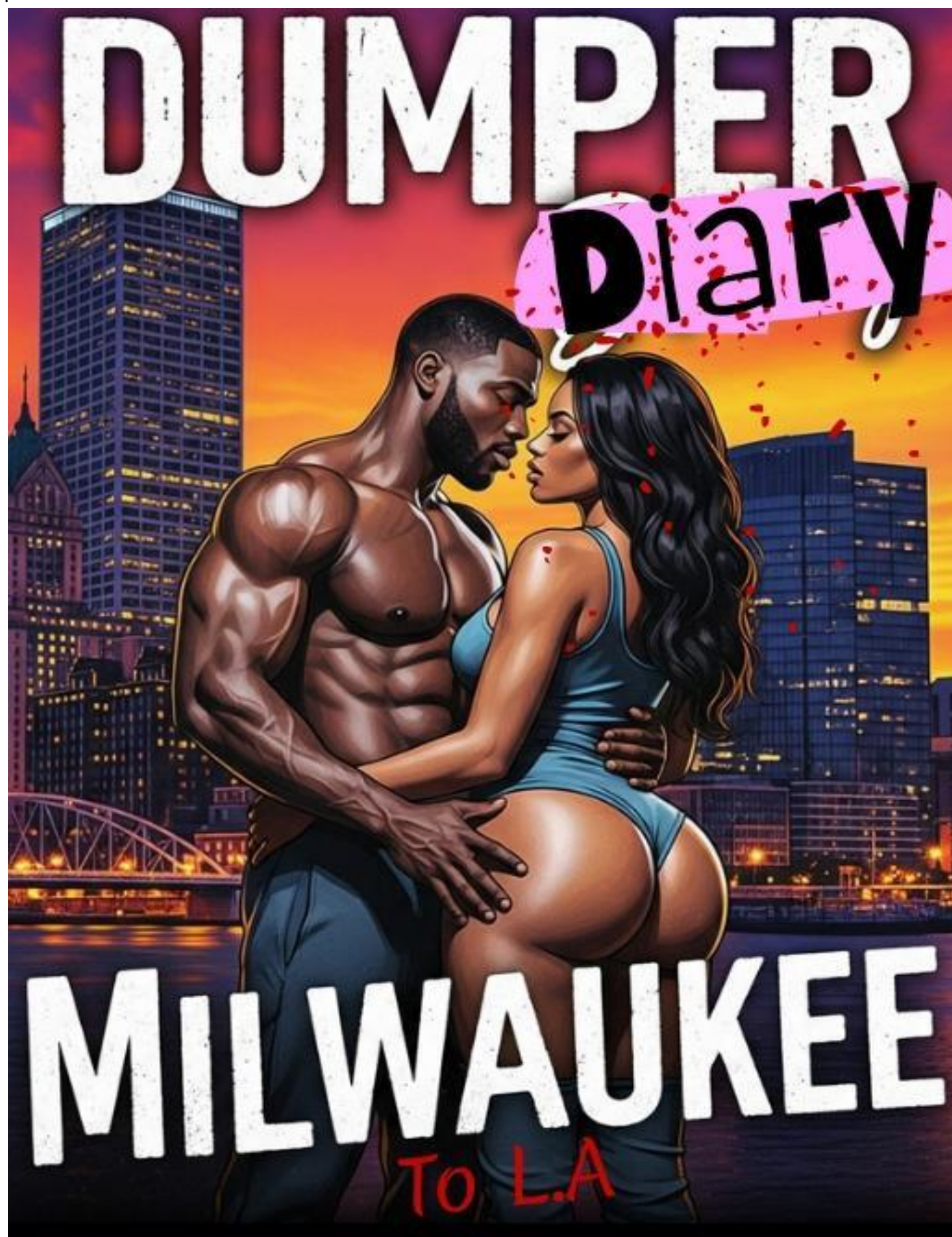




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Prologue:

Final Destination Ain't Just a Movie

“KELLY!... KELLY!” Somebody screamin’ my name. But my ears ringin’ so loud, it feel like I’m underwater with a fire alarm goin’ off in my head. Everything hurt. My chest tight. My face wet. Blood maybe? I’m upside down, strapped in, barely conscious. The seatbelt diggin’ into my ribs like it hate me. The world upside down... and everything in me beggin’ to go back to sleep.

Then it hit me. The crash. We was just laughin’. Just talkin’. Monie was in the back seat singin’ somethin’ off TikTok. She’d always twist the lyrics on purpose—made us crack up every time she belted “Old Town Road” as “Mold Brown Toad.” Off-key as hell.

Mama was fussin’ at the GPS. My sister was chewin’ on Hot Cheetos loud as hell.

Then that semi came flyin’. That bitch slid sideways on black ice like it ain’t have no brakes, and all I remember was metal crushin’, people screamin’, then nothin’.

Now I’m wakin’ up to this. Smoke in the air. Coppery blood on my tongue. Taste like pennies and death. My eyes barely open, but what I do see? Made my soul leave my body. Monie. My 9 year old baby sister... ripped in half. Her bottom half still buckled in the seat across from me, little legs danglin’. But her torso—her whole upper body—was thrown into the roof of the van, layin’ there like a goddamn doll somebody ripped apart.

I scream her name, “MONIE!!” but soon as I do, pain slices through my chest like a blade. That’s when I feel it. Somethin’ sharp pierced right through me. A piece of metal—jagged, thick—stabbed clean through my chest, stickin’ out my back. I can’t even breathe right. Every inhale feel like I’m drowning in broken glass. Blood gurgles in my throat, thick and warm. I spit, but it just drips down onto my hoodie. My eyes dart again—and then I see her. Mama. Her head... sittin’ in the corner of the van. Eyes wide open. Mouth still parted like she was mid-sentence. Body gone. I start screamin’ but no sound comin’ out now. I’m gaspin’ like a fish outta water, shakin’, tremblin’, stuck.

And that’s when I see what’s left of my brothers and my sister. Ain’t nothin’ but shredded meat and bones back there. Brains on the ceiling. Somebody’s arm—my brother’s, maybe—bent the wrong way, twitchin’ slightly. The whole van look like a butcher shop. Then the sirens get louder. I hear boots slam on the pavement. Somebody yellin’ about gas leak and “don’t move her!” But I ain’t movin’ nowhere. I can’t. My body numb. My soul gone.

I close my eyes. I don't even fight it. I just let go.

For a moment, nothing moved. No pain, no sound—just the eerie stillness of being truly broken.

A single shard of glass glinted on my torn sleeve—like death itself had left a calling card.

Chapter 1 - Dumper Diary:

It's 3 Days Post-Crash at St. Mary's ICU on the Eastside of Milwaukee

"Kelly... KELLY!" That voice again. Distant, like I was underwater. But this time, it was louder—more urgent.

I opened my eyes slow. The air smelled like antiseptic and hot coffee—someone's second shift just kicked in down the hall. A soft whoosh from the ventilator felt oddly like a lullaby. Everything felt heavy, like my eyelids was made outta bricks. The light was too damn bright, and my body? It ain't even feel like mine. I couldn't move.

My arms, stiff. Wrapped up. My chest felt like it had a hole in it—like I couldn't take a full breath without pain stabbing through me. My legs was numb. Wrapped in something hard and cold.

My head... shit, my head was pounding like I'd been jumped by life itself.

I blinked and started piecing it together.

