



DEN

OF

VIPERS

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CHAPTER ONE



DIESEL

“Y

ou understand what that means, don't you, Rob?” Ryder murmurs as he straightens his suit, not that it was even wrinkled in the first place. Fucker always dresses like he's ready to walk a runway. Though the cold calculation in his gaze lets you know he's not just a pretty face. I told him once I could scar his face for him, it might make others take him more seriously. I don't know why he said no.

I, on the other hand, am covered in Rob's blood, so is Garrett for that matter. His scarred, tatted up knuckles bleed from the punches he delivered to our unhappy host. Munching on the guy's crisps, I watch in glee as Garrett delivers another brutal blow before stepping back. There's a reason they call him Mad Dog in the ring—you don't even see the big bastard coming. I'd know, I've fought him a couple of times. They were good times, even if I did break some bones.

Blinking, I look back at the man in the chair opposite Ryder. Rob's eye is ballooned shut, his lip split and cheek already bruising. And those are only the wounds you can see. I know there are a few blisters forming under his shirt from where Ryder let me have some fun.

Kenzo is leaning against the wall opposite me, his dice rolling between his fingers like always. His face, similar to Ryder's, is locked in a death stare with the man, waiting for something interesting to happen. It was Kenzo who brought this man to our attention, after all. But Rob looks only to Ryder—good. Let him think Ryder is the only one in charge, we like to keep it that way. To have him as

the face of our...company.

I snort at that, fucking company. We do have a few legit businesses, not that I have anything to do with them. I was deemed too insane to deal with employees after I burned one of their eyes out for calling me scum.

“Rob, pay attention, I don’t like to repeat myself,” Ryder snaps, so Garrett grabs Rob’s greying, short hair and yanks his head back, a blade appearing in his hand, which he presses to the shaking man’s throat. Sweat drips down his face as he cries out, and I wonder if Ryder will let me kill him.

It’s been a whole two days since I got to kill someone, and I’m getting restless.

“Yes, yes, I understand, take her!” he screams.

What a prick. The loser would sell his own daughter to cover his debt to us. I suppose when you don’t have the money to pay, and the only other option is to take it from your flesh...you become real easy on what you’re willing to do.

This city is ours, he would never escape us. He knows that, it’s written in the defeat in his brown eyes. I wonder if his daughter is better looking than him, either way, she’ll be ours now. We normally don’t deal in flesh, well, not live flesh, but beggars can’t be choosers.

A debt is a debt, and it has to be paid or others will start to think we’re going soft.

Ryder leans back, a smirk curling up his pretty boy lips. Rolling my eyes, I step forward from the dark, and that’s when Rob starts to cry. He knows what I am—death. Ryder might be the face, Garret might be the enforcer, the muscle, and Kenzo the dealer...but me?

I’m the fucking Grim Reaper.

“Have her!” he screams, thrashing in Garrett’s grip, whose face tightens in disgust. Me? I laugh.

Leaning down, I get into his face, letting him see the madness in my gaze. My fingers itch to grab my lighter, to burn his house down with him in it until I hear his screams. Fuck, I can almost taste the fear, feel the flames licking me— my cock hardens in my trousers at the image.

“Tell me, when I burn her, will you care or not?” I laugh.

Garrett grins, flashing perfectly white teeth. The bastard is almost as crazy as I am, probably from one too many blows to his massive head. I smirk at him. “I wonder if she bleeds as pretty?”

“Enough,” Ryder snaps, so I move away, doing as I’m told. “Where is she?”

“She-she owns a bar on the south side of the city, Roxers.” He quivers, crying like a pussy. Big, fat tears drip down his face.

I wonder if she’ll cry. It makes it sweeter when they do. I realise then I’m

rubbing my cock through my jeans, and Kenzo is glaring at me, so I stop with a wink.

“Rob, if we aren’t satisfied with her as payment, we’ll be back, you can bet on that,” Kenzo adds decisively, ending this deal. He knows the look on my face.

I want blood.

“Will you kill her?” Rob sobs pathetically.

“Do you care?” Ryder counters, arching an eyebrow at the man. “You just sold your daughter to cover your debt without even trying to stop us.”

“I-I’m a shit father, but she deserves better than you monsters,” he snarls, showing the first bit of balls I’ve seen from him.

“Hear that, Ry? We’re monsters,” I boom, laughing so hard I smack my jeans. “I told you that suit ain’t fooling anyone, man.”

Like usual, Ryder ignores my manic outbursts. “We’ll do whatever we want to her. Fuck her. Torture her. Beat her. Kill her. I just wanted you to know that,” Ryder remarks as he stands, buttoning his blue suit as he does so. Habitually, he swipes back his perfect hair and aims a business-like smile at Rob.

“We will be in touch.” He turns and starts to walk away.

