I think I liked you better when you didn't have a knife in your hand, Peaches...

by KittyKatZorse

Summary

When Blake finds herself sold out to the Saviours by her abusive fiancé, she realises that she's certainly not on her own anymore and finds an unlikely friend in Negan. And Negan does NOT like men who beat their girlfriends, one tiny bit….
WHUMP!

That was the last thing Blake heard.

The rush of air and the sound of a blunt object hitting her over the back of her head.

And then, for what felt like an eternity, there was only darkness.

She was present for all of it…feeling like she was sinking…falling into the endless blackness….almost sure that this was it….that she would wake as one of them…half-conscious but desperate for the taste of blood….of human flesh….

So it came as a surprise to her, when she blinked open her eyes to find that she was still shrouded in darkness….cold and bruised.

Blake gave a groan, scrabbling at the cold concrete floor beneath her, trying to heave herself up into a sitting position, gazing around, through the gloom.

Where was she?

And what had happened?

Where was-

She turned her head at the sudden sound of footsteps, noticing suddenly a crack, beneath, what must have been a large steel door to her left, where a bright shaft of light poured from underneath.

She had been outside the walls to Alexandria when it had happened…foraging for, well, anything…

Times were hard and desperate. If only they could find some fruit, some seeds to plant….a farm nearby maybe? But they had tried all that. Anything to try and fill their quota to the Saviours this month.

While Rick and Michonne were out there trying to find guns, Blake was trying to get by…to not see anyone else killed for the sake of pride.

Her and her team had been picked up seven months ago by Aaron…they had been wandering the woods…hiding out and scavenging for food and sustenance where they could, for what felt like years.

Had it been years? All sense of time had seemed to slip through their fingers. Now it was just them and a sunset….tolling the days.

"David?" she croaked, clutching at her sore ribs as a voice that didn't sound like hers, escaped her lips.

Where was she? And why was she here alone?

Alive?

She sat up, pushing her long caramel hair from her face, as a shadow of feet and the sound of footsteps once again passed the door.
She had been walking on her own when she had heard the sound of trucks entering the gates of Alexandria. The Saviours most likely. Blake usually kept her head down when the brutish men made their way into their camp, plundering everything they could get their hands on.

But she couldn't remember what had happened next. Only that sound, and the blackness….

Where was David?

She gave a gulp, her throat feeling dry and sore and slid herself back against the cold bare wall.

She had on just a white t-shirt, tight fitting jeans and boots….but compared to the humid temperature in the sunlight outside, in here in was cold and drafty and damp.

Her hand slipped down to her side where her knife usually sat but it wasn't there. Blake vaguely remembered having it in her hand when she had been struck, so god knows where it was now.

But before she could think on anything more, the door was wrenched open and a harsh artificial light streamed over her eyes.

Blake squinted, lifting a hand over her face for a second while she adjusted to the light. But she didn't have time to do anything more, as she felt two pairs of rough hands grab her beneath her arms and pull her to her feet.

She stumbled unsteadily feeling for the first time how sore and bruised she truly was. Had she really fallen that badly?

Then she remembered …

It had been a few days ago now…. another of David's angry outbursts. She had almost felt it coming….his irritated tone…the scowls over dinner with Tara…like an oncoming storm…

It hadn't been the first time, and she knew it wouldn't be the last. But since, well, everything had gone to shit, it was common…people were angry…bitter that this had happened….and were taking their anger out on those closest to them.

David used to apologise…but these days….the 'sorrys' were few and far between.

If she had been talking to anyone else, she'd have told them to run…..to get out…..to leave….but they had been together for years before all this had started….and anyway….who else did she have?

Two of the five she had started out with, since arriving in Alexandria, were now dead, so she would stay with David….her fiancé.

Because she was terrified and because she knew there was nothing else. Was having something as horrible as it was, worth it?

And at the end of the day, he loved her….right?

The two men either side of her yanked her forwards painfully.

Blake didn't recognise them, but could guess from the burly characteristics they both shared, it was likely they only hailed from one group. And that group was the Saviours.

Fuck…

Was that really where she was right now? Their camp?
No, no, no, no, no….

She hadn't been involved…she had stayed out of Rick's politics…this had never been her fight!

"Come on, sweetheart," growled one of them men, as they pushed her down a dingy corridor and through a large set of doors.

In a matter of moments Blake had found herself inside a large hall, surrounded by long canteen-style tables and low industrial lighting.

But she wasn't alone here….

Blake got given a sharp shove into the centre of a large group of men and women of all shapes and sizes, who merely leered at her menacingly, some of them brandishing weapons of varying degrees of unfriendliness.

She didn't doubt that the infamous Negan wasn't part of the crowd too.

But despite the descriptions of him, people banded around camp, Blake had never laid eyes on him. Trying to keep away from the Saviours as much as possible.

She gave an instant gulp, twisting her head around, this way and that, her heart thudding inside her ribcage.

She felt a swell of nausea hovering in her oesophagus.

Was this it?

Was she about to find that her fate was to be the same as Glen or Abraham's? Two men she had barely met, and yet their demise was the stuff of gruesome legend, still whispered around Alexandria daily.

Blake could feel all eyes on her. Everyone watching her…all of them eerily silent.

As if waiting for something…

But what?

But her questions were almost instantly answered when a figure stepped forwards and causing her to take a step back in fright….

She turned her head and blinked for a second…freezing in place….like a rabbit in the headlights…

"D-David?"

She could barely get out the word.

For there he was her fiancé of three years.

David.

With his sandy hair and piercing blue eyes.

Smiling…

Blake gave another uncontrollable gulp and took a sudden step back.
What was going on?

Why was he here? Why were the Saviours letting him speak like this?

"Hi baby," he said, his voice steady, and his tone firm. Looking like this was the most natural thing in the world for him.

Blake peered up at him...the man she loved...and yet right now...he looked just like the other men here....he looked at home....

Her green eyes flickered over his features, her eyes filling with worry, her heart still hammering.

She didn't answer him.

But his smile barely flickered.

And that made her uneasy.

"I've made us a deal," he said after a moment or two had passed, and the people standing all around began to stir. "Negan and the Saviours here have said that they'll give us sanctuary if we give us some information on Rick...and the rest of his people.... back there in Alexandria."

Blake felt her heart plummet into her stomach.

Her eyes widened as she stared up at David.

What was he doing?

"Information?" she said almost bitterly, a frown appearing between her brows.

What was his MO right now? He didn't particularly look scared...scared enough to be trying to think of anything to save their lives. No, he was standing there being allowed to speak. As if they had already accepted him as one of their own.

Blake scowled, breathing hard, her hands balling into fists at her sides.

David stood his ground, giving a small sigh.

"Negan has offered us-" he began, his words slow and patronising.

But Blake was angry.

She wasn't Rick's biggest fan, but his people were good and kind and only wanted what was best for one another. Why after they had taken them in...fed them...clothed them... So why would David turn against them like this? Offer up information they didn't have?!

Neither David nor Blake were involved in Rick's meetings....neither of them had any more information than the Saviours did.

What kind of game was he playing?

"I don't give a fuck what Negan has offered us!" Blake snarled furiously.

And with that she took a step forwards, glowering at him.

The woman stood almost nose to nose with him, tall and blonde and angry. She could feel the fire
burning inside her…

…More angry than she had felt in a long time….

But she should have known what was coming….she always knew what was coming…..

And before she had time to say anything more, David had struck her sharply across the face with the back of his hand.

Blake gave a small whimper but didn't scream, instead just doubling over and clutching at her painful cheek, as jeering and laughs were murmured from the crowd of surrounding people.

"You realise they've offered us a choice?" said David in incredulous voice, taking a step towards her, causing her to stare up at him darkly….. just as the two men from before grabbed her arms once again, twisting them both up behind her back. "And they don't do that lightly either. I've had to negotiate for this, y'know!"

The men, of course, sensed her hostility and her unwillingness to obey, and so began to pull her backwards, back out of the room once again.

Blake stared up at her fiancé in disbelief, his blue eyes steely, his jaw now set.

"Either we give them the information they need," David continued, shaking his head. "Or they keep you locked up in that fucking cell until you do."

Blake paled, her mouth feeling dry.

She had nothing to give to them. No information of any sort.

Even if she lied, they would see through that sooner or later.

She was of no use to them. Why had David even told them she was?!

"There's also a third choice," he called after her, just as she was roughly pulled back through the double doors. Losing sight of David and the crowd instantly.

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But what Blake hadn't noticed, was one person watching the commotion from the balcony high above …. 

…a man who blinked his chocolate eyes…his lips twitching up into a grin….as he watched Blake get dragged from sight…

…..a man with a baseball bat covered in barbed wire, swinging limply from one hand…. 
It been three hours since, with not even a word from either of the men holding her, Blake was shoved roughly forwards back into the dank and gloomy cell, the door clanging shut behind her.

And since then she had sat here, cold, alone and thirsty…wondering if she would ever get out.

She still didn't understand how she had got here?

Had the Saviours captured both her AND David?

But whereas she had been out of Alexandria at the time, a little way into the woods, David had, as far as he had been aware, back at the house they shared.

What were the odds of the Saviours picking up both of them like that?

Had David agreed to make a deal with them then they had gone into the woods and found her? Was that it?

But Blake frowned to herself, here in the darkness.

Did any of that even seem likely?

She worried at her lip with her teeth.

She had nothing for them…no intel they probably didn't already know on Rick and his group. So was her fate to sit in this cell and starve? And then turn into one of those creatures she had been running from this whole time?

Her cheek still stung where David had hit her. But at least for a second that had reminded her that she was indeed still alive…for now.

She was used to it….the bruises and the welts…. but that was the first time David had ever hit her in front of other people before…

Blake remembered back to all those years ago. They had had an apartment together in the city, above a coffee shop.

The place constantly smelled of sour milk, Blake had always been convinced of that…but David had always cuddled her and promised that once day they would buy somewhere out of town…not even in the suburbs….a little place of their own…just the two of them. They had been happy. But that felt like a long time ago now.

Life obviously wasn't destined to turn out the way either of them had wanted…

Blake's green eyes drifted over her lap…just as there came the sudden loud sound of a bolt getting pulled across…. 

She turned her shadowed face upwards, just as the heavy door was tugged open and in stepped a figure…

Blake half-expected it to be David…

But despite the fact she had never seen the man standing in front of her before, silhouetted in the light
streaming out from behind him, she still knew who he was…

He was a person of grotesque legend amongst the people of Alexandria. Some had seen him kill Glen and Abraham….some had seen him kill Spencer….but everyone knew his name…

He was taller than she had imagined, standing there in a leather jacket tossed haphazardly over a white t-shirt, with his signature baseball bat covered in barbed wire, slung over his shoulder as if it were the most casual thing in the world.

Blake pursed her lips, staring up into the face of the man before her.

His features were long and tanned, and he grinned down at her with a line of straight, white teeth.

At this moment she could feel her heart pounding inside her ribcage, but she didn't want to admit fear. Not to him.

A second passed, as his dark eyes made their way over her features, before he finally, after what felt like an eternity, opened his mouth to speak.

"Do you know who I am?" he said in a low drawl, arching his back with every syllable he spoke.

He lowered the baseball bat from his shoulder and let it fall beside him, swinging it a mere foot or two from her skull.

Blake looked up at him. This man who had caused so much hurt and pain to the people she now knew as her family.

"Yeah, I figured," she said with contempt in her voice.

At her words, Negan's grin seemed to widen. He glanced at a man with straggly blonde hair and a goatee to his side for a moment, before staring back down at her.

"Glad to know my reputation precedes me," he said, with a slight chuckle. "And you are….Blake, isn't it? Well aren't you a beauty."

He narrowed his chocolate eyes at her as he spoke.

Blake's own eyes flickered down to her knees momentarily. She gave a nod, before staring up at Negan once again.

He was intimidating, she'd give him that, and none of that even had anything to do with the weapon in his hand….or the knife at his hip.

"I just thought I'd call in on you," he said after another second had passed. "See if you'd prefer to bunk up with your fi-an-ce for the night, instead of sitting in here, peeing into a bucket? Might make your stay a little more comfortable?"

Blake stared up at him, her eyes dark. But she didn't give an answer.

She knew that this couldn't be that easy.

"Or maybe," Negan continued. "After that right hook ol' lover boy gave you, you'd rather not be sharing a bed? Hmmm?"

He had seen that.
Blake's stomach twisted into knots. She knew how David's act of power and dominance over her must have made him look…like a fucking hero. And her? Like a little mouse, that needed to be stamped on.

But that wasn't who she was. That was never who she was.

Before all this, she had had a great career. Been earning a good amount of money. More that David anyway…and yet now look at her. Locked up in a cell with a stinging cheek and a bruised ego.

Blake raised a single eyebrow up towards Negan defiantly, she gave a measured smirk.

"Is this our Beauty and the Beast moment?" she said in a mocking tone, titling her head to the side, her green eyes never leaving his chocolate ones. "Offering me a better room? You'll be breaking into song and asking me to dance with you soon."

She half expected this to be the end for her. Her stupid words being the last thing she heard as a baseball bat collided with her skull…

But it wasn't.

Instead to her surprise, she saw Negan's eyes light up, as he gave a chuckle.

"Fuck me, you've got a smart mouth," he said biting on his lip, almost approvingly. "Anything else I should know about you? You got an AK47 stashed down that blouse of yours too?"

Blake gave a scowl, a sniff and went back to staring at her knees once again.

The need for his approval of her was not high on her bucket list right now.

"Fine," he said after a long, drawn out moment. "I mean, you are more than welcome to stay in here," Negan said giving a short sigh. "But I just thought you might like a walk. See what kind of facilities we have here, at--"

But he hadn't eve finished his sentence when Blake cut across him before she could stop herself.

"What are you? The hotel concierge?" he bit at him, baring her teeth.

God, at this rate she was bound to get herself killed.

Negan's lips twitched up into another half-smile, but between his brows the slightest of frowns shifted its way onto his face.

He took a step forwards, dangling his baseball bat precariously in front of her face like a pendulum, tolling the mere moments she was likely to have left to live.

"Y'know I like you much better than your boyfriend," he said in a gruff tone.

Blake continued to stare into her lap.

"Fiancé," she corrected with a murmur.

She almost heard Negan smile at this one.

"Ooh, fiancé. I do apologise," he said in a simpering tone. "But you do realise that fiancé of yours has sold you the hell out. He's told us that you can give us some information on Rick and the rest of his group of pussies. So either you cooperate, or I'm gonna have to start crackin' skulls."
Negan gripped his bat menacingly.

Blake gave a hard gulp. Her throat was so dry not having had anything to drink since first thing this morning.

She didn't want to die. But David had now put her in this terrible position. If she admitted that she had nothing to tell them about the folks from Alexandria, Negan and his men would likely kill both of them…

So Blake knew that she had to play along….for now at least…

Until she could find a way to escape….

Blake gazed up finally into Negan's dark eyes.

"So what do you say, Doll?" he said, as he took in her nervous features.

The tall man held out his free hand for her to take.

Blake gave a nervous gulp, her heart thudding in her chest. Her mind was whirring at a mile a second.

But what other choice did she have right now. She had to play for time…

And so, making up her mind, without taking Negan's hand, Blake pulled herself to her feet and stared directly up at the menacing man before her.

Even fully standing, the imposing figure of Negan was still a few inches taller than her, and peered down at her with a bemused smirk plastered across his long features.

"After you …" he muttered standing aside and holding a hand out for her to pass him.

There was something about him….this Negan…. Despite the fact she'd only just met him…it felt like she'd known him for years. She could read him pretty well. She knew what type of man he was.

Blake gave a slight huff, a frown line lingering between her brows…she was nervous alright, but she did not want to show him that.

And so she obeyed. Shoving past him and leaving the cell….

Out in the corridor were three armed men, as well as the blonde guy with long straggly blonde hair that hung about his face. But none of them said a word to her.

In was only a second before Negan was at her side once again. She could feel his eyes looking her up and down, and she breathed in his musky scent at this close proximity.

Almost immediately, one of the men behind her gave her a shove, forcing her to fall into the step with their dark-haired leader.

And with that, they began to walk…..

Blake was surprised that none of them could hear her heart hammering inside her chest. To her, it felt like it was almost deafening.
Oh, how she longed for the days when it was simple. They would kill the 'dead', find shelter...find other people. Good people, who were out for exactly the same as they were.

Survival.

But nowadays this was a different kind of survival. It was the survival of the Saviours above everyone else. That was obvious here.

They turned a sharp corner, the only noise that could be heard being the sound of boots on the concrete corridor floor as Negan led Blake through a door and out into the fresh air, that hit her like a well-deserved wall of pleasure.

She found herself on a balcony of sorts, overlooking a large compound. This place must have been a factory in its day and several pieces of disused equipment still littered the pathways that were obviously once parking-lots.

It was early evening now, with floodlights throwing a stark illumination onto fences-upon-fences of walkers, caged up, tied up, emaciated and snarling...as they always seemed to be.

"So..." said Negan suddenly appearing at Blake's side, making her jump slightly. He leant against the railing beside them, turning to face her fully, a wide smile thrown across his stubbly features. "...as the Beast said to his Beauty...welcome to my castle."

He gestured to the large compound with his baseball bat.

Blake rolled her eyes.

"It's not exactly a fairy-tale library, in a fucking enchanted palace, now is it?" she said, flashing him a steely look.

But Negan continued to grin.

He gave a warm chuckle, as his eyes flitted across her face.

"No," he said arching an eyebrow at her. "But I do have a huge stack of pornos you can read, if you're inclined."

Blake tutted, but didn't gratify him with an answer.

"We're not the monsters that Rick has made us out to be y'know..." Negan continued after a second, turning away from her and staring out across the lot. "I've been very nice to you and your fiancé, and agreed to make a deal. And if you come good on said deal, I think you'll find I can be very accommodating...."

The tall, dark-haired leader of the Saviours turned back to face her.

"...and you might just find there's a place for you here.....with us," he finished.

Blake glanced down at her feet, her long caramel blonde hair dancing over her shoulders in the warm breeze.

"I wasn't the one who agreed to make that deal....." she said suddenly, with bitterness in her voice. "David was."

As soon as she had said it, she felt her heart plummet into her stomach.
From the corner of her eyes she saw Negan frown suddenly, his face becoming grim.

He pushed himself off of the railing, coming to stand just an inch away from her.

"Sleep on it," he uttered with a low growl. His lips lingering near to her ear. "You might find you'll change your mind after a night in that cell."

And with that, he walked away, leaving Blake alone, staring out at the darkening night's sky.

She knew what was coming…. 

….and as soon as she heard the sound of the door slamming shut behind her and Negan's footfalls retreating swiftly away, she was grabbed roughly by the arms and pulled back inside. 

This was going to be a long, long night…she knew that for certain.
Lemonade

The hours ticked by in the dark cold cell….yet sleep was not something that managed to come easily to Blake.

She tossed and turned, her head resting on nothing but bare concrete.

Every part of her ached, partly due to old bruises that littered her body in hidden places, but mainly due to the sheer cold. The gap beneath the door was drafty, and all night a chilly wind seemed to whistle beneath it, preventing her from falling into a deep sleep.

The hours seemed to crawl slowly by. And before Blake realised it, it was morning.

She could hear footsteps passing by in regular intervals and the sound of muttering floating under the door.

Yet the cell still remained as dark as ever…

Blake heaved herself up, propping her back up against the wall.

Her mouth and throat were parched. It had been twenty-four hours since she had had anything to drink and it was all she could think about.

It wasn't long before the morning drifted by too. And by the time ,that she calculated as lunchtime, came, Blake could take it no longer.

The caramel-blonde woman gave a pained groan and bashed her fist against the steel door.

"Hey!" she cried as loud as she could, with her croaky voice.

A second passed of silence before Blake banged her fist against the cold metal once again. "Hey!" she yelled.

Half a minute slipped by, but before she could knock once more, the door was suddenly wrenched open.

The blonde man she had seen with Negan last night was there once again, staring down at her. She now noticed that one side of his face, that had been, last night, obscured by his lengthy hair, was badly burned.

"What?" he uttered sharply.

Blake gave a difficult gulp.

"I…uhhhh….can I get some water….?" she said in a quiet tone, staring up at him. "… uhhh…..please….."

The man surveyed her carefully for a long second….. before abruptly slamming the door in Blake's face once again.

She gaped for a short moment…before bashing the door with her fist again.

"Please!" she cried out, before giving a small roar of frustration and leaning her head back against the wall behind her.
If she didn't get some water soon, she felt like she'd surely die of thirst.

Blake closed her eyes, slowing her breathing….

She wondered what David was doing right now?

Was he ok? Was he locked away in a cell too? Held prisoner until Blake dished the dirt on Rick and his group. Dirt that she did not even possess!

She was cold, thirsty, and right at this second, felt so so alone.

How had she got herself into this mess and how the hell was she going to get herself out of it again?

Could she makes something up? Try and sate Negan and the Saviours' appetite just long enough for her to hatch a plan?

Ughhh. It was useless.

That Negan guy would be sure to see through the lies in seconds. She knew men like him. He wasn't a fool.

And then what….a swift blow to the head with that baseball bat of his and it would all be over.

She still didn't know what to make of him. Negan. Sure he was intimidating, but he hadn't scared her as much as she'd expected. Perhaps that was all part of some sort of plan of his.

Blake gave a heavy sigh as the minutes seemed to drift by….alone and desperate for a drink of any kind.

Was this really what her fate was to be? After escaping death for so long, was this going to be the thing that killed her off?

She was painfully thirsty now and in desperate need of something….anything to quench that thirst.

Her eyes travelled nervously to the bucket that was serving as a bathroom in the corner of her darkened cell. Luckily or unluckily for her, however she looked at it, she hadn't need to use that yet…so that was thankfully not an option.

But before she could ponder her predicament any longer, suddenly and without any warning, the door to her cell was wrenched open, sending a cool shaft of artificial light streaming across her face.

Blake winced, blinking a couple of times before staring up to see the blonde man standing there once again, beside the open door.

But this time, he wasn't looking back at her. No.

Instead he had his head bowed…his eyes on the floor…

….and it took Blake a second or two, to realise why…

She gave a sudden gulp…her mouth salivating…

For standing at the end of the long corridor was Negan, leaning up against the wall, in that same old leather jacket and legs that seemed waaay too long for him. He still had that annoying grin plastered across his stubby face.
In one hand was his trusted baseball bat…but it was what was in his other hand, that had caught her eye…

"Lemonade?" Negan uttered in that low drawl of his, lifting the glass pitcher full of ice cold liquid in his hand.

Blake heard the ice inside the jug tinkle.

Never in her life had she wanted something more. But she didn't move.

"Oh come on now," continued Negan, flashing her a cocky smile. "I know how badly you want it…"

His eyes met with hers.

"…the lemonade that is…"

He gave a chuckle at his own joke, as the blonde man at the door gave a thin laugh in reciprocation.

It was obvious that Negan's men were scared of him. So Blake knew for a fact that him offering her lemonade right now, was not an act of friendship.

It would never be that easy.

Negan gave a sigh, pushing himself from the wall and peering down at the pitcher in his hand.

"Just thought you could do with a nice cold glass of this, after spending the night stuck in that utter fucking shit-hole," he said nodding towards the dark cell. "And, you have no idea how many skulls I had to crack to get a hold of this."

He tinkled the pitcher again, strolling towards her.

Blake gave a gulp.

"Well you know what they say," Negan muttered, arching his back as he spoke. "When life gives you insolent motherfuckers, you make lemonade."

Blake looked up at him, breathing hard.

His words were so callous, so uncaring. She didn't doubt for second that he wouldn't kill people to get his hands on something as simple as lemonade, either.

"I don't think that's how the saying goes," she said in a simpering voice, narrowing her eyes at him.

But Negan just scoffed, shrugging his leather-clad shoulders, staring down at her. "Tomatoes, tomatoes…Doll."

Blake rolled her eyes.

God, how he infuriated her.

"So you gonna get up yourself, or is Dwighty-boy here gonna have to shut you in that cell again?" said Negan after a second or two.

The blonde man at their side glanced at Blake for a slight second, before looking away once more, keeping his eyes on the floor.
Blake gave an inward sigh.

What choice did she have right now? She was desperate for something to drink and right now she couldn't face another moment alone in this cell.

She frowned, picking herself up, wincing as she did so. Her body felt stiff and sorer than it had after she just woken up. She was almost 30, and so far too old to be sleeping on floors anymore…

She stood, brushing down the back of her dark jeans and pushed her long caramel hair back over her shoulders.

Blake noticed Negan eye her, a bemused sort of expression crossing his long features, as she exited the cell, stepping into the harsh light of the corridor.

She half expected to get pounced on by Negan's men at any second, but the threat never came. To her surprise, she found that it really was just her, Negan, and the man named Dwight, out here.

Blake folded her arms across herself, her eyes travelling up to the leader of the Saviours, as she approached him tentatively.

"Well goddamn, Doll-face," said Negan, his chocolate eyes traveling across Blake's features. "You really are a beauty, ain't ya? The night-time didn't do you justice."

But Blake just frowned up at him, ignoring his comment.

"Where's David?" she asked, her voice steady, and as calm as it could be under the circumstances.

But at her question, Negan sucked his teeth, glancing away for the slightest of seconds. "Oh he's settlin' in nicely," he uttered in a matter-of-fact tone, looking back at her. "Just like you could be….if you tell us what you know about Rick the Prick, and his gang-o-rebels."

Blake pursed her lips, taking a step closer to Negan.

She had nothing to tell him. Nothing at all.

"I want to see him…David…" she said defiantly, raising her head and staring directly into Negan's eyes.

But the dark-haired man merely smiled, although obviously impressed by her stance, he lifted the baseball bat in his hand and swung it towards her middle gently, where it missed her by inches.

"All in good time, sweetheart," he said winking at her. "But first, how 'bout we enjoy this lemonade out on my porch. What do you say?"

Blake gave an inward huff of frustration, knowing she probably had very little choice in the matter.

She blinked in compliance, lifting her head, her green eyes settling on Negan's dark ones.

And for a long moment they stared each other out, Negan running his tongue over his lips and giving her a grin, before he lifted his bat in the direction of the doorway at the end of the corridor.

"Ladies first…" he said with a husky growl.

And Blake almost immediately found herself doing what she was told, and heading off down the hallway, feeling Negan fall into step with her instantly.
She knew where she was going. She guessed correctly that the balcony Negan had been referring to, was indeed the raised platform she had been brought out onto the night before.

And so heading around the corner, the man at her side gave the large steel door a shove with his bat, as Dwight followed behind them silently.

It was a bright and sunny day and the heat seemed to hit Blake more than it probably would have done, had she not felt so dehydrated.

She stopped for a second, gazing around.

Two large rocking chairs, and a small dark wood-stained table had been brought out here to the little balcony overlooking the fences surrounding the Saviours' camp.

In the daylight the place looked ever more horrific than it had at night, with several men in baggy grey clothes keeping the advancing dead at bay as well as they could. It was almost the opposite to the tranquil life that Blake had now become accustomed to behind the high walls of Alexandria.

She suddenly felt Negan's shoulder meet with hers gently, bumping her as he passed.

"Take a seat," he muttered close to her ear, in a low voice that seemed to send shivers all down her spine. She jerked her head around to look at him, feeling defensive all of a sudden.

What was all this? She had almost expected Negan to take her to his 'porch' and torture her until she gave him what he wanted….whether that be information on Rick…or something else completely…

But Negan strolled casually over to the rickety-looking table where two glass tumblers sat, and filled them both with the enticing lemon drink.

Blake breathed hard, the sun beating down onto her caramel blonde hair…

She cautiously walked over to him and took a seat in the chair nearest to the door. Not that she had much chance of escaping, not with Dwight guarding the door with a gun in his hand, at least.

Negan took a seat next to her, placing his baseball bat down between them casually, resting it against the small table, before reaching over and handing her a glass.

Oh god, she wanted it so badly, but she paused for a second, staring down at the cold tumbler in Negan's hand.

Why was he so eager for her to drink it, huh? The Saviours had denied her anything to drink for so long….so why now?

"You've put something in it…" she said giving a gulp, her eyes flickering from the glass and back up to Negan.

But Negan merely chuckled, placing the glass down beside her and picking up his own, before leaning back in his seat and taking a long, drawn-out gulp of lemonade.

It was a moment or two before he placed the glass down again on the table beside him and pointed to her with his finger.

"That's the problem with you people," he said raising an eyebrow towards Blake. "You are all far too suspicious. Here I am, giving you an audience with me, as well as a lovely glass of cold lemonade….and there you go accusing me of trying to drug you."
He shook his head, turning away from her and staring out across the lot.

"I mean, goddamn doll-face," he said with a sigh. "Have I given you any reason to believe that I'm out to hurt you?"

But Blake gave a scowl, almost gaping at his words. "You've had me locked in a cell AND you killed people from my camp…" she said in an incredulous voice. "You fucking bludgeoned them to death….with that thing-"

Blake pointed at the barbed wire-covered baseball bat.

"…so excuse me, for not trusting you," she snarled, huffing and turning away from him, folding her arms across her chest once again.

She could feel Negan's eyes on her, but his face, she couldn't read.

Her chest rose and fell rapidly, knowing that he could very well use that bat on her right now.

But she if she was going out, she was going to go out, having quenched her thirst at the very least.

She turned back towards the table and picked up the glass Negan had just drunk from, bringing it to her lips and taking a well-needed sip.

The lemonade was sharp and cold, and tasted like the best thing Blake had ever, ever tried in her entire life. She could barely stop herself from closing her eyes as she gulped down mouthful after mouthful.

She finished the last drop and gasped for air, hearing Negan give a quiet laugh.

He was still staring at her, through his dark lashes. But Blake didn't care anymore. She just licked her lips and placed the glass down again.

Now he was free to do with her what he liked.

"You know, I think I can see why your fiancé brought you here…" said Negan after a second, shifting slightly closer to her and biting his lip. "I mean if I had a gal like you, there would be no way I'd be leaving you behind."

Blake blinked her eyes.

"What?" she asked, her mouth suddenly going dry again, despite her thirst already being quenched.

Her eyes darted across Negan's face, trying to read him.

What was he talking about?

But Negan just looked back at her lazily.

"I mean there is always an open spot for you as one of my wives -" he started teasingly, with a widening grin, but Blake cut across him hurriedly.

"You said that David brought me here," she said breathing hard.

Negan stared at her, looking a little bemused.

"Yuh-huh," he said with a nod, smiling. "Ol' Davey-boy was pretty fuckin' insistent that you coming
here was all part of the deal. You were already passed-out when Simon found him on the side of the road. He was waiting for them with you, like he'd said he would be."

Blake got suddenly to her feet.

She could feel her heart hammering in her chest.

She hadn't been knocked out and brought here by the Saviours at all…. she'd been brought here by David…. wait, was he the one that had knocked her out?

"Take me to see him," Blake said in a sudden demanding tone, staring daggers at Negan.

But the leader of the Saviours just stared up at her coolly, giving a smirk.

"Now what has got you all riled up, peaches?" he said tilting his head to the side and surveying her carefully.

But Blake was in no mood to play games.

She didn't care about where she was… or who she was talking to…

"Now!" she cried, snatching up Negan's baseball bat suddenly and holding it out towards him threateningly, shifting her weight from foot-to-foot as she did so.

Almost instantly, she heard the click of Dwight's safety being removed, and the feeling of the barrel of a gun being pressed into the back of her skull.

Negan looked amused, sitting back in his rocking-chair, and looking her up and down, his eyes twinkling with something Blake couldn't quite put her finger on.

"Well, hot-diggity-dog," he said giving a chuckle and placing his bearded chin in his hand and gazing at her. "You are giving me, just the biggest hard-on right now, you know that-"

"Shut up!" cried Blake talking over him. "I want to see David…. take me to see him."

Negan's smile lingered for a moment, before his face suddenly because serious.

"Dwight," he said in a measured voice, his eyes never leaving hers. "Take her downstairs to see her precious Fi-an-ce."

From the corner of her eyes she saw Dwight give a confused frown.

"Boss?" he asked questioningly.

But Negan gave a wave of his hand and turned away from them both disinterestedly.

"Give the lady what she wants, Dwight," he said, picking up the second glass of lemonade and bringing it to his lips.

There was a beat, before Blake felt the barrel of the gun being pulled from her head, and the blonde man grab her shoulder, turning her back towards the door.

Suddenly there was a cough from behind them both, causing Dwight to stop Blake in her tracks.

"Ahem," came Negan's growling voice. "Lucille?"
Blake gave a frown, and glanced back at the dark-haired man over her shoulder, who now had his free arm stretched out towards her.

Blake wavered for a moment before looking down at the bat in her hand.

Wait, had he really named this thing Lucille?!

She gave a scowl, her darkened eyes staring directly into his, as she handed the weapon back to him, dropping into his hand with a thud.

Blake knew, that all he had to do was stand up and use 'Lucille', and that could be the end of her….

But he didn't, he merely smirked, and turned away from her once again, taking another sip of lemonade, before giving a satisfied hiss.

At this Blake heard Dwight mutter an irritable "hurry up" into her ear, as he tugged her, once again, in the direction of the door.

"Say hi to David for me…." Negan muttered quickly, in a low voice from behind them, "…oh and Frankie…if she's still down there."

Blake's eyes widened and she snatched one last look at Negan as she was pulled abruptly through the doors.

What the hell had he meant by that?

But she didn't get another chance to ask him as the steel doors swung promptly shut behind her, blocking all sight of the dark-haired man…..and Lucille…..from her questions.
Blake gave a scowl as Dwight pulled her down the stone steps leading down to the basement floor of the large building, a little quicker that she'd wanted.

"Watch it," she sniped at the blonde man, as she stumbled slightly on the last step.

But that only earned her a shove in the direction of a long corridor, with doors lining the right-hand side.

Blake was still angry. Had Negan been telling her the truth? Had David really been the one to bring her here? Or was this all just a game on the leader of the Saviours' part? Set the dominoes up and watch them fall….

Behind her, Dwight gave her another sharp shove.

"Take it easy!" Blake snapped, shooting him a dark look, catching sight of the terrible red scars that haunted one side of his face.

She gave a gulp, wondering how it had happened…

But before she could dwell on it any longer, they came to stop outside one of the doors…just as a slender woman, with long red hair, emerged.

She was smiling over her shoulder at someone, when she suddenly stopped in her tracks, catching sight of Blake and Dwight, her grin disappearing almost instantly.

She didn't say a word to either of them, but by the look on her face, the glance she shared with Dwight must have been meaningful.

Blake gave a gulp, her eyes following the woman as she disappeared off down the corridor.

"You've got five minutes," said Dwight suddenly from behind her, nodding towards the door before them.

Blake turned to him a little confused.

Was this where David was?

Her eyes lingered on the corner the woman had disappeared around.

He had been attractive and around the same age as Blake herself…but why would she be here?

Blake felt her heart hammering inside her ribcage…but all the same, she turned slowly on her heel and gave the wooden door a small shove.

"Back so soon?" came a sudden familiar voice she recognised oh-so well, causing her breath to catch slightly in her throat.

She took a step forwards, peering around the door and into the room.

There he was…David…..the love of her life, sat on the edge of the bed, doing up the last couple of buttons on his clean powder-blue shirt.
His blue eyes drifted across to Blake and his smile almost instantly disappeared.

"Blake?" he said giving an obvious gulp and getting to his feet, an immediate frown plastering its way onto his face.

Blake stared first at him, then around at his plush surroundings.

The room was large…large enough for a king size bed and a side table, at least. There was a stack of women's health magazines on the table, as well as what was left of a packet of potato chips.

Blake looked back at David, breathing hard.

Had he been in here….and all the while Blake had been stuck in that cell?

David took a step towards her, eyeing Dwight at the door suddenly.

The scarred man at the door looked between the pair.

"Like I said to her," he said in a bitter voice. "You've got five minutes."

And with that, he pulled the door shut behind him, leaving them alone.

Blake looked up at David once again, as he moved a hand toward her shoulder.

"Baby-" he tried but Blake pulled away from him, taking a step back.

"You've been in here…this whole time?" she said in an incredulous voice, her eyes wide and disbelieving. "While I was-"

She turned away, her hand going to her temples.

She felt David's hand reach out for her once again, but she tugged herself from his grasp.

"They locked me in a cell, David!" she cried angrily turning back towards him. "With a fucking bucket to go to the bathroom in!"

Right now Blake could feel her blood boiling. She felt furious….betrayed….

David stopped in his tracks, looking at her.

"And who was that, huh?" she said, her voice wavering slightly. Blake pointed to the door. "That woman-"

But David's lips became a thin line. "You mean Frankie?" he uttered giving a sigh, turning around and taking a seat back down onto the edge of the bed and fiddling with his shirt sleeves. "She was just giving me a massage. She was a trained masseuse before all this y'know…"

Blake scowled in her fiancé's direction.

Was he really doing this? Lying through his teeth, right to her face?

This wouldn't have been the first time he'd cheated on her that was for certain. But that had been a long, long time ago. They were a team now…they'd been through so much together…

"You really expect me to believe that," she scoffed, pursing her lips together and turning away from him.
She really couldn't believe that this was happening…here….

She shook her head and chanced another glance over to him.

"Negan told me you were the one who brought me here…" she said, her chest rising and falling hard, with every word she spoke. "That you planned this with them. I-Is that true?"

It couldn't be true…of course it couldn't….

This was Negan she was talking about….of course he couldn't be telling the truth….

There was no one she trusted more over David…them man she loved with all her heart. Maybe Negan had set this whole thing up.

He had known that Blake would ask to see David….known that Frankie was going to be there….that's why he had been so compliant….

It all made sense now…

They were all just pawns to him in some big game he was playing…

But David got to his feet, his blue eyes steely and cold looking.

He closed the gap between them and spoke, his teeth gritted.

"Don't you realise coming here is a good thing?" he said in a low voice. "I-"

He paused, glancing down for a moment before looking back up at Blake.

"we….could be good here. Fuck, Rick and those other losers out there in that fucking place. This is where we need to be," David shook his head, his hand coming to grasp her forearm, his flingers gripping her skin tightly. "Negan's offered me all this….if we just give him what he needs."

Blake gave a gulp, her eyes drifting down to her arm, where David's grip was hastily tightening… hurting her…before her green orbs drifted back up to his face….which was now fixed and cold-looking.

"I don't have anything to give him…I don't know anything…." she murmured, wincing slightly and giving a weak moan of pain as his fingernails dug into her flesh.

But David tugged her close, baring his teeth and leaning in to her.

"You went to those committee meetings, Blake," he spat venomously. "Rick must have said something there that you can feed to Negan. Fuck me, you can be fucking useless sometime, you know that? Just fucking think of something of worth and Negan will reward us both, are we clear?"

Blake racked her brains. Those meetings' that Rick had held in the chapel- they had not been about strategy…but about community…about keeping spirits together…

But Blake was having a hard time focusing on anything right now, as David dug his fingers deeper and deeper into her skin, causing her to cry out in agonising pain.

"Please," she begged, gulping hard, her mouth dry once again.

"Just fucking think of something," snarled David angrily in her face. "Alright?"
And with that, he let go…casing Blake to stumble back, clutching at her painful arm.

She would have cried…but she’d spent her tears long ago on bruises David had given her….now she had nothing left to give…

Blake cared about him, she truly did…and she knew she had to give him what he asked…

Suddenly the door to their left was shoved open and in walked Dwight.

"Alright, time's up," he said looking between them.

Blake wasn’t certain whether he sensed the obvious tension in the room, as his eyes flickered to her, looking her up and down.

She dropped her other hand from her arm shaking her shirt sleeve down to hide anything that might be on show.

David moved over to her almost instantly, and kissed her on the cheek, giving her other arm a hard and warning squeeze as he did so.

He moved away from her and looked back over to Dwight.

"Are you're sure she can't stay?" he said shaking his head, as though unwilling to be apart from her. But Blake was almost relieved when Dwight shook his head and gestured for her to leave.

"Negan's orders," Dwight bit back, pressing his hand to Blake's shoulder and pushing her gently in the direction of the doorway.

Blake chanced one last glance back at David, who looked for a second, so warm and gentle, she knew for certain she must have been overreacting. But in the blink of an eye, once Dwight's back was turned, that look of love turned into one of angry warning.

Blake turned and headed out, giving a gulp as she was driven from the room.

What the hell was she going to do now?
The Upgrade

It took them less than five minutes to make it up to, what Blake presumed, was the second floor, and back to the long corridor where her cell was.

"Please…” she uttered, glancing at Dwight over her shoulder. "I can't be in that cell anymore."

But Dwight shot her back a grimace.

"Sweetheart, people have been in that cell a lot longer than you have," he said in a steely voice, as Blake peered back at him.

"Your face…." she said giving a gulp as he shoved her forwards. "What happened?"

But Dwight didn't answer, instead giving her another sharp shove forwards, his jaw tensed.

But Blake looked around.

They had passed her cell and were now headed in a different direction, down another hallway she hadn't been through yet.

She looked back at Dwight questioningly.

"Where are we going?" she said a little uneasily, her heart banging a drum beat.

But Dwight didn't answer her, instead staying eerily silent and giving her another small shove.

Soon, they rounded a corner, and were met with an identical hallway to the one in the basement, with doorways that lined the walls to the right.

But these seemed to be much more spaced out than the ones downstairs.

But she and Dwight weren't even three doors down the corridor, before the looming figure of Negan sudden stepped out from behind the fourth door, causing Blake to jump out of her skin in fright.

There he was, grinning from ear-to-ear fiendishly, with Lucille slung over his shoulder haphazardly.

Oh god, what was this….?

Was this it for her? Was there going to be some sort of bloodbath in there….one swing from Lucille and that would be the end of everything she had ever known….?

Dwight manoeuvred her forwards, until she was just a foot away from Negan, and side-on to the open door on his right.

The dark-haired man pulled at his bottom lip with his teeth before showing his line of straight white teeth in a smile, and throwing out his hand.

"Surprise!" he said in a sing-song voice, far removed from the low growl she usually expected from him.

Blake turned a little apprehensively, but suddenly blinked, as she caught sight of what was inside the door…
Here was a large room, a lot larger than David's downstairs that was for certain…with a king size bed, a bookshelf, a closet, a compact table and chairs- big enough to fit at least four people around it, and a small flowery couch tucked neatly underneath a huge window.

It was that window, in fact, that intrigued her most, shining the most lovely amount of sunshine through into the room, causing it to sit in a sort of warm, inviting haze…

Blake looked up at Negan a little uncertainly.

Why was he showing her this?

But the tall dark-haired man merely placed a free hand to her lower back and leaned in towards her.

"For you, doll-face," he uttered in a low voice, causing Blake to shiver slightly.

She took a step into the room, giving the slightest of frowns and gazing around, before staring immediately back at Negan.

"What's is this?" she said in a quiet tone of disbelief, shaking her head and staring into his dark eyes.

He gave a chuckle, shrugging his shoulders and strolling easily past her, into the large room, as Dwight stood guard at the door.

"Well I think it was time the Beast gave Beauty a nicer room, don' you?" Negan murmured, picking up an empty green vase that sat in the centre of the table and admiring it, before putting it back down again and glancing over at Blake.

The caramel-blonde woman gave a frown.

Was this another game? What the hell was his MO here?

"So I'm going from a fucking prison cell, to a luxury apartment?" she said, narrowing her eyes at him and shaking her head. "Why would you even give me all this?"