Hospital bed. Tubes everywhere. My mouth dry as hell. Machines beeping steady. My chest rose—barely.

I had bandages, bruises, shit I couldn't even name.

Then it hit me. I felt the images flashback. I gagged.

The machines beeped faster, but a nurse rushed in and held me down gently.

"Kelly, baby, you're okay. You're safe now. You're in the hospital. Just breathe."

As she pressed a cloth to my cheek, I caught a glimpse of a skull-and-rose ink on her forearm—same design I'd seen tagging alleys back home in Milwaukee.

Safe? Ain't no such thing as safe now.

"You're awake," she said gently. "You've been out for three days."

Three days. I barely had a grip on minutes, much less days.

I had fractures everywhere—the doctors said my ribs were cracked, my left lung punctured by some shard of glass that got stuck deep inside my chest. My arms were

broken in two places, my right leg shattered so bad they weren't sure if it'd ever work right again.

There was a bruise on my head so big it felt like someone had smashed a watermelon against it. The CT scan showed a fractured skull, and my brain felt like it was still rattling.

Pelvis cracked. Face cut up from the glass.

And I survived.

Only one.

Outta seven people in that van.

I was the only one who made it out alive.

They said it was a miracle.

Miracle my ass... somebody died so I could still breathe.

I called it hell.

I laid there, high off painkillers but low as hell in my spirit.

I ain't wanna eat. Couldn't sleep without nightmares. Couldn't cry no more—I already let every tear I had leak out.

I was empty. Hollow.

I kept thinking, why me? Why I make it and not them?

The day of the crash was supposed to be celebration.

I had just graduated from Pulaski High School on the Eastside of Milwaukee.

Cap and gown, walking across that weak lil stage with my family in the stands.

My mom had balloons.

My lil sister had glitter on her cheeks.

Everybody smiling, for once.

Then we hit the road.

Headed outta town to celebrate.

And boom—God flipped the script.

I grew up on 1st and Clarke, in that old red brick building with busted mailboxes.

Projects.

Milwaukee cold.

Grew up broke but never broken.

My mama used to strip before she got her CNA license—real woman shit.

She flipped her whole life to raise us right.

My daddy?

He used to be that man in the music scene, swearin' he had a beat stolen by some major rapper.

Never got his credit.

Turned bitter.

Started snorting pills and pouring up, but still showed up for us.
He was a good man—just broken.
I was always into music. Started rapping at three, swear to God.
I'd walk around mimicking my uncles, playing on the piano, making up rhymes about cereal and cartoons.
But I ain't take it serious 'til high school.
My freshman year, this program came through the school—The Peace Project.
Two Black dudes from the city trying to help the youth express theyself.
They helped us make songs, shoot videos for a month for a hour a day at school.
They was hella cool and always let us vibe even tho we had to keep the music clean and on clean topics.
They allowed me to find a flow and learn how to make a basic beat.
That's when Kelly P was born.
I ain't never release shit though.
I just stacked songs.
Made beats on a cracked laptop using Logic.
My notebook was thicker than a Bible, full of bars.
I wrote all the time anychance I had.
I was making beats and recording hits.
I always kept everything to myself.
Quiet.
Focused.
Lame to most folks, but I ain't care.
Lungs barely holding on, trying to figure out who
I'm s'posed to be now.

Chapter 2 (Part 1) - Rehab, Rage, and Rebirth

My whole body felt like it got jumped by the devil and left for dead.
Pain wasn't just physical.
It was a deep-ass soul burn that no pill or doctor could touch.
Every inch screamed betrayal like my own body had turned traitor.
Broken femur, ribs shattered like dry twigs, collarbone snapped clean as a twig, and my skull cracked just enough to keep me awake in a nightmare I couldn't wake from.
I had stitches across my face, bruises from neck to toe, and my eyes still stung everytime I blinked from the glass they pulled out.

But somehow... I was still here.

And everything around me wasn't.

Rehab started slow.

They moved me slow, like handling a fragile-ass relic nobody wanted to break but nobody knew how to fix either.

They had me in a wheelchair at first, doped up on hella meds just to keep the pain manageable.

I had a team of doctors and therapists—white coats, fake smiles, and soft-ass voices like I wasn't a girl from the Eastside of Milwaukee who seen death up close.

They talked down to me like I was fragile glass, but I was a grenade—ready to blow if they pushed too hard.

This wasn't some made-for-TV bullshit.

This was raw pain, cold and cruel.

I was still grieving, still broke up, still tryna figure out why God left me here and took everybody else.

The mornings were the worst.

Cold-ass sponge baths and learning how to walk again with metal rods in my legs.

I hated waking up, but I hated not waking up more.

I used to be thick and pretty, now I was bandaged up, pale, and looked like something off The Walking Dead.

I couldn't eat.

I barely talked.

Food looked like poison.

Talking felt like choking on grief.

Silence was all I had left to scream with.

My godmom Tisha flew in first—my mama's best friend since they danced together at Platinum when they was young.

She smelled like home and heartbreak all mixed together.

Tried to hold it together for me, but the tears always leaked.

She had tears in her eyes the whole visit but tried to stay strong, telling me, "You here for a reason, baby. Don't give up."

Then came my Uncle Zeke and Auntie Keesha from Chicago—two loud, dramatic mf's who cried hard but brought that real hood love.

They was the kind of family that argued and fussed but showed up heavy when it mattered.

Auntie had cooked greens and cornbread and smuggled it in even though the nurses tripped.

Said I needed "soul" not no bland-ass Jello and crackers.

Uncle Zeke damn near fought security after he saw the hospital bill.

That bill was a slap in the face from a system that didn't give a damn about folks like us.

"Two thousand for a damn aspirin?! Y'all tryna scam us while she fightin' for her life?"

My girls from high school pulled up too.

They was the only normal thing in this fucked up world — real ones who didn't just visit, they stayed.

Asia and Domo. Two nerdy, anime-loving, rap-spitting bihhs who always held me down.

They walked in with balloons, big-ass posters that said "KELLY P 4L," and tears that hit me harder than the meds ever could.

Asia ain't even say much—just grabbed my hand and whispered, "You not alone. You got us."

That's when the lawyers showed up.

I wanted to tell them to leave, to let me grieve in peace.

But they smelled blood—and I was their ticket.

Clean suits, briefcases, and no real emotion—just opportunity in their eyes.

The trucking company was a crooked-ass mess — busted trucks, ignored warnings, and drivers pushing 14-hour shifts like it was normal.

Driver was overworked.

Brakes were faulty.

And guess what?

That bitch of a company had been warned three times by DOT (Department of Transportation) that their fleet wasn't road ready.

And the driver?

On his 14th hour behind the wheel.

Illegal af.

They explained it real smooth: I had a wrongful death case stacked ten feet tall.

The company was negligent and they knew it.

My family died because some greedy-ass corporate mf didn't care enough to fix a damn truck.

At first, I ain't wanna sue.

Shit felt dirty.

But letting them walk felt dirtier.

Like giving them a pass on stealing my life and my family.

No amount of money could bring back Monie or Mama.

But then my daddy—who was recovering from his own shit—said it best on the phone:

“You ain’t takin’ blood money, baby... you takin’ accountability. Somebody gotta pay for what they stole from us.”

We settled out of court six months later.

That money didn’t feel like freedom.

It was a weight—a reminder that justice in this world was just numbers on a screen.

