

The Teller Trilogy: Extended Edition

Sterling Emmal



To Peri Penman

The Teller:

Book One

“You know how to kill a bitch, right,” Remmel asked

looking at his assistant, Jason, who stood next to him.

“Ya just stab her right,” Jason replied with an evil glint in his eyes, “Ya just hold her down. Dig the fucking knife right into her stupid heart, and watch the blood go everywhere.”

Remmel put his face in his palm. Out of all his assistants, this one was by far the dumbest and, shockingly, the only one he hadn’t dismembered yet. “No, you idiot,” he said through gritted teeth, “you want her to suffer.”

“But that does cause a shit ton of suffering,” Jason said, “I mean...”

“Oh my God shut up,” Remmel said personifying his frustrations in the tone of his now elevated voice.

“Then how you gonna do it,” Jason asked, clearly not getting the hint.

“You’ll see when they bring the next one in,” Remmel replied as he regained his composure.

Almost as if on cue, the sound of a woman screaming began echoing through the long darkened hallway. It was obvious that she was fighting Remmel’s sociopathic guards quite hard, but the sheer strength of Remmel’s loyal followers and their extremely high pain tolerance levels outmatched the woman’s hopeless struggles. As they drew nearer Remmel could hear the desperate pleas of the woman.

“Let me go,” She shrieked, knowing her emanating fate drew closer, “I’ve got children. I’ve got a family. Please.”

Rommel enjoyed hearing the desperate cries of mercy that came out of his victims mouths as they were dragged to the place of their demise. It always entertained him, yet not as much as the extreme suffering that he caused during the killing process. As he listened to his latest target being dragged closer and closer to his death chamber, Rommel cracked a prideful smile.

The guards had reached the door. Rommel could tell because the woman's pleas were at the optimal level of perfection. Without hesitation he walked over and casually opened the door allowing the guards to drag her in with ease. It was clear that they were injured by her struggles but Rommel didn't really care. All he could focus on the stunning brown haired woman whom he had admired from afar for quite some time now. Just as he did for all of his victims, Rommel had done extensive research on her.

The woman in front of him was a single mother of two, that worked a few full time jobs just to keep food on her family's table. It was that fight and ambition that would make her execution much more entertaining to him. He always felt someone with passion would struggle till the last drop of life left her body.

"Put her in the restraints," Rommel ordered the guards, "Then leave us."

"This is gonna be fun," Jason said in a snarky manner.

"Get out," Rommel replied, annoyed if anything at his assistant.

"But." Jason said stupidly attempting to argue with his superior.

"Get the fuck out," Rommel snarled.

Knowing how dangerous his boss could get, the young man quickly walked out of the room without another word.

The guards hung woman in the center of the room with her hands chained to the ceiling, and her legs chained exactly twelve and a half inches off the floor. Rommel was quite particular about that. As she

hung in this extremely painful position, she for the first time recognized Rimmel.

“Mr. Kell?” She said in complete disbelief.

Rimmel just walked behind her, running his hand down her spine. His touch seemed to bring chills to her body. “Listen,” he whispered in her ear, “this will all be over soon.”

“Please sir,” The woman said trembling, “I’ve done nothing to you. My children need me. Please have mercy. ”

“Don’t worry,” Rimmel said soothing but ominous voice, “I wouldn’t make them suffer without you.”

“What the fuck does that mean,” The woman said now allowing her emotion to switch from fear to anger.

“Let’s just say when I’m done with you, you’ll see them again,” Rimmel said. He was maliciously taunting her now.

“No,” The woman screamed out as she began to viciously fight the restraints.

“Oh, don’t worry,” Rimmel said running his fingers over her dark hair, “They didn’t suffer—not like you will.”

Rimmel had begun to lose interest after watching the woman thrashing around for at least three minutes screaming bloody profanities at him. “Alright dear,” He said gently running his hand down the side of her face, “It’s time to get started.” With that he walked out of the room leaving her to continue her futile attempt at escape.

Rimmel returned pushing a wheeled table. On it sat six twelve inch long spear-like needles, a knife, and a large syringe full of yellow liquid. At first he allowed the woman to look in horror at the utensils on the table. Then, after a moment, he picked up the syringe.

“As much as I enjoy watching you struggle,” Remmel said oh so calmly, “I need you to hold still.”

“No please,” The woman said, barely able to form her words as he walked towards her, “I’ll give you anything. Just let me go.”

“Shhhh darling,” Remmel said with an eerie calmness about him, “This drug acts like liquid paralysis. It’ll only last about ten minutes, but, I promise, it’ll take much longer for you die then that.” Remmel put his hand on her upper leg. “If you relax it hurts less,” he said putting the needle right up to her skin. He watched the woman tense up even more, and shut her stunning green eyes tightly.

“Have it your way,” he said removing his hand and stabbing the needle as far into the muscle as it would go.

She shrieked in pain.

“I haven’t even started yet,” Remmel said slowly pushing in the medication. When the syringe was about half empty Remmel could see the poison was already taking effect. “I think that will be sufficient for my purposes,” He said as he withdrew the needle from her leg.

“I can’t breathe,” She said hardly able to move her lips.

“I know sweetheart,” Remmel said, “that feeling goes away after a moment.”

His demeanor was calm almost comforting to the woman, yet she knew in mere moments she would be dead by his hand. With that thought tears began to fall down her face.

“I don’t want you to cry,” Remmel said gently wiping the tears from the woman’s face.

“Why,” She replied in a hoarse whisper, “don’t you like it.”

For some reason this comment caught Remmel off guard. He usually loved watching tears pour down his victim’s faces, yet not in

this strange case. This unusual reason made him hesitate for a moment. Just for that moment he considered letting her down. He could picture himself holding her and telling her everything would be okay. He couldn't understand the reasoning behind this thought. What he did know was that she would not reciprocate the same feeling to him. For another matter, he had already killed her two little brats, so in his mind he couldn't stop now. Pushing all pity aside Remmel picked up the knife.

"Your death will be painful," he said as if nothing had crossed his mind, "but before we start, I need to see what I am doing."

"Please have mercy," The woman whispered still having trouble speaking. Fear danced around her eyes like the last sparks from a dying fire.

"You honestly think I'm killing you with this," Remmel said quite amused, "No. That would just be too easy."

The woman tried to shut her eyes again, yet the drug he had given her truly prevented this. All she could do was watch in agony as Remmel slowly slid the knife under her professional style blouse. He made sure the blade faced away from her body. He didn't want any unnecessary cuts on his little trophy.

"What are you doing to me?" The woman asked half heartedly. It seemed as if she was slowly accepting her fate.

"You'll see," Remmel replied as he held the tip of the knife at the collar of her shirt exactly one centimeter from her neck.

He began to pull the blade of the excruciatingly sharp knife towards himself with just enough force to cut into the woman's blouse. Then in a quick swoop he pulled down cutting through the cloth, and exposing the top half of the woman's body to the ice cold air that filled the dingy room.

Though she couldn't move very well the woman's body began trembling uncontrollably. It was unclear to her if it was from the ice

cold air or the fact that her arms were forced to hold her entire body weight. “Please listen,” She begged, “even if it’s just for a second. Just hear me out.”

“All right darling,” Rimmel said so simplistically as he putting the knife back on the table, “you have my full attention.”

“I know that I’m going to die,” the woman said her voice was trembling now.

“I know that,” Rimmel said gently running his fingers down her side.

“Just get it over with,” The woman begged in a hoarse whisper, “Please. If you have any spark of humanity left in you, just get it over with.”

Rimmel played around with the thought. Stabbing the woman would assure her suffering would end much quicker. Rimmel thought that would be the ‘humane’ thing to do. On the other hand, if he used his usual method, it would take hours. He knew it met the definition of torture perfectly, yet it was just too entertaining for him to pass up. Without speaking Rimmel looked at the fearful woman, then at the table. It wouldn’t be fun if he just outright killed her. No, he had to make her suffer immensely, or else there would be no point.

“Please say something,” The shaken woman said realizing that Rimmel’s silence had a more frightening presence than the thought of death itself.

Rimmel cocked his head to the left looking into the woman’s petrified eyes, seeing her desire to die personified through them. In a way he had become quite disappointed with her. He wanted a fight not a surrender. “You know,” he said in a relaxed manner, “how about I let you down for a few minutes.”

Shock was bestowed upon the woman. All she could do was stare at Rimmel in disbelief.

“Would you like that,” Rimmel asked.

“Please,” She said, wanting nothing more than to lie down and allow herself to fall asleep. Hopeful that if she did this whole ordeal would turn out be a wretched nightmare.

“Please what,” Remmel asked, mocking her in a cold sarcastic tone.

“Please let me down,” The woman said slowly, attempting to articulate each and every word she spoke.

Remmel sighed, yet he reached into the back pocket of his jet black dress pants pulling out a small key. He held it in front of the woman. Taunting her with its very presents. He could see the longingness in her eyes. The longingness for him to take that key and release her from the painful bonds that suspended her in mid air.

“The lock is to your back,” Remmel said, showing her a fake sense of compassion. He walked behind the woman then placed his hand on her shoulder. Then after three seconds he pushed down as hard as he could.

The strain on the woman’s arms got to an unbearable state. She screamed and screamed and screamed. Tears were just pouring down her face.

“You honestly thought I was letting you down,” Remmel asked letting out in a slight laugh, “Oh no, darling. We’re much too far along for that.” He took his hand off her shoulder, relieving the tension from her arms but only by a small margin, then put the key back into his pocket.

She watched in horror as Remmel walked back to the table and picked up one of the long needles. Instinctively she attempted to close her eyes, yet she could only close them half way.

“It’s time to start dear,” Remmel said once again wiping the tears from her eyes. He paused for a moment allowing the ominous words to set in.

“Please, I’m so scared,” The woman said desperately.

“I know,” Rimmel said running his hand down her exposed side.

His hand was warm against the woman’s cold skin. It was almost comforting to her, yet she knew it was a false sense of comfort. She knew in moments Rimmel would pierce that needle through her uncovered skin into her helpless body, yet, for the second she was in, she just enjoyed his touch. Without even thinking she whispered, “Don’t let go.”

“You’re enjoying this aren’t you,” Rimmel asked wrapping his arm around her back, pulling himself close to her in a seductive manner. A slight exhausted smile came to her face. Feeling Rimmel’s body pressed against her’s brought a strange sense of euphoria. It was almost as if she had tuned out entirely what he was about to do.

Rimmel put his ear to her chest and listened to her heart beating. It was a healthy heart. It beat steadily and strong. The sound of another human heart was something that always pleased Rimmel. It made him feel at ease just listening to that single organ that pushed blood throughout the body. In Rimmel’s mind, the heart was the leader of the body. If the organs of the human body were an army, the heart would be their general. If the heart were to lose a battle to the death, the rest of the body would be forced to surrender; allowing death to succumb the entirety of it as well.

Rimmel truly didn’t want to let go of her. It felt good and right to hold her, yet in his mind he knew all good things must come to an end. “Don’t worry darling,” He said half whispering, with his head still to her chest, “I’ll make this go fast.”

As he spoke these words he felt her heart beginning to race. Rimmel knew that adrenaline rushed through her veins and he felt her body was at the peak of fear. In his mind, it was the perfect time to begin the kill, so released his tight grip on the woman’s body and turned his attention to the table.

When he picked one of the long needle like objects, he remembered that the drug he had given the woman was about to leave

her system completely. For a moment, he contemplated giving her more, yet, to him, killing a moving target was always more rewarding.

“Mercy,” The woman screamed as she began to thrash around again, “Please have mercy.”

Rommel merely smiled as he positioned the tip of the needle on the right side of her body between her bottom two ribs. “Little poke sweetheart,” he said as he slowly plunged the sharp tip of the needle into the woman’s exposed flesh. She screamed over and over again. He knew that the pain she felt was excruciating. In a way it pleased him that that the only noise she could make was a dying shriek. When he knew the needle had pierced far enough into the liver, Rommel stopped pushing and grabbed out a second one.

