

Mara, They Call Me

“BRANDY...BRANDY, WAKE UP YOU SILLY THING...IT’S ME...”

His eyes peeled open with languid hesitation. Licking his lips and clearing his throat, he pried his eyes open a little wider. *Jesus*.

Her ebony hair seemed haloed by the cool blue silhouette of the moon, sliding subtle light into his bedroom. Her lips, red, enduringly puckered and full, curved delicately into a smirk in the corners of her mouth. He licked his lips again. She gazed at him through hooded, endearing, vulnerable brown eyes, as though he mattered to her; all of the life and love between them, acknowledged wholly. He then felt a flicker of vivacity just south of his navel.

Emotion erupting within him, he smiled through the sensation of his throat burning. He sat up to greet her, feeling the tears pool at the bottom of his eyes. “Jesus Christ, Tallie...”

And she straddled his lap, bucking and flexing against him as she cradled his face in her clutches.

She ran the tip of her finger over his left eye gingerly. “Don’t cry, Brandy. Don’t cry, please.”

“Natalie...I...you...”

She pecked the tip of his nose with her lips. “Shhh, my love...”

A tear slid down his cheek, as he inhaled her scent, feeling the flicker again. Grabbing at the sides of his Natalie aggressively, he pulled her closer to him, using the tip of his tongue to stab at her neck, tasting her, relishing in the ownership of her.

She moaned and giggled, raking her fingernails through his scalp. “Yes, Brandy...yes...show me how much you’ve missed me...”

He grabbed her tighter, spurred on by the sounds of her, the smell of her, the sweet taste of her skin.

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Then, blinking once, she disappeared from his grasp, standing across the room, wrapped loosely in a bed sheet, glaring at him keenly with tear-smearred eyes. “I hate you, don’t you know that? I fucking hate you! *You* did this! *You* did this to me! *You* did this to us! This is *your* fault! Fuck you!”

She then launched herself out of the bedroom. He could hear her piercing screams. Throwing the sheets off of his body, he tumbled after her, shrieking, “Tallie, baby, please! Don’t do this to me again. *Natalie!*”

Stalling in the empty hallway, panting and nude, he heard nothing but the sound of crickets crying.

It was then, with absolute certainty, that he realized he’d been dreaming.

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