

## A Twisted Tale

Marlene's eyes were frozen, and cold.

It was the familiar look she always gave when she was fed up.

I stared right back at her.

As I squeezed firmer on the blade of the knife I was holding in my hand, I could feel my pulse began to throb. My veins were rapidly pumping adrenaline ....

*'How long you think it'll take to bleed out'...*

I glanced down at my left hand and realized

I was shaking.

I began to breath, deep ...

Slowly...

I began to raise the knife up until I could see the shiny blade reflect in the dark.

Marlene began to smirk as she walked towards me, leaned forward, and in a solid whisper said,

"Yo bitch ass ain't gonna do shit".

Neither one of us blinked or moved a muscle.

I inhaled deeply.

My heart beat thrust once again through my chest like a deadly punch;

I exhaled...

The tension relaxed as I began to back away...

I inhaled deeply once again.

Marlene chuckled. "Better hurry or you'll be late",  
she sarcasticly teased.

I never bothered to turn around as she left. I just eased my grip, opened the medicine cabinet, and gently slid the pocket knife back onto the 2nd shelf.

I grabbed my toothbrush and slammed the cabinet shut.

My heart slightly began to race again, she was right.

"I'd better hurry up", I thought outloud as I began to brush my teeth.

## 2.

Later that night, on my way home from the office I contemplated if any of this was even what I wanted.

As usual it had been a long day and my head was swimming.

Who'd ever thought I would have ended up becoming one of the top parterners at my firm.

I was one of the youngest women there and I could surely say tuition was paying off, but considering all the hours I work and bills I keep seeming to accumlate I always feel drained.

Like none of the bull I go through is even worth it.

I constantly find myself roaming down old alley ways wondering what life could be like had I chosen a different path.

As I skim down Jefferson Blvd there's a comfortable feeling of home. My heart begins to race as I pull into a familiar neighborhood. I ride all the way to the end of the block and park in the driveway of a yellow brick home.

I reach for my phone to send a text, "Hey, I'm outside :)"

Minutes later pass by and the front door finally begins to crack open. I try to hold back my smile as I gather my things from the car and walk up the driveway to greet Marcus.

He was wearing his favorite pajama bottoms and black house shoes.

His brown chest glistened under the porch light as I approached him.

We embraced each other as I arrived to the front door.

"I ain't know you was in town tonight", he said as he squeezed me gently in his arms.

His heartbeat was steady.. as usual.

The scent of his body spray almost held me in a trance. I smiled and inhaled deeply as I released my grip from around him and stared deep into his brown eyes, "I know.

I didn't feel like being home tonight".

### 3.

The next day was a long drag like any other. I was like a kid looking forward to Friday's again, eager to explore an off day and have as much fun as possible through the weekend.

The last two hours on the clock lingered forever. I was absolutely estatic to end the last meeting and rush out the office soon as 5PM hit.

I grabbed my phone to make a call to my best friend as I headed down the hallway towards the exit.

"Whaat's uuup", Kendra answered.

It didn't matter what time of day it was my friend always sounded like she was in a good mood and ready for whatever.

"Kendra! What's the move tonight girl"?!

"Why? You must be ready to do something" she playfully responded.

"You know me. I need to relax".

"I heard that! You know there's a release party downtown", she chuckled. "You might find you a baller".

"Girl hush"! I playfully yelled.

Kendra was always trying to hook me up. She didn't care if I had a man or not. Kendra was just one of those type of friends always looking for the next step up. She was honest and kept it almost a little too open at times.

"Girl"! I loudly whispered through the phone as though anyone else was in the hallway listening.

"You know I'm just trying to" --

"Yeah, yeah" she interrupted. "Chill and have a good time, then why you don't wanna be at home withco' stiff ass man".

We both laughed hysterically as I mad my way to the elevator.

"Girl whatever! You want me to drive", I asked while pressing the Lobby Room floor button.

"Yeah", she said whining, "and puh-lease come before eleven so we can stop by the liquor store and still make it in time to get in free"!