The woman had shut her eyes tightly, just wanting this God awful hell to be over. The pain that she was being inflicted on her was worse than anything she had ever felt in her life, even childbirth. She now knew her death would come after a figurative eternity of pain, and all she could do was scream and pray that her life would end sooner than she expected.

Rommel was not impressed by her shut eyes. If she was not to see, Rommel wanted it to be on his terms. He picked up another needle, and with his opposing hand he pried open the woman’s left eye.

“No,” She screamed thrashing around vigorously and trying her hardest to close it again.

Without warning or hesitation, Rommel stabbed the needle into the woman’s open eye ball pushing it deeper and deeper into her skull until the tip pushed out the other side. By this time blood was gushing out of her eye socket, and had began to drip out of her right side. Oh how she screamed.

“Oh shut up,” Rommel said pushing the next needle into her throat. He twisted this one around a few times to assure the maximum amount of pain.

It was clear to Rimmel that the woman was losing consciousness now. “Okay pretty,” He said picking up his last needle, “You look so exhausted, so I’ll speed this along.”

He placed the sharp object in the approximate location of her aorta then inserted it at an angle as to hit her lung as well as the arguably most sacred piece of the heart. As Rimmel pushed the needle into her chest he uttered the last words the woman would hear. “Goodnight darling,” he whispered. With that he walked out of the room knowing that the woman would slowly bleed out—alone and without comfort.

A sad smile came to his face. The woman had been such a good hard working mother, and such an amazing person. Yet again the thought crossed Rimmel’s twisted mind all good things must come to an end.

Two

As Rimmel Kell walked down the long basement hallway of

the Account Force USA HQ he began to reminisce about the secret chamber he had created in the grand building.

The building had been owned by the previous banking franchise ten years earlier. Yet the building became condemned and the company was on the verge of needing a substantial government bail out. To top everything off, the CEO, James Vinn, had resigned and none of the board members would step up and take the position. To many people, the thought taking his position would turn into a public swan song, yet Rimmel saw this was an opportunity. Though he had his degree in accounting, the bank was not, and never would be, the main focus in his intricate mind; It was the building. Knowing this asset would be completely under his control, Rimmel’s mind became set; he would become the next CEO.

Rommel was only a twenty three year old teller at the time making ten dollars an hour, yet he had approximately two million dollars in family inheritance that he had received from his father's passing.

When he walked into the hectic boardroom, he was able to make up a fiscal plan on the spot. In addition to this his willingness to invest in the bank, and his charismatic speech to get himself the job within two and three fourths of an hour. He had literally timed it.

As Rommel reached the stairs to his office he looked down at his black dress shirt. It was clear by his meticulous examination that no blood was visible. So he proceeded up the stairs entering his office. Within minutes of Rommel's return his receptionist's voice came over the phone intercom, "Sir you have an interview with The Time's in one hour."

"Thank you Cindy," Rommel replied in a pleasant manner when he truly wanted to say "I know my fucking schedule." In any event Rommel was in no mood to do an interview. He was annoyed at the lack of effort his latest kill put into living. She wasn't as big as a thrill as he had hoped. In fact, she was quite a disappointment. He continued to reminisce on the issue for around an hour. After that a knock at the door brought Rommel back to the current moment. "It's open," He said still a bit lost in his own thoughts.

Cindy walked in.

Fuck, Rommel thought attempting to mask his frustration with a slight smile, what the fuck could she possibly want? Yet after a brief moment he said in his usual calm manner, "How may I help you, Cindy."

"Sir," She said, "The Time's canceled and governor has issued a state of emergency and is urging businesses to send their workers home."

"Might I ask why," Rommel replied completely caught off guard.

“Well, look it out there.” Cindy said gesturing her hand to the window.

“Holly shit,” was all Rimmel said after drawing his attention to the window. It was snowing. Hard.

“It’s going to be a whiteout soon, sir,” Cindy said, “What should I tell the employees.”

“Tell them to go home,” Rimmel said rather distantly, “I’ll close everything up.”

“If you want I can stay and help,” the naive receptionist suggested, “You look exhausted.”

A pleasant smile crossed Rimmel’s face. “Go home Cindy.” He said, “I can handle.”

“Thank you sir.” She replied as she turned and walked out the door.

Within the hour all the staff had all clocked out, leaving Rimmel alone with his thoughts. He walked through the halls of the empty building, his empty building, just to assure himself that they all had gone. Then he returned to his office. He was unwilling to leave until he knew that his trophy was truly dead. It was approximately a three hour process, depending on the specifics of the target, and Rimmel always had to be sure it was complete before he could leave the body in the hands of his dumb ass assistant.

He sat alone in his office for fifty three more minutes, looking out at the now practically dormant streets of Manhattan. The heavy snowfall silenced the sounds of traffic to a faint murmur of noise. The silence was tranquil to Rimmel, yet at the same time caused him great anxiety. The anxiety came from the fact that he was alone in the building. Then again, he wasn’t alone. He knew all too well that the woman was still alive, well barely, but yes, still alive.

Rimmel let the anxiety build for another ten minutes. The sound of his wall clock was all he could hear at that point. Tick tock. He

thought of the disappointment he felt. Tick tock. He thought of how much time he wasted on this particular target. Tick tock. Tick tock. Tick. Tick. Tick.

Rommel slammed his fist on his desk, allowing himself to feel the pain and shock that raced up his arm. It was as if rage was emanating from his mind to his body, poisoning it with irrational and unneeded adrenalin. She will pay for this, he thought to himself, as he got up from his desk and threw the trapdoor open.

With each step he took down the staircase his hate for the woman was more and more passionate. When he reached the hallway he was practically sprinting to the chamber that held the partially dead corpse. As he entered the chamber he saw her.

It was clear that the woman was unconscious from lack of blood yet her body was still twitching. This meant that some part of her body still felt pain. This pleased Rommel.

“If you thought I was done with you, you were very wrong.” Rommel snarled out the words. He quickly grabbed the knife off the table that still sat on the table on which he had left it and began to stab her. Over and over, until blood was spurting everywhere. Finally once the adrenalin died down, Rommel looked at the mess he had made of her body. He felt strangely sad and disappointed now with himself. He had let her get into his mind. Shaking his head and looking at the mutilated body with some sort of admiration Rommel said, “So you did win. You got in my head, and now you got to go early... Good for you.” He paused for a moment putting real thought into his next words and actions. He then put the knife to her bound wrists he said, “Now I will let you down.”

Three

Once he was in a state of contentment, Rimmel had called up

his idiotic assistant, and ordered him to come immediately to dispose of the body. Of course, one and a half hours later Jason showed up eating a cheeseburger.

“Where the fuck did you get that,” Rimmel said not amused at all by the wait.

“McDonald's,” Jason said shrugging his shoulders, “Now what do I gotta do.”

At this point, Rimmel was at his wit's end. “Come with me,” he said leading the young man into the chamber.

Jason walked in looking wide eyed at the corpse sprawled on the ground then he looked up to see its hands still hung to the ceiling. “You had fun,” Jason said not noticing that Rimmel had quietly shut the door behind him.

“Not as much fun as I’m about to have,” Rimmel said with a playful emotion behind his voice.

Jason spun around to see Rimmel standing in front of the door holding the blood covered knife. “Woah. Woah. Woah.” He said putting his hands up and slowly backing up, “What the fuck man.”

Rimmel rolled his eyes. “You have become a severe liability to me,” he replied coldly, “As well as a severe pain in the ass.”

“Dude I didn’t say anything.” Jason said with his back to the wall. His face had become ghostly pale, and he was trembling hard.

“I know,” Rimmel said ecstatic to see the fear in his assistant, “I’m more worried about the pain in the ass thing.”

Jason's pulse accelerated. He was finding it hard to get a decent breath of air into his lungs, and that was making him dizzy as shit. The young man fell to the ground shaking. Before he knew what was going on Remmel stood over him.

"I'll do anything," Jason begged, "Anything. Please."

Remmel knelt down next to him and put the blade of the knife to the back of his assistant's neck. He found this whole situation to be much more satisfying than he originally thought.

"You'll really do anything," Remmel said tauntingly.

"Ya," Jason begged while tears now poured out of his eyes, "Ya. Anything. Anything at all."

"Good," Remmel said changing into a calmer demeanor, "You will pull yourself together, properly dispose of this body, and the next time I give you an order, you better follow it word for word. Do I make myself clear?"

"Yes sir," Jason said, "a hundred percent. Absolutely."

Remmel took the knife away from the young man's neck. "Consider this your warning," he said in a scolding manner, "Trust me Jason, the next time you fuck up, I will not be giving you a third chance."

"I won't, I won't screw up again," Jason said through short gasps of air, "You have my word."

A few minutes passed by and Remmel had said nothing. He just sat aside his young assistant in a half ass attempt to comfort the man. He truly didn't know how old Jason was. He had always thought of him around twenty one, yet now he figured that this approximation was far more off than he had expected.

"Would you like me to leave," Remmel asked at last.

Jason looked up at him, briefly stunned by Remmel's words.

“I won’t be offended if you say yes.” Rimmel spoke as if to validate the fact that he was truly giving Jason the choice.

“You’re kiddin’ right,” Jason stuttered out the words, “You. You can’t leave. You’re the only person who I got left in this world, ya know, that I can call family.”

Rimmel just stared at his assistant in utter disbelief. He had been completely blindsided by this statement. It had only been three months ago that Rimmel caught Jason trying to shoot open one of Account Force USA’s ATMs at three o’seven in the morning. Instead of calling the police, Rimmel had confronted him face on, giving the young man an ultimatum—go to jail with a felony robbery charge or work for him. Of course Jason didn’t want to go to jail so he asked what kind of work.

Rimmel had just smiled and offered to talk over some breakfast at his home. Jason was of course hesitant at first, but was too tired and frightened to decline. It was at Rimmel’s suburban house that Jason first saw his new employer’s true colors. Over breakfast, Rimmel had made it abundantly clear that if Jason were to turn him down, jail would not be the other option. No, if Jason had turned him down his pathetic life would have been cut extremely short extremely quickly.

Rimmel had always assumed that Jason stayed out of fear. Never once did he think that loyalty had anything to do with it, yet clearly it did. After pondering this for a moment Rimmel finally found what he thought to be the correct words to speak. “To be honest,” he said attempting to pick the appropriate wording, “I can’t see how you think that, yet, then again, I can see how I missed it so easily.”

Jason pushed himself to a sitting position. “Look,” he said, “I kinda figured that you wouldn’t get it.” He seemed disappointed, and the proof was written all over his face.

“I can’t understand something that’s going on inside of your head,” Rimmel stated with so much ease, “I can only attempt to decipher the thoughts and words that come out of your mouth, so if you want me to know something, tell me.”

“Okay,” Jason said slowly. He was questioning if opening up to Remmel was the smartest thing to do. He couldn’t fathom being rejected by another person because of his secret, yet then again he wanted the person he considered a mentor to know.

“Say what you need to,” Remmel said, trying to gather more information. He didn’t care on a personal level, but then again he hated vagueness. It was more an obsession over detail, but that was just a technicality in his mind.

“All right,” Jason said, “You can’t drop me off at no street corner and never speak to me again. Kay.”

“Whatever you’re hiding cannot be worse than what I have done, and what I’m currently doing,” Remmel said. He shrugged his shoulders then added, “Besides you know too much.”

Jason nervously nodded his head. “My parents got a place in New Jersey,” Jason said in an ashamed manner, “but I ain’t allowed to go back there no more.”

“Why,” Remmel said completely cutting Jason off.

“It’s cuz I’m gay,” Jason said, too ashamed to look at Remmel, “Okay. There. I said it.”

“Listen,” Remmel said without hesitation or much thought, “Who you fuck is none of my concern or my problem. Your parents shouldn’t care either.”

“Well they fuckin’ do,” Jason said, “The care so fuckin’ much they drove me to this fuckin’ city and left me here. I didn’t get no money or nothin. Fuck I stole the gun you found me with. To top off the fuckin list I’m seventeen.”

