer! I thought you were cool! Stealing from the rich, y’know, all that.”

“It’s... not cool!” Trinity shot back, slightly desperately. “Stealing is wrong!”

Candace just snorted. “What the hell happened to you? How did you go from pulling off robberies to dressing like a bimbo and coming out here to fuck with me?”

“I...”

Trinity didn’t know what to say. She couldn’t possibly explain what had happened, could she? There was no way she could just tell this person that Radiance had captured her and forced her to use her own mind-control powers against herself, twisting her values and turning her from a career villain into some kind of goody-two-shoes. Or, that she’d then incapacitated Radiance and escaped from her, wearing one of her old, prototype uniforms, solely so that she could try her own hand at being a superhero. Even to Trinity, it sounded insane. Her own actions weren’t even slightly rational.

But that was far less important to her than the desires and values Radiance had implanted into her mind. They beat at the inside of her head like a drum; a rhythm that couldn’t be delayed or denied. The words Radiance had used to brainwash herself were her faith and her god. They were more important to her than food or water or air. And far, far more important than dignity or rationality.

She loved to obey the law.

She loved to follow the rules.

She wanted to be good.

She wanted to be a good girl.

She needed to protect people.

She needed to make people feel good.

Trinity took a deep, calming breath. With those all-important principles fixed firmly in her mind, she knew what she had to do. She couldn't let this criminal lead her astray, nor could she let herself succumb to embarrassment or taunting.

She was a hero now. And she was going to do what heroes do.

Trinity fixed Candace with a serious, righteous glare. "Put the knife down and come with me," she demanded. "Last chance."

Candace glanced nervously from side to side. She seemed to sense the change in Trinity's demeanor, and was obviously trying to judge how afraid of her she should be, and how far there was between her and the entrance of the alleyway they were standing in. After a few moments, and another derisive look at Trinity's ridiculous, whorish costume, she made her choice.

"This is a joke," Candace scoffed. "Get lost."

She glanced at the entrance to the alley again. And by the time she looked back, Trinity was right there in front of her.

Usually, given the nature of her powers, Trinity did her best to avoid any kind of physical confrontation. It didn't play to her strengths, especially not in a city full of heroes strong enough to crush a car between their hands. But in part because of that, Trinity had taught herself how to move. When she needed to, she could move a lot faster than most people expected of her. Normally, that skill was reserved exclusively for running away.

But it was just as effective for closing the distance between her and Candace.

Candace's eyes went wide as, before she really knew what was happening, Trinity's hand fastened around her wrist. With strength bolstered by righteous fervor, Trinity jerked her hand to one side, pulling her knife harmlessly out of the way.

And with the other hand, she reached for Candace's head.

"F-fuck!" Candace shrieked, in the instant before Trinity pressed her thumb, shimmer flaring, against the center of her head.

"Drop it," Trinity ordered, as she saw her power surging through the mugger.

Candace didn't hesitate. She couldn't. Before she could protest, before she could even process what had just happened, her fingers relaxed and allowed her knife to slip through her fingers and clatter uselessly against the ground. She stared at Trinity with uncomprehending eyes that rapidly changed color to the familiar, vibrant purple that indicated she was under Trinity's control.

Trinity breathed a sigh of joy and relief. She had defused the situation. Candace no longer posed any threat to her. Like most people, she was utterly incapable of putting up any real resistance to her shimmer. Controlling Radiance had felt like trying to swim through treacle; compared to that, getting into Candace's head was child's play. She couldn't so much as blink if Trinity didn't want her to.

But much, much more important than that was the fact that Trinity had finally done it.

She'd been a hero!

The warm sense of reward and satisfaction that flooded the brainwashed villain was like nothing she'd ever felt before in her life. It was better than sex. The all-consuming urges Radiance had inflicted on her were finally being sated. She was being a hero. She had stopped a criminal and saved the day! She could even give that woman her purse back, if she managed to catch up with her. Trinity was upholding the rules. She was enforcing the law. She was keeping innocent people safe, and making them feel good. She was being an

obedient servant of the people.

Trinity had done it!

So, what next?

The importance of that question dawned on her as she looked at the entranced girl twitching helplessly in her grip. What was Trinity going to do with her? She felt slightly embarrassed upon realizing she hadn't bothered to think that far ahead. Trinity's brow furrowed as she considered the issue, drawing upon her new mantra as she did so.

WWRD: what would Radiance do?

Take the mugger to the cops, probably. That seemed like the most lawful option, and for that reason alone, Trinity felt a powerful pull towards it. But equally, she couldn't ignore that it presented numerous issues. She wasn't an official hero - not yet, anyway - which meant that the police were likely to be very skeptical of her and her intentions. Licensed heroes got a pass. Vigilantes were objects of suspicion, or even sanction. That went doubly for someone who was using mind-control powers. Trinity could have the girl confess her crimes, certainly, but given that she could also just as easily make her say anything else, that didn't count for much.

Furthermore, in light of what Candace had told her, it seemed like there was every chance the cops would recognize her. And if they did, that would

bring untold complications upon her and Radiance both.

So, the police? Not an option.

Trinity considered letting the girl off with a stern warning. That might work. She didn't exactly seem like a hardened criminal, and a scary encounter with a hero was likely to keep her straight from now on. But was that what a hero would do? Was that what Radiance would do?

Suddenly, it occurred to her that there was something else Radiance might do.

She might use her power to turn Candace into a good girl.

It was a real lightbulb moment, but it took Trinity a few more moments to sort through all the ethical wrangling involved. On the one hand, using her shimmer to permanently brainwash someone seemed like a real no-no. It was exactly the kind of thing Radiance had objected to her doing. But on the other hand, it was exactly what Radiance had done to her. Radiance was a hero. She did the right thing. If she had done that to Trinity, it had to have been for a good reason. And besides, now Trinity couldn't help but be thankful for it. If it was in the name of the good and the law, wasn't that the most important thing?

Trinity nodded to herself, feeling very proud at having figured it out all on her own.

“Tell me,” Trinity began, addressing Candace, “what’s your name?”

“Candace,” she replied at once.

Trinity couldn’t help but shiver. Despite it all, it felt good to be in control. Hearing a girl speak to her in that distant, placid tone of voice was a pleasure too deep to ever be uprooted.

“Good,” Trinity said gently. “And why are you out here, doing this?” She gestured to the knife.

“I... I didn’t have a choice.” Candace sounded a little more uncertain this time.

Trinity nodded. “I see.”

She really did. Trinity understood all too well what it felt like to have no other choices, in a place like Future City. Her heart went out to Candace.

Just one more reason she wanted to save her. To show her the light.

“But,” she continued, “don’t you know that it’s wrong?”

Candace’s eyelids flitted. Even when they were closed, Trinity’s purple shimmer-light could be seen, shining through. “It’s... it’s...”

Clearly, that question was a little too much for the hypnotized girl. Trinity decided to try something else. “Don’t you know it’s against the rules?”

At that, Candace stilled. “Yes.”

Trinity couldn’t suppress an eager smile. She knew exactly what to do. “Going against the rules is bad, Candace.”

Candace’s eyes went wide as Trinity added a little extra *push* to her shimmer. She could see the weight of that suggestion settle across Candace, smothering and heavy, bringing with it guilt and shame.

“Going against the rules is bad,” Trinity repeated. “But following the rules is good.”

Candace nodded, eyes shimmering. She was little more than a helpless puppet, with Trinity pulling the strings inside her mind. Trinity, for her part, was feeling equally swept away by the encounter. For all that Radiance had done to her, nothing she’d said stopped Trinity from drawing intense, dizzying pleasure from being in control of a girl like Candace. She felt righteous. She felt powerful. Trinity was finding her rhythm again, and letting her words carry her away as she altered Candace to her own liking.

“So, you see,” she explained. “You’ve been a bad girl. You want to be a good girl instead.”

Her words made Candace quiver as they ran through the poor girl's mind, flattening her values and her priorities into one, simple paradigm.

Bad girl.

Good girl.

A plaintive need started to shine through in her eyes. She wanted to be a good girl. Trinity could see it, as clear as day.

"You need to be a good girl," Trinity pressed. "Being a good girl is more important than anything. Everyone wants to be good, don't they? Good things are good. Bad things are bad. It only makes sense. You want to be a good girl. Right?"

Candace nodded faster and faster as Trinity continued to speak. "Yes. Yes, yes, yes. I want to be a good girl."

"And following the rules is good," Trinity reminded her. "Good girls follow the rules."

"Oh." Candace's mood sank. "Yes. Good girls follow the rules."

"It's OK," Trinity said softly. She couldn't resist reaching out with her free hand, to stroke a gentle, comforting finger across Candace's cheek. "You can

still be a good girl. I'll make you a good girl. Just like me!"

Candace kept nodding eagerly. She was as helpless as a doll. She was like a little clockwork trinket, all stuck and stalled out. Trinity couldn't wait to wind her back up again. She tried to remember what Radiance had said to her, but eagerness carried her onward before she could consider the weight of her own words.

"Good girls follow the rules," Trinity told her again. "And good girls love to help people."

A nod.

"Good girls love to make people feel good." Trinity did her best to repeat what Radiance had said, but she was starting to lose focus. The feeling of doing this to Candace was filling her with feverish arousal. "Good girls love to be helpful. Good girls love to do what they're told. That's why they follow the rules."

There was more nodding, as Candace absorbed each and every word. She felt so pliable. So easy to change.

"And you love those things too," Trinity continued. She knew she was going too far. She knew she should pull back. It wasn't right. But she couldn't help it. "Because you're a good girl, Candace. You're going to be a good girl from now on."

“I...” Candace was mouthing feeble little half-protests, but nodding at the same time. Trinity could see in her eyes that immense inner conflict that came with having the very core of your being rewritten. Being a good girl was now the absolute center of her identity, and everything else was shifting to orbit around it. “I’m a...”

“You’re a good girl,” Trinity pushed. “Being a good girl is the most important thing in the world.”

Finally, Candace nodded again. Her eyes were blazing pools of shimmer. She couldn’t resist. Trinity was so very tempted to keep going, because of how divine it felt to be inside of the poor girl’s head, but she couldn’t bring herself to. Instead, she slowly took her hands away from Candace, and watched her slowly return to her senses.

“W-wha,” the girl bleated, as the daze of Trinity’s shimmer slowly receded from her.

“Hey.” Trinity was smiling and swelling with pride. She reached out to rest a hand on Candace’s shoulder, to help steady her. “It’s OK. Just take a moment.”

Candace nodded gratefully. Her eyes were wide as she looked up at Trinity. “You... saved me?”

Trinity wanted to jump up and down with excitement, but she managed to

restrain herself to a stoic nod. She was entirely unprepared for the girl to throw her arms around her in a tight, passionate embrace.

“My hero!” Candace cried. “I... I didn’t even realize... thank you so much for redeeming me.”

Trinity tried to stop herself from blushing, and tried to keep herself from noticing how good Candace’s hair smelled. As she hugged her back, she felt on uncertain footing. What was a hero supposed to do in this situation?

“Oh, you know,” she said bashfully, as Candace drew back from her. “It’s all in a day’s work.”

“No, no way!” Candace argued, her eyes burning with earnest enthusiasm. “You’re amazing! You’re... you’re perfect! You save people, you follow the law, you make everyone feel good. You’re everything I want to be!”

Now, Trinity couldn’t stop her cheeks turning red. “Hold on, that’s a little-”

“You’re *such* a good girl,” Candace finished, shivering rapturously.

Hearing those words stopped Trinity in her tracks. Her mind simply went blank for a moment. She had to struggle to remain standing. “W-well, maybe-”

“And you were a villain so recently too,” Candace muttered to herself. She was too caught up in her own little world to notice how Trinity was reacting to

her. “You switched sides? Just like that? Just to follow the rules? That’s amazing. That’s... that’s what I need to do too!”

Trinity still wasn’t sure what was happening, but the hairs on the back of her neck were starting to stand on end. Maybe this wasn’t going how she’d planned. Maybe she should have reined herself in. “Look-”

Candace cut her off yet again, clutching at Trinity’s chest and looking up at her with pleading eyes. “Won’t you show me how to be a good girl?”

Trinity let out a very, very tiny whimper.

She couldn’t help it. Nothing could stop her from being moved by a cute girl saying that to her, in that tone of voice.

Not that she was going to take advantage. That would be wrong. It wouldn’t be heroic at all.

“Please?” Candace begged. “I’ll do *anything*.”

Immediately, Trinity forgot what she had been saying to herself. For a moment, she forgot almost everything. Probably even her own name.

“I...” she babbled, very un-heroically. “Uh... that’s... um...”

Candace just waited, big eyes blinking. Trinity cursed herself. Why couldn’t

she think?

It really didn't help that Candace was standing so close to her. Now that there was no longer any danger or tension in the situation - at least, not that kind of tension - it was impossible for Trinity not to notice how pretty the girl was. She had this lovely, wavy, sideswept hair that was dyed a deep blue, and her plump, full lips, slightly parted, inspired all kinds of wicked thoughts. She was wearing a big coat over a baggy hoodie and loose-fitting jeans, but now that Trinity had felt Candace hug her, it was clear that underneath all that, the girl had an incredible body. In particular, the way her large chest squished as she pressed it up against Trinity was one of the reasons the newly-turned hero had been blushing.

Unfortunately for her, Candace wasn't oblivious to the way Trinity was looking at her.

"Hey," the brainwashed girl said, tilting her head curiously. "Are you a lesbian?"

"Y-yeah," Trinity replied thoughtlessly. "Wait, um, what?"

A coy smile spread across Candace's face. "That's perfect. Now I know exactly how to make you feel good."

Trinity was thunderstruck. It was impossible to mistake Candace's meaning, but this wasn't what Trinity had intended. "N-n-no!" she protested.

“No way, that’s-”

“Aw, c’mon.” Candace was affecting a light, playful, girlish tone of her voice, but her eyes reflected a deep, growing hunger. “Why not? I can make you feel good. Isn’t that what you wanted?”

“F-fuck no!” Trinity tried to insist, but her confusion and indecision came through in her voice. What *did* she want? It was so confusing. Her own, natural desires were at war with Radiance’s brainwashing, and with Candace trying to seduce her, neither the angel nor the devil on her shoulder had time to catch their breath. “T-that’s not... I’m a hero! It isn’t right! It’d... it’d be bad.”

She’d hoped that would get Candace to back off, but the girl seemed to sense that Trinity was struggling to believe her own words.

“I think it’s perfect,” Candace countered. “The hero gets the girl, don’t they? Isn’t that how it’s supposed to go? Don’t you deserve some kind of a reward for being so brave and heroic and *good*?”

There was that word again, sending shivers down the spines of both brainwashed women.

“I... I...” Was that how it was supposed to go? Trinity had no idea. She didn’t know the first thing about being a superhero. Not really. She tried to think it through properly. What would Radiance do? Radiance would refuse... right? She’d refused Trinity, after all. But when Trinity thought about all the other

things Radiance had done to her, it started to get much, much more murky.

And didn't heroism deserve a reward? That seemed only natural. To Trinity, it was the most important thing in the world. The summit of all that was good. Heroes enforced the rules and the laws. They protected and saved people. What felt better than being saved? So, heroes should be rewarded. Of course they should.

"And," Candace added, giving Trinity a practiced, adorable pout as she pressed her advantage, "don't *I* deserve it? You made me a good girl, Shimmer. You saved me. Now let me be *your* good girl. Won't you let me be a good girl for you? Won't you let me make you feel good? It would be so very mean not to, you know. What else am I supposed to do? I need it. I *need* it."

Her plea struck a chord with Trinity. She remembered what it had been like, when Radiance had refused to let her act on her new desires. The denial of her new calling had hit so hard it was almost painful. Could she really do that to Candace? No. No, of course not. There was nothing good or heroic about that. She wanted to make people feel good.

This was what Candace needed to feel good.

"O-OK," Trinity agreed. It was all starting to click into place in her head, though she had no idea if she was reasoning it through properly or merely talking herself into sin. Everything was so scrambled. But she wasn't sure how much she even cared anymore. Her body was growing hot. It wanted this, even

if Trinity didn't. Still, though, she decided to try and end this as quickly as possible. "Yeah. Um. Kiss me."

"A kiss?" Candace tilted her head again, and giggled. "Of course, hero."

And just like that, Candace was kissing her. Trinity didn't get the moment to steel herself she'd been hoping for. Instead, she found herself staggering backwards a step or two as Candace threw her arms around her in a deep, fierce, passionate kiss. Her lips tasted incredible, and they felt just as hungry as her eyes. It was the kind of kiss it was easy to get lost in - and so Trinity did. After everything she'd been through, her arousal was on a hair trigger, and a girl like Candace grabbing her and making out with her in an alleyway was like a match to gasoline. When Candace finally drew back, Trinity was seeing stars.

"W-wow," Trinity breathed. Candace looked more than just pleased at her response. She was glowing with a fervent, religious, inner light. "OK, um... I think I should maybe take you somewhere. Like...maybe a hospital."

Candace just giggled again. "What do you mean?" she asked. "We're not done."

Trinity paled. How did she feel so out of her depth, so powerless? She was supposed to be the one in control of this situation! She had superpowers, for Christ's sake. Instead, she felt like a deer in headlights. "Yes we are," she said, as firmly as she could muster. "You kissed me. That's my reward."

“Yes, I kissed you,” Candace mused. She reached out and ran a hand down Trinity’s side, making the would-be hero shiver. “But I can tell you’re not the kind of hero to be satisfied with just a kiss.”

She glanced meaningfully at Trinity’s outfit.

Trinity’s heart was pounded. She felt like she was being torn in half. “B-but,” she attempted weakly. Her mind was grasping at straws as she searched for any reason she shouldn’t give in. “But I made you like this! Isn’t that, you know, kind of fucked up?”

“I don’t care,” Candace replied immediately. It was obvious from the look in her eyes that it was true. “I just want to be a good girl.” She licked her lips. “C’mon, if you didn’t want me this way, why did you make me this way? I’m saying yes. I’m *begging* you, even.”

“God...” Trinity panted. She was at her limit. Candace was throwing herself at her. What was she supposed to do? She was too wet to resist.

“Look, I get it,” Candace whispered, working her lips ever closer to Trinity’s ear. “It’s your pride as a hero, or something? Or maybe you just don’t want to be in control. It doesn’t matter. I’ll make it easy. I’ll be a good girl. Just let me touch you, and when you want more, all you have to do is nod.”

Trinity couldn’t bring herself to mount any protest, and so, after a second

or two had passed, Candace reached out and stroked a hand down Trinity's cheek.

"Here?" Candace teased, drawing her thumb over Trinity's lips. "Or... here?" Her hand moved down to Trinity's neck, caressing her like a lover.

Trinity shivered, but she didn't make a noise. She didn't nod.

"Here?" Candace started feeling at the curves of Trinity's tits with her hand, feeling their shape before rubbing at her nipples. It was desperately hard for Trinity to keep herself from moaning. "Or..."

Suddenly her hand darted downwards, and her fingers started to pry Trinity's thighs apart.

The moment her fingertips touched Trinity's crotch, she felt her head start to move in involuntary agreement.

But an all-too-familiar voice broke the moment in two.

"Trinity?" yelled Radiance, from nearby. "Trinity! Where are you?"

For all the action she'd seen in her time as a legendary superhero, Radiance was approaching blind panic as she ran through the streets and back alleys of Future City, in a growing search area around her safehouse. She'd considered flying, but she didn't want to miss anything from high up. And moreover, she didn't want anyone to see her like this.

How had she fucked everything up this much? That was the one question she kept coming back to. Radiance had made insane decision after insane decision, and now her whole life was unraveling. She couldn't explain any of it. It was like something was possessing her - but in her heart, the superhero knew that wasn't true. It was just that, whenever she saw Shimmer's face - Trinity's face - she stopped thinking straight.

Somehow, she had to fix this. Radiance didn't know how. She wasn't sure how to fix the mess she'd already made, and she didn't dare to think about the mess Trinity might be out there making right now. Not that Radiance could blame her for it. Not this time. It was all her own fault.

And most of all, Radiance needed to make sure Trinity didn't get hurt.

Radiance was pretty sure she was in the right area. Trinity probably hadn't gone far, and ever since coming back to her senses, Radiance had been tracking rumors and potential sightings on social media. Mercifully, whatever Trinity had done to her had only lasted for a few hours. Radiance's head still

felt like a cracked egg, but she was relatively confident she was in her right mind. All she had to do was find Trinity, shut her down, and then maybe everything would be OK.

That was what Radiance was telling herself as she rounded a corner, and found herself face-to-face with someone she absolutely didn't want to see.

As a fellow member of the Apex League, the two of them had worked together in a professional capacity dozens of times, but that didn't make the woman standing before Radiance any less intimidating. Normally, Radiance was always grateful for her ruthless determination and razor-sharp intelligence, but now that it might be turned against her, she was beginning to understand why her comrade was so feared by Future City's villains. Everyone recognized her gray, armored costume, with its iconic, beaked mask, and even though she didn't have any superpowers, everyone respected what she was capable of.

The Peregrine.

"Radiance." The Peregrine greeted her with a nod. "Looking for something?"

Radiance grit her teeth. She didn't have time for this, but she also knew that acting suspicious would only attract the other hero's curiosity. "Just patrolling."

“Is that so?” There was a faint whirring noise, as the sophisticated lenses built into the Peregrine’s mask adjusted and narrowed. “Where have you been?”

“That’s... my business,” Radiance replied. “It’s personal.”

“Not if it affects the city,” the Peregrine retorted. “Something’s off with you.”

“What do you mean?” Though she was trying not to show it, Radiance’s skin was itching under her fellow hero’s intense, inscrutable gaze.

“The charity heist, the other day. It’s not like you to let a villain like Shimmer slip through your fingers. Not like you at all. And then suddenly, I can’t seem to get you to take my calls.”

Radiance clenched a fist at her side. “Is that meant to be some kind of accusation?”

“Accusation?” The moment the word left Radiance’s mouth, she knew it was poorly chosen. “What would I be accusing you of?” the Peregrine asked. Then, her voice brightened. “We’re friends, aren’t we? I’m worried about you.”

Radiance sighed. Now she was making an even bigger mess. She’d handled this all wrong. “Right. Sorry. I’ve just... been feeling a little under the weather. Haven’t been sleeping right.”

“I see.” It was impossible for her to tell if the Peregrine believed her or not. Calling the two of them ‘friends’ was a distinct overstatement. They knew each others’ identities, yes, and they’d fought alongside each other dozens of times. But that didn’t make the Peregrine any less of a mystery to Radiance. “And what about Shimmer?”

A chill ran down Radiance’s spine. “What about her?”

“I figured you’d have been looking for her. It’s the reason I’m here.” The Peregrine’s lips curled into a smile. “A little bird told me she might be in the area.”

The Peregrine often made reference to her ‘little birds’. She never explained what she meant by that, but whatever they were, they were rarely wrong. Radiance was, for once, too distracted to question her.

“Leave her to me,” she demanded immediately.

“Oh?” The Peregrine sounded faintly amused.

“She’s mine.” Radiance tried to smile. She thought she might have succeeded. “She got away from me once. You know how it is. It’s a matter of pride.”

The Peregrine seemed to accept that. “Just make sure you get the money back soon.”

“Huh?” Radiance was more than a little taken aback. For one thing, she hadn’t given so much as a single thought to the money Trinity had stolen. And for another, it was a strange request, coming from her fellow superhero. “The money?”

The Peregrine nodded. She seemed a little tense, somehow. “It was for a good cause, after all. It’s very important that it’s all recovered.”

“Well, sure, but...” As much as Radiance wanted to get back to hunting for Trinity, her instincts were telling her something was off. “Why do you care? Surely getting Shimmer off the streets should be our priority.”

The armored superhero’s face twitched slightly beneath her mask. “I know what I’m talking about.”

“I’m just concerned that-”

“Radiance,” the Peregrine said, interrupting her firmly. “Let’s just *do it my way*, OK?”

Radiance blinked slightly, before nodding automatically. “Right.”

“Good.” The Peregrine stepped past her, hefting her grappling hook, and fired it, letting it latch to a suitable anchor point on the building next to them. “I’m sure Future City can count on you.”

An instant later, she was gone, her platinum hair and flowing cape billowing out behind her as she was launched gracefully into the air. Radiance blinked a few more times. The Peregrine being on her back was another headache she didn't need. She had better deal with this all as quickly as possible. Once she was sure the Peregrine was out of earshot, she started sprinting through the night, calling out her prey's name in the faint hope that she might come running.

"Trinity? Trinity! Where are you?"

She needed to find her.

And she needed to get all that stolen money back.

Chapter 12

“Trinity? Trinity! Where are you?”

The sound of Radiance’s voice froze Trinity on the spot. She’d figured Radiance would probably find her eventually, of course, but not this soon. She wasn’t ready yet.

She was very, very far from ready.

Trinity had just, for the first time since Radiance had brainwashed her to the side of the law, carried out a genuine feat of heroism - almost. She’d caught a criminal, but her attempts to do to Candace what Radiance had done to her weren’t going as planned. She’d been hoping to present Radiance with a reformed criminal and a grateful civilian, as proof of her capabilities as a hero. Maybe then, Radiance would recognize her as an equal and a partner superhero.

She wanted so, so badly to be a good girl.

Right now, though, all she had was a maddened Candace, desperate to seduce and please Trinity. Clearly, Trinity had done something wrong. Using

her supernatural shimmer, she'd made Candace a little too obsessed with being a good girl, and without Radiance's careful emphasis on law and wrongdoing to guide her, she'd ended up fixated on the sinful, sapphic desires that still lurked with Trinity.

Trinity was doing her best to resist the mind-controlled Candace's seductions. But she was at her limit, and a moment of distractedness was all the girl needed.

"Trinity? I know you're around here!"

When Trinity froze at the sound of Radiance's voice, Candace was already pressed up against her, teasing out Trinity's inhibitions through slow, gentle but insistent touches. She seized on the moment with glee, deftly unfastening part of Trinity's hero costume and snaking her hand down into her panties. The moment she felt Candace's fingertips against her cunt, Trinity started to cry out in pleasure. As embarrassing as it was, mind controlling Candace had been an incredible turn-on.

"Shh!" Candace urged, putting one of her hands over Trinity's mouth. Even though she wanted to silence Trinity's moans, their sound brought a satisfied grin to her face. "We don't want to get interrupted too soon, do we?"

"I-I... u-um..."

Trinity had no idea what to say. She was feeling torn asunder between

violently different emotions. She wanted Radiance to find her - to save her even. Deep down, she knew she was out of her depth. But... if Radiance found her like this, she would never give her any chance. She needed to figure out how she could salvage this. She needed more time.

And, of course, there was part of her that craved nothing more than giving in to Candace's advances.

"God, you're so wet," Candace purred. "I knew you wanted this. See? I can make you feel good."

Her eyes were manic. Every one of Trinity's weak shivers and suppressed moans was, to her, proof that she was serving her one and only purpose: pleasing Trinity.

Trinity struggled to fight through the pleasurable fog that was enveloping her. "We... n-need," she panted, "to... um... to go! Here... outside... it's b-bad."

Candace hesitated, and, for a moment, Trinity thought she might be about to back off. But then:

"I... can't," Candace decided. "I just can't wait, Shimmer. I need this. You understand, right? I know you do. I can see it."

Trinity made a sound of protest, but when Candace started rubbing her palm against the would-be hero's cunt again, it turned into more of a needy,

whining moan.

“Just tell me what you want,” Candace begged. “Are you a top? A bottom? What do you want me to do?”

Something about hearing that was unbelievably, desperately humiliating. Trinity was meant to be saving Candace from herself. Instead, she’d turned her into... this. How had it gone so wrong?

“I’ll just... I’ll take the lead,” Candace muttered to herself. “But you can tell me what to do if you want, OK? Or... or if you have any kinks? Just tell me.” Her voice was breathy, needy, fanatical. “You can use me however you want.”

Trinity moaned again. Her sex drive was betraying her. She couldn’t help it. The last couple of days had been nothing but teasing and torment for her. She needed sex. She needed release. And here Candace was, offering it to her, however she wanted it.

All while Trinity’s shimmer danced behind her eyes.

It was unbelievably fucking hot.

“Fuck,” Trinity panted, slumping back against the nearest wall. “Fuck.”

Candace seemed to take that as some kind of permission. Eyes gleaming, she used one hand to press Trinity yet further, making sure she was resting

her weight against the wall, and then she sank to her knees. She pulled the folds of Trinity's costume a little further apart until her sex was exposed, leaving Trinity to shiver at the sensation of the cold, evening air of Future City against her sensitive skin.

When she felt Candace's tongue touch her cunt, she had to cover her own mouth not to scream.

It was immediately clear that this wasn't Candace's first experience eating pussy. She wasn't wasting any time, either; there was no foreplay, no teasing. She was determined to get Trinity off. It was an all-consuming desire. It couldn't wait. Trinity's pleasure was her life's meaning. She needed to feel like a good girl.

"S-slower!" Trinity pleaded, letting out as little of her voice as possible. Her body was so sensitive, and what Candace was doing to her was overwhelming.

As eager as the brainwashed girl was to please, there was no submissiveness to the way she was going down on Trinity. She wanted to please her, yes, but if Trinity was going to be so hesitant, she was willing to take the lead. She rested one hand on Trinity's hip, using it to keep her pushed back firmly against the wall, and with the other, she reached up to grope and squeeze Trinity's tits. Even through her costume, the sensation was intense.

There was nothing Trinity could do but moan.

She couldn't believe how helpless she was. Trinity found herself moaning and writhing helplessly, but she couldn't even bring herself to try and squirm free. She was simply unable to keep herself still as pleasure wracked her body. At any moment, she could use her power on Candace again. She could stop her. But... she couldn't. She didn't have the willpower.

She was weak.

Trinity knew that. She'd always known that. She didn't really mind. People who cared about strength usually ended up dying real stupid when someone stronger came along. But this time was different. She was trying to be a superhero, and you needed to be strong to protect people. Radiance was proof of that.

Trinity couldn't even defend herself against one horny, desperate girl with a skillful tongue.

"See?" Candace panted. She was out of breath, and her face was slick and wet. "Aren't... I... good?"

The would-be hero could only moan and nod.

Hearing that made Candace twitch, almost as if she was having an orgasm. But it didn't distract her from her task. She pushed her face back between Trinity's thighs, pressing as close to her as she could and using her tongue to reach as deep inside her as possible. Trinity had to bite down on her own palm

when the tip of Candace's tongue started to curl, reaching all the way to her G-spot. She'd had some amazing head before, but the edge of humiliation and powerlessness was lending the ecstasy a sharp, wicked edge. It was just like how it had been with Radiance. Being this powerless drove her crazy.

Radiance.

Radiance was probably still nearby, and she was definitely still looking for Trinity. That fact hit Trinity like a thunderbolt. She couldn't let Radiance see her like this. She just... couldn't. Trinity renewed her struggles, trying to push Candace away from her, trying to catch even a single moment to breathe.

It was useless.

Trinity was slumped back against a wall, and thanks to Candace, her legs were jelly. She couldn't stand. The feeble way she pushed at Candace wasn't going to do a thing. The girl barely seemed to even notice. She was wholeheartedly devoted to Trinity's cunt. All she did in response was cling to Trinity even tighter, stretching her hand around to cup and squeeze Trinity's ass.

When she felt that, Trinity just went limp again. Her ass was still sensitive from the way Radiance had beaten her the day before, but now the pain felt more like pleasure. She was being overwhelmed.

"Are... are you gonna cum?" Candace demanded. Her eyes were unnervingly

wide, and even as she asked, she kept licking Trinity's pussy, kissing her outer lips and using her tongue to toy with Trinity's clit.

"I... I... u-um... n-no!" Trinity tried to insist. The way she twitched a moment later made the lie obvious.

"Don't hold back!" Candace told her. She kissed Trinity's inner thigh with animalistic zeal. "C'mon. Cum."

"No!" Trinity begged uselessly. "No, no, no!"

She couldn't cum. She couldn't. It would feel like defeat. It was just like with Radiance. She couldn't allow herself to go over the edge. It was the ultimate proof that she was incapable of resisting herself. Incapable of fighting her own body, her own desires.

But she couldn't stop.

Her body was betraying her. It was too tired, too sensitive, too overtaxed.

"N-n-no!" Trinity whimpered. Hearing how pathetic her own voice sounded made it even worse.

If mind-controlling Candace meant nothing more than using the girl to get off, how was she any better than she had been before?

It didn't matter. She didn't have a choice.

Trinity came.

Her orgasm felt like a dam breaking. It was a flood - not just between her legs, but across her whole body. Every last inch of her flesh was drowning in endorphins, and she felt each one of her muscles go totally limp as she released an unfathomable amount of tension. As shameful as it was, in the moment, Trinity was passed caring. Her head was empty. She saw white. Her moans were loud, even stifled by her hand, and as her orgasm went on they devolved into happy, giddy giggles.

But that wasn't the end.