I shook my head. "Girl, you a penny pinching, heffer".

"No Megan, there's a difference", she paused. "I'm about saving a dollar and this dress I'm about to wear is gonna get us both wasted so don't be late, ok"?!

Once again we burst out laughing.

The elevator door *dinged* open!

"Ok, see you then" she replied then hung up.

Kendra never waited for a response after ending a phone conversation. Shaking my head, still smiling from our conversation, I looked at my phone's front screen to make sure the call had ended.

By the time the two elevator doors slid open my smile slightly vanished as I looked up to see who was standing there.

Starring back at me was Mr. Ceo of the firm. David stood there unbelievably attractive and poised as always. He was incredibly tall with broad athletic shoulders, clean cut and groomed. I kept eye contact with his stern dark eyes as I approached him and got on the elevator.

"Going down"? He asked with a grin. He pushed the button for me before I had a chance to respond. We stood there shoulder to shoulder. His cologne was gentle, just like his light smooth caramel skin.

I breathed slowly as I turned to look up at him. "Working late"? I asked as I watched him turn to

look at me. He sighed, "Two more meetings then a phone conference".

"Sounds like you'll be busy", I quickly replied. He licked his lips before saying anything.

"And up late"...

I hesitated before responding.

"So will I".

I could feel my heart beat speed up as I exhaled,

slow, and quietly.

My mind skipped to the thigh high, black dress I would put on tonight.

I was feeling really Devil-in-Prada(*ish*) for some reason.

The sound of David's deep barotoned voice startled my thoughts.

"Your perfume smells so nice", he said while leaning in closer to me.

I cleared my throat. "Of course", I said softly.

I watched as the orange lights on the elevator button skipped down,

.. 3.. 2...

I looked back up at David. He slowly licked his lips again and said, "Let me know when you make it home". By the time I took one more deep breath the elevator doors swung open.

I stepped off and turned around to make eye contact one last time. I smiled innocently before responding. "Later, David".

I turned around and continued walking towards the **EXIT** and all of a sudden I had a brand new energy. I was excited about not seeing the office for the next two days and even more eager to get out and see what the rest of the evening had in store.

#### **4.**

Kendra and I sped down the highway singing to the top of our lungs. The night was young and I was ready to get loose. I wanted to shake all of the anxiety from the office. It was such a dull place, completely opposite of my character. Of course I was blessed to have the job of my dreams but lately I felt like it was holding me back.

I nudged Kendra. "Biiitch open the bottle already", I said while holding my styrofoam cup to her. "Oh I got you, I got you", she said while still looking in the mirror readjusting her hair. "Girl when's the last time you heard from Marcus", she asked while digging into the brown paper bag.

"Uh, sometime last month", I lied. I didn't want Kendra to know I was seeing my ex so regularly. She always thought we should have been together, or, soul mates as she would put it.

"How you gonna avoid your man like that", she said playfully while unscrewing the cap off the Paul Mason. I laughed at her. "Now you know I got a man".

"Mmhmmm with his over protective ass". Kendra tilted her head back and filled her mouth with the liquor. "Whoooo"! She shouted after taking the shot.

I could smell the posionous sweet smell drift throught the air as she poured my cup and sat it in the cup holder.

"We should move to Atlanta", I said moreso thinking outloud.

"Ohh now that would be fun! You know ain't nothing for me to pack up and find something there"!

I picked up my cup and began to sip. Kendra continued chatting.

"Forreal girl a change of scenery would be nice. Fort-Petersburg is so washed up and they pay way more for cosmetics up there. Shoot, I might can start my own business".

I could feel the liquor beginning to work. A small tingle of relaxation loosened my nerves as my body warmed up.

I giggled softly still listening to my friend talk non stop.

I moved my shoulders to the music and pressed down harder on the gas pedal. I was feeling myself and ready to get into some fun.

Tonight was for me.

I abruptly woke from my sleep around 4AM. I sat up in bed, head still spinning, looking around the dark room trying to readjust my eyes. I couldn't tell where I was but my bladder was so full my lower back was aching.