Kenzo pushes off the wall, pocketing his dice. “Don’t be a stranger at the tables.”

I laugh harder as Garrett releases Rob’s neck, tapping his cheek with the blade, all friendly like. Me? I get in the man’s face again, wanting him to look into the eyes of the man who’s going to wreck his daughter. When I’m done with her, there won’t even be enough to bury. “I’m going to make her scream, I might even record it for you.”

“Diesel,” Ryder calls from the doorway of the shitty little two-story house we’re in.

Leaning forward, I press my lips near the man’s ear. “I’ll let you know if she comes before or after I slice her neck,” I whisper, before lunging forward and biting off his earlobe.

He screams as I howl with laughter, spitting the flesh and blood across his chest as I turn to leave, whistling to myself as the copper tang fills my mouth and drips down my chin.

“You’re a crazy bastard,” Garrett grumbles.

“You too, brother, now let’s go get our new toy!” I declare, suddenly in a good mood with the prospect of torture on the horizon.

Rob should have known better, the whole city should... When you fuck with Vipers, you get fangs.

That poor little girl has no idea what’s coming her way...

CHAPTER TWO



ROXY

“**A**right, alright, I get it. You’re the prettiest butterfly in the butterfly farm.” I nod seriously as I grip Henry’s shoulder and press him down, helping him into the cab. “See you tomorrow, Henry. Try not to choke on your own vomit.” I chuckle as I slam the door shut. Heading to the front, I pass the driver some money and tell him Henry’s address.

As a regular, he’s here every night. I asked him once why he drank. Honestly, I didn’t expect an answer. The poor bastard’s daughter died a few years back. Murdered. Ever since, he drowns his sorrows, and I make sure he gets home okay. He might be a drunk, but I have a soft spot for him. I can see the pain in his eyes, and any father who cares that much about his daughter is a good man. But maybe that’s my own daddy complex talking.

Turning back to my bar, I grin at the exterior. She ain’t much to look at, but she’s all mine. “Roxers,” written in bright red LED letters, hangs above the door which has seen better days. She’s rundown for sure, a dive, but she’s one hell of a place to drink. The outside looks like an old cabin of some kind. Made from wood and mismatched brick. She has a porch wrapped all the way around where the patrons all smoke, with bike spaces in front of her. The two swinging doors are unlocked at the moment, and the filthy windows leave you unable to look inside.

We get all types here—truckers, bikers, criminals. Everyone is welcome. There’s only one rule—don’t break the fucking furniture. It’s an old rule, put into place before I even owned it, I just carried on the tradition. The sandy

parking lot is empty, apart from my beat-up muscle car that I won in a bet, so I head back inside, flicking off the sign as I go so everyone knows we're closed.

It's early, almost time for the sun to come up. I guess owning a bar makes me a nocturnal creature, I did always prefer the night and all the fun that comes with it. Sighing, I brush back my silver hair and put it in a quick ponytail as I start to close up. I sent Travis home earlier, his grandma is sick and needed his help, so clean up is on me now. Picking up one of the mismatched chairs, I lay it on the table before collecting the glasses, as many as I can.

I head towards the back, past the pool tables and dartboards, and march up the stairs to the left. I push open the kitchen door with my hip and rinse the glasses before running them through the washer. Flicking off the kitchen light, I walk back into the bar area to mop the floor, not that it stops it from being a sticky mess you wouldn't want to walk on with bare feet, but it's a habit.

To my left is the old bar, the top made from beer tops set in resin, a gift. It's clear of bottles at the moment, the differing stools empty before it. The old, wooden shelves hold every type of liquor you can imagine and the kegs waiting to be filled.

I already sorted the bar and cash register while Henry was pretending to be a butterfly, so not much more to do now before I can collapse into bed. Fuck, I need to find a new bartender. It's hard finding one with experience who will last here though. They either speak too freely or fall in with the bad crowd. Yeah, you can't look on a job website for this one, folks.

The last one we had was sent to jail for murder. Yeah, that's the kind of place it is. Although, I gotta say, I miss the old bastard, he played a mean hand of poker. I stop when I pass the door, and it swings shut behind me.

There, in my bar, are four massive men. Tattoos cover their knuckles and necks, one even has his head shaved. Unsavoury sorts, of course, but that ain't different from the usual around here. Their clothing is all black, and I narrow my eyes, assessing them quickly. "We're closed," I tell them, hoping they will take a hint.

Fucking sloppy, I didn't lock the door. That's what pulling pints and breaking up fights for fourteen days straight will do to you. I'm in desperate need of a day off, and now these assholes waltz in here like they own the joint.

One cracks his knuckles as they all smirk at me. If they think that will scare me, they should think again. I drink beer with men who would make these guys piss themselves, and I usually drink them under the table.