\$2 million bucks straight into a trust fund under my name.

I stared at that figure like it was both a lifeline and a noose.

Every dollar felt like a scar.

Rich in paper, poor in peace.

My fingertips hovered over the ‘view balance’ button—but my heart felt bankrupt.

I was 18 now.

Legally grown.

Legally rich.

And legally alone.

Just a kid stuck in a grown-ass world that don’t care if you crack.

After the rehab wrapped up, I had two choices:

stay in Milwaukee and keep drowning in memories,

or start over somewhere far.

Somewhere warm.

Somewhere I ain’t hear my sister’s scream every time I close my eyes.

Tisha opened her home to me in L.A.

Inglewood wasn’t no paradise, but it was better than the ashes I left behind.—said I could come stay with her in Inglewood, in the same spot she been holding down since she left the pole and got clean.

It wasn’t no Beverly Hills, but it was palm trees, sun, and a new start.

So I took it.

I packed up my pain and boarded a plane to a new hell disguised as hope.

I eventually got the energy to look for spot and bought myself a clean lil one-story with a backyard in Calabasas shortly after moving with Tisha.

I walked through each room in silence—

kitchen, living, bedroom—every echo reminding me:

I own this place, but I don’t belong here.

Nothing too flashy, but cute enough.

Three Modern bedrooms, updated kitchen, and a lil studio I had them update.

I also copped a black-on-black G Wagon I didn’t want to flex.

I just wanted armor—something to hide behind.—
 fast but lowkey for this area.
 Didn't want no attention.
 Just space.
 Peace.
 A fresh beginning.
 But peace don't last long when you got trauma trailing behind you.
 Even in L.A., even with palm trees and palm angels, I still heard the crash in my dreams.
 Still felt Monie's blood on my shirt.
 Still reached for my mama's hand in my sleep.
 But I kept moving.
 Kept writing raps.
 Started recording on my own equipment in that lil home studio.
 I ain't put nothing out yet, but every track was a release.
 I talked to God, to my sister, to pain.

Chapter 2- Part 2

Rebuilt from the Ruins

(Flashback - Six Months of Rehab)

Smellin' bleach and piss and trauma every time you open your eyes. Bein' stared at like a
 body in a bag that just happened to keep breathin'.
 My eyes opened, and the only thing I could do was cry. No sound came out, just hot tears
 runnin' down my temples into a pillow that smelled like chemicals and sorrow.
 I looked around and saw wires, tubes, a breathing machine, and a tray of untouched
 applesauce next to my bed. The walls were so white they hurt.
 My reflection was blurry in the IV bag. Pale. Swollen. Bandaged. Gone. I looked like
 somebody who died and got sent back by accident.
 I had internal bleeding, a minor stroke, and the doctors said I might not walk again. I didn't
 even care. My mama, daddy, and baby brother had already been buried. What did it matter
 if I walked?

The Beginning of the End

(Or So I Thought)

I couldn't even talk for the first two weeks. My jaw was wired, my throat raw from tubes. Every time a nurse came in, I prayed they'd leave me alone.

They'd smile fake smiles and ask if I needed anything. Yeah, I needed my whole damn life back.

Instead, I got baths from strangers who avoided eye contact, needles every four hours, and that constant sound from the heart monitor that reminded me I was still alive when I didn't wanna be.

The worst part? That damn catheter. Ain't no dignity left after pissin' in a bag for three weeks straight.

First Steps Are the Deepest

Physical therapy started when I could finally sit up without throwin' up. They rolled me into a room with mats, mirrors, and machines that looked like medieval torture devices. The mirrors were so bright I could see every bruise on my body reflected back, making me feel two dozen scars deep.

That's where I met Marcus — my physical therapist. Ex-football player. Built like a doorframe. Beard always lined. Voice deep like he narrated movie trailers.

He looked me dead in the eye and said,

"Aight, Ms. Kelly. You ready to fight back?"

He hesitated, jaw tight.

"I lost my little brother to a hit-and-run — never saw him stand or walk again. Now I fight for every step you take."

I blinked at him.

"Do I got a choice?"

He chuckled.

"Nope."

The first time I tried standing, my legs collapsed. I hit the mat like a sack of potatoes. Face flushed, pride shattered.

"Don't trip," he said, helping me up.

"Everybody falls at first."

"I ain't everybody," I mumbled.

"You ain't. You Kelly. And Kelly gon' walk outta here. Bet."

Sweat, Screams, and a Little Soul Food

It wasn't just pain. It was humiliation. Learning how to brush my own teeth again. How to hold a fork. How to sit up in bed without someone lifting my back like I was made of glass.

But slowly — like inch by inch, breath by breath — I got better.

Marcus pushed me every damn day.

“Just one more, Kel. Just one more rep.”

He’d play old-school R&B in the background — Luther, Donny, Anita — and let me curse him out while I screamed through the stretches.

I’d say shit like,

“You built like a brick but you got me doin’ yoga poses like I ain’t fractured in three places!”

He’d laugh and reply,

“You lucky I like you. Keep that sass up and I’mma make you do two more sets.”

Nurses, Jokes, and Blunts on the Low

The staff was a mixed bag. Some cold. Some fake.

But Nurse Carla? She was a real one. Lightskin, tats all over, always chewing gum.

She smuggled in a mini speaker and played City Girls when the older nurses wasn’t around.

“Hospital quiet is depressing,” she’d whisper.

“Let’s turn up just a lil’.”

One time she even rolled up and hit me with a

“You ain’t see this, aight?”

We hotboxed that therapy room on my birthday. I’ll never forget that shit.

Learning to Walk Again

The day I took five steps without the walker, I cried. Ugly cried.

Not because I was in pain — but because I felt powerful again.

Marcus held me steady and whispered,

“You did that. You.”

They clapped for me. My girls cheered.

I felt like I won something — not a medal, not a trophy — but my own damn self.

Each day after that, I walked a little farther.

Lifted a little more weight. Laughed a little louder. Grieved a little less.

Final Month: Rebirth

By month five, I had full control of my legs again. I was still stiff, and my limp was noticeable, but I could walk. Climb stairs. Dress myself. Take showers standing up.

More importantly, I was me again — scarred, stretched, stitched-up, but me.

The therapy team threw me a lil’ “Going Home” party. They gave me a cupcake and a card full of messages like:

“You’re a fighter.”

- “We’ll miss your sass.”

- “Keep climbing, Kelly.”

I hugged Marcus so hard my ribs hurt.

“Don’t ever come back,” he joked.

“I won’t,” I said, wiping tears.

“But you gon’ hear about me.”

Present Day: 6 months after accident

Now when I wake up and my knee aches or my shoulder stiffens up, I don’t complain.

I just remember that girl in the hospital bed who couldn’t lift her own head.

I remember the pain, the progress, the fight.

And I remember who the fuck I am.

Kelly P. Rebuilt from the ruins.

*Chapter 3 (Part 1) : Za, Flops, and Real Sh*t*

May 1st , 2025

I rolled over in my Calabazas bedroom, sunlight pouring through these tall-ass windows like it owned the whole damn place.

Six months ago, I was laid up in a hospital bed.

Now I float in this mansion like a ghost — sunlight dancing on marble but no warmth in my chest.

I’m in an almost half-million dollar home with a pool, marble floors, and a walk-in closet that look like it belonged to somebody on *Love & Hip Hop*.

I should’ve felt on top of the world.