Gripping the edge of the king size mattress I let my feet slide onto the floor using my hands to

feel my way around the shadowy room. I eventually found the bathroom. Once I flipped on the light switch I immediately recognized the tiny little area.

I rushed to the toilet to relieve myself.

After washing my hands I stared into the mirror looking at myself...

*'What have you done?!'*

I crept through the hallway, made my way back to the room, and slid in bed. I could see a large hump laying silently on the other side. I smiled and scooted closer until my chest pressed against his back. Gently I wrapped my arms across his waist.

Without opening his eyes Marcus cleared his throat and asked, "You good"?

I nodded my head as though he could hear me.

My thoughts began to wonder.

*How the fuck did Kendra get home?!*

*What time did I leave the club?*

I drifted off back to sleep, lost deep in thought.

I left Marcus house around 9AM speeding home through Saturday morning traffic. My head was killing me so I stopped to get breakfast before pulling up in my driveway. I hit the button on my keys to lift up the garage.

A feeling of relief swept over me to see no other cars were there. Home alone.

'Good'.

I didn't feel like seeing anyone or explaining anything. Especially not Marlene. She was like an unexpected, overprotective roommate that popped up when she felt like, and was only there to judge me.

Her intentions were always good but her tactics were overbearing. Speaking of friends, I had to see if Kendra was ok!

5.

I spent most of the day sleeping off my hangover and watching old reruns. Mainly starring at the screen but daydreaming in my head. I often feel I have the life most 28 year olds would kill for. A huge house, beautiful car, and a boyfriend that provided anything I could ever need. Even though we both were so busy to hardly spend quality time anymore, I still felt lucky.

Lucky, but empty.

Something was missing from my life that I just couldn't put my finger on. I blamed myself for being, *ungrateful all the time*, as mother would put it.

Coming from where I'm from I never imagined I would be seeing a six figure check, let alone blowing it the way I do! I had everything I wanted and didn't know what to do with it. I had to get away. My head was pounding from the rapid thoughts. I figured I'd take a trip to the spa to feel better and relax.

Late that evening Kendra and I sat on the patio of our favorite restaruant giggling and enjoying the breeze.

"Speaking of last night", I paused and looked up at her.

"What happened"?! I asked.

Kendra gave me a blank stare for a minute. "Like what", she asked waiting on me to continue.

"Well, like, what time did you get home?! I started thinking you left with that guy at the bar you had been talking to".

With a very confused look Kendra shifted her head to the side and replied, "What do you meeean? We ditched them clowns"! She could hardly finish her sencece before she burst into laughter. "Do you remember when your heel broke climbing out that side window?"

Girl, dude was really about to wait outside that bathroom all night for us to come out".

I fake laughed along because it sounded hilarious but I had no clue what Kendra was talking about. She continued on in a hoot. "Ooh girl and Night Owl's Market bathroom was so awful you just ended up peeing in the sink"!

Just when I was about to accuse her of lying a quick flashback distracted me.

Marcus lips kept gently tickling the inside of my knees made me feel all tingly and I kept trying

to pull away. He playfully made a face and asked "Eww why yo' feet all dirty".

That's when I remembered!

"Ohhh, cause I took that broke ass heel off to sneak through the employees lounge".

"Yes"! Kendra hollered.

I joined in this time. "And you said it's technically not stealing from the store if it's in the employees lounge already".

I took a deep breath almost hot from laughing so hard. I thought hard but that was all I could remember. If Kendra wouldn't have reminded me, I would have thought we almost had a quiet night and returned early.

Honestly I don't remember much more of the night after we took those first two shots of Patron at the bar.

I then got lost in thought thinking, *'Well, damn. What else did I do'?*

The drive home was quiet. I told Kendra I'd call her tomorrow to see if she wanted to do pedicures after church. After all the excitement I was feeling like I needed an extra break just to recover from the weekend.

Although I got a lot of sleep I still felt tired. I sighed quietly to myself and let all the windows down.