It wasn't enough for Candace.

She was giggling too, as she felt Trinity's body squeeze and spasm around her. But she didn't stop; she kept sucking, kissing, licking, driving Trinity to even greater heights of mindless, helpless pleasure. There was a look of near-religious revelation on her face. She achieved her purpose. The purpose Trinity had given her. Now more than ever, she was convinced that this was what she was for: pleasing people.

Pleasing Trinity.

Right and wrong, the law - these meant nothing to her. Trinity had only told

her to be a good girl and to follow the rules.

She knew Trinity wanted it.

How was she supposed to be satisfied with just once?

“H-hey,” Trinity said in a thick, heavy, shaky voice, once she was starting to recover. “W-what are you doing?”

Candace wasn’t stopping.

She was still licking Trinity’s cunt, just as eagerly as she had been before. She had backed off just a little, taking it slow for a moment, allowing Trinity’s pleasure to reduce to a simmer so that it could soon boil over once more. Her ardent kisses and the ravenous look on her stained, drenched face made it clear she was far from sated.

“You want more.” Candace’s words came out like a desperate prayer. “Right? You do. I bet you do. Look how fucking sensitive you are! There’s no way you’re done now. Not with just that.”

“I... what?”

In truth, Trinity couldn’t tell. She couldn’t even feel her fingers. Her mind was still foggy from the earth-shattering orgasm she’d just been hit with. But her body, in some small way, flushed and shivered in anticipation in response

to Candace's words.

That was all the encouragement the brainwashed girl needed.

When she pushed her tongue, eagerly, insistently, back into Trinity's pussy, she was just as helpless as before.

Trinity's body was even more sensitive, almost painfully so. It was a little less needy, perhaps, but one orgasm after five minutes of having her cunt licked wasn't even close to enough for the primal, carnal part of her mind that had been tormented without proper release for two long, long days. Her mind was even foggier and even more turbulent than before. Fighting was the furthest thing from her mind. She might as well have tried to tell herself to climb a mountain. She was so lost to pleasure that her hand slipped from her mouth, and her sharp moans pierced the night long and loud.

After that, it was only a couple of minutes before Radiance arrived.

When the superhero first appeared, Trinity wasn't convinced she wasn't hallucinating. After all, the alley around her kept spinning, and her vision was filled with bright, bursting stars. Amidst all the pleasure and all the shame, Radiance was like a vision. She was impossibly tall, impossibly bright, impossibly gallant- and heroic-looking. She was in the throes of her second orgasm, and she felt so feverish remembering her own name would have been a struggle.

But when Radiance spoke, the mortifying reality of her situation crashed back upon her like an ice-cold wave.

“Trinity!” Radiance cried. Her voice rang with gratitude as she rushed towards her. “Are you hurt? I heard- oh.”

The hero froze in her tracks when she got close enough to see exactly what was going on, and realized what the sounds she had been hearing truly were. She and Trinity shared an awful moment, staring at one another in recognition. Trinity felt ashamed that Radiance was seeing her like this. It made her evident failure as a true hero all the more undeniable. She couldn’t tell what Radiance was feeling. More than anything, she simply looked embarrassed.

“What... who...” Radiance began uncertainly. For a brief instant Trinity thought she was about to turn and leave, but instead she took a deep breath and gathered herself. “Trinity,” Radiance repeated. “God damn it, I’ve been looking for you all over the city. Who’s... this?”

She didn’t need to point. Candace, somehow, didn’t seem to have noticed Radiance. Or perhaps she simply didn’t care; it was impossible to tell.

“She, um...” Trinity tried to keep her voice even as she spoke - not that there was much point in trying to maintain her dignity. She tried to think of a good lie, but that was pointless. She couldn’t lie to Radiance about this.

She needed to be a good girl too.

“She was trying to steal from s-someone,” Trinity explained, her voice quivering when Candace turned her attention to her clit. “I stopped her.”

“You... stopped her?” Radiance asked skeptically.

A whiny little half-moan escaped Trinity’s lips. “I tried to help her,” she explained, in a slightly desperate voice. “Like how you h-helped me.”

Slowly, the color drained from Radiance’s face.

“Oh, god,” she breathed. “You... god, no, no, no! How could you?”

Her accusatory tone was like a slap. “I-it’s what you did to me!” Trinity whined.

Radiance flinched. “But you weren’t supposed to do it!” She raked a hand through her hair. The hero looked furious with herself. “I never meant... god. Fuck. This is so fucked.”

Trinity wanted to say something, but that came to her lips was another moan.

“Fuck,” Radiance spat, before taking another step towards Trinity. “Come on. Let’s go. I need to fix this.”

Now, Candace took notice. The heavily-brainwashed girl slumped to one side, finally giving Trinity some space to catch her breath. She looked up at the two costumed women, eyes shining, face slick with Trinity's juices.

"What? No, you can't!" she pleaded. "Please! It's not enough yet."

Radiance looked appalled. Trinity shrank away from the look in her eyes.

"God, Shimmer, what did you-" Radiance cut herself off, squeezing her eyes tight shut for a moment behind her domino mask. When she spoke again, her voice was heavy. "Never mind. I can't really blame you, can I?"

Trinity didn't know what to say. She didn't even know what to feel. She couldn't help but be ashamed. But why, exactly? What exactly was she so ashamed of? Answering that question would have been like stepping into a labyrinth. Everything Radiance had done to her was still churning around in her head, settled atop all the memories of her old life. It was too hard to separate it all out.

Trinity knew she felt good.

She knew Candace was feeling good.

Maybe that wasn't so bad?

It wasn't exactly heroic.

But if she went with Radiance, it would all be over. She could see that from the resolve in the superhero's eyes.

Trinity couldn't stand that.

"Hey," Candace piped up. She was looking intently at Radiance. "Hey, I know you. You're Radiance, aren't you? The angel of Future City?"

Radiance sighed a little. "Yes," she replied. "I am. And this is all going to be OK. I promise."

Candace nodded. "Yeah," she said eagerly, licking her lips. "Why don't you join us?"

As one, Trinity and Radiance blinked.

"You're *amazing*," Candace exclaimed, as a kind of explanation. "I want to make you feel good. Won't you let me?"

Radiance seemed stunned by the proposition, and was slowly shaking her head. Trinity, though, had a very different reaction. Gears were starting to turn in her head.

If Radiance joined them, wouldn't everything be perfect?

Trinity craved the opportunity to please and service her almost as much as Candace now did.

Moreover, if Radiance just gave in to her urges, they'd be the same. Trinity knew that, on some level, she wanted to. The way she'd treated Trinity proved it, and if that wasn't proof enough, Trinity had seen a lustful glint in her eyes a dozen times or more in the past couple of days. Radiance was gay and horny and kinky - just like her.

And if even heroes of her caliber could succumb to their own urges, what was there to feel ashamed about?

Trinity knew how twisted her own logic sounded. But right now, it made just as much sense to her as anything else.

"No," Radiance was saying to Candace. "Look, this doesn't concern you. You're just a civilian. I know she did something to your head and that's making it difficult to think straight, but I promise, you don't want to be caught up in this. Just run home, OK?"

Candace shook her head, and pouted.

Radiance frowned and looked to Trinity. "Tell her. Come on, you know this isn't right?"

Slowly, though, Trinity shook her head too. "Maybe she's right," she suggested pleadingly. "Just join us, Radiance."

"N-no!" Radiance recoiled. "How did you get this twisted, Shimmer? I already told you. We're not doing that."

"I know!" the former villain cried, frustrated. "But you can change that, can't you? All you have to say is 'yes'."

Candace rose slowly to her feet. She and Trinity looked at Radiance together, presenting a united front. The superhero's expression started to sour.

"Enough of this!" she snapped. "We're going back, now. Whether you want to or not."

Radiance took a couple of threatening steps forwards. Trinity didn't back down. What would have been the point in running? She was past that. She wasn't a villain running from a hero anymore.

She just needed to make Radiance realize that even heroes could have their vices.

"What about what *you* want," Trinity countered. "Don't you want us? Don't you want... this?"

Trinity stretched herself up to her full height, and started to sway her hips

a little from side to side, drawing attention to her body. The way her curves moved and flowed in that skin-tight costume of hers was magnetic, and she knew it. It was small enough to cling perfectly to every last little line of her form, fully exposing her soft and inviting her body was underneath. On her, Radiance's old costume looked completely obscene. Normally, wearing something like that would have been mortifying. Now, Trinity knew it could be a weapon.

"No," Radiance spat back. She didn't sound very convincing. When Trinity raised an eyebrow and flashed a smile, she continued awkwardly: "I mean... that's not the point."

"Why not?" Trinity asked softly.

"Because... Because..." Radiance seemed to be having trouble meeting Trinity's gaze. Her eyes were being drawn downward, to the villain's gyrating hips. "Stop that!"

"Why?" Trinity asked again. She took a step forwards. "I thought you didn't want this."

Radiance shook her head like it was buzzing with flies. Trinity's smile widened. No-one could have ignored the way she looked unless they were made of stone - and for all Radiance's famed strength, she wasn't. She was a lesbian. She had desires. Trinity had caught several glimpses of those. She could almost see the hunger in Radiance's eyes. The front of Trinity's hero

costume was still unfastened, and her cunt, still dripping with wetness, was completely exposed.

She looked like a feast waiting to be eaten.

“I... I...” Radiance grunted. “Why are you making this so hard?” she spat.

She couldn’t take her eyes away from Trinity’s body. Trinity was starting to realize why. She had overcome Trinity’s rather hasty hypnotic suggestions - but not completely. Even Radiance, shaking them off without a trace took more than a few hours. As a result, a few treasonous little mantras were still bouncing around in her subconscious.

Even if it was against her will, Radiance liked seeing Trinity like this.

No. She loved it.

As twisted as it was, she thought Trinity looked pretty and heroic.

She thought she looked hot.

Probably, she had other, more lucid thoughts too. Trinity just needed to make sure those weren’t the ones she was listening to.

“I’ll go back with you afterwards,” Trinity whispered. “I promise. You just need to give me this. Give yourself this. Don’t you deserve it?”

Unconsciously, Radiance licked her dry lips. Trinity kept swinging her hips in a nice, soothing rhythm.

“No,” Radiance replied. Her voice was nowhere near as firm as it had been. “I’ve... haven’t I already fucked this up enough? I have to make it right, Trinity.”

“Then just say yes!” Trinity urged impatiently. “I deserve it too, don’t I?”

She could see how close Radiance was to breaking. She wanted that, for all kinds of reasons. Deep down, a lingering part of her, untouched by all the layers of mind control she’d experienced, was still salivating at the prospect of seeing the almighty Radiance sink into corruption.

“You made me like this, remember?” Trinity was now close enough to her to look up at Radiance with pleading eyes, trying to play on the woman’s guilt. “Why? Just to reject me? Was this all just one big punishment?”

“What?” Radiance looked both surprised and saddened. “N-no! No, of course not.”

“Then... please?” Trinity was close enough to reach out and touch her. “Please. Let me make you feel good. Let me give you what you need.”

Those urges, given to her by Radiance, burned as strongly as ever.

“Let me be a good girl for you,” she begged, putting all her heart into the request.

Radiance nodded slowly, her movement matching the rhythm of Trinity’s hips. When she spoke, her mouth sounded totally dry. “OK.”

Trinity’s eyes opened wide in elation. She couldn’t quite believe what she’d just heard. What Radiance did next, though, surprised her even more.

She reached out and rested a hand on Trinity’s head.

“You’re a good girl, Trinity,” Radiance told her, with odd warmth.

“W-what?” Trinity found herself shivering.

“You’re a good girl,” Radiance repeated quietly. “You did your best. I know that. You must have done. You really did your best. Good girl.”

Trinity let out a strained, high-pitched squeak. It was all she was capable of. Something about Radiance saying that had taken all the fight out of her. Her mind was quiet. Everything had been smothered.

“Come here,” Radiance beckoned, spreading her arms wide.

Without a single moment of thought or hesitation, Trinity allowed herself to fall forwards into Radiance’s arms, and drink in the warmth of her body. She

had been cold. She hadn't realized how cold it had been in the alley, with her clothes half-off. Not Radiance, though. She pulled Trinity into a hug, and her heat enveloped the smaller woman.

Trinity was so perfectly calm in that moment, she didn't even flinch when Radiance summoned her golden shackle out of thin air, and placed it carefully around Trinity's neck.

"Go to sleep," she said.

And so, Trinity did.

Chapter 13

Trinity woke up in the bed in Radiance's safehouse. The worst part was that it wasn't even the first time she'd woken up that way, after Radiance's plans for her had taken a seriously wrong turn. The first time, after the dyke bar, she'd been sore as hell from the way Radiance and her friends had been tossing her around and bending her over. This time, it felt like all her joints had been filled with cement. She couldn't believe how stiff she was. It felt like she'd been unconscious for years.

But at least her mind was her own again. Oh, she had a splitting headache, certainly. But when she looked back on her time running around the city in the obscenely embarrassing outfit she'd taken from Radiance's closet, she felt what any right-thinking person would have: crippling, mortifying levels of shame. There were still a few dizzying, maddening traces of pride and hope mixed in there, but she could clamp down on them good and hard before there was any risk of her starting to spew more garbage about being a superhero.

Thank god.

Trinity was also naked. She wasn't sure whether or not to be grateful for that.

When she tried to sit up, her stiff, weak muscles rebelled so hard and so painfully that she let out a harsh, ragged groan that hurt her dry throat.

Right afterwards, the pile of clothes and blankets next to her moved.

It took a moment of her rubbing her bleary eyes for Trinity to figure out that the pile was, in fact, Radiance. Radiance, who was now looking up at her with the biggest, most worried eyes Trinity had ever seen on the hero. She was perched anxiously on a chair at Trinity's bedside, and until just that moment, she'd obviously been sleeping there. She looked enough like a loved one watching over her sickly beloved that it made Trinity blush.

"You're awake?" Radiance whispered, urgently and hopefully. "Oh, I was so... how are you feeling?"

"Uh..." Trinity rubbed her head, and managed to haul herself up into a sitting position - almost. "I'm fine. I think?"

Her voice sounded rough as hell, and it hurt to speak. Radiance picked up on as much right away, and rushed to offer her a glass of water she'd placed nearby. Trinity took it and sipped from it gratefully, even though she was more than a little perturbed by Radiance's anxious nursemaid act.

"When you say fine," Radiance asked carefully, "what do you mean, exactly?"

“It means I’m a scumbag again,” Trinity replied cattily, once she could. “Not something half way between a sex doll and a shitty superhero action figure.”

She was hoping to see pangs of guilt on Radiance’s face, but she looked too relieved to register any other feelings. She shuddered for a moment, and let out a long, weary sigh.

What followed was an awkward silence. Trinity didn’t want to be the one who broke it, but after a few, long moments, her own feelings of remorse compelled her to speak.

“That girl. Candace?” she said. “What happened to her?”

“She’s OK,” Radiance replied. “I took her to a hospital and put her in the hands of a doctor I trust. They’ve been looking after her and helping her get her head sorted. I’ve been getting updates. She’s doing just fine.”

Now it was Trinity’s turn to breathe a sigh of relief. She wasn’t exactly sure how much of that night’s misadventures she deserved to blame herself for, but she felt guilty for all of it. She wasn’t a monster, after all, whatever Radiance thought of her.

“Officially, you’re still at large,” Radiance continued calmly. “I told them she’d run across you. They didn’t ask any more questions than that, and Candace’s memories are pretty scrambled. Fortunately, some doctors have a

pretty good amount of experience dealing with mind control victims.”

“Right,” Trinity said slowly. That all made sense. Something about Radiance’s story, along with how exhausted the hero seemed, was making her apprehensive. “So... she and I are both back to normal in just one day? Guess those doctors of yours really do work fast.”

Radiance shook her head. “You’ve been out for three days now, Trinity.”

Trinity blinked. That took a couple of seconds for her to process. “Shit,” she said miserably. “Then...”

“I’ve been using a combination of medication and my power to keep you asleep.” Radiance’s expression was unreadable. “Except for a couple of times a day, so I could make you eat and use your power on yourself again.”

Trinity stared at her.

“It seemed like the quickest way to... to fix what I did,” Radiance added quickly.

“I see.”

Trinity made herself take some very, very deep breaths.

“What the fuck were you thinking?” she demanded.

Finally, a twinge of deep regret and guilt made it to Radiance's stony face.

"I've been asking myself that a lot," she confessed. "It was stupid. Unbelievably reckless and stupid."

Trinity just kept staring at her. She wasn't going to let Radiance off that easily. She wanted the why.

"I thought it would just... make everything easier," Radiance struggled. "It didn't seem that complicated. Good is good. Right is right. I've always lived my life that way. As a hero, I've tried to serve as an example to others, too." She shook her head. "I told you before, I'm from Castron. Same as you. I grew up poor, same as you. I saw what people can do to one another when they're cruel or desperate. In the face of that, all anyone can do is choose - choose to do the right thing instead."

She looked up at Trinity, eyes wide and earnest.

"I don't understand you, Trinity. I don't understand people like you at all. But I thought if I could make you see it my way, even for one day, you'd understand me. You'd choose to do the right thing too."

Trinity's jaw almost hit the floor.

Then, after a few seconds of careful thought, she started laughing.

“Holy shit, Radiance!” Trinity cackled. “You’re kidding me, right? You can’t actually be that naïve.”

The wounded look on Radiance’s face took the mirth out of her laughter.

“Believing in doing the right thing isn’t ‘naïve,’” Radiance replied frostily.

Trinity rolled her eyes. “No, look, I mean- look, OK, first of all, you know you can’t just brainwash morality into people, right?”

Now, a faint blush touched Radiance’s cheeks. She looked aside.
“Apparently not.”

“It’s...” Trinity sighed. “Let me explain. Shimmer brainwashing 101: it’s like... like trying to hotwire a microwave.” Radiance flashed her a strange look. Trinity was already doubting her own choice in metaphor, but she ploughed ahead. “Let’s say the ‘start’ button doesn’t work. That’s pretty easy to shortcut. All you need to do is open up the front panel and move a couple of wires around. It’s a little rough and ready, and you might wanna buy a new microwave before too long, but it’ll do. Right?”

“Right.”

“Now let’s say you’re hotwiring it because you want roast a turkey.” Trinity tried to ignore how dumb that sounded. “Maybe if you really try, you can

pump it with enough juice. But even so - and this is very important - that would be fucking stupid. Nothing in your microwave was designed to handle that much heat or power. If you try, everything's gonna explode. You see?"

Radiance shook her head. "What the hell are you talking about?"

Trinity sighed again. "Short-circuiting, it's like... whenever I'm using my power on someone, I try to keep it simple. I try to get to the heart of someone, to the basic urges that drive them and motivate them, and twist a few dials here and there. Turn something up, turn something else down, and eventually you get what you want. It's nice and simple, and my power makes it nice and easy. But roasting a turkey, that's..." Trinity face-palmed. "OK, forget the fucking microwave. The point is: morality? That's not simple at all. It's a whole mess of beliefs and feelings and personal histories. You can't just flip a switch in someone's head and put them in goody-two-shoes mode."

Nodding slowly, Radiance replied: "I guess I should have figured."

"You think?"

Trinity snorted. The two of them lapsed into silence for a moment, but Trinity could resist pressing her further. "You really thought it'd be that simple? Just 'do the right thing'?"

This time, Radiance's sigh was long and ragged. "I... I don't know! It seemed that way, I guess. Rules are rules, laws are laws, and most of them exist to

protect us from one another. I thought my chain could make you follow them. Is that so crazy?"

"You spend all day flying around the city," Trinity said incredulously. "And you really think everything that's going wrong with the world could be fixed just by everyone being a little nicer? A little more upstanding? Are you superheroes so thick-headed you think the only bad people in the world are supervillains with shitty capes and shittier monikers?"

"What else am I supposed to believe in?" Radiance snapped. Trinity flinched a little at the hero raising her voice, but Radiance didn't sound angry. She just sounded desperate. "Yeah. Yeah, I know the world isn't that simple. But doesn't the solution have to start somewhere? What chance do we have if we can't all treat each other decently? If we don't all play by the same rules? That's what the law is, for all its faults. It's better than nothing. That's what I believe. And if you think I'm wrong, how about you tell me your way to fix things instead?"

Trinity realized she didn't have an answer to that. Not really. She had a few snappy comebacks. She thought about telling Radiance that it wasn't fair of her to expect Trinity to have a solution like that, and she thought about telling her that Eleanor Quinn was the real problem. What stopped her was the sincerity of Radiance's plea.

The hero wasn't trying to put her down, or win a high school debate with her. She wished, sincerely, from the bottom of her heart, that Trinity had an

answer for her. She wished for a different way. She simply hadn't been able to find one.

"I guess we're both idiots," Trinity said quietly.

Radiance didn't say anything. She didn't need to. Each of them could sense the other's agreement.

"Maybe I'm the bigger idiot, though," Radiance mused. "Maybe not. Either way, I owe you an apology, Trinity."

Trinity couldn't help a little sarcasm. "Another apology? You're being real generous with them, you know."

"Well, I keep doing things I need to apologize for," Trinity replied evenly. "And it's the least I can do to try and make them right. That's one of the rules I'll never stop holding myself to."

"Oh. OK." Radiance's earnestness made Trinity feel a little embarrassed of her own snark.

"So: I'm sorry." Radiance stared into Trinity's eyes. "I'm sorry for messing with your head. I'm sorry for being reckless with you. I'm sorry for allowing you to go out and endanger yourself by acting against your own will. I don't expect you to forgive me, but I promise you, on my honor as a hero, that it will never happen again."

“Thank you,” Trinity said, before she could stop herself. Somewhat against her will, she felt sincerely touched. She wasn’t used to being spoken to like that; not by Radiance or by anyone else. It was special, somehow. Then, after a long moment, she blinked. “Never again? So... what happens now?”

It took Radiance longer still to answer. “I’m going to let you go.”

Trinity blinked.

“Just like that?” she asked, incredulously.

Radiance shrugged. “I guess so.”

“But... why?” Trinity couldn’t believe this. After all she’d gone through, was it just over? “That’s a little hard to believe, coming from you.”

Radiance laughed ruefully. “Why are you arguing?”

“I...” Her question gave Trinity pause. Why *was* she arguing? “Don’t I at least deserve to know the reason?”

“Yeah, you do,” Radiance agreed, nodding slowly. “I just figured it was obvious. After all this, I can’t trust myself. I still don’t think you’re a good person. Stealing from people is wrong. Breaking the law is wrong. But... I’m not the right person to punish you for that. Or maybe what I’ve already done

will be punishment enough.” She rubbed at her own head, like it was hurting. “I... was supposed to get that money back from you, I guess. It seemed important. I don’t know why. I’ve put you through enough. Anyway, you’re free to go.”

“Oh.” Trinity looked over at the door. “Right now?”

“If you want.”

Trinity should have felt happy. Relieved. Victorious. She didn’t. The idea that she could just stand up, walk outside, and never see Radiance again didn’t seem real. An odd reluctance threatened to bind her to the bed. It was the feeling that something was being left unresolved.

But at the same time, it wasn’t like she was going to stay.

“In that case, I guess I’m out of here,” Trinity announced, as lightly as she could. She swung her legs off the bed and tried to stand.

Before immediately falling back onto the bedsheets.

Trinity’s legs were jelly. She couldn’t possibly make it out the door and back to her apartment under her own power. Even making it to the bathroom seemed unlikely.

“I’m afraid lying in bed for days at a time will do that to you,” Radiance said

gently. "You might want to stick around for a few hours. Eat something. Do some stretches. Don't worry, your strength will come back soon."

Trinity's cheeks turned slightly pink. "Yeah. Sure. Good idea."

The silence that followed was very, very awkward.

"So, um, any plans for what you're gonna do first?" Radiance asked, and immediately looked embarrassed with herself.

"Um, what?" Trinity asked. The attempt at small talk was so unbelievably ridiculous it made her smile a little.

Radiance shifted in her seat a little. "Convicts love to talk about what they're going to do when they get out of jail. Where they're going to go, what they're going to eat, who they're going to fuck. I know this isn't exactly prison, but still. I figured you might have some plans in mind."

"I hadn't really thought about it," Trinity admitted.

"Any more charity events to crash, maybe?" Radiance flashed her a strange look.

"What? No!" Trinity shot back. "Are you seriously just trying to get me to admit to something criminal?"

“No!” Radiance looked like she wanted to fly out of the skylight and disappear. “It was, um, meant to be a joke.”

“Oh,” Trinity said again. She felt silly for getting worked up over it, and she could tell Radiance felt silly for asking. “Sorry,” she added.

Radiance tried again. “I guess what I meant was more, what are you going back to? I’m sure you have a place somewhere. An apartment, a hideout, a lair, whatever.”

Trinity nodded.

“I’m sure people have been missing you, too,” Radiance continued. “Friends. Roommates, maybe. Your girlfriend.”

“I don’t have a girlfriend,” Trinity interjected.

“A boyfriend?” Radiance suggested.

Trinity made a snorting noise. “Hell no.”

“Then, you’re single?” When Trinity nodded, Radiance’s eyes widened. “Huh. I seriously wouldn’t have guessed.”

Trinity let out an awkward laugh. “I know, I know. One touch, and I could be dating any girl I wanted, right? Well, I can’t say I’m not tempted. But that’s not

what I want out of life, you know? I'd rather do it the real way."

"Oh, um, no, that's not what I meant," Radiance corrected quickly. "Just... that you're really pretty."

She might as well have hit Trinity over the head with a sledgehammer. The bedridden villain turned a very stupid shade of red, and let out an even stupider giggle.

"You really think so?" she asked, before she could think better of it.

"I do," Radiance replied, looking aside as she did. Plainly, the superhero was almost as embarrassed as Trinity was.

"T-thank you," Trinity stammered. "I mean- um, that's nice of you to say. I'm not so sure, I guess."

"Well, I am," Radiance said, with unexpected conviction. "And trust me, I'd know. I've seen just about every part of you. You're pretty."

Trinity felt like a kettle boiling. After a few dumbstruck seconds she did her best to laugh the compliment off.

"I can't believe the city's greatest hero thinks I'm pretty," she quipped. "Man. Some of the girls I know are really gonna get a kick out of that one. Do you think you can go on record with that one? I'd love to see it in a newspaper,

next time they mention me.”

Mercifully, Radiance let out a genuine laugh. As the hero laughed, Trinity found herself admiring the way she looked as she did, relaxed and at-ease. When her face stretched into a smile, a pair of little dimples formed at the corners of her mouth. It was an oddly cute, innocent little feature for her trademark strong, heroic face.

“Anyway,” Trinity added, “being pretty isn’t always the most important thing, when it comes to finding the right person. I mean, I’m sure you’d know that better than anyone, right?”

Radiance kept laughing, although now with a hint of bitterness. “Damn. It’s really that obvious I don’t have a girlfriend, huh?”

“Fraid so,” Trinity told her. “If nothing else, there’s no way I’d ever let a girl I was dating live in a place like this - no offense. And...”

She broke off, but she’d caught Radiance’s curiosity. “And what?”

“And... you seem pretty lonely,” Trinity answered, a little apologetically.

“Ah.” Despite everything, the look of deep sadness on Radiance’s face melted Trinity’s heart. After a moment, though, it passed, and with an air of forced brightness, she said: “Well, hey, at least you think I’m pretty too. That’s something, right?”

Great. Trinity had just barely managed to stop blushing. “O-of course I do!” she spluttered. “Doesn’t everyone?”

“I suppose so,” Radiance admitted. “But I’m not sure they’d still think that, if they saw all the sides of me you’ve seen.”

“I think they would,” Trinity said quietly, before reaching under the covers and pinching herself. What the hell was she saying? And why were her cheeks so damn hot?

It wasn’t fair. When Radiance called her pretty, Trinity blushed. When Trinity called Radiance pretty, Trinity blushed. How was the superhero having this effect on her?

Maybe it was a lingering effect of that golden chain of hers. Yeah, that had to be it. Like how she’d made Trinity enjoy some of the demeaning stuff Radiance had subjected her to. Of course. That made the most sense. At least that meant it wasn’t Trinity’s fault.

And if it wasn’t her fault, then did it really matter what happened?

“Hey,” Radiance said suddenly, hesitantly. “You mind if I lie down? This chair hasn’t been too comfy to sleep in.”

“Sure,” Trinity replied quickly. “I’m afraid you’re gonna have to share,

though. Standing up is still a little beyond me, apparently.”

“That’s fine. It’s not like it’s the first time, right?”

Radiance clambered into bed, sighing gratefully as she stretched out and let herself sink into the sheets. Trinity considered shifting over a little, to allow the hero a little more personal space. But she didn’t.

“Hey,” Trinity said suddenly, hesitantly. “You mind if I hold on to you a little bit? It’s kinda cold in here.”

“Sure,” came Radiance’s quiet answer.

The superhero didn’t move or protest as Trinity pressed up against her side awkwardly. Radiance was, indeed, much warmer than Trinity.

The two of them lay together like that for a long time. Trinity was unwilling to move, unwilling even to breathe too deeply. She wanted to be still, even as strength gradually returned to her body. Radiance was still too; so still, Trinity thought she might have fallen asleep. Only the occasional flickering of her eyelids as she glanced over at Trinity reassured her. Trinity wasn’t sure how much time passed like that, but her mind kept turning to the knowledge that soon, it would have to end. She would have to go. As she dwelt on that, a question came to her mind.

“Radiance?” she said quietly. “Won’t you at least tell me your name?”

Radiance frowned slightly. "I..."

"I think you owe me that, as well as the apology," Trinity pressed. "You've seen too much of me. I've seen too much of you. It feels so dumb that I just have to keep calling you 'Radiance'."

The pause that followed was so long, Trinity thought Radiance was simply giving her the silent treatment. But then, finally: "My name actually is Violet."

"Ha!" Trinity exclaimed. "I knew it. I knew you gave Daisy and the others your real name."

"I didn't mean to," Radiance replied. "I was going to make something up, when I met them. I just slipped up."

"Maybe that would have been a good idea," Trinity teased. "'Violet'... wow. The fangirls would love that."

"It doesn't suit me." Radiance turned away to try and hide the blush in her cheeks. "So it's Vi, mostly."

"Vi," Trinity repeated, nodding.

After another pause, Radiance reached up to rub her face. "Trinity, that shimmer of yours sure is something. It's been days."

“What do you mean?”

“I have absolutely no idea why I told you that,” Radiance replied. “Some of the stuff you did to me about... about how I feel about you. It’s still messing with me, I think. Can’t get my head on straight.”

Trinity was surprised to hear that. On Radiance, of all people, it should have worn off by now.

“Let me see,” she said, propping herself up on an elbow.

“See what?”

“Your eyes,” Trinity explained. “With my power, there’s usually a trace. It fades, as the influence weakens.”

Without another word, Radiance turned her head so that she was looking right at Trinity. It made the villain suddenly very conscious of how close their faces were. She could see from the look in her brilliant eyes that Radiance had realized the same thing. Neither of them backed away. The moment held them.

Instead, they kissed.

And a single second later, Radiance’s communicator started to buzz.

In an instant, Radiance was all business again. The transformation was so swift, Trinity was left wondering if their kiss had happened at all. Radiance leapt off the bed, swiped her communicator from its place on the table, and held it to her ear.

“Radiance,” she said, “talk.”

Her voice was perfectly cool and calm. So this was Radiance when she was truly called into action. Trinity felt a little wounded at having been abandoned so totally, but with Radiance’s back to her, she was at least free to inch closer and listen in.

This is Peregrine, came a cold, aristocratic, and strangely familiar voice, from Radiance’s communication device. *Where are you? I expected to hear from you by now.*

“I’m sorry,” Radiance replied. To her credit, she managed not to sound flustered or embarrassed. “I’ve... something came up.”

I see. Peregrine seemed to consider that for the moment. *That’s not like you, Radiance. Don’t tell me you got distracted. I thought we were very clear with each other, the last time we spoke. Where are you with finding Shimmer?*

A heart-stopping pause ensued, before Trinity heard something miraculous: Radiance lying.

"I lost her trail," Radiance said calmly. "I don't know where she could be."

That's very disappointing, Peregrine said. She made it sound like a threat. Trinity couldn't imagine any other hero being willing to threaten Radiance. *And surprising. You don't let villains get away, Radiance. It's one of the things I most like about you.*

"I do my best." Radiance's voice was completely flat. "Maybe this one just got lucky."

Or maybe you just weren't motivated enough, Peregrine growled. *I think you should keep trying. You need to find her. You need to retrieve what she stole.*

"I'm telling you," Radiance protested. "She-"

Remember, Peregrine interrupted. *You agreed that you would just do it my way.*

Something strange happened to Radiance. She didn't respond, not for several seconds. Instead, her back stiffened, and her breath caught in her throat.

"Understood," Radiance said eventually. Somehow, her voice was even flatter and more emotionless than before.

Good, Peregrine said. *Call me once it's done.*

The communicator beeped as the other hero hung up.