But real sh*t? I felt numb.

Most days, I smoked till my lungs gave out. My daily starter pack: five backwoods, half a zip of Za, and a bottle of water I never finished.

I stayed high. Floating. Hovering over my trauma like it was some dark pit I was scared to step back into.

Every puff was an escape, but the pain? That sh*t was still right there, lurking behind my lashes.

I hit up every fire dispensary from downtown to the Valley. Cookies, Jungle Boys, Sherbinskis — I tried it all.

Ran through eighths like they was nugs of relief.

Sometimes I'd sit in my Maybach just chieffin', music low, watching rich folks jog past like they ain't never lost nobody in their whole damn lives.

It had only been a week in Cali, and the silence was killin' me.

No Monie callin' my name, no Mama yelling 'bout the dishes, no Daddy comin' in talkin' 'bout "Turn that beat down, girl!"

It was just me and that echo.

Even Domo was gone, took off to China to start med school. Proud of her, but it left me all alone.

So I texted Mei.

"Come live w me. I'll fly u out. I'm deadass lonely af."

Mei responded in seconds.

"Say less. I'll pack. Need a change anyway."

I smiled for the first time in days.

But even with Mei on the way, my mood wasn't hittin'.

Something else was eating at my chest.

My first song dropped. I thought it was fire. Spent three days mixing that bihh. Beat crazy. Hook catchy. Bars real. I titled it "*DeadWeight*" — a tribute to the people I lost and the pain I carried. Uploaded it everywhere — YouTube, TikTok, Apple Music — all that. Made a quick lil video of me vibin' in the booth, smokin' and talkin' sh*t.

I thought folks back in Milwaukee would show love. Thought the L.A. folks would rock with a real baddie wit bars. Twenty-eight views. I stared at the number like it was a bad joke — 28 souls out of millions. A voice in my head whispered, '*Maybe you really aren't that special.*'

28 damn views. That's it. On YouTube. Spotify had even less. TikTok? Crickets. IG comments? One emoji from some spam page.

I stared at the numbers on my phone for hours. Refreshed the page so many times my screen damn near cracked. I had money now, a studio in the house, real equipment. Thought that was all it took — drop heat, go viral, go big. But the sh*t flopped. Hard.

I felt sick. Like, why did I even bother?

That night, I sat in the studio with tears in my eyes and a wood burning slow. I was high, yeah, but not the fun high. The "*what am I doing with my life*" kinda high. My phone buzzed, but I ain't even care. I felt washed. Embarrassed. Like maybe I wasn't cut for this. When Mei landed, I picked her up in the matte-black G-Wagon, red guts inside. Mei looked around like, "*Damn, this your sht?*"*

“Yup. Welcome to the crib, bihh,” I grinned, trying to hide the weight behind my eyes.

We got back to the house, rolled up instantly, and got to talking.

“You really did that, Kel. You made it out. From Pulaski to palm trees.”

I puffed. “It don’t feel like it.”

Mei gave me a look. “You still healing. Don’t rush it.”

We chilled outside by the fire pit, blunt after blunt, stars above us and silence in the hills.

“I dropped my first song,” I said, voice low. Mei perked up. “Word? Let me hear it!”

I hesitated, then pulled it up. The beat hit hard — dark, moody, real.

Mei sat quiet, then nodded slow. “Yo, this sh*t go.”

I shrugged. “Only 28 views.”

“Man, f*ck the views. You know how many girls wish they had half your skill? You just gotta learn the game.”

I exhaled smoke, eyes glassy. “What you mean?”

“This industry ain’t just bars and beats no more. It’s image. Marketing. Algorithms. TikToks. Content calendars. Fan engagement. You gotta build a whole brand. Being talented ain’t enough no more.”

I leaned back. “Damn... I thought that sh*t would blow. It felt like a moment, y’know?”

“It is a moment. But now you gotta turn it into a movement.”

That hit different.

Later that night, I went on YouTube and started watching interviews — indie artists talking strategy, how to market music, how to pitch to playlists, how to use reels, how to build a fanbase from scratch. Realized I was basically starting over.

All that talent meant nothing if nobody saw it.

Had to become a brand. Kelly P couldn’t just be a grieving girl who rapped good. Had to be a whole movement. A vibe. A message.

The next day, I wrote a list on the whiteboard in my home studio:

- Make 1-minute content daily
- Start IG freestyles weekly
- Engage w fans daily
- Record visuals, not just songs
- Email pitch to playlist curators
- Find a brand image and stick to it

I stared at it long. Then nodded.

“Okay then. Kelly P finna eat.”

This pain? I was gonna turn that sh*t into power.

This house? This weed? This view? It was all fuel.

I lit another blunt, stepped out on the balcony, and looked down at the city.

L.A. was cold, fake, and lonely.

But it was my new home.

And Kelly P was just gettin’ started.

Chapter 3 (Part 2): Roots, Rages, and Rolls

Calabasas truly felt like a different planet from Milwaukee — palm trees swaying in the warm night breeze, sprawling houses with manicured lawns, and luxury whips lining every street like trophies.

My house was tucked on a quiet cul-de-sac with a view of the hills that shimmered silver under the moonlight.

I wasn’t used to this life. It felt strange and new, like wearing shoes two sizes too big.

But it was mine now.

Mei was the one who made it feel real.

We’d been tight since third grade — ever since she and her family moved here from Japan, fleeing shadows neither of us fully understood back then.

Our houses were right down the block from each other growing up in Milwaukee. We shared everything — secrets, dreams, and music.

That last day before I left, Domo and I kicked it with Mei at my old spot. We smoked, laughed through tears, and talked about the future.

The heaviness in my chest made me want to scream, but Mei just held me tight.

“You gotta breathe, Kel,” she said. “We all got our battles, but you got this. You ain’t alone.”

When night came, Mei and I decided to step out.

I hadn’t really done much nightlife before or since I got to Calabasas — mostly stuck in the studio or laying low — but that night I needed to move, to let off the pressure, to feel something. The club was lit up like a damn Vegas set.

Neon lights flickered, bass thumping through the floor, bodies moving in sweaty rhythm.

The air smelled like a mix of perfume, alcohol, and weed haze.

And then I saw him.

Blicky.

He stood at the edge of the crowd — tall, broad-shouldered, moving with a confidence that sliced through the chaos.

Dressed all black — leather jacket, designer jeans, fresh kicks — with eyes that glinted like dark ice.

His jaw was sharp, his smile slow and dangerous, like he knew exactly what power he held. He wasn't just a man — he was a force.

When his gaze landed on me, something deep stirred in my chest.

The DJ's track dropped into a hard kick, but around us the noise seemed to muffle — like the bass swallowed every other pulse in the room.

My breath hitched, skin tingling like I'd been shocked.

Heat pooled low in my stomach, spreading up to my cheeks.

I felt wet — like my body was screaming to him before my brain even caught up.

My hands trembled just a little, heart pounding in a rhythm I'd never heard before.

Blicky's eyes held mine with an intensity that made the world blur around the edges.

His smile grew wider — slow, deliberate — like he was claiming me without saying a word.

He stepped closer, and the heat between us was electric.

"You new round here?"

His voice was low, smooth like bourbon, and it slid into my ear like a secret.

I nodded, unable to find my voice at first.

Then I muttered, "Yeah. Just moved."

He reached out, fingers brushing against mine like a spark.