Remmel was in a state of shock, and nothing really ever shocked him, or took him by surprise, yet this did. It was strange that his assumption about the boy’s age, and motives had been so far off. Out of all the criminals he had recruited to assist him with his morbid

obsession, he had never taken in a child. No wonder Jason had been such a giant pain in the ass.

“I shouldn’t have said nothin,” Jason said getting quite uneasy with Remmel’s silence.

“I have to close now,” Remmel said sounding a bit off, “You know where the Hydrofluoric acid is, and how to use it. Clean this fucking mess up. I need to think about things.” With that he pushed himself up from the ground, and briskly left the room.

Four

*B*y the time Remmel had finished locking up his bank, at

least a good foot and a half of snow had accumulated on his sporty 2015 Mercedes-Benz S-Class Sedan. It’s silver paint made it practically invisible in the current whiteout condition.

This is going to be a fun drive home, Remmel thought as he attempted to shovel the snow off his car with his dark leather briefcase. His car was the only one left in small company lot and it was getting dark.

“Damn it,” Remmel cursed kicking the side of his car. He was shivering a bit now, half considering going back inside the office building just to get warm.

“You okay, sir.”

Remmel spun quickly on his feet to see a younger scruffy looking woman standing behind him. She had on a bit too big greenish yellow Carhartt jacket, some worn out jeans and a pair of mittens. Her blonde hair was cut into a neat shoulder length bob, but what Remmel was staring at was her stunning green eyes.

“I didn’t mean to startle you. You just looked,” She said. Then she stopped. Her eyes got wider and her mouth just dropped open. “Oh my God,” She said after a few seconds of shock, “you’re Remmel Kell.”

A warm smile came to Remmel’s face. “Yes,” He said, “I am. And who might you be.”

“Me,” the woman said a bit star struck, “Oh I’m just Celia. Nothing special.”

“Well just Celia,” Remmel said now shaking quite hard, “My car is snowed in and I have no way of getting it off, so to answer your original question I’m not that okay.”

“I own a coffee shop just down the street,” Celia replied, “I have a shovel in my back room, and you really look like you need to warm up.”

“I’m going to have to take you up on that offer,” Remmel said now in a desperate state to get out of the cold heavy snow.

“Come on then,” Celia replied with a huge smile. She then noticed Remmel’s hands. They were red from attempting to push the ice cold snow off his car. Feeling a tad guilty for not offering sooner, she took the mittens off and offered them to Remmel. “You need these more than I do,” she said.

Remmel wasn’t big on taking things as charity offers, yet his hands burned from the cold. “Thank you,” He replied generously accepting the mittens.

As they walked down the quiet street Remmel observed that Celia was quite nervous. It was either nervous or excited. He truly couldn't tell. “So,” He said casually, “May I ask what you what you were doing out in this God awful storm this late at night.”

A sudden sadness came across Celia’s face and she turned her gaze to the ground. “I don’t have my own place.” She said somberly,

“I usually just walk around the city, you know until I get tired then I just go to my break room and sleep.”

Rommel was not fascinated by the words Celia spoke, yet he was listening. His true fascination thought was with the tone she spoke in. It sounded so familiar, yet he couldn't pin down where he had heard it. He pushed the thought aside and responded with a caring tone, “That's no way to live.”

They reached the small first floor coffee shop. Celia reached into her jacket pocket and pulled out the silver toned front door key. Her hand was shaking as she turned it in the lock.

“Are you all right, Celia.” Rommel asked noticing her trembling hand.

“To be honest,” She replied, “I've never had someone as important as you come into my shop. I mean.” She stopped finally looking up at Rommel, realizing she was sounding like a stars-stricken idiot. Then again the CEO was gorgeous.

He was tall with perfectly sculpted brownish black hair. It was just a guess, but Celia assumed he had a perfectly toned body under that suit. And that face. His skin was pale with dark eyebrows, and he had stunning dark brown eyes. She had lost her train of thought just lusting over him, yet she pushed her thoughts and the desires away. Why would he ever want something like her? Yes, she owned a business but it was barely breaking even, and she lived in the fucking break room of it. Hell she would be legitimately homeless if her business went under. She turned her attention back to the door, finally clicking open the troublesome lock, and successfully opening the door.

As Rommel entered the shop he felt a burst warm air surround him. It was an instant relief to his chilled body. “Thank you,” He said looking directly into Celia's eyes as if trying to read what was going on behind them. She seemed caught off guard yet unable to look away.

“Ca..Can I get you something,” She stuttered unable to take her eyes off of him.

“I don’t have anything to pay you with at this moment,” Rimmel said with a playful glint in his eyes.

“It doesn't matter,” She blurted out without thinking, “I mean...It’s... It’s on the house today.” Celia was practically kicking herself as she spoke. She usually never stuttered at least not this badly. Breaking eye contact with Rimmel, Celia walked briskly behind the counter. Her back was to him only for a moment as she fumbled to turn on the espresso machine.

Rimmel walked up behind her.

Celia spun on her heels to face the CEO. Her heart was pounding out of her chest and her breath was becoming unsteady as her eyes met his once again. “You startled me,” She said almost in a trance.

Rimmel cracked a warm smile. “Don’t be afraid of me, Celia,” He said pulling her closer to him.

“I’m...not,” She said half a second before Rimmel engaged her in an extremely passionate kiss.

A black car pulled up in front of the coffee shop just as Rimmel had finished the kiss.

“My ride's here,” he said seeing the car out of the corner of his eye, “I hope to see you again.”

“O...Okay,” the stunned woman replied, still in awe of what had just happened. Without another word Rimmel picked up his briefcase and walked out of the small shop.

Five

“*H*ow the hell did you know I was here,” Rimmel asked his

assistant as he got into the car.

“I saw your Ferrari covered in snow,” Jason started to explain.

“It’s a fucking Mercedes,” Rimmel cut in.

“Kay I saw your *Mercedes* covered in snow,” Jason said with a bit a sarcasm, “then I used that fuckin’ iPhone app.”

Swallowing his pride, Rimmel replied with a simple ‘thank you.’”

“So,” Jason said changing the subject, “who’s the girl.”

“Someone I need to keep close,” Rimmel replied cryptically.

“Okay,” Jason said prying at his boss to get a little more information, “I gotta ask why?”

“If I had an answer at this moment, I’d give it to you,” he replied distantly looking out the window at the falling snowflakes.

“You ain’t actin’ like yourself,” Jason said, now a bit worried for his own safety.

“Her eyes looked so familiar,” Rimmel said not even paying attention to Jason at this point.

“You gonna kill her or fuck her,” Jason asked out of the blue.

“I’m not going to kill her until I learn more,” Rimmel said half to himself, “I have to learn more. If I kill her now I’ll fuck up the Ratio.”

“I’ve never understood it,” Jason replied.

“What don’t you understand,” Remmel asked. He was agitated enough. The last thing he wanted to do was explain himself to a seventeen year old.

As Remmel predicted, Jason replied, “The whole ratio thing.”

Remmel let out an annoyed sigh. “There has to be an order to everything,” he replied in a monotone fashion, “Even death. Without an order the action is pointless. I have an order to my actions. I find one target with two children of a different age. I kill them in order from youngest to oldest. That is why I stay away from the ones with twins. It has to be in order. I find one target and get three kills. One to three. That is the ratio of punishment from which I have learned, and that is the ratio of death from which I follow.”

“Ya mean you learned this shit,” Jason blurted out in shock.

“Yes,” Remmel said beginning to reminisce on how he had adopted this perfect system of eternal pain.

The interest in his ratio had begun when he was young—very young. He lived with his father, mother, and two younger brothers, yet only for a short time. His father left when he was nine years old, and exactly one year after this departure Remmel found out that his mother had stage two breast cancer.

Remmel remembered three long years after her diagnosis she was looking him in the eye, and asked him to let her go. When he asked her what it meant she reached into her bedside draw and pulled out a syringe of pain medication. She told him it was an overdose. She told him she didn’t want to fight anymore but she didn’t have the strength to push it in. Then she asked him to do it for her.

He couldn’t stand hearing her complain about the pain anymore, and he wasn’t thinking of the repercussions it would have on him. So he did it. Remmel gave his mother the shot. Within three hours she was gone. No one ever figured out what he had done. In fact, her death was labeled a suicide.

Rommel and his brothers were placed into the foster care system, and separated into different so called “homes”. When he turned eighteen he found that his younger brother had found and shot his middle brother and turned the gun on himself after that. It was then he realized the death of his mother had shattered his brothers. That was the day his obsession truly started.

He saw how damaged his two brothers had become after the death of their mother, how broken they were. He also saw the order in which they died. Oldest to youngest. He rationalized quite quickly if his family had died in the opposite order no one would be broken. He never liked broken things, or broken people. He always wanted a do over of sorts. A way to go back in time and fix the order.

“So who taught ya,” Jason said snapping Rommel back into the current moment.

“Let’s not speak of this right now,” Rommel said pushing the memories to the side, “I have many other more important things contemplate right now.”

Six

*I*t was five o’clock in the morning and the storm had cleared and

Celia was preparing for another day at her small corner coffee shop. She figured her two baristas would be late; they walked to work and the sidewalks were coated in slick ice. The city was working on clearing the snow from the roads, but judging by the quantity of snow outside her shop she still kept her assumption about her employees tardiness.

While doing her usual prep work she couldn’t help thinking of the night before. Rommel Kell kissed her. Her, out of all people, her. Celia figured the stunning CEO could get whoever he wanted, but he

kissed her. The butterflies still fluttered around in her stomach. Before she knew it Lisa and Amelia were banging on the door. It was five thirty and they were exactly on time.

“Seals,” Lisa called through the glass, “it’s cold out here open the door.”

“Yeah,” Amelia added in, “I’m freezing my butt off out here.”

Celia quickly snapped back into reality and grabbed her key. She attempted to get the dorky lust-struck smile off her face, yet it was practically impossible.

She opened the door. “Okay,” She said as her two cold employees rushed through the door, “you will never guess what happened to me last night.” She was unable to hold in her excitement.

“Tell us everything,” Amelia said exuberating the same level of excitement as her boss.

“Okay,” Celia said, quickly remembering that her shop was about to open, “just get your coats off, put your aprons on, and then I’ll tell you.”

“You better tell us,” Lisa said, looking at Celia with a sly smile.

“I will, I will,” Celia said, “Just get ready for customers.”

The two women quickly walked to the break room, leaving Celia on the floor. She made sure the front door was unlocked then walked behind the counter hoping for a morning rush of customers to start coming in. Within seconds of doing this a young professionally dressed woman walked in.

“Hi there,” Celia said greeting the woman as she approached the counter, “What can I get for you?”

“My boss told me to get him whatever you recommend,” She replied in a quite upbeat manner.

It surprised Celia. She has assumed the woman would be a bit snobbish. Then again, Celia had always been an awful judge of character. “Well, our specialty is our white chocolate raspberry mocha,” She replied pleasantly in return.

“I’ll get two of them.” The woman replied, “In the biggest size you have.”

“Can I get your name,” Celia asked pulling out a black marker from her apron.

The woman smiled. “I’m Cindy,” She said pulling her wallet from her over the shoulder purse. She pulled out an Account Force USA credit card and in a joking manner stated, “What’s the damage.”

“Eight Fifty,” Celia replied with a smile.

“Put four twenty five on this one,” Cindy said putting the card down.

As Celia ran the specified amount on the card, Cindy began to fumble through her purse once again. As she did so the card came back as declined.

The woman looked absolutely humiliated. “Today of all days,” she said aloud.

“Don’t worry about it,” Celia said with an understanding smile, “this one’s on me.”

Before Cindy could say no, Lisa and Amelia had already made up the requested drinks and sat them on the counter. “Thank you,” She said appearing to be quite humbled.

“Come again anytime,” Celia replied feeling so much empathy towards Cindy. She had been in this same situation multiple times. “Wait,” Celia said right as the young professional was about to walk out.

“Yes,” the woman replied quickly turning around.

“How much is your rent,” She asked.

Cindy was confused but answered honestly. “One thousand even,” She said.

Celia opened up the cash register door pulling out each and every hundred dollar bill in there. There were five in total. “I don’t have a thousand to give,” She said walking the bills over to Cindy, “But this’ll get you half way there.”