As soon as Radiance turned around, Trinity knew something was wrong. It was like the superhero had put on a mask. Her face was blank and her eyes were ice.

No.

It was like she was a completely different person altogether.

Trinity wasn't sure what was going on, but she knew she should be afraid.

"I'm gonna leave now," she said nervously. "I think I'm strong enough, I can probably manage-"

"You're not going anywhere," Radiance interrupted firmly. She reached down and seized Trinity's jaw in her hand, holding her still. "Not until you give me all the money you stole from Eleanor Quinn."

Chapter 14

As Radiance seized her by the jaw, Trinity couldn't believe what she was hearing. For a moment she, quite sincerely, worried that she was suffering from some kind of head trauma. It didn't make any sense. Why? Why would Radiance suddenly start talking like that, after how far they'd come with each other?

"What?" she demanded of the amazonian woman, in a slightly strangled voice. "What did you just say?"

"I'm not letting you go," Radiance said, in the firmest and coldest voice Trinity had ever heard her use. "Not until you return all the money you stole."

Trinity shivered and tried to squirm away, but Radiance wouldn't let her.

"But... but you just said-"

"It doesn't matter what I said before," Radiance interrupted.

Her face was utterly, mercilessly unreadable. Trinity started shaking her head as much as she was able.

“This isn’t funny,” she said. Trinity could sense that a change had come over Radiance, and it scared her. “This is a real shitty joke, Vi.”

That seemed to get through to the superhero, but only a little. She released her grip on Trinity and turned away.

“I’m not joking.”

“What...” Trinity started backing off, aiming vaguely towards the door. “What the fuck? So, what? You were just jerking me around? Another one of your sick fucking lessons?”

“No!” Radiance replied quickly. “No, I just... I realized you still need to make up for what you did.”

There was an uncharacteristic stiffness to her voice. She sounded like she was trying to rationalize her own words to herself. Trinity kept waiting for her to say more, but she didn’t.

“OK, well, first of all, there’s nothing to return, remember?” Trinity shot back. “I burnt it all. It’s all up in flames.”

Radiance nodded. She was still staring at the wall. “The security guard. I remember. But you’re wrong.” She sighed. “You brainwashed one of Eleanor Quinn’s people. You told her to deliver all the money collected at the event to

you. Well, she was still the person responsible for the accounts once the event started appealing for donors to come forward and rewrite the checks you torched. Guess what she did with it all.”

Trinity’s eyes went wide. “Then...”

If she managed to get out of here, she had millions waiting for her. And Radiance had seriously been about to let her go?

“Yeah,” Radiance said. “That brings us to now. To this.”

Trinity still couldn’t quite believe it. “There’s got to be a mistake,” she insisted. “I mean, there’s no way they just let her handle all that money after I got to her!”

“No one saw,” Radiance replied. “No one knew. Except...”

“Except you.” Trinity finished quietly.

It was starting to click into place. Radiance had been too obsessed with punishing Trinity to stick around and do her due diligence. As a result, a vast sum of money had simply disappeared. Now, after finding out, Radiance felt guilty and needed to make Trinity give it all back in order to soothe her guilty conscience.

That almost made sense. Almost.

There was still one thing Trinity couldn't get past. Just minutes ago, Radiance had seemed so sincere. So earnest. After their little heart-to-heart, Trinity had completely and totally believed that Radiance had intended to let her go. Would she really have changed her mind that fast? It seemed decidedly out of character for the superhero. If nothing else, she was the honorable type. She'd put Trinity through some pretty twisted stuff, but she wasn't one for mind games. Radiance was the type of woman who always kept her word.

Which meant something had to be very, very wrong.

Trinity thought back to the conversation Radiance had been having with the Peregrine. It had been short, but seemed to have caused Radiance to have a complete change of heart. Why? Trinity tried to recall what had been said.

"Radiance," she said slowly, "what did the Peregrine mean by 'doing it her way'?"

Radiance stiffened visibly. "She meant the right way," she replied, in a mechanical tone of voice.

Trinity frowned. This was just getting more and more confusing.

She knew the Peregrine, but only by reputation. That wasn't saying much, of course. *Everyone* knew the Peregrine by reputation. Radiance was almost certainly the most famous hero in Future City, but the Peregrine was a close

enough second to introduce a little doubt into the mix. Trinity counted herself lucky that she'd never crossed paths with her. the Peregrine was all gadgets and smarts, with no apparent superpowers to speak of, but that didn't stop her from being scary as shit. She had a certain level of infamy, among the city's villains.

The Peregrine was ruthless. Sometimes deadly ruthless. One way or another, if she was on your trail, that was it. You were finished.

Fortunately, she usually restricted her patrols to the ritzy parts of the city, and spent most of her time focusing on high-profile villains with more dark powers than brain cells. Which, of course, just made her interest in Trinity's comparatively low-grade heist all the more suspicious.

"Does she have something on you?" Trinity asked slowly. "Some dirt? Or you owe her a favor, maybe?"

It was nothing more than a shot in the dark, but Trinity didn't have any other ideas.

Radiance shook her head at once. "The Peregrine is a hero," she insisted. "She's the kind of hero this city needs. She knows what's right. She knows what needs to be done, and how to do it."

Trinity couldn't help but notice the way the Radiance sounded like she was reciting lines from a book. Her voice was stiff and robotic - unnaturally so.

Clearly, something extremely weird was going on. Unfortunately, when Radiance was stonewalling her this hard, knowing that didn't help Trinity much. She decided to concentrate on, as usual, saving her own skin. She was this close to getting out from under Radiance's thumb. All she needed to do was make the hero doubt herself long enough for Trinity to slip away and disappear. Permanently.

What did she care what was going on with the hero? She shouldn't. She *shouldn't* care. Trinity kept trying to tell herself that.

"Look, Radiance - Vi," Trinity pleaded, "you know why I wanted that money in the first place?"

Radiance didn't respond.

"So I could get the fuck out of here!" Trinity cried. "I'm not trying to fuck anybody over, alright? I'm not trying to hire a private army of mercenaries. I'm not trying to build a stupid fucking apocalypse machine, or whatever. I'm just trying to leave. I'm trying to get enough money to start over someplace else. A new life, one where I'm not always on the bottom fucking rung, having to deal with ceaseless bullshit from someone who thinks they own me. That's all I want. Is that so wrong?"

Radiance folded her arms.

"So... so why won't you just let me go already?" Trinity pleaded. "You want

to. You know you want to. You told me that much! Don't you owe me this?" Radiance seemed immovable. It was like talking to a brick wall. Trinity grasped around desperately for something she could say. "I... I'm not going to hurt anyone, OK? I promise. I've learned my lesson. Is that what you want to hear?"

This time, Radiance twitched strangely, and Trinity thought she might have gotten through to her. A moment later, her hopes were dashed.

"You're a villain," Radiance said mechanically. "Villains have to be punished. You stole. You need to give back what you stole. It's as simple as that."

"Fuck!" Trinity hissed. She hated that the way Radiance was treating her was making tears well up in her eyes. She'd been starting to like her. She'd been starting to wonder. Now, all she wanted to do was be anywhere else. Trinity was seriously considering making a break for the door; only the knowledge that it was completely futile stopped her.

"So. Where is it?" Radiance demanded. The hero's eyes were unreadable.

"The money?" Trinity started to laugh hysterically. Why the hell was Radiance so hung up on this? It was beyond absurd. "I don't know! You think it goes to my Cash App or something? Of course not."

"You *must* know," Radiance said, with an air of forced patience. "Apparently, the woman you mind-controlled wired the money to a dummy account,

offshore, which was immediately emptied.”

“No shit,” Trinity spat. “I wasn’t born yesterday. I know how to run a heist.”

Radiance scowled at her. Trinity sighed.

“It goes to a friend of mine, alright?” Trinity crossed her arms. “She holds onto it. So I don’t have it.”

“I see.” Radiance rolled one of her shoulders like she was limbering up. “Then, let’s go see your friend.”

Trinity stared her dead in the face, balled her hands into fists, and drew herself up as tall as she could.

“Not. On. Your. Fucking. Life.”

Radiance sighed, and looked at her evenly. “Come on, Trinity. This is the last hurdle. Just tell me where I can find your friend, and you can go.”

“I’m not a fucking snitch,” Trinity snarled furiously.

“Come on, Shimmer.” Radiance made a threatening gesture that Trinity knew all too well. “You know I can just make you.”

“You can try.”

Trinity had no desire to suffer Radiance's mind control again, nor was she under any illusions about her ability to resist it. But she'd be damned if she wasn't going to try. It didn't matter if Radiance let her go or not; if she betrayed a friend without a fight, she'd never forgive herself. But she was hoping it wouldn't come to that. Surely, after all that they'd been talking about, Radiance wasn't going to use that thing on her again. There was no way. Trinity wanted to believe in her that much, at least.

As if sensing her doubts, Radiance took a warning step forwards. "I mean it."

"God!" Trinity wanted to scream. Somehow, she'd never felt more like a cornered animal. She'd thought she knew where she stood with Radiance. Now, she didn't seem to know anything. "Why do you even care so fucking much, huh? Answer me that! It's not the money, that's for sure. It's not about teaching me some kind of stupid lesson either. And don't try to pretend it's just about principles. That's bullshit. There's something else going on, I can tell."

"Why?"

At first, Trinity thought Radiance was about to bellow an answer. It was only after a couple of seconds of silence that she started to get the feeling the superhero was talking to herself as much as she was to Trinity. The silence dragged on, with Radiance simply standing there, implacable as a statue, with

a distant, almost dazed expression on her face. It was as if the question had somehow stunned her.

“Why?” Radiance echoed again, faintly. “Why do I care so much?”

Trinity started to grow concerned. She reached out a hand toward her captor. “Whatever it is, maybe we can talk about it,” she urged quietly. The supervillain’s heart was pounding.

The seconds dragged on.

“N-no.” At first, Radiance sounded uncertain, but conviction quickly filled her voice. “No! There is nothing to talk about. In fact, you’ve kept me talking for far, far too long.”

With a wave of her hand, she conjured the magical, golden chain that never failed to fill Trinity’s heart with dread. This time, though, it did more than that. It filled her whole body with trembling fury.

“You are such a fucking hypocrite!” Trinity yelled. “I can’t believe I ever... ugh!” She started pacing furiously back and forth across the small corner of the room she occupied. “You’re so quick to lecture me about every little god damn thing, but now you won’t even deign to explain yourself to a lowly mortal like me. You want to teach me the right way to live my life, but to do it, you make me indulge every single one of your personal little dominant fantasies!”

Radiance looked taken aback by Trinity's sudden fury. "I wasn't-"

"You were getting off on it! Don't even pretend otherwise." Trinity's throat was already starting to hurt from yelling, but it felt good to finally let it all out. "And worse! You made me get off on it too."

At that, Radiance just blinked. "What the fuck are you talking about?"

Trinity laughed, her voice coming out more than a little manic. "Playing dumb? For real? Whatever. Fine. Fuck with my head even more. Sure. More games. Whatever this one is, it can't be any worse than making me cum from your friends passing me around, or making me get off on being spanked."

"You... got off on all of that?" Radiance asked incredulously.

"Sure did!" Trinity spat. "Thanks to you and your fucking chain, and whatever it was doing to me."

Too late, Trinity took heed of the bizarre series of contortions that were passing over Radiance's face as she turned white, then red, then purple.

"You..." Radiance growled, through gritted teeth. "You truly are the lowest of the low. Is there anything you won't sink to? Is anything beneath you? I was... and I thought... I can't believe I actually felt guilty."

Trinity's stomach tied itself into yet another knot. "What? N-no..."

"I didn't make you enjoy anything!" the superhero told her, voice full of cold fury. "I couldn't. Not even if I wanted to. That's not how it works!"

"Then..." Trinity whispered.

Then it had all been her. That was what Trinity couldn't stop herself from thinking. She shook her head and kept shaking it, over and over. That had been her. All of it. All that pleasure. All that arousal. All that enjoyment.

Everything Radiance had done to her. She'd liked it.

She had liked being treated that way.

"And I thought I was punishing you," Radiance snorted. "Who am I kidding? I was giving you the ride of a lifetime! Why so eager to leave? Had your fill already? Or can you just not wait to get bragging about how you got laid?"

"What the fuck?" Trinity's head was too busy. She needed a moment to sit, to think. But she couldn't have one. Radiance was right there, growling, yelling, and all Trinity could do was try to meet her, word for word. "You chose to do those things to me, remember? I never had any say in it. Don't act like I made you. You're practically a god! Make you? I couldn't even stop you!"

"You could have told me," Radiance shot back. "You could have let me know

you were having a great fucking time.”

“I-I wasn’t!” Trinity insisted, although in truth she was less than sure. “I couldn’t... I thought that was what you wanted! I didn’t want to let you know you were winning.”

Radiance ignored her. “You didn’t say a word,” she ranted. “You just lied. You used me. Maybe you didn’t even realize it, because it comes as naturally to you as breathing, doesn’t it? Using your power, taking whatever you want. Money. Dignity. A quick fuck. You just can’t help yourself. Well, congratulations! You got one over on me too. I’m sure that’s something you can have fun boasting about.”

“I’m not going to- god!” Trinity was shaking. Why was Radiance making this so hard? Like it wasn’t hard enough already. Trinity had a million questions she needed to ask herself, and the more Radiance yelled at her, the more twisted it all got.

Had she really been using Radiance? No! Of course not! Unless... unless she had. She had been getting off on it. She’d been enjoying it. That wasn’t Radiance’s fault. It was hers. And was she really supposed to deny that she used people? It was practically a way of life for her. She was a criminal. A villain. So, why did the accusation hurt so much, this time?

Maybe it was all her fault.

It usually was.

But...

No! That was all wrong! It was Radiance. Radiance had done those things to her. Wasn't the superhero even going to acknowledge that? Was all this just that easy for her? The more Trinity thought about that, the more her guilt and confusion started to curdle and boil over into anger.

"And you just can't help yourself either, huh?" Trinity hissed. "You think you're so fucking good. So much better than me. Better than everyone. Why settle for being a hero? Just call yourself a goddess. You know what's right and wrong better than anyone, don't you? You get to administer whatever sick fucking punishment you feel like, right? Doesn't matter that you were getting off on it just as hard as I was. I'm not the only one here using her powers to get her rocks off."

"How dare you?" Radiance yelled. Trinity just laughed.

"Sure. Fine. Just keep playing pretend. It's not like it matters. Everyone will just believe you anyway. You're the big famous angel of Future City. I'm just scum, right? And everyone knows it." Trinity turned her back and folded her arms. "I can't believe I was starting to care about you. And I can't believe you pretended to care about me."

At that, Radiance just spluttered: "I... you... pretend?"

Then, she fell silent, and Trinity wanted very, very badly to turn back around and see what kind of expression she had on her face. But she couldn't bring herself to give the hero the satisfaction, and when Radiance spoke again, her voice had turned back to being quiet and distant and hard.

"This doesn't matter," Radiance said. "None of this matters. How you feel doesn't matter. How I feel doesn't matter. What matters is that I am going to take back what you stole. I have to do this the right way. I am going to make this right."

Trinity finally broke, and looked at her. Just like she had earlier, Radiance looked dazed. Shell-shocked, almost. Trinity was close to taking pity on her, but when she made to reach out, all of the hero's hurtful words came flooding back. So, instead, she just stared resolutely at the door, and contemplated her odds.

There was nothing uncertain or unsteady in Radiance's movements when, without a sound, she surged forwards and clasped her golden chain collar around Trinity's neck.

Trinity shivered as the cold, enchanted metal wrapped itself around her neck, forming, impossibly a perfect, inescapable binding. It felt like a circuit being completed. Trinity could sense, somehow, Radiance's control settling over her. It made her body freeze, and her thoughts turn still. It was like a straitjacket, fitted around her entire body. She was intimately, uncomfortably

aware of her own muscles, ready to betray her. Ready to act according to another's will, not her own.

She wasn't sure if that feeling was really there, or if she'd just learned to expect it. Trained and conditioned to obey, like a dog with a clicker.

The humiliation of it made her wet.

"Tell me your friend's name," Radiance ordered. "The person holding the money you stole."

Trinity's breath came ragged as the name forced its way out of her. She fought it as hard as she could, but she lacked the strength to take herself to her breaking point. To resist until she was on the verge of passing out from the pain. She felt defeated.

"Ramona Isley," she whispered.

"Good." Radiance nodded. Her eyes were stone-cold. "Are you going to tell me where I can find her, or do I have to make you do that, too?"

Trinity's shoulders slumped. "I don't know," she replied. "She has a few places she likes to lie low. She could be at any of them."

"I see." Radiance seemed relieved. She paused for a moment and thought. "If you called her and asked for a meeting, would she show? Be honest with

me.”

That command, too, settled over Trinity. The compulsion that suddenly worked to loosen her tongue made the fallen supervillain whimper. “Probably,” she said. “I trust her, kind of. She doesn’t know anything is wrong.”

“Good. I have some burner phones. Will those work?”

Trinity just nodded. She had the number memorized. There was no point trying to fight any of this. She’d learned that lesson, at least.

“Then let’s go give Ramona Isley a call.”

Nodding again, Trinity followed Radiance as the hero led her over to her wardrobe. She expected Radiance to look pleased or smug, given how meekly she was obeying, but she didn’t. She didn’t look happy at all.

Ramona Isley was a strange bedfellow, at least for Trinity. As far as villains usually went, they were in two different camps. For all of her open contempt for Future City’s wealthy elite, Trinity was, ultimately, in it for herself. There

were plenty of villains like that, and there were also plenty of villains who were obsessively vengeful, violent, obsessive, or otherwise deranged And then there were the idealists. Ramona was one of these. She was as punk as they came, both inside and out, and she was a supervillain because she sincerely wanted to make the world a better place - by burning everything shitty in it to ash.

At least, that was the big-picture goal. In practical terms, she was cautious, level-headed, and remarkably sane, which meant that she mostly operated on a modest scale and made a good partner for someone like Trinity. The two of them hailed from different parts of the city, but both had gotten their start in the criminal underworld at about the same time, and so had ended up crossing paths. Neither was too much of an egomaniac to consider teaming up, and so they'd ended up forming an on-again, off-again kind of partnership, whenever one of them was planning something that could prove mutually beneficial. In this instance, it was completely straightforward: Ramona kept Trinity's money safe, and she got a small cut.

The two of them also fucked sometimes, because hey, why not?

That part of their relationship was even more on-again, off-again, though. They weren't all that compatible; Trinity's switchy moods were infrequent, and Ramona was one hundred percent organic top, with no added submissiveness.

When those switchy moods did hit, though? Ramona was as obnoxiously

cocky as she was irresistibly skilled.

Ramona was also trans, something that she advertised openly and proudly with some of her many tattoos. She liked to say it was the source of all her strength; her powers had first manifested in response to taking HRT. Apparently, the introduction of feminizing hormones into her system had triggered some kind of latent gene, and caused her to start producing incredibly potent, mind-warping pheromones.

Her and Trinity being proud servants of the gay agenda had helped them get to know each other, and was one source of their closeness. However, it was also the source of one of their oldest in-jokes. After making her villain debut, Ramona had been dubbed 'Pheramona' by the press, a moniker annoyingly close to her actual name. She'd tried re-branding herself, but with no luck; apparently, once the media decided what they wanted to call you, it was far harder to shake than any deadname.

Trinity never, ever got tired of giving her shit for it.

Affectionately, of course. Trinity would never have knowingly or intentionally said anything to piss Ramona off. Partly, that was because her powers could be a little temperamental - if you caught her in a bad mood, she could easily fill an entire office block with enough pheromones to have everyone working there drooling over her. But mostly, it was because Ramona had had her back more than once, and that counted for a lot, when you were a villain. People you could trust even a little were hard to come by, and when

you found them, you'd be a fool not to value them properly.

Which was why, when she heard Ramona pick up the phone, Trinity's heart sank in the knowledge that she was going to have to betray her.

"Hey, Ramona," Trinity said, forced by Radiance to sound like her usual, breezy, untroubled self. "Where are you? I need to come by and pick up the goods."

Chapter 15

As Trinity and Radiance walked towards the meeting spot Pheramona had given them, Trinity hunched over until her back ached, and wrapped herself up tight inside her jacket. She wanted to make herself small; so small that no one would be able to see her. Not the people, not the birds, not the insects. No-one. Nothing. She'd never wanted to disappear so bad, but Radiance's enchanted shackle around her wrist was a constant, heavy reminder that she couldn't. Each awful step she took was outside of her control.

It was a mercy, then, that there were so few people around. It was getting late, and they were in one of several of the large, abandoned, disused industrial districts in the outer ring of Future City. Sometimes, tourists opined that it was strange for such a prosperous city to tolerate such wasteful use of space. Little did they know, dereliction was simply part of Future City's great wheel of prosperity.

A neighborhood would find its blood flow inextricably cut off, its infrastructure allowed to fall into ruin as jobs and money dried up. Then, once people started to leave and the price of the land collapsed, a locust swarm of property developers would descend, devouring every last structure and replacing them with blocks and blocks of near-identical high-rise apartment

blocks, each one safe and comfortable and eco-friendly - and with twice the rent of whatever had been there before.

There was a reason Trinity was so determined to get the hell out of there.

The directions Pheramona, the supervillain holding Trinity's loot for her, had provided led to an abandoned-looking warehouse on a street of other, equally abandoned-looking buildings. It was the kind of place that city planners hated, but Trinity loved. There were so many signs of life if you knew where to look. Grass breaking through the asphalt. Fresh graffiti on the walls. Lots of broken bottles, none of them too old; the mark of a recent party.

Trinity hated that it was all about to be buried underneath ten thousand tons of glass and plastic and gleaming steel.

"Where's your friend?" Radiance asked quietly as they stepped inside.

Trinity grimaced. Clearly, Radiance wasn't even going to give her a chance to brood properly. "She'll be around here somewhere," she replied.

Unfortunately for Trinity, Radiance had given her some very, very clear and extensive instructions. She couldn't *not* be helpful.

"She might have taken the money and ran," Radiance said. "Seems likely, for your kind of people."

Trinity rolled her eyes. “She’s not like that. Ramona’s reliable.”

She wanted to say a whole lot more than just that, but again, Radiance’s commands tied her hands.

Trinity had to act natural.

She had to help Radiance as much as she possibly could.

She had to avoid giving anything whatsoever away about what was going on.

And she had to follow the plan.

Unlike Trinity, Radiance didn’t seem at home at all in their derelict surroundings. She was dressed inconspicuously enough, in nondescript civilian clothing, but an six-plus foot tall, blond, muscular amazon inevitably stuck out anywhere she went. Until she’d heard the plan, Trinity had been sure Pheramona would bolt as soon as she saw her. The two of them had to go together, of course - that was the only true limitation of Radiance’s chain, as far as Trinity could see. They had to be literally joined at the hip, or else Trinity would be off her leash and free to bolt.

It really, really sucked that Radiance was smarter than she looked. In Trinity’s opinion, it wasn’t fair at all. Clever plans should be for people without wings and huge biceps.

“Hey there,” came a familiar voice, from above them. “It’s about time. I wasn’t sure if you were gonna show up or not. I’d been waiting days for you to call.”

Trinity glanced up, but saw nothing more than a blur as Ramona Isley, better known to the world as Pheramona, vaulted down from a gantry and landed before her.

Pheramona looked like she always did: like she was ready to raise hell. Unlike Trinity, she didn’t believe in being inconspicuous. She wanted everyone to know she didn’t care what anyone thought, least of all cops or superheroes. She was wearing a sports bra, and over it, a sleeveless battle jacket covered in patches and pins advertising all kinds of rebellious and subversive causes - a transgender symbol, a raised fist, the letters ‘ACAB’. Her skin was just as colorful; both her arms bore sleeve tattoos that wove together a multitude of slogans and symbols in a dizzying kaleidoscope of artistry. Even her face wasn’t completely free of ink. The only part of her body that wasn’t so adorned were her abs; instead, those were gleaming with sweat. Pheramona liked to run hot. Odds were, she’d been doing push-ups whilst waiting for Trinity to arrive.

The barest hint of her scent in the air was enough to make Trinity shiver. She’d seen exactly what Pheramona’s powers could do to someone if she really let loose. Her mind-warping pheromones would have your brain dripping out of your pussy before you knew what was happening.

Rounding off her look was a pair of loose-fitting pants, some heavy boots, some spectacularly dyed hair, and an amused smirk. Once she and Trinity had taken a moment to look at each other, she moved in to clasp a friendly hand on Trinity's shoulder.

"I'm glad you made it out clean," Pheramona said. "I was worried the pigs got you."

"No shot," Trinity replied easily, clasping Pheramona's shoulder in turn.

It should have felt good, seeing a friendly face for a change. A face that wasn't Radiance's. A smile that wasn't mocking or superior.

It didn't.

With each and every moment that passed, Trinity was finding it harder and harder to keep herself from throwing up. Only Radiance's ironclad commands kept her bile down. Being this friendly and familiar with Pheramona felt *wrong*. It wasn't her choice. Even though she wasn't trying to fight Radiance's mind control, she could feel the strings attached all over her body, pulling her arms up to wave and tugging the corners of her mouth into a smile.

She was like a doll. A perfect little performing doll.

And Radiance was going to make her betray one of the few people in the

world who'd ever had her back.

Oblivious to her inner turmoil, Pheramona nodded towards Radiance.

"Who's your friend?"

She's Radiance, and she's here for you. That was what Trinity wanted to say. Instead, she was forced to repeat the lines Radiance had fed her.

"Just someone I picked up on the way," Trinity answered, her tone betraying nothing of her deception. "If you're gonna be handing me cash, I figure it's gonna be a couple of big briefcases or something. Why make my own arms ache if I can use hers?"

By way of illustration, she raised her hand and let a few purple sparks fly between her fingertips.

Pheramona laughed. "Well, it's a little more than that, so you picked a good one for it," she commented. "She looks as strong as a bull. Big as one, too. Where'd you find yourself a stud like this?"

As she spoke, she started pacing around Radiance in slow, languid circles, like a big cat stalking her prey. Radiance remained staring forwards, bolt upright, like a soldier at attention. She wasn't much of an actress, in Trinity's estimation, but it was a passable enough impression of someone under heavy mind control.

“On her way back from the gym,” Trinity replied. “Where else?”

“Maybe I went to the same gym once,” Pheramona said. “She looks kinda familiar.”

Trinity did her best not to shudder. She was caught between two opposing instincts; the old, familiar urge not to get caught in a lie, and the desperate, forlorn hope that somehow, Pheramona would realize what was going on.

Sadly, no one knew what Radiance looked like without her domino mask.

“Maybe I should get you to throw her in as part of my cut,” Pheramona murmured. “It’s not often I get to have fun with someone my size.”

Trinity smiled and rolled her eyes. That reaction was half-genuine. She’d expect nothing less from someone like Pheramona. Though, she couldn’t tell if her comrade wanted to fight Radiance, or fuck her.

Or both.

Pheramona had a real alpha female thing going on. She was irrepressible. Maybe it was something to do with the pheromones.

“If you want,” Trinity said, sighing theatrically. “I had a feeling she’d catch your eye.”

“Yeah.” Pheramona laughed. “You sure know how to sweeten a deal, Shimmer.”

Trinity laughed too, even though her insides were working their way into knots. She couldn’t decide what was worse: the lying, or the powerlessness. She felt like a rat, and she hated the way that her own body language and her own words were being scripted by someone else. Her own mind was betraying her, faithfully interpreting Radiance’s commands as best it could, and forcing her to do the rest. It was like she was a puppet with Radiance’s hand up her ass.

“Although,” Pheramona commented, “maybe you’ve already got plans for her?”

She gestured at the golden chain that bound Trinity and Radiance together. That should have been a dead giveaway, but Radiance had worked it perfectly into the deception. Her end was attached around her own neck, like a collar, and the chain passed down under Radiance’s open jacket to rest in the palm of Trinity’s hand and attach to her wrist. It looked like the two of them were being kinky in public, discreetly, and like Trinity was the one taking the lead.

In Trinity’s opinion, it was total bullshit that the chain still worked for Radiance like that.

“A gold chain, though? Not your usual style. A little too flashy. Feeling rich already, huh?” Pheramona continued.

Very much against her will, Trinity thought furiously to come up with a convincing response.

“Just something to spice it up a little,” she replied lightly. “You know how it is.”

Pheramona shrugged. “Whatever floats your boat. Anyway, I get the message. She’s all yours. Unless, of course, I decide to take her from you.”

Trinity blinked, and carefully scrutinized the roguish, half-serious smirk on Pheramona’s face. Her fellow villain was just joking around.

Probably.

Maybe.

‘Friends’ only ever went so far between supervillains, after all.

The last thing Trinity felt like doing was goading her on, but she knew that it would be weird if she didn’t bite back a little. And Radiance’s orders wouldn’t let her act weird. She shrugged. “You could try,” she retorted.

Pheramona arched an eyebrow and tensed her shoulders, showing off the muscle tone in her arms. “That’s funny. You know it wouldn’t be close, right? You like getting other girls to do your dirty work for you a little too much.

There's no way you could handle me."

Trinity wasn't about to deny that Pheramona cut an imposing figure. She was broad-shouldered and tall; almost as tall as Radiance. And Trinity knew she was every bit as tough as she looked.

"C'mon, Ramona." Trinity made a big show of shaking her head. "It's not just about how much you can bench."

"Oh yeah? It's not what you've got, it's how you use it?" Pheramona snorted. "I haven't heard any complaints about me in that department. Least of all from you."

"Chk." Pheramona licked her lips as Trinity blushed faintly, and made a displeased noise. "I'm talking about brains, idiot."

"You don't think I've got those too?"

"Of course not," Trinity replied haughtily. "Just look at yourself, meathead. But hey, I'm not complaining. I'm sure I could find something fun to do with that body of yours."

Pheramona threw back her head and howled with laughter. She took a step towards Trinity. "Oh, it's like that, huh? Well, in that case, I won't even need to bruise that soft, cute body of yours. I could have you on your knees before you could blink."

How far was Pheramona going to take this joke? Trinity was feeling distinctly uneasy, but she couldn't back down. It wouldn't have seemed right. "One touch, Ramona. You've seen how I work. That's all I need."

"You wouldn't get it." The other villain took another step forward. "And me? I don't even need that. But don't worry. You'll enjoy it. Just like before."

The glint in her eye left no doubt as to what she was referring to.

"I was playing nice, before," Trinity growled. She was starting to get seriously pissed off. Her pride had already taken enough of a beating lately. "I don't always play nice."

Pheramona said nothing for a moment. She just tilted her head, and stared at Trinity very intently. For one moment, Trinity was sure she was going to make a move. For another, she was sure Radiance would move first. But nothing happened, and after a second or two, Pheramona just yawned and shrugged.

"You're awful pent up today," she said. "Stress, I guess. Let me know if you need any help working out some of that tension."

And with that, she turned away from Trinity and got back to business.

"This way," she called back, as she headed off deeper into the warehouse.

Trinity followed her, with Radiance at her heel as if she was the obedient pet and not the puppet master. It was just a short walk through the disused building before they reached some rows of shelves that stretched all the way up to the rafters. Most of them had already been picked clean, but there were still some large crates here and there, strewn about and forgotten. Pheramona quickly approached one in particular, reached into it and retrieved two huge, blocky cargo cases. She set them down on the floor in front of Trinity, before bending down and opening one.

It was full to the brim of paper bills. All hundreds.

The sight was almost rapturous enough to make Trinity forget her dire situation. This was it. This was her big score, staring her in the face. The villain had never seen so much money before in her life. It was more than enough to make a fresh start. At long last, one of her heists had actually worked.

With one very, very large caveat.

"It's all here," Pheramona drawled. "In cash. Should be untraceable. You're welcome to count it, if you want."

Trinity shook her head. She wasn't even sure how much there was supposed to be in the first place. "Did you take your cut already?" she asked.

"Nope." Pheramona put her hands on her hips. "It's not mine to touch. Not

until you take it off my hands.”

Little things like that were one of the things Trinity liked about Pheramona. She had principles, even if they could be a little twisted.

“Alright,” Trinity said, squatting. “Let me cash you out.”

She reached for the briefcase and started sorting through the stacks of bills, setting aside one bundle out of each ten for Pheramona. A full count would have taken far too long, but even that cursory accounting exercise was enough to convince Trinity that she was looking at a vast sum of money. Tens of millions in total, at least. And there was another one of these? The sheer volume of wealth was staggering. Trinity couldn’t take her eyes off it, even as she counted.

“Yeah. I know,” Pheramona grunted. Trinity could tell she was feeling the same thing. “It’s a good thing you brought another pair of hands.”

At her prompting, Trinity turned her head around to look at Radiance. She was still standing there, stiff and still, but her eyes were trained on the money, and there was a deeply unfamiliar, hungry look on her face that sent a chill down Trinity’s spine.