"Name's Blick. If you ever need anything, you know where to find me."

That simple sentence was a promise — and a warning.

I could feel his power — not just from the way he moved, but from the aura he carried.

The weight of his name in these parts.

I swallowed hard, trying to steady my breath.

My body still buzzing, my mind racing with all the questions I didn't know how to ask.

Blicky turned, disappearing back into the crowd, but the feeling he left behind lingered — thick and heavy like smoke in a closed room.

I realized then this was different.

Not just another night.

Not just another chance encounter.

Something had shifted.

Me and Mei turned up until the club closed, then we went home. Next morning I was a little hungover but not enough to stop the grind. With Mei in my corner, schooling me on ads — Instagram, Facebook, Google — I learned how to turn my story into a brand. Together, we planned a \$100,000 campaign for our new joint — so I got the money from the bank for “*Bird Flu*” and put together a music video. Pay a fee to known people in the city to be in it, so it could actually get some traction & blow. I was looking to get bigger names from back home in Milwaukee like Big Frank & JP. But for right now me and Mei studio sessions were sacred.

The little home studio smelled like weed, sweat, and dreams.

We was shitting on hoes with this one.

The beat hit hard and shit made my ass twitch — I wanted to shake ass immediately, lol. Mei’s smooth voice layered over my rough edge, turning hood and hustle into a vibe people could feel.

The song wasn’t just music — it was our declaration. Our anthem.

I brought my Milwaukee Midwest sound and ate that song tf down. Fr tho.

With a bottle of Don Julio in my right hand & Casamigos in my left hand, I went in.

Kelly P (Chorus)

“I put myself up in that Lambo

Yo nigga still on the bus

Ho you waitin’ on yo next check

Mines bought the spot for brunch

I heard a discount, watcha need?

We own this bitch now, what ya want?

Bitches always wanna hate

Birds always wanna jump”

Verse

“He flew me out cuz I’m the shit

He flew u out cuz u a bum

I crossed the state because I’m rich

You crossed the state cuz you a drunk

Don’t need no nigga to get me lit

I can pay for anything I want

You a broke stupid cheap bitch

I’m from Milwaukee where they dump”

That shit hit hard asf. I knew I killed the chorus and verse.

We finished the song with Mei's verse, and we were both drunk so I mixed it as best as I could — adding melodies and pianos to the beat, making the 808s hit harder, and adding some auto-tune to our voices to make it crispy.

Added some plug-ins I bought from T-Pain's kit. I went the whole 9 and made that shit sound good even while drunk.

The night ended with me falling asleep at the desk mixing our songs. Of course, a bihh barely remembered.

Chapter 4: "Pain Breeds Power"

(Part 1)

I woke up to sunlight creeping through the Calabasas blinds, burnin' my face like it had beef.

My head was still hummin' from all the Don & Casamigos me and Mei tore through last night, and my throat felt like I'd swallowed the mic we was screamin' in.

But I smiled.

Last night was dope.

Real dope.

Me and Mei, in the stu, laughin' our pain away like two lil' high-ass angels tryna out-rap their trauma.

She even fell asleep on the couch in my room after we rolled up and talked 'bout old times.

Third grade to now — we was locked in like DNA.

I stretched, yawned, and looked to the other side of the room.

Empty.

Mei's spot was cold.

Covers thrown like she dipped in a hurry.

"Huh?"

I sat up. Rubbed my eyes.

Maybe she went to the kitchen.

Maybe she went outside to smoke.

Or maybe she glanced at me funny last night, that half-smile that didn't quite reach her eyes.

Maybe she...

No.

Somethin' ain't feel right.

I got up, my bare feet hittin' the cold hardwood.

The house was quiet — too damn quiet.

No music.

No smell of weed.

No giggles.

No damn Mei.

"Mei?" I called out.

No answer.

I checked the kitchen.

Nothing.

Backyard? Pool? Bathroom?

Gone.

She always left me a message if she left, so that was hella odd.

Then I seen some of her stuff was gone.

Like.

huh?

Now my stomach started doin' that weird twisty shit — like when you on a rollercoaster and it click-clacks to the top and you know somethin' wild 'bout to drop.

I walked back into my room, heart thumpin'.

I tried to calm myself.

Then it hit me.

The lockbox.

The fucking money.

I kept it in a small safe behind my mirror.

Dumb, I know — but I never thought I had to be on guard around Mei.

She knew all my shit.

Passwords, codes, my motherfuckin' Wi-Fi.

She been knowin' me since I had pigtails and a Lisa Frank backpack.

I used to ride to school in her daddy's old Lexus when the buses ain't run.

My fingers were already shakey when I pulled the mirror aside.

I typed in the code.

The same one she seen me put in a hundred times.

Click.

I opened it.

Nothing.

Not a damn dollar.

Not a crumb.

Not a wrapper.

Not even a lil' note sayin' "my bad."

That \$100,000 was gone.

Gone.

And just like that, all those months in that hospital bed flashed back — vomiting blood, screaming for my mama, learning to walk on shattered bones.

This betrayal wasn't just money gone.

It was another family ripped to shreds.

At first, I just stood there.

Blinkin'.

Like maybe my eyes was playin' tricks.

Maybe I was too high.

Maybe it's a dream.

Maybe Mei moved it for safekeepin'.

But no.

No.

She took it.

My hands dropped to my sides.

My mouth opened but no sound came out.

Then I felt it hit — that fire in my chest.

That realization.

That betrayal.

"She really... this bitch really STOLE from me?!"

I screamed.

I grabbed the lamp off my nightstand and hurled it across the room.

It exploded against the wall, shards of glass flyin' like I was under fire.

My knees buckled, and I dropped down, punchin' the floor like it could answer for what she did.

"BITCH!" I yelled.

"You fucking BITCH! You took my shit?! You took MY SHIT?!"

I couldn't breathe.

I started hyperventilatin'.

Tears and snot mixin' like some sick ass cocktail of rage and heartbreak.

I'd been through too much to get here.

I done buried my whole damn family.
Learned how to walk again.
Pushed through pain that woulda made most people blow their brains out.
And the one person I trusted to hold me down — my sister — the one person I gave everything to, took the knife and drove it right through my chest.
“I let you in my HOME... you slept in my FUCKIN’ bed...
you used my STUDIO... you wore MY clothes! Ate MY food!”
I was stompin’ now.
Screamin’ to the ceiling like God was gon’ answer.
“WE WAS SUPPOSED TO MAKE IT TOGETHER, BITCH! TOGETHER!”
I kicked the dresser so hard it slid across the floor.
My voice cracked with every word.
"You stole from me like I’m a lick?! Like I’m some dumb ass bitch you met last week?!"
I collapsed to my knees, sobbin’.
Ugly.
Raw.
The kind that hurt your stomach.
My brain was racin’ back through every moment from last night.
The way she kept pourin’ up.
The fake ass smiles.
The fake ass toasts.
How she kept askin’ me shit like, “You ever *think 'bout goin' back to Milwaukee?*” and “You trust me, right” I did.
Goddammit, I did.
She was probably packin’ her shit while I was singin’ our damn song.
Probably booked the flight with my Apple Pay.
Used my own face ID on my iPad.
She had all my shit.
And I gave it to her.
Because that’s what you do when you love somebody.
She knew I was weak.
She knew I was still climbin’ out the hole.
She watched me cry every night for six months, helped me stretch after therapy, rolled my blunts, and acted like she was really down for me.
But the whole time...
she was plottin’.
She plotted on me.