I loved feeling fresh air as I drove down the uncrowded service road.

The night sky was peaceful but the closer I got to home a feeling of worry crept in.

I thought about detouring by my old neighborhood. Any excuse to have a reason to stop by Marcus' place. I knew he probably would be working out or working on his sports car in the garage.

I imagined him opening the door and greeting me with his warm, sexy smile.

I imagined him slowly rubbing my hair like he always did when he hugged me. I could almost even smell the scent of his cologne I liked so much. My heart stopped fluttering then reality kicked in. I drove silently down the dark road.

*Yeah, it's better I just get some rest.*

I sat in the car for a while after pulling up in my garage. A quick instinct told me maybe I should back out. I cleared the thought away and headed inside.

I passed through the kitchen and threw my keys on the edge of the counter.

"Babe, is that you"?

Quickly I made my way upstairs.

"Yeah, uh I'm just coming from dinner".

My heart panicked as David turned to make eye contact with me. I continued,

"Me and Kendra were on the riverside and I lost track of time". I forced a quick giggle. "You know how much that girl can talk". I leaned in to kiss his cheek.

Without saying anything at all David began to unbutton his shirt and change into his pajamas.

I sat down on the foot of the bed, sliding my shoes off.

"So, I'm uh, surprised you're not at the office. I thought y'all still had a big case".

He ignored my comment. "If you were with Kendra what made you put on that dress"?

"What", I raised my voice in confusion.

"I mean you're dressed like you're looking for a one night stand, but, supposedly out with girlfriends? Give me a fuckin break. You knew I made reservations for tonight a while ago! This was the last week of the case"!

My heart dropped. I remember about two months ago David took me shopping for my gown especially for this evening.

I sighed. "Look I'm so sorry. So much has been going on I totally forgot about tonight".

"You need to get your fucking priorities straight", he snapped. "I invited clients and I ended up having to cancel. It's really not a good look".

I paused before replying, "Oh, so this wasn't about you wanting me there to celebrate, you just need me to look good for your ass kissing image, huh".

I gave a sarcastic chuckle and headed towards my dresser to start getting undressed.

"You could have sent a simple text".

"Meg, I looked out for you to even be here! Instead of clubbing around here like you're still some teenage slut" --

"Waaait a fucking minute"!

"It's true".

"Don't act like I don't do things for myself. Most real men would be proud to have a woman that keeps herself up".

"There's a difference, Megan".

He began to fus louder.

He was talking over me, I was talking over him.

I couldn't hear anything. I gave up. I stopped talking just to catch the ending of his last few words.

"I just don't want somebody who's supposed to be with me, in the streets, acting like a hooker"!

It took the breath out of me.

My heart twitched as I heard his words echo throughout my head. I clinched my throat muscles to immediately stop the tears from forming in my eyes. I took one more deep breath and swallowed.

My whole body relaxed.

He was so stupid I didn't even feel like fighting. But I had to make one more point. "You know, I really don't have to be here period. I have options if you're going to keep acting like this".

I knew I struck a nerve.

David shouted "Ungrateful bitch"! He then grabbed the back of my head and clenched a fistful of hair as he pulled my neck back.

I hated when he did that. It felt like 10000 little ants were biting my scalp at once. I tensed my body up. With all his force he shoved me forward into the dresser.

Almost everything on top shattered to the floor. I tried to relax a bit right before my body went flying into the mirror.

The impact wasn't as bad if you didn't go against it.

David swung me around by my shoulders. Right as my knees began to give way he pressed his body into mine and held my arms down.

He leaned in until I was staring directly into his empty eyes. He whispered, "You are so ungrateful. I do so much".

Before he had time to finish another word he flung me out of his face to the other side of the room. I stumbled a few feet and landed on the bed.

I squeezed my eyes shut as I felt sharp pain rise from where the bones in my ankle slammed together.

I covered my head with my arms as David began to let the blows fly.