“I gotta say, I’m impressed you actually managed to pull it off,” Pheramona commented. “I never thought you had it in you. You were always talking about your big score, but I figured it was all bullshit.”

“Yeah?” Trinity muttered, distracted.

“You know how it is.” Pheramona shrugged. “A lot of us talk big. Not a lot of us really mean it. And you didn’t seem like the type who was gonna make it.”

Trinity could tell the villain was trying to get a rise out of her. Fortunately, she was permitted to ignore Pheramona and focus on counting.

“What are you gonna do with it all, anyway?” Pheramona asked.

“I’m going to get the hell out of this city for good,” Trinity replied, “and start a new life somewhere far, far away.”

The words now tasted foul and sour in her mouth.

“Yeah?” Pheramona pressed. “You don’t feel like staying here? Fighting the good fight?”

Trinity sighed. It was a familiar debate between them. “What does that mean, Ramona?”

“Keep screwing the people who are trying to screw us, obviously,” Pheramona replied. “Same as you’ve been doing. More heists. More stunts. You could go bigger, if you wanted. There’s a lot this money would buy. If you put it to good use, we could really start tearing this city apart.”

It was a pointless argument, of course. Trinity knew that. Radiance looking over her shoulder was no different from a sword hanging over her head. Still, she had no choice but to repeat old, familiar rhythms. “You know I don’t believe in that stuff. There’s no fixing this place.”

“That’s easy for you to say, now you’ve got an exit strategy,” Pheramona shot back, with fire in her deep voice. “What about everyone else? And what about those downtown assholes ruining everything? Are you really OK with just walking away and letting them win? Don’t you want to tear it all down, and make them watch you piss on the ashes?”

It was also a pointless argument because there was no winning, not with her.

“I robbed the richest woman in the city for millions,” Trinity said wearily. “Consider that my war contribution over and done with. Now, here’s your ten percent of this half.”

Her tone was final, and mercifully, Pheramona took heed of that. Without another word, she reached down and grabbed some of the bills that Trinity had set aside for her. She turned around, reaching for her own bag, ready to stash away her cut.

She was within arm’s reach, and completely off her guard.

And Radiance noticed.

For the first time, she spoke, in a voice only just loud enough for Trinity to hear.

“Now.”

This was the moment Trinity had been waiting for. She’d been mustering all her strength and all her willpower, just for this. Radiance wasn’t unbeatable. No one was unbeatable. Trinity had managed to overcome her before, just once. She’d managed to force her shimmer through the hero’s formidable will and dominate her. This was no different. Trinity needed to hold on to that hope. If she truly focused, if she truly fought, she could resist Radiance’s mind control. She could make herself hold back. She didn’t have to do what Radiance told her. Not this time.

Trinity fixed that thought in her mind as firmly as she could, as she felt the ironclad force of Radiance’s compulsion start to descend on her mind and body. The magnetic pull she felt across her limbs, forcing her into action, was all but irresistible. This time, though, Trinity was determined to resist. She was determined to win. No matter how much it made her body ache and her head throb, she was going to manage it. This was one line she wouldn’t let Radiance make her cross. Trinity brought her very last mental reserves to bear on that one, singular goal.

All she managed to do was make herself hesitate for a single moment.

That moment was enough, though - not for her, but for Pheramona. The villain's instincts were as fierce as ever, and even though her back was turned when Trinity silently lunged forward towards her, she somehow sensed it and managed to wheel around, throwing out an arm to defend herself.

"What the-" Pheramona cried, in the instant before Trinity's hand clasped around her wrist.

Trinity had been aiming for her head. Radiance's orders had been firm and unequivocal. They left no room for disagreement or misinterpretation. Trinity had to strive her hardest to subdue the supervillain, and her power was at its most effective when she could touch someone's head - the closer to the brain, the better. But it was far from useless otherwise. Pheramona froze up as a torrent of shimmering, purple sparks started to flow out from Trinity's fingertips and up her arm.

And up, and up, until Trinity could start to see them in her eyes.

It always felt good to truly let loose with her power like that, but this time, the moment was ruined. Trinity was still doing her best to hold back, but the unfolding events had already shown her that it was useless. Trinity felt like a mere conduit - an agent of Radiance's will, as her own power channeled itself through her, all according to Radiance's plan. It would have been so easy to resign herself to helplessness, but for how uncomfortably intimate it all felt. This was her power. It was her hand around Pheramona's wrist. And she was

the one Pheramona was looking at with those shocked, angry eyes as they started to change color.

The contact only lasted a moment before Pheramona managed to wrest her arm away from Trinity and stumble a few paces backward.

“What the fuck?” she spat. She was plainly still dazed from the unexpected betrayal, and the lingering effects of Trinity’s shimmer weren’t going to back clear thinking any easier. “What are you doing?”

Trinity didn’t reply. She couldn’t. She was still bound by Radiance’s order not to reveal anything. Instead, she glanced at her superheroine handler. Trinity had been fully expecting Radiance to intervene once things went awry, but she didn’t. She just stood and stared and watched. From the irresistible pull she still felt, Trinity realized she was going to have to see it through by herself. The words Radiance had spoken to her before they arrived were echoing in her head, loud and clear.

Defeat Pheramona. No matter what, you will defeat and subdue her.

“Why?” Pheramona demanded. She was breathing hard, and her face was full of fury. “Why are you doing this?”

Trinity wanted to answer her. She owed her an answer. But she couldn’t give one. Her jaw was held shut just as surely as Radiance’s chain was fastened around her wrist.

“Sometimes I think they’re right to call us villains. All we ever seem to do is stab each other in the back.” Pheramona wasn’t wrong about that. Infighting amongst villains was a constant of life in Future City’s underworld. Neither Trinity nor Pheramona were above it. “Why won’t you all realize what we could achieve if we worked together, for once, instead of squabbling over whatever scraps fall off the table? I thought you were better than that, Shimmer.”

Pheramona started moving, circling Trinity, looking for an angle. Her fists were raised. Trinity matched her movements. Radiance simply stood aside, watching impassively, and with each step Trinity took the supernatural chain connecting the two of them lengthened, allowing her to move unencumbered.

She was certainly going to need that advantage, if she wanted to stand even the slightest chance against Pheramona.

“Let me guess,” her opponent raged, “I’m a loose end, right? You gotta clear up that money trail. Can’t leave anything behind that might ruin your precious new start. Nothing at all. Is that it?”

Trinity could barely hear her over the sound of her own heart pounding in her ears. Even though the last thing she wanted to do was fight, her instincts were fierce and her body was flooded with adrenaline. One wrong move, and she was in serious trouble.

“Or did you just get greedy?” Pheramona continued, snarling. “What, was ten percent too big of a cut? You need every last cent, huh? I guess that makes sense. You’ve only ever really looked out for yourself, after all. Maybe soon you’ll be one of the big shots you used to be so pissed at, looking down on us little people from one of those fancy skyscrapers.”

Despite everything, her words stung.

“Seems like I don’t even deserve an answer.” Pheramona barked a harsh, guttural laugh. “Fine. Doesn’t matter. Soon enough, you’ll be begging for the chance to tell me whatever you want.”

The significance of that threat wasn’t lost on Trinity. Already, she noticed the distinctive, intimate scent of the supervillain’s pheromones starting to hang heavy in the air around them.

She was already running out of time.

Trinity had seen more than once what Pheramona’s power could do to people. Calling her pheromones a blunt instrument for mind control would have been an understatement. When she really let loose, it was like a bomb going off. On one occasion, Trinity had watched her reduce an entire building’s worth of people to little more than drooling puppets. Unlike Trinity and Radiance, she couldn’t exactly tell people what to do - but she didn’t need to. After enough exposure, they’d be falling over themselves to please her.

Her pheromones effectively shut down rational thought, inhibiting areas of the brain that were responsible for planning, decision-making, and maintaining priorities. Conversely, it kicked your animal brain into overdrive, inducing a powerful hormonal response of lust, reverence, and loyalty, all directed at Pheramona.

The way the other villain had explained it to Trinity was simple and evocative: once you were drunk on her power, you were like a wolf in a pack - and she was the alpha. Everything that followed was pure instinct.

“What’s the matter?” Pheramona jeered. “You’re looking a little unsteady there.”

Trinity’s mouth went dry. It was already affecting her.

Her head felt thick and heavy, and her thoughts were racing uncontrollably. It was more than just the adrenaline and the panic, and it was a far cry from the agonizing clarity she felt when Radiance was controlling her. Her own body was becoming a gnawing, burning distraction. Trinity was uncomfortably aware of beads of sweat forming on her skin, causing her clothes to cling to her body, and a throbbing between her legs demanded all her attention. She tried focusing on Pheramona, her opponent, to banish the distractions, but that was a double-edged sword. The other villain’s body was every bit as distracting as her own. Her eyes kept wandering to Pheramona’s toned arms, or her broad, imposing shoulders, or to the way her hips were bouncing as she kept light on her feet.

This was bad.

She'd counted on having longer. Pheramona's power was a fickle thing. It waxed and waned with the force of her emotions, and normally it took some time to ramp up.

Her partner in crime must have been really, really pissed off at her.

Trinity glanced over at Radiance, hoping to see that the pheromones were getting to her too. If they were, she wasn't showing it. The superhero was as impassive as ever.

Typical.

"Ready to give up already?" Pheramona mocked. "C'mon, aren't you going to make a move? Or are you so scared of a fair fight you'll let me melt your brain for free?"

"Shut up," Trinity grunted. Unfortunately for her, Pheramona had a point. It was on her to finish the fight she'd started, before the pheromones overpowered her.

Thanks to Radiance, she quite literally did not have a choice.

Throwing caution to the wind, Trinity darted forward. She knew she wasn't

as good as Pheramona in a fight, but all she needed was a few more moments of contact. Her power would do the rest. Odds were, the other villain still hadn't quite recovered from her first dose. Maybe, thanks to that, she'd be just a little bit slower than she needed to be. Maybe.

No such luck.

Pheramona danced away from her with the finesse and agility of a boxer. She made it seem effortless, a vicious smirk on her face the whole time. Trinity couldn't touch her, and she knew it.

All she had to do was wait.

Which each punch she threw, Trinity got more and more tired, and her head got foggier and foggier. And each time she bobbed and weaved out of the way, Pheramona's heady, mind-altering scent was left hanging in the air behind her. Just being near her was overwhelming. If not for Radiance's commands still binding her, Trinity was sure she would already have fallen to her knees. Instead, she was forced to stagger onward, even as her blows got slower and less coordinated.

"Just give in," Pheramona sneered. "You're already tapped out. I can tell. Make it easy for me, and I'll go easy on you - you and your new pet, both. I guess I get to have fun with her after all."

Trinity wanted to get mad at her, but she couldn't. She couldn't feel

anything except for desperate arousal, and a crushing urge to submit. More and more, Pheramona's presence felt awe-inspiring. Overpowering. Her words had extra bite to them; extra gravitas. She seemed invincible. Why was Trinity trying to fight someone like her? It was obviously futile. Pheramona was stronger. Better. Wasn't it absurd to think she could bend such a mighty villainess to her will?

Trinity shook her head madly, trying to throw off those thoughts as they assailed her like a cloud of flies. She had to keep going. It wasn't up to her.

Defeat Pheramona. No matter what, you will defeat and subdue her.

Those words in her head were warring with what her new, warped instincts were screaming at her to do: kneel, submit, beg. Her whole body was burning. It was so hard to think with anything except her cunt. Every time she stepped forward, trying to match Pheramona's rhythm, her thighs rubbed together and made her want to scream with pleasure. She wanted her opponent to touch her. To use her. It was blindingly intense. It was all she could think about. She was experiencing the delirium of an orgasmic high, but deep in her gut she knew the only thing that would satisfy her would be falling to her knees in front of her new goddess.

Meanwhile, her movements were getting sloppier and sloppier. After one particularly clumsy punch that landed only in midair, Pheramona simply stepped past her and delivered a single jab to her side. She could have hit Trinity much harder, but even that blow was enough to leave her head

spinning. All she could hear was the sound of her own blood pumping, and the mocking laughter of the other supervillain.

Trinity couldn't win. It was completely and utterly hopeless.

There was a kind of relief in that, but she still couldn't stop her addled mind from taxing itself to the limit to try and find a way out - any way out.

How could she possibly win this fight?

She couldn't.

Maybe the only way to win was not to fight.

Defeat Pheramona. No matter what.

Her head scrambled beyond reason, Trinity's legs gave out beneath her. She slumped to the ground, twitching and groaning in defeat. Pheramona's scent dominated her senses. Her pheromones were roaring through her. It felt so right to finally give in and listen to them.

"Told you." Pheramona shook her head theatrically. She clearly took no small amount of pleasure in seeing Trinity submit. "It didn't have to be like this, Shimmer. It was your choice. You could have taken your money and walked away. But since you didn't..."

Trinity could barely hear her. She was twitching and drooling from need, and pawing at herself in a useless quest for satisfaction. Even submission was torture. She could still feel Radiance's chain, tight around her wrist. It was as if her mind was ripping itself in half.

"Jesus. You've really got it bad, huh?" Pheramona looked hungry, as she approached the kneeling Trinity. In Trinity's eyes, she was as great and radiant as the sun. "Well, it's your lucky day. I'm in a forgiving mood, and I'm not much a sadist." As she said that, her face pulled itself into a twisted smile. "Now, just tell me what you need."

"I..." Trinity's speech came out slow and slurred. Her mouth had been dry before; now she was salivating like a hungry dog. "I... n-need... ugh... nnnneed?"

How was she supposed to answer that? How was she supposed to condense the enormity of her urgent need into simple words? With each step Pheramona took toward her, it got harder and harder. She was drowning in pheromones, and the object of her wild, submissive lust was almost within arm's reach.

"Oh yeah?" All of Pheramona's fury had dissipated. Instead, she was swelling with pride and victory. She moved with a slow, easy swagger, loping towards Trinity like a cat to a cornered mouse. "Need? What do you need, pet? Use your words."

At first, Trinity's only reply was a keening whine of protest. How long was Pheramona going to torture her like this? All the same, she couldn't stop herself from trying to obey. Following the supervillain's lead seemed as natural as breathing, now.

"Nnnneeeeee," Trinity gurgled. She reached out to Pheramona with a weak, flailing hand. She'd never been so viscerally aroused. Her brain felt like it was boiling, "y-you."

"Me?" Pheramona gestured to herself in mock surprise. She was now standing only a couple of feet away from Trinity. "But what would you need from me, Shimmer?"

"Y... you... y... your..." Trinity shivered rapturously, still drooling all over herself. Her gaze was completely and utterly fixed on just one spot: the front of Pheramona's pants.

Even though Pheramona's clothes were loose-fitting, it was plainly obvious that she was very, very turned on by what she'd done to Trinity - just as turned on as Trinity would have been if their positions had been reversed. The sight of her large bulge steadily growing in her pants was making Trinity see red. She'd never needed anything more in her life. She needed Pheramona to use her cock on her, or she needed to worship it, or whatever her new idol wanted.

"Wow," Pheramona giggled. "You're cute. But... this? I'm not sure you

deserve it, Shimmer.”

At that, Trinity let out her most desperate whine yet.

“But maybe I’ll let you earn it,” the other villain continued, before a sudden, wicked light appeared in her eyes. “No, even better. I’ll let you buy it.”

Trinity just nodded. She was past caring. She’d give Pheramona whatever she wanted.

“And it’s going to cost you some serious money,” Pheramona licked her lips, relishing the moment. She loomed effortlessly over Trinity, allowing the subjugated supervillain to bathe in her strength and her confidence. “The other ninety percent of your score, actually. How does that sound?”

Before she had even finished asking, Trinity was nodding fervently. Money was the last thing on her mind.

Pheramona howled with laughter. “Deal!” she exclaimed, before stepping forward and reaching down to cup her hand on the back of Trinity’s head. Trinity was utterly incapable of resisting as Pheramona forcefully pushed Trinity into her, grinding her face into the huge bulge in her pants. “You’re even more helpless than I thought! Trading away all your hard-earned cash just for some good dick. It’s pathetic, honestly. Maybe pathetic enough that you’ll actually learn your lesson.”

Her cruel words were little more than a ringing in Trinity's ears. At that distance, the other villain's pheromones crashed over her in torrential waves with each breath she took. Her heart was pounding so hard that she thought it was going to explode. Trinity was nothing more than a bitch in heat. Without a thought to spare for her own dignity, she was already desperately lapping at Pheramona's bulge with her tongue.

"Well, go ahead." With a lopsided grin on her face, Pheramona moved her legs slightly apart, and folded her hands behind her head. "Unlike you, I keep my bargains. Help yourself, slut."

Trinity closed her eyes and sighed blissfully. Hearing those words was so sweet. In that moment, she wanted nothing more she wanted Pheramona's cock. She wanted to be her bottom. Her bitch. That desire was her whole self. It was all her thoughts, all her feelings. She wanted to lose herself in it for hours.

It was almost painful that she couldn't.

No matter what.

This time, Pheramona was caught completely and totally off-guard when Trinity surged up at her, clamped her palms around the villain's head, and hit her with as strong of a burst of mind-controlling shimmer as she was still capable of.

Moments later, Pheramona slumped to the ground, insensate. Trinity was on the verge of collapsing along with her. After that exertion, she had nothing left to give. She was still drugged up beyond the point of reason by Pheramona's power.

It was simply that Radiance's control had proved even stronger.

As she tried to bring her breathing back into rhythm, there was nothing else for Trinity to do but look over at Radiance. The two of them were still shackled together, and the superhero hadn't moved so much as a muscle in minutes. After meeting Trinity's gaze, though, she slowly folded her arms, and smiled.

"Good girl."

Chapter 16

“Good girl.”

Just about the only thing Trinity hated more than the biting condescension in Radiance’s tone was the way her words made her thighs clench together involuntarily. She could blame Pheramona’s power for her arousal, of course - even now that the supervillain was barely conscious, her pheromones hung in the air, thick as fog - but after some of their recent experiences, both she and Radiance knew it was something deeper than that.

What Trinity hated most, though, was how hauntingly, devastatingly *hot* it was that she found the words so humiliating, as they bounced around in her head.

Good girl.

The last thing she wanted was to feel good about this - about standing over the senseless, kneeling body of her partner in crime, who she’d betrayed and tricked not once, but now twice. Trinity would admit to being a lot of things, including a lot of scummy and unflattering things, but she’d been determined never to be a traitor or a snitch. And then, of course, Radiance had taken that

choice away from her.

Trinity looked down at Pheramona. It was a minor miracle that the unfortunate supervillain was still upright. Trinity had hit her with such a strong blast of shimmer that she was all but unconscious. Her eyes blazed purple with brilliant sparks, and saw nothing at all. And it wasn't over - Radiance's commands held Trinity there, one hand rested on Pheramona's temple, feeding her a steady trickle of her hypnotic energy. It was incredibly strange, seeing her look so blank and so submissive. It seemed wrong. Pheramona could be kind of a crazy bitch, sometimes, but she had her pride. Trinity still felt sorry for her.

"What's the matter?" Radiance sounded maddeningly smug, but underneath all that was a simmering anger. "You don't look very pleased."

No sharp, witty comeback rose to Trinity's lips. She was too tired and too horny, and she couldn't think. "Just... you've got your money," she said dully, nodding in the direction of the huge cargo cases full of stacked bills. "Are we done here?"

Radiance's lips curled. "I thought you'd want to enjoy your victory."

"Of course not," Trinity growled.

"Well, I do." There was a strange glint in Radiance's eyes; one that Trinity didn't like one bit. "Clearly, this is what I should have been doing to you all

along! I think I'm starting to understand you, Trinity. You're reward-motivated. I guess I just needed to show you how rewarding it can be, to be on the side of good for a change. It's just like training a dog. You need to give her a few treats."

"W-what the fuck is wrong with you?" Trinity was shocked at how blatantly cruel Radiance sounded. Why was she being like this? Why, after all they had been through and talked about? But that shock didn't stop her words from burning right through her and making her cunt throb with need.

"I'm just calling it how I see it," Radiance replied. "Once you've got someone holding your leash properly, you're so effective! A little yappy, perhaps, but besides that, you make a wonderful hunting hound. Doesn't it feel good to do the right thing for a change? To be on the right side of the fight? To be a good girl?"

Trinity's head was spinning. She wasn't sure what this new game of Radiance's was, but she couldn't handle it. The effortless superiority on the superhero's face, the implacable authority in her tone, the twisted, condescending praise in her words - it was all driving her crazy. The way her own body was hearkening to Radiance's taunts was even more humiliating than being made to cum from being passed around in a dyke bar.

"You're crazy!" Trinity protested. "I'm a villain, remember?"

"But you don't have to be," Radiance shot back. "Maybe you just haven't

been trained properly yet.”

Trinity couldn’t suppress a moan. “S-shut up.”

“I can’t tell you how cute it is that this is getting to you,” Radiance laughed. “A bad girl with naughty little fantasies about turning good, huh?” Trinity was shaking her head furiously, but Radiance ignored her. “I suppose it makes sense. You want to be part of something bigger, don’t you? Everyone does. Why not just keep following my lead, Trinity? I could use a decent sidekick.”

The offer was far too ridiculous to be genuine, but knowing that didn’t stop the series of images that unfolded in Trinity’s head like a montage in a movie. Her, at Radiance’s side. Her, wearing a hero costume, like the one she’d taken from Radiance. Her, doing good, and basking in the acclaim of the masses - and in Radiance’s mocking praise.

All with the superhero’s chain bound tight around her neck.

The shame Trinity felt at her own arousal burned within her chest like hot coals. What was happening to her? Why did she want this? She... she didn’t, did she? It was so damn hard for her to think, with her head full of pheromones. Her desires were running wild, and chasing after whatever intoxicating little thread Radiance suggested to her.

“What’s wrong?” Radiance mocked. “Need me to call you a good girl some more?”

Trinity squeezed her thighs together as tightly as she could, as a deep, wicked part of her mind savored the pleasure it brought her. It was getting harder and harder not to throw herself at Radiance's feet and start rubbing herself.

Fuck, even picturing herself doing that made her hot.

"N-no!" Trinity whined. "I'm not... go fuck yourself!"

Radiance just laughed at her. "Don't pretend you're not turned on," she scoffed. "I can smell it, Trinity."

That made Trinity blush even harder. Her cheeks were discovering hitherto unknown shades of red. "It's the pheromones!" she insisted, half-truthfully. "Can't you feel it too?"

She was desperate to talk about anything except her own body, and for once Radiance indulged her. The superhero shrugged. "Enhanced physiology," she replied. "Toxins, chemicals - I don't have to worry about stuff like that."

"Tch. Must be nice."

Radiance having even more bullshit superpowers up her sleeve didn't come as much of a surprise. She was, after all, famous for being perfect. That didn't mean Trinity had to stop being bitter about it, though. After another moment

or two, though, her thoughts turned to how strangely Radiance was acting. What if she wasn't as immune as she thought? Pheramona's power was more than just some random toxin, after all. Trinity did her best to peer through the fog of her own arousal and inspect Radiance carefully. The hero was breathing hard, her nostrils flaring unusually every few seconds, and her pupils looked a little dilated.

"Radiance," Trinity said carefully. "I think you might not wanna be so-"

"Stop trying to change the subject," Radiance told her, smirking. "We were talking about you, remember? And how turned on you are, more specifically."

"I'm not!" Trinity snapped, but her own voice betrayed her. She sounded high-pitched and feminine, and desperately needy.

"Why even bother to lie about that?" Radiance seemed both amused and irked by Trinity's denials. "Don't you know what you look like? It's pathetic."

"Ngrhh." *Pathetic*. Why did that one word do so much to her? "Shut. Up."

Even the sound of Trinity's own voice was humiliating to her. It was so whiny; so weak. The way the smirk on Radiance's face danced showed she was just as aware of it. "And now you're repeating yourself," Radiance commented. "'Shut up'? Is that the best you have left in you? Where's that sharp tongue, Trinity? Surely you can do better than that. Than barking like a stupid puppy."

Trinity saw white for a moment. This was too much. The shameful pleasure of humiliation was burning within her hotter than she could stand. Her own powerlessness was torture. Normally, she'd always know what to do. Run, or fight, or use her power, or at least throw out a witty retort. This time, she couldn't do any of that. The need to simply *escape* was overpowering, but all she could do was twitch and squirm in ways that made her feel all the more pathetic. It didn't help that every little movement made her body rub against itself, leaving her aching to touch herself. She was running out of self-control.

"You want this," Radiance continued. "Just say it, Trinity. You. Want. This. You want to be weak. You want to be small. You want to let someone else do the thinking for you. You want to be mine. You want to be my obedient puppy, because that feels better than anything else in your shitty little life. Admit it."

The worst part was that Trinity couldn't tell if she wanted to or not. She couldn't shake the feeling that it would feel good, somehow. That it would feel like a release, one she desperately needed. Radiance's words felt painfully, ecstatically true, and she wasn't sure how much of that was real and how much was her own overtaxed mind contorting pathetically to what Radiance was telling her.

The only thing Trinity knew for sure was that if she let this go on for much longer, she was going to end up doing and saying whatever the superhero wanted.

"W-what about you?" Trinity said thickly; a last, desperate attempt to spit

in Radiance's face while she could still think. "Haven't you got... better things to do? Than... than getting your rocks off... making fun of me? You should see how *you* look. You're... you're the one pushing me so fucking hard. Trying to make me feel weak. Trying to make me the... the kind of girl y-you like. You. You're the one... who wants this. Who wants... *me*."

Radiance's face soured immediately. Clearly, Trinity had touched a nerve. The manic glint in her eyes didn't disappear, though. It just became even more twisted.

"Fine," Radiance growled, in a breathy voice. "Fine. Maybe you're right, Shimmer. Maybe you're not enjoying this. Maybe you really are some kind of big, bad, untouchable dominant. That's what you want to pretend, right? You keep making excuses. It's my power. It's the pheromones. Anything, to pretend you wouldn't enjoy being treated this way. Well, you know what? Show me. Prove it."

Trinity wasn't sure exactly what Radiance wanted from her - until glanced pointedly down at Pheramona, still slumped at Trinity's feet.

"What?" Trinity looked down and felt dizzy. As absurd as it felt in the situation, she was overflowing with lust, much of it directed at Pheramona. The supervillain's power was wearing off only very slowly, and its lingering effects were like a magnetic pull, beckoning Trinity towards her. Something deep in her animal brain, worked into a frenzy by the mind-warping chemicals filling the air, was screaming at her that Pheramona was her very purpose. "W-

what are you talking about?"

"You've already got her on her knees." Radiance folded her arms. "It shouldn't be so hard."

"That's not the point!" Trinity insisted. "The point is, I don't want to!"

The telltale quiver in her voice betrayed how truly unsure she was. Her desires were a churning mess of contradictions. She was at the point where she'd do just about anything to achieve any kind of release, no matter how degrading, but if she went along with what Radiance was suggesting, wouldn't she be every bit as much of a scumbag as she liked to make out?

"I'm not sure that's true," Radiance mused. "But it doesn't matter. I wasn't asking."

Trinity shook her head violently as Radiance tugged threateningly at the golden chain wrapped around her own neck.

"No," she pleaded. "No way. Radiance, think! The pheromones! This isn't you, it's-"

"Shut up," Radiance said calmly. Trinity felt the superhero's will flow into her through her chain, striking her like a bolt of electricity. Her jaw clamped shut. "That's better," Radiance continued. "Now, listen: you're going to wake up Pheramona, and you're going to dominate her. Use your power on her. Make

her do whatever your twisted little heart desires. Just be sure to remember the rules I gave you before. You're not allowed to tell her what's really going on." The smirk on Radiance's face darkened. "And make it humiliating."

Trinity paled at the command. She couldn't believe how twisted it was. What was the point? What was this supposed to teach her? She wondered if Radiance had cast aside all pretenses of nobility, and was simply trying to break Trinity's will for the sake of her own amusement. That was certainly what it felt like. There was little hint of anything but sadistic, manic glee in Radiance's demeanor, and it was impossible to know how much of that was due to the pheromones filling the room, and how much was simply the superhero's own desires beginning to unshackle themselves.

Knowing would have meant less than nothing, however. Trinity wanted to pretend that she wasn't being tamed, but she had already internalized the lesson that there was no point fighting Radiance.

She had no choice but to obey.

Already, the steady stream of shimmer that Trinity was trickling into Pheramona had started to ebb. Not completely, of course - she needed to remain in control, and needed to try and keep Pheramona's power suppressed - but enough to allow the supervillain to regain some semblance of consciousness. Right away, Pheramona showed signs of stirring. Her stamina was truly impressive. Still, even once she'd managed to force her eyes open and tip her head upwards, it was clear that Trinity's power had her in its sway.

Pheramona was moving like she was underwater, and when she spoke, her voice was thick and slurred.

“Ugh... you... I... wha...” She swayed dangerously for a moment, before regaining a little more clarity. Her eyes filled with impotent rage as she fixed her gaze on Trinity. “Fuck,” she groaned. “I can’t believe you beat me.”

“Told you,” Trinity said breezily. “I don’t always play nice.”

In spite of everything, it felt a little bit good to rub that in Pheramona’s face.

“Damn it.” Pheramona reached up to rub her head. “Don’t go thinking you’re not weak. It’s my fault for letting you sucker punch me like that. You pulled out the oldest trick in the book.”

“Yeah, and you were dumb enough to fall for it,” Trinity snorted. “What does that tell you?”

Pheramona made a displeased noise and attempted to brush Trinity’s hand away from her temple. She failed. As weak as a kitten’s, her arm fell limply to her side. Trinity was already through all of her mental defenses - but that didn’t mean staying in control was effortless. As per Radiance’s instructions, she needed to keep Pheramona awake enough to find what was happening to her humiliating. That meant she was only just perched on the precipice of a genuine trance, and all her thoughts were bent towards rebellion.

“That won’t work,” Trinity told her. “I’ve got you, Ramona. You’ve seen what my power does to people.”

Pheramona growled at her through gritted teeth, but she seemed to accept her fate. “Fine. You win. Now what? You take all your money? Wipe my memory?”

“Maybe.” Trinity felt Radiance’s mind control kick in and, against her will, she flashed a smug, wicked smirk down at Pheramona. “But first, I’m gonna have some fun.”

Pheramona’s eyes widened a fraction. “You wouldn’t dare.”

“That right?” Trinity laughed, and her laugh was more than a little genuine. Pheramona really still thought she was big and tough and scary, even when she was on her knees. It was so like her. “And why not, exactly?”

“You...” Pheramona’s eyes flitted around for a moment. Was she looking for an escape? Or was she simply nervous? That thought brought a smile to Trinity’s face. Pheramona was the kind of girl who always needed to get the last word and the last laugh. You had to let her, if you wanted to stay on her good side. Maybe a little humility would be good for her.

“You just wouldn’t,” Pheramona finished lamely. “It’s not your style, Shimmer. You’re not that type of girl.”

“Sure,” Trinity replied. “But you are. Isn’t that what you were saying just now? You told me you were going to take advantage of Ra- I mean, of my friend Violet here.”

She gestured towards Radiance, and flashed her a slightly sheepish look. It was only Radiance’s mind control that had kept her tongue from slipping.

“That’s...” Now Pheramona was started to sweat a little. Trinity couldn’t help but feel a little gleeful. She might not have been the one at the wheel, but she could still enjoy the ride.

“And me too, I bet,” Trinity added. “You’ve never exactly been one for self-restraint, Ramona. Anyway, that’s not all. Thanks to you and your fucking power, I’m all worked up. Seems only fair you help me work out some of the tension. You even offered before, right?”

This time, Pheramona just grunted. Trinity could sense the defeated villain trying to draw on her pheromone power again, probably in the hopes of drowning Trinity in a close-range dose that would leave her helpless. But she couldn’t. Trinity wouldn’t let her.

“Fuck you,” Pheramona spat, once she figured out that Trinity was blocking her.

“You wish.” Trinity wasn’t proud of that one. It was too cliché. It still felt a little bit satisfying, though. “But not this time, Ramona. It’s time to switch

things up.”

Once she caught Trinity’s meaning, Pheramona became a simmering cauldron of rage. It was an impressive sight. There probably would have been steam coming out of her ears, if not for Trinity’s power tamping down on her emotions.

And that, of course, was exactly what Trinity had been aiming for.

As Trinity had learned in her various dealings with Pheramona, one facet of the other villain’s alpha female complex was that she prided herself on being a ‘gold star top’. She always had to take the lead in bed. Her pleasure always came first. She was always on top, both figuratively and literally. She boastfully claimed to have less than zero interest in experiencing the other side of the slash.

That was about to change.

Radiance was forcing Trinity to humiliate Pheramona, and she knew the most humiliating thing for Pheramona would be to take the submissive role - and to get off on it.