But Negan lifted his chin, keeping his chocolate eyes on her the whole time.

"Well, see, thing is…” he said shaking his head, a wide grin dancing its way back over his lips. "…it seems like I have quite the soft spot for you. And I think you'd do a lot better up here, than you would in that dark old cell back there. A flower like you, needs some sunlight, don't you think?"

Blake gave a gulp, looking worriedly up at the man before her. The man who had brutally killed people from her camp. The man who had revelled in slicing someone's stomach open….

"I'm not up for being one of your wives, if that what you want," said she a little defensively, shooting him a dark look. "That was never part of the deal."

But Negan gave a small laugh, as Blake saw Dwight at the door, glance around at them momentarily.

"Hold your horses, buttercup," uttered Negan eyeing her fondly. "I'm giving you a room, not an ultimatum, here. You might wanna try and sound a bit more fucking grateful."

Blake calmed herself a little, giving a gulp and tearing her eyes away from his.

She took a couple of steps further into the room and gazed about, her fingertips dancing lightly over the back of the moth-eaten couch.
It had been a while since she'd had this much space to herself. Even in the large houses at Alexandria, she still shared a three bedroomed house with six other people.

"Is this all just to get me to tell you what I know about Rick?" she said, not looking at Negan. Instead her eyes flitted over towards the window, wondering if she'd be able to escape through it at some point…

"Well you know how the old saying goes." said Negan from a little way behind her. She could hear him pacing. "You catch more flies with honey, than with vinegar."

Blake smirked, glancing back at him over her shoulder, where he stood bouncing on his heels.

She doubted he had ever used 'honey' for anything in his life.

"Aha!" he announced loudly, pointing at her with his baseball bat. "You do smile."

At this, Blake rolled her eyes, moving over to the large bed.

"I think you're imagining things," she tutted in an airy voice, causing Negan to chuckle. "Perhaps all that lemonade has gone to your head."

"Well I've got the feelin' that that soft spot I'm harbouring for you, might be mutual, doll-face," he said, approaching her slowly.

Blake looked back at him, cocking an eyebrow in his direction.

"You wish," she muttered, her lips twitching upwards into a smirk once again, but she turned her head away, hiding it from him, and moving over to admire the dusty hardback books that sat on the shelf to her left, instead.

Negan gave a laugh, coming to perch against the table, dropping Lucille to his side.

Blake could feel his brown eyes boring into the back of her head as he did so.

The room fell silent for a moment or two, as she ran her fingertips over the grimy-looking book-spines, but she wasn't reading the titles. No. Blake was instead, still pondering why Negan had given her this room, when just a few hours ago she had been locked in a cell.

She didn't trust him….not one little bit.

After a brief moment or two, she turned back towards him.

He was, to her surprise, closer to her than she had first thought, and from here, she could make out each and every laughter-line that littered his long, tanned face. Though she was well aware what kind of things Negan was likely to laugh at….and that worried her immensely.

Blake stared over at him, tugging at her lip with her teeth for the slightest of seconds before speaking.

"Why not just put me downstairs….with David?" she asked in a quiet voice.

Even now she could still feel the ache of a bruise beneath her shirt-sleeve where David had grabbed her just a mere ten minutes ago. Part of her wanted to be close to him…wanted to be back where she belonged…at his side…But another part of her wanted to be as far away from him as humanly possible….

But Negan didn't answer her, he just sucked at his teeth and glanced away, gripping his bat lightly in
his hand and pushing himself from the table.

It looked as though for the smallest of moments he was going to say something, but the words just never came….

Instead he turned away from her, heading towards the door.

"Dinner's at six, downstairs," he said waving a hand over his shoulder at her almost dismissively. "But in the meantime, make yourself at home."

Blake watched him go, the smallest of frown lines appearing between her brows.

What was with him?

But Negan stopped beside Dwight, turning back to her and shooting her a knowing look.

"Oh and don't even think of trying to escape through that window, Doll," he said finally, with a nod towards the paned glass. "Your friend Daryl had to scrape the last guy up off that asphalt outside, and let me tell you, it was not a pretty sight."

And with that, before Blake could utter another word, Negan had turned away and slunk off out of sight, as Dwight closed the door behind them.

Leaving Blake all alone…

….her eyes drifting towards the large window…knowing that there was indeed, no way out…
Bruises

Blake paced around the room, walking first from the bed, and then to the table, and then back again.

What had just happened?

These past couple of days had just been a whirlwind to say the least.

This time yesterday she hadn't even met the leader the Saviours yet, and now he had given her… well, all this! A room….no, a place of her own….

But it couldn't be that easy, right? There had to be sort of catch. She knew better than to trust him… this Negan…all tall and dark and handsome as he was…

Blake shook herself…

What was she doing? The man was a monster. Of course he was. He'd killed Glen and Abraham, Spencer and Olivia. He was a madman. Drunk on power.

She gave a sigh rubbing her tired face with her hand and slumping down onto the edge of the bed.

Blake had already used the bathroom, a separate washroom for ladies at the end of the corridor, and washed her face, freshening herself up slightly. She had not looked good. Her long caramel hair felt a little tangly and her skin looked dirty (most likely from sleeping on a dusty cell floor last night).

A red haired man and another man with shaven dark hair stood in the corridor holding guns, watching her as she passed, but didn't utter a word. She guessed they had been told to stand watch by Negan. But at least in the bathrooms she could be alone…

The toilets themselves were separated off into blocks with separate shower cubicles that had all been empty when she had popped in.

Blake had come back and shut herself in here again. In her room.

All of this being a little overwhelming for her, as she sat here alone, with her thoughts…

At least it was better than sitting in a cell, she thought to herself. But here she was away from David….away from the people she knew back in Alexandria…..away from everything she held dear….although most of those things were long gone now anyway.

Blake gave a sigh, raising her eyes to see a flock of birds drifting past her window in the far distance.

She had already stood at the window and checked the view, which was just of that same old fencing, surrounding by hordes of the chained-up dead. But Blake had discovered, that from back here on her bed, it looked like she could be anywhere….where none of this had happened…where everything was back to normal and right again.

This was, in fact, the first time in the long years since all this had begun, that she had felt this way. Felt like she could just drift away and forget about everything.

Despite this place being what looked like an abandoned factory, the air seemed clean in here, and smelled good. Better than out there at least….

Never would she get used to the smell of the never ending rotting dead.
She picked up a book from beside her. A random title she had picked from the shelf to distract herself for a moment.

Moby Dick.

She remembered starting reading this book as a teen but being far too interested in boys to keep up with finishing it. Perhaps she could pick up where she left off, those fourteen or so, long years ago.

Blake gulped, flipping the pages over in her hands, but not wanting to stop anywhere particular. And so she just kept flipping.

She wondered what at this second, David was doing. It had been an hour or so since she had seen him.

Was Frankie back with him now? In his room? Giving him another massage?

Blake could only presume that Frankie was one of Negan's wives. The way she was clothed in a skimpy black dress and long dangly earrings, was far from what regular people wore around here.

Blake shook her head to herself, slamming the book closed, her hands tensing around the spine.

She didn't know what she was more irritated with right now. The fact that David might be having sex with that….woman. Or the fact that Negan could just help himself to as many wives as he wanted…

Blake got to her feet, letting out a huff and moving over to her closet, tugging it open abruptly.

But she gaped slightly, taking a look at what was inside, not quite expecting to see….well, this…

Here were neatly folded and hung piles of what looked like brand new clean clothes, some of them even still having the tags on.

There were loose white blouses very similar (but a lot cleaner) than the one she currently had on. Five or six pair of dark jeans and pants. Underwear or every sort of description. Sneakers, boots that she could probably squeeze into, and fresh towels. And to her utter surprise, every piece of clothing seemed to be in her size, give or take a couple of things.

How was this even possible?

She pulled at a cute navy jacket, feeling the softness of the sleeve and running her fingers down the material, as her eyes flickered towards the door.

Was this Negan's doing?

Surely it couldn't be….

Why would he do all this for her?

But she didn't want to dwell on this, as her stomach let out a low grumble. It was almost six and Blake certainly wanted to find something to eat very soon.

She hurriedly tugged down a white long sleeved t-shirt from the hanger, as well as a pair of tight-fitting back jeans, a clean white bra, matching panties and clean socks.

There were laundry facilities at Alexandria, which had been massive step up of course, from what Blake had had to endure through the year or so before they had arrived at the camp….but having
brand new fresh, clean clothes like this, was utter luxury.

Placing them in a neat pile on the bed, and removing her boots and filthy clothes, she snatched up a towel, wrapping it around her body and headed out of door and out into the long corridor.

The two men with guns were now gone and so Blake headed straight into the shower room, and manoeuvred into a cubicle, turning on the faucet.

She waited a few moments but the lukewarm water never seemed to heat up, but that was still ok by Blake. The temperature of the showers in Alexandria were similar, and she had certainly got used to shivering while she showered, over the last six months.

It was better than nothing. It was always better than nothing.

In a matter of minutes she was out once again, feeling as fresh and as clean as she could do these days.

And as she turned off the taps she stared down at the painful black and blue bruises that had now bloomed across her forearm, where David's fingers had been...

She looked sad, feeling her mouth dry as tears begin to prick at her eyes.

This wasn't his fault….she kept telling herself….he was under stress…under pressure. And if anyone was to blame it was her. All she needed to do what he asked, and he would be happy.

But were those her thoughts? Or were those David's….hammered into her head…

You beat a dog enough times, it starts to think that it's the one that's done wrong…. 

She shook herself, leaving the shower room clutching her towel tightly around herself and making her way down the corridor.

But she was barely, two strides down, when she felt a sudden hand grasp her upper-arm tightly.

For a moment she thought that it was David…

But as she swung around her eyes met with the red headed man from earlier who had been standing guard, carrying a gun. His guard-mate obviously gone.

He was broad and squat with barely any neck, and yet his eyes, right-now, gleamed with something dangerous.

"Hey there, pretty thing," he uttered with a hushed southern twang. "What you doin' scurrying about, drippin' wet like that?"

He bit his lip, his beady eyes looking her up and down greedily.

Blake tried to tug herself away from him, but the man's hold on her was tight.

She gave a frightened gulp.

"I-I'm going back to my room," she murmured, trying to pull herself away yet again, but to no avail.

The man cocked his head at her.

"Why in such a hurry?" he said licking at his lips. "My room is just down the hallway. How about
"we go back there instead? Have some fun?"

But Blake shook her head, tugging herself backwards desperately. "No," she said, gritting her teeth.

She knew exactly what he was after, and there was no way he was going to get it.

"Oh come on, baby," said the guy, sudden reaching out his other hand to grab her towel...to pull it off of her. "You know you want it-"

But suddenly, before Blake could scream or shout or utter another word, a long, familiar looking baseball-bat, covered in barbed wire, appeared in front of the man's greedy-looking face.

"The lady said no," came Negan's wholly-recognisable voice, as he stepped around the bulky man.

The red-haired man immediately let go of Blake, raising his hands to the sky in defeat.

"I'm sorry, Sir," he uttered with what was almost a whimper, his pudgy eyes widening, looking at Negan.

But the leader of the Saviours merely gave him a lingering look, his face deadly serious, before turning to Dwight, who had appeared behind him.

"Dwighty-boy," he muttered, suddenly grasping the man by the collar and shoving him roughly towards Dwight. "Take this fucking piece of shit here outside and feed him to those dead pricks."

"No, p-please, don't-" began the man in a desperate, pleading voice, but Negan had already turned away from him, his attention now on Blake.

Behind the tall-dark haired man, Blake noticed Dwight and another Saviour, drag the man away, through the double doors at the end of the corridor, as he let out a muffled cry.

Blake gave a sudden gulp, staring up at Negan, feeling all of a sudden, very self-conscious.

She hid her bruised forearm down by her side, keeping it out of sight.

"Sorry 'bout that. Some of my men tend to get a bit carried away on occasion. But I just need you to know that that is something I do not stand for here." said Negan, his eyes drifting down her barely-covered body, until Blake shot him a warning scowl.

At this, he immediately raised his own hands, much like the other red-haired man had, just mere moments ago.

"Alright, easy, Peaches," he chuckled, holding out his arm for her to take. "Allow me to offer my apologies, and escort you back to your room."

Blake did not take his arm, but she murmured a huffy "fine", which caused Negan to give a charmed grin and follow her, as she padded back down the empty hallway.

She shoved open the door to her room and went inside, half expecting Negan to stay shut outside it.

But to her utter annoyance, he instead, followed her in, shutting the door behind himself...with him on the inside...

Blake rolled her eyes and crossed the room over to her bed, before turning back to him and folding her arms over her chest.
"I need to get dressed," she said firmly, staring directly into his dark, chocolate eyes.

But Negan just smiled lazily and took another step further into the room.

He waved a hand, bouncing on his heels delightedly.

"Go ahead," he gestured, before he folded his own arms suddenly across his own leather-clad chest, mirroring Blake's stance.

At this, she gave another huff.

God, he was so irritating!

"There is no way I'm changing with you stood there watching," she said with a dark frown.

But Negan just raised his eyebrows easily. "Baby, I just saved you from that utter piece of shit out there, and you won't even thank me by giving me a strip tease? I'm hurt!"

Blake knew that any second he could use that bat in his hand on her. But at the moment it didn't look like he was going to. In fact, he looked like he was having far too much fun for that.

She scowled, suddenly marching right up to him.

"Just because you've given me this room and tried to-"

She waved a hand in the air trying to find the word.

"charm me," she continued, suddenly jabbing him in the chest with her finger. "That does not mean I'm your property. I have not agreed to become one of your wives, Negan!"

Blake stopped, breathing hard, and taking a sudden step back, realising what she had just done.

Oh she would pay for that, she was sure of it….she wondered what Negan had done to the last person to speak to him that way.

The tall dark-haired, bearded man stared at her long and hard for a drawn-out moment, his face unreadable….

Before finally, a small laugh escaped his lips.

"You are just my favourite, you know that?" he said in a playful voice, shaking his head at her. "I mean, shit, doll face, I've known you, what?…Not even a day…And you already have me wrapped around your little finger."

Blake stared at him.

Was he being serious?

He certainly seemed like he was…especially when he rolled his eyes dramatically and turned around suddenly, facing the door.

"Fiiiiine. But I can't promise I won't peek though," he said in a cocky tone, causing Blake to eye him suspiciously.

Wait was he really turning away to allow her to change in privacy?
It shouldn't have been a great ask, she would admit, but coming from this man, she knew that it probably was much more than he would have done for most of the people here.

Blake stood still watching him for a long moment, making sure he couldn't see her, before hurriedly snatching up her bra and panties from the bed and pulling them hastily on.

She lifted her eyes to Negan once again.

"So what, were you checking up on me or something?" she said after a second or two, sweeping her slightly damp caramel-hair back across her shoulders and picking up a pair of brand-new black jeans from the bed.

Negan gave a chuckle. "Well for your sake, doll-face, isn't it a good thing I did?" he uttered mildly, still facing the doorway.

Blake bent down and pulled the pants up her thighs, jumping slightly to do up the button at the top of her zipper.

"I'm not going to thank you," she said giving an irritable frown. "He was one of your men. If you'd have just let me and David go-"

But Negan gave a loud tut, cutting across her sharply.

"David, David, David," he said in a mocking voice, shaking his head. "Baby, don't you realise that he was the one who wanted to be here. We didn't drag him here kicking and fucking screamin'."

With that, Negan glanced at her over his shoulder teasingly for a moment, before turning his whole body around to face her. He immediately arched his back as he did so and shot her wide grin, looking her up and down in approval.

But his smile was not reciprocated.

Blake merely scowled at him, still in just her bra and jeans.

"Ugh, do you mind?!" she snapped at him angrily.

But Negan's grin almost instantly turned into something different right before Blake's very eyes, a dark frown passing suddenly over his long face.

Right now he looked like the Negan she had heard about…in horrific tales….uttered in mere whispers through Alexandria.…

Had she finally gone too far with her insolence?

Blake gave a gulp, her eyes widening slightly as Negan quickly closed the gap between them, striding forwards intimidatingly before she could say another word.

"I-…uh..." she stuttered, backing up slightly, as he tossed his baseball bat unceremoniously down onto the bed, and reached for her arm, grasping her wrist and pulling it towards him.

Blake's heart thudded in her chest as the tall, dark-haired leader frowned, his chocolate eyes roving over the now dark purple bruises that lingered at her forearm.

Fuck.

"Did one of my men do this to you?" Negan uttered in a dangerously low growl, his calloused thumb...
running over the swollen bruises. They were painful and sore, even to his careful touch.

Blake gave another gulp, her heart pounding inside her ribcage. His close proximity to her nearly-naked chest, long forgotten about.

There was no way she wanted Negan to find out that it was David who did this to her. She was just so ashamed…so hurt…

But at the same time, there was no way she wanted anyone else to take the blame for this. She had seen what Negan was willing to do.

She hurriedly shook her head.

"It's nothing," she breathed, attempting to pull her wrist from Negan's grasp, but he held on tight, his brown eyes flickering up to her face.

She had never seen him so serious…

So angry…

His jaw was clenched and his gaze was steely. And right now, Blake was scared… not for her own safety, but for someone else's.

"The fuck that's nothing," Negan uttered in a loud, furious tone.

But Blake managed to finally tug herself from his grip, turning, picking up her white long sleeved shirt and pulling it hurriedly over her head.

She avoided his eye, rolling her sleeves down quickly over the bruise, hiding it from Negan's sight.

"I must have fallen on it…." she lied, picking up the pair of white socks from the bed, busying herself with unrolling them, unable to look at Negan. "…back in the cell when they first pushed me in there….i-it was probably my own fault."

She chanced a glance at up the man at her side finally, to find his eyes fixed on hers.

It was obvious he didn't believe her. But there was no way she was going to tell him the truth.

Blake felt herself redden slightly beneath his stare.

Was it right that she was protecting her fiancé like this…? She knew what she would say to someone if she saw bruises like this on their arm.

But why did Negan care so much anyway? She didn't even know him.

Blake desperately wanted to change the subject.

"So….dinner's at six?" she said pursing her lips slightly and perching on the end of the bed, moving away from Negan, to put on her socks.

He was still looking at her, his gaze hard and fixed, when he finally seemed to shake himself, running his tongue over his straight white teeth, looking ever so slightly irritated.

He didn't answer her.

"I haven't eaten anything since the day before yesterday," she said giving a small sigh and getting to
her feet, stepping into her beige boots as she did so.

She looked up at Negan once again, who gazed at her for what felt like the longest of moments, before he gave a nod.

He certainly seemed unconvinced by her lie, but gratefully didn't linger on the subject any longer.

"In that case," Negan murmured, raising an eyebrow, his face breaking into a small palatable grin once again, becoming much more like the cocky Negan she had now become accustomed to. "…let this Beast escort his Beauty down to dinner."

He held out an arm for her to take heroically, snatching up Lucille from the bed.

But Blake merely gave a smirk, rolling her eyes and shaking her head.

She didn't take his arm, but all the same, walked over to the door, with Negan following close behind. A wide smile plastered across the tall man's features.
Blake walked silently down the long hallway, with Negan close at her side.

Neither of them had said a word to the other since they had left her room several minutes ago, and the eerie quiet made her feel slightly uneasy.

Did Negan suspect David of giving her those bruises?

It frightened her, that the fiercest she'd seen this well-known monster to be, was when he had thought one of his men had hurt her.

She really could not understand why he had seemed to have taken such a shine to her. And so quickly too. It had only been a day since Blake had woken up here, disoriented and sore, after all.

Perhaps Negan thought that the information she held on Rick and his group, was just that juicy.

She gave a gulp, chancing a quick glance over at the tall man at her side, holding his baseball bat cockily across one shoulder.

But Negan was quicker and more aware than she thought. Obviously traits which had been valuable in making him a leader.

His dark brown eyes immediately caught hers, his face fixing itself into a wicked grin.

"You enjoying the view there, BabyDoll?" he murmured in his low drawl, raising an eyebrow at her fiendishly.

Blake rolled her eyes at his comment, tearing her gaze away from him as they turned the corner, Negan leading her down a large iron staircase.

"So are you going to be escorting me to every meal?" she asked in a mocking voice, feeling slightly defensive.

She knew teasing the leader of the Saviours probably would not end well for her, but she knew that here, death could come at any second, so it didn't really seem to matter anyway. She really didn't trust Negan as far as she could throw him right now.

Negan smirked.

"Well I guess I'll have to, if you insist on wandering the halls in nothing but a towel and a nice smile," he said, lifting his chin and turning away from her.

Blake pursed her lips, giving the smallest of huffs as Negan pushed open a large green door that loomed ahead of them, and strode into the room, holding it open for her to follow him.

Inside was an large, cavernous room, the same one, in fact, that Blake had been brought to the previous day…with a high ceiling, industrial lighting and several long tables that seated twenty or so people on each.

At the far end of the room was a sort of make-shift canteen, with several men and women serving food from multiple trays and pots.

For a split second the place was loud and the din of people talking, laughing and eating was almost
immense in the echoey room.

But almost immediately, not even a second later, silence hurriedly fell over the crowd of sixty or so people, their heads turning towards Blake and more importantly Negan.

The tall, dark-haired man beside her, grinned to himself, bringing himself up to his full height.

"As you were," Negan said in a loud carrying voice, arching his back as he uttered the words. "Don't mind me."

A second seemed to pass before a low and uneasy murmur carried through the gigantic room once again, as Negan beckoned Blake forwards.

It was obvious from the nervous surreptitious glances that followed Negan as he walked, that the leader of the Saviours didn't frequent these dinnertime get-togethers very often.

Negan pulled Lucille from his shoulder as they strutted forwards, allowing the long baseball bat to swing from his side instead.

"So this is where your people come to eat the food you've taken from us?" Blake commented a little snappily, staring up at Negan almost defiantly.

But he merely shot her a bemused look. "Oh, don't think your people are the only ones we take from, sweet-cheeks," he uttered conversationally. "We take what we need. Hell, I gotta make sure my people get fed somehow."

But Blake gave a scowl. He made it sound so easy. So honest. But what he did was far from that.

"There are men and women back in Alexandria starving," she said scathingly, peering down to where one large man was polishing off two portions of what looked like some sort of broth. "And your people have much more than they need."

But Negan stopped in his tracks, turning suddenly to face her. He was just an inch or two taller than her, but right now that felt like a lot more.

The dark-haired man loomed over her, pressing the end of his baseball bat into her chest carefully, his face fixed and unreadable.

"For someone who hasn't yet given me a lick of information on Rick and your camp, as I was promised," he said giving her small shove with the end of Lucille. "You're getting' to be kinda' insolent, doll-face."

His tone was warning, and Blake couldn't help but give an uneasy gulp, as he leaned his long face suddenly into hers.

Her heart began to pound inside her ribcage, at his closeness…feeling his warm breath on her neck.

But Negan's lips suddenly curved up into a wide grin, and he reached up and stroked his thumb across her cheek softly.

"Like I said, it's a good job I've got one hell of a fucking soft spot for you, peaches," he finished, pulling himself and Lucille, swiftly away, allowing Blake the chance to breathe normally again.

He was clever, she could tell that, and his unpredictability made him a constant threat to everyone around him. That was obviously why his men were so scared of him. One moment they were
probably treated like his best friend. And the next…he was, as he so delicately put it, 'crackin' skulls'.

Blake scowled up at him as he walked away, but she didn't make a move, instead she remained rooted to the spot.

It wasn't a second later that Negan turned back to her, giving her a small frown.

"You comin'?" he asked, poking his tongue into his cheek, looking slightly irritated. He gave a warning shake of his head. "Don't make me ask twice."

Right now Blake could feel the entire room's eyes on her. They obviously knew what Negan did to people who refused to obey him. And as far as he was concerned, stood here amongst a high proportion of his people, he had a reputation to uphold.

She stared him out for a long second, before finally giving in, bowing her head and following him.

"That's my girl," said the tall, leader of the Saviours, leaning back approvingly, as his chocolate eyes followed her.

But Blake didn't look at him, she kept her eyes on the floor, her head bowed low.

His tone with her right now was not dissimilar to how David would often speak to her. Like she was something he had brought in off his shoe. So it was nothing new to her to try and avoid eye contact and keep her head down….

That was just something she had become accustomed to over time.

Blake made to slip silently and obediently past Negan, heading over towards the line of people waiting with their empty trays at the pot of steaming broth. But before she could do so, he had grabbed at her bruised forearm lightly, causing her to wince, taking in a sharp intake of breath.

"You keep that chin of yours up, doll," he murmured into her ear suddenly. "You are a fucking queen here, and do not allow anyone to tell you otherwise. Even me."

Blake peered suddenly up at Negan, parting her lips slightly as she did so. And for the first time since she had met him he looked almost regretful for his actions, surveying her reaction carefully.

There it was again. That sense of threat….and then the charm…. 

She felt so confused right now….so uncertain of what it was that he wanted from her.

Why the hell would she ever be a queen? She was no one. Just a girl from the city….someone who used to just get by day to day….went to work….made dinner….came home to her fiancé….but never in her life had anyone called her a queen before.

Blake let out a shaky breath.

And for the briefest of moments there was something in Negan's eyes that Blake could not quite put her finger on. But in an instant it was gone….the tall Saviour bringing himself up to his full height again, smiling.

A second later, she felt the hand that had grasped her arm, slip down, Negan entwining his fingers neatly with hers.

He pulled her forwards, tugging her down towards the front of the line of people queuing for food.
The crowd instantly parted as he sloped on through with her tailing close behind.

"We'll have two of the lobster thermidore and a bottle of your finest champagne," he uttered to the nervous looking woman and man, stood behind the pots and pans, serving up dinner to people.

Negan looked back at Blake and shot her a wink, before turning away again to face the servers.

A woman, with long greying hair looked almost as though she was about to cry, and the man at her side, his hand holding a ladle, shaking, didn't look far from tears either.

But after a moment, Negan gave a loud chuckle. "I'm kidding!" he said lifting Lucille up onto his shoulder with his other, free, hand. "Don't look so worried!"

The man and woman forced an uneasy smile, but still looked as nervous as before.

"So what is on the menu?" Negan asked, arching his back as he spoke.

The man gave a visible gulp, his hands trembling. "Uh….a vegetable broth with white bread," he said in a quiet tone. "W- With a chocolate-chip shortbread cookie for dessert."

Negan turned back to Blake. "You hear that?" he said wrinkling his nose back at her, flashing her a wide grin as he did so. "Dessert!"

Blake shot him a look, pursing her lips slightly. Which only seemed to cause his grin to widen further.

He looked back at the man, letting go of Blake's hand, and giving his own an urging wave towards the servers.

"Well, plate it up then," he said with a faux-tone of encouragement.

A second later, a tray full of warm steaming broth, a spoon, a bread roll and a cookie were handed over to Negan, who promptly passed it back to Blake, giving it a dramatic sniff.

"Smells good don' it?" he said smiling.

But Blake just tutted, snatching the tray from his grasp and turning away from him, causing him to follow her delightedly, on bouncing heels.

"Yeah, thank you for finally feeding me," she murmured under her breath in a scathing tone, probably just loud enough for Negan to hear.

But Negan just chuckled, muttering something about how much he was enjoying her 'smart-mouth'.

He bumped her shoulder playfully as he strode ahead of her, over to an empty portion of one of the long tables and offered her a seat on the end of the long bench.

Blake placed her tray promptly down and took her seat, swinging her legs over the bench and gazing surreptitiously around the room.

It was full of faces that Blake had never seen before. Despite a lot of them looking like men and women who knew how to handle a gun, there were also several older people, as well as kids and a few weedy-looking teens.

Maybe this place really was the 'Sanctuary' it was named after.
It wasn’t a moment later that Negan sat down next to her, dropping Lucille down onto the bench beside him. But rather than facing the scrubbed wooden table, the leader of the Saviours faced the other way, leaning back, stretching his arms out and resting his elbows back against the table-top easily, surveying the room.

But right now Blake did not want to make further small talk with him, instead she took a grateful bite of bread, picking up her spoon and beginning to eat the warming broth. It was simple, but she was in fact so hungry, just the smell made her mouth water.

And for a minute or two Negan left her to it, sitting there, legs wide apart, grinning to himself, staring out at his empire.

Blake still did not know what to make of him. Everything he did made her feel uneasy…. on edge… and she knew that he wouldn’t wait forever to hear what she knew about Rick and his group. She had to think of something. But what? What on earth could she tell Negan that he wouldn't see through in seconds?

Even if she did have something of value anyway, there was no way she was going to tell Negan what Rick had planned. He was a monster who had killed people…but actually….thinking about it, in a way, so was Rick….

Blake gave a gulp, pulling apart the bread roll wither hands and taking a small bite.

She internally cursed David for getting her into this situation. He had put her in this dangerous position while he swanned around with Negan's wives.

Although, Blake had to look at her own position right at that minute, sitting under the protective wing of Negan himself… There was worse places she could think of being…..like back in that cell for starters.

She chanced a glance up at Negan at her side, all cocky swagger and leather jacket, looking as smug as he always did.

He almost instantly bit his lip and looked her way.

"You enjoyin' that, peaches?" he asked, his dark eyes looking her up and down.

Blake gave a nod, a spoonful of broth hovering an inch or two from her lips.

Negan gave a wide smile, leaning in towards her slightly.

"No points needed for you here, we clear? And if any of my men try and tell you otherwise, you tell them to come and see me," he uttered staring deep into her eyes as he spoke.

"Points?" she murmured, lowing her cutlery and staring back at him.

"Yuh-huh," he nodded, his lips curving up into a grin, as he poked his tongue through his teeth. "You see around here, either you work for me….or you work for points…"

Blake looked out across the room, over to where an elderly woman was clutching half a piece of bread as though it was gold-dust, and a tiny-looking girl at her side, barely more than seven years old, had her arms clenched around herself, looking thin and starved.

Blake now understood why people came here. Even if they had to scrape by working for points to get a meal, it was still better than being out there….alone.
"But like I said….you don't need any points, beautiful," Negan uttered in a charming voice. "I got you."

But Blake looked up at him once again frowning, placing down her spoon with a clang and standing up suddenly.

After two long years of being out there alone…surviving….. this was the last thing she needed from anyone….especially him.

She shot Negan a furious look, before swinging her legs over the bench, picking up her cookie and getting to her feet.

Blake immediately marched across to where the little girl was stood and handed her the dessert.

"Here…you can have this," she said in just a whisper, as the little girl peered up at her through dirty blonde locks. Her tiny hazel eye shifted over to Negan for the briefest of moments before she clasped the cookie hungrily.

"'Fanks," she croaked, causing Blake to purse her lips and turn back around to face Negan, who she found, to her surprise, hadn't moved.

In fact, the only thing that had changed about him, was the bemused smirk now fixed onto his long, tanned face.

Blake strutted back over to him and resumed her position, picking up her spoon once again, like nothing had ever happened.

She had defied him. And she knew full well, that if he wanted to use Lucille on her right now, he could.

But instead she just felt him turn to her, eyebrows raised, leaning in once again…

….this time pushing back a strand of caramel blonde hair from her face…his lips brushing her ear as he spoke….

"And that is why..." Negan murmured, sending shivers right down Blake's spine. "...you are. a. queen."

She turned to look at him, his face lingering a mere breath from her own. And right at that second she felt her heart pounding just that little bit faster at his proximity to her.

He tilted his head slightly, licking at his lips slowly….

But Blake suddenly turned away, back to her bowl of food hurriedly, avoiding his twinkling chocolate eyes…

Negan was certainly playing a dangerous game here…and Blake still wasn't sure whether she could survive it…
Blake lifted the spoon to her lips once again, taking a grateful sip of broth, as Negan gave a laugh, shifting back to his original position surveying the room.

But after a second or two Blake felt him dig her ribs with his elbow.

"Hey, doll-face," he muttered in a low, but excitable drawl. "Lover boy's here."

Blake immediately looked up from her food, knowing exactly who Negan was talking about.

And there he was indeed…. David…walking into the large room, alone.

He was still in his blue shirt and blue pants from earlier, but he was scratching at his sleeve, glancing over his shoulder looking slightly harassed.

He, in fact, looked much less confident than earlier, but that didn't stop Blake from feeling slightly nervous as she saw him….the bruise at her arm still throbbing….

"Now Davey-boy over there," said Negan, with nod over towards Blake's fiancé. "Now he's been given a nice room and all….nothing compared to yours, mind you….but unlike you, he is on the points system. So unless you can give me what he promised you could, very soon he is soon going to have to start finding other ways to earn those points."

Blake gave an immediate gulp, which she noticed Negan catch, but right now she was filled with worry….for she knew what David would do if he had to start working for his food.

David had been an art student when Blake had met him….and even though she spent long hours in the office at her admin job, she had always been the one to come home, make dinner and do all the housework…..and even after the world had gone to utter shit, David had still had a hard time fending for himself.

Soon after they had left Atlanta, they had made friends with small group of people and had travelled around with them for a while, scavenging as best they could. It had been hard and they had, of course, like everyone, lost people along the way….but whereas Blake had thrown herself into the tasks that needed to be done, David wasn't quite so familiar with a gun or a knife. He wasn't particularly good at hunting…and at best could take a 'walker' down with a headshot from a few feet away.

He had always struggled by himself.

Blake always feared that that was the real reason he had kept her around this long….and it wasn't long after they had arrived in Alexandria, when the resentful stares and vile comments had started creeping in. He no longer needed her, or the group they had come in with, there. There was no need to leave the gates of the community if you didn't want to….but despite being a 'kept' man there at Alexandria, David hadn't even thrown himself into work either. He had just stayed holed up…..listening to records, reading and painting….but obviously feeling so frustrated, that he would often take it out on Blake….

Her breath caught in her throat for a second before she lowered her eyes to her lap.

"C-Can I talk to him?" she asked giving a gulp, part of her hoping that Negan would say no. But the tall, dark-haired man at her side, merely gave a wave of his hand.
"Be my guest," he said scratching at his stubbly cheek.

Blake placed down her spoon, getting to her feet once again and crossing the room, finding David at the end of the line for dinner.

She knew that Negan's eyes would be fixed on her the entire time. Not that she was willing to try anything right now anyway.

Negan's hold on her was a clever one. She felt strangely protected with him.

More protected than David seemed to be anyway.

Her blonde haired fiancé stared up at her suddenly with wide blue eyes, his mouth set in an uneasy line as he caught sight of her.

"W-What are you doing here?" he asked her bluntly as she approached him.

He did not make a single move to hug or embrace her….which Blake was sure that Negan would catch. He was as perceptive as anything, and knew there was not much that slipped past his dark gaze.

Blake gulped, watching as David's eyes slipped past her looking directly at Negan himself.

The cocky man gave him a wave, with the hand that was now holding Lucille.

It was David's turn to now give a gulp. His eyes flicking back to Blake.

"Have you given him what he wants yet?" he asked, through gritted teeth, his hand suddenly moving up and clutching at her neck.

From anyone else's viewpoint, it would look to be a loving Fiancé staring deeply into the eyes of his true love. Embracing her.

But as David pulled her slightly closer to him, she could feel his grip on the back of her neck tightening….his fingers looping their way around a strand of her hair, tugging hard.

"Well, have you?" he asked, with a grunt, barely moving his lips as he spoke. "Because I've had Negan's men at my door the last hour watching me."

Blake pursed her lips. "I-I have to try and think of something-" Blake began, but obviously this reply wasn't good enough for David, who tugged at her hair, his hand obscured by her lengthy caramel locks.

She winced, letting out a shaky breath, her eyes flickering away from his….down towards the floor.

David held his lips close to hers, looking for a second as if he was about to kiss her.

"You always were fucking useless," he whispered, baring his teeth in what looked like a smile….but in reality it was far from it. "We could have had a good life here. I could have had a good life here, but as always, you just screw things up for me..."

Blake felt her heart plummet into her stomach as his grip tightened around her neck.

Maybe she was as useless as he said. The more he said it, the more that fact seemed to get drummed into her skull….over and over…
Maybe all this was her fault.

But David gave her hair another tug, leaning in towards her ear.

"I don't give a shit what you have to do…get on your knees and blow him for all I care…” he spat. "Just fucking do it."

With that, he pulled away from her abruptly, running his soft hand over her cheek as though admiring her, but Blake's eyes were now on the floor, filling with tears.

She took a hurried step away from him, keeping her head bowed low….and gave an obedient nod.

"Now fucking smile at me like you love me," he ordered, his hand slipping away from her cheek.

Blake looked up at him, praying that the tears wouldn't slip down her cheeks just yet. and flashed him an award-winning smile.

Every part of her hurt now…..and that was no longer due to the bruises. The irony was that she did love him. More than ever.

But she wasn't good enough for David. She knew that now. And so all Blake could think to do, knowing the conversation as over, was turn on her heel and leave…

She just wanted some fresh air…to clear her head….frightened that the sight of her oncoming tears would be a dead-giveaway to Negan that they weren't the perfect couple everyone expected them to be.

And there was no way she wanted to get David in trouble….not now….not after all the pain and anguish she had obviously caused him….

And so Blake fled the room…walking as fast as she could…murmuring something about going to get some air to Dwight, who was stood by the door with a gun, as she passed him.

She wasn't quite sure if that was allowed, if she was able to just wander off on her own like this… but thankfully Dwight didn't stop her.

Blake knew of course that Negan was watching her. He would ask where she had gone to. But for now she needed to get out of there to dry her tears before anyone saw them….

She rounded a corner hurriedly, her chest feeling tight and painful.

She needed to breathe…she needed air….

Her feet pounded along the corridor, walking faster and faster…

Before suddenly, she pushed open a wide set of doors, bursting out into the warm evening air.

She took a big gulp, filling her lungs with oxygen once again, doubling over. Letting out a loud carrying sob…but thankfully there was no one else out here to hear it.

The outdoor area here was small….looking like a delivery entrance of sorts, but abandoned nowadays and disused. A large chain link fence ran the entire way around it, sealed shut with a large set of locks that Blake knew she had no chance of escaping through.

But this wasn't the reason she had ventured out here anyway….
She placed her hands to her face, crouching down on her knees and let out another soul-wracking sob….feeling the tears falling freely now….slipping down her cheeks…

She couldn't help it. All this, it was too much for her to bear.

David was relying on her and what had she done? Just let him down again? Maybe he was right… maybe she was useless…maybe she always had been.

She was sickened by herself….distraught that she hadn't been able to do more….

But what David had suggested she do….she was supposed to be his fiancé…and for him to speak about her like that….

Her stomach twisted into knots….

Blake was confused…in pain…in more ways than one…

She knew that more bruises were already blooming on her neck…where David had dug his fingers deep into her flesh….pulled at her hair…

She had seen in his blue eyes how angry he was…how bitter he was that she hadn't given Negan what he wanted yet. But for what ends? Did he expect them to live the perfect life here together? Or was Blake not even in the equation?

She swiped at the tears that had run down her cheeks with her fingers….willing them to stop…

Willing everything to stop.

Blake looked suddenly skywards….just as a flock of birds swept overhead….the same birds from earlier today…..

They looked so free…..able to escape everything.

And right at that moment Blake wished she could escape too….not just from the Sanctuary…or from the Saviours….but from all of it….from life itself….

She worried at her lips.

Right now David's words of disgust tolled through her head over and over….never stopping…. 

Blake pulled herself slowly to her feet, with one last heaving sob and ran her hands down her face.

Her entire body seemed to be trembling but she knew she had to stop….Negan or any of his men could walk out here at any moment…

She knew he wouldn't leave her for long unsupervised.

But as the minutes drifted by, Blake coming to sit on the ground, back against the wall… she found herself still alone.

She was grateful. She needed this. She needed time.

These last couple of days had been intense for her, and far too overwhelming for words.

And so she sat….until the sun began to set, its last few rays of golden sunlight falling back over the horizon.
She brushed at her knees, now all dusty from collapsing onto the floor like that…..

…..just as the door behind her was shoved open.

Blake didn't look up….expecting to hear the angry voice or Negan….or Dwight….or even David….
But to her surprise a softer voice spoke to her…..one she had certainly heard before…
"Coming here a-and mixing with these people can be difficult…..your first time, I can tell you that by personal experience."

Blake looked up suddenly into the eyes of-
"Eugene?" she said in what was merely a whisper, giving a frown.

She had of course known Eugene back at Alexandria…they hadn't had much to do with one another, but when he had been taken by the Saviours, everyone had presumed that he was now dead.

But here he was, with that same old worried expression…that same old haircut….but now his clothes were different and something about him made him look more confident.

"I thought you were-" Blake started, her mouth half-hanging open, but Eugene cut across her.
"Dead?" he finished for her. "No… I-I survived on request of Negan. He's kept me alive…given me a room….allowed me to work for him."

Blake's eyes roved across his face….into his eyes that stared pensively out towards the fence.
"Sounds like he's starting quite a collection of us," Blake said scathingly, tearing her eyes away, just as Eugene looked back at her.
"Negan…well…. he's a good leader. I have seen that now," he uttered in matter of fact voice, giving a nod.

But Blake pursed her lips placing her hand to her knees.
"Funny….because I think he's an asshole," she said with a grimace, cocking an eye up towards Eugene once again.

Eugene didn't respond to her comment, merely staring back at her blankly.
"He's built this place…..made his people trust that he can do the job of leader….he's able to do what most people in this apocalypse couldn't. He's made me what I am," Eugene paused before speaking once again. "I am Negan now,"

But Blake shook her head, giving a dismissive gulp.
"You've been brainwashed," she said, breathing hard.

But Eugene let out a sniff.
"Not brainwashed…" he mumbled. "Just give a chance."

Blake frowned hard. "Rick gave you a chance, Eugene," she said sadly.

But Eugene's lips twitched as he stared back at her.
"Actually, I do not know that he ever did," he said turning around and hauling open the door once again and making to step through it.

Blake turned away, looking skywards once again...

The birds were now gone...leaving nothing but a dark sky.

But Eugene, his hand on the door, paused for a second, turning back towards her.

"Negan wants to see you...in his quarters..." he said giving her one last curt nod. "Take the stairs to the top floor...take a right, then a left, then another right...and you'll see it."

And with that, he disappeared. The door swinging gently shut behind him...

...leaving Blake all alone once again.

But she knew she couldn't sit out here all night....she knew it was likely that from her and David's conversation earlier, that David had now made Negan another promise that Blake would need to fulfill....one that didn't involve any information at all....but involved something else entirely.....something that Negan could quite easily take from her if he so wished....and that frightened her incredibly.

But Blake gave a gulp and got to her feet...her heart pounding as she did so...

She was doing this for David, she thought to herself, as one last lone tear slipped its way down her cheek...She loved him...and maybe now....after this...

.....he would love her again too....
Blake walked slowly down the long hallway.

It had taken her no longer than five minutes to make it up here to the top floor, following the instructions given to her by Eugene.

The sky was dark now and Blake couldn't help but glance out of the large factory windows as she passed by them. Each one tolling her fate like a bell.

She knew that she was trapped right now. If she didn't do what David had promised, he would be so angry with her….and well, she loved him, she had always loved him. And maybe she could make things right. But it terrified her to think just what David had likely asked of her…..much more than just information on Rick and his group.

Blake turned the corner, heading into a long corridor… gloomy, and without windows, but identical to the last….

But in this one, a soft distant music seemed to drift slowly down towards her, and she had a fair idea where it was coming from…..