I could hear him grunting in rage. I tried to be still as possible. Every blow that missed my head was a sigh of relief. I breathed slow and deep and began to count every swing. Every now and then I'd feel slight grazes to the back of my head but the ones that struck into my back sent instant suffering I knew I'd feel in the morning. I was too scared to uncover my head though.

16.. 17.. 18 ...

I could feel him slowing down.

I took a deep breath and got ready to time the next hits.

19... 20!

As he lifted his left arm back up, I used all my strength to roll over.

I went to raise my knees into my chest and caught him in between the legs halfway.

Just enough space!

I flailed my elbows around so crazy until I heard a sound crack so loudly it sounded like a baseball bat.

I lifted my knees into my chest and shoved them out in front of me. David stumbled back a few feet. He was slowly rubbing his jaw and shaking his head like one of those cartoons with the stars around their head.

Maybe I had three or four feet but that wasn't enough space to run for the door.

I really just didn't feel like fighting tonight. I tucked my head down and bolted straight for him,

digging my shoulder into the middle of his ribs with as much speed as I could, not stopping until his back slammed into the same dresser he threw me into earlier.

I ran for the doorway so quickly I could feel little slits on the bottom of my feet from where broken glass was diggin into them. But I didn't care. I sunk my toes into the carpet so hard I could feel tiny drops of blood from where some of the cuts stretched deeper.

Just when I could see the kitchen's light from the top of the stairway that striking pain pinched at the back of my head. David wrapped locks full of my hair around his hand and tugged so hard I went backwards.

He was moving so fast he slipped down the first few steps.

I didn't have time to think about nothing but getting far away. I flipped over and crawled quickly ahead. I reached the biggest piece I could find and picked up the broken glass.

Just like rhythm, I waited.

I waited until I heard David back on his feet. As the pounding of his footsteps came closer, I inhaled and took a deep breath. I knew he wasn't going to stop until he wore himself out or damn near knocked me unconscious. I turned back over just as he was falling on top of me. His body felt like a ton about to crush my chest. I shut my eyes tight and waited.

Just as his weight lifted off me so he could raise his arms and take another swing, I cocked back and jabbed the broken glass into his side.

I pulled it out and dug it in again a little deeper. I opened my eyes and tried to aim for the same spot four more times. He screamed and reached down to pull it out from where I left it.

I had just enough space and even less time.

I shoved him off me and climbed back on my feet. I swung my arms and ran to the door so fast. I turned to look back, to make sure David wasn't following me. I used both hands to hold on to the rail and almost just let myself slide down until I stumbled over the last two steps.

The cold tile floor sent chills through my body as I kept moving trying to fully regain balance.

I took one deep breath, then another, this time slower.

The knot in my throat began to form again as tears rolled into my eyes.

My heartbeat was pounding out of control.

Instant flashbacks of David's anger stared at me. I shook my head and blinked before the water had time to drop down my eyes.

I was ready to get away from it all. My thoughts raced. I couldn't believe how signs of life kept forcing me to see that I was in the wrong place. The fight was becoming exhausting.

## 6.

I was just a few feet away from exiting through the garage door when Marlene came in.

"Look, I just got to get out of here".

I stopped, turned around, and thought for a second.

It isn't fair. I get my ass beat for no reason but I feel ashamed, embarrassed. We were so loud tonight I'm sure the neighbors were seconds from filing a complaint if they hadn't already.

"Megan", she called. "I know you're not trying to hear this".

I stood frozen in place waiting for my heartbeat to rest.

*Megan if you leave don't come back! Cause it's gonna get worse until he kills you.*

My imagination took me back to the very first time.

I was more shocked than physically hurt. It was a mental boxing match trying to figure out what triggered someone who once, so lovingly caress my insecurities, could use the same hands to attack like a ruthless savage.

Excuses rang off in my head like,

*'At least my face isn't bruised. No one will ever be able to tell'.*

Pathetic. How fuckin' pathetic.

I could hear Marlene's voice trail off in the distance.

I walked back in the kitchen with a plan. The counter drawer slid open smooth and slowly.