“Don’t you dare,” Pheramona growled. “The moment I get free of you, I’m gonna-”

“Ah, ah, ah!” Trinity tutted, wagging a finger. All she needed to do to cut

Pheramona off was infuse her with a little more of her shimmer; just enough to make the words melt out of her head before she could speak them. The other villain's eyes were dancing with sparks. It was a glorious sight - addictive, in the purest sense of the word. "You really don't get it yet, do you? I'm making the rules here."

That was a lie. There was only one of them there making the rules, and it wasn't Trinity. But when she said it, it *felt* true. When she was standing over Pheramona like this, using her power to dominate her like a cowboy with a wild horse, it was impossible not to feel the old, familiar thrill of dominance, its intensity undiminished by its phoniness.

"Grkkk," Pheramona drooled, in useless protest.

"And the rule is," Trinity continued. "You're going to get me off. And you're going to like it."

Pheramona's eyes widened slightly. There was something endlessly amusing about how offended she seemed to be at the suggestion, like she hadn't taken advantage of people in the same way many times before. Really, all she was doing was giving her a taste of her own medicine. Maybe that wasn't so bad after all. It troubled Trinity, a little, that she found it so easy to feel that way. But she was too horny to think, and she knew there was no point resisting it.

"Now get over here, and get to work," she finished, brushing aside her

misgivings.

Trinity started to lead Pheramona over to a nearby storage crate, one of the empty, abandoned ones. Pheramona made a big show of resistance, of course. She growled and grit her teeth and dug in her heels as much as she possibly could. But all Trinity needed to do was exert a little more effort, and she folded. Her limbs disobeyed her, and Pheramona found herself crawling obediently along the ground at Trinity's heel like a dejected puppy. Trinity's enchanted touch was just as binding as any leash, when she needed it to be.

After taking a moment to shuck her pants down to around her knees, Trinity perched herself on the edge of the storage container and spread her legs amorously. Her panties were utterly, embarrassingly soaked, thanks to Pheramona's power, but Trinity didn't feel at all bashful about exposing herself. When she was the one taking control, it didn't feel like vulnerability. It felt like an assertion. She felt untouchable. The violent glare on Pheramona's face didn't bring her any fear or trepidation. It just made her want to...

What *did* she want?

That question gave Trinity a moment of pause. What did she want? Without really realizing it, she'd slipped into acting on autopilot. Dominance wasn't unfamiliar to her, and it felt totally natural to follow her lusts and her hormones whilst she allowed her superpower to do the rest. Trinity wasn't the type to let anything stop her from doing whatever she wanted to do. Only, this time wasn't like the other times. She wasn't doing this for herself. She was

doing this for Radiance. She was doing it because Radiance was making her, and that was the only reason. She didn't want this at all.

Except, she did.

She viscerally, palpably did.

Trinity tried to think back. The things she'd said just now, the things she'd done - were those her? Had those been her choice? Or was it all Radiance?

She wasn't sure.

A moment of reflection was all Radiance would allow her. After a few seconds of hesitation, she could feel Radiance's commands pulling at her like a tightening noose, pulling her forwards, back into the irresistible flow of pleasure and domination.

"Here," Trinity barked insistently, using her hand to guide Pheramona's face between her thighs. "You know what to do."

"Fuck you," Pheramona grunted. "Go fuck yourself."

"Very eloquent." Trinity sighed.

"If you want me to go down on you, you're gonna have to make me," Pheramona sneered.

“Nope,” Trinity replied. “I just have to make you want it.”

Before Pheramona could say another word, Trinity opened the floodgates on her power and forced her way into the defeated villain’s head.

The feeling was as electric for Trinity as it was for her victim. Trinity gasped at the satisfaction and pleasure, whilst Pheramona went stiff, purple sparks dancing across her face. Her eyes were steadily changing color to the unnatural, iridescent purple that marked Trinity’s puppets. Every time Trinity truly tapped into her power, she knew: she was born for this. Even now, that feeling couldn’t be tainted.

“Ramona,” Trinity whispered to her, “for now, for today, you want to eat me out. You want to go down on me so fucking bad.”

Her words rippled through Pheramona like the wind through grass. She could see, even now, the supervillain trying to resist. Her subconscious was every bit as stubborn and fierce as the rest of her. But it wasn’t working. Trinity grinned as she noticed Pheramona’s sharp intake of breath, her gaze started to stray downward to between Trinity’s legs.

“There.” Trinity pulled back on her shimmer just a little; just enough for her to be able to enjoy Pheramona’s authentic reaction. “Feeling any more eager?”

“N-no,” Pheramona growled, but her voice lacked the conviction it had held

mere seconds before. Trinity could tell she was struggling to come to terms with her new impulses and flailing to fight the new desires welling up inside her mind.

The sight was delicious.

“Liar,” Trinity said playfully. “But if you can still lie, I guess I’m not trying hard enough.”

She *pushed* again with her power, this time a little harder.

“You don’t just want this,” Trinity purred, teasingly stroking her soaked panties with her fingertips as Pheramona watched. “You’re obsessed with it. With me. With my pussy. You belong between my legs, Ramona. It’s what you need.”

This time, Pheramona shuddered with the force of the suggestion. Her mouth opened and closed like she was trying to speak, trying to protest. The words wouldn’t come to her, though, and eyes were now completely fixed on the outline of Trinity’s needy, throbbing cunt.

Trinity loved taking her time like this. Letting her playthings savor their fall. She’d been missing this experience so badly. Nothing else was ever as hot or as satisfying. Compared to this, her encounter in the bathroom at the dyke bar had been nothing.

Watching as Pheramona gradually and unwillingly submitted to her mind control was twisting Trinity's own desire into further, stranger knots. She was riding a crazy, dominant high, but she was still suffering the effects of her victim's pheromones. They were still hanging heavy in the air all around her, and she could barely think for how overflowing with lust for Pheramona she was. Part of her brain was still screaming at her that Pheramona was her goddess, her queen, her alpha. That part wasn't at war with the part that wanted her to dominate and humiliate the supervillain, though. Instead, the two were merging, tainting one another in their own colors.

Pheramona was a queen, and Trinity wanted to overthrow her. She was a goddess, and Trinity wanted to defile her. She was an alpha, and Trinity wanted to tear down her pride and ruin it. She was practically drooling at the prospect of laying her hands on such a vision of feminine perfection. It felt like she would never get tired of it; of wrapping Pheramona around her little finger, making her act out her every sordid little fantasy, and of forcing the proud supervillain to pleasure her to her heart's content.

"I... you... hnggn." Pheramona was at her limit. Trinity could tell. She just needed one more little push.

"You've never needed anything more than you've needed to taste my cunt," Trinity whispered, her words infused with power. One by one, sparks traveled up her arm and into Pheramona's head, transmitting the suggestions. "You crave it. You're itching for it. You're drooling over me. You can't hold back any longer."

Pheramona's eyes started to bulge, and some saliva escaped the corner of her mouth.

"Now," Trinity finished. "Do what you're told. Eat me out."

She didn't bother to add any extra hypnotic power to those words. She simply wrapped her hand tight in Pheramona's hair and pulled her close.

Pheramona didn't resist. She felt like nothing more than a limp, helpless rag doll as Trinity pressed her face into her cunt.

The moment Pheramona's tongue touched the front of Trinity's panties, something changed. It was like the dam inside her had broken. All of a sudden, she was licking and sucking in a frenzy, helpless in the face of her own, insatiable desires.

Thanks to Trinity, she *needed* this.

"F-fuck!" Trinity cried. Even though the thin, soaked fabric of her panties, the sensation was blindingly intense. She'd been too worked up for too long, and she couldn't help grinding and bucking her hips, eager for more stimulation.

And now, Pheramona was unable to refuse her.

It took several moments of energetic tongue-worship before Pheramona regained the presence of mind to reach up and pull Trinity's dripping wet panties aside. An instant later, she buried her face between Trinity's thighs again. Being able to lick Trinity's naked pussy only added to her desperation. She was shrouded in Trinity's heady, lusty scent, and her face was slick with her wetness. For Trinity, the way Pheramona looked was every bit as pleasurable as the physical sensation of getting eaten out. No one had ever seen her like this, after all. If they ever did, it would be the talk of the entire supervillain community for a month. Best of all was Pheramona's eyes. She looked as furious as she did needy. She wanted to kill Trinity, but she wanted to keep going down on her even more.

Perfect.

Trinity closed her eyes for a moment, arching her back as lightning bolts of pleasure raced up her spine. She'd been craving gratification like this for days, and she wanted nothing more than to make sure it dragged on for hours and hours. But... she couldn't.

She wasn't really the one in control here. Radiance was.

Somehow, knowing that didn't detract from her pleasure. Instead, shamefully, it just lent it an extra edge, white-hot and dizzying. Radiance was right there. She had to be. Watching her. Admiring her. Enjoying the spectacle of her making a fellow villain, a former comrade, eat her out. Trinity shuddered, and her cries of bliss jumped up another octave.

It was like she and Pheramona were nothing more than puppets in Radiance's sinful performance. Trinity was the dominant, yes - but that was simply the role Radiance had given her.

Fuck.

Trinity's eyes opened again, and she jerked her head around, looking for the superhero. As soon as she made eye contact with her, she regretted it. Radiance was just a short distance away and was watching with a lurid, almost rapturous expression on her normally-heroic face. It made her look almost unrecognizable. She held Trinity's gaze, unblinking, her eyes letting her know that she was seeing everything. She was listening to every word Trinity spoke, and drinking in the sight of her every little twitch and spasm of pleasure.

Trinity's breath caught in her throat.

She couldn't look away, and she couldn't shake the feeling that she was seeing a single, relentless demand written on Radiance's face.

More.

Trinity wanted more too. At least, she thought she did. She felt the pull to take things further, but she couldn't tell where it was coming from. Was it her, or was it Radiance's command to humiliate Pheramona? She didn't care anymore. It didn't matter. She knew what she was going to do, and Radiance's

gaze burning into her skin only served as encouragement.

“Mmf,” Trinity moaned, mostly to make sure Pheramona would know how much pleasure she was getting from her tongue. “You’re better at this than I thought, Ramona. You sure you haven’t been practicing?”

“Fuck... you,” Pheramona grunted, her voice muffled. Even to spit vitriol, she couldn’t bring herself to tear her lips away from Trinity’s pussy.

Trinity just laughed at the impotence of her frustration. “C’mon,” she mocked. “You can tell me. What kind of lesbian doesn’t enjoy licking pussy? Oh, I know. You’re a top, right? That’s what you want to say? Or... maybe you’re just not as much of a top as you thought?”

“I’m... not... enjoying this!”

Trinity wondered whether or not that was true. It was possible. Mostly Pheramona was doing this out of sheer need. Still, Trinity thought she was showing a few telltale signs of arousal. That was probably only natural, given her situation.

Fortunately - or unfortunately - for Pheramona, Trinity wasn’t a selfish lover. She always made sure her partners had a good time.

“Wrong,” Trinity said. “You are enjoying this. Very, very much.”

Her whole body felt like it was crackling with energy; letting some of that flow out into Pheramona was as natural as breathing out.

“N-no!” Pheramona whined in protest as the suggestion took hold, her tongue still buried inside Trinity.

“Yes,” Trinity insisted. “No matter how embarrassing it is, no matter how much it wounds your pride, you’re enjoying this. It feels so good, Ramona.”

Pheramona’s pathetic groan turned into a shameful moan, and she started to shiver and squirm between Trinity’s legs. Trinity’s grin was splitting her face from ear to ear.

“It’s like a secret kink you’re stumbling on,” she continued, making sure every word was going to bury itself in Pheramona’s mind. “Eating me out like this has got you turned on like you wouldn’t believe. It’s driving you crazy. You’ve never been this hot for another girl.”

Was that a little gratuitous? Perhaps, but it was worth it for Pheramona’s reaction. Her pupils, dancing with Trinity’s shimmering sparks, suddenly dilated, and she clamped her hands around Trinity’s thighs with fresh eagerness. She couldn’t help herself, even with her face still burning with shame.

Even better, Trinity could see that her large, proud cock was rock-hard in her pants, forming a huge tent that betrayed her state of absolute arousal.

“There we go,” Trinity purred gleefully. “See? Not so bad after all.”

“I... I...” Pheramona’s head was too scrambled for her to reply. Knowing that Trinity was messing with her desires didn’t make them any less real or any less intense. Her every instinct and feeling was betraying her, her every urge held in Trinity’s sway. She couldn’t stop herself from tonguing Trinity’s cunt as much as she could, and she couldn’t stop herself from loving it.

“F-fuck!” Trinity’s pleasure redoubled along with Pheramona’s effort. She was already riding the edge of orgasm, but she wanted this to last just a little longer. “I think you were made for this, babe.”

Pheramona shivered, and her hips bucked.

“Maybe all that big, alpha female talk was just an act,” Trinity teased. “Maybe this is all you really wanted, deep down. To be a nice, useful tongueslut for a girl like me.”

“F-fuck, fuck, ffffuck,” Pheramona breathed.

“Maybe not just for me,” Trinity said, through her moans. “Maybe I should share you around. Give some other girl a taste of this.” She giggled. “Or, I mean... give you a taste of them.”

“Hhnnggn.” Pheramona was beyond pride or resistance. All she could do

was moan incoherently between gasping for breath. Her face was drenched with Trinity's pussy. She looked obscene.

"Actually..."

An even more wicked idea hit Trinity. The perfect cherry to add on top of this incredible sex. Her hands shaking, Trinity reached into one of her pockets and pulled out the small communicator device Radiance had given her earlier, to make sure they could stay in contact. It was essentially nothing more than a phone, except it couldn't be used to call anyone except Radiance.

But like a phone, it had a camera.

"Hey, Ramona," Trinity said. "Smile!"

The communicator made a small 'click', as it took a picture.

Despite Trinity's shaky hands, it captured the moment perfectly. Pheramona had only had just enough time to look up and process what was happening before Trinity had hit the button. Taken from above, the picture showed exactly what was going on: Pheramona was on her knees, with her face buried between another woman's thighs. Her shameful, humiliating arousal was plain from the bulge in her pants and the sweat on her brow, and the way her face was drenched with lewd wetness made it obvious how eagerly she'd been worshiping. Her eyes registered a dizzying mixture of panic, shock, and devastating pleasure.

Trinity came.

And as soon as she realized that was what was happening, Pheramona came too. Despite the lack of stimulation, the tent in her pants started to bounce and throb, and, moments later, a huge stain started to spread out from the distinctive bulge. Plainly, it was the most humiliating experience of Pheramona's life, and Trinity was relishing in it.

Best of all, Pheramona still couldn't seem to stop eating her out, and so Trinity kept riding her face as she was hit by orgasm after thunderous orgasm.

It was another several minutes before Pheramona's mind finally buckled under the weight of all that stimulation, and she slumped to one side. Trinity let her. She took her hand off the supervillain's head and watched as Pheramona collapsed altogether. Clearly, she wasn't going to be a threat any longer.

As if on instinct, Trinity looked to Radiance. She wasn't sure what she was looking *for*, exactly. Admiration? Respect?

Approval?

Even as she'd been cumming her brains out all over Pheramona's face, Trinity hadn't been able to forget the knowledge that, even if Pheramona didn't know it, Radiance was the one dominating both of them.

And while she would never have admitted it, it had made her orgasm all the sweeter.

Radiance wasn't where Trinity had expected to find her, however. Trinity looked around, her vision clouded, before she finally caught sight of the hero. Radiance was some distance away and was opening a fire exit like she was going to step outside. When she noticed Trinity was looking at her, she flashed her a very strange, unreadable look.

"I just... need some air," Radiance blurted out apologetically, before disappearing outside.

Chapter 17

The cool, night air of Future City hit Trinity's face like a bucket of ice water as she stepped outside. She hadn't realized quite how stuffy and stifling the air had become inside the warehouse. The heady aroma of mind-warping pheromones had completely filled the building, made all the more intoxicating by the added scents of sweat and sex. The fresh air was something Trinity hadn't realized she'd needed. She had to pause for a moment and drink it in, slowly filling up her lungs before exhaling as she listened to the sounds of the distant, passing cars. Immediately, she felt so much better. It was like she'd had her head stuck in an oven without even realizing it.

The clean air was refreshing, but the clarity it brought was accompanied by a torrent of mixed feelings. Now that Trinity could look back on her own actions with eyes unclouded by lust, she was shocked. Shocked at how mean and domineering she'd been, and shocked at how much she'd enjoyed it. Whatever excuses she could make, she didn't feel right about it at all. The question she'd so easily discarded in the midst of passion started to nag and gnaw at her again: had that really been her? Or had it been Radiance? How much of it had been Radiance's mind control forcing her to humiliate Pheramona, and how much of it had been her simply using that as an excuse to unchain her own sadism and sex drive?

She didn't know. It was impossible to know.

Trinity didn't have time to dwell on the question, either. That wasn't what she'd come out here for.

She'd come out here for Radiance.

A mere heartbeat after she'd seen Radiance slip out the fire exit with a strange look on her face, Trinity had followed. Despite her own urgency, she wasn't exactly sure why. It wasn't like Radiance was going far. The two of them were still bound together by Radiance's golden chain, ensuring that Trinity had no choice but to obey each and every one of her commands. It was, apparently, able to keep extending itself to keep them connected, if that was what Radiance wished. Since she hadn't dragged Trinity outside along with her, clearly she did. Trinity was willing to believe her chain could stretch a thousand miles, until proven otherwise. Radiance's power seemed to have no limit.

That shouldn't have mattered to Trinity, though. What should have mattered was that Radiance had left her unattended. It was the perfect opportunity to try to make an escape. She could have tried to get the chain off her wrist, or set a trap, or attempted to rouse Pheramona. Perhaps she could have found a loophole in Radiance's instructions that would have allowed her to clue the other supervillain in. Trinity hadn't done any of that. She'd just rushed after her captor without so much as a second thought.

Damn it.

Radiance was only a few paces away, and one look at her was all Trinity needed to know that something was deeply wrong. After days spent together, the superhero's body language was an open book. Normally, she was upright and proud, looking every bit as obnoxiously heroic as she did in the press photos. Now, she looked alarmingly sagged, like an old, ruined castle on the verge of crumbling. There was something desperately unquiet about the hero, too; she was breathing hard and she couldn't seem to stand still. She was pacing back and forth aimlessly, just a few steps this way and that, turning and shaking her head.

She didn't seem to have noticed that Trinity had followed her, which was a miraculous gift, and the perfect excuse for Trinity to turn around and go back inside. But she just couldn't stand to see her that way.

"Radiance," Trinity began, reaching out. "What's..."

Radiance recoiled, almost like she was scared. Trinity blinked.

"Fuck," Radiance whispered miserably. "Fuck. I... fuck."

"Hey," Trinity ventured. "What's going on?"

"I don't know," Radiance replied slowly. She was hunched over like a

wounded animal. "I just... God. Fuck."

Trinity sighed. So it was like that, huh? Well, she'd seen more than one girl through a panic attack before.

"Hey," she repeated. "Vi. Listen. You need to calm down, OK? Let me help."

Radiance just shook her head, although she seemed barely to have heard Trinity's words.

"Violet!" Trinity tried, a little louder. "Listen to me."

Radiance shivered and went still, and cocked her head. Good enough.

"Good," Trinity said softly. "Now breathe. One-two-three. I'm sure you've given that advice out a few times, am I right? Take it from me: I know it's hard, but it works."

Radiance was still shaking her head, but Trinity could tell she was doing her best. Her breathing was easing a little.

"Good, that's good," Trinity repeated. "Now, um..."

She looked around. On the ground, near her feet, was exactly what she'd been looking for. A rock - really just a small chunk of concrete, worn away from the ground. Trinity scooped it up, stepped forward, and pressed it into

Radiance's palm.

Finally, Radiance actually looked at her. Her sheer surprise seemed to have snapped her out of her panic, a little. "What-"

"Shhh," Trinity insisted. She clasped her hands around Radiance's, closing the superhero's fingers around the rock. "Just go with it."

A dubious look came over Radiance's face, but she didn't pull away.

"Good," Trinity said again. "Now just... feel it. Turn it over in your hand. Rub your thumb against it. Get to know the rock. Get the feel of all of its edges - how sharp they are, how they curve, how they feel on your skin. Let the surfaces press into your palm. You can close your eyes, if that helps. Look, I know it sounds dumb, but just... try it."

Radiance nodded stiffly, and Trinity could tell she was doing it. Even so, Trinity kept her hand clasped in her own. Radiance looked so fragile, somehow. It was hard to shake the feeling that she was going to go limp if Trinity let her go, and Trinity couldn't bear to see that. So, she just watched and waited, and listened to the sounds of the city as the cold air beat over her face.

Eventually, Radiance let out a long and ragged sigh. "OK," she said quietly. "I'm good."

“Are you sure?”

“Pretty sure.” Radiance nodded. She opened her hand and looked at the rock. “That worked a lot better than I thought.”

“Told you,” Trinity said lightly. “It’s a psychology thing. Sometimes you just need to focus on something physical. Something real. Something you can get your bearings with.”

Radiance nodded again. And then: “thank you.”

The sincerity in her voice took Trinity aback. She blushed slightly, suddenly aware of how close the two of them were standing. “N- um, you’re welcome.”

They lapsed into a familiar kind of awkward silence. Radiance was still now, and Trinity couldn’t fathom what on Earth might be going on inside her head. Meanwhile, she was wracking her brains, trying to figure out what she was supposed to do or say next. All she was getting was 404: smoothness not found.

“So, uh, do you want to, like, talk about it?” she settled on eventually, and cringed at herself.

“Christ,” Radiance breathed, with an air of gallows humor. She rubbed her face with her hand. “I should be saying that to you.”

“Huh? What are you talking about?”

“In there!” Radiance gestured wildly with one hand, and raked the other through her hair. “I... what was I *doing*? What was I making you do?”

“Huh?” Trinity repeated dumbly. She wasn’t prepared for this level of emotional whiplash.

“I was - I am - out of control,” Radiance admitted despairingly.

“Hold up,” Trinity said cautiously. “Isn’t that what you brought me here for? To teach me a lesson, or... something?”

“No!” Radiance cried. “I mean, not like that at least! I’d never...” She trailed off, and shook her head ruefully. “I already made that mistake. I promised I wasn’t going to do it again! Not to you. But then we were in there, and I got heated, and I...”

“Vi...” Trinity had never seen the superhero like this before. It was almost scary. Even calm, she looked like she was on the verge of breaking apart.

“That wasn’t what I’d planned, I swear!” Radiance insisted, her words flowing out of her in a torrent, each one after the next, like she just needed to get it all out. “I just thought... I... the money... fuck! Fuck, I can’t even remember what I *was* trying to achieve!”

Trinity was speechless, and her silence only seemed to weigh on Radiance, who shriveled under her stare and looked at her with eyes full of pain and guilt.

“I’m out of control,” she reiterated. “I don’t know what’s wrong with me.”

Even though it didn’t make any sense to her at all, Trinity’s first instinct was to console and comfort.

“I do,” she said. “It’s the pheromones, idiot! I’m willing to bet you’re not as immune as you think. Definitely not completely. You weren’t thinking straight. Your head was being messed with. That’s what happened. That’s how it got out of control so bad. I could feel it too. That wasn’t *you*, Radiance.”

Internally, Trinity was too busy calling herself stupid to really think about what she was saying. Why was she doing this? Why not anything else? She rationalized that there was no way she was actually trying to *help* the superhero who’d been keeping her captive. That wouldn’t make any sense. No; she was just trying to be fair. It wouldn’t be right if Radiance didn’t know or understand the reasons behind her own actions. No one deserved that.

Radiance frowned. “I think... it was at least a little me,” she said quietly. “After what I did before, at the bar.”

Trinity had absolutely no idea how to argue with that.

Radiance soon started babbling again, perhaps out of a need to fill the awkward silence. "I just wanted to fix everything, I swear," she said miserably. "That's all I've ever wanted. But it never goes right. Never."

"I don't think that's true," Trinity replied quietly. "You're Radiance. You're the city's greatest hero. Everyone adores you."

"Well, they shouldn't," Radiance snorted. "You've seen what a sad little mess my life is. I don't deserve anyone's admiration. And if I'm the city's greatest hero, then that really, really sucks for the city."

"C'mon," Trinity laughed; a nervous, unfortunate tick. "You can't be serious. You've saved this place... how many times?"

"Yeah, and do you see anything getting any better?" Radiance retorted bitterly. "I see more than you'd think, flying around on patrol. Everything is getting worse, for everybody. Crime is up. Violence is up. Villainy is up. No matter what I do, no matter how hard I fight, it's not making any difference. Everything's getting worse."

The true, desperate despair in her voice threatened to break Trinity's heart.

"So... so what am I even doing here? I can't stop asking myself that every single morning. Just staggering from one crisis to another? That's what it feels like. Until I get to the one that finally breaks me. And then what? Future City will carry on like before, but with one less hero." There was such weariness

and heaviness to Radiance as she stood there, slowly shaking her head. "That's just failure, Trinity."

Words rose in Trinity's throat. She wanted to argue back. She wanted to tell Radiance that she was more than that. But as painful as it was, she held back. She sensed that Radiance needed to get this all out.

"I think that's why I put you through all this," Radiance continued quietly. "I was trying to prove that I could change something - really change something. Change *someone*. It- god, that sounds so stupid, doesn't it? It's just that every day, people expect me to take care of whatever's going on. There's always someone stealing, or mugging, or breaking, or burning, or hurting, and I keep wanting to scream at the world for it to all just *stop*. Day after day after day, Trinity. You don't know what it's like..." She trailed off, and paused, and scrunched up her face. "God. I need to stop saying that. Fuck."

Trinity couldn't bear to hold back any longer. "No," she breathed. "Radiance, no, no, no, you're not-"

"I'm truly, truly sorry," Radiance said mournfully. It was as if she hadn't even heard Trinity speak. "Basically, everything I've put you through has just been one long, extremely fucked-up breakdown." She barked a laugh. "That sounded even more pathetic out loud than it did in my head."

"It wasn't that bad," Trinity said unconvincingly. "Hell, *you're* not that bad. Radiance, listen. You're crashing right now. Your mind is messing with you."

Plus you're still dealing with the pheromones, and-

"I don't think so." Radiance was shaking her head as she cut Trinity off again. "Right now, standing out here, it's like it's the first time all day I'm actually thinking clearly. Which means I know what I need to do next." She looked right at Trinity, a look of regret on her face. "I need to let you go. Right now, before I change my mind. You can take Pheramona and leave. You'll never have to worry about me, not ever again."

Trinity was quiet for a moment. Radiance was offering her everything she should have wanted, but the thought of it didn't make her happy. Not even a little.

"No," Trinity replied, before she realized what she was saying. "You shouldn't be alone right now."

Radiance blinked. She looked stunned. "What are you talking about?"

"I-I'm not just going to leave you alone," Trinity spluttered, her mind racing to catch up with her heart. "Not like this. I wouldn't do that to my worst enemy. Not that you're... well, OK, I guess you might be my worst enemy. But, uh, that's not the point."

The smile that danced across Radiance's lips was bemused, but mostly sad. "You're a lot kinder than I gave you credit for," she said. "But I'm telling you: you don't need to do that. Just go."

Trinity rolled her eyes. Not this. Not a superhero who thought she was being cool and self-sacrificing. She'd have been better off trying to argue with a stubborn teenager. "If you're letting me go, then that means I'm free to make my own choices, right? Then I'm staying."

Radiance clenched her jaw a little. "Fine," she replied. "You can stay. I'll go. I have wings. I'll fly off somewhere."

"Oh, for fuck's sake!" Trinity snapped, and the way Radiance jumped at her outburst almost made her smile. "Are you an idiot? Learn to accept some help for once! I get it. You're strong. You're trying to save the whole damn city on your own because you think it just *has* to be you. And... and maybe it does! I don't know! But at least stop being so thickheaded you're not gonna let a girl keep you company for one night when you seriously need it."

Trinity had never seen the superhero look so surprised. It was deeply satisfying. She'd often longed to be able to put that blank, stunned, helpless look on Radiance's face - albeit, not quite like this. Even so, she was worried she might have pushed a little too hard. The tall, gorgeous, amazonian hero standing in front of her somehow managed to look faintly like a deer caught in headlights. Trinity was afraid she was going to spread her wings and flee into the sky.

"Fine," Radiance said quietly, instead, and right before Trinity's eyes, slumped to the ground.

Now it was Trinity's turn to be surprised. It hadn't occurred to her that Radiance might want or need to take the weight off her feet. She always seemed so far beyond such trivial, human things. Clearly she wasn't, though. Clearly, she was just as messed up as everyone else. For all the shit Radiance had put her through, knowing that, Trinity couldn't help but feel compassion for her.

And so, because there was nothing else to do, she sat down too, right next to Radiance.

For perhaps the first time, the silence between them felt companionable. Certainly for the first time that wasn't an odd, fleeting moment, soon lost to sleep and twilight. That was a minor miracle, given everything that had just happened inside the warehouse. Trinity was finding it surprisingly easy to not think about any of that. She was just thinking about how she was a little cold, but that she could feel Radiance's warmth against her skin, just faintly, from a few inches away.

It was nice.

A faint, distant siren sounded from somewhere far away. Both Trinity and Radiance turned their heads and watched silently as alternating red and blue lights passed over the horizon, from the other side of a row of industrial buildings. Trinity wondered briefly if Radiance was going to dash off after it, but she was entirely still until the siren's howling faded into the night. That

was a relief.

Trinity almost jumped out of her skin when she felt Radiance's arm settle across her shoulder.

Now it was her turn to feel like a deer in headlights as she looked up at the superhero. The tender, protective expression on Radiance's face made her heart skip a beat.

"You looked cold," Radiance said simply.

That was so, so unfair of her.

There were a lot of things Trinity might have said, but she couldn't bring herself to say anything except "yeah," and nestle herself against Radiance's tall, firm body.

It was much, much warmer like that.

"You know," Radiance murmured, after an immeasurable amount of time had passed. "Maybe you had the right idea all along."

"Probably," Trinity replied breezily, before feeling a little embarrassed with herself. "Um, about what?"

"About getting out of here for good," Radiance replied. Her eyes were back

on the horizon. "About just leaving this hellhole and all its problems behind. Starting over somewhere else, with a nice, quiet life. It sounds pretty great."

Trinity's eyes widened. "I'm... surprised to hear that," she said cautiously. "I didn't think you were the type."

"Me neither," Radiance admitted. "I always thought I'd be in this fight until the very end. I was always the best, you know? I'm not saying that to brag. I just... was. When I was growing up, when I got these powers, that's what everyone said. And when you're the best, you can't just stop being the best. That doesn't feel like an option. It doesn't even feel like it makes sense. Who am I to anyone, if I'm not this costume? These wings?" She sighed. "Maybe it's time to stop."

"M... maybe..." Trinity couldn't believe what she was hearing, and she could even less believe what she was about to say. But a deep part of her wouldn't let the moment pass. She wouldn't let this be one of her regrets. "Maybe we could... go together?"

Slowly, Radiance turned her head to look at her. It was a little too dark for Trinity to read the expression on her face. Trinity's stomach was doing some crazy backflips. It was like being a schoolgirl again, trying to figure out if the older girl she had a crush on was gay, or just weird. Trinity was blushing and squirming right down to her very soul as she waited for an answer.

"Well," Radiance said slowly, clambering to her feet. "Before anything else,

we should probably clear up this whole mess.” She jerked her head towards the warehouse.

“Ah. Right.” After a short pause, Trinity nodded stiffly. She tried not to let anything show on her face. She wasn’t sure if she had crossed some kind of line, perhaps pushing Radiance before she was ready, or if she’d just been imagining everything between them. Either way, she could sense she wasn’t going to get her answer.

“I think I need another moment. Could you check on your friend for me?” Radiance flashed a small, weak smile. “I promise I won’t run off. Or fly off.”

“Sure thing,” Trinity replied, with forced ease. She was a little grateful for the request, in truth. She needed a moment away from Radiance.

Her head felt like a ringing bell, vibrating but empty, as she walked back towards the open fire door she’d left the warehouse through. Trinity braced herself as she stepped inside, but fortunately, time and fresh air seemed to have whisked away the worst of the mind-warping pheromones that had been filling the room. Once she looked around, though, she soon realized that something was missing.

Pheramona.

The villain was gone. Trinity had been sure that, after the dose of shimmer she’d given her, Pheramona would have been down for the count for a good

while. Evidently not. She must have recovered and slipped away. Trinity cursed under her breath. That woman was stupidly tough. And now, she was another potential mess to worry about.

With that weighing on her mind, Trinity busied herself loading some of the many stacks of bills strewn about the floor back into the cargo containers Pheramona had brought them in. It was mostly a way to kill some time while she got her head back on straight, but she reasoned that it needed to be done, whatever she and Radiance decided to do with it. Once she felt ready to face the superhero again, she stepped back outside.

“Radiance,” she called, “we might have a-”

She froze, interrupted by the sound of a loud, insistent beeping.

Trinity’s gut started to churn as she realized what it was. It was Radiance’s communicator, tucked into the hero’s belt. As if by instinct, Radiance was already reaching for it.