“I... I honestly can’t accept,” Cindy replied dumbstruck by the offer.

“I insist,” Celia replied setting the money in the middle of the cardboard coffee holder.

“I’ll pay you back when I can,” Cindy replied, and without another word, she walked out.

Seven

*T*he rest of the day went rather slow. After Cindy left only a

handful of people came in. Mostly, if not all, loyal customers with maybe one or two new faces. Celia wasn’t keeping track. Before she knew it there were five minutes left till’ closing.

“We outta here, Seals.” Amelia said walking with Lisa to the break room to grab their things.

“You be safe out there,” Celia called out from the front desk. As she stood there the front door opened. To her surprise, or maybe even a bit of shock Remmel Kell entered the shop. He had a well fitted black suit with thin lines of white on the jacket.

“Hello Celia,” he said, with a playful glint in his eyes.

“Hi,” Celia stuttered out the one syllable word.

“I have to apologize to you,” the CEO said as he walked up to the counter, “When I sent over my secretary, I had no idea her card would be declined.” He paused, briefly, then said, “I also had no idea you’d give her five hundred dollars for her rent.”

“I’ve been in her situation,” Celia said almost shaken by the fluidity of his speech, “That situation. I mean. I can empathize with it.”

It seemed, to Celia, as if Remmel was truly listening to each and every word she spoke. It seemed he would take each detail that came out of her mouth, analyzing it, yet still pay attention to the emotion behind it. When she had completely finished speaking Remmel started.

“You seem to take care of everyone else at the expense of yourself,” he stated, “Am I correct.”

Celia took a moment to contemplate the statement. “You’re a very good judge of character Mr. Kell,” She said, entranced by his dark eyes.

“If that’s the case,” he replied, “Isn’t it about time that someone took care of you.”

Celia was taken aback by the comment. “I wouldn’t expect it from anyone,” She replied in an almost sad manner.

Remmel reached into his pocket, retrieving his wallet. He pulled out five hundred dollar bills and sat them on the counter in front to the shocked business owner. “This is for your trouble with my secretary,” he said with a subtle smile. “This is what I’m going to invest in your business,” he said after pulling out a folded check, “and I hope you’ll accompany me to dinner.”

Celia slowly took the check off the counter and opened it, and in almost a delayed reaction said aloud, “Holy shit.”

“How much is it Seals,” Lisa called out from the break room door.

“Holy shit,” Celia repeated, now practically on the verge of tears. “How.. I mean why. I mean what?”

“Let me answer those three daunting questions,” Remmel said with a sensual hint of sarcasm, “first let me answer the how. I am the CEO of one of the most successful bank franchise in the country, and I think you know what’s in front of you.”

“You didn’t answer the why,” Amelia said with a big ole’ grin on her face.

“Melia,” Celia said, shooting her employee a dirty look.

“I didn’t,” Remmel said with a slight scolding look on his face.

“Fine,” Celia said regaining her composure, “Why?”

“Because, someone who would leave themselves destitute to invest in someone in a similar predicament, is someone worth investing in,” the CEO replied.

As he looked at her expression, Remmel knew at that moment she was now in the palm of his hand. Exactly the location he wanted her. After much contemplation, he had realized she was almost a spitting image of his last victim. Her eyes, they were almost exact replicas of his latest disappointment. Looking intently at the young woman with his calming dark eyed gaze Remmel said, “Now that I’ve laid everything on the table, what do you say about dinner.”

“You just handed me one hundred thousand dollars,” Celia said still in shock, “Do you honestly think I’m going to say no.”

“Judging by the way you look at me, I highly doubt you’ll say no,” Remmel replied.

“I’ll have to close first,” Celia said. Her whole body was trembling.

“No she doesn't,” Lisa butted in. She turned to her boss and life long friend. “Look Seals,” She said, “Me and Amelia are going to close. You are going to go to dinner with Rimmel Kell.”

“But,” Celia protested.

“Girl, do I have to drag your workaholic ass out of here,” Lisa replied cutting off her friend mid sentence.

“Okay,” Celia butted in. Still not truly believing what was happening. To her it felt like some weird dream and she feared that in seconds she would wake up.

“Okay,” Rimmel said taking the woman's hand and practically leading her from behind the counter, “It's a date.”

Eight

“Is this really happening,” Celia asked as Rimmel opened the

door of the now snowless Mercedes. She felt like a kid in a candy store. For one she didn't had a car, and if she ever had it would never have been that nice.

“Of course it is,” Rimmel replied getting in the car himself. Then after a brief pause asked, “Do you doubt my motives?”

“I would never doubt you Mr. Kell,” Celia replied looking down at her hands, “I just have a hard time understanding why anyone... well anyone with your status... would even consider someone... you know...like me.”

From past experiences, Rimmel knew that this was the key time for this particular type of manipulation to work. He considered this whole situation to be like fishing. He had already hooked his prize catch, now all he had to was get it aboard to secure its fate.

“Even the most refined of all gems truly can’t tell how much they’re worth,” he said without a moment too much of hesitation, “and I doubt there are many gems in this world that shine as brightly as you, Celia.”

“You really think I’m refined,” Celia said looking up at Rimmel. The moonlight glistened in her fascinating green eyes.

“Of course I do,” Rimmel replied. The words rolled out of his mouth with such a seductive fluidity. This type of speech had never come naturally to him. It was a learned, and heavily practiced asset. Without it, Rimmel knew he could not continue to follow the rules he believed from observation to be truth.

“You must have had a super good family,” Celia said, longing to know more about this man who adored her so.

“Out of pure curiosity,” Rimmel questioned, “What would make you think that?”

“You’re so respectful, and such a gentleman,” Celia answered, “Someone must have raised you right.”

Rimmel was quiet for a moment, contemplating how to manipulate his truth to make his story appealing to Celia. “To be honest,” he said, strategically picking each and every word, “My father abandoned me at a young age then my mother died of breast cancer a few years later. I never truly knew either one them.”

“I’m so sorry,” Celia said now feeling guilty that she had made the assumption she did.

“It’s nothing to apologize about,” Rimmel said comforting the woman with his calming voice, “When I was taken to my second foster home, I promised myself that I wouldn’t let the foster care experience destroy me. In fact I promised myself I’d do something great in this world and prove everyone who thought I was a worthless object wrong.”

“You aren’t worthless,” Celia said with so much compassion, “You’re an inspiration to so many people. Me included. So don’t you ever think you’re anything less than that.”

Hook, line, and sinker, Remmel thought to himself as he listened to Celia’s compassionate words. Now it was his turn for answers. “Thank you,” He replied in a humble tone. Then, after a short pause, asked “Are you close to your family?”

A sad smile came across Celia's face. Her demeanor seemed to shift a bit as well. “I never knew them,” She said.

“I don’t understand,” Remmel replied almost without thinking.

“My mother was fifteen when she got pregnant,” Celia replied distantly looking out the window at the full moon, “She gave me up at birth and.... and I never heard from her again. To be honest, I think she forgot about me.”

“If she did, it’s her loss” Remmel said pulling the car up to the Four Seasons Resort valet.

“I’ve always wanted to go here,” Celia said shocked and mesmerized by the towering hotel. After a moment of bewilderment she began to feel a bit guilty, and it read all over her face.

“What’s wrong,” Remmel asked pulling off a concerned tone.

“This place is so nice and elegant and...expensive,” She said almost intimidated by the location he had taken her to. No, she was intimidated. Really intimidated.

“I have close to eight figures in my bank account,” Remmel replied with a playful smile, “Money is not an issue to me.” He got out of the car, handed the valet his keys, and opened the car door for Celia.

There was a slight breeze but no clouds. The temperature had to be in the negatives. Celia felt the ice cold air from the second she got

out of the car. She began to tremble as she walked with Rimmel to the front door. He put his arm around her and held her close.

By the time they entered the warm building Celia was no longer hungry, at least not for food. She wanted him. She could just picture him holding her, kissing her, loving her to the first morning light.

“Do you just wanna skip dinner,” She asked out of pure lusting impulse.

Rimmel stopped walking and turned to her. His dark eyes glistened with pure desire and his body was a mere inch away from her’s. “What do you have in mind,” he said passionately looking at her brightly lit up green eyes.

“I think you know exactly what I have in mind,” Celia said staring back at him with such intensity.

With that Rimmel pulled her close, and they kissed. It was the most passionate kiss Celia had ever experienced. She indulged in each and every second of it.

After it was over Rimmel said, “I already have a room.”

Nine

*T*here were no words to describe the pleasure Celia felt that

night. She had been with men before, but never like this. Even after their lustful session had taken place, Rimmel held her close to him feeling her heart beat as her warm unclothed body pressed against his. Soon Celia allowed the feeling of euphoria to guide her into a deep sleep.

About two hours passed and Rimmel still lay awake contemplating how similar Celia was to his last victim. It wasn’t just

the eyes now. It was the similar tone of their skin to the similar concave of their similar faces. He hoped to high hell that they were just sisters. If they were his flawless ratio would still be intact, yet if Celia was the daughter of his latest kill the perfectness of his order would be fucked to high hell.

Rommel knew he couldn't redo the order of a kill to fit in a missing peace. Then again a mother with three children wouldn't fit the ratio either. It had to be a mother with two children. The ratio was one to three; one target, three kills. In order. The killing had to happen in order, ascending order to be precise.

"You still up," Celia said playfully yet still half asleep.

"Was your mother's name wasn't Vieta Bay, was it," Rommel asked in a cold emotionless tone.

"How would you know that," Celia said now fully awake, and now, with a bad feeling in her gut.

At that moment Rommel knew he screwed everything up. Everything he held true, everything he believed in, it was destroyed in his mind. His ability to think was now clouded by anxiety and frustration. "Because I killed her, Celia," He replied in a monotone voice, "I killed her and her two younger children."

Celia wanted to get up and run, but she couldn't. Her body wasn't listening to her mind. It was frozen with fear and residual lust. Rommel gently ran his fingers down her arm. Celia cringed at his touch, yet she still wanted it.

"Are you going to kill me now," She asked submissively.

"It wouldn't make sense," Rommel said with a dark intensity, "It wouldn't make any sense. I don't kill for pleasure. I kill for order."

"How many people exactly have you killed," Celia asked in pure horror.

“One hundred twenty three,” He replied as if this were a normal conversation, “I targeted forty one of them. The other eighty two were collateral damage.”

“Why are you telling me this,” Celia asked trying to be brave.

“Because,” Rimmel replied coldly, “I target single women with two children. No more no less. Vieta Bay had three, you being one of them. I did not know she had three children. It was a mistake to kill a woman with three children. Don’t you see.”

“You’re crazy,” Celia whispered the words in an attempt not to cry.

“It’s not insanity, Celia,” Rimmel replied, “It is the need for order.” He kissed her shoulder gently then got out of the bed and began to get his clothes on. “I’m going to go now,” he said, “but the room is still on me.” As he got to the door he added, “Till’ we meet again darling.” With that he left the room.

Celia just laid on the bed in a state of shock. She didn’t know how long she had been there. Time was standing still. In fact she had no idea if she was awake or asleep. When she began to come back into reality Celia found herself in a hospital bed, with an IV of fluids. She was so dazed she didn’t even notice the nurse who sat aside her.

“Can you hear me dear,” The woman asked sounding really worried.

“Did he tell you,” Celia asked attempting to see who was next to her.

“It’s all over the news,” The now visibly plump nurse replied.

“What is,” Celia asked still dazed but coming to more and more each second.

“Rimmel Kell confessed to one hundred twenty three people,” the nurse replied, “Do you remember if he tried to hurt you dear.”

“He said it wouldn’t make sense,” Celia said vacantly, “How long have I been here.”

“Just shy of twenty four hours,” The nurse replied kindly, “You were in a non responsive state of shock. Do you have any family that can pick you up.”

“Can you call my friend Amelia,” Celia replied still quite shaken, “I don’t have any family in this area.”

Ten

*F*our weeks had passed since Celia was discharged from the

hospital. She was staying with Amelia and Lisa out of pure fear of being alone in the coffee shop.