An assortment of shining utensils beamed at me as though they were gifts presenting themselves. A quiet chuckle seaped through my lips.

*I won't let no one hurt me again.*

Quickly I slipped the sharpest steak knife out the drawer and held it to my face so I could see

my reflection. Outloud I repeated,

"I won't let no one hurt me no more".

Quietly tip toeing back across the kitchen floor, I stopped before I reached the stairway, looked up, and in a cold whisper repeated the affirmation.

*I won't.. let no one, hurt me no more.*

I stared back up into the darkness of the bedroom. As I crept back up the stairs, quietly, I could hear Marlene's voice judging me.

Criticizing my persistent forgiveness. Every scar David had ever given me seemed to burn at that moment.

I knew I had to take charge of my situation. Things weren't going to get any better and they couldn't get worse from here.

Now I stood standing over him with this knife in my hand and a headful of resentful memories to die for.

Anger beat in my chest until I began to panic.

David never even heard me come back in the room. He never turned around. He laid there curled up like a child, covering his face with his hands hysterically crying.

Amazing.

Less than a few minutes ago there he was assaulting me like a caged fighter on a mission. And now he laid there playing the victim like he wa sorry.

I couldn't believe it!

Rage began to build in my chest. I started brething so heavily I'm surprised I didn't hyperventilate.

The pain in my body creeped in.

A warm tear dropped down my face as I felt the wood splinters scraped in my back, where I had torn the dresser apart.

I squeezed onto the knife, held my breath and slowly backed all the way out of the room and

down the stairs into the kitchen.

Once I reached the bottom a rush sent air back into my body.

The knife dropped onto the ground and bounced off the soft yellow tiles landing next to my feet.

I couldn't do it.

As bad as I wanted to kill him, I just didn't feel threatened. It's like someone pressed a button to a water works show the way tears drenched my face.

David was weak. So weak.

And I was becoming just like him; self-pitying, tormented, and spiteful.

I shook my head to clear my thoughts and ran straight out through the garage door, never looking back.

## 7.

"I knew it", her voice echoed out through the other line. "I knew I should have just took your keys like I started to".

"Kendra, it's fine. It's my fault" --

"You always blame yourself"!

I could hear Kendra's hands clapping to the rhythm of her frustration.

"Megan you are going to be dead".

"Stop saying that"! I shouted back.

"You are". She paused for a second before continuing.

"I will easily sell the mortgage to my granny's house in a minute".

I burst out laughing.

"Oh my God Kendra you're so crazy"!

"What, she don't live there"! We both giggled so hard

and then became silent.

"Megan seriously, I'm so with making some plans to get out of here.

I'm not holding on to nothing. Why are you"?

That question seemed to repeat over and over in my head on the ride back to my place. I was staring out my passenger window. I was supposed to grab my gym bag with the credit cards and get straight out.

The music was playing so loud, but I could clearly hear my own thoughts reciting each step I was going to take. I was more nervous about this big trip in two weeks than actually sneaking away.

Suddenly the music turned down and Kendra's voice interrupted.

"You sure you don't want me to go in with you"? I turned to her slowly. She was staring at me in a stern, mom-like way.

We had already pulled back up in my garage. I frowned and shook my head.

"Ok, so hurry up"!

As I began to climb out the car she loudly whispered at me, "Megan, I'm coming in if you not out in three minutes"!

"His car not even here", I scolded back.

"Well hurry up", she reassured as I closed the door behind me.

You would think I'd be rushing to grab as many of my belongings to get out of there after what happened between me and David,

but something telling me this two week notice thing and moving to Atlanta to live in hotels until we finally found a condo to stay in seemed a bit dramatic.

*I mean starting my own small firm isn't as easy as Kendra is trying to talk me into.*

*She doesn't understand.*

My friend has always been so spontaneous almost to a fault.

That's what I loved about her but I was really second guessing the move. It seemed extreme all for a break. I just needed to get away; Like a vacation.

Yeah, just me by myself for a week.