“Wait!” Trinity cried. She didn’t know exactly why, but she was overcome with a terrible sense of foreboding. “Don’t answer that!”

She never got to know if Radiance couldn’t hear her, wasn’t listening to her, or was simply operating on sheer, long-trained reflexes. Whatever the case, Trinity’s warning didn’t stop her from hitting the button to answer and holding the small device up to her ear.

“This is Radiance,” she said briskly. “What’s-”

Trinity watched in horror as an unmistakable change came over the superhero. She went ramrod stiff, and suddenly looked more like a toy soldier at attention than a person. All of the color and emotion drained from her face, and even her deep, sad eyes came over blank and glassy. It was plain that she was thinking of nothing as she listened to the words being poured into her ear. Trinity had absolutely no doubts about what was happening.

Radiance was being mind-controlled.

She had only seen the hero react this way once before, and because of that, she knew exactly who was on the other end of the communication line. It was the Peregrine. It had to be. The first time, Trinity had sensed something was up, but she hadn’t been sure what. It had seemed plausible that the Peregrine was just one scary bitch that Radiance happened to take orders from. But now, there was no mistaking it.

The Peregrine was controlling Radiance.

That meant that both of them were in very, very serious trouble.

“Understood,” Radiance replied blankly after a few moments, and put down the communicator. Then she looked straight at Trinity and started walking towards her, her every movement suddenly robotic and cold.

“Violet-” Trinity started to say, a warning chill passing down her spine.

“No,” Radiance interrupted immediately. Her words were as bereft of emotion as her face. “Silence. No more talking.”

When Trinity’s mouth clamped shut, she bitterly regretted that she hadn’t asked Radiance to take her damn chain off when she’d had the chance.

“No more distractions,” Radiance said, clearly echoing someone else’s words. “Don’t move. Stay here.”

That didn’t leave Trinity with many options. She was helpless to do anything more than breathe as Radiance disappeared into the warehouse and returned a moment later with the cargo crates full of money hefted across her shoulders.

“Hold on tight,” was the superhero’s final instruction.

Trinity couldn’t disobey. She pressed herself to the brainwashed Radiance’s side as tight as she could as Radiance wrapped an arm around her, spread her magical wings out from her back, and leapt into the sky.

Chapter 18

Trinity didn't resist Radiance as the brainwashed superhero carried her through the sky on her enchanted, angelic wings. What would have been the point? Her power was all but useless against her; Radiance had proven that time and time again. She didn't try to squirm out of the hero's grip, and even if she'd been able to speak, Radiance wouldn't have been able to hear her over the sound of the howling winds that blew through the towering spires of Future City's beating heart. At some point, it started to rain, which made Trinity feel almost comically pathetic. Now she was cold, sad, *and* wet.

It was a nice reminder, in a way. She couldn't control what was going to happen to her any more than she could control the weather. Her fate was out of her hands. Just as it had been for days. No, just as it had always been. Trinity wondered if it was finally time to accept it.

Trinity hated going downtown. She hated how hostile the skyscrapers felt looming over all the streets, blotting out the sky and reminding all the little people that their wonders and riches simply weren't for them. As it turned out, flying was worse. There was no magic to it. Trinity wanted to be down at street-level, in amongst the crowds, where the people were more than just faint little lights. There were too many lights, Trinity decided. Rivers of them

beneath, made of cars, and great strips of them rising up on either side of her, shining out of thousands of identical windows. It made her feel nauseous.

It wasn't long before they approached the greatest light of them all: Quinn Tower. It was the tallest building in the city by far, and lit up like a beacon. It was visible from everywhere, and up close it illuminated even the clouds above, bright as day. Radiance approached it head-on, before tilting back to catch the wind and swooping up, straight toward the sky. Then, moments later, she spread her wings wide and used them as a kind of air brake, bringing them to a dead stop in mid-air. For a single instant, Trinity felt like they were falling, but then they simply touched down gently on the rain-drenched surface of the skyscraper's helipad.

The flashing landing lights were almost blinding, especially reflected in the steadily-growing puddles, but once Trinity adjusted to the brightness and stopped feeling like she was going to throw up, she noticed there was someone else standing on the helipad with them. A figure she recognized all too well.

The Peregrine.

Up close, she was every bit as intimidating as her reputation. The Peregrine cut a tall and wiry figure, but with added bulk thanks to the costume she was wearing. Unlike Radiance's, hers was all practical; it was a dull, unremarkable gray color, and the Peregrine hadn't bothered to hide any of the armor plates worked into it. Numerous gadgets and sensors were visible all over her,

attached around her belt or worked into her cowl, a swooping mask that ended in a point vaguely evocative of a bird of prey's beak. She looked like a woman who knew that she, as a mere mortal going up against gods, would need every advantage she was going to get, and so she'd decided to stop at nothing to get them.

In Trinity's opinion, she also looked scary as hell. Her reputation for ruthlessness was well-known. Most heroes did their best to bring villains in alive. The Peregrine wasn't one of them.

She didn't bother to look at Radiance as she approached the pair, but she inspected Trinity with unnerving intensity before turning and calling back:

"Bring her inside."

Radiance moved to obey without a word, walking after the Peregrine and threatening to drag Trinity along by her golden chain until she jogged to catch up. The stiff and unnatural way Radiance followed the Peregrine's orders only confirmed what Trinity already suspected, and that meant she was seriously fucked.

The door to the helipad led directly to some kind of personal suite. The large, open-plan room inside was luxurious, in that very sparse, plain, minimalist way Trinity always attributed to rich people not having enough imagination. Still, she couldn't help but be grateful for the luxury. It was pleasantly warm inside, and a far cry from Radiance's spartan, unhappy safe

house. The room was dominated by a set of large, long, leather couches arranged around some coffee tables, with a bar and a desk over in opposite corners and a set of stairs leading to a loft above. The outer wall was nothing but floor-to-ceiling windows - mirrored glass, Trinity judged, since she hadn't been able to see in from outside.

The whole place more or less gave Trinity the creeps, but she was too tired not to sit down when the Peregrine indicated. The couch was disgustingly comfortable. Radiance stood sentry next to her, holding her by a short leash.

The Peregrine let her stew for several long moments.

"So," she began eventually, sitting down opposite Trinity. She moved with grace, despite her armor. Radiance remained standing. "What do I do with you?"

Trinity knew an obnoxious leading question when she heard one. She was normally good with snappy retorts, but it was a little hard to think when her chest was aching the way it was. She sat back.

"What the fuck is going on?" she demanded.

"Let's begin at the beginning, shall we?" the Peregrine replied. "You're a supervillain. And you recently stole a great deal of money."

'Supervillain'. Yuck. "Well, it's not here," Trinity shot back. "As you can see."

"I'm well aware." It was difficult to read the Peregrine's expression under her cowl, and her voice remained level. "Some of my people are retrieving it right now, as a matter of fact."

Trinity frowned. "Then... what am I doing here?" She risked a glance at Radiance. Then, her willpower slipped, and she asked the question she really wanted to ask. "Wait, no. First, what have you done to her?"

"Worried?" The Peregrine tilted her head to one side. "Or... impressed?" When Trinity didn't answer, she answered: "I've brainwashed her, of course."

"So, that's your power?" Trinity tried not to show too much concern on her face. "Some kind of mind control? But you've been hiding it?"

The Peregrine laughed. "Hardly," she replied. "No, I'm not nearly as impressive as you, Shimmer. I simply have the resources it takes to reverse-engineer the human mind." When Trinity was visibly nonplussed, she rose to her feet. "Allow me to demonstrate."

She walked over to Radiance and slapped her across the face once, very hard, and quickly enough to make Trinity jump. The blow couldn't possibly have hurt one such as Radiance, but it seemed to rouse her a little. She blinked, and her posture became just a little less stiff.

The Peregrine sighed. "Oh, Radiance," she mused theatrically. "You really

are a high-maintenance girl.”

The hero - if she deserved that title - reached down and snapped one of her gadgets off of her belt. In her hand, it quickly unfolded into what looked like some kind of smooth, metal visor with a blank screen running across it. In a well-practiced motion, she slapped it onto Radiance’s face and, with a small, mechanical whir, it clamped itself in place. Immediately, a small, red dot appeared on the visor’s screen and started bouncing back and forth, like some kind of sinister loading graphic.

The Peregrine turned back to Trinity. “It’s not as quick as your power,” she said. “And it isn’t perfect. But it was worth every penny, don’t you think? It’s my most closely guarded secret.”

Trinity’s jaw tensed. “Shit.”

Her captor tilted her head, curious.

“You’re showing me your most closely guarded secret? Me?” Trinity explained unhappily. “That only means one thing. You’re going to kill me, but you want to brag first.”

Trinity was just about ready to jump off the helipad if that was the case. Trading barbs was sometimes fun. Not today. She was too tired and too miserable.

The Peregrine, though, simply laughed like it was a good-natured joke. “You think I’m one of those supervillains who can’t get enough of the sound of their own voice? Hardly. Not that it doesn’t have its appeal, sometimes.” She sounded rich, Trinity was noticing. Posh. Well-educated. “But rest assured, Shimmer, you’re more than just a disposable, captive audience. I wasn’t being rhetorical earlier. I really am deciding what to do with you.”

A shiver ran down Trinity’s spine. Why did that not sound like a good thing? “So... what are the options, exactly? They say it helps to talk things through.”

The Peregrine laughed again, but then turned serious. She held up a gloved hand and raised three fingers, one by one. “Kill you. Brainwash you. Recruit you.”

Trinity blinked rapidly. She had lots to say about each one of those, but it was the last that caught her attention. “Re- sorry, *recruit* me?”

“Of course.” The Peregrine returned to her seat opposite Trinity. “Your abilities are remarkable, Shimmer. And you’re quick-thinking. You managed to get under Radiance’s skin, which is an achievement. You’ve seen too much for me to simply let you go, but I’m loath to let talent go to waste. There’s so much I could do, with you under my wing.”

“Seen too much? I don’t know what the hell is going on!” Trinity blurted out, but the Peregrine ignored her.

“I considered simply giving you the same treatment I’ve given Radiance,” the Peregrine continued. Trinity glanced at the strange visor on Radiance’s face. “But with a power like yours, it’s a risk. I don’t know enough about how it works. Deep psychological conditioning could easily render you useless. And that last thing I’d want is to damage the goods.”

Trinity swallowed. “Hold up,” she said. “You’re not... recruit me to *what*?”

The Peregrine’s good humor was back. She laughed and held up a hand. “You’re quite right, of course. I’m getting ahead of myself.”

Instead of explaining, she rose to her feet and walked past Trinity, crossing the room to the bar. As she was pouring a drink, Trinity had eyes only for Radiance. The superhero was still motionless, the Peregrine’s visor over her eyes. Trinity wasn’t sure what she was looking for, exactly. Maybe for her to move, at least a little. To struggle. To say something annoying, something high and mighty. She couldn’t believe she was actually yearning for that, but it would have been a comfort. Right now, she felt alone, and like Radiance was slipping further away from her with each passing moment.

Trinity was startled when the Peregrine appeared back next to her and pressed a glass full of red wine into her hand. “Drink,” the Peregrine urged, when Trinity started shaking her head. “I can assure you, you’ve never had better.”

Reluctantly, Trinity took a sip. She was no sommelier, but it didn't taste all that great to her. It was so rich it almost made her choke.

"Oh, and where are my manners?" the Peregrine added. She snapped her fingers. "Radiance, take your shackle off of her."

The brainwashed hero moved very, very slowly. She looked like she was underwater. Obediently, she reached down and slipped her golden chain off of Trinity. She was free. Not that it was worth much now.

"Tell me, Shimmer," the Peregrine began, sitting down. "Have you ever wondered why, no matter how many superheroes devote themselves to keeping Future City safe, nothing seems to get any better?"

That earned the Peregrine a surprised look from Trinity.

"Villains break laws," the Peregrine went on, "And then heroes punish the law-breakers. Over and over again, round and round. It's all so... rigid. Don't you agree? For all their heroism, are our heroes truly bringing Future City any closer to the utopia it once promised to be?"

Trinity was hard-pressed not to nod along in agreement. She'd said the same thing many times, in different words. Usually with more expletives.

"I mean to do better." The Peregrine was practically lounging, now, wine glass in hand, entirely at ease. She took a sip from under her cowl, savoring

the drink with a satisfied sigh. Suddenly, she changed tack: “Do you know why I’m called ‘the Peregrine’?”

Frankly, Trinity didn’t care. “It’s a kind of bird, right?”

The Peregrine nodded. “The peregrine falcon, yes. ‘Peregrine’ means traveler. Wanderer. The peregrine falcon flies wherever it wills, without regard for borders or laws. It can be found all over the world, flying higher and faster than any other, looking down on those beneath. A king amongst birds.” Trinity could see her smiling proudly from beneath her cowl. “That’s what I intend to be, Shimmer. We need heroes, yes, but we need something else too. Someone who doesn’t just enforce the law. Someone who stands above the law, and does whatever needs to be done. For the sake of a better world.”

There was something oddly reassuring about hearing all of that, despite its insanity. Now, Trinity knew what she was dealing with: a genuine, full-on god-complex egomaniac. But she still needed to keep her talking. “OK. Um. How, exactly?”

“Simple,” the Peregrine replied. “Control. Complete and total control. I want to control every heart, every mind, and every purse string. Once I - once *we* - have complete and total ownership over every street in this city, we can put everything right. No more crime. No more poverty. No more chaos. All it takes, Shimmer, is a strong hand.”

“So that’s why you...” It all fell into place. The gentrification. The voracious

acquisition of buildings, blocks, neighborhoods. It had never been innocent, but now Trinity saw that it was even more sinister than she'd believed.

"I knew you'd understand, Shimmer." Trinity could hear the smile in the Peregrine's voice. "It's all about control. Always. It's what everyone wants and craves - but unlike most, you and I can reach out and take it. I'm glad to see you're a kindred spirit."

That, perhaps more than anything else, left Trinity completely floored. Keeping her composure was a struggle. "OK. Uh. There's still one thing I don't get," Trinity said. "Why do you care so much about the money I took? It's just a few million dollars, right? "

The Peregrine sighed and rose to her feet. She went to stand by the window, looking out, sipping her wine. "How much do you think a city is worthy, Shimmer? Dollar value, I mean. It's a trick question: it's priceless. You can't even conceive of how much an entire city is worth. The more you own, the more expensive it gets. There's competition and scarcity. Complications and holdouts. I may be wealthy, but I'm not that wealthy. Nobody is that wealthy. So, I need partners. Creditors. Investors, you might call them."

"You're... you're broke," Trinity realized. "And you're in debt, aren't you?"

"Hardly broke," the Peregrine scoffed. Trinity sensed it was her word choice, more than anything, that the Peregrine objected too. "But, well, my partners expect results and returns. I've had to extend my finances

considerably in order to make good on my plans. You might say I am... temporarily over-leveraged. A few million dollars is an unacceptable loss, at this precise moment."

Trinity didn't know what 'over-leveraged' meant, but she knew desperation when she heard it.

"Then, of course, there's the other reason I care about the money you stole." The Peregrine sounded smug as she said that. She reached up to her cowl, and it disengaged from the rest of her suit with an audible hiss. "It's my money. I am Eleanor Quinn."

She turned to face Trinity with a flourish, lifting her cowl off over her head to reveal her face.

Trinity didn't give her the reaction she was plainly hoping for. "I know," she replied, unimpressed. "It was pretty obvious, given where we are."

Eleanor Quinn - the Peregrine - sniffed. Trinity wasn't surprised, but it was still strange to see the face of Future City's most famous billionaire under the mask of one of its most famous heroes. She would have recognized Quinn anywhere, but this was her first time getting to study the woman's features properly, in the flesh, and unfortunately, she was beautiful. Eleanor Quinn had a sleek, sharp, pale, aristocratic face, sculpted to perfection with makeup and other cosmetics, and made almost ethereal by her piercing, ice-blue eyes and near-white hair. She looked like a queen, like she deserved every little bit of

her own ego and arrogance, and she was kind of exactly Trinity's type.

"I suppose that's true," Quinn conceded. "But I wanted to make it clear I'm not keeping any secrets. After all, we're getting along so well."

She actually seemed like she meant it.

"At first, I was furious, of course," she went on. "That stunt you pulled at my charity gala? It was the last thing I needed. I thought I could count on Radiance to deal with you. But when she let me down, I got curious. When I saw how strangely she was behaving, I got more curious still - about you. I decided to learn everything I could about Shimmer, the small-time supervillain. I liked what I learned. I got to wondering what you could do with those powers of yours, if only you had a little more... direction."

Trinity wasn't sure if she should be flattered or offended. Or both. Frankly, she was barely listening. Quinn's offer was surprising, to say the least, and not entirely unappealing. They had yet to reach the 'what's in it for you' part of the pitch, but it wasn't difficult to imagine how great the rewards could be. However, Trinity just didn't like the way Quinn was toying with her - bringing her here, giving her the seduction treatment. If they were going to talk, Trinity wanted to do it on her own terms. That meant winning back a little of that precious control that Quinn was so obsessed with.

And there was only one way Trinity was going to manage that. She had to hit Quinn with her power.

That was sure to be easier said than done. But her cowl was off; that was a good start. Direct skin contact, ideally close to the head, was the most important thing for Trinity's mind-controlling shimmer to work effectively. But as she knew from people like Radiance, even that wasn't a guarantee. She should assume Eleanor Quinn, as the Peregrine, was just as formidable. She needed to make her let her guard down.

Again, easier said than done.

"You know, I'm starting to understand why villains always monologue like this," Quinn remarked, interrupting Trinity's train of thought. A thin, crooked smile came to her face, and there was something about her voice that caught Trinity's attention. She started walking back towards Trinity and didn't stop. "It really is satisfying. I don't get a lot of chances to unburden myself, Shimmer. To get... *intimate* with someone."

That sent a distinctive shiver down Trinity's spine.

"He- wait, what are you-" spilled out of Trinity's mouth, as Quinn perched back down on the couch - not opposite Trinity, but right next to her, uncomfortably close.

"It's funny," Quinn purred. "You and I are hero and villain. Opposites. Enemies. And yet for all that, we have a lot in common." She tilted her head, and a few locks of her platinum, silken hair fell into her face. "You aren't

drinking your wine?”

Before she could think twice, Trinity found herself bringing her wine glass to her lips and taking another few sips. It was still painfully rich, but she could feel herself getting used to it. Strong, too. Trinity’s head was already starting to buzz pleasantly.

Fuck. The way Quinn’s tight-ass corporate supermodel haircut was starting to loosen as she drank was really, really pretty. Trinity couldn’t believe she was catching the hots for her mortal enemy right now. That was so typical of her and her trash taste.

Quinn nodded approvingly as she sipped her wine, and seemed to inch closer. “You must get lonely too,” she said softly. “For true companionship, I mean. For someone to confide in. For a partner in crime. I’m sure you don’t have trouble finding girls to warm your bed at night. Not with your power.” Quinn licked her lips, and her icy eyes flashed. “God, that’s so fucking hot.”

Trinity’s eyes somehow shot wider still.

“It is, right?” Quinn’s voice was suddenly filled with raw, unrestrained desire. “You were having some fun with Radiance, I could tell. Good. I’m very, very pleased you’re that kind of woman. I am too. It’s so... so intoxicating. Being able to have anyone you want. Any way you want. What’s the point in being Future City’s savior, if you don’t get to indulge a little?”

“Y-you’re...” Trinity wasn’t even sure what she was about to say. There was a cavernous, frenzied lust in Quinn’s eyes, and she could feel herself being swept up by it. Drowned by it. She had only ever seen a look like that before on the worst of supervillains, but here it was again, and it was all for her.

“I take what I want,” Quinn told her. “And so do you. Mind control is just as much of a turn-on for you as it is for me, isn’t it? It’s more than just a means to an end. When you’re really, truly inside another woman’s head, molding her and changing her, knowing how much you’re going to be able to enjoy each and every one of those changes, doesn’t it get you so aroused you can hardly think?”

Trinity was all but mesmerized by the impossible sultriness of her voice. It was like Quinn had shape-shifted before her eyes, from a cold, calculating businesswoman into some kind of dark and lustful queen. She was so entranced, she didn’t even notice Quinn lean in and reach out to rest a hand on Trinity’s shoulder. When they touched, she let out a sensual gasp that made her arousal plain. Quinn smirked, pleased.

“Yes.” Trinity figured that, since there was no point denying it, she might as well own it. “It’s the hottest thing in the world.”

“Of course,” Quinn agreed hungrily. Trinity truly couldn’t tell how much of her was real, and how much was just some kind of strange performance. “From what I know of you, Shimmer, you might think we’re on opposite sides. Rich, poor. Good, bad. However you prefer to see it. But I think our similarities

clearly run deeper.” She started stroking her fingertips along Trinity’s skin, perfectly slowly and gently, raising all her hairs. Trinity couldn’t bring herself to pull away. “Those things come and go. But nothing - *nothing* - is more fundamental, more elemental, than what gets your cunt wet.”

Trinity shivered embarrassingly at that. It was like Quinn knew exactly what was happening to her between her legs. Her head was getting seriously scrambled. She should have been probing for weak spots. Instead, she was tipping over into full-on sapphic panic.

“I have to admit, though,” Quinn added. “I’m a little jealous of what you can do. It seems so... so *visceral*. You’ll have to tell me how it feels sometime. After all, you get to literally, directly experience things I can only imagine. I have a thousand questions. Like... if someone’s fighting you, but you’re stronger, how does it feel to just reach into their head and snuff out that resistance? What’s it *like*?”

It was as if Quinn was working herself up into a frenzy. As she did, she kept drawing closer and closer to Trinity, until their bodies were pressed up against one another as if they were lovers. Trinity’s breaths were starting to come quick.

“Tell me later,” Quinn decided. She took another sip of her wine, and laughed. “Perhaps I’m succumbing to the ages-old lesbian riddle: do I want to *fuck* her, or *be* her?”

Trinity, who had been sipping wine in imitation of Quinn, was suddenly struggling not to choke.

“The easy answer is almost always ‘both’, of course,” Quinn mused. The alcohol seemed to be making her loquacious. That might have been good, if Trinity had been in a fit state to exploit it. “But there are so many other options, too. I’m surprised no one ever talks about them. Do I want to fuck her or be her? Or do I want to worship her? Do I want to ruin her? Do I want to possess her?”

Each one of those carefully-chosen possibilities was dripping with promise. Trinity could feel a bead of sweat forming on her forehead. Even though she was still damp from the rain, she was feeling very, very warm.

“How did you feel, with Radiance?” Quinn asked. “When you used your power on her, was it just the same as with any other girl? Or was it special? After all, *she’s* special. She has that golden shackle of hers. And she’s a dominant. Radiance isn’t just another sheep. She’s a wolf. She’s like us.”

“Yeah.” Trinity was too tipsy and too flustered to lie. The truth dripped from her lips in a low, husky voice, and the secret she was confessing seemed to bind her and Quinn together. “Yeah. It was special. It was... powerful.”

Trinity might not have been in her right mind when she’d mind-controlled Radiance, but she still had the memory of it. She’d been in Radiance’s head. Thinking about that sent a sinful shiver down her spine.

“I know,” Quinn replied, nodding. Her fingertips moved upward, stroking along Trinity’s collar. She was resting against her, now, like she was about to climb into the villain’s lap. “There’s nothing hotter than testing wills and wits against a truly worthy opponent - and winning. I bet brainwashing you would feel like that, too. Fuck, that’s exciting to think about.”

Trinity looked at her in alarm. Quinn just licked her lips, eyes manic.

“You can brainwash someone with a single touch,” the billionaire mused, “but I’ve still got you here, in my penthouse, drinking my wine. All because I wanted you here. That’s pretty hot. But it could be *so much better*. Just imagine what you’d look like wearing one of my little gifts.” She nodded towards Radiance. The hero was still just standing there, ramrod-stiff, the sinister light on her visor flitting back and forth. “I have to admit, it’s a little tempting to just throw caution to the wind. It could ruin your power, yes, but... fuck, thinking about it really gets me going.”

She shifted slightly on the couch, and Trinity realized she was rubbing her thighs together. It was then that she truly accepted it: this wasn’t an act. This was real. This was the real Eleanor Quinn. Somehow, that made Trinity squirm too.

C’mon, Trinity, she told herself. Don’t stick your strap in crazy.

“But it goes the other way, too,” Quinn added. “Thinking about how your

power must feel on the other end has me really, really curious.”

“W-what?” Trinity gasped. Quinn couldn’t seriously be propositioning her with this, could she? It had to be a trap. It had to be.

If only she could see how.

Seeing anything straight was getting harder and harder now. Quinn truly was starting to clamber onto her, slipping an arm around Trinity’s neck and sliding inch by inch into her lap. Trinity tried to lean away - out of instinct rather than revulsion - but Quinn wasn’t to be deterred. She seemed to take Trinity’s reclining pose as an invitation and slipped up her body with a serpent’s grace, until Trinity found herself lying back, propped up on her elbows, with the billionaire over her on hands and knees.

“Come on,” Quinn teased. “You can’t tell me you haven’t thought about it. I know what you think of me - or what you thought of me, anyway. You must have had your little fantasies. We’ve already figured out what kind of woman you are, Shimmer.”

Hopeless as she was, even Trinity wasn’t going to say ‘yes’ to that. She just tried to stare at anything except the Peregrine’s tits, their gentle swell visible even under the hero’s costume.

“I’d love to find out,” Quinn’s voice dropped to an intimate whisper. “How would you ruin me? How would you use me? How would you humiliate me?”

Fuck..."

Now, she made absolutely no attempt to hide the way she reached between her legs and started rubbing herself. Trinity truly couldn't believe her eyes. This was like something out of one of her stupid wet dreams, not reality. Maybe it wasn't a trap. Maybe Eleanor Quinn was just a total freak.

"I can be *bad*." Quinn licked her lips and smirked. "Or I can be good." She lowered her head and raised her hips, in a suggestive, submissive parody of prostration. "It'll all be up to you. I won't know what you're going to do to me. Whatever limits or promises we make, you could break them. You could exploit me to no end."

She let out a long, rattling sigh, like the very possibility was her own personal heaven. Her lust was infectious. Trinity couldn't help but start picturing it. Just as Quinn had said, it wasn't the first time she'd entertained fantasies like that about the billionaire. She was uncomfortably aware of a growing, familiar itch that had her own hand straying downward, to between her thighs.

"Or, of course..." Quinn tilted her head and giggled. "It could always go the other way. Trust me, I have plenty more little gifts to share around."

"Hff... um... u-uh..." Trinity's body was truly betraying her. She couldn't stop squirming. Why was this getting to her so bad? Why couldn't she stop imagining what it would feel like to let this psychopath control her?

“I knew it,” Quinn purred. “I knew you had an experimental side. Won’t you let me indulge you, Shimmer? Can’t you tell how much I want this?”

Trinity let out a weak moan when Quinn seized one of her wrists and used it to push the villain’s hand between her legs. She started grinding against her lewdly, and Trinity could feel how wet the billionaire was.

Surely, Trinity tried to tell herself, she wasn’t considering this. Surely. But... it was so tempting. And was it really worse than anything else she’d already done? Maybe she should just give in. Just for one night. Having to fight everything and everyone was getting so exhausting, especially compared to the oblivion Quinn was offering.

And, it sounded extremely hot. Trinity wasn’t sure how Quinn’s mind-controlling visors would feel, but a part of her was itching to find out.

What would it do to her, exactly? What would she look like? Trinity tried picturing herself in Radiance’s shoes.

Radiance...

“You... why should I trust you with that?” Trinity said thickly. She was keen to interrupt before she lost all sense of self. “After all the ways you already got Radiance to fuck with me?”

Quinn pulled back ever so slightly, and arched an eyebrow. "Got her? Darling, I haven't done anything of the sort."

"You're in her head," Trinity retorted, through gritted teeth. "There's no other way she'd have done those things to me."

"Well now I'm *really* curious," Quinn remarked, cocking an eyebrow. "Although I can guess, given some of her proclivities. None of it was on my orders, though. The only instructions I gave her were to retrieve my money, and bring you here." She tilted her head to one side. "But..."

That sounded sinister. "But?"

"Our sweet Radiance has been getting a little unpredictable of late." Quinn sat up, and turned to look at the hypnotized superhero. Trinity was thankful for the respite. "It happens, from time to time. As I'm sure you can imagine, for a subject like her, I need to be a little... less-than-gentle, when it comes to my little gifts. That can have some side effects. Emotional dysregulation, impaired judgment, things like that. It gets worse over time. The poor thing starts to come apart at the seams." Quinn sighed. "I suppose that explains why she was struggling to follow my orders a few days ago. I'll have to wipe her and recondition her from scratch again."

Trinity shuddered. "How many times have you done that to her?"

Quinn waved a hand dismissively. "Four or five."

“Jeez...” Trinity breathed. She knew full well what could happen when you pushed someone’s mind too hard. Five times, broken apart and put back together. That was a lot. Way too much for anyone, no matter how tough they were. She thought about Radiance’s strange moods - her anger, and her sudden remorse. Her despair with herself. Was Quinn the reason for it all?

Suddenly, Quinn turned back to her. “I’m bored of talking about her.” She pouted, almost like she was jealous. “We can do that later. For now, weren’t we getting to know each other?” She licked her lips and leaned in against Trinity. “What’s it going to be, Shimmer? Top, or bottom? Tell me what your little black heart desires.”

Trinity looked away, and shuddered at the force of her own desires as they flooded back. “B-bottom.”

Quinn giggled and clapped her hands, once. “Perfect! I get everything I want, all at once. A new friend - and a new toy.”

Against her will, Trinity moaned. *Toy.*

“Let’s get you nice and warmed up first,” Quinn purred. “That’s always most fun. Then, you can just melt into my hypnotic embrace.”

Trinity just nodded. She looked down, hiding her eyes, posture submissive. Quinn’s dominance felt like a force of nature. For all the curiosity about

submission she'd shown earlier, it was very, very clear that she was a woman who was used to getting her way. Trinity could sense that all she had to do was let Quinn sweep her away, and she wouldn't have to think anymore.

"Let's see if you can do what you're told, Shimmer," Quinn said. "I love girls who can take orders. Spread your legs for me."

"Y-yes," Trinity whined. Slowly, she let her thighs fall apart, resting on her back, opening herself to the billionaire's touch.

"Good girl," Quinn cooed. She deftly slipped a hand down the waistband of Trinity's clothes and started touching her. A grin came to her face when she saw how wet the villain was. "My, my, you really are eager, aren't you?"

Trinity was struggling to speak for moaning. Being touched directly was too much. She hadn't realized how badly she needed this. "K-k-kiss... kiss me," she whimpered.

Quinn giggled. "I hadn't pegged you for the romantic type," she said, a touch mockingly. "But I'm happy to spoil you."

She lowered herself over Trinity, letting their bodies rest against one another, still stroking Trinity's pussy. The two of them shared an intimate moment, looking into one another's eyes.

Then, they kissed.

For a moment, the kiss was real. Passionate. Dizzily intense. But then, very deliberately, Trinity raised her hands and clasped them on either side of Quinn's head.

"Gotcha, bitch," she hissed.

Trinity gave it everything she had. She cranked her power all the way up to eleven, focusing so hard it made her head throb. She watched purple sparks fly from her fingers, seeping into Eleanor Quinn's skin and flooding down to taint her eyes in Trinity's shimmering color. The look of shock and collapsing resistance on Quinn's face was the sweetest thing Trinity had ever seen.

After a couple of perilous seconds, Trinity allowed herself to indulge in the thought that she was actually going to win this struggle for control. Then, however, she heard a strange, electric humming, slowly growing in volume.

Then, there was a noise like a defibrillator discharging, and Trinity was hit by an electric shock so powerful it had her seeing white.

Trinity's arms fell to her sides as her entire body convulsed. She couldn't move. She could barely think. She could only watch, horrified, as Quinn shrugged off Trinity's mind control and clambered to her feet. She realized, far too late, where the noise had been coming from: the Peregrine's suit. Some kind of defense system.

“You poor, stupid thing,” Quinn mocked, grinning down at her. The billionaire was blinking rapidly and looked a little steady, but she was still very much in control. “And I had such hopes for us! Oh well. At least now we can have some *real* fun.”

Chapter 19

You poor, stupid thing.

Eleanor Quinn's words echoed over and over in Trinity's ears, becoming more and more mocking with each turn. The world around her was echoing too, overlaid on itself again and again, and spinning too fast to see. The vicious electric shock Quinn's costume - the Peregrine's costume - had given her was still coursing through her, making her twitch and see white. It took several long seconds for her to even be able to raise her head - precious seconds she didn't have. Trinity knew Quinn was already shaking off her mind control. That had been her best shot, and it hadn't worked. There was no way Quinn was getting that touchy-feely with her again, at least not until her brain was dribbling out of her ears.

It was over.