The day was December 24—Christmas Eve. Celia woke up to a strong smell of cooking eggs. She got out of bed and walked into the kitchen. Lisa was cooking breakfast. To be more specific she was cooking eggs and hash browns. The smell was putrid to Celia, so much so that she automatically began toughing her guts up in the sink.

“Woah,” Lisa said caught off guard, “You okay.”

“No,” Celia replied rubbing her temples. Her head was pounding now as well.

Amelia walked in to see what the commotion was about. “You look like shit Seals,” She said looking at her freshly sick friend.

“I feel like shit,” Celia replied, “and that smell is killing me.”

“Oh my god, Celia” Lisa said as a light bulb went off in her head, “Tell me you didn’t sleep with that sociopath.”

“Please don’t judge me right now,” Celia replied in an irritable, stop asking me questions, sort of way.

“Are you pregnant,” Amelia blurted out.

“No,” Celia moaned.

“Girl, prove it,” Amelia said.

“I am not going to the store to by pregnancy test on Christmas Eve,” Celia said wanting nothing more than to through the eggs out the window and go back to bed.

“Don’t ask me why but I got a box,” Lisa said, “all you gotta do is pee on the stupid stick.”

“Fine,” Celia said giving in, “I’ll take the stupid test, but I am not pregnant.”

“They’re in the cabinet towards the back,” Lisa said as Celia walked into their shared bathroom. Within five minutes she emerged. Her face was extremely flushed and her body was shaking. There was a sense of horror portrayed thought her eyes.

“Oh my God Seals,” Amelia said almost instantly knowing what had happened.

“You were right Meals,” Celia said with the sound of pure terror in her voice, “I’m pregnant.”

The Teller:

Book Two

*T*wenty nine long weeks had past, and Celia was entering her third

trimester of pregnancy. As she stood at the coffee shop counter she couldn't help but reminisce over her first ultrasound. The doctor had made it was clear there was not one, but two little hearts beating inside of her. Celia was pregnant with twins. In a way it was the happiest moment of her life, then again, it was the saddest. It was in that moment that she realized she would be a single mother, and, due to all the publicity she had gotten after Remmel turned himself in, her twins would eventually find out that their father had taken more lives than any other serial killer in the history of the United States. She tried to push that thought to the back of her mind, and focus on her daily tasks as a business owner.

She knew, as her pregnancy carried on, running her business was getting harder and harder. Especially with the new herd of customers that came to her shop each day, once again, due to the publicity surrounding her and Remmel affair. They would ask her so many questions, and she hated each and every second of it.

Suddenly, a scruffy looking young looking man walked into the shop, snapping her into the present moment. He looked a bit nervous as he walked up to the counter.

"Can I help you?" Celia asked with a bit of caution.

He pulled out a folded note, "Boss told me to give this to ya," He said setting the peace of paper on the counter. Then he quickly walked out.

Celia timidly opened the paper and read the following words: *'I truly believe that guns are tacky, but I have a loaded M-16 in close reach. Unless you want me to open fire on your customers, you will*

leave immediately, get into the black Lincoln outside your shop, and tell no one. In addition, know I'm watching you as you read this.'

Celia looked out her shop's window, and saw the black car sitting directly across the street. "Shit," she whispered to herself. In her gut, she knew this was a legitimate threat. Without thinking twice, or saying another word to Lisa and Amelia, she walked out the front door.

Even as she approached the car, she couldn't see past the dark tinted windows. Despite this fact she still crossed the street and obediently got in the back seat. As soon as she shut the door behind her a hysterical sense of panic set in. It was as if she just figured out her life could be over at any second, and it would be no one's fault except her own. It was then a more daunting thought crossed her mind. If she were to die, so would her two unborn children. *God what have I done*, she thought to herself as the car began to move.

Soon she felt someone place their arm around her. It wasn't a forceful touch. In fact it was quite comforting. Soothing was a much better word, because Celia wasn't at all comfortable.

"It's okay darling," The man said in an unmistakably calm tone, "I'm not going to hurt you."

"Rommel," Celia said dumbfounded by the familiar voice, "I thought you." She stopped unable to finish her sentence.

"You thought I was locked up," Rommel stated with a slight laugh, "Everyone thinks that."

"I don't understand," Celia whispered, "How did you get out?"

"To make a long story short I have allies on both sides of the law," Rommel replied with such simplicity, "Because of my associates in the NYPD everyone thinks I'm somewhere else, making it extremely easy for me to be here with you."

Celia didn't understand her emotions at that moment. She couldn't. It was almost as if her body was overwhelmed with joy just

to hear his voice, and to feel his touch. Yet her mind was surrounded with fear and thoughts of the cataclysmic possibility that her life was about to end. Even though she wasn't looking up she could feel the killer's eyes watching her. Reading her. Lusting for her. This made Celia petrified in fear.

"Try to sleep," Rimmel said gently running his hand up and down the pregnant woman's back, "We have a long drive ahead of us."

Celia pushed her body against his. He was warm and his touch was ever so gentle. "Are you going to let me wake up," Celia asked indulging in her craving that was his touch.

"Of course I will darling," Rimmel replied strategically placing his arm around her, "Now rest."

For the next few hours Celia lay asleep in Rimmel's arms. Her body at rest was so still. It almost seemed lifeless at times. This frightened Rimmel, so much so that every thirty minutes he would gently place his hand on her neck to assure himself that her heart was still beating. Then again in Rimmel's mind it would be so easy for him to make her heart stop. The thought kept crossing his mind. Oh how easy it would be. After precisely the second hour of driving Rimmel began to fantasize over the thought.

He contemplated taking the Swiss Army Knife out of his jacket pocket and slowly twisting the blade into her neck almost as if it were a screwdriver. Then again it would be too messy, and too impulsive of an action. Celia was his prize catch merely for the fact that her personality was so submissive. Honestly Rimmel could do whatever he wished with her and she would give little to no struggle. With this in mind he decided to resist the ever so present urge to kill the sleeping woman. No. After all the hell he had been through in the past nine months, Rimmel felt it was only fair to make her suffer.

Two

*I*t had been four hours and fifty nine minutes. The metropolitan

skyline of New York had dissipated into a secluded section of White Mountain National Forest located in the small state of New Hampshire. By the time Celia opened her eyes the driver had already taken her deep into the woods—far past where anyone would look.

“Where are we,” Celia said feeling sick to her stomach.

“It’s not important,” Rimmel replied playfully running his fingers up and down her arm.

Celia shuttered and attempted to pull away from him, but Rimmel violently pulled her back to him.

“Let me up,” Celia snarled through her teeth as she tried to fight Rimmel’s tight grip.

“Listen to me, Celia,” Rimmel said moving his hands quickly around her neck.

With this motion Celia stopped struggling. She didn’t want to die, not yet. She hadn’t held her babies yet or even seen them. Hell they were still inside of her. They were counting on her to keep breathing. To give them a chance to take a breath. She closed her eyes and prayed to God that Rimmel wouldn’t kill her yet.

“If you’re good, I’ll be good to you,” Rimmel said keeping his hands loosely around her neck, “If you struggle as you did now, I will not hesitate to harm you.” He could feel the breath going in and out of her throat getting quicker as he spoke. He watched as tears began to fall uncontrollably out of her closed eyes. After a brief moment of entertainment Rimmel removed his hands from her neck.

Even though Remmel had removed his hands Celia did not move an inch, nor did she open her eyes. She sat in the car frozen in pure terror.

“It’s alright darling,” Remmel said caressing her with his calm tone of voice, “Just do as you’re told, and this won’t have to happen again.”

“Hold me again,” Celia begged. Her voice was shaking now.

Remmel gently placed his arm around her in a comforting way. He felt the woman trembling in his arms. He felt as Celia place her head on his shoulder and hot tears poured out of her eyes on to his jacket. Her tears articulated her terror, and begged for his acceptance. It was clear, at least to Remmel, that Celia was now his. All his. With the proper persuasion she would do anything he wanted. More importantly, she would let *him* to do anything he wanted to do to her. He owned her. Celia belonged to him and at this rate no one was going to take her from him again.

The car finally pulled up to what appeared to be a two story cabin. As far as the eye could see there was nothing but trees and shrubbery. It was obvious, to Celia, that she was now completely alone with the sociopath.

“We’re here,” Remmel said, as the driver put the car in park.

“You got the money, ya know, for the gas,” The young driver said finally breaking his five hour silence.

“It’s in the house,” Remmel said in such a smooth manner. It was almost eerie, “Let me get her inside, then I’ll grab it.” He got out of the car rejoicing at the fact that he could finally stretch his legs. Then he extended his hand out to Celia.

She appeared hesitant.

“If you do not come willingly,” Remmel said impatiently, “I will make you will sleep on the ground in the basement with not one glint

of light. And trust me Celia, in the state you're in, that is not what you want."

Celia took in a deep breath, exhaled, then took his hand. She knew there was no apparent hope of escape, and at this point she did not want to get on Remmel's bad side again. As Remmel led her into the house, Celia clung tightly to his arm. She knew in her mind that Remmel Kell was a sociopathic killer, but her heart didn't want her to let go of him. In some twisted screwed up way she wanted to be close to him.

The interior of the cabin was actually rather beautiful. The first floor had a full functioning kitchen and a living area. It had a L shaped couch and one wall with fully stocked bookshelves from floor to ceiling.

"This isn't that bad," Celia said allowing her nerves to shine through her voice.

"I know," Remmel replied, "Now, take a seat on the couch. I have a small problem to take care of, then I'll deal with you." He helped Celia get to the couch then briskly walked to the next room. In only mere seconds, he came back holding a gun.

Celia's heart dropped. "You're going to kill him, aren't you," She said feeling numb inside.

"I'm not going to make you watch," Remmel said calmly.

Tears welled up in Celia's eyes. "Don't make him hurt that bad," Celia said trying not to cry, but failing epically, "If you gotta do it, just do it quick."

"It's okay, Celia," Remmel said gently taking the woman by the hand, "He's suffered a very long time. He'll be free now, from his pain in one shot, I promise."

Celia wasn't able to speak. She just nodded her head, accepting the fact that Remmel was about to murder his young driver, and there was nothing she could do about it. As Remmel walked out the front

door she just buried her face in her hands and began sobbing uncontrollably.

Three

*B*efore Remmel exited the house he concealed the gun inside

his jacket, as to not alert Jason of his quickly approaching fate. To his surprise the boy had stayed behind the driver's seat, and the car window was open.

“Why don’t you get out and stretch you legs,” Remmel said in his best attempt to sound compassionate.

“I don’t want the money,” Jason said on the verge of tears.

The statement caught Remmel off guard. “Why,” He said in shock.

“I don’t want the money cuz, once I get it, I’ll never see you again,” the boy replied, “You all I got now. I can’t take someone else leaving.” He was in tears.

“Listen to me Jason,” Remmel said in his usual calm manner, “I know you’ve had a hard life. I know you're in pain. Let me make it better.” He pulled out the gun. “Let me set you free.”

“If you gonna shoot me, I gotta tell you one more thing,” Jason said with a meek expression on his face.

“I’m listening,” Remmel said clicking the safety off the gun.

“Kay,” Jason said taking a deep breath, “I wish ya nothing but the best, man. Good luck with yo girl and please... don’t forget ‘bout me.”

"I never forget people," Remmel replied so kindly, Jason almost forgot that he was about to get shot, "Are you ready?"

"Ya," Jason replied meekly, "Just get it over with."

"Goodbye Jason," Remmel said pulling the trigger.

The bullet hit Jason square in the heart. Remmel watched as the boy slowly moved his hand over the quickly bleeding wound.

A slight smile came over the boys face. "Thank ya," He whispered. His voice was extremely shaky but Remmel still understood him.

Remmel opened the car door and helped Jason to the forest floor. He hadn't expected the toll taking Jason's life would take on him. It was a strange feeling. It was one he hadn't felt before. He looked at the dying boy just lying on the ground. There was something inside him that couldn't leave him to die alone. So he lay aside the child, holding him close. Even though Jason was fading fast, Remmel didn't leave him until he was sure the last of his breath had left his body. Then still he stayed with him.