The end of the hallway was shrouded in a soft warm light coming from and open door up on the left, and Blake couldn't help but give a gulp as she slowly approached it.

She knew exactly who to expect inside.

But she held her head high….all her tears already having already been spilt this evening…

She could do this…..for David.

….she would think of something….a way out of all this for both of them…

She hovered slightly near to the doorway before tentatively peering around the large wooden door.

The classic rock music playing from a scratchy record player was louder now, but her attention was not really on that. Instead it was on the soft carpet, she could just about make out around the door and the large shadow that had just fallen across it.

Blake looked up just in time to see the door tugged open fully, and the recognisable, grinning figure of Negan standing there…looking just as smug as he usually did, still in that same old leather jacket.

Blake felt her heart began to pound a drumbeat in her chest, but her eyes found his chocolate ones, and she brought herself up to her full height.

But Negan just stared back at her lazily, Lucille hanging limply from his right hand, his left used to lean up against the door cockily.

"Well goddamn, Peaches," he started, peering down at her with delight in his gaze. "You took your sweet-ass fucking time. I swear I coulda' grown even more of this fucking shit in the time it's taken you to get up here."

He brought his hand across to his scratchy beard, before giving her a wide smirk, looking her up and down.
"I got lost," Blake uttered, giving him a shallow frown and a neat shrug, glancing away for a moment. "Maybe you should have come and fetched me yourself, instead of sending your flunkies after me…..again!"

Negan made a face, peering down at her looking impressed.

"That another way of you sayin' you want me an' only me, Doll?" he said taking a step forwards and leering over her, his face leaning into hers.

But Blake folded her arms across her chest defensively, pursing her lips.

"In your dreams," she uttered bluntly, shaking her head, but her eyes never left his.

But this only caused Negan's grin to widen.

He gave a short chuckle, arching his back as he did so.

"Oh, do not even doubt for a second," he said suddenly leaning his mouth close to her ear, sending shivers down her spine. "...that you ain't in my dreams full-fucking-time, buttercup."

Blake shot him a scowl as he withdrew his face from hers and pushed himself from the door.

His long, leather-clad arm, suddenly snaked its way around her shoulder and he gave her a small tug forwards, heading inside the room.

These were Negan's quarters. That was obvious not only from the instructions Eugene had given her and Negan's own presence here….but this place was all so…..him.

From the soft drifting classic rock being played, to the large bottle of whiskey sitting on the small coffee table in the centre of the room, surrounded by two large leather sofas.

Blake could just make out a second door, slightly ajar across the room, that revealed Negan's bed, large and looming, even in the darkened room.

Blake gave a gulp at this…..wishing to god she knew exactly what Negan wanted from her tonight. What had David promised him?

She turned her head as Negan's hand slipped lower, finding its place at the small of her back. beckoning her forwards towards a second door that she hadn't noticed at first, over on their right.

"Oh I gotta show you this," said the tall, dark haired man in a husky voice, sounding excitable.

He opened the small green door and tugged on an almost invisible pull light, suddenly illuminating what had to be the biggest bathroom Blake had ever seen.

It was huge all white and pristine with small white tiles lining the entirety of the walls. Along the back of the room was a large floor to ceiling shower and beside it two wash-stations with a humongous mirror that stretched along the far right hand wall. It had a toilet and even a small white bath rug…but it was what was sat in the centre of the room that made Blake's mouth drop open.

"You have a bathtub?" she breathed taking a small step towards it, glistening white and round in the middle of the room. It had large chrome taps and a chain plug.

It had been a long time since Blake had seen a bathtub. All those years on the road with, sometimes, not even water to wash in, she had dreamed of the warm and bubbly baths she had taken when she was a kid….just relaxing there for hours….without a care in the world.
At her side Negan licked his lips, suddenly bashing Lucille gently against the edge of the tub.

"A beauty ain't she? he said, giving a sigh and turning back to Blake. "You know if you ever need someone to scrub your back-

"Hmmmm, sounds tempting-" she said in a scathing tone, rolling her eyes, turning around on the spot and strolling back into Negan's living room.

She heard him give a laugh as he followed her easily, as she span back around to face him.

Right now her heart was pounding more than ever before and she felt helpless and angry…angry at what was happening to her right now.

She took in a breath and stared at Negan firmly, knowing she had to say something. "Look, whatever you want from me tonight…whatever David's promised you…" she wavered slightly as she spoke, but tried as hard as she could to compose herself under Negan's gaze.

At David's name, Negan's eyes darkened slightly and the smile had slipped from his features.

But Blake was angry right now. Angry at Negan's attitude.

She didn't blame David. She blamed Negan…thinking he could take what he wanted…just like that.

"...I'm not gonna give it to you….we clear?" she finished, shifting her weight from foot to foot nervously.

But Negan merely stared back at her, his dark-brown eyes never leaving her face.

"And what exactly is it you think I want from you, hmmmm?" he said taking a step towards her slowly.

Blake gave a gulp but didn't answer him.

It wasn't a second later that Negan had closed the gap between them, coming to stand just a breath away from her, his mouth now pressed into a grim line.

Blake could feel her heart racing, hear it thudding away inside her ribcage.

She knew Lucille was still in Negan's hand but all she could see right now was the dark-haired man himself…looming over her…his face just an inch away from hers.

Blake was petrified. She knew what he was capable of doing to her right now.

Negan lifted a sudden hand to her face, his tanned fingers brushing her cheek…

...but Blake almost immediately flinched away before she could stop herself, tugging herself suddenly away from him, breathing hard.

At this, Negan gave an immediate scowl.

"Don't you dare get scared of me," he said in a low dangerous voice, suddenly pointing a finger at her, and lifting his chin, surveying her. "You are a badass fucking queen who doesn't take any shit from anyone, least of all me. So don't you dare disappoint me now, buttercup."

Blake gave a gulp, staring back at Negan, who took a step towards her once again, before suddenly shoving past her bumping his shoulder against hers.
He stalked over towards a small kitchenette that stood at the far end of the room. It looked barely used and Blake knew how unlikely it was that Negan would bother making his own meals when he had people to do that for him. But he did reach into a cabinet and pull down two small glass tumblers with a chink.

"Now let's talk about somethin'," he said suddenly walking over to the sofas, setting the two glasses down onto the coffee table, picking up the bottle of whiskey and unscrewing the top. "Sit."

Negan nodded to the squish leather couch nearest to him.

Blake hovered for a long moment, before giving a gulp and moving over to the couch and taking a seat.

She brushed down the knees of her jeans and watched as Negan poured three big glugs of whiskey into each of the glasses before screwing the lid back onto the bottle and handing her one of the short tumblers.

Blake did not drink whiskey. In fact she hadn't drunk any alcohol in years….not since all this had started. It had never been high on her list of priorities of things to scavenge for, her focus mainly being on a food and medical supplies.

She took the tumbler from Negan's grasp, lowering her gaze as she felt his eyes one hers once more.

"Let's talk about David," he said starkly, suddenly sucking on his teeth and taking a seat opposite her, spreading his legs out cockily and placing his baseball bat beside him.

At this, Blake glanced up towards the dark-haired Saviour nervously.

"See, I've got this theory…" he continued, taking a drawn-out sip of whiskey and making a face as he glugged it down. "…that maybe you and ol' Davey boy are not the happy-fucking-couple you make out."

Blake stared back at Negan hard, before bringing the whiskey to her own lips and taking a drink.

The brown alcohol burned as it slipped down her throat and Blake couldn't help but cough, letting out a splutter and placing the back of her hand to her mouth.

Negan chuckled as he watched her, but this only made Blake irritated.

"We are," she uttered bluntly, taking another swig of the whiskey, this time finishing half the glass.

"Whoah now, Doll-face," Negan said, tugging on his bottom lip with his teeth. "You might wanna slow down a little."

Blake gave a scowl.

Who the hell was Negan to tell her anything?

"Me and David," she said baring her teeth at Negan. "We're fine."

But Negan gave a shake of his head. "You wanna remind me again how you got those bruises…" he said goadingly.

But this only caused to boil Blake's blood even further.

"I told you," she muttered through gritted teeth. "I fell."
But Negan shifted to the edge of his seat, lowering his chin, gazing at her, before letting out a long sigh and running a hand down his face.

"You see, Peaches," he uttered in a quiet tone. "That soft spot I got for you does not stretch to your fi-an-ce. And if for one moment I think that he ain't treatin' you how a queen should be treated, then he is gonna be a whole world of fuckin' trouble. You understand me?"

Negan was certainly not stupid, Blake knew that. From the way his chocolate eyes roved across her delicate features, and from the way his tone seemed wholly full of concern.

She had seen just what he had down to the red-haired man who had tried to force himself on her…so she couldn't bear to imagine what he would do to David…the man who had given her oh-so-many bruises over this last six months.

Blake gave a nod, lowering her gaze to her glass once again and bringing it to her lips and tossing the liquid back, draining her glass.

Negan paused for a moment before his face broke into a small bemused smile.

He grabbed the bottle of whiskey, unscrewed the cap and leant forwards filling her glass a quarter of the way full again.

Blake could already feel the alcohol going to her head, stopping her brain from thinking as fast as usual.

"As long as we're clear," said Negan, shifting back and taking another swig of his drink as Blake mirrored him doing the same.

The brown liquor spilled down her throat easily now.

Negan sucked at his teeth harshly and dropped his own glass to his lap once more, eyeing her.

"So," he said after a long moment or two. "How was running into Dr Smarty-Pants earlier?"

She knew that he obviously meant Eugene but Blake was not rising to his mocking.

"Fine," she shrugged, trying to act as nonplussed as possible and taking another long gulp of alcohol. It was certainly having a strong effect on her, making her feel slightly woozy now. Part of her knew she needed to slow down, but another part of her liked the feeling of serene fuzziness. Taking her mind off the harsh reality of her current existence. "I didn't really know him that well back in Alexandria."

Negan frowned. "No?" he said licking his lips. "Well he certainly seemed to know you. Said that you attended a lot of community meetings…and that you went out scavenging for Rick a few times. I mean shit, Buttercup, if I didn't know better I'd say that you were an integral part of that little band of pricks."

Blake frowned. "You're such a charmer, you know that?" she muttered in a sarcastic tone, throwing back more of her drink. "I was never integral. We were only there six months."

"Six months is a hell of long fuckin' time in this world, Peaches," Negan mused, causing Blake to purse her lips and finish off the last of the whiskey from her glass.

She made a face as she placed the tumbler down on the table, and placed a hand to her mouth, her
eyes not really able to focus well anymore.

But even despite this, she knew that Negan's eyes were still on her, his lips curbed up into a grin.

"Y'know, you are full of surprises," Negan said titling his head at her. "The offer is still there if you ever wanted to be one of my wives. I do like a woman who knows how to handle their drink."

But almost instantly, at his words, Blake rolled her eyes, pointing a finger at him. "I don't think you realise just how many things are wrong with that sentence."

She shook her head. He was so full of himself. So cocky…. and this only served to annoy her more in her inebriated state.

"ONE of your wives…" she continued bitterly, suddenly getting to her feet. "I mean, have you even heard yourself."

She had had enough of Negan's games, but even so, on her feet she felt far more unsteady than she had done sitting down.

She knew she had drunk that whiskey too fast, but right now she didn't care. She only had one thing on her mind and that was to tell the stupid, arrogant man in front of her, a few home truths.

"I mean, do any of those women actually want to be with you?" she snapped angrily, cocking her head to the side, and trying her best to focus on him.

But Negan didn't get up, he merely stayed sitting legs splayed, staring at her through narrowed eyes.

"Watch your fucking tone with me, baby-doll," he uttered in a low warning voice, his free hand suddenly drifting over to Lucille.

But Blake was almost passed caring.

She snarled at him.

"Or what? You think trapping me here like this is going to make me want to be with you….be one of your wives? Because it's not..." she said angrily, pouting at him. Her head was spinning and a vast wave of nausea suddenly rose up within her. "I-I'm not like them...."

She desperately wanted that to be true. She wanted to prove that she was stronger than that but every fibre in her body right now told her that she wasn't. David's words tolled starkly through her head. She was useless and she had only ever let him down.

Blake felt herself beginning to tremble. She wasn't sure if this was the alcohol's doing, or something else completely.

She felt so small right now. Why was it only men that were able to make her feel like this? Men who seemed to have this horrible hold over her, like that was their right.

But Blake didn't even have time to take an unsteady step backwards as Negan suddenly got to his feet and moved over to her.

His cholate eyes stared suddenly deeply into hers and he bared his teeth.

"You're not like them," Negan suddenly murmured in a low voice, his lips a mere breath from her own. "Like I said, doll-face. The difference between them and you, is that you are a queen. And whether you're with me…with David…or with any fuckin' guy you want, you're still gonna' be that
Blake stared up at Negan standing there, his face serious and his eyes locked with hers…right now she felt short of breath, her heart thudding inside her chest all of a sudden…

…was this the whiskey? Or was this something else…

But Blake didn't not have time to dwell on this much longer, as suddenly, the wave of nausea hit her once again…but stronger this time.

A lot stronger.

Her eyes widened suddenly and she paced a hand to her mouth…

This was indeed the whiskey…

She suddenly shoved past Negan and ran over to the large white tiled bathroom and over toward the toilet. She pulled the seat up and only just made it in time, before suddenly coughing and vomiting up at least a quart of whiskey.

She panted, feeling woozy as she collapsed to her knees.

Blake felt her eyes fill with water as she gagged again, heaving over the bowl.

She felt like such an idiot. So embarrassed that this is what it had come to…trying to drown her sorrows by downing more whiskey that she had cared to enjoy in her entire life.

She let out a sob, as she hung her head over the toilet bowl…before puking yet again.

But to her surprise, a second later, she felt a sudden hand on the back of her head.

Her watery eyes drifted down to see Negan's boots standing to her side and a moment later she heard his soothing voice, let out a brief 'shhhhh', as a second sob escaped her lips.

"I told you, you should have taken it easy on that whiskey," Blake heard him mutter as her stomach convulsed yet again and more bile spilled from her mouth before she could stop herself.

She felt her face burning red, wondering whether that was a side effect of the alcohol or the sheer embarrassment she was feeling right now. It had been a long time since she had been this drunk, so it was hard to remember.

"You know I don't think there's many people that I would let puke in my personal bathroom, so you count yourself lucky, Doll," she said Negan with a hearty sigh, holding back her long caramel hair. "Like I said, it's a fuckin' good job I got that soft spot for you, now isn't it?"

Blake breathed hard, as tears fell from her eyes.

And she barely took an notice of the way Negan's fingers drifted over the back of her neck…where David's hands had dug into her skin just a couple of hours before.

Blake gave a sniff, her stomach settling slightly, but she still felt like crap, her head woozy.

But she didn't manage to say anything in reply, even as there came a second set of footsteps from behind them.

"Tanya, baby, is it that time already?" came Negan's sudden sickly-sweet tone.
Blake feeling so ashamed of herself right now gazed over her shoulder to see a short woman with dark-hair and thick bangs wearing a short black dress standing in the doorway.

Blake wiped at her mouth, giving a small sniff.

She saw Negan look suddenly between the two women, his hand still resting comfortably on the back of Blake's head.

"Tanya," said Negan after a second or two. "Would you be a doll and take Blake here back to her room."

Tanya looked up at Negan a little unsure for second before giving a hurried nod.

She crossed the room over towards Blake, but as she did so, Negan caught her arm, stopping her in her tracks.

"Oh and don't bother coming back here tonight. I know it's your night an' all, but after all this excitement I'm fuckin' beat," he finished, letting go of her arm.

For a moment Tanya looked relived before she suddenly grasped Blake beneath the shoulder and pulled her to her feet.

Blake managed to stand up herself, a little shakily, looking down at herself. She had luckily not managed to puke all over her pristine white top which she was grateful for, but still hung her head ashamedly.

Negan could easily punish her for that…and Blake didn't care to think about what David would do if he heard that she had almost jeopardised their future here.

Right now she didn't know who she was more scared of.

But as she shuffled across the room, propped up by Tanya she chanced a final glance at Negan who was chuckling to himself watching her with those same old dark, calculating eyes.

He didn't say another word to her but just watched as she left the bathroom, and then Negan's quarters entirely, heading into the silent corridor away from the music, away from the warmth…away from something that Blake could not quite put her finger on.

It took only five minutes for Tanya to walk Blake back down the stairs and down the lengthy hallway and back to her room in silence.

"This one's yours right?" she said a little coldly, as they approached what looked like Blake's door, although with her fuzzy vision she couldn't be sure.

But Blake suddenly turned to Tanya and gave a frown, trying her hardest to focus on the young dark-haired woman.

"Why did you do it?" she asked suddenly. "Why become one of his wives?"

At this, Tanya let go of Blake and rounded on her.

"You don't know what I went through out there," she said scowling. "You don't know what choices I had to make….what I had to do."

But Blake shook her head, her green eyes searching Tanya's features.
"But surely there was another way…” she muttered.

But Tanya rolled her eyes, giving a shallow laugh.

"That's easy for you to say," she muttered bitterly. "The way he looks at you…like he respects you. He doesn't look at any of us like that. For us there wasn't another way."

And with that, Tanya turned on her heel, leaving Blake in the empty corridor all alone.

She stood there for a long moment before blinking her eyes shut, her head spinning. She hurriedly grasped for the door handle letting herself inside.

Her room was how it had been hours earlier….the drapes still open….

But now there were no birds outside now. Only darkness….never ending and black.

And so with that Blake threw a hand across her tired face and collapsed onto the bed, fully clothed.

And within a second or two…she found herself drifting off into a well-needed dreamless sleep….away from thoughts of Negan, of his wives…or indeed David…
The wake up call

BANG BANG BANG.

Blake gave a sleepy frown, at the sudden noise waking her from her sleep.

BANG BANG BANG- came the noise again, unrelenting…each thud sending a piercing pain shooting through her skull.

She gave a groan and buried her face further into the pillow.

It was morning already. And despite having had at least ten hours sleep, Blake felt as rough as anything. She knew that she was still in the clothes she had been wearing yesterday, lying on top of her bedsheets, having just collapsed here the previous night.

BANG BANG BANG- came the noise again, louder this time.

"Go away," Blake managed to murmur, scrunching up her face and turning her head away from the noise.

But it was only a second later, that she heard her door swing open, and a couple of heavy footsteps strut their way into the room.

"Wakey, wakey, rise and shine, Buttercup," came the wholly recognisable voice of Negan.

But this only caused Blake to let out another frown.

Her head was pounding and her mouth was as dry as anything, and as she opened one bleary eye, the light from her undraped window hit her face, causing her to feel at least ten times worse.

She grasped up her pillow, placing it over her head, closing her eyes once more.

But this only made Negan chuckle and bash, what was likely Lucille, against her open door once again.

It took Blake a moment or two to remember just why she felt so hungover right now.

Last night she had downed a couple of glasses of whiskey in a matter of minutes. And considering she hadn't drunk even a drop of alcohol in almost three years it wasn't surprising that she felt so worse for wear this morning.

"Well look. at. you. Aren't you a sight for sore eyes, and still in last night's clothes too," uttered Negan in an obnoxiously loud voice, letting out a carrying whistle and yet another chuckle.

"Stop," murmured Blake in a croaky voice, giving a moan of pain as she pinched the bridge of her nose with her fingers. "I already feel like shit. There's no need to make me feel worse."

She suddenly felt the mattress sink slightly, the springs creaking gently as a soft weight sank down beside her.

At this Blake let out another grizzled groan.

"Well fuck. me, Peaches. I mean, I did warn you to slow down," came the voice of Negan, closer now.
Blake scowled, suddenly raising her head from beneath the pillow, turning and shooting him a furious look.

"Well I obviously needed a drink after the couple of days I've had," she snapped irritably. But Negan just gave a gruff laugh. "I was brought here without my knowing, thrown in a cell and on top of everything, I've had to deal with you."

She looked Negan up and down. Today he was still in that old and battered leather jacket thrown over a grey t-shirt, with his beard looking as scrubby and as haphazard as ever. Lucille of course, hung limply from his hand, as it always did.

"Ex-fuckin'-cuse me, Doll-face," he said in a sudden loud voice, that grin still lingering at his lips, looking almost impressed by her sass. "You can blame your oh-so-fuckin' perfect boyfriend for bringing you here against your fuckin' will. Not me!"

Blake eyed him for a long second, before letting out an annoyed huff.

"Well, whatever," she muttered, rubbing at her face with her hand and propping herself up onto her elbows. "What do you want anyway?"

Negan ran his tongue over his line of perfect white teeth smiling at her.

"I just thought we could take a walk…" he said titling his head slightly. "Thought I could give you the grand tour, now that I can trust that you won't try to use poor old Lucille on me again."

Blake's lips twitched up into a smirk as she pulled herself up into a sitting position. "And how do you know that?" she said raising an eyebrow towards him bemusedly.

Negan stared at her hard for a second, before easing himself off of the bed and getting to his feet once again.

"Oh baby, I know you better than you think," he said grinning down at her. He suddenly glanced towards the door where Dwight was stood and nodded for him to come inside.

Dwight, of course, did as he was told, his eyes on the floor, not looking at Negan or at Blake.

He merely walked over to her nightstand, placing down a bottle of water and two tiny white pills that looked like aspirin.

"Here's a little somethin' for your sore head," uttered Negan nodding. "See you in thirty, Buttercup."

And with that, before Blake could say another word, Negan walked back out of the room followed swiftly by Dwight, both men closing the door behind them.

She stared after Nagan for a short moment, before immediately throwing a hand across her face, giving a huge groan, and falling back against the mattress once more.

Maybe she would have just five minutes more sleep.

But before she had the chance to drift off again, there came another BANG BANG BANG against the door causing her to scrunch up her face, wincing.

"Get up, Peaches!" came Negan's loud, calling voice through the door. "Do not make me ask twice!"

Blake instantly gave an angry huff, before opening her eyes once again in annoyance and tugging herself grumpily to her feet.
God, she hated that man sometimes. She really, really did…. 
Within twenty minutes…with plenty of hungover grumbling later, Blake had managed to drag herself from her bed, down the aspirin that Negan had left for her, grabbed a quick shower, washed her hair, brushed her teeth and shucked on a fresh set of clothes.

Blake opened her closet door, now up and fully dressed, to find a long floor length mirror attached to the inside. She stared at herself as she did up the buttons of her fresh, loose, white blouse.

She didn't look as bad as she first thought. Perhaps still a little green around the gills but fairly ok. Her long damp caramel hair was pushed back over her shoulders and she had on a pair of tight fitting dark navy jeans and sneakers.

These had been the first pair of tennis shoes she had put on in a long time and they instantly felt far more comfortable to her than her usual hard-wearing walking boots did. But she certainly didn't want to get too used to this lifestyle. Just because Negan was trying to...charm her, for some reason…that did not mean she could trust him. This couldn't be just that easy. Could it?

She blinked a couple of time staring up into her large green eyes, reflected in the mirror. She was convinced she didn't look like the same person anymore. She had changed so much in such a short space of time and that had nothing to do with weight-loss or diet…..this was because of what she had seen out there…...and what she could never forget.

She dragged her eyes away from the mirror, shutting the closet door with a clang, just as there came a brief knock at the door.

But this was not the loud bashing of Negan, she knew that for sure. This was softer, more tentative.

Blake strolled across the room, tucking her long hair behind her ear as she did so, before hauling open the door, her lips pursed.

Standing there was Dwight, looking back at her blankly, knife at his belt and that same old awful scar lingering across his cheek.

"Negan wants to see you downstairs," he uttered matter-of-factly, his gaze only meeting with hers for the slightest of seconds, before he tore his eyes away.

Blake knew she had no choice in the matter but to follow him, and so, shutting the door behind her, she headed out into the corridor following Dwight.

The pair walked in silence for a moment or two, before Blake suddenly chanced a glance up at Dwight.

"How long have you been here?" she asked a little cautiously, chewing on her lip.

For a long second Dwight didn't answer her, until-

"Ten months," he uttered in a hollow voice, his eyes never leaving the hallway ahead of him.

Blake's eyes travelled down to the floor before looking back up to him finally.

"You came here alone?" she asked in a quiet voice as they rounded a corner and headed through a door which came out on top of a long circular staircase Blake recognised from yesterday.
Again, Dwight didn't answer for a long moment before he finally let out a curt- "No."

And Blake could tell that that was the end of that conversation. Dwight's jaw was clenched and he looked angry discussing this with her. So she didn't push the matter any further as they ambled slowly down the long staircase, before finally reaching the bottom.

"Through here," Dwight muttered after a second later, as Blake led the way, making to go down the second staircase they approached, but instead Dwight held open a door on their right for her to pass through, leading them in a direction Blake had not been before.

She looked at Dwight a little unsurely before walking into a large spacious room.

The room was bright, surrounded by dusty stained glass window panes. It was alive with hustle and bustle of Saviours going about their business, decked out like some sort of huge marketplace, with lots of trestle tables set up with salvaged wares, as well as what looked like various food items and medical supplies.

This looked like a little community in itself and Blake spotted the same sort of faces here as she had done the previous day in the dinner hall. Many older people, who looked they were not able to fight, as well as a lot of younger kids that certainly were not old enough to handle themselves out there.

This indeed certainly looked like a safe haven for people like that.

Was it Negan who had really built all this?

But before Blake's thoughts could dwell so much on the annoying leader of the Saviours, she saw the man himself appear through the crowd of people.

He was taller than most, and so easily spottable in that leather jacket, biker boots and barbed-wire covered baseball-bat combo.

"Well don't you look like a million bucks all spruced up, like you're ready for a day out at the mall," he said flashing her a grin as the crowd of people before him parted, bowing their heads and staring down at the ground nervously.

Blake rolled her eyes, crossing her arms over her chest as he approached her.

"Is this your mall?" she said in a mocking tone, offering him a simpering look. Behind them Dwight sauntered away obviously having work of his own to attend to.

But Negan merely eyed her, coming to stop just a foot away from her, swinging Lucille up and across his shoulder.

"I guess you could say that," he said flashing her an approving smile. "But at this mall, you don' need to pay for anythin'. Anythin' you want, Doll-face, is on me."

He placed his free hand to his chest graciously. But Blake wasn't so convinced.

She narrowed her eyes at the dark-haired man.

"Why?" she said pursing her lips, keeping her arms folded across herself a little defensively.

But Negan chuckled, arching his back and leaning in towards her.

"Soft spot, Peaches," he merely uttered with a chuckle, his hand coming to rest at her back.
He urged her forwards. "How 'bout we take a walk?"

Blake gave an audible huff, that only served to make Negan chuckle, and followed him, gazing around the room at the various vendors working behind each of the 'stalls'..

There was one for freshly baked bread, one for medicine, one for canned goods…amongst a lot of others Blake couldn't quite yet make out over the hustle and bustle of people.

"You've built up quite an empire for yourself," she said a little offishly, feeling slightly irritable. "Nice to see that you've built your success off the back of others."

"Now, now, sweetheart," said Negan, his hand never leaving her back. "Do not fuckin' start all that again."

Blake gave a grumble, stopping for a moment to admire a stall full of knives, guns and utensils from afar, before moving on to the next stall beside it, full of tattered old clothes, sock, pants, overcoats, thinking guiltily to the closet full of brand new clothes she had upstairs.

Negan stopped beside her, watching her carefully, but Blake didn't care.

To her left, a skinny looking woman with short greying hair, wearing a vest approached, picking up a large woolly sweater and turning it over in her hands.

"H-How much?" she stuttered nervously to the stall-holder, one eye on Negan.

The grumpy looking woman behind the stall, about Blake's age with tied back brown hair chewing gum, looked up from her ledger uninterestedly.

"48 points," she muttered lazily, popping her gum.

Almost immediately the skinny woman hurriedly placed down the sweater and turned away looking forlorn.

It was obvious that she did not have enough points.

Blake stared after her as she walked away. Was this the existence these people were really left to?

"Now you see, that is the way of my great-big-world unfortunately," came Negan's voice suddenly in her ear. "You either work hard enough for the points, or you get shit."

But Blake turned to him scowling. Angry at the injustice of this place.

"And how exactly are people expected to work for you, huh?" she said suddenly raising her voice, causing the skinny woman, the stall-holder and a couple of people nearby to look over at her suddenly. "What? You make the attractive women your wives and the rest end up starving? Fucking fantastic."

"Now you better watch your damn language around me, Doll," said Negan in a half-teasing, yet half-warning voice.

But Blake felt her blood boiling and she brought herself up to her full height, rounding on Negan, jabbing him in the chest with her finger.

"I know men like you," she uttering scowling. "You come with a system that works for you and only you. You make people think that they need you to survive. You use people."
Blake knew from first-hand experience what men like that were like.

She gave a gulp, her mind flitting to David. But she instantly pushed these thoughts from her head.

"But that doesn't make you a leader. That just makes you an asshole," she finished, teeth bared, as Negan's face became suddenly serious, his chocolate eyes boring into hers.

Blake had had it with him…with this place…this stupid points system. Had these people really survived….for this?

She turned on her heel suddenly, snatching up the sweater, as the Saviour behind the stall snapped her gum , getting to her feet.

"Hey!" she cried out in surprise, but Blake wasn't taking orders from her.

She held the sweater out towards the skinny older woman.

"Here take it," Blake said in a firm voice. "I'm giving it to you. Consider it a gift from Negan."

The woman looked hurriedly at Negan, looking frightened, as the stall holder did the same.

But Negan, his lips still fixed in a grim line, looked angry…

Was he about to use Lucille on Blake for her insolence? She wished he would. Just to see what would happen.

Negan was silent for what felt like the longest moment, as the stall holder matched up to Blake, pulling a knife from her belt obviously ready to haul her back and punish her-

"Let her have the fuckin' thing," said Negan suddenly with an irritable tone. And as Blake looked back at him over her shoulder, she saw that his jaw was clenched and his eyes were steely and fixed on her.

The stall-holder gave a huff of what seemed like disappointment, as the skinny woman took the sweater graciously from Blake's grasp. "T-Thank you," she said in a whisper. "I-It's for my daughter…s-she's just turned ten years old."

And with that, she took the sweater and disappeared off into the crowd, her head bowed, obviously frightened of Negan and his men and women's wrath.

But Blake turned back to Negan, looking serious.

"A leader needs compassion," she said bitterly, looking up at him, her gaze dark.

Negan had lavished gifts on her, probably his wives too…..but he had made these poor people work their fingers to the bone and for what…not even enough points to afford a sweater that the Saviours had looted anyway?

But Negan just stared back at Blake, running his tongue over his straight line of white teeth, looking deadpan.

"That what the great Rick told you before he killed a whole bunch of my fuckin' men?" he muttered in a low voice.

Now the entire room had stopped what they were doing and were turned to them, listening intently.
It was unlikely anyone ever survived talking to Negan like this, but Blake knew she was too far gone now.

She knew she had to do something. To make a stand.

"Rick didn't bludgeon two men to death just to prove a point!" said Blake furiously, suddenly moving swiftly over to her left and grabbing a large knife from the nearby table, laden with weapons of varying kinds.

At this, Dwight, the female stall-holder, and at least 3 other men suddenly, stepped forwards, raising their guns and their own knives, towards her.

Blake knew she was royally screwed now, but she still held the knife out towards Negan defiantly.

"Baby, baby, baby," uttered Negan, his voice low and growling, causing a sudden silence to fall over the room. "Y'know, I think I liked you better when you didn't have a knife in your hand."

His lips suddenly curved up into a wide grin, which Blake had not been expecting. He was such an imposing guy and that grin only served to make Blake feel even more nervous.

Was Negan just another David? Using her and everyone around him to get his own way? She already had one man in her life like that, she couldn't afford another. But surrounded by Negan and his men, she was trapped, like she had been since she had got here. Given the pretence of freedom, with a room and clean clothes, but in reality, she was as much trapped by the Sanctuary as she was by David.

Blake shifted her weight from foot to foot, feeling totally and utterly hopeless right now.

She gave a gulp and stared back at Negan, letting out a long tired sigh. No matter what she did he would always be the one with Lucille, and she would always be the one under his power….under the Saviours power.

"Well I liked you better when you didn't even know I existed," she said suddenly, dejectedly, dropping the knife to the floor with a clatter.

As soon as she had done so, she was hastily grabbed by her caramel-blonde hair, by the brown haired-stall holder, and forced to her knees, a knife suddenly cutting into her cheek.

None of this was as bad as the hurt she had felt by David's hand, and so Blake winced, but did not cry out.

She was stronger than that. She had to be.

This was obviously the point where Negan would finally be using Lucille on her. Blake was even on her knees ready for it…just like Glen and Abraham had been.

She closed her eyes, letting out a breath steadying herself…waiting for death to come to her.

"Oh you'll pay for all that," hissed the woman's voice in her ear. "You stupid bitch!"

But Blake merely breathed…in and out…..and opened her eyes once again, as the blade pressed hard and cold into her cheek.

She was ready.

But it was then, that Negan spoke.
"Ah, ah, ah, Becky, Sweetheart," came his sudden sign-song voice, arching his back as he strolled

towards Blake and her captor, Becky. "You donot want to do that."

Blake noticed Becky stare up at Negan, looking a little confused as he approached her. And to
Blake's surprise, he pointed Lucille at the brown-haired woman's face.

"If you fuckin' pull that knife back, and I see you've drawn blood on Blake here's, pretty-little-face," 
said Negan staring down at Becky and baring his teeth. "Then there is gonna be HELL to pay!"

With those words, he leant backwards, his words loud and carrying across the now-quiet room.

Blake looked up into his long, tanned face, frowning.

What the hell?

Why was he defending her? After all that she had said to him?

Becky immediately retracted the knife carefully from Blake's face and stumbled backwards
scrambling to her feet, backing hurriedly away from Negan, back into the crowd.

It was then that Negan turned to Blake, his face unreadable and held out a hand towards her.

"Doll?" he offered, in that same old low drawl of his.

Blake's heart thudded in her chest…

And it took her a long moment or two, to even bring herself to move…

Before she slowly…tentatively…reached out and took his hand…allowing him to pull her to his feet.
She didn't know why she did it…

She didn't understand why she wasn't already dead? Was this some sort of game?

She stood, as Negan kept her hand held tightly in his, his eyes still on her.

Even when he spoke loudly to the surrounding crowd, his eyes never left hers, not even for a
moment.

"Now listen up all you pieces of utter shit," he said in a growling voice. "Any of you, even thinks
about touching a hair on her head, you're gonna have to answer to me. No, exceptions. We clear?"

The crowd was silent.

It was then and only then, that Negan tore his eyes away from hers bringing himself up to his full
height and placing Lucille up onto his shoulder.

"I said- ARE WE CLEAR?" he yelled in a loud, furious tone.

There was a sudden murmur as everyone around them bowed their heads in acceptance. Everyone in
the room conforming to Negan's will.

Blake looked up at him, standing there….a leader…..like no one she had ever met before.

She had been wrong… he was not another David after all.

No….
For he was Negan.

There was no other way to describe him. All tall and looming ….causing her breath to catch slightly in her throat as she looked at him….

He was so strange to her. Calling her a queen, defended her in front of his men, given her everything she had wanted. And why?

Her heart thudded in her chest, faster now that it had when she had had a knife to her cheek….

She had defied him and he'd let her. Him...Negan…he'd just let her walk all over him.

Blake pondered why.

A moment or two passed, where the crowd looking on thinned out, with everyone going about their business once again, a soft muttering passing through the room. But Blake could tell everyone looked cautious and frightened of what Negan was capable of doing next.

Blake looked down at the floor, before her eye caught Negan's chocolate ones once again.

Why her? Of everyone here…why her? She was no more attractive than any of his wives. She had yet to give him any information on Rick. And she had been anything but cooperative with him so far. And yet he had given her a room, a closet full of clothes, and told her that anything she wanted here was hers. Did he really have that soft spot for her he kept talking about? Or was all this some sort of game?

She had only been here two days….two long days. She wasn't special in any way. She barely even knew Negan, and yet….when he looked at her with those dark eyes of his, she saw something in them. Something she didn't get from David or any other men that had ever entered her life. Something warm and familiar…and sort of safe.

Which was the complete opposite of how she knew she should have been feeling around him.

But Negan turned to her, his lips curving up into a wide grin, as he leant in towards her ear, his hand shifting from hers, to the small of her back instead.

But Blake no longer flinched from his touch. She felt at ease around him. Stronger and more confident than she had felt in years. Maybe he was, what he had oh-so-aptly called himself and his people. Maybe he was her saviour.

"Y'know there was only one other person in my life I ever, ever let talk to me the way you just did, Peaches," Negan uttered in a husky voice into her ear.

Blake blinked a couple of times, turning her head to face him.

Negan's long face was now just a whisper away from hers….

She could feel his warm breath on her neck…sending shivers down her spine.

Blake saw him lick his lips, his chocolate eyes travelling down to hers….the crowd around them seeming like a blur….

Right now it felt like they were the only two people that mattered. The only two people in the world.

"...and I hope you know, that when you use that naughty-little badass tone of yours," continued Negan with a wicked smile. "...you become even hotter to me, if that. is. even. possible!"
He looked down at her admiringly, his eyes travelling over her features.

But Blake stopped, suddenly shaking herself from her daydream, pursing her lips in his direction and shooting him a disapproving frown.

The moment was obviously gone.

"...and y'know, the offer's still there if you did wanna go back to your room and have a lil' afternoon de-light with yours truly?" Negan finished, raising an eyebrow and staring at her suggestively.

But Blake just rolled her eyes.

She quickly pressed her hand to his taut chest, holding him at arm's length.

"Ugh, you're despicable, you know that?" she muttered, giving a tut, going back to her usual annoyance at him.

Her fingertips grasped lightly at the fabric of his grey t-shirt for a second, before she let go, turning on her heel and walking slowly away from him. Knowing for fact that he would follow her.

And he did, of course.

A moment later he felt him stride up behind her, falling into step at her side, and throwing his leather-clad arm haphazardly around her shoulders teasingly.

"Still not that worst thing you've called me today, Doll-face" he said in a low voice, giving a smile, revealing a row of perfect teeth. "So I'll take that."

Blake tutted at him once more, but couldn't help but feel her lips try to twitch up into a smirk, but instead she just shook her head as the pair walked across the room together, parting the apprehensive crowd before them as they went.

But what neither of them seemed to notice, was a single face in the crowd, at the far back of the room, staring at the pair of them, face twisted into a dark, seething frown.

David.

Blake may have finally found her feet in this place...finally finding a moment of confidence....but David knew that he wasn't going to let her have that. This was his place...not hers....he had been the one that wanted to come here. Wanting to have something more for himself...because he deserved it...not Blake.

She had just been his way in. His pawn. He didn't need her. He didn't want her. But there was no way he was going to let her find even the slightest bit of happiness here. Just because she had somehow found an in with Negan, that didn't mean she wasn't still his fiancée after all. She belonged to him and only him. And he could do with her what he liked.

For at the end of all this, this was to be his home. And not hers. Never hers. That had always been the plan.

So David knew he only had one choice....a choice that he had made a long, long time ago...

He was going to have to get rid of Blake, so that he could get what he wanted...

....one way or another.
"An' this," said Negan as he shoved open a door with dull end of Lucille, to reveal a room full of dusty old bookshelves cram with books. "...is the library."

Blake took a step forwards, her mouth dropping open slightly, as Negan let his arm slip from around her shoulders.

Since they had left the marketplace, Negan had showed her around the makeshift hospital wing, the gymnasium (filled with several punching bags, and some tired out gym equipment) and had now brought her along the corridor here...to the library as he so called it.

Blake looked back at Negan over her shoulder giving a bemused frown. "You have got to be kidding, right?" she said shooting him a look. "A library...seriously. I mean, I'll be looking out for the singing teapot next."

Negan merely chuckled, raising his chin and arching his back slightly and flashing his bright white teeth. Lucille was now swung back over his shoulder lazily, and he had his free hand half stuffed into his pants pocket easily.

"Well, Peaches, readin' is important. I mean, half those sorry sacks of shit out there, are pretty much fuckin' illiterate, and the ones who can read have better fuckin' things to do nowadays...but you are welcome to browse my wares, darlin'," uttered Negan in a cocky voice, as Blake gave a smirk, rolling her eyes at him and turning back to the shelves before her.

"Thanks," she said a sarcastic tone, her eyes drifting over the titles as she wrinkled her nose. "I'll bare it in mind."

She heard Negan give a laugh.

"Well after you're done here, I'll take you on a tour of the kitchens. See if there's anything you might want to eat," he uttered matter-of-factly, scratching at his face. "See if there's anything hot and gourmet you might them to rustle up for you."

Blake gave a shrug, pulling a book titled How to get rich in twenty easy steps towards her, before scoffing and throwing it back onto a nearby pile.

"Hmmm, gourmet dining isn't really my thing," she said glancing back at him over her shoulder. "I'd definitely take pizza and a movie over that any day."

Negan's lips curved up into a smile. His dark eyes drifting across her face, causing Blake's stomach to backflip slightly.

But she turned back to the shelves again, shaking this feeling from her.

What was up with her today?

Right now, she felt so much more conflicted than she had done, say, yesterday.

She had been a part of Rick's group for six months. Of course she was completely loyalty to them...but Negan had, in her short time here, had made her feel strangely...well, at home.

She gave a small inward sigh, picking up a large hardback book on Giant Tortoises of the
Galapagos, before putting it down again.

But it wasn’t a second later that several footsteps came thudding down the corridor towards Negan and the open door.

"Negan," came a sudden male voice.

Blake turned, to see a tall man with a long handlebar moustache and brown hair appear in the corridor alongside a second, much younger man, carrying a gun.

"Sorry if I’m...uh...interrupting," said the older man looking a little uncertainly between Blake and Negan, as if surprised to see her.

The younger man moved off down the corridor to stand guard.

Negan immediately gave a grin, and pointed suddenly at Blake with his bat.


Blake vaguely recognised his name...banded around the camp. Labelled as Negan's right-hand man.

The man named Simon looked at Blake a little unsurely, before giving a curt nod and turning back to Negan.

"Oh that's right," said Negan cutting across Simon just as he opened his mouth to speak. "You two already met, right? When old Davey-boy knocked her out and made a deal with us. You were the one that brought them in."

Simon nodded, his eyes flitting back to Blake, but he didn't speak further on the matter.

And for a second, Blake was sure she saw the tiniest flicker of guilt crossing his features.

She narrowed her eyes in his direction, a little unsurely, as he turned back to Negan.

"Boss, we've got a problem," he said giving a poignant nod and staring up at the bearded leader of the Saviours, looking slightly perturbed. "With them."

Negan's face became suddenly grim.

"That where you just come back from?" Negan asked in a steely voice, taking a step towards Simon.

The moustachioed man blinked a little but didn't flinch.

"He's being as uncooperative as ever," said Simon, chancing a glance over at Blake momentarily before tearing his eyes away.

At this Blake was sure she knew who he was talking about.

It had to be Rick and his group back at Alexandria...surely.

"Well then let's go pay them a little visit," said Negan, a grin sliding its way onto his face, as he readjusted his grip on the bat over his shoulder.

But Blake took a sudden step forwards, closing the gap between her and the bearded Saviour before she could stop herself.
"Don't hurt anyone," she blurted out hurriedly, her eyes wide and pleading.

But Negan merely glanced her way, before slowly turning to face her fully, looking down at her, now just a foot away from him.