"Don't worry, you'll live," Quinn said to her. There was some strain in her voice, but she was forcing herself to sound breezy. "You shouldn't have tried that, though. Not cute at all. It's pretty obvious I would have a little just-in-case at the ready. My suit can detect a large range of intrusive energy emissions, and respond with an appropriate deterrent. It's... I forget how

many volts. A lot.”

It sure felt like it. Quinn was back on her feet, looming over Trinity, while the small-time villain was having to fight to make it into a sitting position. Quinn seemed content to let her struggle.

“Deep breaths, babe,” Quinn went on. “And give me a straight answer, if you’d be so kind: why? Was it really such a bad offer? Co-ruler with benefits? You’d get just about everything you ever wanted! I thought I was offering you a sweetheart deal.”

Trinity managed to make it upright and fixed Quinn with a vicious, resolute look. “You’re just not really my type,” she replied thickly.

“And there was me thinking we had chemistry.” Quinn sighed theatrically. “Oh well. I still win, that’s what counts.” She clapped her hands. “New deal! I’m going to give you the same treatment I’ve given Radiance, and then I’ll see if you can still be useful to me. If you can, we can still be besties - albeit on slightly different terms. If not, then...”

She trailed off. Trinity glanced at Radiance. The superhero was still standing there as if nothing had happened. She was utterly motionless and stiff, and looked more like a human-sized doll rather than a person. And she was still wearing Quinn’s device; a large, metal visor that had attached itself over her face, a blinking, moving light suggesting it was still at work twisting Radiance’s psyche. The city’s greatest superhero looked utterly helpless and

placid. The sight was mesmerizing, and made Trinity's heart throb.

"Did you actually think I was ever - *ever* - going to work with you by choice?" Trinity sneered as she turned back to Quinn. "I thought you were meant to be the smart one. Gadgets, clever plans, that kind of shit."

"Annoyingly, yes, I did," Quinn snapped. "People don't say 'no' to me, Shimmer. I always make sure that seeing it my way is in their best interests."

"You're crazy," Trinity snorted. She stretched her legs a little, testing them. "That little 'I've got a crush on you act'? *That* was your amazing scheme?"

"It wasn't just a scheme, you know," Quinn sniffed. "We could have had some good times. Some *hot* times. Plus, even the Peregrine gets lonely some-"

"Fuck off!"

It wasn't Trinity's wittiest crack ever, but it helped her to psych herself up. She surged off the couch as quickly as she could. Her legs stumbled and slipped underneath her, but Trinity didn't need to get far. There was nowhere to go. She just needed to take Quinn by surprise one last time.

"What are you doing?" Quinn asked disdainfully.

Trinity ignored her. She only had one goal in mind: Radiance. She managed to cross the distance between her and the superhero before Quinn stopped

her, and then she raised her right hand and slammed the base of her fist into the device on Radiance's face with all the strength she had left.

It slipped free and clattered to the ground.

Radiance blinked like she was just waking up, and peered at Trinity with confused, bleary eyes. Trinity wanted so, so badly to throw her arms around the superhero and explain everything - but she couldn't. There was no time. She just had to hope that whatever Quinn had been doing to her, it had made her weak enough for Trinity's plan to work.

"I'm sorry!" Trinity cried, and planted her hands on each side of Radiance's face.

For the second time in as many minutes, Trinity mustered as much of her shimmer as she could. The sensation of all that power suddenly erupting out of her like a wellspring was comforting. It felt good to feel powerful again, but Trinity couldn't savor the moment. She simply tried her hardest to ram all of that power into Trinity's head all at once.

The tips of Trinity's fingers glowed like purple suns, and torrents of iridescent, glowing shimmer flowed out of her. The strange purple glow sank into Radiance's skin, bathing her in its unnatural light. Trinity sure as hell had some mixed feelings about that, but she didn't have time to listen to them. She had to focus. Radiance was weak, but she was still fighting back. She tried to shake Trinity off, but weakly, like a thrashing child. Trinity could sense

formidable mental walls and dams inside her, cultivated over years of battling villains. But she knew from experience that they could be beaten, if the conditions were right.

They were right. She could feel the dams breaking.

Radiance's struggles were weakening, bit by bit, and Trinity's shimmer was seeping deeper and deeper. It moved inward from her temples, lighting up veins and nerves until it ringed her eyes. Trinity knew she'd won when Radiance's pupils flashed a brilliant, supernatural violet. For a moment the color fluctuated, like Radiance was making a last-ditch effort to throw off Trinity's control, but then it settled stronger than ever. Trinity could see all the tiny little blood vessels in Radiance's eyes were tainted with her color. She had her. Radiance was hers.

"Radiance," Trinity said urgently. "Listen to me. Her." She turned and indicated Quinn. "Eleanor Quinn. Peregrine. Whatever you call her. You need to take her out right now. Right this second. Knock her out. Now. Go!"

She pushed *hard* as she spoke. Trinity couldn't leave room for hesitation or doubt. There was simply no time for that. Once Quinn was out cold, she could catch her breath. Until then, they were both still in danger.

Radiance rocked back and forth for a moment, like a great tree swaying in the wind. But then, she took a step forwards - towards Quinn. Trinity watched her stiffen and tense as she filled with purpose. She was actually going to do it.

Her last-ditch, hail-Mary play had actually worked. Trinity was starting to allow herself to celebrate inwardly.

Then she noticed that Quinn didn't look worried. Not even a little bit.

"Radiance," the billionaire said calmly, as the muscular superhero advanced on her. "You're going to *do it my way*. Don't listen to her, and get down on your knees. Kneel. Submit."

The superhero froze. She swayed again, this time much harder. Trinity was worried she was going to keel over. She held her breath as she watched Radiance shiver and twitch, her brainwashed mind fighting with itself to decide who it was going to listen to.

"C'mon," Trinity whispered to herself. "C'mon. No. No. No. No, c'mon."

Her prayers fell on deaf ears. Radiance crumbled. Placing one foot out before her, she sank to a kneeling pose, like a medieval knight pledging her fealty.

To Eleanor Quinn.

Trinity's vision started to blur. A moment later, she realized that little tears had started to form in her eyes. For some reason, in the moment, that got under her skin more than anything else. This was it. The end. Was she actually going to cry? Was she going to give Quinn that kind of satisfaction?

God damn it.

“Do you see now?” Quinn said gently, like she was being kind. Like she was a good doctor delivering bad news. Standing over a kneeling Radiance, she looked all-powerful. “You can’t win against me, Shimmer.”

Trinity was starting to believe that. Defeated, she took a couple of miserable steps back towards the billionaire and slumped down on the couch.

“Don’t get me wrong, I admire the attempt,” Quinn added. “But it was hopeless. I’m going to be running plenty of tests on that power of yours, but my working hypothesis is that it’s a subtle kind of energy manipulation. The brain runs on electrical impulses, and when you get in someone’s head you can manipulate those.”

She seemed disgustingly pleased by the sound of her own voice, but Trinity didn’t have the energy to make fun of her for it.

“But a power like yours isn’t the only way to do that,” Quinn continued. “My little gifts do the same thing, or at least a close enough approximation. So what’s the difference?” Quinn’s smirk was radiating malice. “The difference is that I’ve been inside Radiance’s skull for longer than you can imagine. The mind is layered, Shimmer. Superego, ego, id. Conscious and subconscious. It’s unfathomably complicated. There’s only so much that you or anyone else can do in a single moment.”

She reached down and stroked a possessive fingertip along Radiance's cheek.

"I've had hours. Weeks. Months." Quinn's eyes bored into Trinity. "Her thoughts are *all* mine, Shimmer. I've drilled my command words into every level of her psyche. Your power is meaningless, because my control always goes deeper."

"I get it," Trinity replied lifelessly, but Quinn wasn't done. Not yet.

"At this point, there's nothing I couldn't make her do." Quinn's eyes were shining. She was utterly intoxicated with power. "Nothing. I could make her break the law. I could make her kill. I could make her betray her oldest friend. Do you truly get it, Shimmer? Radiance belongs to me." She cocked her head to one side. "In fact..."

Quinn reached down further, placing the tips of her fingers underneath Radiance's chin and using them to tilt her face upwards. Radiance simply allowed the other hero to pose her. She wasn't completely in a trance, but nor was she completely awake. She looked like she was trapped in some kind of waking dream and, like a lost, confused lamb, she looked up at Quinn for guidance. The use of that trigger phrase had hammered Radiance's thoughts into submission, leaving her broken mind to reshape itself around whatever commandment Quinn had just handed down.

“Use your tongue to pleasure me, Radiance,” Quinn told her. *“Do it my way.”*

Trinity wished Radiance could have offered even a slither of resistance, but she didn’t. She just nodded slowly. Quinn moved to unfasten the lower portion of her costume and shucked it down to around her hips. She had nothing on underneath, and she was visibly wet. The whole time, she made eye contact with Trinity.

“Eating women out on her knees probably isn’t her usual style,” Quinn said, smirking. “But I’ve trained her very, very well.”

Trinity couldn’t look away as Radiance slumped to her knees, obediently pressed her face between Quinn’s thighs, and started licking her pussy. The spectacle was utterly obscene. Two of the most famous and renowned heroes in Future City were having sex, and both of them were like twisted parodies of their public selves. Gone was all of Radiance’s power, and her formidable confidence along with it. She seemed like a different person altogether, so utterly placid and submissive. There was a perfect, unnatural calm to the way she was going down on Quinn, kissing and tonguing methodically along her lips like a well-trained sex slave. Trinity shuddered as she wondered how many times she had been made to pleasure Quinn like that.

Quinn, meanwhile, looked like a goddess. She radiated power in a way that no superhero should, like she was reveling in the sheer hubris of her own control. Despite shedding some of her costume she was still recognizable as the Peregrine, but she had none of the calm, the nobility, and the singularity of

purpose that the citizens of Future City would have attributed to her public persona. The expression on her face was nakedly malevolent, and there was nothing noble about the way she was riding Radiance, resting a hand on the back of the other hero's head and insistently pressing her into her cunt. She didn't moan or squirm with pleasure, but she let out a kind of low, satisfied purr, her eyes alight with pleasure.

Seeing the two of them like that was all but hypnotic.

"It all ties back into the trigger phrase," Quinn explained. Her voice was even, but took on a slight, suggestive huskiness. "My research on other subjects found that making sure all of their thoughts and feelings were linked to a single command was the most effective way to overcome any resistance. I'm quite pleased with my choice. 'Do it my way'. Innocuous enough to use in almost any situation, but still with that nice, satisfying air of command." She licked her lips. "It's keyed to me, specifically, of course. Just in case you were wondering."

Trinity wasn't. She'd already known that there was no way something like that would work.

"You're going to be the same way, Shimmer." A slight moan crept into Quinn's voice. The thought of brainwashing Trinity seemed to bring her more pleasure than the tongue inside her cunt. "Once I've peeled all of the secrets out of your head, I'll teach you the words that will own you - forever."

Hearing that made Trinity shudder. She couldn't help but wonder: what would it feel like? Quinn looked so domineering. So powerful. Kneeling for her almost seemed right.

"And then I'll teach you exactly how I like to be fucked," Quinn promised. "I'll show you exactly how to touch me. Exactly how to please me. Your brainwashed little mind will lap it all up. It'll become part of you. Just like it's part of Radiance."

Trinity looked at the entranced superhero. As far as she could tell, there was no expression on her face at all. She was completely lost in the task of eating Quinn out. She looked totally, blissfully blank. Droplets of Quinn's wetness were smeared across her cheeks.

Which one of them was she more jealous of? Trinity was no longer sure.

Maybe it wouldn't be so bad. She wouldn't have to worry about anything anymore. She wouldn't have to make decisions anymore. It would all be out of her hands.

Just thinking things like that felt like a sin, but Trinity couldn't help it. She was exhausted. All the fight had been beaten out of her, and besides, her secret, shameful desires were starting to bleed over and taint all of her thoughts. What *did* she want, at this point? It was impossible to tell. She knew she should want to be free, but she remembered how wet all of Radiance's punishments had made her. She should hate Quinn with every fiber of her

being, but something about her made her shiver and throb with need. It was all so confusing. Quinn could make that confusion disappear.

“Fuck, she’s good at this,” Quinn moaned. The way her hand rested on the back of Radiance’s head was becoming more possessive, starting to curl into a fist in her hair. “It’s so hot. You’ll see. I’ll make her go down on you too. I’m not the jealous type. I love it when my toys play together.”

Toys. Fuck. That word made Trinity’s cheeks burn. She had a sudden vision of herself and Radiance together, kneeling, submitting to brainwashing, serving Quinn. It was devastatingly hot. Within moments, the fantasy had seared itself into her mind.

Quinn noticed the way Trinity was shivering. “Oh?” she commented. “You like that idea, don’t you? I’m sure you wanted to keep her all to yourself, but you’ll have to make do with her tongue in your pussy. Trust me, she’ll be very, very devoted.”

It was impossible for Trinity not to imagine it, not to lose herself in lustful desire. Her body craved the sensation. Frustrated need had been growing inside of her for days. The way Quinn had treated her earlier was still echoing in the villain’s body, and her cunt demanded release. Any release. Quinn seemed to sense that.

“Go ahead,” she urged. “Touch yourself.”

“W-what?” Trinity whimpered, shocked.

“I know you want to, Shimmer.” Quinn laughed. “It’s obvious. You’re practically dripping all over my couch.”

The mocking condescension in Quinn’s voice certainly wasn’t help with that. “N-no,” Trinity whined, in pointless denial.

“Why deny it?” Quinn was moving her hips now, grinding her pussy against Radiance’s face. Radiance didn’t react to the indignity, she just kept trying to eat out the billionaire as best she could.

“I... I...” Trinity didn’t have a good answer to that. It wasn’t like she wasn’t tempted. Like she wasn’t having to fight the urge to just reach down between her legs and pleasure herself. She knew it would be incredible. The shame would just make the pleasure burn even hotter. “I just can’t! Not... not that. It’s too much.”

Quinn laughed again. “Come on. What have you got to lose? Nothing you haven’t already lost.” Suddenly, she filled her voice with steel. “Do it. Touch yourself. Now.”

Trinity immediately stopped whining and squirming. Quinn was impossibly commanding. Trying to disobey her felt like fighting gravity, or pushing against the tide. She couldn’t believe she was going to do this. She couldn’t believe that the sight of Radiance eating out Eleanor Quinn was doing this to

her. She wasn't even brainwashed yet! But knowing that was part of what made it all so sinfully hot.

Her cheeks scorching with forbidden heat, Trinity reached down and planted a shaking, unsteady hand between her thighs. She started to rub herself.

It felt just as good as she could have hoped, and the sensation of her fingers against her cunt only became more intense when Quinn's lips curled into a victorious smirk. It felt *good* to bend to her command. "There you go. Good girl."

Trinity moaned. She couldn't take her eyes off of Quinn and Radiance, standing before her, locked in pleasure. It was awful, and they were both beautiful. Trinity wanted to be Quinn, looking down at Radiance, feeling her tongue, using her body. She wanted to be Radiance, kneeling in mindless worship, thoughts wiped clean of everything except devotion and servitude. She wanted it all. She wanted to drown herself in mind control and sex.

That was what Quinn promised, wasn't it? Mind control. Sex. Freedom from choice. Maybe, deep down, that was what Trinity truly craved. Maybe she hadn't truly been trying to escape. Maybe Trinity had just been baiting Quinn into taking away her free will. Had she genuinely been trying her hardest? Trinity wasn't sure. She couldn't help but doubt herself at every turn. Hopefully, Quinn's mind control would free her from that too. Trinity was always full of doubts. She wanted that to end. She wanted oblivion.

And Quinn would give it to her. Trinity could tell that for sure. The billionaire's eyes were shining maniacally bright, and she was staring back at Trinity just as intently as Trinity was staring at her. The pleasure Radiance was giving her seemed secondary to the pleasure she got from seeing Trinity touch and debase herself at her command. Clearly, for someone like Quinn, breaking another mind controller's will was the greatest thrill imaginable. Despite the very short time they had known each other, Trinity felt sure she knew Quinn's madness intimately. She wouldn't stop until she'd completely dismantled every last trace of Trinity's psyche. Unlike with Radiance, she didn't need Trinity to be able to behave normally as a public figure. She just needed another tool.

She was going to break Trinity utterly. It would be slow, but every little step along the way would be tortuously pleasurable. And she wouldn't stop until Trinity was completely and totally hers.

Trinity's hand, stroking her pussy through her clothes, started moving faster and faster. She was so close.

"Stop," Quinn commanded, before Trinity could reach the edge.

Trinity stopped. Obedience was easier than protest, though she did let out a small whine.

"You stop too," Quinn said to Radiance. She callously shoved the

superhero's head away to one side. "*Do it my way.* Sit there and be quiet. Don't bother thinking."

Radiance obeyed perfectly. She simply stopped in the position that Quinn had shoved her to, saying and doing nothing. Her eyes registered perfect emptiness; the expression on her face was transformed from serene to obscene by the way she was streaked with Quinn's wetness.

"I just can't wait any longer," Quinn said breathily. "I'm the worst. I always wanted to open my presents before Christmas, too. But I really, really need to see you wearing one of my little gifts, right this second."

She walked over to where the brainwashing device had fallen when Trinity had slapped it off of Radiance's face, and picked it up. Then, she stepped towards Trinity. Trinity's eyes were locked on the sinister visor in her hand. She knew what it was going to do to her. That fate was perhaps just seconds away now. She found herself holding her breath. Quinn bent down, putting her face close to Trinity's, caressing her chin in a mockery of a lover's touch.

"We can do this the hard way," Quinn told her. "The forceful way. It won't be *that* hard, obviously. Not with Radiance here to help me. But I don't think you're going to make me do that. We can do this the easy way. You're an easy kind of girl." She laughed. "You're going to be a good girl, aren't you?"

Trinity could only reply with an awkward, twitchy nod. Part of her hoped Quinn wouldn't make her say it. Part of her hoped she would. But Quinn

seemed content to just watch her, and enjoy the sight of her broken will.

“Good,” Eleanor Quinn said, as she held the visor up to Trinity’s face. “Night night, Shimmer.”

The visor closed over Trinity’s eyes, blotting out all light. With the darkness, other sensations seemed to recede, and she could focus only on the quiet whirl of a hidden motor as the visor clamped down around her face, forming a perfect, inescapable seal. Trinity sat very still. She wondered what was going to happen; what it was going to feel like. It didn’t take long for her to get her answer.

The black screen embedded in the visor flared to life in front of her eyes with a burst of static. It completely dominated her vision, stretching from corner to corner, and in the perfect darkness that seemed to surround her, it could have been any size. It felt vast. The static was gentle. It swirled in strange patterns, soothing and magnetic. Trinity was reminded of how it felt when she was going to sleep.

Then, the eerie tranquility was broken.

OBEY

The word struck Trinity like a thunderbolt as it was blared into her brain. It flashed on the screen in front of her in block capitals for just a fraction of a second, painfully bright, but the after-image was seared into her retinas for

seconds afterward, pulsing in time with her heartbeat. She twitched at the flash, and then was suddenly aware of her muscles locking down and freezing her place. It was just like the electric shock Quinn had hit her with earlier.

OBEY

The second pulse was stronger and brighter than the first, and it was accompanied by a sound - or at least, it seemed that way. Trinity knew that didn't make any sense. Quinn's device didn't cover her ears. There were no speakers. But even so, she could hear it. The word 'obey', echoing in her ears over and over again. She couldn't tell whose voice it was. It sounded like it was coming from everywhere and nowhere. It sounded like Quinn's voice and Radiance's voice and Trinity's own voice. It sounded like every voice in the world.

OBEY

Again. Trinity felt herself seizing up and shutting down. The word 'obey' had stopped disappearing from behind her eyes between the flashes. It was stuck there, permanent, looming over her, accompanied by that itching, voiceless voice. Trinity tried to piece her thoughts back together, but there was nothing for her to hold on to but 'obey'.

OBEY

Trinity twitched again. The sensation of an electric shock inside her head

was growing and growing. It turned all her senses into liars. She could hear the word 'obey', even though there was nothing to hear. She could feel the word 'obey' being etched into her skin, across every inch, bigger and bigger and smaller and smaller in infinite fractal patterns that left none of her untouched. She could even smell and taste 'obey', even though that didn't make any sense. She just could.

OBEY

OBEY

OBEY

BREAK

OBEY

That single change in the pattern was impossibly dizzying. The new word beat itself into Trinity's beleaguered brain like the scream of a new god. Break. Break. Break.

OBEY

OBEY

OBEY

The word 'obey' was starting to become meaningless, a mere constellation of shapes that unraveled before Trinity's sightless eyes into nothing more than a collection of lines. But at the same time, it meant everything. Its meaning was all-important. It was all she had.

OBEY

SURRENDER

OBEY

Surrender. Obey. Break. The words all bled into each other now. They were no longer flashing singly, but each over and over again, until every single flashing word looked like a thousand flickering lights crammed into the space of one moment. Trinity couldn't think about anything else. Not where she was. Not who she was. Not even her own name. Just 'obey'.

OBEY

OBEY

BREAK

SURRENDER

OBEY

FALL

OBEY

OBEY

SUBMIT

SUBMIT

OBEY

It went on and on like that for an ocean of meaningless time. For what seemed like an eternity, Trinity thought that her head was going to split open as it struggled to hold all of the words being forced through it. Then, without warning, the sensation flipped completely, and it felt as though her head was collapsing inward under the pressure, her mind and her very self spiraling down into a void. The word 'obey' beat and battered against the walls of her mind like driving rain.

And then, all of a sudden, it just stopped.

Trinity blinked wildly as the visor came away from her face. The room around her was bright, and didn't feel real. But all was as it had been before;

Radiance was kneeling quietly to one side, and Eleanor Quinn was looming over her.

“I think that’s enough for now,” the billionaire announced breezily. “I wouldn’t want to fry your pretty little brain all at once. What would be the fun in that?”

Trinity wasn’t sure if she couldn’t move, or just couldn’t muster the will to. Her mouth was dry and her throat hurt, but she couldn’t stop her lips from moving, mouthing the same word over and over again.

“Obey,” she murmured. “Obeyobeyobeyobeyobeyobeyobey.”

Quinn noticed and smiled. “The first part of the process is crude, I admit,” she said. “But you know how it goes: you have to break someone down before you can build them back up again. And demolition is always... messy. Right now, you’re nothing more than a blank little doll who does whatever she’s told.”

“Obey, obey, obey,” Trinity repeated. Her voice steadily died away into nothing, even as her lips kept forming the word. “Obey, obey...”

“That’s right.” Quinn laughed. “You know, I like you like this too, Shimmer. It’s so much fun! But let no one say I can’t be generous. You deserve a treat.” She looked around at Radiance. “Did you think I hadn’t noticed the way you’ve been looking at her?”

Trinity didn't respond.

Quinn was undeterred. "Stand up," she commanded.

Trinity stood up. She moved instantly. She didn't think or hesitate. Obedience was immediate and instinctive. The part of her mind that would have served as a filter between Quinn's orders and her own will had been scooped out.

"Here." Quinn took Trinity's arm and guided her into position. "Kneel."

Trinity knelt, and found herself kneeling directly in front of Radiance. Without realizing it, she'd mimicked the superhero's submissive pose.

"Oh my goodness!" Quinn clapped in celebration. "Look at you both! A lovely little matched set. You're adorable, truly." She grinned from ear to ear. "Now, both of you: *do it my way*. Kiss."

The command made her shiver, but Trinity couldn't disobey. She stretched forward, lips slightly parted, preparing to kiss Radiance. Radiance mirrored her. Trinity looked into the superhero's eyes; there was nothing there. She was blank and glassy. Trinity wondered if Radiance saw the same nothingness in hers.

As Quinn watched, hero and villain pressed together in a perfect,

passionless, mindless facsimile of a loving kiss.

Chapter 20

“Again,” Eleanor Quinn demanded. “This time you do it, Shimmer. On her neck.”

Trinity obeyed at once; it was all she was capable of. She leaned over and pressed her lips to Radiance’s neck in a hungry, passionate kiss.

There was no true hunger or passion in the kiss, of course. Trinity wasn’t capable of that. She still felt like she was dreaming rather than awake. In fact, she wasn’t sure she was ever going to wake up. A single, dull, blunt word kept pounding inside her head, over and over.

OBEY

She wasn’t just faking or acting either, though. It was more than that. More than just playing pretend. Quinn’s control over her was able to reach into the deep parts of her mind and conjure up every last little motion and action that real passion would have led to. A perfect facsimile, better than any actress could ever achieve. She wasn’t performing for Quinn. She was her puppet.

Radiance was too, and Quinn had been posing both of them for what felt

like hours. Currently, they were kneeling beside each other on the floor, naked, as Quinn instructed them to kiss, hold hands, embrace, and do all manner of other things that ranged between erotic, humiliating, and absurd. They were facing the billionaire, who seemed to take endless pleasure in watching the both of them obey her commands. Quinn was sitting on one of the couches in her penthouse apartment, perched precariously on the edge, leaning forwards with an expression of wide-eyed, lurid fascination on her face. Her wine glass was still resting on a nearby table, half-full and utterly forgotten. Quinn was already plenty intoxicated enough.

“Look at you both!” Quinn squealed, not for the first time. “You make such a perfect little pair! I just can’t get enough of it. The hero and the villain. The dashing, famous Radiance and the soft, fiery, clever little Shimmer. The contrast is simply delightful. And what matters most, of course, is that you’re both mine. Although, perhaps I’m getting ahead of myself. I don’t even know your name. Fortunately, that’s easily rectified. Shimmer, tell me your name.”

“Trinity,” Trinity replied immediately. Anything other than instant, total obedience was unthinkable.

“Trinity,” Quinn echoed in a low purr. “Lovely.”

She reached out to stroke the side of Radiance’s cheek, her touch prideful and possessive. Then she did the same to Trinity, but she let her hand linger there. She started gradually applying more and more pressure, until Trinity eventually gave way and allowed her head to turn. She wasn’t resisting, but

since Quinn hadn't told her what to do, she wasn't moving either. She simply allowed herself to be moved. Quinn shivered rapturously.

"I can't wait for all the fun we're going to have together, Trinity," Quinn said. "You really thought you were going to be able to steal from me without any consequences? And now look at you! I'm sure you've learned your lesson. But I'm afraid you're not even close to done paying me back. Fortunately for both of us, I'm sure there's no limit to the amount of enjoyment you can provide."

As she spoke, Quinn moved her fingertips to Trinity's lips and parted them little by little until she could push two of her fingers inside her mouth, forcing her to suck on them faintly with each breath. Then, she amused herself by delicately pulling Trinity's tongue out of her mouth, leaving Trinity with a dazed, stupid expression made all the humiliating by the way Quinn wiped her drool off on her face once she was done.

"Would you believe I was almost getting tired of Radiance here?" she continued. "I'm sure you'll help to spice things up a little. Especially given the delightful little dynamic you two seem to have together." Quinn pointed and drew the tip of her finger in a small circle in the air, indicating both of her brainwashed victims. "Heisting my money turned into quite the little meet-cute, huh? Not that either of you would admit it, from what I can tell. Still, I sense there's a little something going on here. Digging into all that is going to be just fascinating."

Quinn tilted her head from side to side, letting that ominous promise hang

in the air. For a brief moment, Trinity thought she could feel something bubbling up in the back of her mind, under the heavy layers of hypno-conditioning Quinn had just inflicted on her.

“In fact,” Quinn added slowly. “I can’t resist taking just one little peek under the hood, just to whet my appetite. Radiance, *do it my way* and tell me how you feel about Shimmer here.”

“I...” Radiance sounded unsure and exceptionally hesitant. That alone was strange, given how completely she was under Quinn’s control. “I am... not sure. Something... complicated.”

“Oh my, how saucy!” Quinn giggled gleefully. “What kind of ‘complicated’ feelings would a superhero have for a villain, I wonder? I’ll need you to give me a little more, Radiance. Do you care about her?”

“Yes.” This time the answer was immediate.

“I thought so,” Quinn purred, apparently satisfied. She turned to Trinity. “And what about you, Shimmer? Tell me how you feel about Radiance.”

Trinity knew she had to answer. She had to obey. But how? She remained silent for several long moments as she reached around inside herself for an answer. Eventually, one appeared. “I think I might be in love with her.”

“Perfect!” Quinn declared. “It’s even better than I could have hoped.

Radiance and Shimmer. Violet and Trinity. What a pretty couple you'd make."

Trinity felt dizzy. What had she just said? Love? Really? Was that true? It had to be. She couldn't lie. Not right now. Not when Quinn commanded her to speak. But... love? Really? It seemed impossible. There was no way, after everything Radiance had done. Plus, she was a superhero. Villains didn't fall in love with superheroes. That was absurd.

And yet...

Her heart ached when she thought about Radiance. When she saw her hurting. It was undeniable that she cared for the hero. She couldn't stop thinking about her, even though all of her attention should have been on getting herself out of her predicament. What did that mean?

And Radiance cared about her? What did *that* mean? 'Something complicated', she'd said. So, not love? Or, maybe love? Love plus messiness? That certainly sounded complicated. Trinity shook her head from side to side ever so slightly. She needed to stop thinking about love. Radiance wasn't in love with her. No way. Trinity thought Radiance wasn't her type? There was no way in a million years that a legend of Radiance's stature would ever deign to acknowledge someone like her.

But still, she couldn't stop thinking about it. Even as she was supposed to be thinking about nothing but pure, unadulterated obedience.

Abruptly, a frown came over Quinn's face, although she quickly smoothed it out. Something in her suit was vibrating faintly. "Why don't I give you two lovebirds a moment alone?" she said, rising elegantly to her feet. "It seems that I have a few calls to make. A few more of your little messes to sort out. As much as I'd love to play, it won't do to leave any loose ends at risk of unraveling."

Trinity nodded, even though she wasn't really listening. She was thinking about Radiance, and she was doing everything she could to keep thinking about Radiance. Thoughts of her felt like a lifeline. Like a way back to herself.

"I don't want you to get bored, of course," Quinn added. "Let's see... Radiance, *do it my way* and eat Shimmer out until she cums what little is left of her brain out all over your face. And Shimmer, be a doll and get up on the couch with your legs spread, so she has plenty of access."

She didn't bother to watch the pair of them for even a moment to ensure that her commands were obeyed. Instead, the billionaire simply headed off to the far corner of her expansive penthouse, holding a hand up to her ear to use her communicator. She was still close by, but far enough that Trinity felt she could breathe a little easier. Even so, outright disobedience was far beyond her. Trinity raised herself up off of her aching knees and sat down on the nearby couch, leaning back with her legs spread, exactly as Quinn had instructed. Radiance moved in perfect concert with her; almost eerily so, like the two of them were clockwork dancers on the same music box.

Trinity wondered what was going through the superhero's head, if anything. Was she capable of thinking? Was there a little, free voice, hidden in the dark recesses of her mind? And if there was, was it whispering about her? About Trinity?

If there was, it was impossible to tell. Her face didn't show it. It remained utterly blank as Radiance positioned herself between Trinity's legs, face positioned inches away from her pussy.

For an instant, their eyes met. Radiance's were still blank, filled with nothing but that glassy, dazed, unfocused look that Trinity had come to recognize as a hallmark of Quinn's 'little gifts'. All the same, Trinity was struck by just how familiar those eyes were. She'd spent hours looking into them over the past few days. She felt like she could happily lose herself in the delicate patterns of her irises - not in a hypnotic way, but in a comforting way.

It was then that Trinity realized she wasn't ready to give up yet. She had to save Radiance.

That thought seemed as crazy as it did compelling. Her? Save someone? It was laughable. She was nothing more than a small-time crook, barely even worthy of the moniker of 'supervillain'. But that was exactly why she had to try. Radiance wasn't like her. She wasn't small-time. She was something far better and great. A true hero, even if she'd made mistakes, and even if she was struggling with herself. It was worth saving her even if Trinity couldn't save herself.

And hey, if anyone ever asked, she could say she was doing it for love. That was kind of cool.

She just needed to figure out how. Unfortunately, what Radiance was doing between her legs wasn't going to make that easy.

The very first kiss Radiance planted on Trinity's inner thigh made her moan. After everything she'd been through that night, Trinity was unbelievably sensitive. Being touched by Radiance, though, was much, much harder to deal with than being touched by Quinn or Pheramona. Radiance's lips against her skin made Trinity hopelessly light-headed, and it was impossible for her not to immediately start squirming and blushing.

Pull yourself together, Trinity admonished herself. This isn't your first rodeo. You're not some Catholic schoolgirl getting eaten out for the first time under the bleachers.

She sure felt like one, though.