Like a fuckin' op.

And that's what made it worse than death.

'Cause when your enemies hurt you, it make sense.

But when it's your family?

Your people?

That shit changes you.

I sat there, in the middle of my half a million-dollar bedroom, with glass on the floor and silence in my ears, and I felt my heart turn to ice.

Something in me broke.

No... it didn't break.

It flipped.

"I ain't never... never... trustin' no bitch again," I whispered to myself.

"Not like that. Not ever again."

I wiped my face, pulled myself off the floor, and started pacin'.

My mind was already in go-mode.

I checked the cameras.

Of course she covered her tracks.

She dipped before 7AM — hoodie on,
backpack stuffed', used the side exit.

No note.

No text.

No call.

Just gone.

Vanished.

Like we never had history.

Like we never had dreams.

Like we never was blood without the blood.

And that was the day Kelly Parker died.

The sweet one.

The loyal one.

The one who'd give you the shirt off her back.

The one who believed love could save people.

She died right there on that hardwood floor.

And whoever I became next?.....

Chapter 4 (Part 2) - A June Winter

*“Pain breeds power. Keep going.”
Am I even capable of trusting again?*

I read it again.
That shit hit different in daylight.
Like somebody slapped some sense into me with just five words and a signature.
I stared at his number.
My thumb hovered over it for a long-ass time.
I ain't know what I was expecting if I called — a lecture? A scam? Another smooth-talker trying to slide into my grief and fuck me thru the flo with no job?
But something about Blicky wasn't like the others.
He ain't ask for nothing.
He ain't sell me no dream.
He just... saw me.
And that shit scared me more than Mei ever could.
Still, I ain't call.
Not that day.
Instead, I threw on some clothes, rolled a fat Wood, and stepped out back.
The sky was too blue.
Birds too damn happy.
I hated all of it.
I lit up and stared into the pool.
Mei used to say it looked like a music video backdrop — crystal clear, surrounded by white marble, with palm trees reflecting off the surface like a flex.
But now, it just looked like something I was drowning in.
She was really gone.
And not just gone...
she took from me.

Took my trust, my money, my dream.
That hundred bands wasn't just paper — it was hope.
My whole comeback, vanished like it never mattered.
I felt dumb all over again.
I could hear her voice in my head, calling me “Kel Kel” like we was still in middle school.
It made me sick.
I pulled my phone out, opened Instagram,
searched her handle.
Gone.
Blocked.
I ain't even mad she blocked me.
I'm mad I let her in.
Deep.
Like family.
Like ride-or-die.
She seen me throw up blood in the hospital.
Held my hand when I couldn't wipe my own ass.
And she dipped the second shit got real.
I took another hit of the Wood, stared at my blurry reflection in the pool.
Then I opened my text app.
Kelly: you up?
I stared at it for a minute, then deleted it.
Am I still soft enough to fall for the same old trap?
Weak.
If I was gonna hit Blicky, it couldn't be no “you up?” text.
I had to come correct.
Straight spine, chin up.
I scrolled to his number, heart thumping like I was about to press detonate.
Called.
One ring.
Two.
“Yo,” he answered.
Calm.
Like he already knew it was me.
“... You said to call when I'm ready,” I said, voice dry as hell.
“You ready?”
I paused.

“I think so.”

(My fingers tapped the side of my phone like a restless heartbeat.)

He chuckled — low and slow like a jazz bass.

“Good. Come see me. I’ll send the address.”

Click.

That was it.

No directions.

No back and forth.

Just a pin drop 30 seconds later.

The spot was in Encino.

A big-ass glass house tucked in the hills.

Windows so dark I couldn’t tell inside from out.

No cars, no staff — just that gate swinging open like it knew me.

Private as hell, no neighbors in sight.

When I pulled up, the gate opened like it knew me.

Everything was quiet — like the money here made noise illegal.

He met me at the door, hoodie and slides, same way I looked last night.

No chains, no flex — just that same energy: quiet power.

“You found it,” he said. I followed him inside. The place was clean—too clean. No clutter, no dishes, no noise. Just floor-to-ceiling windows with a view that screamed money laundering. He led me to a room with two chairs, nothing else. No TV. No distractions. Just us.

“You eat?” he asked.

I shook my head.

He disappeared into the kitchen and came back with a bowl of mango slices and a Fiji water. Handed them to me like he was my Titi, not some bar-owning, shadow-moving mystery man.

“You wanna know how this city works?” he said, sitting across from me.

I nodded.

“I need to know.”

He blinked, leaned in, voice dropping low:

“Talent don’t mean shit...”

I blinked back.

“They lie to you. Tell you if you sing your heart out, somebody gon’ find you. If you work hard, post enough reels, somebody gon’ sign you. But nah. That’s not the game.”

I chewed a piece of mango, eyes locked on him.

“The game is control. Leverage. Who owe who. Who owns who.”

My knuckles whitened on the chair arms. I hated that it hurt to hear it—but I couldn’t look away.

“The girl who goes viral ain’t always the best—she just knew who to pay. Or who to sleep with. Or who to play dumb around until her numbers made sense.”

I stayed quiet. Let that settle. Blicky didn’t talk fast. Every sentence felt like a brick he was laying in front of me.

“Streams? Half of them fake. Playlists? Paid for. Labels? They watch who already look signed before they even think about reaching out.”

My jaw tightened.

“That \$100K?” he continued. “You thought it was for marketing. But what you really paid for... was a seat at the table. And shorty flipped it into a one-way ticket outta your life.”

I swallowed that shit like a rock in my throat.

“She knew what she was doing,” I whispered.

“She did,” he said. “But that don’t mean you lost. It just mean you ain’t got time to cry over spilled currency.”

“In this city, miracles are as rare as honest deals,” he added, voice low.

“You either gone learn how to move smarter... or drown in your own hurt.”

I looked up.

“I want to learn,” I said.

He nodded.

“Then I’ll teach you. But you can’t be soft no more. No more heart-first. That part of you? Gotta die.”

I stared at him. I felt something break in me again—but this time, not like a collapse. More like... a shedding. Like I was molting. Growing.

“I’m ready,” I said.

Blicky smiled for the first time since I met him. Not wide. Not loud. Just a curl at the corner of his mouth like he’d been waiting to hear that all along. There was something about Blicky that made me feel seen, even in silence. Like I wasn’t just some bad bitch with a fucked-up past — like he could feel all the pain in me, and didn’t flinch.

It was scary how calm I felt next to him. Like maybe, just maybe, I wasn’t broken no more. Like maybe I was dangerous too.

Chapter 5 - Smooth As Hell

We ended up back at his bar. Not out front with the loud music and bottle poppers, but in the back—his private little VIP cave where it was lowkey and dim, with them neon red lights glowin' soft on the walls like a Drake interlude.

We ain't say much—just laid up, sippin' slow, while *South Central Baddies* played on that big-ass screen like background noise. It was peaceful in a way I ain't felt in months.

The bass from the TV thudded low in the background while my head laid on his chest, his arm draped lazy across my shoulder. Every once in a while, he'd take a sip of his Casamigos, lick his lips, then glance down at me like he could see straight through me. It wasn't even about the show—it was the vibe.

The hush in the air, the way the dim lights painted him like a villain in a love story.