He seemed to stare at her for a long moment, before he ran a sudden hand down his beaded face, letting out a long sigh.

"Doll-face, you know I have a hard time refusing you anything, but I gotta be seen to be standin' up for my people. And if pricks like that wanna go around and try to kill my men, then the hell I'm gonna let those sorry fuckin' sons of bitches get away with it."

"Please," said Blake suddenly, cutting across him, her breath catching in her throat.

Maybe she could use Negan's fondness of her to her advantage. Maybe she could use this to save lives…save the people she cared for…

She did care for them…right?

But Negan gave another sigh.

"I mean, you drive a hard fuckin' bargain, Buttercup," he said eyeing her. "But I'm not makin' any promises, we clear?"

Blake stared at him hard for a long drawn out second.

"I could come with you," she offered, pursing him lips encouragingly.

Perhaps this could be the opportunity she was looking for her escape…but then again she had David to think about. There was no way she could leave without him. They were a team.

But Negan leaned back, looking at their ceiling and shaking his head, giving a laugh.

"Sorry, Doll," he said finally looking down at her once more. "This one's not for you,"

Blake felt a frown find its way between her brows and it took all her strength not to give a huff.

But Negan could obviously sense her utter frustration, flashing her a wide grin, his tongue reaching his teeth.

"Next time, Peaches," he uttered in a gravelly tone, suddenly leaning forward and bumping his shoulder with hers. "I promise."

Blake narrowed her eyes, staring up at him.

Was Negan really making her promises right now?!

"I just want to make sure people are safe," she said tilting her head slightly, gazing up into his chocolate eyes, looking concerned.

At this, Negan gave an approving grin, glancing up at Simon and gesturing in Blake's direction.

"An' that is why she is an utter fucking queen, in the guise of a hot-as fuck, goddamn fox," he said in a faux-tone of sincerity to his right hand man, giving a bemused chuckle. "I mean shit, you should have seen her thirty minutes ago, trying to tear me a fuckin' new one. She has. got. some. balls I can tell you that."
Simon looked back and forth between Blake and Negan for a long moment, before his face suddenly cracked into a large smile to match that of his leader.

Blake let out a small frustrated huff.

She had no idea how one man could annoy her so much, but Negan somehow managed it. Every single time.

The tall, bearded Saviour stared down at her, with something in his brown eyes that she could not quite put her finger on, when he finally gave a whistle, beckoning over the second man with the gun, standing a little way down the corridor.

"Gavin," Negan yelled in calling voice, as the man looked eagerly up and marched instantly over to him. "You wanna escort, Doll-face here, back to the main hall, 'case she gets a little lost and finds her way 'accidentally'…"

At this Negan raised both hands, making air quotes at the word, leaning back as he did so.

"…to our weapons cache, and machine guns through most of my men. Which I wouldn't put it past her to do."

He shot Blake a knowing look, which she merely rolled her eyes at, pursing her lips irritably.

Gavin at once, gave a hurried nod, puffing out his chest and looking over at Blake.

He seemed around Blake's age, perhaps a little older, with messy strawberry-blonde hair and a gun clutched to him.

He looked cocky, his lips pressed into a sub-conscious sneer. And as he stared over at her, she noticed his eyes almost immediately travel down to her breasts without even an ounce of shame.

At this, Blake crossed her arms across her torso huffily, obscuring her boobs from view.

But of course, as always, Negan was not stupid, he had obviously caught exactly what she had, and he turned back to Gavin, his eyes blackening and his jaw now clenched tightly.

Blake could almost sense what was coming.

Negan suddenly gave a sharp whistle, drawing Gavin's eyes back to him instantly, and took a sudden step forwards, looming over the younger, already pretty tall guy, intimidatingly.

"Gavin, Gavin, Gavin," Negan murmured, barely moving his lips as he spoke. And with that he dropped Lucille suddenly onto Gavin's shoulder.

It couldn't have hurt him, but the act alone was enough for Gavin to let out a sharp, visible gulp.

Simon at their side, surveyed the scene grinning, his hands shoved into the pockets of his jeans, rocking back of his heels as did so.

"Now Gavin," continued Negan, in soft voice, giving a pout and staring directly into the younger man's eyes. "You obviously were not present when I explained to all those other assholes in there that Blake, here, is off-limits. So if you feel yourself getting hard lookin' at her titties, and think that by slidin' that skinny, piece-of-shit hand of yours, down to her ass and givin' it a nice, hard squeeze, she's gonna be into you, then you've got another thing fuckin' comin'. Because on my orders, if you even give her any sort of look that ain't one a guy would give his own fuckin' grandma, then I will..."
get her to cut those tiny, little balls of yours, off of you herself."

Blake felt herself rolling her eyes, looking away, trying as hard as she could not to laugh.

There was no way she was going to do any of that, but if it stopped idiots from trying to grope her, then all the better.

"We understandin' each other?" finished Negan with a whisper, his face hovering just an inch or two from Gavin's unnervingly.

And from the look on Gavin's face he certainly did understand, giving a shaky nod and letting out a whimpering."Y-Yes, Negan."

Negan gave a sudden grin, stepping back and withdrawing Lucille from the younger man's shoulder.

Behind him Simon gave an impressed chuckle, catching Negan's eye and shaking his head bemusedly.

But Negan merely arched his back, turning once more to Blake.

"I will see. you. later, Sweet-cheeks," he said flashing her a wicked smile, before waltzing off down the corridor with Simon, swinging Lucille from his arm causally, whistling as he went.

It was a second before Blake turned to Gavin and raised her eyebrows.

"So…back to the main hall?" she said brightly, not helping the smirk that seemed to plaster itself across her features, as she walked neatly past Gavin, out of the library as he bowed his head, his eyes falling immediately to the floor.

Ok….so having Negan have a soft spot for you did have its perks, she supposed, smiling to herself as she headed back down the long corridor, poor old Gavin now following in her wake.
Blake let out a long sigh, coming to lean against the metal railing that ran around the outside balcony, overlooking the Sanctuary lot.

It had been an hour since Blake had been marched back down the main marketplace hall by Gavin.

Various men and women, dressed in dark clothes, all carrying guns and weapons of varying sizes, had filed past her as she went, obviously making their way out to the trucks. Leaving for what Blake supposed was Alexandria.

She hoped Rick and the rest of her friends back there would be safe. Her mind flitting to baby Judith and the kids of Alexandria, innocent in all this.

Blake hadn't see Negan again, but had mooched around the marketplace stalls, watching as people stood in line to exchange their wares for points. It had been quieter that it was when she had walked through with Negan. And so after a couple of laps around the place, Blake had wandered the corridors.

Her mind had, of course, flitted immediately to David…heading for the staircase leading down the basement floor where she knew his room was.

She hadn't seen him since their run in in the canteen yesterday and as much as he had frightened and hurt her she knew that all of it…it was for him. She loved him….right?

But as Blake had reached the staircase, she found a broad shouldered black man standing there in front of it, blocking the way, with a gun held steadily in his hands.

Blake had pursed her lips, meaning to push past him, but he took a step to the side, blocking her path.

"I'm sorry," he uttered in a soft voice. "I can't let you go down there."

Blake had given a frown.

"Everyone? Or just me," she asked a little confused, stepping back and staring up at the man, but he just shook his head.

"Uh, just you I'm afraid," he said insistently. "Negan's orders."

Blake scowled, giving a huff, and had been about to protest, but had thought better of it at the last moment.

What good would it do?

Arguing with this guy wasn't going to solve anything.

So Blake had huffed and headed back down the corridor, finally finding herself out here, back on the balcony….in the same place Negan had offered her lemonade, just a day ago.

She still could not believe that was yesterday.

It all felt like a lifetime ago now.
Blake leant across the railing, folding her arms and staring out across the gloomy, grey lot.

The fence today, was covered with the living dead, or walkers at Rick had used to call them, and not just the ones that had been tied up and impaled there.

There had obviously been a mass build-up overnight, and today, several men in baggy grey jumpers were out there, trying to wrangle the walkers into position as best they could, as several Saviours drove knives and posts through their skulls.

It seemed like a slow process and by the looks of it they could do with a few more hands.

Hands that Blake certainly could offer them. Especially if it meant that she could carry a weapon again.

Blake looked around, noticing a tall, armed saviour with a black goatee and cropped hair, standing by the stairs leading down to the lot.

Brushing down the back of her navy pants a little apprehensively, she approached him.

"Hey, you think I could go down there and help out," she said raising her eyebrows and looking up at him. "I mean, I know my way around a knife-"

But before Blake could even finish her sentence, the man gave a scoff, cutting across her.

"Pfft, sweetheart, do you really think I'd let you do that?" he raised giving an amused chuckle and staring at her incredulously. "Negan would kill me….no worse than that…..he'd probably make sure I suffered real bad THEN he'd kill me. So beat it, ok?"

Blake gritted her teeth, irritated, and turned on her heel marching back over to the railings.

Why the hell was she being treated like a child here? Surely Negan realised he couldn't keep her wrapped in cotton wool and cooped up here forever!?

She let out a long breath of air and watched the men and the walkers for a good twenty minutes or so….her mind flitting back to a time before Alexandria….when they had fought tooth and nail for survival…loosing so many people along the way.

Blake had forgotten what it felt like to have a real home….have a family.

She had always had David of course…and the people at Alexandria had always made her feel welcome….but it wasn't the same as it once was back in the real world.

Back then, Blake had worn pencil skirts and high heels to work, grabbed lattes from the coffee shops around the corner, and talked for hours on her cell phone to her girlfriends about their weekend plans.

She had got blow dries and spent lots of money on make-up…more than she probably cared to reveal to David back then.

She had watched re-runs of her favourite TV shows in the evenings, and checked in with friends online….staring at their holiday photos and making herself jealous.

Because all that…it had been important to her back then.

That world…that life….it had all been so loud….so busy….
She had been young…mid to late twenties…having the time of her life…

Blake thought about David.

They had been happy once….ok, he had never been the biggest earner…hoping to get his own art studio one day…but Blake had funded him….kept him going on the lifestyle he liked. Even if it meant her working a lot of overtime. But she had done it because she loved him.

Then the day came….that awful, awful day…when they had packed whatever they could carry, leaving Blake's high heels and pencil skirts there in the city…and driven out of there…sitting in long queues of traffic and then walking for hours….and hours…and hours….

Within a day her cell phone was dead….another day they had been ambushed by a horde of the dead….seeing a family that had followed them along the back-road trail, killed before their very eyes….

A day after that….they were alone, and the world was silent…

…it was all so silent….

And that had been when Blake had known that it was gone. It was truly all gone. Life as she knew it…

Her home…and her family…

All she had left now was David.

And she knew she couldn't lose him. Even when beatings came….she held on tight to him….telling herself that he was her family. He was her home.

And he still was.

Blake blinked, as she heard the door suddenly open behind her and a group of three or four female voices were heard.

She looked around back over her shoulder as the nearby Saviour with the gun did the same, just as four women appeared through the large swing doors, walking out onto the balcony.

One had red hair, Blake immediately recognised as Frankie, the woman from David's room the previous day. And at her side was Tanya, another she recognised from last night. The woman who had appeared in Negan's quarters who had walked Blake back to her room. Behind them were two more women, one young with long white-blonde hair, another with tan features and dark brown eyes, her hair tied up in a bun.

They were all wearing the same style of short black dress and all immediately stopped talking as their eyes landed on Blake.

At this Blake gave an inward gulp, not expecting this reaction.

These were obviously Negan's wives…perhaps this was all of them…although she wouldn't put it past him to already have a different wife for each day of the week.

Blake turned to face the group of women fully, who had stopped in their tracks, as though not expecting to see her out here, and stared at them, parting her lips.

"Uhhh…hi," she murmured, trying to force a smile in their direction.
But the women didn't not reply…

In fact, they did not even smile.

After a long second or two, she saw Tanya, merely give Frankie a poignant shove forwards and the women all hurried away down the steps, past the armed Saviour, heading down to the left of the yard.

Blake gave a despondent sigh, turning back to the railing and placing both hands on it, giving it a frustrated squeeze.

Had Negan really warned everyone away from her?

Right now she felt so frustrated.

So trapped.

Firsts she hadn't been allowed to go see her own husband and now other women were blanking her. But why?

Was she really that bad?!

Suddenly pushing herself from the railing she decided to follow the women….hoping that the Saviour with the gun would not stop her. She hadn't seen around this entire place with Negan, so she would try and explore as much of it as she was allowed. Although she expected that wouldn't stretch too far.

She pushed her long caramel blonde hair back across her shoulders and lifted her chin, strut past the man defiantly…and to her a surprise, he didn't make a move to stop her.

She chanced a second glance at him and she headed down the steps , but he was already staring away uninterestedly.

Reaching the bottom, Blake found that the four wives were long gone, but the walkway wrapped around the building, splitting off into two paths through a couple of smaller units. Blake took the left one and began to walk.

It was hot and humid out and even under the gloomy grey sky of this day in late fall, Blake could feel beads of sweat collecting at her collarbone.

She was tall and with a medium build, having dropped a well-needed pound or two around her waist and hips since all this had started….but she knew that was likely mainly due to all the walking she had done over the past few years. But even now…on days like this she longed for air-con and a temperate shower.

Blake walked down a small pathway that led through the buildings, hearing voices murmuring a little way ahead of her…

Perhaps it was the wives…..perhaps she could catch up with them and confront them.

But she turned the corner, furrowing her brow …finally stepping out into a small courtyard that had been turned into a sort of makeshift communal back-yard.

There was full lines of laundry hanging from wall-to-wall around the yard…with pots of various sizes, growing what looked like small lemon trees as well as others. There was a couple of small
plastic-covered greenhouses and a large gas barbecue in the centre of the courtyard, but it was the vast amount of people that were stood around talking, laughing with one another that surprised Blake the most.

There were a small group of children all running around the potted plants ducking and diving away from each other, paying tag. There were a couple of women sowing what looked like pairs of socks on the far side of the area, as well as men and women of various ages moving about going about their work happily and contently.

If Blake had not known any better, she would have guessed they were back in Alexandria or at any of the other camps she had been at before now.

But almost as soon as Blake had walked forwards around the corner, entering the courtyard, a sudden hush seemed to fall over the small crowd, as heads began to turn towards her.

A woman with ashy blonde hair, pulled a small boy aside hurriedly, stepping back, looking nervous. Blake took a step forward, noticing suddenly that the people all around her had bowed their heads, avoiding her eye.

Just like they normally did with Negan…

Immediately Blake felt embarrassed, her cheeks reddening, as she walked further out into the courtyard looking this way and that.

This was a proper community and as oppressed as these people did seem on the outside, Blake had to be grateful for the fact that they were safe…inside these walls. Just as the people back in Alexandria were.

Blake remembered back to when all that had been new to her…and David….and the rest of her small group. When they had arrived in Alexandria after so, so long spent out there. When they had finally found somewhere where one person did not have to stay up all night on watch…or go in pairs to the bathroom together.

A safe place.

Is that what these people had here?

Blake looked around, passing a young couple with glasses as both of them immediately stared down the ground as she moved by them. They only looked about Blake's age, and perhaps long ago she would have been friends with them….gone out to bars or for coffee with them…and yet now…these people almost looked fearful of her.

Blake gulped yet again, dragging her eyes away from them and coming to a stop just in front of a long line of washing….

….just as a small girl with brown hair appeared in front of her….

….wearing a large, oversized sweater.

Blake gave a blink staring down at the girl as she spoke with a tiny lisp.

"Thank you for my sweater. It was my birthday yesterday," she uttered in shy sort of voice.

Suddenly realization dawned on Blake as she gazed up at a figure, standing just a little way behind
the tiny girl.

It was the woman from this morning…whom she had given the sweater to at the marketplace.
The woman mouthed a 'Thank you' just as the little girl before her, lifted something to Blake's face.
Bake looked down, her breath catching in her throat.

It was a flower. Beautiful and white with a long stem.

"My name's Lydia," she said giving Blake a smile. "What's yours?"

Blake instantly felt tears welling in her eyes as she gently took the flower from Lydia's grasp.

"I…um…I'm Blake," she uttered in just a whisper.

But all this. It was far too much for her to cope with.

This little girl…this gesture from someone who already had nothing….

It was too much to bear.

Blake suddenly murmured a hurried 'excuse me' before turning on her heel and hastily marching out of there as fast as she could.

She knew that all eyes were on her, but right now she didn't care…

She hurried through a large set of doors, and down into a darkened hallway, before suddenly and before she could stop herself bursting into tears….

…the small white flower still clutched tightly within her hand.

Blake flipped over a page in her book letting out a sigh.

It was late evening now…maybe 9pm, and Blake was in her room, sat across her bed reading…as she been for the past few hours.

The flower she had earlier been given was now sat neatly in a green vase on her table in the centre of the room.

Blake had of course been overwhelmed by the gesture…she had cried in silence, unable to stop the tears from falling.

She had felt oh-so overwhelmed by the gesture. All she had done was give the girls' mother a sweater, and yet they had treated her as if she were some sort of princess to them….a Queen. So grateful...when Blake knew she didn't deserve it.

She had only done it to defy Negan…hadn't she?

And yet from both sides…Negan and his people…. they had both given her so much in return…so much that she certainly wasn't worthy of.

The afternoon, of course, had dragged by.

Swiping away her tears, Blake had made her way down the corrido, finally fining herself back in the large canteen….where a tiny queue had formed for late lunch, down at the end of the large room.
The food had smelled so good, and Blake had realised she hadn't eaten since yesterday, and so had walked over to tentatively join the end of the group of awaiting people.

But she had barely made it to the end of the line, when the seven or so people ahead of her, suddenly stepped aside, allowing her to skip in front of them.

Blake hadn't quite believed what an impact Negan's words would indeed have, until this point.

They way these people looked at her with fear and apprehension in their eyes.

She of course declined their offer, urging for the people to take their place back in the line, but they just bowed their heads, refusing to move, and so Blake had eventually stepped up, taking plate filled with meat and potatoes and a large portion of vegetables. (She noticed later that she was the only person who had been given these vegetables…which made her feel even more guilty.)

She had eaten alone on a long table to herself, before quickly heading back up to her room, feeling lonelier than she had in a long time.

She had hoped to see David around…but he had been nowhere to be seen. Her mind trying not the think of the fact that perhaps he was with Frankie again.

Blake worried at her lips slightly as she turned the page of her novel.

She had made it most of the way through Moby Dick now, but had a lot of titles on her shelf still to get to.

Blake had mastered being bored by now. For a long time she had whiled away hours spent in darkened buildings afraid to turn on a light to read, in case the dead found them. But it was not having anyone to talk to that pained her the most. Made her feel bored and alone…and trapped.

She knew that she could go down to the canteen but even there she would be eating alone yet again… And so despite how much her stomach was rumbling and protesting, she would stay here and read a little more before going straight to bed.

But as the minutes ticked by, the only sound being the pages of her book being turned every minute or so, it wasn't a surprise that Blake jumped out of her skin at the sound of loud knocking on the outside of her door.

She gave a frown, staring suddenly up, before slowly placing down her book and getting to her feet.

She brushed down the back of her navy pants, before padding carefully to the door and hurling it open…

But Blake could only purse her lips and frown, staring suddenly at the figure of the other side.

"You miss me?"

It was of course Negan…standing in his battered, old leather jacket, shucked over a, now, bloodstained t-shirt. He had Lucille, as always, flung over his left shoulder, holding the wire-covered baseball bat, loosely in his grip.

Blake gave a frown, wanting to question him on his current bloody state and the outcome of the folks back at Alexandria.

"Whose bloo-," she began. But as her eyes travelled down to his other hand, she stopped suddenly,
her frown become one of bemused confusion. "Wait......is that.....pizza?"

Sure enough, in Negan's other hand was a large round plate with an enormous pepperoni pizza sat on it.

She stared up into Negan's smirking face, just as two men Blake didn't recognise, filed past her into her room before she could stop them.

"Wait-uh-what?" she said almost spinning around on the spot in confusion, as one man moved past her carrying in a large black TV and the other a humungous, ancient-looking VCR and two video tapes.

But Negan just gave a chuckle.

"Well you said you wanted pizza and a movie," said Negan his lips curving up into a grin as he looked down at her. "So I thought I'd bring the queen exactly what she wanted. Courtesy of ol' Greg an' his gang of wet-fuckin'-blankets up at the Hilltop."

Blake looked over her shoulder at the two men setting up her TV, before gazing back at Negan, her breath hitching in her throat in confusion.

"So you didn't go to Alexandria?" she said, that frown still lingering between her brows, but her entire body flooding with relief. "B-But you said-"

Negan shifted his weight from foot to foot, smirking at her.

"I didn't say a fuckin' word, buttercup," he mused, giving a nod. "But there you fuckin' go, assuming the worst from me, as always."

He tutted, causing Blake to grit her teeth irritably.

"Do you really blame me?" she shot back snappily.

But Negan just smiled that annoying smile of his, lowering Lucille from his shoulder and placing her against his leg before picking up a slice of pizza and taking an obnoxiously large bite, as the two men filed back past the pair of them, heading out of the room once again.

"I mean, if you don' want it," he uttered talking through chews and pointing at her with his hand holding the pizza. "I am more than happy to take this stunningly cheesy hot, melt in your mouth pizza away and enjoy it myself."

But Blake shot him a scowling look, suddenly snatching the plate from his grasp.

"Fine," she said in a huffy tone. "I'll take it."

At her reaction, Negan grinned, tossing his half eaten slice back onto her plate and placing his arm to the doorframe, leaning up against it and looming over Blake slightly.

"Had a feeling you'd come around, Doll-face," he muttered in a husky voice, shooting her a knowing look through darkened lashes. "I think that soft spot you've got for me is comin' along nicely. Next you'll be asking me on a date and wanting to put your hand up my blouse."

Blake rolled her eyes.

"Was there anything else?" she asked, raising her eyebrows and shooting him a fake smile, which only caused Negan to let out a loud laugh.
The dark haired Saviour bit his lip, poking his tongue out between his perfect teeth as he eyed her. "An' there was me thinkin' you were gonna ask me in. I'm hurt," he uttered pressing a hand to his heart and scooping up Lucille from the floor.

For a long moment he looked at Blake with something in his eye, which Blake couldn't help but smirk back at.

Had she imagined three days ago when she had woken up in that cell, that she would now be standing here, hot pizza in her hand and a movie playing on the TV behind her. And in her own room too…..she wouldn't have believed it could be true.

And it was all down to one person…

But was that person David…..or was it Negan…

Blake's green eyes lingered on his for second or two…both of them seemingly unable to look away….but Blake knew she was playing with fire here.

She let out a quiet chuckle…and stared down at the pizza in her hand….just as Negan pushed himself off of the doorframe, grinning.

"Night, Peaches," he uttered with a warm growl, turning on his heel and heading back of down the corridor, his boots chinking as he went.

And with that, Blake just stood there for a long moment, watching him go. Before slowly smiling to herself, shaking her head and closing the door with a snap, behind her.
Blake placed the plate full of pizza down on her bed, picking up a slice.

It was of course, as Negan had said, hot, and the smell of melting cheese was already making her mouth water.

She had not had pizza since the world had gone to shit…and it was the one thing, more than anything else, that she craved on a daily basis.

But she never thought in a million years, she would ever actually get to have it again.

She slowly took a bite…and could have almost cried with happiness.

It tasted better than she remembered, with stringy cheese and hot, spicy pepperoni.

Blake closed her eyes, feeling almost euphoric.

She had not felt this happy in a good while, and before she could stop herself, she fell back onto the mattress of her bed, giving a laugh and shaking her head.

The pizza was so good and it was crazy to her, than not only had Negan given her this, but also a TV with a couple of movies too.

She opened her eyes, taking another bite of pizza before turning onto her side and propping herself up onto her elbow, before pulling the two VHS tapes towards her.

They looked ancient and well worn, but Blake could make out two titles, written on the side in marker- GHOSTBUSTERS and JAWS.

She gave a smile, biting at her lip, before letting out a laugh to herself.

How had this happened to her?

She could have been dead by now. Negan could have killed her at least ten times over. But he hadn't. He had kept her alive. And not only that, but he had gifted her this too.

This wonderful thing, that she doubted many people made use of in this world.

But the smile slipped from Blake's face as she remembered.

All her happiness right now, it was all at someone else's expense.

Negan didn't get that blood on his t-shirt by accident.

She felt bad, of course she did…but would one movie hurt right now?

Then tomorrow she could take the TV down to the communal yard perhaps….so that people could share it…

Would Negan allow her to do that?

But Blake pursed her lips, tutting at herself. Since when did she care what Negan would allow her to do? She would try it anyway.
Blake sat up once again, picking up the plate of pizza and getting to her feet.

She strolled across the large room, in her socks, finally placing the plate down onto a small side table and picking up one of the videos and bending down, placing it neatly into the VCR.

The machine instantly whirred for a lengthy moment, before beginning to play the movie…a recorded from the TV version of JAWS.

Blake smiled, as she watched the title pictures pop up onto the screen.

It had been so, so long since she had seen anything like this…and even the blurry pictures, to her, looked incredible.

But before Blake could watch, mesmerized, any longer, there came a sudden bashing on her door.

She gave a frown, pausing the movie for a moment, before rolling her eyes and letting out a bemused huff.

She knew it would probably be Negan again….ready to tease her endlessly, and likely try and invite himself in to watch the movie. Part of her almost picturing him turning up with popcorn and some milk duds….trying to be funny, as usual.

She pursed her lips into a smirk, tossing her hair back over her shoulder and moving over to the door, pulling it swiftly open.

"I haven't changed my mind, you know-" she began.

But Blake paled suddenly, as she caught sight of the figure on the other side.

For it wasn't Negan….it was, instead-

"D-David?" Blake uttered, letting the door swing all the way open, as David took a step towards her.

Blake gulped, for her blonde-haired fiancé's face was fixed into a grim, sneering line.

"Oh sorry," he uttered poisonously. "Were you expecting someone else? Well I'm sorry to fucking disappoint you."

Blake backed up, feeling all the colour drain from her face.

Of course she had wanted to see him….David….but she immediately recognised the look plastered across his features…dangerous and angry…and Blake felt petrified right now of what he could be capable of in this state….

"No, no," she murmured, raising her hands, trying to force a smile. "I- um…"

But David cut across her, his eyes falling on the TV and the plate of pizza on the table, behind Blake's trembling form.

"You have got to be fucking kidding me," he said sharply, causing Blake's blood to run cold, as he threw the door to her room shut with a slam behind him. "I've been told I need to start working for fucking points, and you're here eating pizza?!"

David kept advancing on her, until Blake felt her lower spine hit the table behind her.

She now had nowhere to escape to now, her heart pounding in her chest.
"Listen," she tried, in a pleading tone. "I-I can get you anything you want….I-I'll talk to Negan, it'll be fine."

But David gave a sudden roar of anger, swiping his hand across the table and sending the plate full of hot pizza, flying across the room, smashing against the wall loudly.

"You?! Talk to Negan?!

David spat. "Why the FUCK would Negan listen to you, huh?"

Suddenly David leant over, grabbing a fistful of Blake's hair and pulling her head backwards.

She gave a sharp cry of pain, something she rarely did when David hurt her anymore. But this was a pain like no other. And for once Blake felt more fearful of her fiancé than she had done in a long, long time…

Blake desperately tried to push his hands from her, but he was too strong, his fingers tangled tightly in her long, caramel locks.

With that, David shoved her against the back of the sofa, as he pushed himself up behind her, hard.

"Don't kid yourself that Negan is keeping you around for anything other than getting information on Rick," he spat into her ear, giving her sharp shove forward so that her face hung over the back of the couch. "I mean look at you for fuck's sake. You look like shit, and have you seen his fucking wives?! Why the fuck would he ever listen to you? You're nothing. You hear me? Nothing."

Blake gave a gulp as David tightened his grip on her hair, pulling her face back, causing her to whine painfully.

David was probably right. Blake knew that. Of course she knew that. Negan probably wouldn't let this slide for long and soon enough he'd get rid of her when she found out she had no information for him.

But the funny thing was, Negan had stopped pushing her for information on Rick…in fact he hadn't mentioned it all day…

"I-I'm sorry," she managed to stutter out, as David pulled her head back with a jerk.

But she could hear that his teeth were bared and he pressed his lips to her face, ready to hiss more poisonous words into her ear.

But before he could do so, Blake heard the door behind her suddenly swing open with a loud creak….

And with that, to Blake's utter relief, David let go of her, backing off slightly and letting her up.

She gave a sudden gulp of air….catching the breath she had so desperately been holding in fear...and gazed hurriedly around….

…to see the meek and mild figure of Eugene, stood in the doorway…staring back at them…his lips curved downwards…

Behind her, Blake suddenly heard David gave a puff of air and a chuckle.

"Phew….sorry, bud. You caught us in the middle of getting a bit hot and heavy," he lied, giving another insincere chuckle. "Sometime we find it hard to keep our hands off each other. Isn't that right, Blakey?"
Blake breathed hard, still trembling from head to toe, but she couldn't quite reach Eugene or David's gaze right now.

"Y-Yeah," she said in what was almost a whisper, staring down at the floor and grasping her sleeves within her hands tightly.

"I heard raised voices," murmured Eugene in his low, southern drawl, his eyes roving suddenly over the smashed plate, and the pizza, now sliding its way down the far wall.

Blake reddened immediately.

"We were just excited to see each other," said David hurriedly, flashing a false smile in Eugene's direction.

He walked over towards the doorway and patted the large man on the shoulder. "I mean, she is my fiancé. And I've been kept away from her all day in this god forsaken place. Isn't that right, Sweetie?"

David looked back to Blake who gulped, giving a compliant nod.

Right now she felt so ashamed and yet so, so scared. Scared of hurting David more than she already had.

She was a strong woman and she always had been…but he had this hold on her…this vice-like grip she just couldn't seem to free herself from.

"Now maybe you could…uh...leave us to get back to it," said David poignantly, looking at Eugene.

But this only caused Blake's to run cold once more. So, so scared to be alone with David again….stuck inside this room with his temper and his vicious remarks.

But Eugene didn't move. He looked between Blake and David, his eyes lingering on Blake's scared features.

"I don't think I should leave" he remarked suddenly.

But this only caused David to grit his teeth, looking suddenly furious.

"Look, anything you THINK you heard…" said David in a low voice, pointing at Eugene. "That is between me and my future wife."

Blake felt herself wince as he said the words, her heart was hammering at a mile a minute right now.

Part of her definitely didn't want Eugene to leave, but part of her knew it would be simpler if he did….leaving David with this pent up rage which he hadn't yet taken out on her, could be dangerous. Especially in an environment like this.

But Blake wasn't quite sure how much more she could take. The physical violence was one thing but the way he ground her down was another.

She was mentally exhausted, distraught…tormented.

"Sorry to inform you, but I-I will not be going anywhere," said Eugene determinedly, giving a nod, his eyes drifting over to Blake.

And for a moment, her gaze met with his.
He knew…. of course he did. As much as people underestimated Eugene, he wasn't stupid…. not at all.

But David raised his hands in defeat, letting out a puff of air.

"Y'know what?" he said snappily. "Fine. I'll go. I'm not dealing with these fucking accusations from some mullet-wearing moron."

And with that, the blonde haired man, the man Blake loved more than anything else in this world… stalked out of the room, shoulders hunched, without even a backwards glance towards her..

He shoved past Eugene in the doorway, bumping his shoulder hard as he went. But Eugene barely batted an eyelid.

And Blake could do nothing but let out a steadying breath of air, closing her eyes as David's footsteps retreated down the corridor and through the large metal door at the far end of the hallway, letting it swing closed behind him with a clang.

As soon as she knew he was gone, she suddenly clutched at her chest and staggered backwards, sitting down onto the bed hurriedly.

She wasn't quite sure whether she was about to faint or vomit.

She could feel Eugene's eyes on her and it wasn't a second later that he took a small step into the room.

"Was he-" he began, after a moment or two.

But Blake shook her head, harder than she intended to.

"N-No," she lied quickly, her eyes in her lap, relief suddenly flooding over her… so glad that David was gone.

But she knew she was wrong to be feeling this way…

"Well it certainly seemed like-" began Eugene in a firm voice, but it was Blake's turn to snap at him now.

"Like nothing, ok!" she said in a shrill sort of voice. "It didn't seem like anything."

She felt Eugene's eyes burning into the side of her skull, but he was quiet for a long moment, before finally opening his mouth to speak once more.

"When all that happened back with Pete and Jessie, Rick was right to step in… even if at the time it didn't quite seem that way-" he commented.

But Blake looked up at him for the first time properly, shaking her head.

"That's not what's happening to me," she said cutting across him hurriedly, desperate for him to understand that this was not the same.

She had come in to Alexandria just after Pete had been killed, but she had heard about what he had done to his wife Jessie. How he had abused her… and hit her…

But this wasn't the same. Was it?
David wasn't like that. He loved her.

...Didn't he?

"I-I think I should go and get Negan," Eugene uttered, giving yet another slow nod and turning as if to leave.

But at his words, Blake instantly got to her feet, her eyes suddenly welling with tears.

She knew what the outcome would be if Negan ever found out. And she couldn't let that happen. Not to the man she so desperately loved.

"Please don't-" she said, her breath becoming shallow in her throat with panic.

But Eugene merely paused, looking back at her with wide eyes.

"I really think I should-" he murmured.

But Blake took a step towards him, interlocking her fingers before her suddenly, and holding them up to her chest….

...begging him…

"Please," she said with a sob in her throat, shaking her head desperately. "Please don't. I-I'm begging you right now, please don't tell Negan."

Eugene stared at her for a lengthy moment, his eyes meeting hers.

She was pleading with him…

So frightened…

So scared…

"Please," she managed in a final whisper, trembling as she spoke.

And it felt like an eternity.....before Eugene finally gave a shallow nod, one hand on the door.

"Ok..." he said looking at her sadly. "I won't."

And with that, he disappeared silently away, pulling the door shut behind him.

And it was then, and only then, did Blake collapse suddenly to her knees, clutching her face and letting out a heart-wrenching sob...bursting finally into tears....

....unable to contain them any longer....
Blake had slept badly, tossing and turning all night….unable to get David's words out of her head.

The names he had called her….there was obviously a reason for these. Maybe she was as useless as he suggested. And maybe she did look as shit as he accused her of looking.

Blake was blonde and tall, and as far as the male of the species went, she had never had any trouble finding guys. She had long legs and round hips and her breasts were average size.

She had of course, back in the 'real' world, always supplemented these things with tight jeans, high heels, push up bras.

She had loved make-up and was never seen out without at least two coats of mascara and some lip-gloss…but those days were now gone…

Perhaps she had let herself go slightly…perhaps she wasn't as pretty as she once was…perhaps David was right….the way Negan's wives went around with perfectly polished red-painted fingernails, short black dresses and high heels….they were of course more attractive than her…

But she had never realised just how bad she must look….if that was the kind of things what her own fiancé labelled her as being….

Blake had woken fairly early…just as the sun was coming up…

And being unable to drift off again she had dragged herself up and headed into the shower… spending about thirty minutes bathing under the cool water…cleaning every inch of her….cleansing herself of David's horrible words.

But every time she realised how much he hurt her…Blake felt guilty…so ashamed of herself for thinking these things.

He only criticised her because he loved her. Because he was trying to keep her safe.

That was the only reason…right?

Blake had hurried back to her room and gotten dressed in a fresh pair of indigo jeans, her brown boots and a pale blue blouse, which she tucked neatly into her pants.

She missed carrying a gun or knife and found, that as she slipped a large brown belt around her waist, it felt empty without the addition of a weapon.

She again pondered on Negan's wives….on whether any of them had needed to carry a gun….if all they did was lounge around painting their toenails and reading old magazines?

But she cursed herself.

These women were probably hurting as much as she was…as scared as she was….and whether they had ever carried a gun wasn't important…it was whether they now felt safe, that was.

It hadn't been long after that, that Blake, bored of her room had wandered the corridors, heading down towards the main dining area….hoping to once again catch a glimpse of David….try to reason with him….to apologise…
She had seen a couple of faces she recognised along the way down the winding hallways…a couple of them men who usually surrounded Negan, carrying guns…before she found herself once again in the large communal dining room.

Blake stared up at the far end of the room, expecting to see the usual large pots full of food…but today it was just a single female Saviour stood behind a table, dishing out small bags of crackers and pieces of watermelon to the small line of people.

Blake not really being fussed with eating…her stomach still doing backflips at the thought of her run in with David….instead turned, making to head back out into the small courtyard she had ventured into yesterday.

But before she could do so, she heard a sharp whistle from across the far side of the room…drawing her attention immediately.

She turned her heard towards the sound…her eyes falling on the tall and imposing figure of Negan…just standing there…Dwight at his side…staring over at her…his face fixed and unreadable.

Blake gave a sudden gulp, her breath catching slightly and her heart dropping.

Fuck.

Did he know?

Had Eugene told him?

Her heart pounded, going a hundred miles an hour.

But the feeling only lasted for a brief moment, as a smile suddenly crept across Negan's long features as he began to stroll towards her, swinging his barbed-wire covered baseball bat from his hand as he went.

"Well hey there, hot stuff," growled Negan, his tongue poking out from between his line of straight white teeth. "Don' you look just finger-lickin' fuckin' good this mornin'?"

Blake pursed her lips, catching her breath slightly, and approached him too, crossing the room towards him , folding her arms across herself a little defensively.

Negan looked her up and down, sucking on his lip and arching his back, taking her in.

"That supposed to be some sort of compliment?" she swiped, shooting him a bemused frown and coming to stop just a foot or two away from the tall, dark-haired Saviour.

But that space between them was obviously far too much for Negan, who took an extra step towards her, until he was a mere breath away from Blake, gazing down into her eyes.

At his closeness, Blake felt her breath momentarily catch in her throat…but this was for a completely different reason than before.

From here, she could see every laughter line that littered his face….smell his musky scent…that seemed to make her heart race just that little bit faster…

But she tutted, shifting her gaze from his.

"You mind invading my personal space just a little bit more?" she muttered in a sarcastic tone, pressing her hand to his leather-clad chest suddenly and giving him a gentle shove away from her.
But that only seemed to excite Negan more.

The tall, intimidating man bounced on the balls of his feet, giving a happy chuckle, staring down at her through dark eyelashes.

"Well, my oh my, aren't you a snappy lil' thing today," he commented flashing her his set of white teeth. "Not a mornin' person, huh?"

Blake pursed her lips, shooting him a look, but didn't answer…even when Negan leaned into her once again.

"Don' worry, 'cause neither am I," he muttered in a husky tone. "Maybe someday we can do each other a favour and keep each other up all night, and then sleep all day instead….get over all this pent up crankiness we've obviously both been feelin'."

Blake narrowed her eyes at him, gazing up into his long face as he continued.

"Although I am not adverse to a bit of mornin' fun-time, if you catch my drift…"

He waggled his eyebrows at her, which only caused Blake to give him another sighing shove away from her.

"What do you want, Negan?" she murmured in a unimpressed voice, removing her hand from his taut chest.

But the tall dark-haired Saviour just chuckled once again, staring down at her.

Right now Blake felt like he was seeing right through to her soul. His dark, chocolate eyes full of something she couldn't quite put her finger on.

Negan shrugged his curved shoulders easily.

"I just wondered if you wanted to take a walk with me, Doll-face," he said eyeing her. "Unless you have anything better you think we could be doing?"

Yet again, he stared at her goadingly, leaning in towards her once more, but this time, he reached his hand up….brushing a loose strand of caramel hair back over Blake's shoulder neatly.

At this, Blake didn't flinch…but she did instead shoot the Saviour a dark scowl….which he, of course, instantly caught.

He backed up suddenly, grinning and raising his hands in defeat.

"Alright, alright, I get it, Peaches," he murmured, laughing. "Personal space, an' all that jazz."

Blake shook her head.

"We walking then or what?" she said, just a little snappily. Unamused by his irritating manner this morning, and giving him a gesturing nod.

Negan's lips curved up into another sudden grin.

"Well yes, Ma'am," he said with an admiring smirk before falling into step with her, leading her across the large room…Dwight following behind them meekly.

It was odd that in Negan's presence this morning, Blake found herself slightly relived to be with him.
Despite how dangerous he was deemed to be, he had a way of making her feel oddly at ease….more than David did lately anyway.

A moment or two passed of comfortable silence, before Negan spoke again, leading her through a wide door and outside into a large, grey lot Blake hadn't been out in before.

The sky this morning was drizzly and grey, and Blake looked up, grimacing, as raindrop's fell down the back of her collar uncomfortably.

Out here were two or three trucks, currently being loaded up by several burly Saviours, barely any of whom did Blake recognise, bar Dwight, and the tall moustachioed man Simon.

"So a little birdy tells me you're good with a knife," said Negan after a second, suddenly stopping and turning to face Blake, lifting Lucille up and onto his shoulder casually.

Blake looked up at him, coming to a halt herself, and gazing around the lot.

"I'm here aren't I?" she said shaking her head and pursing her lips.

Blake would never consider herself 'good' with a knife, but she could handle herself as well as she needed to out there. And that was always important.

Negan ran his tongue over his white teeth for a moment before dragging his free hand down his long, bearded chin and letting out a faux-sigh.

"Well if I was to give you 'said'-knife," he muttered, his eyes lingering on her. "You gonna promise me you're not gonna slice me in two? Coz I don' think Lucille would appreciate that very much."

He readjusted his grip on his large and imposing baseball bat across his shoulder, raising his eyebrows intimidatingly.

But this only caused Blake to tilt her head, shooting him a frown. "Why would you give me a knife?" she said in a bemused tone, wrinkling her nose.

But Negan just smiled at her.

"Well how the fuck else are you gonna kill those dead fucks out on our run?" he said arching his back as he spoke, before shouting for Dwight, who immediately came running.

Blake stared up at this man….

He was so confusing to her….

"Run?" she said frowning.

Was he seriously letting her leave this place?

Negan held out his hand in Dwight's direction, and Blake could only watch, as the blonde man passed his leader a large knife in a brown-leather pouch.

"So, Doll-face" said Negan, turning back to her once again, his face looking slightly unreadable, his chocolate eyes locking with hers. "You think I can trust you?"

And with that, he held the knife out towards her.

Blake gave a sudden gulp, her gaze fixed on his.
Would she kill him?

Could she kill him?

She wasn't sure anymore…

Almost every instinct she had, told her to run…to get out of there….kill and Negan and get as far away as she could…

But there was one tiny part of her that didn't want to leave his side…not ever.

But Blake shook herself.

Could she kill him if the opportunity reared its head? She could try…for Rick…for Spencer….for Olivia, for Glen, and for Abraham…she would try….she had to try.

Blake slowly nodded, taking the blade from Negan's grasp.

Perhaps with Negan gone…all this would get easier….

Maybe she and David could leave…be together properly again….maybe they could go back to how it was long ago….before the hurtful comments and the bruises.

But she was torn as she stared up at the brown-eyed Saviour.

Did she actually want to kill him?

Negan finally pulled his dark-eyes away from hers and moved over to a nearby truck, just as two of his men (Dwight included) piled into the open back.

Negan pulled open the door to the cab and held it open.

"You're car-poolin' with me, Buttercup," he said lifting his chin and gesturing up towards the passenger's seat.

But Blake gave a bemused smirk, taking a step towards him.