What seemed to be only minutes turned to hours. From inside the house Celia began to worry about Remmel. She desperately wanted to know if he was alright. Standing from the couch she walked quietly to the open door to see Remmel lying next to Jason. He appeared to be coated in blood. Fearing for the worst Celia ran to his side, placing her hand on his neck feeling for a pulse. Remmel quickly had his hand tightly clamped onto her wrist. Celia attempted to pull away, yet he only tightened his grip.

"Please, you're hurting me," Celia in a full on panic.

"I told you to stay on the couch," Remmel snarled out the words in a complete rage. He quickly got to his feet without even loosening his grip.

"But I was worried about you," Celia said in complete terror.

“I don’t give a flying fuck what your excuse is,” Rimmel replied coldly, “I told you to stay on the couch and you disobeyed. Now there will be consequences for your actions.”

“Please no,” Celia begged still trying to pull away.

“Get up,” Rimmel said violently pulling Celia to her feet. He, then, practically dragged her into the house, leading her back to the couch. “Sit here and wait for me to return.” With that he finally let go of her wrist. His voice was calm now yet still filled with rage.

As he walked into the next room, Rimmel contemplated what he could do that wouldn’t be too detrimental to the expecting mother’s health. He did, in fact, want her to live, yet in his current state he would be quite satisfied slowly cutting off her fingers one by one then watching her bleed out, but that would be too impulsive. Rimmel hated making impulsive decisions. At least, now he did. That was how he got in this predicament in the first place.

He began to pace. Five steps in one direction. Turned. Then five steps in the other direction. He did this ten times, counting each and every step in his head. Whenever he was about to do something he was unsure of, he would do this. It was one of many ritual actions he would do when he was agitated or under pressure.

After the last step in his last set of five, Rimmel felt much more at ease, but that didn’t change the fact of the matter. Celia had disobeyed him and now needed to be taught not to act in the same fashion again. This small mistake wasn’t worth her life, yet she did have to learn not to disobey again.

Then out of the corner of his eye Rimmel saw a hand held razor. This caused him to think. Celia was a stunning woman. A stunning woman with long beautiful, but unnecessary hair.

*D*uring the short period of time in which Rimmel was

away, Celia had fallen asleep on the couch. Her body was exhausted and hungry. Her hand was still gripping the armrest tightly, for even in her sleep she was terrified.

When Rimmel entered the room, he saw how unsound his prisoner's sleep was. Quietly he walked over and sat beside her. He placed the pair of scissors he had found and the razor to the other side of him, deciding that the punishment could wait a bit. His energy was drained from taking Jason's life and punishing Celia now would be more like work than entertainment.

Celia didn't wake, yet sensing Rimmel's warm body next to her's, she cuddled up to him. Soon they were both sound asleep in each other's arms.

After a good six hours Rimmel was the first to wake up. The air in the hidden New Hampshire cabin was crisp and cold. He could see Celia trembling from this cold, yet she seemed to be in a much more peaceful sleep than before.

"You up," Rimmel asked, gently nudging her a bit.

"Am now," Celia replied still desperately trying to cling to sleep. When she knew it was a hopeless attempt Celia opened her eyes, reentering the nightmare that was her new reality. A sudden sadness came over her. "What did you do to me," She asked remembering Rimmel's dark threat of punishment.

"I haven't done anything to you my dear. Well, anything yet," Rimmel said in a calm, smooth, yet ominous way, "I was just waiting until you were up."

"Rimmel please," Celia said shrinking back, "I won't do it again. Just please don't hurt me. Please."

“It won’t hurt that badly, Celia,” Remmel said with such charismatic enthusiasm. It frightened Celia even more. Then he noticed the pregnant woman clenching her legs tightly. As an attempt at falsified compassion he added, “If you like, I’ll let you use the restroom before we start.”

Celia nodded. She did need to go, quite badly in fact. It was almost as if her bladder was about to explode.

“Body language is too easily misread,” Remmel stated, “Use your words if you want something from me.”

“Please let me use the restroom,” Celia said desperately hoping he wasn’t just screwing with her.

“I’ll take you,” he said helping the frightened woman to her feet. He escorted her to an outhouse which stood just in back of the cabin.

As Celia walked in Remmel followed.

“Are you not going to give me any privacy,” Celia asked shocked by Remmel’s action.

“No,” Remmel replied, “Now if I trusted you, that would be different, but since I do not I will stand right here, and that is that.”

Celia just stood there mortified at the idea that she would have to show herself to her captor.

As if reading her like a book, Remmel said with such normality, “We’ve been with each other, It’s not like I haven’t seen you before.”

Celia took a shaky breath and reluctantly pulled down her pants. It felt amazing to finally relieve her bladder, yet at the same time humiliating and degrading that Remmel was standing aside her. As she was pulling up her pants she just began to cry. Remmel put his arm around Celia as he walked with her back to the cabin.

“Don’t touch me,” Celia said halfheartedly.

“Is that what you really want,” Rimmel asked in an almost seductive tone.

Celia put her head to his shoulder. “No,” She said feeling his warm body pressed up against her’s.

“Then what do you want,” Rimmel replied.

“I just want to sleep,” Celia said feeling so overwhelmed, “I’m so tired.”

“And I’ll let you rest,” Rimmel replied as they entered the cabin, “After your punishment.”

Celia’s whole body shivered. She had no idea what was about to happen. She knew from the media stories how Rimmel had maliciously killed in the past, as well as how meticulous he was when inflicting pain on his victims before hand. All she could do was hope and pray that as of now he didn’t have an urge to take her life.

Five

*R*immel sat Celia down at the dining room table facing

towards the wall as he got the scissors and the handheld razor. As he returned, he sat the two items in front of Celia. The second she saw them, her heart began to beat out of her chest and her body began shaking to the point she could hardly sit up.

Rimmel began running his fingers through her messy hair. “You know,” He said, “You’re such a beautiful woman. I have always admired that. I have especially this long beautiful hair of yours... Oh how I’ll miss it.”

He picked up the scissors.

Instinctively, Celia began violently trying to get away from him, because she truly didn't believe he would stop with just her hair. Despite her twisting and turning, Rimmel had quite a strong grip on her hair, and he wasn't letting up. If anything he tightened his grasp.

In a matter of seconds Rimmel had forced Celia to the ground onto her back and then held her arms above her head. Celia was kicking her legs trying to get up, but because of her current stage of pregnancy Celia was unable to stand, let alone fight back, in this position. Her body began to tire and she realized that the little hope had of escape had gone out the window.

For the entirety of the seven and a half minute struggle Rimmel had not uttered a single word, he merely held Celia firmly in place. He didn't feel that one should speak when the spoken to could not listen, and, of course, during a fight or flight moment one could not make sense of logic let alone understand what another person was saying. When he saw the exhaustion come over Celia's body, he knew that she would be more open and able to listening.

"It's just hair, darling," Rimmel said in a calm manner, while still firmly holding Celia's arms above her head, "I could take a lot more from you, but I won't. The only thing I'm taking from you is hair."

Celia had no fight left in her. She felt dead inside. "Please," She begged, "Please just get it over with."

Her manner seemed weak to Rimmel. This was all to his pleasure though. The game of cat and mouse was about to come to an end, at least for this issue. "Are you going to sit at the table, or would you prefer the floor," Rimmel said simply not giving her anymore chances to get out of it.

His words were, in a way, scolding to her, yet Celia contemplated the question. "Please don't make me get up," She said feeling nothing but defeat.

“As you wish,” Rimmel replied, picking up the scissors that he had put down during the fight, “Though I will need you to turn on your side.”

This time Celia did exactly as she was told. Lying on the cold wooden floor was so unpleasant for the mother to be, especially on her side. But she just took the pain not complaining once about the cold or how much the floor made her body ache.

Without another word Rimmel took her hair into his hand as if he were about to put it into a ponytail, twisted it three times, then began to cut. For the most part Celia was holding still, but it was obvious she was extremely uncomfortable. Rimmel could tell. He considered himself quite good at reading social situations. Then, of course, reacting in a way which appeased his needs while having his actions still appear to be in the best interests of everyone else. “Would you prefer to sit up,” he asked pretending to console Celia for a moment.

“Yes,” Celia replied in a voice overcome by terror. She was almost too afraid to speak the truthful word, though Rimmel’s calming tone that made her feel able.

“Then please do so,” Rimmel replied very calmly.

Celia attempted to get up off the floor, but she was hurt from the struggle. Her arms didn’t have an ounce more of strength left in them. Each time she tried to get to a sitting position she would fall back to the ground.

Despite the intense level of amusement this gave Rimmel, he finally assisted the pregnant woman into an upright position, then continued his work. With Celia now sitting Rimmel was able to finish cutting the remaining strands of hair with ease. When he thought the now choppy looking hair was short enough, he picked up the handheld razor. It was the very thing that gave him the ingenious idea for the grand punishment he was performing. He looked at the object for a moment in admiration, before placing it against Celia’s head.

The second the blade touched her head, Celia froze. Goosebumps instantaneously coated her arms, and her hair raised. She could just picture Remmel raking the blade across her head. Using it to peel the skin from her scalp. The cutting her over and over.

“I know what you’re thinking,” Remmel said taking the blade away from her head for a moment.

“What am I thinking,” Celia asked trying not to show her fear.

“You think I can’t control myself,” Remmel replied, “You think I’ll hurt you.”

Celia took a deep breath. “Am I right,” She asked, truly not wanting to know the answer.

“No,” Remmel replied with a false hint of compassion in his voice, “The only way you’ll get hurt is if you move while I’m doing this. Do you understand me, Celia?”

The woman felt small, yet in some screwed up way, she trusted Remmel. In an even more messed up way she wanted him to trust her, to care for her, to love her.

“I understand,” She said obediently.

Remmel picked up the razor once again. “Remember,” He said, “If you hold still nothing will happen.” With that he began gently running the blade across Celia’s head. He enjoyed watching the remaining patches of hair falling to the floor strand by strand. It was chaotic but at the same time beautiful.

After a few moments Remmel had decided his work had sufficiently met the purpose of this exercise, so at last he sat the razor down on the wood floor.

Celia finally felt she could breath freely and at that moment she had a strange sense of calm over her. “Thank you,” She said in a strangely grateful manner.

“For what,” Remmel replied running his hand down her arm in a playful manner.

“For keeping your word,” she said, mesmerized by the sociopath's touch.

“Have I lied to you yet,” He asked now in a seductive manner.

“No,” Celia replied falling right back into Remmel’s trap, “You haven’t.”

She was like a insect that had fallen into a spider’s web. She had been bitten by the venom of Remmel’s sweet seduction, and it had made her almost oblivious to the fact that she was a prisoner with a ticking clock attached to her life.

Six

“You seem exhausted, Celia,” Remmel said with such fluidity,

“Shall I take you to bed.”

“Um,” Celia said hesitantly. She knew in the logical part of her mind that she should hold Remmel at arms length, yet every ounce of her being lusted for him. Oxytocin flooded her body each time he touched her—each time he looked at her with those dark stunning eyes. Yet she knew the devil was in desire, yet his call was so appealing.

Remmel placed his hands on her shoulders and began massaging them oh so well. Celia’s breath became unsteady. Remmel could tell she was right where he wanted her. “Come to bed darling,” he whispered in her ear so seductively that Celia trembled with desire.

“Please don’t stop,” she said in a complete turned on euphoria. It was as if she had forgotten the torture Remmel had just put her

through, or maybe she just didn't care. He was being kind at the moment, and gentle, and almost loving.

"I won't," Rimmel replied as he continued to rub her shoulders with such a gentle strength that was perfect for the mother to be.

After a moment of this luxury, Celia wanted nothing more than to fall asleep in his arms. Growing up in the foster care system, she had never felt the need to be this close to anyone in her life. Each and every time she got close to calling someone family, they would just pass her along to the set of guardians, some of whom couldn't even put food on the table. Then of course there were some that just use her as a human punching bag. One thing was for sure, none of them were trustworthy. Because of this, Celia even held Amelia and Lisa, her two closest friends, at arm's length.