My thighs were clenched so tight under that little sundress I almost forgot where I was. I tilted my face up toward his jawline, just to peep how smooth his skin was up close, and he caught me mid-glance.

His eyes locked with mine, heavy-lidded but alert.

He ain't say shit, just smirked with that gold tooth catching the light.

That lil' smirk had me sliding down that mf couch like it was greased. I tried to play it cool, like I wasn't seconds away from climbing on top of him and letting the whole hood know I folded. My heart was pounding—nigga ain't even touched me for real, but he had me wet just existing.

Dangerous. The TV volume was just loud enough to catch a bitch gettin' her wig snatched every couple minutes.

Ghetto reality TV in 4K.

It was weirdly perfect. We just sat there in the plush-ass velvet couch, cuddled up. My head on his shoulder, his arm across my thigh.

His cologne was hittin'—some Tom Ford shit that made my chest warm.

The air smelled of bourbon and stale cigarettes, the tiny edge of pineapple tequila still sweet on my tongue.

It wasn't nothin' performative 'bout it, either.

It was just... chill.

Intimate.

Real.

I sipped on tequila—Reposado with a splash of pineapple.

Slow sips.

No rush. His hand kept gently runnin' along my outer thigh.

Every brush of his fingertips was a small jolt—like he knew exactly which chord to strike.

My breath caught each time his palm paused at the curve of my hip. Just enough pressure to make me wanna press into him more. I could feel the bass from the show vibratin' through the floor, and the heat from his body against mine.

Ain't gon' lie... I was lowkey wet just sittin' there thinkin' 'bout how smooth he was.

Like, how he didn't gotta do too much.

Didn't need to brag, or flex, or run his mouth like most dudes. He just was.

And that "was" was hittin' hard.

He leaned over, whispered, voice deep and buttery like it knew all my triggers.

"You tryna hit this lil' afterparty with me?"

I looked up at him with a soft grin.

"You already know the answer."

We clinked glasses. I finished my drink in one long gulp like it was water. He laughed under his breath, reachin' his hand out to help me. I took it without thinkin'. His grip was warm, firm, gentle—all that. He stood up first, slid his Glock under his hoodie like it was second nature. His eyes flickered to me—safe behind him.

One hand hovered near my hip, second on the door jamb.

He seemed to map every exit in one quick glance.

"Let's dip, ma. I don't like when places get too quiet. That mean noise comin'."

Chapter 6 - What The Helly ?

I followed him out the private lounge door, which led through a long hallway smelling like fresh pine cleaner and old money.

It emptied into a back alley, where his matte black Maybach was already idling, driver in the front like a shadow.

My body was lit, mind a little hazy but focused.

Blicky made me feel like I was floating in designer drugs even though we ain't pop nothin' but drank and vibes.

That lil' smirk he had when he opened the back door?

Had my coochie doin' flips, I ain't even gon' lie.

I wasn't thinkin' about no enemies, no problems, no betrayals. Just me, him, and the way the world slowed down when he looked at me like I was his lil' secret weapon.

I didn't even know he had it like that—quiet power.

He opened the door for me like a gentleman, but before I could step in, he gripped my waist gently and whispered, "Don't get too comfy. The night just gettin' started."

Blicky paused, just for a second.

He always move like he two steps ahead of death.

“I on like that car sittin’ there,” he mumbled, eyes locked on a black truck parked down the alley with no lights on.

His hand slid to the back of his hoodie like it was muscle memory. That was the first time I seen him switch from chill to soldier in half a breath.

— — —

(Blicky POV)

As soon as that door clicked behind us, my instincts flared.

Street got quiet, like the city held its breath.

Ain’t no wind, no footsteps, not even no distant sirens.

Just dead air and tension.

My Glock tucked right where it should be, but I ain’t like this vibe.

The Escalade down across the alley had its lights off, tinted windows blacked out.

My left eye twitched.

I done seen too much not to peep some BS when I’m in the middle of it.

— — —

(Kelly POV)

The alley was quiet.

Trash cans overflowed with old whiskey bottles and damp Styrofoam—rats darted between the legs of a rusted shopping cart.

The concrete under my sneakers felt slick with oil and god-knows-what grime.

Just the soft hum of the city night and distant bass from the front of the bar.

He had one hand on my lower back as we stepped into the darkness, and right before I could say some flirty slick shit about the afterparty—

I glanced at the exit sign flickering above the back door—it buzzed low, like a dying hornet.

I should’ve known then something was off.

BOW! BOW! BOW! BOW!

I thought it was booty meat but nope.

I tasted copper in my mouth, felt gravel bite through my palms, smelled piss and night-blooming jasmine mixed in the dark.

Gunshots cracked through the air.

Loud as hell.

Too close.

My body dropped instinctively, heart poundin' so hard it felt like it was tryin' to run without me.

Blicky grabbed my wrist and yanked me behind a dumpster, his whole demeanor switchin' from chill to militant in seconds.

"Don't move," he growled, eyes sharp, already reachin' under his hoodie.

I couldn't even speak.

My pulse hammered so loud I could almost feel it against his hoodie where my cheek pressed.

Heat pooled low, every nerve ending electrified—not from fear alone.

My ears rang.

The smell of smoke, gunpowder, and piss hit my nose all at once.

Everything slowed down—the air felt thick, like I was underwater.

I ain't know if the bullets was for him.

Or me.

Or both.

But in that moment, my hand grippin' his arm for dear life...

I realized somethin'.

Whatever Blicky was into...

It wasn't no regular street shit.

And if I was gon' keep slidin' with him?

I needed to be ready.

— — —

Blicky's POV

CHAPTER 7 — Ain't No Love in This Shit

I knew they was gon' try me eventually. Niggas always do. Ever since word got out I flipped that shipment in Compton, I knew someone was gone come collect. But tonight? I ain't expect it to be so sloppy. So close. So loud.

One second I'm leadin' lil' baby out the back of my bar, her hips swayin', lookin' like a damn trophy in that fitted dress, and the next—

BRAAATTTATTTAT ! BRAAATTATTTATAT!

Them Draco rounds came singin' from the alley like a choir of demons.

I grabbed Kelly by her waist and snatched her behind that dumpster like my life depended on it—'cause it did.

'I ain't just protecting some pretty face—I'm guarding the only person who ever looked past the bullet holes in my soul and saw something worth saving.

One bullet zipped past her head so close I felt the wind clip my temple.
A sharp sting bloomed under my ribs—warm liquid seeping past my fingers.
But all I noticed was how her fingers curled into my hoodie, white-knuckled and closer
than goddamn skin ought to be.
She was frozen.
Shocked.
Heart beatin' through her chest so loud I
could feel it through my hoodie.
I ain't have time to talk. Ain't have time to think.
I ain't supposed to feel shit for nobody.
But watching her bleed like that? That old part of me... the boy my mama tried to save...
he cracked open.
That mode only real trench babies know.
I went into that mode.
I pulled the switch out my waistband—Glock 19 converted with the drum clip.
Shit purr like a kitten but bite like a lion.
Peeked out the corner.
Bullets split the air so fast the wind whistled.
One tore through my hoodie and kissed my ribs—I ain't even feel the pain yet, just the
warmth spillin' down.
Sparks flew off the dumpster as I shielded Kelly with my body, metal screaming back at
the shots hittin' it.
I let off a precise burst.
Silence.....