Of course she would be riding shotgun to Negan. Why should have even doubted that for second? Even now with her ability to stab him at any second, the leader of the Saviours still had no fear…

And that, to her, was what made him what he was…..this indescribable, powerful man who had led his people so far to undeniable heights.

Blake chewed on her lip for the slightest of seconds before eyeing him carefully.

But Negan just gazed back at her lazily.

"You gonna make me wait all day, Doll?" he asked her cocking his head back in her direction smirking. "Don't make me ask twice."

The smirk was a gesture which Blake soon returned, rolling her eyes, before hopping straight up into the cab, placing one foot on the high pedestal leading up there.

She almost for a second expected him to grab her ass as she slid by him, but he obviously refrained. Which she was, of course, grateful for.
But that didn't stop her from shooting him a look as she took a seat and he shut the door on her gently, giving her a chuckle in return and dragging his hand down over his long face, sighing to himself.

Balke placed her knife carefully down beside her and gazed about.

Inside the truck, the cab itself was old and shabby and smelled of stale cigarette smoke….but Blake had smelled worse in this brave, new world….and this only served as a reminder as the truck her uncle used to drive when Blake was just a kid…all tan interior with ripped leather seats. It almost made her smile.

It was no more than a minute later, that Negan joined her, hoping up into the driver's seat of the truck with long legged strides.

He flashed her another grin as Blake leant against the passenger window with her elbow, running her fingers through her caramel blonde hair looking back at him.

He was just so strange to her…so, so different from David….and yet why did Blake's stomach seem to do an automatic backflip every time he looked at her…..or made a smart comment….or in fact did anything in her vicinity.

But Blake chocked this down to nerves. Or course she was nervous of this guy who spent his entire life intimidating others by carrying around a baseball bat he used to bludgeon innocent people to death with.

"So where are we going?" she said, as Negan switched on the engine.

The truck managed to tick over twice before finally bursting into life.

The dark-haired Saviour patted the wheel and tossed Lucille down onto the seat in between them.

"A couple of my men found a store about thirty miles north of here, with what they think could contain a nice little haul. So I just thought we could go out and take a look," Negan uttered as he stepped on the gas slowly and drove the truck from the lot and over towards the now-open gate at the far end of the fence. "Stretch our legs a bit."

Blake worried at her lips with her teeth, looking over at him.

"So why invite me?" she said tilting her head slightly. "You wouldn't let me come with you yesterday."

But Negan just smiled. "Well today is a brand new day, Doll-face," he uttered in a husky tone

But that didn't reveal Negan's MO to Blake.

Why exactly had he changed his mind? She didn't doubt he had something up his sleeve.

She narrowed her eyes in his direction, thinking for a moment.

"So do you invite your wives on runs too?" she asked a little scathingly as they exited the looming back gates of The Sanctuary. "Or am I supposed to feel special?"

But Negan didn't looked back at her, he merely gave a hearty laugh, his eyes on the road ahead.

"You gettin' jealous, Peaches?" he said in a bemused tone. "Because like I said, there is always an open spot for you, if you've changed you mind."
But Blake scoffed, staring out of the window beside her, feeling her face suddenly reddening— for no apparent reason.

"Well, I have David…so…." she murmured in a forced tone, trailing off and giving another pained gulp.

And she was right. She did have David. He was everything to her.

But even so….after last night, it pained her to even utter his name.

"Oh that's right," Negan scoffed. "David, David, David..."

Blake paled suddenly, for Negan's tone had become almost cold at the mention of her fiancé.

She prayed that Eugene had kept his word.

"Well ol' Davey-boy might be your knight in shinin' fuckin' armour, Doll," he remarked, his long fingers sliding their way down the steering wheel as he turned the corner. "But don't think I haven't noticed you ain't wearing a pretty little engagement ring on your finger, as a fuckin' queen like you should be."

At this, Blake almost instantly gulped, her eyes moving down to her own hands suddenly.

It had been four long years since David had proposed to Blake.

He had gone to Blake's Mom to ask permission…and her Mom, unbeknownst to Balke had given him Blake's Grandma's ring to use, passed down from her own Mom long ago. And when he had got down on one knee at dinner in the nice part of town one raining night in April, Blake had been over the moon the moment she had clapped eyes on it. Recognising it instantly.

It had fitted her perfectly and Blake had never felt so utterly loved.

But times had been hard for David…and one day, not long after they had gotten engaged, David had offered to get the ring cleaned for Blake while she was at work…but when she had come home later that night, he had told her he had instead pawned the ring to get some cash for a bachelor party he needed to go to in Cancun…..

But of course, he had insisted he would get it back for her, he had promised….as soon as the cheque from his new sculptural piece came through he would buy it back from the pawn shop…no harm done…..

…..but that day….that day never seemed to come…..with excuse after excuse later….

And by the time the world had gone to hell…Blake knew that the ring was probably long gone…

She gulped as she thought about it…her other hand reaching for her ring finger gently.

"I uh…I lost it," she lied…feeling hurt and defensive about the subject.

It was not something Blake liked to dwell over…and even now, she felt herself getting irritable at Negan's incessant nosiness.

"What about your wives, huh?" she said in a hurt tone. "You give all of them diamonds?"

But Negan didn't reply.
In fact, he didn't say another word for a good ten minutes, as the rain began to beat down onto the windscreen...heavy and unrelenting...

The sky had darkened and even through the rain, Blake could see black storm clouds forming overhead.

But after years out there...out in the open with little to no shelter...Blake didn't mind a bit of rain.

She remembered back to the times when she would complain to Laura, her colleague, about having to walk from the bus stop to the office-building in the rain, in case her high heels got ruined.

Right now she would long for far-off worries such as that...and how silly and trivial they all now seemed.

Life was just not the same any more. She wasn't the same person.

None of them were.

"You enjoy your pizza last night?" asked Negan suddenly after ten long minutes had passed, breaking Blake from her thoughts.

Blake looked over at him, shaking herself, before staring down into her lap.

"Yeah..." she lied, brushing imaginary fluff from her pants. "...it was great."

She had, in fact, only managed a bite or two before David's outburst had sent the whole thing flying across the room and onto the wall and floor.

Blake had been forced to bin most of it, crying on the floor in heap, cleaning the wall as best as she could through her tears.

But Negan seemed satisfied enough with this answer.

But she had in fact never known him to be so quiet.

The silence however, was not an uncomfortable one....which relieved Blake immensely.

Although the silence did give her more time to dwell on David and what had happened...the painful thought alone, making her nervous.

"Well like I said," muttered Negan glancing her way for a slight second. "Whatever you want...you can have, buttercup. You're a queen. And royalty like you deserves whatever she wants...whenever she fuckin' wants it."

This monologue of Negan's, only served to make Blake gulp....and looked over at Negan sadly. Wishing she could tell him exactly what happened. Just wanting someone to talk to.

But Blake didn't get a chance, for with that, Negan leant across and pushed a small cassette into a black tape player in the centre of the truck's console, before Blake could utter a reply.

Suddenly an upbeat song started playing over the stereo. A happy tune that Blake had never heard before. With lyrics talking about an 'easy street'.

Negan turned up the volume, looking over at her and revealing his line of straight, white teeth in a
"My favourite song," he commented with a wide grin, before turning back to the road.

Blake stared at him for a long moment…long after he had looked away, frowning…

….before finally, before she could stop herself letting out a small laugh….and shaking her head….before finally turning back to the rainy track ahead of them…

…her fingers drumming along the beat of the song, against the leather-clad knife at her side...
The run

The journey had been an uneventful one…and with the combination of rain hammering down onto the truck and Negan's terrible taste in music playing loudly from the car stereo…they was little-to-no conversation between the pair…until they finally found themselves at their destination around mid-afternoon.

Negan had used his radio a couple of times. Checking in with the men in the other truck, as well as Dwight in the back. But the equipment just seemed crackly and pretty intermittent out here in the middle of nowhere.

Blake stared out of the window, as Negan pulled the truck to a halt a little way away from a dark and looming building up ahead.

It looked like some sort of out of town convenience store. Blake knew that most of the ones she had encountered along the way had all been looted of food and medicine long ago…but the windows and doors of this one, looked surprisingly intact…which was good for them, she supposed.

But she knew that that would mean the place had not yet been cleared of walkers which was a dangerous thing. Especially out here where the rain and dull light would cause them to be privy to bad visibility and hearing.

"Well hot-diggity-dog," Negan muttered, peering up at the store and switching off the engine. "Would you look at that fuckin' beauty."

Blake rolled her eyes, shoving the door beside her open and stepping out of the truck into the rain.

She looked around, pulling her knife from her belt, as a second later she was joined by Dwight, Simon, five other men and one woman, all carrying weapons of varying sizes.

They all waited, shifting their weight from foot-to-foot, until a moment later when Negan joined them, strolling lazily around the truck, Lucille resting across his right shoulder.

"Alright boys," he said in a loud voice through the falling rain, loud enough to cause a walker ambling along nearby, to let out a strangled cry of hunger, and begin limping slowly towards them.

But none of them batted an eyelid at this threat yet.

"Now there are some things on that list of mine, that none of those asshole camps that were takin' from, have been able to give me yet," he continued in a commanding tone. "So let's get in there and see what treasure we can dig up. We clear?"

There came a murmur of 'Yes Negan", as the Saviours, all bar Negan himself and Simon, disappeared off, moving this way and that, weapons raised, heading towards the large building.

The rain was coming down hard now, but despite Blake already feeling soaked through and freezing cold she gritted her teeth, raising her head and bringing herself up to her full height, looking over Negan as he spoke.

"And Peaches," finished the tall leader of the Saviours. "You can come with me an' Si here. If you think you can handle yourself?"

Blake pursed her lips, but didn't say a word, as the approaching walker behind her gave a strangled
cry, reaching its arms out towards her and baring its teeth.

She turned easily around and impaled the walker through the skull with her long blade.

"I'm good," she uttered, as the body dropped to the ground in a heap before her and she span back around, glancing up into Negan's chocolate eyes.

He offered her an impressed look, and pressed a hand to her back leading her forwards over towards the building.

"Can I just say..." uttered Negan into her ear leaning in towards her. "...that you look hot. as hell using that knife. I mean, Jesus Christ, Doll-face, do not let me get on the wrong side of you!"

Blake smirked up at him.

"Uh, newsflash," she uttered in an incredulous voice. "You already are on the wrong side of me, idiot."

But Negan's lips twitched up into a goofy grin.

"Really?" he replied. "Cause I'm starting to think that soft spot I've got for you, is most definitely mutual, Peaches."

But Blake could only roll her eyes, as the three of them approached the front of the large building.

They had barely reached the door when it was suddenly shoved open from the inside by one of Negan's men.

"Looks like it was already pretty looted a long time ago, boss," uttered the Saviour with dark shaved hair, holding the glass door open wide enough for them to pass through. "But there's a warehouse out back, but the place is riddled with dead."

"That don't mean it ain't a viable option," said Negan as he stepped inside the store gazing about, before staring back at the Saviour poignantly. "Get to it."

The man gave an uneasy gulp and run hurriedly away.

Blake looked around.

The store was large, with high shelves now empty and littered with trash. There were a few broken cans of dog food lying here and there, but no food, so to speak, that Blake could see.

She walked a little ahead, passing a large luminous fifty percent off sign, hanging from the ceiling by just one small cable. But as Blake walked down one of the long aisles, she didn't hear a walker appear from out of nowhere lurching suddenly towards her...

Blake backed up suddenly, her heart pounding in fright.

But as she staggered backwards, she toppled into a stack of animal bedding, losing her footing....

She quickly attempted to scrabble to her feet once again, just as the decaying figure of a man, snapped at her with its green, broken teeth...too close for comfort.... it's face nearing her arm perilously....

Blake panicked, her blood running cold...
But before she could push the walker aside or call for help…. the creature was suddenly knocked aside by a blow to the head, which sent it's, now limp body, flying down the aisle…sliding across the floor.

And Blake could only look up, to see Negan standing there, smirking.

A bloody Lucille held tightly within his grasp.

"You sure you can handle this, buttercup?" Negan said in a teasing voice.

But Blake scoffed grumpily.

"It caught me off-guard is all," she muttered brushing herself down and standing up straight, pushing past Negan and bumping his leather-clad shoulder as she went.

She still had that knife in her hand, and knew that she could just turn around and use it on him if she wanted.

But he had just saved her….

Maybe she could keep him around…for now, at least…

A second later, Negan fell into step beside her, as Simon went ahead, pointing his gun this way and that as they walked, keeping an eye out for more dead.

Blake looked around as they passed down a second aisle, with a few bottles of shampoo, and various tubes of mascara and chapstick sitting on the shelves.

Blake paused momentarily, before grabbing a shiny tube of mascara and a couple of sticks of glossy chapstick, and sticking them into her back pocket hurriedly, hoping Negan wouldn't catch this.

This was all down to what David had said to her last night. If Blake had just made more of an effort with her appearance, maybe her fiancé wouldn't be so hostile towards her. Maybe all his anger…his resentment…it was all down to her.

But Negan, as always, was quicker than she gave him credit for.

"Now you know, if you were to become one of my wives," he began, as Blake felt herself pre-emptively rolling her eyes at his forthcoming comment. "You wouldn't have to worry about scavenging for shit like that. You'd be sittin' pretty up in that suite back at the Sanctuary, applying yet another coat of lipstick and spritzin' yourself with perfume, ready for me to enjoy you, when I got home."

"Wow," uttered Blake in a sarcastic tone. "Not even one date down, and you're straight onto the proposal! Well don't I just feel swept off my feet?"

But Negan just grinned over at her, showing off his line of white teeth.

"You know…when you use that tone with me," began Negan, biting his lip longingly. "I'm not quite sure if you're about to screw my brains out, or, hit me upside the head with a blunt object. But either way, I am surprisingly into it!"

He leaned back, giving a chuckle., as Blake smirked once again, rolling her eyes and tutting.

But it was only a moment later, before any of them had time to utter another word, that five or so walkers appeared around the corner, suddenly spotting Simon, Negan and Blake, and turning
towards them slowly.

"I got these two, boss," uttered Simon, pulling a large axe from his belt, and stepping forwards, taking the two loping dead on the left.

Negan gave a sigh, gripping Lucille easily in his hand and heading for the two walkers in the middle.

"You got ol' string bean, over there, Peaches?" he shot back at Blake, nodding over towards a thin looking dead-head in a long blue tabard, which was loosely strung over his decomposing body.

But Blake didn't need to give an answer, strutting forwards and taking the walker down with a single knife-blow to the skull.

She turned, watching as Negan swiped Lucille across the heads of his own couple of dead, giving a hearty yell as he did so.

Blake grinned, raising an eyebrow in his direction, as all five of the walkers were soon floored.

Blake bit her lip, strutting over towards him.

"You might wanna rein it in a bit, baby," she muttered to him in a teasing whisper, leaning in towards the tall, dark-haired Saviour, wrinkling her nose, and patting his shoulder as she slid by. "Coz' it looks like you're having waaaay too much fun."

Negan gave an immediate chuckle, watching her go, his twinkling chocolate eyes looking her up and down yearningly.

But to her surprise, he merely gave an impressed sort of wolf-whistle in her direction, but didn't utter a word in reply.

Blake followed the silent figure of Simon down towards the end of the store and out through a small door at the rear.

This led into a darkened warehouse, where here, large pallets full of what looked like saran wrap were sat. With covered groceries all piled up throughout it.

The Saviours were had already manged to get the large back entrance open and had backed up one of the trucks onto it, loading what they could fit onto the large vehicle easily.

"We got cereal, canned stuff and some toilet paper," said Dwight to Negan, as the tall leader of the Saviours appeared in the room behind Blake, walker-blood dripping from the end of Lucille.

"Well then, load it up," said Negan a little uninterestedly, peering down at the baseball bat in his hand before snatching up a stale, and long abandoned, bottle of water from the top of one of the pallets, and pouring it over his weapon, watching as the watery-looking blood pooled onto the floor at his feet.

Simon gave a sudden clap and stepped forwards, hurrying his men along, as Negan strolled about overlooking his people as they worked.

Blake looked this way and that, moving around one of the pallets that contained yet more dry dog-food.

She was of no use here...part of her wondering why she was even brought here in the first place.

But before she had time to dwell on that thought, she suddenly noticed a small open door at the far
end of the shadowy warehouse.

"Hey, anyone taken a look in here?" she called back to the Saviours from around the pallet. But none of them acknowledged her, perhaps not even hearing her at all.

Blake turned back to the open door, peering into the shadowy corridor beyond.

It looked like a row of offices and small rooms….but Blake had scavenged enough in her time to know to never leave any stone unturned.

She raised her knife to her shoulder, walking slowly and silently into the long, dark corridor.

There were no windows here and the whole place was shrouded in an unnerving gloom, that put Blake on edge.

She moved past a darkened office and tried the door.

It was locked.

But by the looks of it, there were still four more doors to go…as well as a red looming door up ahead, which looked like it led outside.

She approached the second door, looking back out in the direction of the warehouse...the main door was still open, shining a bright afternoon light through, into the otherwise, gloomy corridor.

She worried at her lip for a second, turning back to the task at hand….and slowly turning the handle on the second door…

But suddenly, before she could do anything else, there came a sudden loud slam, causing Blake to jump in fright, letting go of the door, as the entire corridor was plunged into darkness.

She looked up, to see that the door leading back into the warehouse was now shut….

…but before she could head back in that direction, there came a sudden loud moaning, and from the office door she had just opened…

… out of the darkness…

….four walkers suddenly emerged.

Blake staggered back in fright as they lunged for her, cutting off the path leading back towards the warehouse.

She paled suddenly…for she knew that she was well and truly trapped….  

….with no way out…

"Fuck."
Blake's heart thudded in her chest as she scrambled backwards, knife raised.

Through the gloom she could just make out the five walkers, advancing on her hurriedly down the narrow corridor…in between her and the way out.

Adrenaline pumping through her veins, she jabbed at the nearest figure.

But it was quicker than she had thought, and staggered towards her, arms raised.

Blake jumped backwards, not wanting to try a door to another room, in case more walkers emerged.

Fuck…what was she going to do?

She felt herself beginning to panic now.

Her heart was pounding a drumbeat inside of her ribcage, her breaths now coming quick and ragged inside her chest.

She had been in some sticky situations before now…but nothing like this.

There had always been a way out. Always.

A female walker leered over at her, snapping its wide-jaws terrifyingly.

But Blake gave her a shove, suddenly sending her, and another walker, sprawling backwards like bowling pins.

But this was nowhere near over yet.

She felt frightened. More frightened than she had done in a long, long time…here in the dark. Alone.

Blake took a hurried step back, as another of the dead launched itself at her, its fingers trying to tear at her face….. but Blake sent her blade hurriedly flying through its skull.

Although that was just a small win, as the other three walkers snarled and groaned at her, their rotten hands snatching at her wildly, as she quickly tried to retract the blade.

One of the dead figures bit at her, missing her hand by mere inches…

She felt scared. Really scared. Trapped like a rabbit in the headlights.

She could barely see the walkers to fight them off, here in the darkness. So her only chance of survival was escape.

Blake's eye darted this way and that, trying as hard as she could to figure out a way of getting out…but it was impossible….

"Help!" she cried loudly, hoping the Saviours would hear her cries. "HELP, PLEASE!"

But her shouts only caused to provoke the walkers more….as they moaned ever-louder, advancing on her with snapping teeth….

But there was nowhere for Blake to go….
Apart from the door that led back out to the warehouse. She was trapped….right?

But Blake breathed hard.

The red door.

She spun around, running as fast as she could towards the opposite end of the corridor…to where the red door stood….

Just beneath it, she could see a small crack of pale light streaming through.

The door led to the outside. It had to.

This was it….this was her chance to escape!

She moved over to it quickly….turning the handle …hearing the dead shifting ever closer….

But the door, to Blake's utter dismay, was shut fast.

"No, no, no, no.." she cried, with desperate crying breaths, as tears began to slip from her eyes before she could stop them. She knew that this now might be the end. "Please, please…..no."

She pushed as hard as she could, shoving her shoulder against the door, a sob inside her chest…but it wouldn't budge.

She turned to see the walkers just a couple of feet away.

This was it.

She could try and attack one of them, but in the low light and small-spaced corridor, there was little chance of her survival.

This was the end for her.

Blake let out an uncontrollable sob, clutching at her mouth with one shaking hand, raising her knife with the other…. 

So, so frightened….leaning back against the door…with no way out….

But as she winced, taking in a sharp breath, waiting for death….she, all of a sudden, found herself toppling backwards into the pale bright light….as rain and gunshots fell suddenly all around her.

She hit the asphalt beneath her hard, landing on her ass.

Blake, shaking from top to bottom, looked up, bracing herself, to see Negan and his eight Saviours standing there, three of them shooting at the dead….who each collapsed to the ground before they could make a grab for her.

She had never felt anything like this in her life….she was shaking like a leaf…her face wet through a combination of tears and the constant falling rain, which was currently soaking through her blue shirt and indigo jeans.

She looked back at the walkers…lying there, no longer a threat to her anymore.

But the terrifying fear was still there.
The panic.
The shellshock.

But as she breathed hard, she felt a sudden figure come up beside her…

….and Blake glanced up, to see the tall and rain-soaked Negan standing there, a smirk lingering across his smug features.

He reached out a hand towards her.

"I'm impressed," he uttered. "Although I thought you might have taken out a couple more of those sorry fucks, before we rescued you..."

Blake sat there a moment on the cold wet ground, her chest rising and falling rapidly just staring up at him.

She didn't understand.

"Sorry we had to shut you in like that, Doll-face," murmured the Saviour easily. "But you did good."

But at this…at his comment, Blake's heart seemed to stop.

What had he just said?

Blake tensed her fist around the knife in her hand.

"What?" she managed to mutter in a deadly tone.

But Negan just arched his back lazily, his hand still held out towards her.

"Doll," he muttered with a sorry sort of smile, shaking his head. "I just needed to prove to you, that you are a queen that don't need help from any fucking son-of-a-bitch here. An' I mean, I was sorta right. Apart from right at the end, of course."

But Blake's eyes blackened, as she scrambled to her feet, not bothering to take his hand.

She was seething, her chest heaving with every breath she took.

She glared back at Negan, pointing at him with her free hand, and throwing her knife to the ground.

"You almost just got me killed just to prove a fucking point?!" she said in a high-pitched, incredulous voice. "You're an asshole! A fucking asshole!"

She could feel her blood boiling, tears still spilling their way down her cheeks, masked by the falling rain.

How could he do this to her? Shut her in like that? Almost get her killed, torn to shreds by walkers.

But Negan took a step towards her, his face suddenly becoming dark and unreadable.

He now looked like the dangerous man she had heard about so often.

Negan bared his teeth, pointing back at her intimidatingly.

"An asshole rying to prove a fuckin' point that you don' fuckin' need a man that treats you like utter fuckin' shit, sweetheart!" he yelled back at her, his face grim.
Blake suddenly paled, stepping back slightly.

Did Negan know about David?

Blake's heart pounded within her ribcage.....as rain continued to fall all around them, deafeningly loudly.

"I have told you from the fuckin' beginning, Doll, that you are worth more than that, an' hell, you have survived out there, better than half these sorry sons-of-bitches would have," Negan uttered in a low growl pointing at his men, but keeping his dark eyes locked on Blake's green ones. "So don't you start givin' me your piece-of-shit excuses now, Doll-face. You're a fuckin' Queen, and you gotta remember that, when you're defending that spineless fuckin' asshole back there-"

But Blake was angry.

What the hell did Negan know about anything?

She wasn't taking this from him, standing here in the middle of nowhere surrounded by his men. David wasn't spineless.

He loved her.

And Blake knew what she felt in return. What she had to feel.

"I love him," she uttered in a firm and steady voice through the rain, shaking her head and staring back at Negan angrily.

But Negan looked equally as angry as Blake felt, dragging a hand down his face irritably at her words for a brief moment, before pointing Lucille at her face.

"You fuckin' love that prick, Peaches, when all he does is treat you like shit. I mean, hell, the first time I saw you he was beatin' you upside the pretty face in front of all my men," Negan began, sounding furious. "And don't you dare fuckin' even begin to lie to me about where you got those fuckin' bruises."

Negan suddenly grabbed Blake's forearm tightly....with his free hand....but unlike David's grip there a few days ago.....his hold on her was strong but not painful....his fingers not digging into her skin like her fiancé's had.

"I ain't dumb, darlin'. I can fuckin see you've been grinded down by that stupid piece of utter shit, and made to feel like you ain't worth nothin'. But in your eyes that goddamn douchebag can do no fuckin' wrong."

Blake felt herself trembling within Negan's grasp, her chest rising and falling hard, as the rain fell around both of them.

She looked up in Negan's chocolate eyes that were full of anger and frustration.

"That's why I fuckin' went ahead and separated you from your asshole boyfriend who sold you the fuck out, for his own room and his chance to get a rub-down by Frankie each night," Negan finished, the corners of his mouth turned downwards. "And that's why I brought you out here and pushed you to your fuckin limits, Doll-face. 'Cause I know you are more than that."

But Blake tore her eyes from Negan's, looking down at his hand holding her arm tightly...
"He's my fiancé…" was all she could manage to utter in reply, her shoulders slumped dejectedly. All Negan had said was true...she knew that...as tears slipped from her eyes, falling onto the rain sodden asphalt below.

But the tall, dark-haired man in front of her, tensed his jaw, his chocolate eyes roving across her features.

"Yeah, so you keep fuckin' sayin', sweetheart," said Negan with a sigh, finally letting go of her arm and placing his hand over his tired eyes for a brief moment. "But, hell, darlin'. I aint feelin' much fucking love in this goddamn relationship."

Blake peered up at him...this man she barely knew...breathing hard...but could not bring herself to say another word.....

For she knew that he could read her like a book.

But did he really know the true extent of David's actions?....His threats...his cruel words....

Or was this only guesswork? Negan joining up the pieces...

He didn't know about the months of mental and physical abuse back at Alexandria....or even the fact that David had come and seen her the other night....

But despite this, Blake felt something she had not felt in a long time.....and that was safe.

Standing here with the tall dark-haired leader of the Saviours...

This dangerous man.

Negan stared back at Blake....his eyes full of something words just weren't enough to say right now....but Blake needed him to say it....

But before she had any more time to dwell, the moment was gone....and Negan shouted back to his men through the pouring rain.

"Alright," he said arching his lean figure as he spoke. "Take the stuff and get back to base in the loaded up truck."

But he ran his tongue over his teeth, his eyes returning to hers, surveying Blake solidly, as rain fell onto his leather-clad shoulders.

"Me and Peaches here are goin' for a drive."

Blake blinked up at him through wet eyelashes, letting out an unsteady breath and giving a gulp.

Where was he intending to take her?

But she knew her questions would likely soon be answered, as Negan nodded over toward the truck they had come here in, as the other Saviours all loped off towards the other bigger vehicle.

For moment she didn't move, rooted to the spot in the ever-falling downpour, her green eyes flickering over to the truck she had arrived here in just an hour or two ago.

But Negan merely leaned in towards her, his lips brushing her caramel hair as he spoke, his hand gripping her upper arm lightly.
"Get in, Doll," he muttered commandingly.

And Blake, for once, did as she was told.
A cold and rainy night

egan and Blake drove along the back roads….alone and silent, as the rain softened a little…the sky growing ever darker, as the night began to draw in.

The had been driving for at least forty minutes…seemingly going nowhere…both of them still obviously seething a little from their argument, just a little while ago.

Blake was sat on the far passengers seat, the furthest she could get from Negan, staring out of the window beside her, at nothing but the overcast woods that lined the road.

She felt sad…

Broken and hurt.

She knew all the stuff that Negan had said was true, and that he had only done all that because he was trying to help her. But that still didn't stop it hurting.

But Blake's tears had long dried now….feeling herself calming a little.

Although she was soaked trough to the skin still….the rain having drenched her from top to bottom….as it had done Negan.

She chanced a glance over at the bearded Saviour….as silent as ever.

In fact this was the longest they had gone without sniping at one another. Which Blake would have normally taken as a victory. But not now.

She turned back to the window, but as she did so, she felt the truck slowing…

Blake gazed up, watching as the vehicle ground to halt in the middle of the large dark road, that stretched out far ahead of them.

The pitter-patter of tiny droplets of rain on the windshield being the only sound they could hear.

Negan turned off the engine, and in-turn, the heaters that had been warming Blake's cold wet form up, even just a little.

But it was a long moment or two before he finally uttered anything, leaning back in his seat.

"I hope you realise," uttered the dark-haired Saviour giving a small, silent sigh. "…that you are the only person I let talk to me like you just did back there, Peaches."

That name…that name he used on her all the time.

The name that told her everything was ok.

She had abandoned the knife back at the outside of the store…not bothering to pick it up. For she didn't want to use it again. Not on Negan. Not now….after everything.

But Blake remained silent, her eyes falling down into her lap. She couldn't look at him right now.

Negan gave another sudden, more audible, sigh, running his hand down his stubbly face.
"Look, I know I acted like an asshole," he said, placing his tongue to his back upper molars tiredly. "But in the fuckin' stupidest way possible, I was only tryin' to make you see that you are more than just ol' Davey boy's fuckin fi-an-cée."

Leaning up against the driver's window beside him with his elbow, Negan turned to face her. His gaze serious.

"Look, I know I'm not innocent. An' hell I've done some things I ain't proud of, to get where I am today-"

At this, Blake scoffed, leaning against her own passenger door, mirroring his stance and staring over at him, raising her eyebrow in an unimpressed fashion.

But Negan ignored her, continuing.

"-an if he's what you want…what you really want…then I ain't gonna argue," he said in a growling voice. "But I swear to god. If he, or anyone else, lays another fuckin' finger on you, then there will be hell to pay. We clear on that princess?"

Blake eyed him for a second.

"You ain't mine," Negan muttered, his eyes suddenly flickering over, out onto the raindrop covered windshield. "But that soft spot I got for you ain't goin' away any time soon. An if your precious Fi-an-ce wanted you both to come an' live with us, then he is gonna have to abide by my rules."

There it was. As simple as that.

Blake stared up at Negan for a long moment….a feeling of relief washing over her…letting a small breath escape her lungs…

She felt grateful.

She managed a nod, tugging at her lips with her teeth for a long second, before-

"Thanks," she finally uttered, her eyes drifting too, to the raindrops, slipping down the dark glass ahead of them.

Night had passed over their heads, and outside the sky was now dark and ominous out there.

"Holy shit, buttercup," said Negan giving a sudden chuckle, his fingertips reaching his lips. "Did you actually just thank me for something?"

Blake gave a smile, her eyes flitting over to him.

"You must have been hearing things," she muttered back, catching his gaze momentarily.

And for the slightest of seconds, Blake felt her breath catch in her throat…her heart pounding.

But she pushed these feelings hurriedly away…

What was wrong with her tonight?

She looked back down to her knees and rubbed at them.

Her jeans were sodden and her skin beneath her clothes was now freezing cold.
She let out a small, involuntary shiver, as Negan sighed beside her, patting his hands on the steering wheel.

"Alright then," he said with a nod. "Air fucking cleared. Maybe we can get back before the rain comes in again."

Blake looked at him.

Was that it? Was that why he had really brought her all the way out here?

Blake wasn’t too familiar with the roads in this area, but she knew that this was still miles out of the way from where they had just come.

Negan grasped the keys and turned on the engine.

But it gave a cough and a splutter, but refused to turn over.

"Come on you, piece of utter shit," he said, bashing his fist against the steering wheel and trying again, as Blake frowned over at him bemusedly.

But the vehicle, to their dismay, would not start.

"We should have taken the other truck," she said in a mocking sigh, wrinkling her nose, knowing what Negan's reaction would be.

And, as expected, he shot her a faux-warning look in return. "Yeah, yeah, hindsight is a goddamn wonderful thing."

Blake bit her lip.

"So is a working truck," she replied goadingly.

And Blake had to withhold a laugh, as it was Negan's turn to now roll his eyes, giving a gruff tut.

He bashed on the steering wheel once again as the engine gave another loud splutter and died completely, before suddenly snatching up his radio from the dashboard.

"Simon? You read me?" he uttered in a low voice, his finger on the button.

But there came only static.

"Arat?" he tried again, holding the device up…

But the loud static just hovered there for a long moment before falling silent once again.

Negan looked annoyed, flinging the radio down once more onto the dashboard and giving a huff.

Blake looked at him.

It was a rare sight to see Negan like this…so at a loss…with things so out of his control.

But Blake liked that…she gave a smile.

"So we're stuck?" she said in a incredulous voice.

Negan slowly licked his lips and looked back at her.
And upon seeing her grin, his lips curved up into one to match.

He puffed out his chest, taking in a long breath. "Looks like it, Doll-face," he muttered matter-of-factly in that drawl of his. "Might as well try and get comfy for the night."

But Blake gave a frown.
"Here?" she said looking at the inside of the small cab and out at the dark, rain-sodden windows beyond.

"Unless you've got a better idea?" said Negan shifting back in his seat and surveying her from across the way.

Blake looked about. It was freezing in here, and the only sort of supplies they had with them, was a radio, a bottle of water and Lucille.

With the heaters now also off, Blake knew it wouldn't take long for temperatures to drop dramatically. And that was something she just could not afford in her cold and wet state.

She gave another shiver, rubbing at her arms, trying to act as nonchalant as possible.

But Negan was always quicker that she expected him to be, and raised an eyebrow up towards her.

"You cold, Peaches?" he asked her.

But Blake shot him a cool look.

"I'm fine," she lied, folding her arms across her chest nonchalantly.

But this only caused Negan to smirk and shrug, poking out his tongue between his line of white teeth.

"Y'know," he began after a brief moment or two of silence, as he placed one hand on the steering wheel. "I was gonna take you back to that camp of yours tonight. Back to Rick and those other pricks back in 'Pleasant-as-shit-sville'."

At his words, Blake looked up at him.

She felt her heart pound, but for a different reason now.

"An' I still can...if that's what you want?" Negan offered, something about his tone softer than before. A hint of something human within him.

Blake's lips parted as she looked over at him. His face fixed, serious and unreadable.

Blake could go home. Back to her people. The people she cared about…

But was that what she wanted? What she really wanted?

It wasn't just her fiancé's presence back at the Sanctuary that was making her feel this way…oh no…there was certainly something else right now. But that something, she just couldn't quite seem to put her finger on just yet.

Her heart thudded inside her ribcage…and she pushed a small shallow, shaky breath from her lungs….her eyes locking finally with Negan's…. 
"No," she said in what was not much more than a whisper.

And that was all she needed to say, as Negan let out a slow, understanding nod, his gaze never leaving hers.

She had never expected this. Not from him.

After all this…

After everything…

…he had given her a chance to leave….

"This really is like Beauty and the Beast," she said a after a long second, breaking the tension slightly, her face falling into an amused sort of smile and letting a small, breathless laugh escape her lips. "You gonna offer me a magic mirror too?"

She raised an eyebrow up at him teasingly, unable to stop herself.

But Negan gave a chuckle in return.

"No. But I can always get Dr Smarty Pants to try and knock you one up, if that's something you think you'd want," he swiped back with that same old Negan cockiness that merely made Blake roll her eyes and shake her head.

The pair were silent for a long moment, Blake watching as her breath before her, turned to steam in the cold.

She gave another shiver…rubbing at her knees trying to warm herself as best she could, as rain fell against the window beside her.

The temperature had fallen in the minutes they had been chatting, and with the engine off, the truck had started to become a hell of a lot colder.

Blake trembled slightly, jiggling her knee, trying to warm herself…

Negan looked over towards her, smirking.

"Peaches, now I know that you're definitely cold now," he said giving a her a told-you-so look, which made Blake grit her teeth in annoyance.

"I'm fine," she lied once again.

But Negan just smiled that irritating smile of his…all smug……flashing his straight white teeth at her.

And with that, he suddenly lifted his right arm up and raised both his eyebrows in her direction.

Blake pursed her lips, frowning.

She knew what he was doing…

But right now Blake found herself so terribly cold…it was almost unbearable.

Her clothes and hair were soaking wet and clinging to her trembling form.

She gritted her teeth, staring over at him.
Was she really going to do this?!

God, had she pictured this just a few days ago while having dinner with Tara and Rosita back at Alexandria, she'd have thought she was going crazy. And yet here she was about to share her warmth with the head of the Saviours himself.

She tutted, lowering her eyes suddenly to the space in between them, and shot Negan a look.

"Well you gonna move that thing then?" she muttered a little defensively, her arms still folded across herself.

But Negan, obviously never expecting her to agree to this, grinned, his chocolate eyes twinkling.

"Now, now, Doll-face," said Negan in a taunting voice, lifting his chin slightly and gazing at Blake devilishly. "That thing, is Lucille. And she deserves some respect…"

But Blake titled her head slightly, offering him an unimpressed look.

"Really?" she said with a small sigh, knowing for fact he was messing with her.

God, he annoyed her so much!

Negan gave a chuckle, pulling on his bottom lip with his teeth before picking up Lucille, and dropping her down to his other side, neatly.

"There," he said promptly, his eyes meeting with hers again…with something in them that Blake didn't want to read too much into right now.

She was doing this because she was cold, and there was no other reasoning behind it.

And so, with faux-reluctance, Blake slowly shifted across the wide tan leather seat, coming to sit beside the tall, bearded man, as he settled his arm around her shoulders.

Instantly, his warmth hit her…along with his heady musky scent…which made her breath catch slightly in her throat.

Negan shifted slightly in his seat, pressing himself into her and pulling her close.

"Now this ain't so bad, is it?" he suddenly uttered in a husky voice, his lips hovering just a breath away from her neck, which caused another kind of warmth to spread its way inside of her.

Blake gave a gulp, but she wasn't about to show that he was getting to her. No way.

"I mean I'd prefer to be back there with those walkers," she said in a sarcastic tone. "But we can't have everything, can we?"

Negan let out a small, impressed laugh, into her ear.

"Oh Peaches," he said in a low growling tone. "Now you have got to watch that smart-mouth of yours at such close proximity. I mean, you do not know just. what. you. do to me when you say stuff like that."

Blake smirked, shaking her head, but she didn't dare turn her face to look at him fully, for she knew just how close he was to her now…

She let out a long puff of spiralling air into the cold atmosphere of the cab, as the rain pitter-pattered
once again on the windshield ahead of them.

Blake crossed her legs, placing her hands into her lap as silence fell over the pair…the only sound being that of their own breathing.

But it felt comfortable and natural…more than Blake had first thought it would be.

After a few long minutes had passed them by, Blake parted her lips, suddenly leaning her head back against Negan's shoulder.

Almost immediately, she heard him let out a small chuckle.

"You mind invading' my personal space just a little bit more, Peaches?" he said in a sarcastic voice, into her ear, mimicking Blake's words from earlier today, back to her.

Her lips curved up into a wide smile, blinking down at her thighs.

But she didn't grace him with a response. Instead she just remained there, comfortable….as she shifted herself slightly, turning her body in towards the tall, dark-haired Saviour, and resting her head in the tanned crook of his neck.

But stil she didn't look at him…..feeling his thumb begin to rub circles against her shoulder, without another word from his lips.

She felt guilty…thinking of all the men and women that Negan must have killed…including the ones she knew…..Abraham…Glen and Spencer to name just a few…but this…this was for survival, right?

She was freezing….and even if she didn't die of cold waiting out here for God knows how long…she could certainly get sick, catch the flu and THEN die...without the proper meds to save her.

Blake tugged at her lips with her teeth.

Ok, it wasn't right….but what in this world was anymore?

She shifted herself slightly, her eyes flickering up over to Negan's driver's-side window, staring out into the darkness.

Everything was silent and calm and in that moment, everything was right in the world…even while they were stuck out here alone.

Here, Blake felt her thoughts of David, and every other care she seemed to have, just drift away, as Negan rested his bearded chin suddenly on the top of her damp head.

But she didn't flinch or shift away at this, like she might have done just a few days ago, but instead turned her body slightly into him, her knee brushing his, as she closed her eyes tiredly.

Here she felt safe. Oh-so utterly safe.

And a long moment or two seemed to pass, before Negan suddenly spoke, his hand shifting down her arm slightly, and a chuckle slowly escaping his throat …Blake feeling it shudder out from beneath her resting head.

"Y'know, if you're in the mood, Doll-face," he said a in a slow, purring voice. "I might know a way we can get a little warmer, if you catch my drift..."
But Blake merely smiled, giving a hearty sigh. It had only been a matter of time.

"No…I think I'm good, thanks," she uttered in a firm tone, keeping her eyes closed as she spoke.

But Negan just chuckled again, just as a sudden crackle emitted from the radio.

"B-Boss?!" came an intermittent voice.

Blake opened her eyes, pulling herself from Negan, as the tall leader of the Saviour's sat up and reached for the device.

"Si?" he uttered, his thumb over the hold button. "Listen we've broken down just off the 373 over near Berry. Fuckin' thing might be outta gas."

There was brief moment of silence before the radio hissed again.

"We doubled back, boss," came the, again, crackly voice of Simon, over the radio once more "Hold tight and we'll be with you in ten."

And with that, the device went dead, as Negan let out a short sigh, chucking the device back onto the dashboard once more, as silence fell over the cab again.

Blake opened her mouth as if to say something but changed her mind, shifting back over to far end of the cab, feeling her face reddening.

Alright, nothing had happened between them…but she still felt embarrassed…her stomach lurching slightly, as she felt Negan's gaze flicker back over to her.

"You tired of cuddlin', Peaches?" he said, poking his tongue of out through his teeth teasingly and looking her over, titling his head back.

Blake ran her fingers through her hair, before pushing her long damp caramel locks back over her slender shoulder.

"I am now that I know we're gonna be rescued in ten minutes," she uttered, grinning back at him. Negan gave a pout. "Well, you know, ten minutes is still enough time for-"

But Blake stopped him, knowing exactly what he was going to say.

"Like I said," she murmured, cutting across him in a slow mocking voice, narrowing her eyes goadingly in his direction. "I'm good, thanks."

Negan licked at his lips.

"You know, that's why I like you," he said after second or two. "You're not afraid to say no to me."

Blake gave a bemused frown. "Lots of people aren't afraid to say no to you, Negan. Difference is, you usually use Lucille on them when they do."

Negan grinned. "Well would you look at that. You used her name," he muttered proudly, causing Blake to shake her head, looking away from him and staring out of the windshield ahead.

How the hell could one person annoy the hell out her so much?

She was about to snap back with a cool sort of retort, but before she could, a sudden face pressed
itself to the glass beside Blake, causing her to jump almost out of her skin in fright.

She clutched at her chest.

"Jesus!" she uttered, staring at the looming walker, standing the other side of the glass, pawing at it, snarling and snapping at her.

She slid back over to the centre of the seats away from it, coming to sit next to Negan once again.

Negan raised his eyebrow and opened his mouth as if to speak, but Blake just pointed at him threateningly.

"Just don't," she uttered in a deadly voice, pre-empting Negan's reaction.

And the bearded Saviour just gave a hearty laugh and settled back against the tan seat behind him, gazing at her admiringly.

"I didn' say a word, Doll."
The journey back to the Sanctuary had been uneventful at best.

Simon, as promised, had arrived at their truck in less than ten minutes, receiving a hearty pat on the back from Negan, who had promptly hopped up into the front of the truck with his right-hand man.