That sounded so much more realistic than Thelma and Louis'ing  
it seven hundred miles North to figure it all out when we get there  
with eight months worth of savings. It felt like an emotional decision to me  
but suddenly my thoughts were interrupted.

*'Shit*

I remembered I had hung my coat on the bathroom door and I also kept all my makeup there. I needed as many of my things as I could grab just in case. I headed in that direction in a rush. As I passed through the walk-in closet,

I stopped to realized how big it was. A small grin crossed my face at the same time my heart dropped.

Memories of when I couldn't ever imagine filling shelves with that many shoes. I took one deep breath and slowly looked around.

Now I wouldn't be able to take half of them with me.

I walked over and stood a while at the counter in the center of the room filled with jewelry and old post cards from Summertime trips.

I sighed outloud.

Buried underneath a pile, I pulled out a picture of David and me standing on the beach in Jamaica.

So much time had passed.

*'God, I remember we used to have so much fun'.*

I turned to the open doorway where you could see our bedroom and the beautiful thoughts turned gloomy.

My heart sunk even lower as I caught a glimpse of the broken glass pieces that were still on the floor.

*'What could I be thinking'?*

A sharp pain ran up the back of my spine.

This is over.

I placed the picture back face down and continued towards the bathroom on my plan to escape.

Slowly shaking my head and talking outloud I repeated,

"All of this is over".

I made my way into the bathroom. That's when fear began to put me into a panic rush.

I'd better get out of here. No telling how long until he gets back.

I felt the sorness in my body return as I quickly grabbed my personal items from the drawer under the sink.

I opened the cabinet to get my medicine and that's when I could feel her eyes watching me. My heart jumped when I noticed Marlene in the room,

and she was not happy!

## 8.

I reached back down to the cabinet drawer below the sink.

It happened so fast the next thing you know the sound of the safety unlocking was echoing in my ears.

I remember slowly rising up to face the mirror to see my reflection confront my own empty eyes.

They were dark.

The stare was solid as ice. My huge black pupils stared right back. My soul trembled with every heartbeat. It's almost as though time stopped.

Quiet.

Inhale.

... Heartbeat ...

Then I exhaled.

Gently as the wind my breath raised the chill bumps over my body.

I inhaled deep once more then let go.

*'So... you really gonna end it like that, huh'?*

I was confused.

I always say none of this is worth it. There was a long pause.

*'You just gonna bitch out like that'?*

What?

'Damn I'm ashamed of you.

So fucking ashamed'.

"You ain't shit"! I shouted outloud.

*'Fuck you, go on, pull it. Do what you gotta do.*

*But don't take your time. Don't hold back like you always do'.*

The gun's tip went from the temple of my head to re aim straight ahead into the reflection.

Chants begin to ring throughout both ears.

*Do it, do it, do*

*it...*

Like a zombie, I walked forward until the gun's barrel hit against the mirror.

I stood there frozen.

I breathed deeply.

"Fuck you", I grunted outloud as tears dripped down my face.

"Just do it this time already"!

It's like... it's almost like I was screaming so loud everything went mute.

When I woke up I knew things were different. I lost control. Kendra was standing over me with a concerned yet forced smile on her face. "Oh my God, can you hear me"?

I barely felt her hand touching mine but I knew she was holding on tight.

The air was peaceful.

I didn't know how many days I had been in a coma but I could tell by how heavy every muscle felt, that quite some time had passed.

My vision was foggy and almost couldn't see anything at all out of my left periphial.

I tried to sit up by my body barely raised an inch before exhaustion made me rest back down. Just at that moment a warm hand pressed against my shoulders. My heart skipped a beat as I looked up to see Marcus beaming down at me.

He grinned softly.

"Megan, don't try to move too much. We're right here ok".

He squeezed me gently. My heart seemed to swell with effection as tears poured out.

I had a second chance.

Try again...

Try again, I thought while drifting back off.

Try again.

Heal.

Recover.

**A Twisted Tale  
by Dawn Duchess**