Then: bodies hittin' concrete.
Car was rollin' slow past the alley entrance, doors slid open.
Four of 'em.
Three strapped with big shit—one hangin' out the window with that Draco.
The driver was masked up, barely even lookin' out the windshield.
“On my mama...”
I gritted my teeth and slid out from behind the dumpster like a ghost, stayin' low.
The alley had just enough shadow to cover me, but not enough to save them.
I squeezed.
RAT-TAT-TAT-TAT-TAT-TAT-TAT!
The switch sang like a young Usher
Glass shattered.

Front tire blew.

One of they shooters caught 4 rounds to the jaw—head snapped back like a bobblehead.

Nigga dropped his blick.

The others panicked.

I ran toward the whip.

Didn't even feel the bullet hit me in the side 'til I was already at the passenger door.

It was like my body ain't register the pain—just the mission.

Pop! Pop!

Two more caught me in the shoulder and thigh.

I ain't fall.

I ain't slow down.

I kicked the fuckin' door open, dragged the masked shooter out by his hoodie, and pistol-whipped him clean unconscious with one hand.

Another jumped out the backseat—big, swole nigga with dreads and a Tec-9.

Swung wild.

Wrong move.

I ducked and buried my blade in his stomach.

Ain't even know where the knife came from—reflex.

Shit went deep.

He folded like a beach chair.

Two more rushed me from the sidewalk.

Masked.

Both strapped.

I dove forward and rolled, caught one in the shin with a few shots.

He dropped his burner.

Before the other could raise his, I was on his ass, swingin' fists like my life depended on it.

'Cause it did.

Hit him in the throat.

Elbowed his jaw.

Slammed him into the alley wall and finished him off with a burst to the chest with the switch.

That tore his whole midsection into shreds.

I could see the ground through his chest when he fell.

Precise. Effective.

The last one tried to run.

Nope.

This ain't "Get Out" gang.

Come here.

I hawked em down of course.

Switched his ankle off the bone and tackled him.

Ripped the mask off.

Heart stopped for half a second.

I knew that face.

Dre.

From my own fuckin' set.

A nigga I grew up with.

A nigga who'd been to my mama's cookouts.

"You?!" I growled.

Blood all in my mouth.

Chest heaving.

My Glock pressin' against his forehead.

"I ain't mean it like that, Blick," he choked.

"It was—niggas paid me! I ain't know it was gon' be you, bro!"

"Stop fuckin' lyin'."

I switched his knee off until it was slightly detached from his thigh.

RAT-TAT-TAT-TAT-TAT-TAT-TAT

Looked like it would fall off the bone if he tried to run again.

Then I stood over him.

I wanted to finish him.

Wanted to erase him off the map for crossin' that line.

But my vision blurred.

My legs buckled.

Shit started spinnin'.

I dropped to one knee, holdin' my ribs.

My hoodie was soaked.

Warm.

Sticky.

That's when Kelly ran out from behind the dumpster.

"Blicky?! OH MY GOD—BLICKY!!"

She slid next to me, eyes wide, voice breakin'.

Her hands touched my chest, then my face.

She saw the blood and damn near lost it.

"Baby breathe, please. Stay with me, Blick. Don't fuckin' die on me, nigga."

I gripped her wrist, smilin' through the pain.

Her fingers trembled so hard I could feel each pulse through my skin.

She pressed her forehead to mine and let out a shaky breath, like she was exhaling every ounce of terror at once.

“Ayo... you still tryna go to that afterparty?”

She choked on a laugh through the tears, smackin’ my chest.

“Boy fuck you—come on!”

She helped me up, half-draggin’ me to the car she parked ‘round the corner.

The bodies laid behind us like broken dolls.

Sirens started ringin’ from the distance.

I could feel my blood soakin’ the leather seats as she sped off.

Vision goin’ black.

But I held on.

‘Cause fuck dyin’.

Niggas gotta pay for this.

But as Kelly floored it toward the ER lights, I already heard whispers in the dark:

Rival crews lining up.

Playlists leaking our code.

And a war that wouldn’t end at dawn.

“We ride or die,” she’d said—like prophecy.

Sirens or rivals—either way, the real war starts now.

My ears ringin’.

Blood soakin’ through my jeans.

Kelly had me laid across the back seat screamin’ at Siri for the nearest ER. I heard tires screechin’, engine roarin’, and her hand smacking my cheek yellin’ for me to stay awake.

“You better hang on, Blick,” she screamed over the wind.

“I swear on my baby sister, you ain’t dying tonight.”

I looked up at her—eyes wild, scared, but solid.

She wasn’t no soft bitch.

She ain’t leave.

She ain’t run.

She drove like a damn demon through red lights, holdin’ pressure on my wounds with one hand and the wheel with the other.

That’s when I knew.

If I make it out this bitch alive—

She ridin’ wit’ me forever.

Kelly POV

As sirens closed in behind me traveling 150 mph, one thought echoed:
If I pull through this, I'll never be soft again—
But can I learn to trust on my own terms?

To be continued.....

FB@FattyTae
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My name is Lamontiontae and this is my first book , my books will not be standard. It's a Diary style book meant to engage the readers with a refreshing experience when reading my books. I hope you enjoyed. I'm currently working on book 2 or part one so please input your email if you want any updates. For the reader who made it all the way to the end of my book and are reading this I have a little update on what Kelly and Blicky are doing . Much love hope you enjoy. Get ready for book 2 !

Epilouge

The fluorescent hospital lights hummed above, cold and sterile, but I barely noticed. I could hear Kelly's shaky breathing, the soft rustle of her fingers brushing against my arm, as if holding me in place could keep me from slipping back into the darkness I'd lived in all my life.

I stared at the ceiling, tracing the cracks, each one a reminder of the fractures I'd left in the world. My body ached, but the pain in my head and heart was far sharper. This bed, these machines, the antiseptic smell—it all felt like a pause before the storm I had to unleash.

Almighty God, forgive me for the murders and tortures I'm about to commit. Forgive me for my future sins. My voice was silent, but my heart spoke it loud enough to fill the room. I never wanted to become that man again. I told You I wouldn't kill. I lied.

I could hear Kelly whispering my name, soft, trembling. Her eyes were wide, glossy, full of fear and hope all at once. She didn't know me like I knew myself. She didn't know the boy from L.A who watched too much, learned too fast, and made promises he couldn't keep. She didn't know the nights I spent counting the bodies I *had* to make, the kids I saw crying before I closed their fathers' eyes.

And now, this—this isn't choice. This is survival. Revenge. Legacy. The men who pulled the trigger at the bar, who thought they could touch my world, my people, my Kelly—they don't understand the rules I play by.

I'm going to burn their kids alive and make them watch. The words tasted like fire and ice on my tongue. My hands twitched despite the pain, imagining the careful orchestration, the inevitability. The world had always been cruel, and I had learned to be crueller.

I could feel Kelly's panic radiating through the thin hospital blanket, but she didn't need to understand. She only needed to survive, to be the tether keeping me from losing every last shred of myself to the darkness I walked in willingly once before—and would walk again if I had to.

I closed my eyes, praying not for forgiveness, but for precision. For focus. For the strength to do what needed doing, to make them pay in a language they'd never forget. The man I once was—the boy who hated killing, who hated blood—had been buried long ago. What rose now was a storm, quiet, calculated, and merciless.

And when I walked out of this hospital bed, it wouldn't be as the man who survived the gunfight. It would be as the reckoning they never saw coming.