Blake had sat in the back with the rest of the Saviours in the dark, listening to the rain which had started up again, harder than that before.

It was coming down in droves by the time they reached Alexandria an hour later.

Blake had gotten to her feet after the truck had pulled up, safe inside the gates, before following the other men, including Dwight and the woman Negan had called Arat, out of the back of the vehicle.

But she had barely made it a step or two out, wincing against the ever-falling rain, when she had felt a sudden figure at her shoulder. And she almost rolled her eyes, predicting who it was.

It was of course the looming figure of Negan, Lucille in his hand, who placed at arm over her shoulders, a grin across his lips.

"Allow me to escort you back up to your room, Doll-face," he uttered into her ear in a charming voice, causing Blake to frown up at him and shrug his arm from her body.

Ok, she might have used him to keep warm for few minutes, but she certainly wasn't going to make this a regular thing.

She strutted away from him in her damp clothes, feeling his dark eyes on her, but kept walking until she reached the inside, stepping eagerly out of the rain.

She raised an eyebrow at Negan as he followed behind, smiling easily as he approached.

"I mean, I'm flattered," she uttered in a mocking voice, stopping in her tracks in the shelter of the building, as the rest of Negan's men all filed past her, disappearing off in the direction of the canteen. "But I'm sure I can find my own way."

But Negan just smirked, slowly coming to stand before her, gazing down into her face, raindrops running down his leather-clad shoulders.

They were on their own now in this quiet corridor. And that only caused to make Blake's heart pound that little bit faster.

"Oh, this ain't flattery, Doll," he said, his tongue poking through his straight white teeth. "And I aint fuckin' askin' either."

Blake rolled her eyes at his arrogance.

He always did this to her.

Riled her up and made her feel a little bit more defensive than she needed to be. Even here, in this place.

But Blake just tutted, raising her eyebrow in an unimpressed fashion in response, before stalking off, knowing that Negan would soon follow.
He always did where she was concerned.

It amazed her, that even with this vast empire he had built up here, that Negan was remotely concerned with her.

He had his wives (Blake making it perfectly clear she wasn't interested in becoming one of those). He had his men and women able to fight….so what was she good for?

He had stopped pushing her for information on Rick. And it was likely of course, he had seen right from the beginning she had had nothing to give him…being dragged here against her will, in the first place.

So what was he still doing here…at her side, as he had been for these last couple of days…?

She glanced over her shoulder narrowing her eyes, knowing it was only a matter of time.

And with that, Negan, as expected, did of course follow her, as she headed down the corridor.

Blake turned away, hearing his studded biker boots chinking along after her as she went.

"So, do I get to lay-in tomorrow?" she asked in a sarcastic tone, as she felt him fall into step with her at the long staircase, leading up toward her hallway. "Or are you planning to take me somewhere else where you almost get me killed?"

From her side, Negan gave a quiet sort of chuckle.

"Hold your horses there, Peaches," said Negan in a goading tone. "I thought I taught you a very fuckin' valuable lesson tonight."

But this only caused Blake to click her tongue at him, irritably.

"Yeah, not to trust you again," she uttered in a scathing tone, staring up at him and shooting him a look.

But Negan looked back at her, raising a dark eyebrow. "Well I mean, fuck me, Princess, I'm surprised that you ever trusted me in the first place."

But Blake gave a huff ignoring his comment.

Had she ever really trusted Negan? She wasn't sure…but even now, tonight he had confused her. Him putting her in danger like that… it had only been for Blake to prove to herself…..to make her see that she didn't need David. That she was better than that.

She was still terrified of David of course, but what Negan had said….

What he had obviously seen….

But she felt weak and strained right now…like David had this hold over her that made her look like a tiny insect that needed to be squashed under his foot.

Was that what she had become? Was that what she looked like these days? Was this why Negan was paying her so much attention?

Because she looked fragile and unable to fend for herself?
This very thought alone got her back up. Made her question things she hadn't questioned before.

Feeling more confused than ever.

"Don't you have better things to do that to be walking me to me room?" she said a little snappily, glancing up at the grinning Saviour as they finally reached the top of the staircase, turning right.

He was oh-so irritating to her, and the fact that he just read her like a book, just caused to exacerbate things.

But Negan just gave a lazy shrug, causing droplets of water to run from his leather jacket on to the bare hallway floor below, as he wrinkled his nose, grinning.

"Ooh this is just like old times, ain't it?" he uttered in a playful voice. "You snapping at me… me takin' you back to your cell…."

Blake shot him a serious look.

"I swear to god, you take me back to that cell-" she said in a deadly, warning voice.

But Negan merely laughed, raising his hands in defeat, as they walked.

"Well Jee-sus, this pussy-cat's got goddamn claws," he said, his rounded shoulder bumping hers teasingly. "Don' worry, sweetheart. I've told you, a royalty like you, deserves a fucking palace-"

The pair of them came to a stop just outside Blake's room.

"-an' that's what I gave you," Negan finished, looking cockily down at her. "In this fucking pig-shit fuckin' world, anyway."

But this only caused Blake to narrow her eyes in his direction, looking his long, bearded face over carefully.

"Am I supposed to be grateful?" she said snippily, turning the handle of the door and heading inside.

She flipped on the light switch, illuminating the large room, as well as her dry and comfy bed, just where she had left it.

All she wanted to do now, was get out of these wet clothes, take a shower and sleep.

But Negan raised his dark eyebrows at her incredulously, following her into the room before she could stop him.

That alone, made her ever increasing irritation tonight, rise even further.

Maybe it was because she had shown so much vulnerability back there in that truck. Or maybe it was the fact that he had seen through her relationship with David instantly. The only person in the last six months, bar Eugene, who had seen it for what it really was.

"I mean you could show some fucking gratitude," Negan sudden replied in a matter-of-fact tone, checking the following off on his long, slender fingers. "I mean, I give you a fuckin' room of your own. A big one I might fuckin' add, none of that basement shit. I get you off the points system. I give you a fuckin' TV. And-"

"And, you almost feed me to a bunch of walkers…" said Blake cutting across him and frowning. She turned back around to face him before she reached her closet.
But Negan just stared over at her lazily, and to her utter irritation, settled himself on the edge of her bed, placing Lucille down beside him, as the mattress creaked slightly under his weight.

"Alright, alright, I admit," he said cocking his head. "Maybe I went a little too far."

Blake rolled her eyes and gave a loud scoff, before turning back to her closet and opening the doors wide, as the storm raged outside, the rain lashing against the windows.

"Hmmm…story of your fucking life," she muttered just loud enough for Negan to hear her.

She pulled out a fresh t-shirt and set of grey matching underwear, as she heard him growl playfully behind her.

"You know you gettin' to be quite the fuckin' potty-mouth, Peaches," he murmured back, as Blake turned back around to face him, pile of clothes in her arms. "Might have to get Arat to knock up a goddamn swear jar, if you keep this up."

But Blake gave a huff of annoyance as she eyed him, sitting on her bed as casual as ever. She ignored his comment, instead strolling over towards him coolly.

"Don't think you're going to make yourself comfortable," she said in warning voice, a smirk twitching at her lips, staring down at him incredulously, and shaking her head. "I'm gonna shower, and change, and then I'm heading to bed…without you here."

But Negan's eyes glinted as she spoke.

He bit at his lip oh-so slowly, making sure she caught every second of it, throwing her a goading look through dark, narrowed eyes…..and all this only caused to make Blake's stomach jolt.

"Well, shit, Doll-face…I mean I was countin' on a slumber party…" he uttered, his smoky eyes never leaving hers. "..but I am more than willing to join you in that shower instead."

Blake gave a sudden gulp before she could stop herself, her breath catching for the slightest moment, inside her throat. But she quickly overcame the feeling, knowing that she had to, shaking her head and pursing her lips, shooting the dark-haired Saviour a frown.

"Not a chance," she uttered in a firm tone suddenly, marching forwards and grasping Negan's arm, attempting to pull him from the bed. "Out!"

She half expected him to get angry with her for her insolence…but to her utter surprise, Negan, almost at once, complied.

He chuckled, staring up at her, eyebrows raised, but got to her feet, taking Lucille with him.

"Shit, darlin', I mean, it's not my fault you're giving me mixed messages here," he said giving a mocking-pout as she manhandled him towards the door, her hand grasping his elbow tightly. "I mean, one moment you're trying to get to second base with me back in that truck, and the next minute you're kickin' me the fuck out-"

But Blake scoffed yet again as they reached the door, pausing, as thunder clapped loudly outside.

"You realise that one cuddle to keep warm, doesn't make me one of your wives, Negan" she uttered pursing her lips and rounding on him as he stopped. Blake narrowed her eyes in his direction,
jabbing at his damp t-shirt covered-chest with her finger. "Go bother one of them instead."

But Negan grinned, biting at his lip again, and looking down at her desirously.

He took a single step towards her, closing the gap between them entirely. And Blake felt her breath catch almost instantly.

Negan leaned in towards her, his lips just a breath away from hers….as his fingers traced her waistline…

"Who said anything about you becomin' one of my wives," he said waggling his eyebrows at her fiendishly, knowing full-well he had teased her about this every day since had arrived here.. "All I'm suggestin' is one night of fun. Just you, an' me…an' the backdrop of a fuckin' thunderstorm. I mean it sounds like the start of some high-class porno, don' you think?"

But Blake just smirked at him, rolling her eyes, and giving him a gentle shove away from her, out through the door.

"Oh…just……screw you," she muttered in a light voice of faux-seriousness, trying to find the words.

But Negan just arched his back, giving a groan of longing, his eyes twinkling at her. "Oh I fuckin' wish you would, Buttercup."

Blake felt her cheeks turn pink almost immediately.

"Goodnight, Negan," she muttered in a warning voice, before he could rile her up anymore. This….annoying man.

But Negan paused for the briefest of moments…a grin at his lips…as his eyes remained locked on hers…. …reading her again like a book…

Blake blinked up at him…her heart thudding in her chest.

"Night, Peaches," he finally replied in a husky voice, leaning in towards her for the slightest of seconds…his face lingering close to hers…..before turning on his heel, swinging Lucille up onto his shoulder, and heading off down the corridor, whistling a tune, before she could utter another word.

Blake waited there for a long second, watching him disappear off around the corner… before letting out a long, exhausted sigh and shutting the door closed with snap.

It had been a long day, that she was certain of.

But as Blake clutched at the pile of clean clothes in her arms tightly…shaking her head….. …she was unable to stop the smile that seemed to dance its way across her lips…
Blake opened the door and stepped out into the silent and, now, dark corridor.

She had a towel and a change of clothes tucked beneath her arm, intending to shower, peel herself out of her damp and dirty clothes, and get herself dry and clean once more.

It had been a long day, and all she wanted now was sleep…

But a shower first would do her good…..push all of her thoughts and worries from her mind.

She pulled her door shut behind her and padded down the corridor over towards the communal showers quietly.

Negan had helped her today…..she knew that was the truth.

And as much as part of him still terrified her…..never sure of what he was capable of, or what he was going to do next….he seemed to have this charm about him…this ability to take the heavy weight from her shoulders and pick her up like no one had in a long, long time.

But he was still Negan…..head of the Saviours and she knew she needed to remember that.

People from Alexandria were still dead because of him. And that couldn't be forgotten.

But Blake's thoughts drifted to what Negan had said earlier, back in the truck, as the rain fell all around them…

He had offered to take her home…just like that. Back to Alexandria….to the people she had started out with.

But was that her home? Had that ever been her home?

David was here now….that was a fact….but even despite that….she had felt no better back there than she did here…

Still struck with worry, that she wasn't doing right by her fiancé. By the man who had stuck by her all this time.

Perhaps she had made the wrong decision not taking Negan up on his offer…but perhaps someday he would ask her again….when she was less confused, less torn…

For right now Blake didn't know how she felt about things with David….pondering this as she walked down the long shadowy hallway toward the bathrooms…

Maybe she could stand on her own two feet without him….and maybe she didn't need him anymore…. 

But before the tall, caramel-blonde haired woman could dwell on this any further….she jumped in fright as a sudden hand gripped her upper arm tightly….

Blake gave a sudden gasp of fright….praying that it was not another of Negan's men…as it had been just a couple of day ago…

But her heart thudded, as she turned at once, to see a familiar face step out of the shadows.
Her eyes widened.

"D-David?" she stuttered, her blood suddenly running cold.

For there was her fiancé, a grim look lining his features.

When she had first met David he had been carefree, with shaggy blonde hair and the bluest eyes imaginable…

…but now his face was lined with disgust….his once handsome features dripping with resentment as he stared back at her with hollow eyes.

He emerged from the darkness of the gloomy corridor, looming over her looking angry.

Blake had seen him like this before. She knew exactly what was coming.

"What...no smile for me?" he uttered in a cold poisonous voice, his grip tightening on her upper arm. "Blakey, I'm disappointed."

His voice was full of poisonous mocking, his mouth twisted into a vile smirk.

Blake could only gulp, backing up slightly as her breath caught in her throat.

"I-I-" she stuttered out, desperately searching for an excuse to get away. She did not want to see him. Not after today. "I-I just need to use the bathroom."

But David gave a cruel-sounding laugh, not letting go of her, even when she attempted to desperately pull away.

"Are you kidding me?!" he said in an incredulous voice, high pitched and taunting. "You've been away all day, while I've been here working my fuckin ass off for ten measly fucking points, and when you do finally turn up, looking like fucking shit I might add, you're too busy to talk to me?!!"

"I didn't say that," uttered Blake staring up at David worriedly, shaking her head.

Right now, she had nothing but Negan's words dancing about in her thoughts…

She was stronger than this.

She didn't need him.

She didn't need this.

Blake suddenly snatched her arm away from him, before David could readjust his grip on her.

"I just need to shower," she murmured shaking her head and tearing her eyes away from her fiancé.

Blake just needed time to breathe…to think…..to sleep on it, if anything….

Hurriedly she stalked away down the long gloomy hallway away from him, her towel and her change of clothes huddled in her arms.

She was so tired….so anxious…..she just needed a break from everything…..from David…for five minutes...

For so long she had been tormented by his words….by his bruises…feeling guilty for what he did to
her….but maybe Negan was right. Maybe she was a queen.

Maybe she could survive without her fiancé….without anyone in fact.

She had lived for so long in his shadow…living through his choices….doing what he wanted….keeping up appearances because that's what he had made her do.

She felt so confused, pain coursing through her….

So all she knew right at this moment was that she need to get away from him.

Even if only for a while…

Blake bowed her head, hurrying over towards the bathrooms, tucked away near to the stairwell… avoiding anything further to do with David.

But this had been the first time in a long, long time that Blake had defied him….

And before she could do a thing to stop it, she heard rushed footsteps behind her and within an instant she was grabbed roughly around the throat.

Blake dropped the items in her hand, staggering suddenly backwards….letting out a strangled cry.

"Please…" she cried, trying desperately to push David away from her but he was just too strong… his fingers digging into the smooth skin at her throat.

But David did not relent.

"Move," he spat into her ear, giving her a hard shove forwards around the corner and into the shadows of the looming stairwell.

Blake choked, stumbling slightly as she went…praying someone anyone would appear and stop him….

For she knew David so well….she could read his moods easily...and yet never in her life had she seen him this angry…this enraged…this willing to use such menacing violence against her.

Her mouth was dry and her heart pounding a drumbeat inside her ears as he shoved her towards the top of the staircase, out of earshot of anyone in the rooms along Blake's hallway.

She gagged slightly, giving a shallow whimper, as David turned her around to face him roughly… never loosening the grip against her throat.

She could feel his fingernails digging into her…..all breath being choked from her body.

But all she could focus on in this moment was her fiancé’s eyes. The piercing blue eyes she had fallen in love with…that now were staring back at her, glinting almost gleefully, with a vile look of contempt…

"You fucking disgust me," he uttered into her face, his teeth bared. "All these fucking years I've put up with you and your constant whingeing…all the time…the same old thing…..it was the same when we were back in our apartment in the city, it was the same at Alexandria, and it's the same now. The lies and the useless fucking garbage that comes out of your mouth...just constantly. I mean you're lucky I put up with you for so long, because believe me, no one else would have…"

David's eyes travelled down her body as he edged her backwards, towards the large steel staircase.
Blake's eyes were wide and terrified as she stared back at the man she loved…

But the look in her fiancé's eyes was far from one of love….as he choked the life from her, his fingers and thumbs cutting into her flesh.

She couldn't breathe…couldn't speak…couldn't even find the strength or the ability to push him off of her.

Never in her life had she ever expected anyone to spill some much pent-up hatred for her from their lips.

"I mean look at you," sneered David, scoffing and holding her throat tightly. "You're nothing to look at, are you? Not anymore. Oh you used to be…maybe......when you could fit into a size 4, and knew when to shut your mouth and only open it when I wanted to shove my dick in there."

Blake felt tears prick at her eyes as they darted this way and that, oh-so desperate for a way out…a way of escape…

But there wasn't one. David as always had control of her….dangling her high above the fifteen or-so metal steps, that led down to the lower levels of the Sanctuary.

He literally had her life hanging in the balance, as Blake could do nothing but give a strangled sob. Terrified of what was about to come next.

This was not the man she had loved.

This was a man capable of god knows what…and that scared her more than anything else in this world right now.

And Blake could do nothing as this larger than life, blonde man suddenly pressed his face to hers. His lips curved up viciously.

"Because if you're not good for that, what are you good for? Huh?" he said a poisonous voice. "Because I know for a fact I'd do far better here without you around…without Negan pussy-footing round you treating you like you're a somebody. Because Blakey…I hope you know that you will never, ever be anybody…anybody....."

He pushed this word out from his hissing lips.

"...because you never have been......" he continued, his voice suddenly becoming flat. "....and now.....all you've ever going to be, my sweet Blakey, is yet.....another.....fucking.....walker."

And with that, David just stared at Blake blankly…

....as he suddenly let go of her throat…giving her a hard shove backwards….

And Blake could do nothing, but gape and flounder in mid-air for what felt like an eternity, as she lost her footing….unable to grasp a hold of anything in time…

......falling backwards, into the darkness below…

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Eugene brushed crumbs from the front of his black button-down shirt as he left the canteen, stuffing a bite from a third and final cookie, into his already full mouth, as he went.
He was, at this precise moment, pondering the exact way he could manufacture his own type of cool whip from the supplies available to him down at the marketplace, his eyes staring lazily ahead as he walked.

But it took Eugene a long moment or two to truly realise what he was staring at, as he rounded to corner towards the long staircase that led up towards his living quarters.

He stopped in his tracks, the cookie falling unceremoniously from his hand….. as his eyes suddenly widened.

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Negan, still slightly damp and dusty from this evening's events, strolled along the long corridor, swinging Lucille from his hand easily.

It was late and the dark-haired Saviour knew for a fact that it was likely Frankie would be waiting for him back in his large plush bedroom when he got there….it was her turn after all…

But as Negan dragged a hand down his long bearded face, his thoughts couldn't help but flicker to someone who was not one of his wives. Someone he would much prefer to be there waiting for him instead.

Fucking Peaches.

All fluffy and gorgeous on the outside, and sweet and ripe and oh-so-fucking delicious on the inside. Negan could already tell that about her.

He had a hard time refusing her anything, which was not how he had got to be in his position of such power amongst his people. But Negan was very much enjoying not being in the driving seat for this one…

He knew for a fact he had been well and truly fucked over, and in just a matter of days, Blake's status had been elevated above most of his men in this place. But that was his doing….and he knew full fucking well how much he was well and truly wrapped around her little finger.

She sort of fucking delighted him…which was rarity for him nowadays….so he would make the most of it while he could….and give her what she wanted…

Negan let out a long tired breath, lifting his stubbly chin, as he made to turn left, heading through the large double doors that led up towards his quarters at the top of the factory.

But before could do so, he heard a loud, carrying, strangled cry suddenly echo through the silent hallways.

"...h-help," came the weak-sounding male voice. "...s-somebody..."

Negan stopped suddenly, a grin curving its way up onto his lips.

He loved trouble.

Wandering the hallways terrorising people was practically a fucking hobby of his, after all.

So without a backwards glance, or concern for Frankie waiting in his room for him, Negan turned on his booted heel and stalked intimidatingly back down the corridor, towards the source of the noise.

Lucille gripped tightly in his hand as he went…..excited for just what he would find…. 
Falling through the darkness

The world was black.

Just darkness now.

And in that darkness, Blake could feel herself falling….

Down and down and down….until she could fall no more.

There was no light here, but the moans and snarls she could hear….of something moving in this shadowy realm.

And there she was…alone….but not alone…..gasping for breath…unable to grasp hold of anything around her….

Terror filling her veins…and anxious gasps leaving her throat.

This was not life. She was not safe here.

Her eyes searched in the gloom, finding herself suddenly surrounded by the dead.

She could feel them…smell them…..hear them….crawling out of every crevice…shuffling towards her…

…..one in particular….tall…with blonde hair….and blue eyes….

But this one was not like the rest.

This one she knew…

…..she loved…

She reached out a hand towards him….but the figure struck her hard across the face…sending her toppling backwards….hitting the ground behind her with a thud.

"Peaches?" came a far off voice, as Blake winced against it.

Her entire body felt broken…her head throbbing…..

She opened her lips….letting out a breathless moan…..as she felt a rough hand at her cheek, fingers drifting down to her sore and painful throat…. 

Her eyes tried to flutter open….but she couldn't hold them….briefly seeing a face hovering over her…a familiar face that felt warm and comforting to her….

"Stay the fuck with me, Doll-face," came the voice again, low and grizzled, and close to her ear.
"Don't you dare fucking close your eyes."

But Blake couldn't help it…..the world going dark and fuzzy yet again.

"Get in here, Doc," came the far off voice for the last time….as Blake frowned…

…..slipping back into the dark, quiet realm once more…..
Blake was lying down. That was all she knew…

Her mouth felt parched and her entire body felt sore and bruised…like she had gone ten rounds in a boxing ring.

It took her a long moment to realise why everything was still dark….slowly fluttering open her eyes.

She gave a hard, painful gulp and blinked a couple of times…staring up, as sunlight danced across the white ceiling above her.

Blake took in a deep breath, filling her lungs with well-deserved air, realising at once that she was in her room at the Sanctuary.

The window was obviously open, because a warm breeze seemed to dance across her face as she shifted beneath the white sheets that lay across her, turning her head to the side.

"Jesus fucking Christ, Doll-face," came a sudden lazy voice. "I thought you were never gonna wake up. I have been bored out of my fuckin' mind sittin' here waitin'. I mean there's only so many ways I can read about what face cream I should be usin' or how many time a day I should be drinking green fuckin' juice."

Blake gave a frown, her eyes travelling across the slouched form of a person she recognised very well.

Blake pulled her dry and parched lips apart, making to say something, but she just coughed…unable to speak.

Negan, who was sitting on a small, rickety chair, beside her bed, with his boots propped up on the mattress beside her, reading from a severely-outdated Women's Health magazine, gave a huge roll of his eyes.

"Jeez, sweetheart," he huffed in a voice of faux-resentment, a grin twitching onto his lips. "I mean, is it not good enough that I fucking save your life….but now you got me fuck' waitin' on you hand and foot too?"

With that, he placed down his magazine, grabbing a large ice-cold glass of water from his side, raising himself off the seat as he did so.

Blake pulled herself up into as much of a sitting positon as she could manage, allowing him to hand her the drink.

She was so desperately thirsty, but as she made to lift her right hand, she noticed it feel sore and was bandaged at the wrist. She looked at it in disbelief.

"You almost cracked your fucking skull open, as well as sprained a wrist and broke a couple of ribs while you were at it. Gave me fuckin heart attack too, when I saw you lying there, out of it," came Negan's low drawl, answering her question before she could ask it, as she raised her other hand, taking the water from his grasp and taking a grateful glug. "But hell, I've come off worse in bar-fights that that. And the Doc has said you're doin' ok."

The water slipped down Blake's throat, quenching her thirst within seconds. And it was a moment
later that she placed down the glass once more on the night-stand beside her with trembling fingers.

Her head pounded thickly in her skull…and as she lifted her hand to it, she found it was bandaged roughly, her hair feeling almost matted with blood at the back.

She winced to herself….as she remembered what happened….

She had been going to take a shower…she'd had her towel and a change of clothes…

But two blue eyes suddenly shone bright through her memories….causing her stomach to jolt uncomfortably and her heart begin to pound.

"So…." uttered Negan in a cool voice, settling himself back into his seat and replacing his boots back onto the bed. "...before I get back into readin' seven ways to get beach-body ready this summer, you want to fuckin' tell me exactly what happened, Peaches?"

Blake gulped…her already-quenched mouth going dry again, as she looked up at the familiar dark-haired Saviour.

Negan was today without his jacket….just in a white t-shirt….as he shifted in his seat slightly, lifting a hand to his face.

Blake noticed Lucille lying against his chair….as the bearded man, his fingers resting against his stubby cheek, looked back at her, his dark-eyes serious, now full of anger and concern.

"Coz' there I was, about to spend a wonderful evening with Frankie, mindin' my own fuckin' business," he continued. "…when I hear Dr Smarty Pants yellin' the place down….because he's found you lying in a pool of your own blood at the bottom of the fuckin' stairs."

Negan sounded suddenly very angry, his grey bearded jaw clenched…..looking like he was ready to kill….

But at this, Blake's eyes almost instantly drifted away from his…as memories came flooding back to her.

She knew of course who had done this to her….

Who had tried to kill her…

Who had pushed down the stairs, with horrible, vile contempt across his face as he did so….

But Blake couldn't say his name, her gaze drifting down to her bandaged wrist instead…her empty hands clasped now, in her lap.

Negan stared at her for a long moment. And despite not even looking at him, Blake could feel his eyes boring into hers.

"Now I know that accidents happen," he uttered in a low and dangerous tone, lifting his chin. "…but not on my fuckin' watch, they don't. So tell me buttercup…. what. fuckin'. happened…."

He repeated those words meaningfully.

Blake gave another painful gulp, lifting her hand to her throat, but didn't look up at him.

She took in a sharp breath as he felt the welts that lined her neck…..exactly where her fiancé's fingers had been…. 
She knew there was no hiding that…

And at this, Blake suddenly trembled…feeling tears prick at her eyes….

But she just couldn't say his name…

She couldn't admit what he had done to her….not to Negan…not to anyone…

For she knew what would happen if she did…

She gave a painful gulp….but still her eyes remained in her lap.

Too ashamed to look at Negan…to admit what had been done to her.

What the man she loved, had done to her…..

Suddenly she felt Negan move himself, dropping his boots to the floor unceremoniously, and hover near to her…..as she tried as hard as she could, to not cry…to not tremble…..to not look like she was scared…..

But inside she was distraught…..aching with sadness…..

Wanting to scream…to cry….to yell…

But she couldn’t…and that had nothing to do with her bruises or her broken bones….

"It was an accident," she uttered, the words suddenly spilling from her mouth, before she realised just what she was about to do….as she felt Negan's chocolate eyes blink suddenly. "I j-just…..I fell. I tripped…and I fell….it was my fault…"

She didn't know why she did it.

Why she uttered that lie…. 

But it was now done….her defending David and his actions yet again….only because she was so, so fearful of the outcome otherwise.

But as soon as she spoke….Blake almost immediately felt Negan's shoulders tense….his jaw ticking…..his eyes blackening, at her side.

He knew. Of course he knew.

Negan remained there, gazing down at her for what felt like the longest of moments …..disappointment lining his features…. as Blake felt a sob catch in her throat.

He looked angry and betrayed….as Blake pressed her aching head back against the pillows behind her, unable to meet his seething stare.

And it was then that she knew what he was about to say….before he had even said it.

The tall, dark-haired leader of the Saviours, standing up straight, picking up Lucille, looking intimidating and oh-so furious at this very second.

"You know, Sweetheart, part of me wanted you to believe you belonged here," he said pointing the dull end of his baseball-bat at her accusingly, his voice low and deadly serious. "Wanted to believe you ain't as weak as your precious fi-an-ce made you out to be."
Negan grimaced for a brief moment, looking back at her darkly.

"But hell, I'm startin' to think you're not the queen I fuckin' thought you were."

Blake felt tears falling silently from her eyes as she leaned back against the pillow behind her head… unable to look at him……her eyes staring back up towards the ceiling once more.

For she knew his words were true.

She wasn't a queen.

She was just the sad, pathetic woman who got beat up and pushed around by her boyfriend….by the man who had sold her Grandmother's engagement ring….by the man who had sold her out to these people…..by the man who had pushed her down a flight of stairs….

Blake knew that now…

She wasn't worth anyone's time. Unable to stand up for herself.

Tears slipped silently down her cheeks as she realised David was right….she wasn't anyone.

She half-waited for Negan to continue his outburst…to keep yelling at her as she lay there, expecting the hurtful words now, tears running down her face sadly…having no reply to give him…

But to her surprise, Negan was silent….obviously done with her now…as the next thing she heard, was the door slam closed behind the dark-haired Saviour, as he left the room….

….leaving Blake oh-so utterly alone, once again…

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Blake remained alone for the long two days that followed.

She had managed to get herself up and out of bed to use the bathroom….but that was far as she felt able to go by herself….exhausted by even that.

The bandages around her broken and bruised ribs and around her sprained wrist were checked and changed by Doctor Carson, formally of the Hilltop people…who looked slightly stressed and frazzled.

And apart from that, a meek-looking Saviour, who only looked about fourteen, brought her three meals a day without fail.

But this pair were the only people she had seen. Even the hallway outside her room had been empty each time she had passed through it.

Since Blake had awoken, she had had no contact with Negan or any of his close lieutenants. No Dwight, no Eugene, no Simon and no Arat. Even the few she didn't know by their names hadn't come near her either…and Blake knew that this had to have been on Negan's orders.

She had heard the anger in his voice when he had spoken to her….felt the disappointment in his glare…

He had of course expected her to betray David…but Blake couldn't do that. For she knew what would happen if she did.

She had to remain loyal…..to the man she loved….

Or at least the man she used to love.

Blake's brain since having woken, had been going a mile a minute.

She was in pain. But this had nothing to do with her bruises or her broken bones.

Instead, this had everything to do with what David had done to her…not just three days ago…but over the last six months.

Even when she had been in Alexandria she had felt like a prisoner. Afraid to put a foot wrong. But back then she loved him. She doted on him. He was her fiancé after all.

But since getting here, to the Sanctuary, things had changed….David had changed…..he was not the man she had met and fallen for all those years ago.

The tears had barely stopped falling these last couple of days….her eyes red and sore….and dried up…

She had nothing left to give. No energy left to spend.

Blake had just taken a long shower. It was late afternoon and today had been the first day she had felt strong enough to stand in the shower….letting the water wash the dried blood from her hair….washing carefully her three large stitches that remained on the very back of her head….as well as the dirt and grime from the rest of her body.
Blake hadn’t showered or changed her clothes since before she had left for the run…

But now standing here, in just a fresh pair of plain black matching underwear…looking into the long mirror that hung on the back of her closet…did Blake realise just how terrible she looked.

Her skin all over was bruised….and the bruises that were no longer bright purple like the ones across her ribs and her neck, were now green and ghastly-looking.

Her eyes were red, as predicted...with deep purple bags beneath them.

Her hair was damp and wavy, and even despite running a hairbrush through it, it looked limper and more lifeless than before.

Blake took in a half-sob before she could stop herself, clutching suddenly at her mouth, the pain of the sharp intake of breath shooting through her sore ribs.

This is what she had become. A mere shell of herself.

And she knew who all this was down to.

Blake hung her head, staring down at her feet.

But she had had her chance. Had her chance to blame him. And she had instead lied. Defending him to the bitter end.

And even Negan, who had had her back since getting here, had turned against her…sick of her lies too..

She knew now that he must think of her, just like David thought of her…with disgust….

Blake had almost expected Negan to hit her too….while he yelled at her. And it had surprised her when he hadn't. But was that because that was all she expected now from men in her life? A punch here…a poisonous word into her ear there?

Blake let out a shaky breath and stared up at her reflection once again…before her gaze, instead, drifted to the window behind her…shining in, a warm late afternoon sunlight….that caught on the dust particles that drifted through the air…making Blake think of a dreamy place……a place where perhaps she would have been had she not woken up two days ago…

She gave a painful gulp.

Her throat was still sore...the bruises still littered there.

But as Blake grasped up a soft grey jersey sweater and a pair of navy pants, slipping them on, she knew that for the first time in days she just wanted to be outside in the fresh air…Even if only for a moment.

Wanting to feel alive.

She stepped into her pair of low-topped tennis shoes, chancing one last change at her reflection, before slamming the closet door and heading straight out of the room.

Out in the corridor she looked this way and that. It was of course, silent again, with not a soul in sight.

Blake wondered now to what Negan was doing right now…or David for that matter…
She wondered if Frankie was still giving him massages…or whether he was lurking around the corner once again to finish the job to kill Blake off completely.

This thought alone made her nervous, and Blake couldn't help but give yet another gulp as she turned right at the end of the hallway, making for a different way down to the outside areas….not wanting to see the staircase she had fallen down. Not yet anyway.

She turned the corner, pushing open a door and stopping at the top of a small, this time, stone set of stairs that led down to the lower levels.

Blake gripped onto the railing tightly and let out a nervous puff of air as she walked gingerly down the steps one at a time.

It wasn't a minute later that she had gone down two flights of the staircase, coming out on the first floor….finding herself in a familiar looking corridor….

In a place she had not seen in days.

She blinked slightly, frowning and peering down the long gloomy hallway.

It was quiet, and as Blake tentatively walked down the corridor her footsteps echoed loud and clear, she remembered back to less than a week ago, when she was first brought here, to the Sanctuary, and placed a cell.

And that cell, was in fact, right there, third door down, straight ahead of her.

But there was nothing to be afraid of now…right?

Would Negan really shove her back in there?

But actually after what happened between them…she wouldn't put it past him now.

Blake's fingers trembled nervously as she walked…heading past the closed cell door hurriedly…heading towards the door at the end of the hallway, that she knew led all the way down towards the large, open balcony outside.

But she had barely moved a few feet past the looming cell door, when a sudden, quivering voice called out.

"P-Please…..i-is someone there?"

Blake recognised it instantly…her face paling.

"Please..." it came again, sounding desperate. "…I'll d-do anything!"

Blake turned and took a slow and tentative step towards the door, giving a hard gulp.

"David?" she murmured…her voice wavering slightly as she spoke.

What was he doing locked up in there?

But she obviously knew who was responsible for this….of course Negan had seen right through her lie…. 

But she had never expected him to do this to David. To lock him up…to keep him in there.
"Blake?" uttered the voice of her fiancé. She could hear him shifting against the inside of the door. But Blake stopped nervously just a foot or two away…clenching her sleeves in her hands tightly.

The last time she had heard David's voice, she had been looking into his bright blue eyes….full of hatred and disgust…as he had pushed her backwards. But yet something…something in his voice seemed to pin her to the spot…unable to move…to run…to flee.

It was as if he had a hold on her…a hold she just could not escape from.

"Blake," David uttered once more, his voice full of urgency. "You have to get me out of here. I haven't eaten or drunk anything since they threw me in here. I-I can't take it anymore. Please, Blakey…sweetheart, you have to help me."

Blake tugged at her lip worriedly….right now feeling so weak-willed…

"I don't know…I-I-" she began as her words trailed off, her eyes darting this way and that up and down the corridor. Almost waiting for someone to come and disturb the two of them…to give her a way out.

"What the fuck do mean, you don't know?" snapped David suddenly from behind the door. He sounded irritated. His words bruising her more than his fists had. "After all these years we've been together, and what? You're just going to leave me here to rot? Is that it?"

Blake took a step back, shaking her head.

"N-no, no.." she said in a quiet tone of desperation.

What he had done to her…

He had tried to kill her. Of course he had.

But even so, right now, Blake felt wholly like she was the one that owed him. Guilt flooding over her, causing panic to fill every fibre of her body.

She heard David give a sigh.

"Blakey," he began, speaking slowly. "If you loved me. If you really loved me, you'd go and talk to Negan. You'd get me out of here. I mean, you do still love me, don't you, Sweetie?"

Blake breathed hard, tears pricking at her eyes.

"Y-Yes," she blurted out before she could stop herself. Not knowing whether the words spilling out of her mouth were entirely true.

Did she love him? After everything he'd done to her…she knew she shouldn't…

But it was almost as if she desperately needed to please him. To feel his love….

Because without him, who else would she have in this world?

"Then I need you to go and find Negan," David said in a careful tone. "I need you to explain to him that I had nothing to do with you falling down those stairs."
That was a lie.
And Blake knew it.

She hovered there for a moment. Feeling almost unsteady on her feet.

"And if you do that….if you get me out…" continued Blake's blue-eyed fiancé. "…you and me, Blakey…we can be together again….just how we used to be…"

Blake's mouth went dry.

That was all she wanted in the world.

She felt herself trembling. Every inch of her body telling her to leave him there for good…inside his prison where Blake and everyone else around her could be safe from him.

She pressed a hand to the cell door closing her eyes and breathing in and out…so so aware of the bruises, right now, that covered her body.

"I don't know if Negan would even listen to me-" she started, shaking her head.

She certainly did not want to beg Negan. She knew what he was capable of. And right now she was not really in his good books. She would likely be risking her life trying to reason with him.

But David continued, his voice sounding close now and softer than before-

"Blakey, I've seen him around you. If anyone can convince him, it's you. Promise me you'll do this for me, Blakey."

Blake felt so frightened right now.

She squeezed her eyes tightly shut at his words, pursing her lips sadly and leant her forehead against the cold steel door.

"I-" she began….the words disappearing from her mouth as she spoke. "I-I'll try…"

She know she had to.

She couldn't lose David. Let him down. He was all she had.

"I love you sweetheart," David uttered in a loud voice.

But Blake blinked her eyes open, looking down at the floor.

"I-I….I love you too…" she whispered finally…with purpose, pushing herself from the door.

She knew she had to do this.

For David.

But she couldn't help her heart ache with overwhelming sadness.

If this had been anyone else…she'd have screamed at them….yelled at them for being so stupid. But here she was….and from the inside, looking out at all this….it was far more difficult to navigate that one would first believe.

She was defending the man who had tried to kill her…who had pushed her down the stairs… who
had spoken to her with so much poison in his voice.

And yet now….it seemed like perhaps he had changed…perhaps he regretted what he had done...

He had told her he loved her. And that was all Blake wanted right now. Someone she could hold onto in this hellish world.

She gave a dry gulp…as she walked swiftly down the long hallway, head bowed low before turning the corner and beginning to head up the large, steep staircase that led up towards Negan's quarters.

The Sanctuary was quiet up here, with no sound except from the muffled echo of Blake's footsteps as she headed around the maze that was the upper levels, turning right, then left, then right again….finally finding herself…before she realised where she was. Now, right outside Negan's door.

Blake took in an unsteady breath, clasping the sleeves of her sweater tightly in her hands once more, before letting them go and smoothing them down.

She looked up and tried to calm herself.

She needed to do this.

She needed to…

And so, raising her hand, Blake gave a slow and steady knock, her heart pounding as she did so.

There was a long pause….long enough for Blake to search the door before her with frightened eyes and turn on her heel….supposing (or at least hoping) that Negan wasn't inside.

But after a long few seconds there came an answer. An answer which Blake had hoped would never come.

"Come in," came the commanding voice of a person she recognised so well.

The man…that dangerous man…who had given Blake everything in the short time she had been here.

She let out a small, nervy puff of air and turned the handle, opening the door…

Her eyes searched the large room for him, as the door swung wide open, only for them to finally land on the wide leather couch, were Negan was sat, one leg propped up across the other, writing in some sort of large notebook with a ballpoint pen.

He had on his black leather jacket, with grey t-shirt just peeking out from beneath it, his boots and his dark grey pants, and he looked like he had been there, sat on the couch for quite some time, with Lucile propped up against the coffee table before him.

Negan looked up at Blake with darkened chocolate eyes, as she took a step nervously into the room.

A frown twitched its way between his brows as he opened his mouth to speak.

"Can I help you?" he asked with a low growl, looking up at her incredulously.

His tone with her was so unlike what Blake had had from him before.

It was scathing, irritated, and gave nothing away.
Blake took a step into the room, staring over at him defiantly, raising her chin….trying to be the person he had seen her as before.

But inside Blake was doing all she could to stop herself from shaking with fear.

"You have to let him go," was all she could manage to say, her voice almost braking as she spoke, her green eyes meeting with his.

She tried to stand up straight, but right now she felt like a tiny mouse….an insect that Negan could oh-so easily squish if he wanted to.

Negan paused for long a moment, staring back at her, not saying a word.

The room filled with a thick sort of silence, and Blake was convinced that her heart was pounding so hard that both she and Negan would surely hear it.

It was a long few seconds before Negan replaced the cap back on his pen, and shut the notebook in his hands, placing it silently down beside him. All this while not breaking eye contact with Blake.

She gave a painful gulp, the bruises at her ribs aching.

The tall, dark-haired saviour got to his feet with a short, stiff sigh, his eyes narrowing at her as he did so.

Even though Blake was tall herself, as Negan moved across the room towards her, it was hard not to be intimidated in his presence.

But why?

This was the man she had cuddled up to for warmth just a couple of days ago… the man who had given her anything she wanted….even going as far as to hand-deliver pizza to her door just because she wanted it.

But right now, Blake's breath hitched painfully in her throat, as Negan closed the gap between the pair of them, coming to stop just a mere breath away from her.

He reached a hand up, grasping her upper arm firmly and tugging her into him gently.

"Now why would I wanna do that? Hmmm, Peaches?" he uttered, in what was a husky, low whisper, his lips lingering near to her ear. "You give me one good reason why I should do that, darlin', and maybe…just maybe I'll consider it."

Right now everything felt so far away for Blake…the whole world, including David, seeming distant to her….as she stood there, turning her face, so that her eyes met with Negan's dark ones.

He looked back at her, almost plying her to tell him the truth….to say what she had been keeping in for so long.

But Blake's heart broke as she realised the truth.

That she would never be free. That she would never be allowed to make that decision. She would never be the queen that Negan thought she once was.

Blake's lip quivered for a long moment, before she let out a shaking breath and shook her head.

"Because I love him..." she uttered, her shoulders dropping tiredly, as her eyes lingered on his, full
of pain and anguish and heartbreak.

Negan gazed back at her for a long moment, that frown line still there…before he gave a sudden
blink…his lips parting slowly…

But before Blake could say another word Negan had dropped his hand from her arm, turning around
and striding back over to Lucille.

He snatched up his barbed-wire covered baseball-bat unceremoniously, before advancing on Blake
once more, suddenly grabbing her hand in his, and pulling her towards the door.

Blake looked startled…gaping.

"What-" she began…" W-Where are we going?" she uttered fearfully, as Negan tugged her out into
the corridor, walking ahead of her with long-legged strides.

Blake had never seen the leader of the Saviours like this before…so determined and so purposeful.
He was usually the first to fool around. To make light of even the darkest of situations….whether it
was appropriate to do so or not.

But now he seemed angry…..his shoulders tensed beneath his leather jacket…

She gave a gulp, trying as hard as she could to pull herself from his grasp, but Negan was strong, not
giving up his grip on her hand.

At the end of the long corridor, before the pair reached the stairs they were met with a frowning
Simon who looked up at them a little confused.