Everyone knows Roxers, and everyone knows me...and not to fuck with me. There's a reason they all call me Swinger, and it ain't 'cause I go to sex parties. Sliding closer to the bar, I slip my hand behind it, connecting with the smooth

wood of my trusty bat, the bitch smacker. “I said we’re closed. Better get out, boys.”

“Or what?” one of them challenges as he steps forward. The fucker has a scar right across his eyelid. “Going to cry for help?” He laughs, and the others join in.

Rolling my eyes, I pull out my bat and rest it on my shoulder. “No, I’ll break your fucking kneecaps and toss you outside like the garbage you are. Now, one more warning—we’re closed.”

They share looks again. “Is this broad serious?”

“Broad?” I snap, low and deadly as I step closer. “Did you just call me a broad?”

They ignore me, of course, so I palm my bat. That prick gets it first. Ain’t nobody insulting me in my own bar, that’s just plain rude.

Heading their way while they’re still arguing about how best to grab me, I swing, letting the full force of the bat hit the asshole’s knees. He crumples to the floor, a scream erupting from his throat as I smirk down at him from my five foot six frame—well, five foot nine with my biker boots. “Want to call me a broad again?”

“Fucking get her!” he wheezes, so I kick him in the balls, making him fall back with a cry as I turn to face the others, ducking their grabbing hands.

Swinging my bat, I hit one of them right in the junk, and he goes down hard, so I bring up my knee and smash it into his nose, hearing the crack as it bursts like a peach. Fuck, now there’s blood on my floor. I just mopped!

Angry now, I swing like a woman possessed as the other two duck and dive, trying to stay out of my path. One of them falls onto a stool, smashing it beneath his gigantic frame. I freeze, my eyes narrowing dangerously, and he scampers backwards.

“Did you just break my stool?” I seethe.

He gulps as I fling myself at him with a *Braveheart* worthy war cry. I smack him with the bat, making him grunt. He punches his fist out as I kneel down to get his face. It connects with my jaw, and my head jerks to the side, blood filling my mouth.

Deadly fury fills me.

Turning back slowly, I glare down at him and he knows he fucked up. Just then, arms come around me from behind, hoisting me to my feet. Smashing my head back, I connect with the guy’s chin, stomping on his foot as I elbow his junk and slip out of his hold while he grunts in pain.

Thank you very much, *Miss Congeniality*.

Lining up my bat, I swing, hitting him square in the face. He actually flies

backwards from the force, landing hard on the floor and almost shaking the building. He stays down. One to go. I turn back to the guy who broke my stool. He's just getting to his feet, so I kick them out from under him, sweeping my leg as I bring my bat down across his spine.

He slumps forward, so I smash it down on the back of his head. Whistling, I look around to see the first guy struggling to his feet, so I throw my bat at him, and it does as its name suggests—hits the bitch. He's out cold.

Stomping through the mess and their bodies, I pick up my bat and wipe it on his shirt before putting it on a nearby table. Propping my hands on my hips, I sigh at the sight before me. Now how the hell do I get them out?

Resigned, I grab one of their collars and start to tug, but he's a big bastard, so I pick one of the smaller guys first. Bending, I hoist my hands under his shoulders and grunt as I yank him towards the door.

The door that's swinging open.

I lift my head, blowing my hair from my face, and drop the guy I'm trying to drag to the door. Travis stands there, open-mouthed. He's still in this black Roxers shirt, which is tucked into blue jeans, and boots, his deceptively thin frame shivering from the cold. He flips his blue hair from his face, his green eyes peering at me. "Jesus, Roxy, what the fuck happened?"

"That one called me a broad, that one broke the furniture, I didn't like the other two's faces." I shrug, wiping away the sweat on my brow with my arm. "Whatcha doing here?"

"Forgot my key," he murmurs, looking at my handiwork.

"Good, you can help me toss these assholes outside." I grin, and he shakes his head.

"Never a dull day with you, babe." He drops his bag, though, and heads my way. With his help, it only takes me five minutes to toss them into the alley out back. Dusting off my hands, I head back inside, making sure to lock the door this time as I dial the local police. I'm going to tell them what happened and where the guys are, no doubt they will get spooked at the sirens and run...if they wake up.

Travis lifts his finger, showing me his keys as I lean against the bar. "You going to be okay?" he mouths.

I nod and wave him away as someone finally answers, then I relay the information before hanging up, ignoring the questions they sputter at me. "Sure thing, tell your grandma I said hi. I'm going to shower and sleep."

"See you tomorrow, babe." He snorts as he leaves.

I lock up behind him, putting the deadbolts and chains in place before heading past the bar and turning off the lights. I activate the alarm and head

down the corridor, past the office and toilets, and up the stairs at the back to my place above the bar, where I have lived since I was seventeen.

I really need a day off.

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