Rimmel was different.

Yes, he hurt her, but so did all the rest of the men in Celia's life. She was use to the pain. There was a difference because Rimmel would also comfort her. He held her like she meant something to him. He touched her in a way that made her feel safe. It also helped that he was still rather gorgeous.

"Hold me," Celia said practically begging for him.

"Will you come to bed now," Rimmel asked running his fingers once more up and down her arm.

"If you stay with me," She said in a partial whisper.

Rimmel was quite.

The silence discouraged Celia. "Do you not want to?" She asked fearing she had said something wrong.

Rimmel got to his feet and extended his hand to her. As he helped her up he said, "There is nothing more I want right now then you." Then he kissed her. It was just as passionate as the first time they met in the coffee shop. At that moment though, Celia knew it

was wrong. A sense of panic was bestowed upon her. "I can't," Celia said pulling away, "I just can't."

"If you're not ready, I won't force you," Remmel replied. He enjoyed taking lives but he didn't believe in rape. In his mind, it not an effective method of torture. It would be effective if Remmel ever planned to let his victims go. Then he would do it. Just for the mere fact that rape was a long term psychological punishment, but Remmel's prey had too short of a shelf life for that.

Celia, now having a full on panic attack, embraced Remmel. "I don't want you to let go yet," she said unable to stop the tears from pouring out of her eyes, "I'm sorry. Please don't let go. I'm so sorry."

"Shhh," Remmel said putting his arms back around her, "It's okay darling. It's okay. Just come rest. I won't hurt you."

"Don't leave," Celia said still in a complete panic.

"I'm not going anywhere," Remmel said in a reassuring manner as he took her by the hand and led her up the stairs.

The upstairs area of the cabin was an open loft. There was a queen sized mattress on the wooden floor covered with many blankets and fluffy looking pillows. Next to it was a nice wooden desk with a chair sitting in front of it. The space looked rather cozy and inviting. There was even a window, looking out upon the vast forest.

The room had a homey feel, a sense that Celia had not expected to feel. Still, she was hesitant to rest and allow herself to be in the hands of Remmel's mercy. She would be unable to get up or have any leverage to defend herself.

"Go ahead," Remmel said seeing Celia's hesitance, "Lie down."

Celia looked up at him. Her eyes were begging Remmel not to make her. The expression shown on her face was fear.

"Do as you're told," he said sternly.

Not wanting to go through anymore pain, Celia obediently laid down on the mattress. It was extremely comfortable, and in a way almost luxurious. She had never had a memory foam mattress before. They had always been far out of her budget range, and now she saw why.

The only unpleasant peace of this to Celia had to be feeling the pillow touch her practically barren scalp. For the first time she moved her hand to her head feeling what was left of her bleached blond hair. It felt stubbly and uneven. This not only made Celia sad, but it gave her a new sense of vulnerability. In away she felt she had nothing to hide behind anymore.

“I see you’re uncomfortable,” Remmel said after a long silence. “Not badly,” Celia replied, sounding on the verge of tears once again. The statement was an obvious lie. Clearly the absence of her hair affected her more then she was willing to show.

“Celia, you know I don’t want to hurt you,” Remmel said, “But there are somethings that I can’t help. It’s clear to me that you don’t understand.”

“Then make me understand,” Celia said as nervous adrenaline pumped through her veins, “I want to know you Remmel Kell. Just please let me in.”

“Why,” Remmel asked rather taken aback.

Celia didn’t answer. She was trying to find the right way to express her feelings toward him. It was obvious though, that her silence was doing nothing but irritating Remmel.

“Speak,” Remmel said slowly with a hostile way about it.

“Please, I didn’t mean to anger you,” Celia said feeling small. Her breath was in short gasps. It was clearly a sign of anxiety.

Remmel took a deep breath. “Before I do something rather impulsive,” Remmel said trying to remain calm, “I need to step away.”

*I*mmediately, after he returned to the downstairs, Rimmel

began his pacing ritual once more. When someone would retract a statement after not wanting to elaborate any details, it was one of his pet peeves. In fact it drove him absolutely insane, and that was exactly what Celia had just done.

After finishing the final set of his stress relieving ritual, Rimmel began to see that his reaction to Celia was a complete and utter overreaction. It was just a set of words that had temporarily angered him. It was nothing to spill blood over at least nothing justifiably.

He walked back up the stairs only to find the mother to be in a sound deep sleep amidst the luxurious sheets. Even without that stunning long blond hair, Rimmel considered Celia to be a beautiful trophy as well as his most prized possession. She was definitely something worth keeping around, at least for now. Then again, there was a hint of regret lingering in his mind.

A part of him regretted ever pursuing her. If they had never crossed paths, Rimmel would still be CEO of Account Force USA, he would still have easy access to many more trophies that he could add to his long resume, as well as the network to get ahold of them. Now Rimmel only had a select few contacts that he could trust with his location and only a handful of which could come to see him. The words 'see him' were a bit of a stretch. Truly they were only permitted to drop food off at the door then leave. In fact, one of these drop offs were supposed to stop by with in the next twenty three hours and seven minutes.

Rommel was in a state of extreme fatigue in addition to being completely overwhelmed by his current situation. He quietly walked to the bed and laid down beside Celia. He placed his arm around her and in a moment of weakness said, "I never want to let go."

Celia just pressed her body against his. "Then don't," She mumbled still half asleep. Then she took his hand and placed it on her stomach.

Rommel felt one of the fetuses kick. It was the first time he had acknowledged the pregnancy. It was the first time he realized he was bringing life into the world. It was the first time in this situation that he felt fear, yet the same time he didn't want to remove his hand. These fetuses, they were a part of him, or at least they would have a part of him in them.

"You feel them, don't you," Celia said laying her hand gently over his.

"Yes," Rommel replied in an almost somber manner.

"Are you okay with this," she asked timidly.

"What do you mean," Rommel asked as he felt another kick.

"I just want to make sure you're not going to hurt them," Celia responded.

Rommel sighed. "God I made a big mistake taking you here," he said finally removing his hand from her stomach.

The Teller:

Book Three

One

“So tell me why, again, you didn’t take her when you had the

chance,” Pascal asked his friend as they got into the red Rolls-Royce convertible parked outside the Vancouver airport.

Rommel sighed. “Is I don’t know an acceptable answer to you,” he replied sounding very distant.

“It is,” Pascal said, “but knowing you for as long as I have, it’s a highly unlikely situation. I mean you had to have a reason.”

“Do me a favor Jack,” Rommel said irritably.

“Anything,” The twenty seven year old nuisance replied.

“Shut the fuck up.” Rommel had a look of rage plastered over his face.

“All right. All right,” his friend said now feeling a smidge of fear.

“Start now,” Rommel ordered with no emotion behind his voice.

After about twenty three and a half minutes of this not speaking, Rommel was fed up with the silence. In addition he had business he needed to discuss with Pascal. Silence was no longer acceptable.

“You were right Jack,” Rommel said, calculating his words perfectly to please his so called friend, “We do need to talk about her and perhaps the future of my business.”

Two

Nineteen Years Later

Kaydra Ann Mackenzie was screwed from her time of

birth. At least that's what she believed. Her mother died twenty three seconds before Kaydra could even take her first breath. The only reason she was alive was because of a sloppy perimortem c-section performed some on call doctor in the ER. Kaydra had always assumed they must not have been that good of a doctor. If they were there wouldn't have been two deaths to mourn on her birthday. She would have had a sister. A beautiful twin sister.

Anyway, it didn't matter now. She was nineteen now, and had a very special plan for her birthday this year.

Kaydra stopped reminiscing when she was exactly 20 feet away from her job. She knew this because of the music coming from within her place of work began pulsing throughout her body at the optimal level of perfection. She lived for the music. It was her drug, her nirvana. When she heard it, her focus shifted from her situation to being one with her body. It was one of the perks to being a dancer.

Finally she arrived at the employee entrance of The Playland. She quickly tapped each finger on her right hand against her thumb and counted as she did so. One. Two Three. Four. With that she opened the door to the club.

Three

Jack Pascal felt a great sense of unease entering The Playland.

He hadn't been to this type of club since he was still in his twenties. Now he was forty six. He feared that he would stick out like a sore thumb drawing suspicion to his presence. After expressing this

concern his boss, Remmel Kell, pointed out that Pascal was a well known single billionaire in the States after taking over his old position as CEO of Account Force USA. Why wouldn't he go blow some money at a strip club?

This point made sense to Pascal. Besides, orders were orders. It was his job to assure the safety of Kaydra Ann Mackenzie, at least for now. If this meant watching her dance at a low end strip club, so be it. She was, in truth, Remmel's daughter. He knew if he messed this up his punishment would be death.

Remmel had already blamed Pascal for the death of his second child and the woman who carried it, through the fault was his own. This passing of blame gave Remmel an excuse or at least a viable reason to make his so called friend feel his pain.

The night before their flight to Canada, Pascal had stayed with Remmel in the same secluded cabin he had kept Celia for the duration of two weeks and three days. It was there that Remmel had shaved her head, broken her right leg so she couldn't run, and starved her to death.

That was in fact the true cause of her death; malnourishment and dehydration. But Pascal couldn't tell Remmel that. He didn't have it in his heart. Unlike his friend, he wasn't a sociopath. Pascal grew up in the foster care system with Remmel, and couldn't blame him for Celia's death. So he lied. He told Remmel that the doctor screwed up the C-Section and she bled out.

After hearing this Remmel began to tremble uncontrollably. This was something new for him. He had never felt this type of rage before. Without much warning he stood, calmly walked to the kitchen, picked up one of the chairs and violently shattered it against the wall. Then he just stood there, staring at the pieces of wood that covered the floor.

Pascal usually allowed Remmel to harm him when he was in rage with no fear for his life. This time was extraordinarily different. Pascal had never seen his friend this far out of control before.

Rommel had picked up a sharp fragment of wood. He inspected it as he held it in the palm of his hand. He did this every time he held a weapon. He had to make sure it was the right one. There were no true qualifications to make an object the 'right' weapon. It just had to fit the situation in Rommel's twisted mind. It had to feel right. When he was satisfied with the quality of the piece of wood, he turned once again to Pascal. There was a deep emptiness in his eyes, something that only happened before he killed.

Pascal took a step back.

"If you want to run," Rommel said with a hollowness to his voice, "I won't stop you."

"I'm not leaving you like this," Pascal replied shaking hard. He didn't know why he chose to stay. He figured the reason may have been his misguided loyalty to Rommel, or the fact that he didn't want his lifelong friend to harm himself.

"Then sit down, here, on the couch," Rommel said with an almost demented tone to his voice.

Pascal was shaken but did as he was told. With a now unsteady voice he said, "Do what you need to do, man"

Rommel walked around to the front of the couch. "I'm feeling generous today so I'll leave it up to you," Rommel said in a manner so calm it was frightening, "How do you want to die."

Pascal had no words to answer the question. Fear engulfed him.

"I don't usually give a choice," Rommel said impatiently tapping his fingers.

Pascal broke out into tears, "I don't want to suffer Rommel. You know that. If you have to do this, make it go quick."

He closed his eyes, expecting to feel the severed piece of wood impale one of his vital organs. After a moment of fearful waiting

Pascal was getting confused. Keeping his eyes firmly shut he said, "Please don't make me watch this."

Rommel shook his head. "You know I can't do it Jack," he said somberly, "You're like a brother to me, and in any event I need you alive." It seemed he had regained his composure at least to an extent. He sat down next to Pascal and out of nowhere he began to cry. It wasn't from sadness or remorse, but from anger. He was angry he couldn't have Celia to himself anymore. She was gone and he couldn't fix that. He couldn't fix anything at the moment. Rommel had no control over the situation and he hated it. He hated not having control.

"You know I need you too," Pascal replied finally opening his eyes, "So don't you dare quit on me now."