"Boss?" he began, a little unsurely, as they reached him.

But Negan's jaw was tensed, a muscle in his bearded cheek ticking furiously.

"Go fetch that piece of shit from his cell and bring him outside," he ordered in an angry barking tone,
that usual Negan smart-mouth now gone, leaving only a man who Blake had heard about in fearful
hushed words around Alexandria.

This feared leader who had bludgeoned innocent people.

Blake trembled, as Negan tugged her harshly towards the stairs, and as Simon nodded, disappearing
through a pair of double doors at the far end of the hallway hurriedly.

But Blake gave a hard tug on Negan's arm.

"Stop," she said demandingly, breathing hard.

And Negan finally obliged.

Turning around to look at her, a scowl across his long, bearded face.

"Please don't do this…” she said shaking her head and looking back at Negan with pleading eyes.

And Negan, for the briefest of moments, stared back at her, with something other than anger in his
features.

Something full of warmth and desperation, almost imploring Blake…
But it didn't last long.

And with that…without another word from the tall Saviour's lips, he turned on his booted-heel once again and pulled Blake down the steps…

…down into the unknown…
It was a warm evening, and the last of the sun's few rays danced across the parking lot, where the fences filled with walkers, shimmered in the late-summer haze.

Negan tugged Blake out here by the hand, dragging her over towards the high chain link fences, where several men in dirty clothes wrangled the dead, trying to goad them, as best they could, into position, while the blonde figure of Dwight stood by the gate watching them.

He glanced up as Negan and Blake approached.

Blake's heart pounded.

Negan hadn't stopped since they had left his hallway, coming all the way out here, never halting, not uttered a word to her. She could tell he was seething. But was he angry enough to feed her to the walkers up ahead?

She gave a worried frown suddenly tugging at his arm once again.

"Stop!" she uttered demandingly, in a loud, yelling voice of utter frustration, pulling her hand quickly away from his. "Stop…"

Negan suddenly paused on the dusty asphalt, and rounded on her, his already dark eyes blackening. From here Blake could make out every line that seemed to litter his tanned and bearded face.

Her breath suddenly hitched in her throat.

"Please…just let him go," she uttered in a desperate tone, feeling almost ashamed of herself as the words slipped out of her mouth. "I'll stay here….I'll be one of your wives….i-if that's what you want…"

She trembled, her green eyes filling with tears, as they dropped from Negan's face, instead staring down at the ground beneath her feet.

"…just let him go back to Alexandria if that's what it takes…please. Please just let him go…"

It took her a long moment or two to finally stare back up at Negan….feeling so small and pathetic right now.

Because that was what she was. Practically selling herself to save him.

For what other person would try and defend someone who had done so much damage to them?

But Negan's tongue reached his line of straight white teeth irritably, and he looked down at her hard.

"You know what, Peaches," Negan suddenly muttered, his voice warmer than Blake had expected. But there was no hint of a smile. "If you were anyone else I wouldn't have thought twice about feedin' you to those dead pricks over there."

He gestured with his head over to the fences, almost sparkling in the warm sunlight.

Right now it felt like it was just the two of them alone in this world…everyone else around them seeming like a hazy blur to Blake, as her heart thudded inside her painful ribcage.
Blake breathed hard and Negan let out a hard puff of air, running a hand down his bearded face tiredly.

"Doll-face I'm gonna ask you this once, and only once," continued the dark-haired Saviour suddenly, his lips fixed into a grim line. "You sure he's what you want? What you really want? Some fucking asshole who shoved you down a flight of fuckin' stairs and treats you like shit?"

His words were stark and hit Blake hard, like a blow to the stomach.

"Because if you do this. If you want me to let. him. go," Negan quickly continued, pointing a finger at her. "Then you've got to go too….you understand that? You gotta make a decision."

Blake stared up at Negan with wide staring eyes.

There was no way she had expected that, ever.

She could go back to Alexandria. Both of them. They could just go….if that was what she wanted….

But was that Blake wanted?

Right now she felt torn….physically sick to her stomach.

Her body felt like it was trembling from head to toe. And to any outsider right at that second, Blake would have looked utterly visibly upset by Negan's words.

But before she could even open her mouth to give an answer, there came a sudden noise, as a door was thrown open behind them, and out walked David, led by Simon and another hard-faced Saviour…as well as at least fifteen other people who followed behind.

Blake gave a gulp as she saw her blonde-haired, blue-eyed fiancé for the first time, being dragged across the asphalt with a black eye and bloody nose, obviously both given to him before he was placed in that cell.

But Blake knew that she had to make a decision.

She could leave here with David…with the man who had given her her own bruises…her own broken ribs…her own complex about her appearance…

Or she could stay…without him…be the queen Negan thought she was…

But her stomach jolted violently…aching…so scared of being without David.

He loved her…he had told her that just a few minutes ago….

He did love her…didn't he?

Blake took a step backward, trembling. Feeling so apart from her usual strong-self right now…the events of the past week almost destroying her completely.

She was a monstrous bruised shell of woman right now….

It was a moment before Negan glanced her way initially, before his eyes shifted to David as he was dragged before the tall, bearded Saviour and forced to his knees.

David was silent, as tears streamed down his face.
This was the man she had fallen in love with…

Who she had shared an apartment above a coffee shop with for four years…

Who had proposed to her… who had wanted to marry her…

But this was also the man who had hurt her…

Blake saw him stare up at the looming figure of Negan, mouthing at the air.

"Now I think we have only briefly been introduced," came the low voice of Negan, giving a menacing grin as he gazed down at David, holding Lucille tight within his grip. "You're David, right? Peaches' fiancé?"

Negan almost sang the words like a tune, arching his back as he did so.

At this David almost immediately nodded shakily. "Y-Yes," he uttered, but he didn't look at Blake who was standing there beside them, just a few feet away.

A crowd of Saviours had gathered around them now, standing near to the factory walls, some faces she recognised some she didn't, all of their faces fixed.

She was in trouble here, she knew that.

Blake gave a gulp as Negan continued.

"Now David," said Negan, suddenly dropping Lucille gently onto David's shoulder- although it was enough to make her fiancé tremble giving a pathetic whimper. "When you came to us… came to Simon over there… asking if you could defect from Rick's group… hell, I thought, well, what a stand-up guy… wanting to be one of us just like that… makin' no bones about the fuckin' fact that you would sell out your people for us. But, and I speak on behalf of most of us here, what we did not expect, is for you to bring your hot-as-fuck, fuckin' fiancée along for the ride. I mean, she was never fuckin' part of the deal, was she?"

Negan gave a faux-grimace, as David visibly shook.

"But, we're nice people, so we took her in, hell, I'm not gonna be the guy to break up a perfect couple like that. I mean, maybe it was true fucking love," Negan continued, suddenly lifting Lucille up to David's cheek. "But I gotta say from the minute I saw those fuckin' bruises on her arm, that look in her eyes that said 'I've been dragged through shit an' not willingly', I knew we were never gonna be best fuckin' buddies, you an' me."

Blake looked up at Negan worriedly, as he stood there seething and so, so very angry right now.

He was baring his teeth, a hint of contempt plastered across his long, bearded face.

"But I, again, bein' the awesome guy I am, gave you the benefit of the fuckin' doubt… maybe thought that Peaches here would see sense and ditch your fuckin' ass before it was too late," Negan uttered in a loud voice, leaning back and cocking his head to the side, surveying the trembling David. "But then, and now Davey-boy this is where your mistake lies-"

Negan at once, leaned down, looming over David and leaning his face into his.

"-you fuckin' pushed it. No, wait, let me rephrase that," said Negan angrily, pressing his barbed-wire covered baseball bat closer to David's cheek. "you fuckin' pushed HER! Down the fuckin' stairs."
Now if that doesn't say cowardly fuckin' piece-of-shit, then I don't fuckin' know what does! An' that is something I just do not stand for here."

David gave a whimper, as Negan suddenly stood up straight, removing Lucille from David's shoulder and running a hand down his stubbly face irritably.

Negan looked at Blake with dark chocolate eyes, titling his head as he did so, and the caramel-blonde woman almost immediately felt her breath hitch in the back of her throat, her heart pounding.

"You got anythin' to say on the matter, Doll-face?" asked Negan, his tone slightly softer now, as he looked at her, his eyes searching her exhausted face.

But Blake was lost.

Oh-so lost.

David had tried to kill her. He had made her life a misery for so long…

Blake remained silent…her breath escaping her lips shakily…trapped like a rabbit in the headlights.

But Negan gave a nod, as if satisfied with her response.

"Good," Negan uttered in a final voice, suddenly standing up tall.

And before Blake could stop him he had gritted his teeth raising Lucille above his head, as David gave a whimpering cry, wincing…

Blake's eyes widened into orbs, as he swung his baseball bat upward, ready for it to collide squarely with David's skull.

But before Blake even knew what she was doing, she had leapt forwards.

"No!" she cried loudly, scrabbling in front of Negan, coming to stand between David and the tall, dark-haired Saviour. "No…please! Don't!"

Negan suddenly stopped, Lucille stopping just an inch or two from Blake's own head, as she stared, wide-eyed, back at Negan.

"Please…" she suddenly uttered in just a whisper, staring up at the bearded man. "I'll go…..we'll go."

She knew she assigning her own fate here…

Locking herself with David for all eternity. Because he was hers. And she loved him….with all her heart….despite how much it broke hers to admit that.

Negan stared back at her, his bearded jaw tensing, and his dark eyes never leaving hers.

And it was then that Blake truly saw the disappointment in his angry eyes.

"As you fuckin' wish, Sweetheart," he muttered, his voice suddenly sounding livid.

As though that was not the answer he wanted to hear.

And with that, Negan lowered his barbed-wire covered baseball bat, giving her one last look, before turning away from her darkly.
Letting her go...

Blake's lips trembled as she watched him walking away, striding lazily back over towards his men, standing there, surrounding them.

And it was then, that in the crowd, did she see the faces of Eugene and Simon and Arat…..all people Blake had had little to do with…all staring back at her blankly…squinting through the low, setting sunshine.

She gave a gulp….her heart pounding, watching Negan's retreating back, sloping away.

Had she made a mistake?

Her heart pounded inside her sore ribs.

No…this was good…wasn't it….?

Then why, right now, did it not really feel like a victory?

But as the caramel-blonde woman turned back to her fiancé, kneeling there just a foot or two away from her, she knew that all this….it was for him.

Because he loved her…

And that was the most important thing now.

It had to be.

Blake turned her face away from the crowd of Saviours, reddening and giving a worried sob as she moved over to her sandy-haired fiancé.

But standing there looking at him, it was, right now, as if everything in the world might be ok again….

It could be just the two of them together from now on.

Maybe they didn't need anyone else?

She had saved his life…proved to him that he was the one she had chosen…

But before Blake could even reach a hand out to gently touch David's bruised face….wanting nothing more than to hold him right now…her blue-eyed fiancé had suddenly scrambled to his feet hastily.

He shoved Blake hurriedly aside with his shoulder…not even looking at her….

….instead staring up towards Negan as he walked away, with wide, hollow eyes…. 

"Please," David suddenly cried in a weak, desperate and raised voice, moving quickly over to the head of the Saviours.

Negan slowly spun around on his heel, cocking a dark eyebrow towards the blonde man, as Blake just stood there in disbelief.

"Please," David repeated, begging. "I-It was her...."
With that, David pointed back at Blake with a shaking hand.

"It was her! S-She was the one who wanted to come here….s-she wanted to kill you…..I-I tried to stop her….but coming here…it was her decision."

Blake gaped suddenly, taking a step back, her hands shaking as they balled at her sides, into fists.

What?

"T-That's why I pushed her….I mean, I had to…” David uttered loudly, continuing to point at Blake with desperation in his voice. "I had to stop her from trying to kill you...her and Rick...they thought this whole thing up...the two of them...but I couldn't stand for it.......please, Negan….Sir….I did it for you…t-to become one of your people…to become Negan….I-If you want to punish anyone…kill anyone….then…then…..i-it should be her!"

And with that, David glanced around at Blake…

And that was the moment it hit her.

There was no love in his eyes.

There never had been.

There was only manipulation and cowardice.

He was a mere monster of a man….pathetic and cruel….

And that was when Blake realised, that she was not the insect ready to be squished beneath someone's boot…..it was him.

He was the insect…the cockroach….who had beaten her…bruised her…threatened her…..ruined her life, oh-so much more than the apocalypse ever had.

Tears pricked at her tear-ducts but Blake was past crying now, as she stared back at David, shaking with anger and fury.

This was the man she had convinced herself she loved.

This spineless piece of shit who had sold her out, not once but twice!

And this time, he was standing there with all the gall he possessed, asking Negan to kill her….too pathetic and weak-willed to do the job himself.

But Blake now realised, after all those days of Negan trying to convince her of it, that she was a queen.

Negan had been right all along about that.

And a queen was not going to take shit like that from anyone. Not now. Not ever. Not anymore…

Blake's eyes suddenly drifted away from David's…

….instead, at that exact moment, meeting with Negan's chocolate ones.

He knew.
Of course he knew.

He always knew.

Blake, breathing hard, his fists balled at her sides, lifted her chin….marching quickly past David and over to Negan.

She broke her gaze away and stopped at his side…facing away from David, her eyes on Negan's people….watching silently from their vantage point near the wall…..

She wanted them to see this.

And with that, Blake reached out her hand, looking once again at Negan as they stood shoulder to shoulder.

She didn't even have to say anything, before Negan's lips twitched up into wide grin, revealing a line of pearly white teeth.

He leaned in towards her suddenly, as Blake felt the weight of Lucille drop into her hand.

"Be my fuckin' guest, Sweetheart," he uttered with a low growl.

Blake gritted her teeth, her green eyes blackening darkly as she gripped the baseball bat in her hand tightly.

It felt heavier than she was expecting, the smooth wood of the handle, cool against her fingers.

And it wasn't a moment later, that Blake suddenly turned around, and, raising the bat aloft, swung it sharply into David's ribs.

Everyone around them fell deadly silent at the sound of the loud crack that seemed to reverberate across the lot.

David almost immediately doubled over, letting out a pathetic cry, as he clutched at his middle, staggering backwards.

Blake felt anger building inside her as she remembered each and every bruise and mark he had left on her skin…every vile word that had spilled from his lips.

This weak, cowardly man.

"I loved you," she uttered as David lifted his eyes up to her, scrambling back towards the fence, away from Blake.

"P-Please…" he tried to mouth…but Blake stalked towards him, readjusting her grip on the bat, and cutting across him.

"But you just…you tortured me….made me believe I was worth nothing….." she continued, swinging the baseball bat back once again. "And I convinced myself that I needed you….when I don't….I never actually did, did I?"

With that, the baseball bat collided squarely with David's stomach, tearing his blue shirt apart as it did so.

David doubled over again, this time coughing blood suddenly onto the asphalt before him.
He hurriedly turned away from Blake and limped over towards the high metal fencing, near to where Dwight was still stood beside the gate.

"P-Please..." spluttered David in a weak voice. "B-Blakey..."

But Blake wrinkled her nose, baring her teeth at him.

She hated him.

With every fibre in her body she hated him.

Hated what he had done to her.

Ground her down...made her feel like she was nothing...

Blake knew that Negan and all the Saviours were watching her from at least ten paces behind, but right now she didn't care...fury washing over her...focused on only one thing.

"Don't you dare even fucking utter my name..." she growled in a low voice, rounding on David and grabbing him suddenly by the throat, pointing Lucille into his chest with her other hand.

She was shorter than him, yes, but right now, as David stood stooped on bended knees, clutching at his bleeding middle, Blake knew she was in control.

She had the power now, to do whatever she wanted.

She breathed hard...

Staring down at the pathetic man before her, before her eyes suddenly travelled over to Dwight standing there, one hand on the gate.

And it was in that moment Blake knew what she needed to do, bringing herself up to her full height, sneering down at David.

She leaned her face suddenly into his, grimacing as her grip tightened against his neck....

Just like his hand done just three days earlier.

Blake blinked...feeling nothing but disgust for the person she had told herself that she had once loved...as he stood here whimpering in her grasp....

For what she had felt for him had never been love....it had been fear and hurt and pain....endless....endless pain.

Blake parted her lips as David stared up at her wide eyed, mouthing at the air like a large overgrown insect.

But the caramel-blonde woman merely bared her teeth once again and moved her mouth to his ear....

"You're. not. anyone..." she uttered in a cold voice, repeating the words David had uttered to her just before he had pushed her down the stairs.

And with that, before David could move or even mumble another word, Blake had given him a sharp shove backwards, just as Dwight opened the large looming gate with a deafeningly loud creak....
David stumbled backwards, crying out. Tumbling suddenly into the fenced-off lot. Looking at Blake in horror.

Just as a large crowd of four or five walkers descended on him. Before he could do anything to stop them.

Blake stared straight ahead, as the dead tore at David's flesh. Sinking their broken teeth into his skin. As he screamed in uttered pain.

And yet, despite seeing this horror unfold before her very eyes.

Blake felt nothing.

Nothing.

Not even a single shred of remorse.

For any love she had felt for him had died when he had sold her out to Negan.

Blake lifted her chin defiantly and turned around, as David's pained cries rang out behind her. And began to walk.

She strode back over towards the building. Looking forwards flatly. Walking past Negan once more.

But she didn't look at him.

Not even when she handed the bloody bat back to him soundlessly.

The tall, bearded man took it from her almost immediately. Opening his mouth as if to speak.

But Blake didn't allow him to say anything more. Merely walking off. Parting the crowd of Saviours as she did so.

Heading back inside. Out of the warm evening sunlight.

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[Thank you for reading everyone. Please let me know what you thought of this chapter!]
The bathtub

Blake gave a breathy gasp of air as she slipped into the hot, soapy water….which burned and caused her bruised skin to tingle.

Blake had walked in a daze for a long while….silently wandering the cool, gloomy corridors, having headed out of the evening sunshine and into the darkness beyond.

She was tired. Exhausted and breathless….the realisation of what she had just done not fully hitting her, until she had found where she wanted to be, that was.

Blake had shoved open the, already-ajar, door, and blinked, gazing around.

Everything was quiet here.

Calm and quiet….as her bloody fingers slipped quietly away from the door handle.

She looked down at them….down at her sweater…covered in tiny red dots from Lucille.

Part of her should have cared. She knew that. But part of didn't want to. Not now. Not after everything.

And so, the caramel-blonde woman had moved over to the second room, flipping on the light and headed over to the large wash basin and turned on the faucet.

The water was, to her surprise, warm in the tap….and as Blake let out a shaky breath…looking down into the red…then pink…then clear water, as it washed away down the basin…her eyes travelled simply over to the large bathtub, set in the middle of the room.

She had, without a second thought, stood up straight and slipped her grey sweater from her body….

Her sneakers and pants came too….followed by her underwear.

And before Blake had realised what she was doing, she found herself slipping down into the water… the tub now filled with a white mountain of soap suds.

She had found a dusty, disused bottle of bubble bath on the floor nearby, doubting that Negan ever used it, so had helped herself.

For she really didn't care anymore.

More important things had happened today, than Blake using some bubble bath that didn't belong to her.

But it was here, in the hot water of the tub, that she finally let a small tear slip down her cheek….dropping quietly into the water below.

But that was all she would allow herself.

David did not deserve anything more.

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It had taken Negan a long time to find her.
After he had searched her room…the bathrooms…the canteen…he had of course, known the next place he would check…

And he had been right.

Strolling into his quarters, he lifted his chin surveying the open bathroom door, light on…the smell of fragrant, humid air, drifting out towards him…

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For almost thirty minutes now Blake had sat there, knees pulled up into her, head resting on her folded arms…staring into space.

Every inch of her felt more exhausted now that it ever had….but she couldn't close her eyes…

Not yet anyway. For she knew that if she allowed herself to lie back and drift into that dream world where David still existed, then she would likely never wake up.

Blake lifted a hand to her damp shoulder, kneading at her sore and aching muscles.

But as much as she ached…as much as she was in pain…she knew that that was it. That it was all over now…a huge weight being lifted off of her.

She was finally free.

Blake let out a long breath of air, just as there came a creak of floorboards from the doorway behind her.

She knew of course who it was.

But it was a long moment before he spoke.

"You alright, Peaches?"

Negan's voice was softer than it usually was, but no less husky, with that same drawling tone he always used.

He genuinely sounded full of concern, but Blake continued to stare straight ahead. Not yet turning around to look at him.

With her legs pulled up to her chest and the soap bubbles that surrounded her, Blake didn't care about the sight of her bare skin in front of him. But even if she hadn't had this protection, she still doubted she would have cared even then.

Blake gave a brief nod. Trying to communicate all she could within that gesture.

She was emotionally exhausted right now. Too much for words.

Blake had half expected Negan to yell at her on finding her here, using his personal bathroom and supply of warm water as though it was her right to. But the tall, dark-haired Saviour did not even touch on the subject.

She heard him let out a small sigh, running hand down his face.

"Listen, Doll-face," he said in a slow voice, pausing for a long moment. "What you did out there….I mean, jeez…..I just wanted you to know…"
He paused again, shaking his head.

"… whatever you fuckin' need…"

And with that, he trailed off…not uttering another word.

And less than a second or two later, Blake heard him turn on his booted heel and stroll back out of the bathroom. Leaving Blake alone, once again with her thoughts.

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At least an hour had passed by the time Blake finally stepped out of the, now, lukewarm water.

Her eyelids felt heavy…like they were about to close at any moment.

She needed sleep…to rest….for what she had been through this evening. Well, it felt too much to bear.

Blake moved over to the back of the door and pulled down a large white, towelling bathrobe and shrugged it over her damp, naked body, tying it neatly at the waist.

She doubted this belonged to Negan or any of his wives, but she was in fact far too tired to dwell on this, right at this very moment.

Blake pushed her long caramel damp hair, that now hung loosely around her face, back over her shoulders, giving a heavy blink before padding slowly and tentatively back into Negan's large living quarters.

The room was illuminated now, by just a soft, warm lamplight…which made it look far cosier than Blake had ever expected it to look.

Her green eyes flickered slowly about, suddenly spotting the figure of Negan sat on his black leather couch, where she had initially found him, just a few short hours ago.

He had his back to her now, his black jacket and boots still on…but it was obvious that he noticed her come in.

He turned his head around slowly…his dark chocolate eyes coming to land on her, before he slowly got to his feet.

He moved about, looking down at the carpeted floor, and running a hand over his chin momentarily, before looking back up over at her. As if trying to search for the right words as he gazed at Blake.

The tall, bearded Saviour's eyes seemed to bore into hers. Reading her emotions better than she could explain them.

And it was then that Blake's own eyes flickered down to the floor, unable to hold onto his gaze.

He saw too much in her. She knew that.

"I-Is it alright if I borrow this?" she asked in a quiet, shaky voice, plucking at the oversized white robe, trying to act casual. But inside she was dying. The anguish and apian and exhaustion overwhelming her.

But Negan didn't answer her, merely closing the gap between them, coming to stand just an inch or two away from her.
A second later Blake felt his long tanned fingers reach her chin, suddenly lifting her face, so that her eyes met with his once again.

"Darlin', your fuckin' eyes should be anywhere but on the fuckin' floor right now," Negan uttered, his tone firm. "We clear?"

Blake just stared back at him. This usually unforgiving, dangerous man. This man that most called a monster. Here talking to her as if she was his equal.

Blake gave another tired nod, her shoulders slumping wearily as she looked up into Negan's eyes. He wasn't smiling and yet right now he gave her more warmth that a hundred hot baths ever could.

Blake let out another shaky breath, as Negan's long fingers traced gently over the bruises at her neck. And before she could stop herself….it coming as wholly a surprise her her…Blake let out a sudden sob…as tears drifted their way down her cheeks.

All this. It was too much to keep control of.

Negan parted his lips, titling his head, watching her. Looking for a moment as if he was about to say something, but the words never seemed to come.

But it was a brief minute before Blake swiped away those tears, gazing up the ceiling momentarily, before giving a heavy sigh.

She had needed that.

Those tears were not for David.

They were for her. For a life that had been lost over the past six months…that was now regained.

And then, without a word, Blake pulled herself away from Negan, instead moving over to his large wooden four poster bed in the far corner of the room.

She was dead on her feet…perhaps just wanting to rest her eyes for a brief few seconds. That was all.

But even so, as she sank onto the soft mattress, she half expected Negan to reprimand her or at least make smart-mouthed, inappropriate comment.

But that comment, as Blake carefully avoided his gaze, never seemed to come.

Not even when she gave an exhausted sigh , sliding up the bed slightly and curling up on her side, hand underneath her head…as her eyes met finally with his.

Negan raised an eyebrow, but didn't smile. Instead he just stood there surveying her, as Blake pursed her lips, communicating with him silently once again.

For right now, Blake didn't have the energy for wasted words.

But she knew, that Negan was, as always, fully aware how much she did not want to be alone right now.

And the Saviour, to her relief, seemed to understand.
Of course he did.

For after a long moment, the tall, dark-haired bearded man, moved around the bed and settled himself down beside Blake wordlessly. Lifting his hands up behind his head and laying back against his white pillows, boots and jacket still on.

But thankfully for Blake, Lucille was nowhere to be seen. And for that she was grateful.

And with that, Blake gave a quiet sigh, as her eyes suddenly drifted closed….

...sleep coming in….taking her exhausted body away…before she could stop it….

…taking her to a dream world….wherein Negan was stood guard….making sure that David was thankfully, nowhere to be found….
Breakfast in bed

Blake blinked open her eyes groggily, and gave a small moan of tiredness.

Her body felt stiff and her still aching ribs felt like they had only got worse overnight, but despite this, Blake felt wholly alive.

As though over the space of a few hours and a good rest later, she felt like a new person. The weight of the world having been lifted from her shoulders.

And it had been.

For months on end, she had to live with the impending dread that she might get home…go back to her house in Alexandria to find David in an angry mood about nothing. Ready to take it out on her in any way he deemed fit.

But all that was over now. And as much as she was sure she was expected to be sad about his dismal demise…she wasn't.

She felt, in a strange way, freer than she had in a long time.

But even so, as Blake brought herself up onto her elbows, bleary-eyed…giving a frown, suddenly remembering just where she was.

Blake was not back in her room on the third floor, but she was instead up here, in Negan's quarters. On Negan's bed…still in the heavy white bathrobe she had fallen asleep in.

Blake shifted around to peer at the spot next to her on the bed…but there was no sign of the tall, bearded Saviour in question.

Nothing but a small dusty imprint of where his boots had led across the pristine white bedsheets the previous evening.

Had he really slept beside her last night? With no hint of trying to goad her into having sex with him either?

That certainly was not something she had expected from the dangerous leader of the Saviours. Had she just imagined the whole thing? She wouldn't have put it past herself in her exhausted state.

Blake rubbed at her eyes tiredly…and pulled herself up into a neat sitting position, looking around.

She was alone…the illumination from the window casting a bright white light on the room and on the empty sofa and armchairs across the large, open-plan space

In the daylight the room was far more modern that Blake first had thought, with grey walls, ornate lamps and large green plants littering the area. She gave a small sigh as she noticed Negan's barbed-wire covered baseball bat lying abandoned on the coffee table….as if it were the most natural place in the world for it to belong.

The weapon she had partly used to end her boyfriend's life not even twenty-four hours ago.

But before Blake could dwell on any of this further, the large oak door leading into the room suddenly swung open, and in stepped Negan…tall and looming, his usual black leather jacket shrugged easily over his sloping shoulders.
A wide grin slipped onto his face as he suddenly caught sight of her, sitting there on his bed.

"Well, mornin' sunshine," he said in a charmingly gruff voice, kicking the door closed behind him and strolling towards her.

He held out a plastic plate of hot food, as he arched his back, eyeing her, smirking.

"Thought you might be hungry…" he murmured in a low drawl.

Blake peered up at him for the first time properly, pulling her robe around herself just a little defensively, suddenly wholly aware that she was very, very naked beneath it.

But Negan, catching this, gave an immediate chuckle.

"Hey, don' mind me. You wanna get your titties out in here, then be my guest," he said in a teasing voice, causing Blake to scowl up at him, huffing.

"I wasn't-" she started, before she narrowed her eyes and snatched the warm plate from his grasp. "Just….shut up."

Negan laughed loudly.

On the plate in Blake's hand was a small stack of limp looking pancakes. But all the same, Blake hadn't eaten since yesterday. And for the first time in a long time, she finally realised how much of appetite she actually had.

Six months of mistreatment and vile words would certainly do that to a girl.

She placed the plate down beside her on the bed and tore apart a piece of the dry pancake with her fingers.

"Now no getting' crumbs on my bed, Doll-face," said Negan pointing at her, in a voice of faux-warning. "An' don't think I'm fuckin' jokin'!"

But Blake flashed him a frozen smile, as she placed a piece of pancake in her mouth.

It was dry and didn't taste of much, but it was warm and surprisingly moreish.

"So…am I going to get breakfast in bed every day?" she asked in an innocent tone, after a couple of long moments of silence, raising her eyebrow up in the tall, dark-haired man's direction, fiendishly.

Negan grinned, showing her a line of white teeth.

"Uh, do I look like a fucking servant to you?" he asked incredulously, placing a hand to his chest in a gesture of mock-defensiveness. "I mean, Jesus, Sweetheart. I try to be fucking nice, and you just take advantage."

Blake chuckled, shifting her bare feet against the sheets below her, taking another bite of pancake.

A moment of long, drawn-out silence seemed to fall over the pair of them, but it wasn't an uncomfortable one.

Blake finished off the last of her plate of food, brushing the crumbs from the bed as Negan stared over at her grinning, his hands shoved into the pockets of his grey pants as he rocked back on his heels.
"So…." Blake finally uttered, her eyes flickering up to him after a second or two…looking a little tentative if truth be told.

She blinked her eyes, and cocked her head, giving Negan a small smile.

"…no coffee?"

At this Negan gave a whining laugh of approval.

"Well shit, Peaches," said the tall, tanned saviour shaking his head and surveying her with twinkling eyes. "You are fucking lucky I have a soft spot for ya"

Negan pointed at her, tugging on his bottom lip with his teeth.

And for the briefest of moments, Blake felt her breath catch momentarily in her throat. But she hurriedly pushed this feeling away.

"Look, I'll get Laura to bring some up for you," he said easily, stretching his back with a groan, his eyes still fixed to hers. "But in the meantime, Doll-face. If you wanna take another bath, I mean, I would be more than willin' to join you for that one. I could even scrub your back for you….massage those aching shoulders of yours."

But Blake rolled her eyes, smirking, and pushed herself from the bed.

"As tempting as that sounds," she said smirking and getting to her feet. "I thiiink I'm all bath-ed out."

Her tone was simpering and teasing, and she glanced up at Negan before bumping her shoulder with his as she sauntered past him.

"You can get Laura to bring that coffee to my room," she finished, wrinkling her nose as she smiled up at Negan teasingly.

Blake was glad about all this….their pointless sniping at each other.

Acting as normal, as if yesterday had never happened.

Negan, of course, grinned back, giving a gentle huff, as Blake tied the robe tighter around herself and made to head out of the door, ready to make her way back to her own room, three floors and few hallways down.

But before she could reach the door, she felt Negan's sudden hand reach out, grabbing her upper arm gently, stopping her in her tracks.

He had turned around and was stood beside her now, his face much more serious that it had been a second or two ago, his chocolate eyes boring into hers.

Blake gave a sudden, gulp the atmosphere in the room changing slightly.

"You sure you're alright, Peaches?" asked Negan suddenly in a low voice. "Coz' I mean, as badass as you were last night…you still fuckin' killed your own fi-an-ce by feedin' him to those dead pricks out there. An' I know how much that type of thing can kinda screw with your head."

Blake stared back at Negan for a long second before nodding.

She was ok.
In fact, she felt better than she had felt in a long, long time.

But did that mean she was over it? Now that she wasn't quite sure of…

"I'm fine," she said in a sudden quiet voice, reassuring him. "I just…"

There was something else she wanted to say, but she could not quite find the right words at this very moment.

But she gave another nod instead, her eyes drifting around the room. Looking anywhere but at Negan right now.

"…I think coffee would help."

She wrinkled her nose again and grinned up at him once more.

That soft, mild and warm atmosphere filling the room once again as Negan smiled back, chuckling. 

He gave an enormously sarcastic roll of his eyes.

"Alright, alright..." he said raising his hands in defeat. "One coffee comin' right up, your Majesty."

Blake bit her lip, turning on her heel and headed out of the door…

But what she didn't see was Negan's face stare after her as she left the room, a large admiring, devoted smirk, plastered across his long, bearded features, as he watched her go….still wearing his bathrobe as she went.

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It wasn't even twenty minutes later, that Blake, having just got showered, was stood in the corner of her room, doing up the last couple of buttons on her navy shirt.

She gave a sigh, glancing into the mirror, just as she had the day before…looking back at her hollow cheeks and her purple ringed eyes.

But today she could have sworn she looked fresher….felt more alive….

There was today, colour to those cheeks and after having a good night's sleep, the bags beneath her eyes had all but disappeared.

But there was nothing that could be done about those bruises. No. It would take a few days for those, and her broken bones, to heal.

Blake was convinced she had done even more damage to her sprained wrist after using Lucille yesterday, so she planned this morning, to take a walk to see Dr Carson to check up on it.

She had all but completely forgotten about Negan's promise of coffee when the door to her room was suddenly shoved open, and in walked the tall-dark haired Saviour himself.

He looked as haphazard and as thrown together as always, with legs that seemed far too long for him, a dazzling grin at his bearded face, and a knife at his belt.

"I thought you were sending Laura," said Blake eyeing him suddenly, as her fingers danced cross her buttons, doing them up to her collarbone neatly, as Negan's eyes, she was sure, lingered there for a long second.
He gave a sudden chuckle.

"Oh by all means, Doll-face," he said ignoring her comment, and approaching her with that cocky walk of his. "Leave those buttons open…"

He almost groaned the words causing Blake to roll her eyes and tut as he stopped close to her, pressing a mug of hot black coffee into her hands.

She pursed her lips, staring up at him.

"In your dreams….errand boy…" she said in a mocking tone, taking the coffee cup and pushing suddenly past him, moving over to the large bureau which sat near to the window, and picking up a hairbrush. "Listen, shouldn't you be out there…"

She shrugged giving a frown and taking a sip of her coffee, glancing back over at Negan.

"…I don't know…..killing people and taking their shit or something? Isn't that what you do."

Negan marvelled at her, spinning around on his heel to face her, arching his back as he did so.

"Well, ok there Ms 'I've got a taste for killing people now'," he said in a loud, incredulous voice. But it might fuckin' surprise you to know, that that is not in my regular day job."

Blake cocked her head at him, narrowing her eyes.

"Really?" she uttered in a scathing voice of utter disbelief. "What is then? Bringing me coffee?"

She shot him a teasing look, raising both eyebrows in his direction, as she pulled the brush through her long damp hair, lifting the coffee cup to her lips again and taking a long sip.

But Negan just grinned back, his teeth gritted together.

"Listen, Peaches," began the tall Saviour, moving over to her slowly, leaning his long face into hers, coming to stop just a breath away. "As much as you really got me goin', using Lucille like that last night...you have gotta be careful usin' that smart-mouth tone with me, because I cannot tell you how hard you are makin' me right now."

Blake pursed her lips, sensing the utter goading in his voice, as she stared up at him.

"Ugh...you're despicable," she uttered finally, shoving him away with her hand and moving away from him once again. "And I don't have a taste for killing people, by the way."

She stopped in her tracks.

"Last night...that was...different..." she uttered with a reassuring nod.

That was the truth. Or at least she hoped it was.

Although Blake still felt pretty shell-shocked about the whole thing. As though it hadn't really hit her yet what had truly happened.

"Well, like I've said before," said Negan strolling back across the room, his boots chinking as he went. "Remind me not to get on the wrong side of you, Doll."

Blake glanced over at Negan to see him pointing back at her smirking.
She rolled her eyes.

"Listen, I've got to go and see Dr Carson," she said taking a final sip of her coffee before placing it down on the nightstand beside her bed. "Why don't you go bother someone else instead."

"Ooh, buttercup," said Negan wrinkling his nose, his tongue poking through his teeth. "Can I just say, I am thoroughly enjoyin' our repertoire today."

Blake tutted, moving over towards the door, giving a sigh.

"Was there anything else you actually wanted?" she said in a faux-tired voice, her eyes drifting back over towards the tall, dark-haired, intimidating Saviour.

But in a blink of an eye, Negan's face became suddenly serious.

"Actually....." he said dragging a hand down his bearded face and giving a heavy sigh. "There was somethin' I wanted to ask you."

Blake gave a tiny gulp, the atmosphere in the room having changed once again.

It was as if since last night, something had changed between the pair of them. An unspeakable sort of bond.

"Y'know, if it's whether or not I wanted to be one of your wives," she said a little nervously, talking fast and giving a brief unsure smile. "Then just so you know, the answer's still no."

But Negan's dark eyes remained fixed to hers, as he took a heavy step towards her once again, coming to stop less than a foot away from her.

Blake looked up into his eyes, full of something she couldn't quite put her finger on.

And her stomach jolted….as Negan suddenly spoke.

"I was gona ask if you want me to take you back to Alexandria?" he asked his voice full of low concern.

Blake stopped suddenly, her eyes widening. Never expecting this. Not from Negan of all people.

"I mean Rick is still a HUGE prick, don't get me wrong. But I fully fuckin' understand that it wasn't your decision to come here. An' just so you know, I don't fucking offer this to a lot of people, Doll-face. But you're just a special exception," uttered Negan in a low growling voice, his gaze earnest. "An' I fucking like you...enough to see you go...if that's what you want."

Blake stared up into Negan's chocolate eyes for the longest of moments. Fully contemplating what he was asking her.

He was giving her the choice.

Giving her freedom.

The absolute opposite of what David had ever, ever offered her.

But was this what she wanted? Right now? Of course it was. It had to be, right?

But before Blake could nod and agree, she felt a pull in the back of her chest. Something stopping her from doing so.
She parted her lips slowly, taking in every inch of Negan's features, before giving one last gulp.

"Ask me tomorrow," Blake said in what was merely a whisper.

And with that she turned on her heel and headed out the door.

Leaving it at that.

But in the hallway, still illuminated from behind by the light of the doorway, the caramel-blonde woman paused for a long second.

"Oh, but…uh….if you're wondering what to bring me for lunch," she called back over her shoulder at him. "I'm kinda in the mood for chicken and collared-greens...errand boy."

And with that, Blake smiled to herself as she heard Negan give a laugh behind her…as she disappeared off down the corridor to find Dr Carson.
A warm day

It was warm day. The hottest Blake had felt in a long time. She had noticed that from the moment she had awoken at around nine-thirty this morning.

Blake had gotten up and dressed, struggling to find anything appropriate in her closet for the scorching hot conditions. So had finally settled on a pair of black pants and a plain white t-shirt. But even then, she felt herself perspiring as she walked through the hallway on her way back from grabbing a quick, late-morning breakfast of stale oatmeal, at the makeshift canteen.

The previous day had gone by, for Blake, in a flash.

On her way day to see Dr Carson the previous day, followed by Negan. The tall, dark-haired Saviour had been apprehended by Simon, and had soon disappeared off, giving no explanation. And that had been the last time Blake had seen him.

Almost twenty-four hours later and Blake could only presume he was off on a run somewhere, or visiting one of the groups the Saviours had power over.

Not that she cared or anything.

Negan did nothing but irritate and annoy her, although the day did seem to go by a lot quicker when he was around.

Blake had grabbed a bread roll and bit of cheese for lunch yesterday and had sat alone eating it, just as she had done that evening too.

But the nervous stares and glances that seemed to follow her, soon had become too much to cope with, and so Blake had eventually taken her evening meal of turkey and green beans up to her room to eat instead.

She guessed that word must have spread about David's demise.

But she hoped to god most people knew the full story. Not just painting her as a brutal killer, like Negan and the rest of his men.

David had deserved all that. Hadn't he?

He had ground Blake down…tried to kill her….

…but she found it difficult to be proud of the fact that she had been solely responsible for his death.

She wasn't a Saviour.

She wasn't Negan.

Bake gave a sigh. Scooping her long caramel hair up off her clammy neck as she walked, today, down the long darkened hallway.

The heat was causing her skinny pants to stick to her legs uncomfortably. And Blake knew that there was only one other place she might be in with the change of finding something, weather-appropriate, to put on.

And so, turning left at the end of the corridor, she headed through a large set of double doors and
down the stairs that followed.

Her knowledge of the Sanctuary was improving and she was slowly finding it easier to navigate the maze of hallways now…Not that she planned to stay here or anything.

Negan had yesterday asked her if she had wanted to go home. Go back to Alexandria.

But did she? Right now she wasn't so sure.

Of course, she couldn't stay here forever….but there was something grounding her here….making her feel slightly tentative about going back to Rick and his group.

Perhaps it was the fact that she would be returning alone. And not with David.

Of course they would ask questions about his whereabouts, and that was not really something Blake wanted to discuss at the moment.

So she would wait until Negan asked again maybe.

And then she would make up her mind.

Blake shoved open a large steel door ahead of her, walking slowly into the busy marketplace, already full of people going to and fro…bartering points for items at each table and stand.

A couple of faces turned towards Blake as she entered, but she merely gave an internal sigh and carefully avoided their gaze.

Walking down the large rows of tables, Blake looked this way and that for the items she wanted. Mainly women's clothes….perhaps some summer things.

Not that she wasn't grateful for the items she already had upstairs in her closet, of course.

Blake passed by a small rickety table, where an old man with grey hair and a short beard, was selling all sorts of bathroom essentials and hygiene products, such as body wash, nail clippers and the like, whilst adding together points in a huge ledger before him.

He scowled up at one young girl who only looked about fourteen, standing near to his stall.

"You don't have enough points for these," aid the old man shrugging and withdrawing a small box of tampons from the girls grasp. "Tough luck."

The girl looked almost as though she was about to cry, as she lingered there, opening her mouth and closing it again.

"P-Please, I need them-" she began in a quiet voice, barely louder than a whisper.

"Not my problem. You don't have the points, I can't help you," said the stall-holder dismissively, craning his head around the girl, calling forwards a man behind her in the line. "NEXT!"

But Blake gave a growl, her eyes darkening as she looked on, taking a sudden step forwards.

"Do I have enough points?" she said in a loud voice, lowering her chin at the old stall-holder.

Blake raised her eyebrows incredulously, and pointed to the tampons.

The old man, looked up at Blake suddenly, looking a little taken aback.
"Well…I….uhhh…..well technically.." he uttered, looking a little nervous all of a sudden. "I mean Negan said you don't need points…"

Blake gave a knowing nod and flashed the man a fake smile. "You won't mind if I just take these then?" she said in a sickly-sweet tone, picking up the box of sanitary products.

And with that, she handed the tampons swiftly to the young girl at her side, without a word.

"Y-You can't do that," said the man suddenly scraping back his chair and getting to his feet.

But Blake suddenly rounded on him, shooting him a dark scowl.

"Really?" she said titling her head dangerously. "And why not? Negan said I could have what I want. And are you really gonna argue with him?"

The man reddened, shaking his bearded head. "No…" he muttered hurriedly. "...It's just that….well…there are rules, and you can't just go-
"

"I mean, you are more than welcome to tell him you have a problem with me, if that's what you want," said Blake giving a pout. "I'm sure he'd be very understanding."