Moments later, Radiance was pressing her face against Trinity's cunt. Her body erupted in pleasure. Trinity went completely rigid and let out a howl-like moan, her fingernails leaving deep, pale scratches on Quinn's couch as she struggled to grip at the leather. Radiance didn't seem interested in taking it slow; Quinn's mind control probably didn't leave room for that kind of flexibility. But her technique was still devastatingly effective. Trinity wanted to

thrash and flail as Radiance buried her tongue inside the villain's cunt, but she couldn't. She wasn't allowed to. Quinn had told her to sit in that position, so she had to stay that way. That hypnotic paralysis was proving to be its own kind of torture, forcing Trinity to hold herself firm and stiff despite the pleasure raging through her.

Suddenly, thinking of an escape plan was the very last thing she was capable of.

Radiance was good. Really, really good. Between Quinn and her own trysts, the superhero clearly had plenty of experience and she was putting it all to very, very good use. Her tongue felt impossibly long and deft as it pushed inside Trinity, touching pleasure spots she'd never felt before and working over them in rhythmic, insistent strokes. Every few moments, Radiance would alter her technique, shifting her attention to Trinity's clit or her lips, denying the helpless villain any opportunity to get accustomed to what Radiance was doing to her. When she decided Trinity was squirming too much, she hooked her powerful arms around Trinity's soft thighs and flexed a little of her superhuman strength to keep Trinity pressed firmly against her face. There was absolutely no getting away from her.

"N-n-nooooo," Trinity whined after several, long minutes of having her cunt licked. "S-stop, please! Please, please, please, I c-can't... can't breathe, I... oh fuck!"

Her babbled, incoherent plea fell on deaf, mindless ears. Radiance wasn't

listening. Her mind was utterly closed off to anything except following the command Eleanor Quinn had given her. She was oblivious to everything else, no matter how hard Trinity begged and no matter how much she was fighting for breath as repeated spasms of pleasure forced all the air out of her lungs over and over again.

There was nothing Trinity could do except try to ride it out.

“Fuck, fuck, fuck, fuck” she moaned through gritted teeth, trying desperately to keep her voice down. She was only partially successful. Trinity risked a glance over at Quinn. She could surely hear the obscene noises Trinity was making but fortunately, she didn’t seem to be paying attention. She was facing out the window, speaking urgently into her communicator.

That was something, at least.

Trinity looked away. Keeping any semblance of composure was all but impossible, and concentrating on anything except herself and Radiance threatened to make the single thread of rational thought she was holding on to slip through her grasp forever. Especially Quinn. The mantra of obedience she had fed into Trinity’s head was always close at hand, threatening to drown her in it once more.

She had to focus. Somehow, Trinity had to block everything out and concentrate on the problem at hand. But that was incredibly difficult when what was happening to her was so fucking hot.

Radiance was beautiful. Anyone would have said so, whether they were in love with her or not. She was one of the hottest women in Future City, and she was between Trinity's legs, the whole of her being single-mindedly devoted to getting Trinity off with her mouth. There wasn't a lesbian in the world who wouldn't have been insanely turned on in that situation. But for Trinity, it was even more than that. Knowing that Radiance was completely and totally brainwashed was electric. The blank, vacant look in her eyes was beckoning Trinity to simply relax, sit back, and use her to her heart's content. Trinity blushed even deeper. What a crazy thing to want for someone you loved.

And, shamefully, it was just as hot to her that she was brainwashed too. She was only sitting like this, legs spread, getting eaten out, because of Quinn. Quinn had told her what to do, and she had obeyed. As much as it hurt to lose, there was an undeniable thrill to knowing that another mind controller had beaten her. To knowing that her own superpower didn't matter anymore, because she belonged completely to someone else. Trinity couldn't help but fantasize about what Quinn was going to do her next, and the hottest, most fucked-up part was that it could be anything. Anything the billionaire's little black heart desired. All she had to do was say the word. Trinity was completely incapable of disobedience.

How was she supposed to fight back like that?

Trinity thought about what Quinn had said. *Right now, you're nothing more than a blank little doll who does whatever she's told.* The memory of Quinn's

words made her blush and moan, but through all that, something jumped out at her. She did whatever she was told. *Whatever* she was told. It might not matter what it was, or who told her. Quinn's hypno-conditioning had only just begun, and so far, as best Trinity could remember, it didn't mention obeying Quinn specifically. Trinity's eyes lit up. That was a loophole. That had potential.

The only problem was that the only other person who was there to give her an order was Radiance.

As Trinity wracked her brain, a plan started to form in her head. She wasn't even slightly convinced that it wasn't merely another hopeless pipe dream, but she had nothing to lose. It was worth a shot. And the first step was that she had to stop fighting.

Radiance stiffened slightly when Trinity reached down to rest a hand on her head, perhaps thinking that Trinity was going to try and push her away. Instead, she did the exact opposite. Trinity's fingers knotted into a fist in Radiance's hair, and she used her grip on the hypnotized hero to press her into her body, grinding Radiance's face into her cunt. The encouragement barely made any difference, but Trinity still moaned long and loud. She'd been fighting the urge to do that ever since she'd first spread her legs, and giving in to her desires felt sinfully good.

"F-fuck, I'm close!" Trinity screamed. It didn't matter if Quinn heard her, as long as she only heard what she was expecting to hear. "I need it! I need to

cum so fucking bad. Make me cum already, Radiance!”

Trinity was pretty sure Radiance wasn’t listening to her, but that didn’t matter. It still felt incredible. Trinity let herself indulge in the fantasy of control, and allowed her body to relax into the limitless pleasure Radiance’s tongue was offering. It didn’t take long for an orgasm to rise within her, all the more intense for how much she’d been denied and teased in recent days.

“Oh my *god!*” Trinity screamed as she hit the edge. She rode the orgasm as hard as she could without totally losing herself, bucking her hips to rub herself against Radiance’s face, desperate for every last little morsel of stimulation she could milk out of the moment. It was so very tempting to sink completely into the pleasure, to ride it out for as long as she could last, to close her eyes, throw back her head, and let it go on forever.

But she couldn’t. She didn’t have time for that.

Instead, Trinity started to bring herself down from that orgasmic high, forcing herself to breathe slower and more evenly, and starting to push Radiance away from her very gently, like she was dealing with a scared, wild animal. To her immense relief, it worked. Radiance seemed content to rock back onto her haunches and stare blankly straight ahead. Her assigned task was complete. There was nothing left to animate her. Trinity allowed herself a single second to savor the look on the beautiful superhero’s face: completely brainwashed, and slick with Trinity’s juices.

Only a second, however.

“Radiance!” Trinity whispered, cautiously and urgently. “Violet. Violet!”

There was no response; no flicker of life behind Radiance’s eyes.

“God damn it!” Trinity muttered. Her eyes flitted over to Quinn, still distracted. There was no telling how long she had. She had to do something. Slapping Radiance was enticing, but the noise...

Abruptly, another, much stupider idea came to her.

Trinity bent over and kissed Radiance.

She put all her passion into the kiss. Her real, true passion. She was determined to make the kiss different from the ones Quinn had forced her to perform. When she pulled back, there was finally a sign of hope: the ghost of a personality, dancing lightly across Radiance’s features.

“Violet!” Trinity repeated. “Can you hear me?”

Radiance didn’t say anything, but Trinity thought she could see a hint of recognition in her eyes. After a few, perilous seconds, Radiance’s head started to sway, and it looked like she was fighting to look up at Trinity. Trinity’s heart was pounding. She couldn’t imagine everything that Radiance had been through. Just one short session with Quinn’s mind-control device had almost

broken Trinity's will. But she knew Radiance was strong, too. She'd have to count on that.

"Hey," Trinity whispered. "I know you're still in there. Or... or at least, I have to believe that. You just, uh, need a little help. So I'm gonna... um... just trust me. Please, trust me."

Trinity said one last quiet prayer for Quinn to give them just a few more minutes, and then touched her fingertips to Radiance's temples and started to bathe Radiance in her power.

As soon as her fingertips lit up in bright, familiar purple, Trinity became aware that she didn't have a lot of strength left to give. She just had to hope it would be enough. She'd managed to overpower Radiance before. It might be easier now. It might not. But Trinity had already decided she wasn't going to try and overpower Radiance. She was going to try something else. Against all her instincts and temptations, Trinity held back. She let her shimmer flow into Radiance, but she kept herself from simply quashing every independent thought in her path. Instead, she tried to make her shimmer something gentle and warm. Something that Radiance might choose to let into the inner sanctum of her mind.

And she did.

Trinity took a deep, slow breath once Radiance's eyes turned purple, and she watched Radiance breathe in rhythm with her. Even though time was of

the essence, Trinity couldn't help but take it slow. It felt right. This was a new feeling for her. It was something like the feeling of completing a circuit and watching a light come on. It was intimate, every bit as intimate as her mind control usually was. But it was peaceful, not forceful.

It felt good.

As encouraging a revelation as that was, Trinity knew there was still much, much more to do. This wasn't victory yet. She focused, trying to bring every bit of her concentration to bear on Radiance's thoughts. Not to dominate them, but to understand them. To know how they felt and how they moved. Trinity felt like faint wisps of innumerable thoughts and feelings were whispering to her from all sides. Immersing herself in someone's mind like that was indescribably strange, and the strangest part of all was how distinctly *wrong* everything was. Trinity couldn't put into words how she knew it, exactly, but she knew that Radiance's thoughts were unnaturally silent and still.

The only thing Trinity could do was follow her instincts. She tried to make her shimmer focused and small, small enough that she could direct it with the precision of a surgeon's scalpel. Then she started working her way through Radiance's thoughts one by one, doing nothing more than touching them with all the lightness she could muster so that they could take in some of her warmth.

It worked.

One by one, those still and silent thoughts started to light up. They started to move and connect, and as they did, they shared the warmth Trinity had given them. And, after nothing more than a few seconds, Radiance blinked rapidly a few times and looked up at Trinity with clear eyes.

“W-wha...” she said blearily and quietly. Radiance sounded like she was just waking up after a long, long sleep.

“Shush!” Trinity whispered. “Sorry, I know this is confusing, but there’s no time. Just, um, breathe. Or something.”

Radiance nodded. Her beautiful eyes were flecked with Trinity’s purple.

“Do you know what’s happening?” Trinity asked. Radiance nodded. Trinity immediately realized that a nod wasn’t very conclusive, but there was no time to quiz her. It was just another thing she’d have to take on faith. “OK, good. I have an idea, OK? And I have no idea if it’s a good one, but it’s better than nothing. Do you trust me?”

There was a pause. Then, Radiance nodded.

“OK.” Trinity took a deep breath. “I... I think I can beat Quinn. I just need to make sure she can’t stop me. Can you use your power?”

“I think so,” Radiance replied. She lifted a hand and after a moment, a golden chain appeared in her grip like she had plucked it out of thin air.

“Good.” The sight of the golden chain made Trinity shiver. “Now just make sure I can’t back down.”

Trinity gave that thought a small *push* into Radiance’s head. She knew Radiance might need the extra resolve, and there was too much on the line to leave it all up to chance. Then, she lifted one end of Radiance’s chain and wrapped it carefully around her own neck.

When the collar pulled tight and the ends merged, forging itself into a golden collar, Trinity let out a small gasp. The feeling was as electric as ever; the certain knowledge that she no longer held any power. It was all out of her hands now, for good or bad. If Radiance was harboring doubts, or if Quinn’s control ran deeper than she’d judged, it was all over.

But Radiance didn’t disappoint her.

The superhero rose to her feet. “Trinity, I’m giving you an order,” she said, in a voice that was quiet but firm, and infinitely reassuring. “Obey me: subdue Eleanor Quinn using your power. No matter what. No matter what she tells you to do, or how much it hurts.”

Trinity smiled. “You got it.”

She was more than happy to let Radiance’s mind control pull her upwards as she stood. The compulsion slipped over her mind like a familiar glove. It

was with her every step of the way as she walked over to where Quinn was standing.

“Huh?” Quinn turned as she sensed Trinity approaching. “What is this? Stop. Go sit back down.”

Trinity kept coming. A thrill raced down her spine as she realized she could disobey the billionaire. It was her command against Radiance’s, and Radiance’s was winning.

Quinn frowned, and her eyes flitted down to the golden, supernatural collar around Trinity’s neck. “What are you-”

Trinity grabbed her face and put her power on full blast.

It was just like before: the flood of power that, with Radiance’s urging, was strong enough to completely sweep aside Quinn’s mental resistance. A second or two later, the electric hum of Quinn’s suit started to ramp up in volume. Trinity could do nothing but brace herself for the pain to come.

“Won’t you just learn your lesson already?” Quinn growled. Her face was contorted into a labored snarl as she fought to keep hold of her anger in the face of Trinity’s mind control. “This shit stopped being hot like three ruses ago. Stop.”

Trinity ignored her. It was wonderful to be able to ignore her. Radiance’s

order was pure, and it guided her hand.

“Why... why won’t you do what I tell you?” The strength was slipping out of Quinn’s voice as she succumbed to Trinity’s shimmer. But before she went under completely, the electric shock hit.

Trinity grit her teeth so hard she thought her teeth were going to shatter. Her muscles started to spasm and go limp, and keeping them firm took a superhuman amount of willpower. It hurt, too. It hurt an unbelievable amount. The electricity hurt but trying to keep still hurt even more, and Trinity was seized with the manic conviction that it would have been better and easier if she could have flopped to the ground, thrashed about, and screamed until her lungs ached. She wished that her pride, or her love, or even her spite were strong enough to keep her standing, but they weren’t. The only thing keeping her standing was Radiance. Through all the pain, she could feel that chain binding tight around her neck. All Trinity had to do was trust in that, and trusting Radiance was the easiest thing in the world.

It even gave her the strength to smile and spit one last uneven retort as Quinn’s eyes turned purple. “We win.”

And just like that, it was over. At long last, Trinity could collapse to the ground.

The next thing she knew, she was being swept up in big, strong arms. Trinity made herself open her eyes. It was Radiance. The look of concern on

the superhero's face melted away once she saw that Trinity was conscious. Trinity was suddenly and forcefully reminded that she'd said she was in love with Radiance. She started praying Radiance didn't remember.

"What do we do now?" Radiance asked mercifully.

Trinity blinked. "You're asking me?" Radiance shrugged. Trinity squealed and clung to her a little tighter. "Uh... what do you normally do when you catch the bad guy?"

"Take them to the cops," Radiance replied. "That's not gonna work. She's got the justice system in her pockets."

"Figures." Trinity sighed.

"Let's just get out of here?" Radiance suggested.

A thought came to Trinity. "Wait," she said, as Radiance was just turning towards the door that led out to the helipad. "Let's go separately. We'll meet back at your place. You leave first - out the front door, like a normal person. You're famous. It'll attract attention and make it easier for me to slip out. I'll stick around for just a few minutes. To... to cover our tracks a little.

"Sounds good." Radiance nodded and set Trinity down on her feet. She started to walk towards what Trinity presumed to be the exit, but then paused and glanced back. "Shimmer, if I thought you were planning some kind of

impulsive, petty revenge against Quinn right now..."

Trinity grinned sheepishly.

"I wouldn't want to know about it," Radiance finished, and stepped out the door.

A delicious shiver raced down Trinity's spine. It was a sensation she knew well, even if she hadn't felt it for some time. It was the tell-tale sign that she was about to get away with something horrendous.

She walked back over to the still, hypnotized Eleanor Quinn, and placed a hand on her cheek. Purple shimmer pulsed from her fingertips.

"Hey, Ellie. Listen to me..."

"Ma'am, I... uh... I mean, Ms. Quinn, I need you to open this door for me. We received a call."

Officer Adella Lawson found her heart beating fast as she knocked on the

door to Eleanor Quinn's penthouse suite. She was still a relatively new recruit, but in her short time as an FCPD beat cop, she'd already answered more than enough domestics to make them routine. She'd joined up to try and do some good, but she was starting to feel like her job was more about babysitting drunk, belligerent office managers while the superheroes did all the real work.

This time was different, though. She'd never expected that she'd find herself knocking on the door of the richest woman in the city. Officer Lawson wasn't quite sure how she should act. In theory, Eleanor Quinn was just another civilian, but in practice, she knew that all her superiors on the force were cloyingly eager to keep her happy. Frankly, it was strange that she'd been called up here at all. She'd have expected Eleanor Quinn to private security, or a direct hotline to the Peregrine, or something.

"Ms. Quinn?" Officer Lawson said loudly, knocking again. "Could you please--"

Abruptly, the door opened. Officer Lawson's jaw dropped. Whatever she'd been expecting, it wasn't this.

Eleanor Quinn was standing before her, completely naked. A big smile was on her face and she was wearing the most whorish makeup imaginable, and her eyes were a strange shade of purple. Were those color contacts?

"Hey, officer!" Quinn said, in a ditzy, bubbly voice that didn't suit her one bit. Officer Lawson had to fight to look her in the eyes instead of staring at her

amazing, remarkably athletic body. "Come on in!"

With a giggle, she grabbed onto Officer Lawson's shirt and pulled her inside. Officer Lawson didn't resist. She had no idea what to do. She'd been prepared for drunk, but she'd seen drunk. This wasn't it.

"Ma'am," she began, fighting to remain professional, "we got a call about some kind of disturbance. Could you tell me what's been happening?"

The billionaire giggled again. "Oh, forget about that! I just wanted them to send over someone young and cute. You're, like, totally perfect."

Officer Lawson felt herself blush. She was glad her partner wasn't here to see it. Cute? Eleanor Quinn thought she was cute. "Uh... that's... um... c-can I help you with something?"

"I bet you can," Quinn purred. Without warning, she sank to her knees and started pawing at the front of Officer Lawson's slacks. When the beat cop moved to fend her off, she pouted. "C'mon, officer! I just wanna, like, show some appreciation." She giggled yet again, then put her hand to her mouth, stuck her tongue out, and stuck up her index and middle fingers on either side of her tongue in a lewd, suggestive V. "I'm, like, soooooo thirsty."

Officer Lawson felt like she was about to pass out. She wasn't sure if she was about to make the worst mistake of her career, or the best. But if this was how an eccentric billionaire wanted to blow off steam, who was she to argue?

“Well...” Officer Lawson said, a roguish smile dawning on her face. “The dispatcher *did* tell me to do whatever you wanted...”

Quinn let out a little cheer as the beat cop unbuckled her belt and unzipped her pants, and moments later, her ditzy giggles were muffled as she eagerly buried her face in Officer Lawson’s cunt.

Chapter 21

“So,” Trinity asked reluctantly, “what happens now?”

She didn’t want to ask, she really didn’t, but the question had been swelling and swelling inside her, and she was just about ready to burst. She and Radiance had been hunkered down in her safe house for two days now. They’d agreed it was best if they stayed off the streets for a little while; the smart move was to wait and see exactly what Quinn had planned for them. The billionaire was going to retaliate. Trinity was certain of that. Someone like her didn’t just let things go. The bimbo treatment Trinity had hit her with wasn’t going to last more than a day or so without further reinforcement, given how quickly she’d had to work. Conversely, Radiance wasn’t safe from Quinn’s control. Not yet. You couldn’t heal from something like that overnight, not even with Trinity’s help.

She and Radiance had a few things going for them, though. Firstly, now that Radiance knew what was going on, Quinn needed to worry about getting her head punched off before she could speak a single word. And secondly, judging from what Quinn had said, things weren’t going too hot with her whole Future City domination scheme. ‘Over-leveraged’ was the word she’d used. Maybe, with a little luck, it would all unravel and she’d run into the bad kind of

trouble with her ominous backers.

Admittedly, Trinity wasn't going to hold her breath on that. Rich people always seemed to enjoy a nice, soft landing no matter how hard they fell.

"What happens now?" Radiance repeated. She was sitting on the bed, next to Trinity. "I've been giving that a lot of thought. And I think I have an answer, even if it feels a little crazy."

Trinity turned towards her. "Yeah?"

The two of them had been doing plenty of talking over the past couple of days, mostly for want of anything more interesting to do. Trinity felt amazingly comfortable in the superhero's presence. More so than she ever had with anyone, really. However, they had studiously avoided saying much in detail about everything that had happened in Quinn's penthouse. It was a little too much and too messy - for both of them, Trinity thought. Fortunately, even when they weren't talking, the silences were pleasant.

"I'm going to go vigilante," Radiance announced. "Maybe I'll still be Radiance. Maybe I'll get a new name and a new suit. Not sure yet. But I know I can't go on like nothing's happened. From now on, no cops, no superhero teams, and no doing anyone else's bidding. I can do more good that way."

"Wow," Trinity replied, with a raised eyebrow. Heroes did turn vigilante from time to time, which put them in all kinds of dicey territory as far as their

relationship with the law was concerned. They usually didn't last long, one way or another. Radiance was different, though. No one on her level had ever even tried it. "That would've been my last guess. I actually wondered if you were just going to walk away from it all."

Radiance shook her head. "I couldn't. Saving people, beating up bad guys - this is who I am. For better or for worse. It's what I always wanted to do. And now, I can do it with a clean conscience."

Trinity nodded. "That makes a lot of sense. I... I honestly really admire it."

"Well, you deserve some of the credit." Radiance smiled ruefully at her. "I've been turning over some of what you've said to me. You weren't wrong about me losing touch with what it's like down in the streets. I never thought..." She paused for a moment, thinking. "I was never worried about that. I came from the same poor neighborhood as you. I was always the gifted kid. I wanted to make people proud. To make a difference. I thought if I was the best of the best, then things would change for the better. As it turned out, I was just doing Eleanor Quinn's dirty work."

Trinity shifted in her seat. She felt more than a little embarrassed about all the abuse she'd hurled in Radiance's direction, knowing what she did now.

"How about you?" Radiance asked. "What's next for you?"

"Oh boy." Trinity sighed. "Well, I was planning on leaving town. Figured I

could start over somewhere new. But with how things have turned out, there's no money. So, uh, your guess is as good as mine, honestly. Maybe I'll give it a shot anyway. Sticking around in Future City doesn't seem particularly smart. But starting over isn't so easy when you're flat broke. So... maybe I'm just going back to the same old petty villain routine." She shrugged. "I don't know."

Saying that out loud sounded all the less impressive for Radiance's grand resolution. There was no judgment in the superhero's eyes when she looked at Trinity, though.

"Would you be interested in a partnership?" she asked.

"A partnership?" Trinity barked a laugh. "You breaking bad too, Radiance?"

Radiance scoffed good-naturedly. "No, no. I meant as a vigilante."

Even though she wasn't drinking anything, Trinity choked and did a kind of spit-take. "Me? A vigilante? Are you fucking kidding?" Radiance patted her back. Once she'd stopped spluttering, Trinity added: "C'mon. Where's the money in that?"

"I couldn't tell you," Radiance admitted. "But you'd be good at it. *We'd* be good at it."

Trinity thought it wasn't fair at all how weak her legs suddenly felt upon hearing that. "Alright, that's it," she said. "I'm hauling your ass to a therapist."

You've still got a few screws loose."

Radiance didn't rise to it. "I'm serious," she insisted. "You know the city better than anymore. You know what's hurting people - what's actually hurting people. You can handle yourself, and you're quick on your feet. You can keep me grounded and watch my back. Plus, you know how dangerous so-called superheroes can truly be. I'm sure Quinn won't go down without a fight. She'll try something sooner or later. You know how she operates, and you can get the satisfaction of ruining her day all over again. Why not?"

"You're crazy." Trinity shook her head and tried not to think about it. "I'm not the hero type. Anyone can see that."

"Then you're, what, the villain type?" Radiance raised an eyebrow. "Do we believe in villain types now?"

Trinity rolled her eyes. "I'm the self-interested type. Like most people."

"The self-interested type, huh?" Radiance seemed to chew that over for a moment. "Well, that still works. There's more to self-interest than just money, right? And I think there's a pretty major perk to being a vigilante that you're simply not considering."

"Is that so?" Now it was Trinity's turn to scoff. "And what would that be?"

At that moment, Radiance did something truly unfair. She adopted a

devastating, lop-sided smile, and showed Trinity big, round, sparking eyes as she delivered a stupidly confident and ruinously well-chosen: “you’d get to be my by side every day.”

That was it for Trinity. It was all over. She completely short-circuited. There was absolutely nothing she could think of to say in reply, and the series of looks that passed over her face made it painfully clear exactly what was going on in her head (nothing) and her heart (everything). Radiance’s eyes sparkled just a little brighter, and there was no doubt that she was thinking about what Trinity had said about her whilst under Eleanor Quinn’s hypnotic influence.

“That’s... man, c’mon,” Trinity eventually managed in a distinctly strained voice. “You can’t just throw that at me. Not like that.”

“No?” Radiance wasn’t through having fun. “I figured it had been long enough. You deserve an answer to that bold, heartwarming confession from the other night.”

Trinity’s cheeks were burning so hot she thought she was going to explode. “T-that wasn’t... c’mon...”

“It was very romantic!” Radiance was all guileless, heroic smiles that were only undermined by the mirth in her eyes. “It takes a lot of courage to just throw out all your feelings like that. To a girl you’ve only known for a couple of days, too. You sure move fast, huh?”

“Not this.” Trinity covered her face. “Anything but this.”

“I was a little confused, though,” Radiance added, content to twist the knife just a little further. “What part of our relationship made you catch feelings? Was it the spanking? The degradation? Was it when I tied you up with a chain that made you do whatever you’re told? It’s important to get an idea of these things. Compatibility, y’know?”

“OK hold the fuck up!” Trinity lifted her face out of her hands as she broke in, in a great huff. “I don’t have to take this from you! You... you, Miss ‘Cares About Me!’”

Radiance tilted her head and looked like she was about to burst out laughing.

“T-that was embarrassing!” Trinity insisted defensively. “And... wait, you said that first, too! Why aren’t you the one blushing?”

“What’s there for me to be embarrassed about?” Radiance made her face look serious. “I do care about you.”

Trinity was so flustered she could barely speak. This wasn’t fair. How could she just say that like that? “Y-you went down on me!” she complained. “You ate me out!”

“Sure did,” Radiance replied happily. “It was great, circumstances

notwithstanding. I've gotta say though, it was a pretty bold move of you to tell a girl you love her and then spread your legs before you've even heard what she had to say in response. Is that a signature Shimmer supervillain power play?"

Trinity's face went back into her hands. It was a crushing defeat. Radiance was invincible. At this point, nothing Trinity said would sound like anything more than an excuse. She'd never felt so completely, disarmingly tongue-tied by another woman. And the worst part was that she was more than a little turned on by it. Trinity was shocked by how far she'd fallen in such a short amount of time. A week ago, she'd have laughed at the thought that she could ever become so hopelessly undignified. Perhaps the saying was true: you either died a top, or lived long enough to see yourself become a bottom.

She shuddered.

In the end, mercy came when Radiance let out a long sigh and deflated slightly. "What am I doing?" she groaned.

Trinity looked up at her and blinked. "Uh... I mean, look, if you're having second thoughts about the whole 'partner' thing-"

"No!" Radiance interrupted urgently. "No. No way. I'm just frustrated, that's all. With myself. Gotta start doing things a little differently from now on, right?"

“What are you talking about?”

Radiance smiled ruefully. “I have a girl I care about right here, and instead of just telling her how I feel, I’m dancing around it and trying to make her blush so I can avoid actually saying it. You know?”

“Oh.” Trinity’s blush was renewed, but this time the heat felt different.

“Let me try this again.” Radiance looked at Trinity evenly. “I like you, Trinity. I’m not exactly sure what that means yet, but I want to stick together with you. I want to be a vigilante and I want you to be by my side. Not just because you’d be good at it, but because I like you.”

This was even more unfair than the teasing, Trinity decided. Completely and monstrously unfair. So unfair, she was too stunned to hide her face and stop Radiance from seeing the stupid, goofy smile she was wearing. To her immense credit, though, Radiance didn’t make anything of it. She just waited.

“Damn it,” Trinity muttered, fighting to keep her voice even. “I can’t exactly say ‘no’ when you ask like that, can I?”

“You can, you know,” Radiance reminded her. “You can say whatever you want. Including ‘no.’”

“Right.” Trinity could tell what Radiance wanted from her. It was only right that she give it, given the effort Radiance was making. “OK. Well, I’m gonna say

‘yes’. I’ll be your partner. Sidekick. Whatever you want to call it. Wait, no, not ‘sidekick’. That’s way too-”

Trinity shut up. The pure, happy smile that came to Radiance’s face was a joy to look upon, and made her want to stop talking and simply bask in the moment. A few seconds later, Radiance reached for Trinity and pulled her into a huge hug that threatened to squeeze the life out of Trinity. She didn’t mind. Radiance’s hugs felt pretty great. As Radiance squeezed her, she reflected on how truly content with her own decision she felt. She had barely taken more than a moment to consider it, but she knew it was right. She was going to stay here. With Radiance.

There was only one niggling question left. “So... you said you don’t know exactly what your feelings about me mean,” Trinity said as they broke off the hug. Her words were stilted and hesitant. She had always been bad at the sappy stuff. “And that’s, like, fine. Obviously. But I figured, maybe, uh, we should get on the same page about what we wanna do with that?”

“Right. That’s a good idea.” Trinity was a little gratified to see that Radiance was blushing too. “I... did have one idea about that.”

“Yeah?” Trinity prompted.

“I...” Suddenly Radiance’s blush deepened, and she looked deeply, deeply embarrassed. That only helped to arouse Trinity’s curiosity. “I think there’s something we both enjoy. And that we could keep trying together, maybe. If

you wanted.”

Trinity tilted her head to one side.

“This.” With a small flourish, Radiance pulled her supernatural, golden chain out of thin air. The sight of it still made Trinity shiver as it gleamed with a faint, unearthly light. That strange glow conjured up visceral memories of exactly how it felt wrapped around her neck.

Wait. What was Radiance proposing exactly?

“Not just that,” Radiance added quickly, as she caught the look of faint alarm on Trinity’s face. “Your thing too, if that’s what you want. I... I do, if you do.”

Trinity must still have been looking truly confused, because after waiting for a reply for a few seconds, Radiance hastened to explain even further.

“I just think we’re both that kind of girl,” Radiance said. “Kinky, or twisted, or perverted, or whatever you want to call it. Maybe I’m just crazy, but I think you got something out of it. I know I did. On, uh, both ends. So I was thinking that instead of denying it, we should just enjoy it.” She flashed a nervous smile. “I think we could get up to a lot of pretty wild stuff together.”

Trinity had no doubts about that, but she was still looking at Radiance warily. “You did those things to me because of Eleanor Quinn. She told me that.

Her mind control, it's been destabilizing you. For a long time, probably. And you didn't even know what was happening. I'm sure that didn't help. That stuff wasn't you, Violet."

Radiance shook her head adamantly. "I'd like to think that, Trinity. I really would. It would be nice and neat. But I don't think that's true. I've always had urges, and I've definitely always been kinky. The reason I did those things to you was because deep down, on some level, I wanted to. Quinn isn't responsible for that. I am. I'm responsible for all of it. Whatever she did to me, I can't let myself off the hook. That's part of why I want to do this. I want to figure myself out, not just hide. And..."

"And?" Trinity's heart was starting to pound.

"And if you do want this, and if someone is going to make you feel good that way, I want it to be me," Radiance finished quietly.

Trinity was left newly speechless. She'd wondered about some of it, of course. But this was more than she would ever have dared to imagine.

"Oh, god," Radiance whispered. Trinity abruptly realized that she was taking her silence for revulsion. "I knew I shouldn't have gone there, I should never have-"

"No, no!" Trinity interrupted quickly. "I... I want it too."

Radiance's eyes flew wide. "You do."

"Yeah." Trinity took a deep breath. "Yeah. Yes."

Radiance looked stunned. It was obvious that she had no idea what to say or do next.

Trinity looked down to one side, and let out an awkward half-giggle. "Look, to be totally honest I've been going a little crazy just being here and thinking about it."

"Wow." Radiance's composure was slowly returning to her. A faint smirk came to her face. "Good to know."

It was a little lucky for Trinity that she physically couldn't blush anymore. A crazy idea had just popped into her head. "Do you want to make it official right now?"

Radiance's brow furrowed. "Official?"

Trinity almost didn't do it. She was this close to holding back and blowing it off as some dumb joke. Once, that was exactly what she would have done. But after the events of the past few days, that seemed oddly pointless. So, she went with her heart instead. Trinity slipped off the edge of Radiance's bed and composed herself into a neat, submissive, kneeling position in front of the superhero.

It was nice to see Radiance truly speechless, for once.

Placing her hands on her knees, palms turned upwards, Trinity straightened her spine and raised her head, pointedly extending her bared neck up towards Radiance.

“I’m ready,” she prompted.

It took Radiance a few moments to overcome her sheer disbelief, but once she did she knew exactly what to do. She took it slow, though, savoring the moment as she carefully placed her golden collar around Trinity’s neck. Trinity gasped as she felt it form into a single, unbroken loop, and her body thrummed with pleasure when she saw Radiance fasten the other end around her own wrist.

Nothing was forcing them this time. It was simply where each of them wanted to be. They were connected, and Trinity was placing herself in Radiance’s hands. She knew she could trust her with that. Her conviction only grew as Radiance used the chain to pull Trinity in for a kiss. This was where they both belonged

Together, shackled.

Credits

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