Four

Pascal stopped reminiscing and took a seat in the back of the

club. He couldn't help but to ponder what this Kaydra creature would look like in person. He had always had his associates keep tabs on her location, yet he had never seen the girl in person. He wondered how much she looked like his boss and, of course, if she was just as psychotic. Then again, no one could be as psychotic as Rommel Kell.

The show started. Girl after girl came out on the stage, all dressed in the skimpiest of attire. Pascal was actually impressed. It was as if their looks partially intoxicated him. Then he saw her.

She clearly took after her father. Her long, luscious, dark brown hair was slicked back into a sleek ponytail. It was tainted a bit with thick bleached blond highlights. Her lipstick was red, but she had her father's lips. Her eyes were surrounded with glitter tipped fake lashes. In the middle of her routine, she looked directly at Pascal. It was then

he saw the most haunting resemblance between Kaydra and Rimmel. There was one thing that was practically identical between the two—their eyes.

Kaydra had beautiful piercing dark brown eyes and they wouldn't remove their stunning gaze from the likes of Pascal. He almost didn't feel worthy of the young woman's gaze. It was only for the mere fact of her beauty that made him unable to look away. Before he could devise a plan to get to her, the show was over. At least her segment of it was.

After watching the tall goddess like creature leave the stage, Pascal quietly got up and exited the club. The time was 11:03 PM, just under an hour till midnight. The cool autumn air was crisp and refreshing, yet he still put on his long button down blazer.

Pascal began to make his way down the fairly dormant city streets. Well, dormant for New York. As he walked he couldn't help but hear a commotion coming from a nearby ally. Just out of sheer curiosity, he decided to see what was going on.

"Let go of me," Kaydra shouted as she struggled against her clearly intoxicated opponent. She had seen him at the club just throwing back shot after shot. Now he had both her arms in a death grip.

"Come on, ya little slut," He said slurring his speech as he clung to her, "Come home with me tonight."

"I'm a dancer, not a fucking prostitute," the enraged girl shrieked. She was fighting even harder now, "Get your fucking hands off me."

The drunken bastard just tightened his grip, "Come on baby," He said, "You're mine tonight."

"Let me go," Kaydra screamed now beginning to panic.

"We're gonna have so much fun," The man said pulling Kaydra closer to him. Then he felt a firm hand on his shoulder.

“If I heard her right, the lady said to let go, and if I were you, I’d listen.” Pascal’s voice was calm but had a dark undertone to it. His grasp on the man’s shoulder was just hard enough to be threatening. Remmel had taught him extremely well.

Almost instantly the man released his painful grip on Kaydra. She fell to the ground sobbing.

Pascal got really close to the man’s ear and in a quiet snarl, he whispered, “Get lost.”

With that Kaydra’s assailant stumbled off into the night. Once he was out of sight, Pascal turned his attention to Kaydra. “Are you hurt,” he said kneeling down next to her.

“I don’t know,” Kaydra said still curled up on the ground.

“Is there somewhere I can take you,” Pascal said, “The hospital maybe?”

“No,” She said just trembling out of control, “I hate doctors.”

“Well, I’m not going to just leave you here,” Pascal insisted.

“I’m staying at Nazareth Housing,” She said, “I can walk.”

“It’s not safe for you to be out right now. At least let me walk with you.” Pascal said. He was practically begging now out of fear for his own life. If anything happened to Kaydra while she was under his watch Remmel would be extremely pissed.

“I don’t wanna impose,” Kaydra said hesitantly.

“I insist,” Pascal replied holding out his hand to her. She accepted the gesture, and he helped her up.

It was getting colder now and the young woman was wearing ripped jeans and a tank top. She was shaking tremendously. Pascal unbuttoned his blazer and put it around her shoulders. She looked at him with her dark eyes. There was a hint of gratitude behind them and

a bit of guilt, but the most prominent feeling she portrayed to Pascal was exhaustion.

“Are you sure you don’t want me to drive,” he asked again.

“Would you,” Kaydra replied, finally giving in to her exhaustion.

She clearly felt bad for needing the help, but Pascal just put his arm around her. “It’s going to be okay,” He said.

She placed her head against his shoulder and they began to walk to the car.

As they walked down the streets of New York Pascal couldn’t help but notice Kaydra tapping her fingers on her right hand against her thumb. He couldn’t help it. It reminded him of a similar action performed by Remmel.

Kaydra noticed Pascal’s fixation on her hand. “Sorry,” she said, “I can’t go through a door without tapping.”

“It doesn’t bother me,” Pascal replied, “I have a friend like that.”

“What do you mean ‘like that,’” Kaydra replied taken aback by this comment.

At that moment he was practically kicking himself. “I didn’t mean to offend you,” Pascal said quickly trying to mend the situation he had just created.

“It’s okay,” Kaydra said looking down, “I’m just a little insecure about it that’s all.”

“I don’t judge,” Pascal replied, now feeling bad for the girl. Even though it was obvious that he was much older Kaydra, Pascal felt a strong attraction to her.

“I don’t think I got your name,” she said leaning against him.

“I’m Jack,” He replied. He couldn’t help feeling the warmth of her body next to his.

“I’m Kaydra,” she replied looking down, “and thank you for saving me back there.”

“It wouldn’t be right if I didn’t,” Pascal said with a warm smile, “No one deserves to be hurt like that.”

Five

*W*ithout warning thunder cracked and a heavy downpour of

rain began falling from the sky. Pascal put his arm around Kaydra, and their eyes met for the first time since they locked eyes in the club.

“I love the rain,” She said as a shy smile came across her face.

“Why,” Pascal said not breaking eye contact.

Kaydra looked away. “It reminds me of my family,” she replied, “I was told it began to rain two minutes after my mother and sister died. When it rains it makes me feel that they’re still looking over me.”

“I’m so sorry for your loss,” Pascal said feeling guilty that he already knew what happened.

“I’ve come to terms with it,” Kaydra replied with a sad undertone.

“You know why I love the rain,” Pascal said trying to change the mood.

“Why,” Kaydra said looking back into his bright blue eyes.

“Because,” Pascal said with a slight smile, “all the best love stories end with a rain storm.”

Kaydra was quiet, but Pascal could see a spark of desire in her eyes. After a moment of this beautiful silence she spoke.

“Or they begin with one,” Kaydra said almost majestically.

They stopped walking simultaneously and faced each other. Pascal couldn't hold back any more. At that moment he kissed her, and she didn't pull away. In fact she just pressed her body against his, almost as if she were clinging to him for dear life.

“I'm sorry. I shouldn't have...” Pascal said trying to pull away, yet Kaydra stopped him.

“Kiss me again,” she said. Her voice shook but it still exuberated her sinful desire.

“Are you sure,” Pascal replied trying to control his lust for her at that moment.

“Please,” Kaydra practically whispered the word, “I want you, and I know you want me too.”

She looked at him with lusting eyes and with that he couldn't resist anymore. It was almost as if the young beauty was some type of drug. By kissing her, Pascal had taken the first hit, and now he was head over heels addicted. He pulled her close to him and gently tucked her now sopping wet hair behind her ear. After watching the girl trembled at his touch, he went in for the kiss. This time the passion that both individuals felt was electrified to an even higher intensity. After feeling this passion and electricity between Kaydra and himself, Pascal had no problem inviting her to his penthouse suite.

Pascal didn't think twice about it. He was now fully lusting over Kaydra, and what Remmel didn't know wouldn't hurt him, but the thought never crossed his mind that Kaydra could have an ulterior motive.

During the quick ten minute car ride Pascal could hardly pay attention to the road. He was so smitten with lust. When he parked, he

quickly got out of the car, and opened the door for the young dancer. After handing his keys to the valet, he turned to the object of his affection and asked, “Are you sure you want to do this?”

The girl let out an unsteady breath. “I’ve never been more sure of anything in my life.”

“You’re shaking,” Pascal said looking into her dark gorgeous eyes.

“I know,” Kaydra whispered, kissing him again.

“God, you’re amazing,” Pascal said shaking now himself.

“So are you,” Kaydra said taking his hands in hers, “I want you. I want you so bad.”

“Let’s go,” Pascal replied naively leading her into the building.

Six

*P*ascal’s penthouse had the most stunning view of New York City,

and there was a huge window in front of the bed to gaze out upon it. His favorite spot to think would be right in front of that window.

“Wow,” Kaydra said looking out at the city.

“It’s mesmerizing, isn’t it,” Pascal said standing aside the young woman.

“Yes, it is,” Kaydra replied. Then after a short pause said, “You wouldn’t mind if I used the restroom real quick would you?”

“Go ahead,” Pascal said a bit taken aback by the question, “It’s right around the corner.” He didn’t notice that she had taken her purse with her, and even if he did it wouldn’t have raised a red flag.

Kaydra entered the black and white themed bathroom yet didn't shut the door. Immediately pulled her freshly sharpened switch knife out of her purse. She held it in her hand, almost as if she were examining it. After a moment an ominous grin came over her face. As she clicked the blade open she let out a small laugh. It was a beautiful blade, perfect for her grand birthday extravaganza.

She turned on the sink, set the knife quietly down on the counter, and slipped off all of her cloths. Silently she picked up the knife and walked back around the corner. She saw her target still standing in front of the window, looking at the beauty that lay below him. He appeared deep in thought. This was perfect for Kaydra. She knew if she made one noise he would turn around, and that was something she couldn't afford. She practically held her breath as she crept across the heavily carpeted floor.

Kaydra got right up behind him. With two hands she raised the knife above her head. Then, in a fast and accurate motion, brought the knife down directly in the spot where Pascal's neck met his back. The blade severed his spine. Kaydra could feel the knife breaking through the bone. It was a glorious feeling.

Pascal fell to the ground, unable to feel his body. Yet he could still see Kaydra standing over him.

"Instant paralysis is such a beautiful thing," Kaydra said quietly kneeling down next to the dying man. Blood coated the front of her body, " But there's only one problem with it... My father wanted me to assure myself you were dead before I left and as of now you're not." She put the knife to Pascal's throat. "I hope you enjoy these last few minutes of your life," She said running the freshly sharpened blade back and forth on his neck as if she were butchering a piece of meat until his head had been completely decapitated. She kissed the top of Pascal's severed head then walked back to the bathroom as if nothing had happened.

She got into the dead man's shower and rinsed the blood off her naked body, dried off and, put her cloths back on. After making

herself look nice, took the flip phone out of her purse and hit the first contact on speed dial.

“Is it done,” Remmel said, before Kaydra could speak.

“Yes,” She replied.

“I payed for the tickets in your name,” Remmel said, “Just show your ID and passport at the terminal to get your boarding pass. You have both on you right now, am I correct?”

“Yes,” Kaydra said.

“Take a taxi to the airport. Don’t stop anywhere else,” Remmel ordered, “I already transferred the money into your account to pay for everything you need.”

“I’ll see you soon, and dad,” Kaydra said cracking a huge smile, “we’re gonna have so much fun together.”

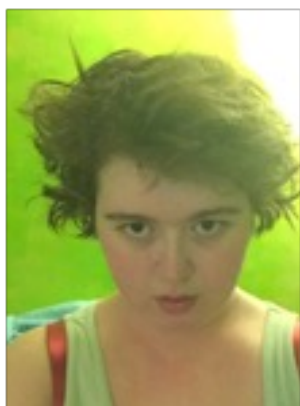
“Yes we are darling,” Remmel said, “And just remember Kaydra, this time we will have together, it’s a good thing.”

“I know,” Kaydra said hanging up the phone.

Remmel sat down the phone and looked at the sharpened collection of knives he kept on the table. “Like all good things darling,” He said as if his daughter were sitting in front of him, “Time must come to an end, even for you.”

Rommel Kell was the CEO of Account Force USA, or as most people knew it, the largest banking franchise in the United States. To the public Rommel seemed to be a charismatic and highly educated entrepreneur. When he gave a speech or did an interview everyone stopped to listen. Yet those close to him knew the gorgeous CEO had a very morbid obsession. He would target single mothers with two children. Then brutally murder them one by one in the order of ascending age. It was the perfect ratio, and to him, it was such a good thing.

**But all Good Things Must Come
to an End...**



**Enjoy if you dare...
-Sterling Emmal**