Blake knew instantly that she had won.

There was no way anyone was going to ignore a direct order from Negan. And if Blake took advantage of that fact, then that was just a bonus the leader of the Saviours would have to deal with.

The stall holder sat back down hurriedly, his eyes flickering away from Blake. "Next," he said in a slightly put-out voice, calling forwards the man next in the line.

Blake gave another sigh, as the young teenager at her side uttered a brief thank you before scurrying quickly away.

She wasn't here to fight peoples battles for them, but if she could help out for a while, she would, in any way possible.

Blake strolled casually over, past another stall selling various fruits, including some huge watermelons, before she finally spotted the table she had been looking for.

Today it was manned by an older woman with black curly hair, who was busy folding the items before her, neatly in her hands.

Blake nodded at her briefly, before beginning to rummage through the huge piles of women's clothes.

There were tank tops, leggings, and even lacy lingerie, that Blake couldn't even imagine herself wearing in this world!

On one side was a pile of shoes, and on the other, some sweaters all piled up in a basket.

Blake routed through the pile in the middle of the table, suddenly pulling out a pretty floral cotton dress that looked to be about her size, with spaghetti straps and buttons all the way up the front.

She held it up before her, thinking how good it would feel to be wearing something like that in heat like this, when she felt a sudden hand slip around her waist and a body press up to her side from behind.
"Oh Peaches, now if I saw you in that, I do not know I'd be able to control myself," came a sudden husky voice, close to her ear, that caused a sudden uncontrollable shiver to run down Blake's spine, and the hairs on the back of her neck to stand on end.

Blake rolled her eyes, pursing her lips, and dropped the dress back down to the table again.

"Don't you have enough wives to help you out with that one?" uttered Blake in a scathing voice, without turning to look at the man at her side, for she knew who it was just by the sound of his voice, and the musky scent that seemed to drift towards her nostrils, causing her heart to pound just that little bit faster.

She almost felt him press a grin to her ear.

"Yes, but I'm only human sweetheart," he said in a low voice. "An' seein' you in that lil' thing would drive any man fuckin' wild."

Blake pouted and turned to face him, his hand still lingering there at her waist.

There he was, Negan. Standing looming over her in his usual black leather jacket, grey pants with Lucille in his hand. But today he had a red scarf at his neck and a charming, cocky smirk plastered across his long, bearded face.

Blake placed her hand to his forearm gently, her fingers slipping around the black leather slowly.

"You might only be human, Negan, but your definitely still an asshole," she muttered, shooting him a look as he leaned over her, chuckling cockily.

"Yeah, but that don' mean you don' like me, Doll-face," he said in a drawling voice, his dark chocolate eyes roving over her soft features, as he poked his tongue out from between his straight white teeth.

Blake rolled her eyes, tutting, which only caused Negan's grin to widen.

"So..." he said after a moment or two, his fingers sliding their way further around her waist (although Blake did nothing to stop him) "...you miss me?"

Blake raised her eyebrows giving him a small smile, shrugging noncommittally.

"Oh, were you gone?" she said in an airy tone, her eyes drifting away carelessly, looking back down to the clothes at her side. "I didn't notice."

But Blake heard Negan giving a whining chuckle and take another step into her. Closing the space between them completely.

At this, Blake's breath seemed to hitch in her throat as she stared back up into his tanned face at such close proximity.

"Oh do not pretend that you weren't pining for me while I was away..." said Negan in a low growling voice, leaning his face in close to hers. "I mean I can just picture you...lying awake last night thinkin' of me and moanin' my name, as that hand of yours slides lower and lower-"

But Blake gave him a gentle shove away from her, causing his hand to slip away from her waist.

"Uh, I was not doing THAT, thanks very much!" she said in a loud voice, shaking her head. "Don't flatter yourself."
She eyed him irritably, wrinkling her nose, but Negan just laughed.

"Oh but I've gotta picture somethin' while I'm freezing my goddamn ass of in a van, with no one to cuddle up to but Simon and Dwight, Doll-face," he said grinning widely. "I missed ya."

Blake tutted, reaching for a pair of small khaki green cargo shorts about her size, pretending to ignore his comment.

"If being out all night is such an issue for you, shouldn't you be catching up on sleep right now, instead of bothering me?" she said hazily.

But Negan just smiled, coming to stand beside her, side-on to the table, and picking up a pair of lacy women's panties in his gloved hand, and peering at them goadingly.

"What's that ol' phrase…" Negan muttered, before tossing the underwear back down onto the table. "I'll sleep when I'm dead."

Blake raised an eyebrow in his direction, not helping the small smirk that twitched its way onto her lips.

"And I'm guessing at the rate you piss people off, that might be sooner than you think," she said scathingly, looking him up and down.

Negan certainly had at least fifteen years on Blake, not that that really mattered in this world. But even so, he certainly needed to watch his back, especially when there was plenty of people out there who had vendettas against him nowadays.

Negan looked down at her, gritting his teeth suddenly and narrowing his dark eyes in her direction. "Is that a threat, Princess? Because I've got a nice empty cell down that corridor back there, if that's what you want?"

He pulled Lucille up onto his shoulder, leaning back as he spoke in that overly-confident tone of his, before smiling and lifting his eyebrows teasingly.

But Blake just frowned.

"Don't you dare," she said warningly, suddenly narrowing her eyes back at him seriously and giving a shake of her head. "I swear to god, Negan, you put me back in that cell, and I will kill you!"

And with that, Blake snatched up the pair of khaki shorts from the table and waltzed away, bumping Negan's shoulder hard as she went.

Leaving the tall-bearded Saviour smirking after her.

She didn't even notice as Negan turned cockily towards the nervous-looking, curly-haired stall-holder and gave a wide grin.

"I'll take the dress," he muttered, picking up the pretty floral garment that Blake had been looking at just a few minutes ago, from the table beside him. Before suddenly leaning in towards the older woman and wrinkling his nose fiendishly, explaining…

"…for my date tonight."
The request

Blake was sat outside in the sun, now dressed in her khaki shorts and white t-shirt, enjoying the warm weather with an untouched book and a bottle of water propped beside her.

Now that she was in something more comfortable, the day had certainly become more enjoyable.

And of course that had nothing at all to do with Negan being back.

Not a single bit.

She was sat on the small balcony, alone as always, watching through squinted eyes as several Saviours poked long spikes through oncoming walkers that leered at the fence frighteningly.

Each and every day, the dead seemed to be drawn here in their droves. Probably due to the masses of vehicles that seemed to constantly move in and out of the Sanctuary, but probably also partly due to the sound of the trapped walkers that stood attached, protecting the long fences surrounding the buildings.

Blake had at first, partly looked out for the dead figure of David when she had arrived out here, just a few feet away from where 'it' had happened. Gulping as her eyes had flitted amongst the decaying walkers. But she knew in reality that the entirety of him was now gone.

And that, well…that was all her fault.

But she kept telling herself that this world was different now.

And that if David had had the chance, he would have done exactly the same thing to her.

In this world, it was do or die.

And Blake just had to accept that now.

But suddenly, before she could dwell on this any longer, a large looming shadow fell across her seat.

Blake immediately pursed her lips, almost rolling her eyes huffily.

"You here to bother me again?" she uttered a little snappily, unable to help her lips twitching up into the smallest of smirks.

But to her surprise, the reply that came, was not from the leader of the Saviours, Negan, as expected, but instead from another voice.

"I-I'm sorry, I just saw you out here and thought I'd say hello. Thought it might be appropriate to offer my condolences and the like, given the situation," came the quiet, low tone of-

"Eugene," said Blake suddenly, peering up at the mullet-wearing man through the sunlight that silhouetted him. "Sorry, I thought you were someone else."

Eugene stepped around Blake, his mouth fixed into a straight line.

"I just thought I would come and see how you were," he said in matter-of-fact tone. "After what
happened the other night….well, that would be hard on anyone. But if it's any consolation, I thought you did the right thing. David seemed like, if you pardon my French, a pretty bad egg."

Blake bit at her lip, giving a gulp.

"I'm fine," she said promptly. "I'm, uhhh…I'm over it."

Was that a lie? Blake wasn't so sure.

Should she have felt guilty that she didn't really feel, well, anything right now?

Not hurt…not pain…not sadness….just nothing.

"Are you sure? Because I know from first-hand experience how hard these things can hit you, when you lose someone you l-" began Eugene, but Blake cut across him suddenly.

"I'm fine, Eugene, ok?!" she said in a slightly raised voice, getting to her feet suddenly.

Blake at this moment felt harassed.

Defensive and angry.

She snatched up the book and the bottle of water that was sat at her side.

But Eugene, as solemn looking as ever, merely blinked, not reacting to Blake's outburst at all.

But Blake was in no mood to be questioned. Not right now.

Why did people think that they had the right to do that?

It was almost as if they wanted Blake to feel bad…to feel upset. And was she really a villain for not feeling those things?

For not feeling anything at all?

She turned on her heel huffily.

"See you later, Eugene..," she uttered sharply, heading inside, not even taking a second look back towards the dark-haired scientist.

Blake was infuriated.

Feeling utterly defensive right now.

But maybe she wasn't mad at Eugene for asking if she was ok. Maybe she was mad at the fact that she hadn't felt anything over these last few days.

Was she over David? Over his death? The death of her partner of years….the man who she loved long before the apocalypse. Long before anything…..

Surely she should feel something. But all Blake seemed to feel, was empty inside….longing to feel anything at all…

Because she should be feeling something right now? Surely?

Blake heaved a difficult sigh, heading back up to her room on the third floor.
She hadn't seen Negan since her brief run-in with him in the marketplace earlier. But if truth be told she wasn't in the mood to see him either.

All the people around her seemed to want to do, was ask questions. Ask things, that Blake just didn't want to give an answer to right now.

And so, feeling utterly conflicted, Blake shoved open the door to her room, slamming it shut behind her. The entire room seemed to reverberate after it, but she didn't care.

Flopping instead, down onto her bed huffily, grinding her teeth in irritation at the world.

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It was late afternoon by the time that Blake had finally cooled down, barely remembering why she had been so snappy in the first place.

She had laid back on her bed just staring at the ceiling blankly….until the sun had shifted all the way around the building, finally getting lower in the sky, bringing on the evening's much-needed coolness.

Giving a sigh, Blake had lifted herself up onto her elbows, just as there had been a sharp knock upon the door.

"Come in," said Blake in a hazy voice, half-expecting, once again, for it to be Negan, or even Eugene. But to her surprise it wasn't either man.

The door was, instead, slowly pushed open, by the tall and skinny, blonde figure of Dwight, who stood there, face serious, with a small, wrapped package in his hand.

He sucked at his teeth for a moment, staring over at Blake under hooded eyelids, before venturing a step or two into the room.

Blake raised a single eyebrow in his direction, swinging her legs around to the side of the bed and placing a hand either side of her.

"Can I help you?" she asked in a careful voice. Not quite sure why Dwight would be frequenting her bedroom.

But Blake soon got her answer.

"This is from Negan," uttered Dwight in a quiet yet serious voice, tossing the small, soft-looking parcel, wrapped in brown paper and tied with string, down onto the bed beside Blake. "He wants you to wear this tonight."

Blake gave a sudden frown at the mention of Negan's name.

She froze, staring up at the scarred man for a moment.

"Wants me to wear what?" she asked in an accusing voice, wrinkling her nose.

But Dwight gave a small huff and just nodded towards the parcel.

Blake continued to frown up at him for a long few seconds, before finally pulling at the wrapping and untying the string hurriedly.

She immediately scowled as she saw what was inside.
"You have got to be kidding me," she said bluntly, looking up at Dwight once again and plucking the thin flowery summer dress she had been looking at earlier today in the marketplace, up, as well as a pair of white sandals with a small heel. "There is now way I'm wearing this."

But Dwight folded his skinny arms across himself.

"He wants you to go for dinner with him," said the blonde man, pursing his lips, obviously very aware that Blake wouldn't be too impressed by this request.

Instantly, Blake shot Dwight a scathing look.

"What? To Olive Garden or was he thinking somewhere a bit more classy?" she muttered in a scathing voice.

But Dwight just shifted his weight from foot to foot.

"Downstairs," he said factually, as if she was seriously asking a question. "I'm supposed to take you down there at eight."

Blake gave an annoyed huff at this.

Who the hell did Negan think he was?

"Do I have a choice in this?" she snarled, gritting her teeth, knowing full well that it was likely she didn't.

But Dwight rubbed at his face with his hand, pausing for a second, before looking at Blake once again.

"Not really," he replied honestly. "If you don't agree to come, then you don't eat. I'm not allowed to let you out of this room until you're in that dress, apparently."

Blake gave a loud growl of annoyance.

"He is such an asshole!" she said suddenly, getting to her feet and almost stamping her foot in irritation, balling her fists at her sides.

Blake could feel that bad mood of hers rising in her once again.

How the hell could one man possibly be that arrogant?

"Well I'll starve then, because there is no way I'm wearing that for him!" she said loudly, after a long minute of her fuming had passed.

Blake right now was pacing across the room, pointing down at the dress and sandals furiously.

But Dwight just shrugged, staring back at her.

"Suit yourself," he said with a small sigh. "But if I were you, I'd just do it. For everyone's sake."

And with that, Dwight walked back out of the door, pulling it promptly shut behind him.

But Blake stared after him gaping, for a long second or two, before letting out a long roar of annoyance.

Nope…
Nu-uh…

There was no way Negan was going to get her into that dress tonight.

Not in a million years….
Blake paced around her bedroom, as the sky outside gradually darkened.

She still couldn't believe that Negan would have the gall to give her a dress and heels and expect her to go for dinner with him?

Just like that.

Blake gave another growl, shooting a look over towards the pretty summer dress and white strappy sandals Negan had provided as her outfit for tonight.

There was no way he was getting her in that dress.

Not a chance.

But as the hours seemed to tick by, with Blake's stomach grumbling uncomfortably, she had resigned herself to sitting back down on the bed, beside the items, shooting angry scowls at them at regular intervals.

She hated the dark-haired leader of the Saviours. She hated him.

How could one man possible manage to be so cocky? So confident that she would put on a little dress for him, like all his wives did. That, was not who she was.

Blake wrinkled her nose, folding her arms across her sulking chest huffily, as her stomach gave yet another hungry rumble.

Surely Dwight hadn't been serious about keeping her in here until she agreed?

Blake got to her feet, slowly padding across the room on bare feet and pulled open the door slowly, peering down the seemingly empty corridor.

It was empty.

She gave an inward sigh.

Dwight had obviously been kidding about keeping watch, she thought, as she slipped on out the door silently, making to head down in the direction of the canteen.

But before Blake could take even a single step into the gloomy hallway, the tall, skinny figure of Dwight suddenly appeared from her right, causing to Blake to almost jump out of her skin in fright.

"Jesus!" she yelled, suddenly clutching at her heart, and taking a small step backwards.

But Dwight didn't react to her moment of shock, merely looking her up and down blankly.

"I told you, I can't let you out of your room 'til you're wearing it," he said shaking his head, looking grim.

But this only caused Blake to scowl once again in his direction, folding her arms across her chest defensively.

"So…what? He's going to make me starve to death, to try and force me into a wearing dress for
him?" she asked in an incredulous voice.

But Dwight just gave a sigh, looking seriously aback at her. "No, but if you don't do it, it won't just be you he'll punish, you realise that right?" he uttered frankly.

Blake scoffed.

Negan couldn't scare her.

"Oh yeah? Who's he gonna punish exactly?" she said in a disbelieving voice, shaking her head.

What exactly could Negan do?

With David gone, he had nothing on her now.

Dwight, shifted his weight from foot to foot for a moment, moving about the gun that was clutched between his hands.

"There's Eugene….the people you spoke to from the marketplace….the little girl…" he said in a low voice, listing them. "If you don't give him what he wants, he might not punish you for it, but he'll make the people around you pay. People you might care about."

For a moment Dwight looked a little distant, as if remembered from something like this happening from first-hand experience.

Blake paused, mouthing at the air for a long second, before pursing her lips tightly shut.

"He wouldn't…" she uttered firmly, before suddenly trailing off mid-way through speaking.

In fact, she didn't doubt that was something Negan would do.

"So if I say no," she began again, changing tac slightly. "You really think he'll hurt them?"

She looked at Dwight, a frown line lingering between her brows concernedly.

But Dwight just gave a tired sigh.

"You have no idea what he's capable of," he uttered, self-consciously shaking his stringy blonde hair across his scarred face, and staring down at the ground.

Blake paled for second.

Just because Negan had never done anything to hurt her, she knew full well what he had once done to Glenn and Abraham…not to mention Dwight's face too. That certainly had not been an accident, Blake was sure of that.

Deep down….despite the smart-remarks and the flirting. He had and always would be, a monster. And Blake just couldn't forget that.

She gave a gulp, with one hand on the door, finally looking over her shoulder, back at the dress and sandals that still sat in a neat pile on her bed.

Was she really going to give into him? Let get his way?

But what choice did she have right now? If she didn't put on that stupid dress, as Dwight had said, someone would surely pay.
And so with an angry huff, Blake turned back to Dwight.

"Alright, fine," she said stroppily. "But if he thinks he can get away with this easily, he's got another thing coming!"

And with that, Blake unceremoniously slammed the door in Dwight's face.

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Ten minutes later and Blake walked silently beside Dwight, as he led her down the darkened corridors, in a direction Blake hadn't been before. This part of the Sanctuary was quiet, and far from the hustle and bustle of the canteen or marketplace.

Blake had, reluctantly, and with much huffing, got into her pretty pink and blue summer dress, which clung to her body neatly, skimming past her waist and hips, coming to a stop mid-way up her slender thighs.

She had even slipped on the sandals which fitted pretty snugly on her feet, cursing Negan as she did so.

Dwight took a sharp right, as Blake, her arms folded across her chest irritably, followed him through an unassuming black door and out into a small room, that was dimly lit by only soft lamplight and a single candle sat in the middle of a small table in the centre of the room, next to a large eight-paned window, that spanned the entire far wall.

It was dark now and through the window, Blake could see the brightest of stars that had appeared in the indigo sky.

But it wasn't this that had caught her attention fully.

It instead, was the figure slouched lazily in a chair parallel to the small table.

A figure with a large grin plastered across his long, bearded features, who cocked a dark eye up at her as she entered.

"Well look at you, Peaches," he said in a low grow of a voice, suddenly shifting in his seat. "Don't you look good enough to eat…"

Dwight held the door open wide enough for Blake to enter, which she did so with an enormous scowl plastered across her face.

"Seriously? You blackmail me just to get me into a fuckin' dress?!" she said all of a sudden, marching with purpose towards the relaxed looking Negan, pointing a finger in his direction accusingly. "You are such an asshole, you know that?!"

But Negan gave an amused grin, showing off his pearly white line of teeth, as his sultry eyes looked her up and down.

"Oh it was worth it, Doll-face, believe me…" he uttered, titling his head to the side, his gaze travelling up her thighs as he pulled at his bottom lip, giving a whistle. "I mean…that. view…"

But Blake scowled angrily.

"Ughh, you can keep your eyes to yourself," she snarled, leaning in and jabbing her finger at him reproachfully.
But Negan just grinned again, chuckling.
"Duly noted, Buttercup," he said in a cheery voice. "But I can't promise anything about my hands."

And with that Negan made to reach out, to grab at her upper thigh, making to pull her towards him. But Blake almost immediately slapped his tanned hand away.

"Don't you fucking dare!" she said glaring at him and walking around the table. "Prick…"

Negan gave a whining laugh, leaning back in his seat once more.
"Y'know when you call me names like that, Sweetheart," he said with a sudden low growl, causing the hairs on the back of Blake's neck stand on end. "It just makes me wanna sit you up on this table, and see if you taste like peaches too?"

Blake felt her stomach jolt slightly as she stared directly into Negan's dark eyes, her breath hitching and a heat suddenly pooling inside her….

A sort of warmth she had not felt since she had been sat close to Negan back in that van.

But Blake pursed her lips, tutting, pushing all this from the forefront of her mind….and body.

Just as behind her, she heard Dwight suddenly give an awkward cough from the doorway, causing both of them to look up at him suddenly. The pair of them obviously forgetting he was still there.

"Go get us some dinner Dwight," Negan ordered, with a wave of his hand dismissively. "And no cheap shit either. Get them to make what I ordered from the kitchen."

Dwight gave a nod, avoiding Negan's eye, as he exited the room silently, pulling the door shut behind him.

But as soon as she found that she was now alone with Negan at such close proximity, Blake gave a huff, her face flushing pink, trying to right herself once again.

What was wrong with her tonight?

"I am not one of your wives Negan," she finally uttered in a matter-of-fact voice, shaking her head as she moved around the table, coming to stand by the chair on the other side from him, looking across at the tall-dark-haired man.

Negan, since earlier today, had gotten rid of his red scarf, and was now sat in just his leather jacket, grey t-shirt and pants, with his usual black boots at his feet, and that stupid grin of his, still plastered over his face.

He gave a small laugh.

"Oh, you are much better than them, Princess," he uttered, lifting his hand and rubbing it across his bearded chin. "Especially in that little number. You have no idea how many bad, bad things I would do to you in that."

He nodded towards her body, still wrapped in that clingy dress.

But Blake just scowled.

"Don't you ever stop?" she said, sliding into her seat, and rolling her eyes. "I've only known you a week, y'know…"
She cocked an eye up at Negan as she fiddled with the polished cutlery at her place setting absent-mindedly, not really knowing what to do with her hands.

The small table was, of course, set for two, with a neat, white tablecloth draped over it, and a dusty old bottle of red wine and two wine glasses sat in the centre, next to the tall candlestick.

"A week is like a fuckin' lifetime in this world, Darlin'," Negan said resting his elbow on the arm of his chair and lifting his first two fingers to his stubbly cheek, gazing at her. "And when two people are as hot for each other as you and me, then there. is. no fuckin' point in wasting time."

Blake sat back in her seat and crossed her legs, narrowing her eyes in his direction.

"When have I ever told you I was hot for you, Negan?" she said in a tired, bemused voice.

But Negan just gave a long sigh, leaning forwards and picking up the bottle of wine and beginning to pour the dark red liquid into both of their glasses.

"Oh you didn't need to say a fuckin' word, Peaches…" he said looking suddenly up at her through lowered eyelids. "I can read you like a fuckin' book."

At this, Blake felt her heart immediately began to pound.

Why the hell did he have this effect on her?

But Blake turned her gaze away, picking up her wine glass and taking a small sip.

The wine tasted slightly vinegary but not bad considering how old the bottle looked.

"Careful now, sweetheart," said Negan, giving a sudden widening grin, nodding at her. "We don' want you hurling in my bathroom like last time, now do we?"

Blake rolled her eyes, placing the glass down again and giving a tut.

He was so, so annoying.

"Uhhh, THAT was because you plied me with whisky," she said matter-of-factly, toying with the stem of her glass. "Now, wine- I'm good with."

Negan gave a small chuckle, his dark eyes still on her, she could feel them.

"Plied? You sound like I was tryin' to take advantage of you, Princess," he eventually muttered, taking a sip from his own glass.

But Blake cocked an eyebrow in his direction.

"Aren't you always?" she said shaking her head and tucking a strand of caramel blonde hair back behind her ear.

Blake couldn't say she hadn't made an effort tonight. She had pulled at her hair in the mirror, trying to tease it into some sort of shape…as well as putting on a single coat of mascara, from the tube she had picked up on their run.

Not that she wanted to impress Negan or anything….

As if…
She pursed her lips, giving a sigh, as Negan continued to look at her.

Blake's eyes flickered over to her right, towards the large window that showed nothing but dark blue sky and sprinkling of stars.

From this view there was nothing but that….

Just a world, in which the walkers in the lot, far below, did not exist.

But despite all this, it was still hard to forget.

She dropped her gaze to her lap finally, taking a small shuddering breath.

Just over a week ago she had first come here…with a fiancé…with a hope that things could get better. But it seemed like all that hope was gone now. David was gone now and there was no bringing him back.

And for the first time it had happened….all those long days ago…Blake finally felt something for the first time….

A sort of sadness…..

It wasn't regret. For she knew she had done the right thing. But it was a pain…a mourning for a life now gone…

She worried at her lips, blinking hard, as the door behind them was suddenly shoved open.

Dwight entered the room silently, placing down two plates full of tasty-looking food in front of them.

It looked like some sort of chicken, in a creamy sauce with green vegetables on the side, but Blake could feel her mouth watering as she glanced down at it.

It was probably the most decadent meal she had been given in a long, long time, remembering back to the days when she had eaten roadkill just to survive out there.

She doubted Negan had ever been forced to do that.

Blake looked up at him, as he grinned back at her, as Dwight left the room, shutting the door behind him.

"Seven-foot-Pete downstairs used to be a chef in a fancy restaurant downtown," explained the tall, dark-haired Saviour. "Me and Lucille asked him, oh-so fuckin' kindly, if he'd rustle us up something nice and tasty tonight."

Blake rolled her eyes, knowing full-well how Negan and Lucille were likely to have asked…

"Well," continued Negan flashing her a charming smile. "Bon appetite, Doll-face."

Blake looked up at Negan for a long, unsure second, before slowly picking up her fork as the bearded Saviour did the same, and taking a bite.

The food was piping hot, and the soft creamy chicken almost melted in her mouth as she ate a mouthful.

Right at that second, Blake could have given a groan of pleasure, closing her eyes for the slightest of seconds as she chewed.
But this look, of course, did not go unnoticed by Negan, who grinned across the table at her, fiendishly.

"Ooh, well look, at. us!" he said in a loud voice, giving a chuckle and eyeing her. "Wine…dinner for two…candlelight…you in that fuckin' dress…." He gave a nod in her direction, his eyes travelling down her body momentarily, as Blake scoffed.

"Hmmm….nice to see you dressed up for the occasion too…" she said in a simpering tone, batting her mascara-covered eyelashes in his direction, gazing at his usual haphazard attire.

Negan gave a laugh, taking a mouthful of food.

"Now what occasion is that, Doll?" said Negan looking at her suddenly, giving her a smile. "Because from where I'm sitting, this kinda looks like a date. I mean, this would probably make it our second, if I'm countin' right."

Blake glanced up at Negan with raised brows, unable to help her lips as they twitched up into a small smirk.

"And what exactly are you counting as our first?" she asked in an amused voice, picking up her wine glass once more and taking another sip. "If it's that time you got us stuck in that truck…"

But Negan smiled, leaning back in his seat easily and cutting over her.

"Well I wasn' gonna count the fuckin' time where I lent you Lucille to smash old Davey boy's ribs in, was I, Peaches?" he said in a sarcastic tone, raising both eyebrows back at her teasingly.

But this comment was not something Blake appreciated, her eyes blackening and a scowl shifting its way suddenly onto her face.

"Don't…." she managed to utter after a long second, her voice now quieter than before. "…just….just don't." This was not something so wanted to discuss with Negan in jest. Not yet.

It was all too soon. All too much, to just be joking about everything.

But the grin soon dropped from Negan's face too, as he looked at her earnestly.

"Jesus…" he uttered after a long few moments had passed, dragging a hand down his face. "…I'm sorry, Doll-face….I was just kidding around….I didn' mean'ta'-."

But Blake cut across him, avoiding his gaze.

"It's fine," she insisted, shaking her head, but keeping her eyes lowered to the table before her.

But even so, she could feel Negan's chocolate orbs boring into hers. And it was only a second later before he spoke.

"You know you've been sayin' that a fuckin lot," he said peering through the candlelight at her. "And somethin' tells me you ain't fine at all, Sweetheart…See, I know you better that you think I do. And I know that you are a queen, but after what you've been through…with those fuckin bruises on your neck, you ain't just fine."
Blake gave a gulp, staring suddenly up at Negan.

He could, as he had always been able to, read her like a book.

But Blake couldn't talk about all this with him….could she?

She parted her lips gently, setting down her fork onto her plate and was silent for around a minute, before finally speaking. The words leaving her mouth before she could do a thing to stop them.

"We met when I had just left college and David was at art-school," she started, her fingers rubbing patterns across the crisp white tablecloth beside her, her heart thudding in her chest, as she began to slowly explain. "He was nice and kinda different to the guys I'd dated in the past…a-and in like a year we'd already moved in together, into this little apartment above a coffee shop. It was in a trendy part of town and great for David's art career. It was like his dream to open a studio, y'know?"

Blake looked distant for as second before carrying on.

"A few years passed and he eventually proposed to me….and I…well, I said yes," she muttered conversationally, showing a brief hint of a smile, before it slowly slipped away once more. "And I was happy…..we were happy….at least I think we were….I mean, at the time I thought I was….

She shook her head, still not looking at Negan. As feelings and thoughts long forgotten-about, rose to the surface.

"Then one day we got up and saw all these reports on the news…..a-and they said we should pack up and get out of the city….take what we could….and at first we didn't believe them. Because why would we…and then…"

Blake let out a shaky breath, lifting her gaze to Negan, who was staring back at her, his lips covered with his fingers…his eyes locked on her face.

He knew what she was talking about. He knew why she couldn't finish that sentence.

Everyone who had survived in this world knew….

"And we moved around for a while…lost a whole bunch of people along the way," said Blake carrying on and tucking a strand of long hair behind her ear. "…but things were still good….me and David….I thought…I believed he still loved me….."

Blake gave yet another difficult gulp, her mouth feeling dry.

She reached over taking a deep swig of wine, before placing the glass down again.

"….and….well, we hadn't been in Alexandria long…a-and then one night…."

Blake gaped for a long drawn out second, before closing her mouth once again. Not able to finish what she was saying.

But it was all there, written on her face, as she took another sip of wine, tossing it swiftly back and draining her glass….

She breathed hard, running a slender finger over her pink lips, before looking at Negan once again.

"You mind if I-?" she said with a nod towards the bottle of wine.

This wasn't a hurling in a bathroom moment, but it certainly was a 'I need another drink' moment.
Even Negan could see that.

He looked at her…his eyes full of something Blake could not quite put her finger on…before nodding back…

"Help yourself, Buttercup," he uttered back to her in a low voice, as Blake swiftly did as she was told, pouring herself a third of a glass and taking another small sip.

She picked up her fork once again, taking a small bite of chicken and veg, before pausing after a couple of chews and looking up at the tall, dark haired Saviour before her.

"I did love him.....a long time ago," she said honestly, letting the smallest of frown-lines shift between her brows. "So that's why…as much as I know he deserved what was coming to him....."

She cocked her head to the side, her eyes wide and full of sadness.

"…it still hurts…"

Blake let out a small sigh, knowing she had explained herself….even though she hadn't needed to.

But she felt better for it. Better for letting Negan know she was fine…

…..but she just needed time.

Blake lowered her eyes to her plate once more…finally, after days of anxious nothingness, letting herself relax…

…letting go….

"Now…I am going to shut up and eat this food before it goes cold…” she uttered in a lighter tone, flashing small relaxed smile up at Negan, before looking down again.

But the bearded Saviour didn't reply…but merely looked back at Blake….like she was the most curious thing he had ever laid eyes on…before taking a long heart sip of his own drink…..

…..his chocolate eyes never leaving her as he did so….

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Are you guys enjoying this? Would like me to carry on posting onto here?
Blake placed down her fork neatly onto the plate, finishing the last of her food, before looking back up at the tall, dark-haired Saviour before her.

"So," she said after what had been at least five minutes of silence, a rarity now for the pair of them. "Do I get a fancy meal every night?"

She gave a small smirk, taking a small sip of wine to cleanse her palette slightly.

Negan looked back at her, having long put down his own cutlery, and shot her a widening grin.

"That mean you want another date, Peaches?" he asked giving an amused pout.

But Blake flashed him a small, smiling warning look.

"I did not say that," she uttered, pointing a finger at him, unable to help the small laugh that left her throat.

It wasn't as though she had enjoyed their dinner or anything….of course not…

But the food had been good…..

That was obviously the only reason for her feeling of utter contentment right now…. 

"Oh, you didn't have to," uttered the leader of the Saviours in a teasing voice. "Like I said, I can read you like a fuckin' book, sweetheart. And I think you had fun tonight. More than you were expecting to."

Blake pursed her lips, still smirking back at him lightly.

She gave a momentary raise of both her eyebrows, toying with the stem of her wine glass.

He wasn't wrong.

"Maybe I did, but that doesn't mean it was a date, Negan," she said shaking her head and looking up at him with dark green eyes.

But Negan, who was leaning back in his seat, leather jacket now unzipped revealing his grey t-shirt underneath, pressed a hand over his heart.

"Well from where I'm sitting I'm starting to think you're harbouring a very big soft spot for me," he grinned. "And you know that the feelin' is definitely fuckin' mutual, Doll-face"

Blake smiled, lowering her gaze, feeling her cheeks suddenly flush pink.

How the hell did have this effect on her?

It had been the same ever since their run, even before she had lost her fiancé.

"I think you must be imagining things…" she sighed lightly, taking another sip of wine, as Negan beamed back at her.

"Oh Darlin'," he said in a happy voice, shaking his head "Now you can pretend all you want. But I
think...its love."

Blake shook her head back, placing her wine glass back down onto the white table cloth as she grinned.

"More like Stockholm syndrome," she swiped back, giving a small cough and brushing imaginary crumbs from her lap.

Negan leaned his bearded chin on his hand, gazing at her, with a look almost akin to awe in his eyes.

"I can still drive you home tonight, Doll."

But Blake just smiled, looking back up towards Negan sat across the table from her.

She pulled at her bottom lip with her teeth for moment and wrinkled her nose, pausing for what felt like an eternity, contemplating her answer,

"Ask me again tomorrow," she said finally, giving the same reply as she had done yesterday, before getting slowly to her feet.

Negan just smiled up at her, titling his head in her direction, his eyes warm and brown….and full of something Blake didn't want to look into right now.

She felt her cheeks flushing yet again, but she shook her hair in front of her face, trying to hide her blushes, as she readjusted her dress.

She barely even noticed Negan get to his feet too, plucking his barbed-wire covered baseball bat from god-knows-where, and move around towards her.

Blake glanced up at him, smirking, as his chocolate eyes looked her up and down.

The room was dark now, with nothing but the dim, warm lamplight, and light from the flickering candle, throwing golden shadows across their faces….

But it was the silence that filled the room that caused Blake's breath to hitch in her throat slightly, as Negan took a step towards her, closing the gap between them. Now the only noise that could be heard was the soft clinking of Negan's boots as he walked, and the soft sound of their breaths, shallow and quick in their throats…

Negan gave a short whistle.

"I mean, damn, Doll-face," he said finally breaking through the across the otherwise quiet atmosphere, as thick as it was. "That dress does look fucking stunning on you…"

He ran his tongue over his line of white teeth, looking down at her almost hungrily, as he closed the gap between them.

But Blake titled her head to the side, narrowing her eyes at him bemusedly.

She opened her mouth to say something but instead changed her mind, closing it once again instead.

She gave a sudden loud sigh, letting out the smallest of chuckles, before glancing over towards the door.

"So, you going to walk me back to my room then?" she said bumping her shoulder suddenly with his
as she sashayed past him, a smile still lingering on her lips.

At this she heard Negan give a small hearty laugh behind her and rub a hand across his bearded chin, before following her over to the door.

"That where we gonna have our dessert?" he asked in a goading voice, gazing hard into her eyes, as she glanced around to look at him.

But Blake pursed her lips, rolling her eyes, as she tucked a strand of long caramel-blonde hair behind her ear.

"I've got to watch my figure," she said teasingly, giving a smirking smile and a nonchalant shrug as she walked off down the corridor ahead of him. Her white, high-heeled sandals echoing loudly in the corridor as she went.

But Negan lingered at the door for the longest of seconds, cocking his head to the side and letting out a long carrying puff of air.

"Oh, so do I, Peaches…" he said with a hungry growl looking her retreating figure up and down, with need in his eyes.

The tall-dark-haired Saviour paused for a drawn out second before following her, with long-legged strides. Swinging Lucille from his hand as he went.

Blake headed down the corridor alone for a minute or two before feeling Negan finally fall into step with her as they advanced down a set of stone steps and out into a wide hallway, just adjacent to hers.

She gave a small smile….feeling refreshed after tonight.

As much as Negan annoyed her….as much as he had got her back-up by making her wear this dress….it had felt good to talk to someone about how she was feeling.

For who else did she have now?

Eugene, she had thought had been the closest person she had considered to being a friend here, someone from Alexandria, but she hadn't particularly wanted to speak to him. To tell him how she was feeling.

But the words had come almost easily with Negan. Spilling out of her mouth before she could stop them.

In front of everyone else, she had been ashamed…embarrassed about how long she had endured what David had done to her. But not with the Leader of the Saviours.

For with Negan, she already knew how well he could read her. Better than David ever could have…or her Mom…or her friends…

It was like they were two pieces of the same jigsaw puzzle. So, so different….in every way…but somehow they fit together, just right….

Not that Blake wanted to fit with Negan. Of course not…

They weren't even friends….

He was just the guy who was keeping her here.
But really, he wasn't even doing that any more.

Twice he had asked her now if she wanted to leave. And twice she had held off on giving him an answer.

And Blake gulped to herself as she considered why…

She blinked a couple of times…pushing these thoughts from her mind, as they turned the corner and ushered open a large door heading down into Blake's dark and silent hallway.

The caramel-blond woman, bit at her lip, as they headed a little way down, coming to a stop just outside her door.

"Well," said Negan as Blake backed up against said door, one hand on the door handle, and he turned to face her. "Here. we. are."

Blake nodded, giving a small laughing smile as she stared up at him.

From here, in a the dusky light of the corridor, Blake could make out all the little laughter lines that littered Negan's long, tanned face, as he took a sudden step towards her.

He placed his hand up against the doorframe behind her and leaned into her, closing the already smallish-gap between them, until there was only a mere breath of space left.

Blake leant back against the door behind her, her heart pounding inside her chest so loudly she was sure Negan would hear it.

But Negan just gave her a husky grin, his eyes travelling down to her heaving chest momentarily, before looking back up at her face once more.

"You sure I can't tempt you with dessert, Doll-face?" he asked in a low husky drawl of a voice that sent shivers immediately running down Blake's spine.

Blake could feel a warmth pooling inside her at Negan's words and his closeness. A feeling she hadn't felt in a long, long time rising inside her.

But she held back, giving a shallow gulp.

Maybe this was the wine….messing with her head.

But right now her head and her body- seemed to be wanting completely different things…

Her gulp distracted Negan long enough for his dark, chocolate eyes to travel down her slender throat for a small second….giving her enough time to shake herself and smile up at the ceiling, rolling her eyes.

Blake pressed a hand to Negan's chest and gave him a small shove away from her, as her other hand turned the door handle, pushing the door behind her open.

"Goodnight, Negan," she said with a faux-sigh of tiredness, as she stepped back away from him, heading into her room, where she knew he wouldn't follow….

Not tonight…

Negan held her gaze for what seemed like a long few seconds…before giving a chuckle, glancing down at the floor and parting his lips…
He finally gazed up at her once again, pushing his hand away from the doorframe with a small, happy groan.

"Suit yourself…" he said arching his back and bending his knees as he spoke.

He licked at his lips and stared at her… and Blake felt like for some reason, at that very moment, she just could not tear her eyes away from his….

But the moment soon disappeared as quickly as it had come, as Negan chuckled and turned on his heel sloping off.

"Night, Peaches…" she heard his retreating form utter, as Blake, in turn, bit her lip, approaching the door once again and watching him go.

In fact, she stayed there, staring after him, long after she had heard the door at the end of the corridor swing closed, smiling to herself.

And it was at least a minute later, that she shook her head, letting out the smallest of bemused laughs, and shutting the door closed, with a quiet snap…
Lovesick puppy

Blake had woken bright and early that morning, feeling refreshed and ready to start the day. But it wasn't until she had gotten up, washed and dressed, had she realised that she didn't actually have anything to start.

It was an odd feeling- not to have a purpose.

It seemed like most people who lived around here had a job or a role of some sorts. Whether it was cooking, cleaning, intimidation….everyone had something to do with their day, even Negan.

But not Blake.

But it wasn't like this was her home….right? She didn't intend on staying here….and soon she would take Negan up on his offer of going back to Alexandria.

There she would have things she could get involved in, things she could help with.

Blake had spent the day wandering around the large looming Sanctuary. Passing through the canteen…the marketplace…the library….eating an apple with one hand, and running her fingers through her long damp hair with the other.

Blake was today wearing dark pants and a white blouse, and had stared long and hard at her ever-diminishing bruises in the mirror this morning as she had gotten dressed.

Soon they would be gone…leaving nothing but distant memories of her past life.

She wouldn't exactly say she was happy now.

But content was certainly a word that could easily be used to describe how she was feeling.

Bored….. but content.

Blake rounded the corner, as she made her way aimlessly down a long hallway during the late afternoon, making to go back to her room, but instead, looking for something more to do than to spend her evening reading, she headed out through a door she hadn't ventured through before.

Once through, Blake found herself outside, in a small loading area, where several burly Saviours with guns, some she recognised, some she didn't, were busy unloading sacks and crates of food, from the back of a large truck.

She slowly walked around the space, tossing her old apple core aside, and dodging out of the way, as one man with a beard headed past her, carrying a crate of fresh vegetables.

The area out here was vast, but most of the space seemed wasted, with various pointless fences-within-fences, lining the lot. Fences that even walkers couldn't even get close to.

Blake folded her arms across her chest, spotting the tall, moustachioed Simon, who hopped down from the truck ahead of her.

"There's a couple of sacks of flour back there, but one's got a rip in it, so be careful," he muttered to a short woman and a man with long blonde hair as they walked past him, nodding obediently. "Negan won't be happy if you waste that shit."
Blake gave a small roll of her eyes as she heard this.

"You know, if Negan got out there and actually found that food himself, maybe he'd have a reason to be so anal about losing a bit of flour," she said as she caught Simon's eye.

The brown-haired man gave a chuckle, and slowly approached her, his eyes looking up and down her tall, slender form.

"I'd be careful talking about him like that y'know," said Simon, raising his eyebrows at her. "People have gotten into trouble around here for much less."

But Blake pursed her lips, looking to her left as the two Saviours carefully manoeuvred the sacks of flour from the van.

She knew for a fact that around here she could get away with a lot more than most could.

And it was likely that Simon knew that too.

He stuffed his hands in his pockets, rocking back on his heels as he observed her.

It was a few moments before he finally spoke again.

"So, you …uhhh…you okay after what happened on Thursday?" he asked in a voice, that was absent of concern, but littered instead, with politeness. Something which Blake had long forgotten about in this society. "I mean that stuff with your boyfriend…that was all a huge shit-show…Negan didn't really let on what he'd actually done to you an' all…"

He trailed off, staring at her, as Blake let out a long breath of air, tearing her eyes away.

"I'm fine," said Blake nodding. "I just….can we not talk about it please?"

Her tone was firm and signalled that she was not in the mood to be discussing this with him right now.

The weight had been lifted from her shoulders. But all that…it was not a memory she wanted to re-live, not in the stark light of day at least.

Blake gave a sigh, staring out across the area, as people around them moved to and fro.

All of this stuff they were carrying, sacks full to the brim, were things scavenged by other people….perhaps Rick's group….perhaps someone else….

Ok, the Saviours did have a lot of mouths to feed, but other people were in need of this stuff. Starving people…..children.

There were plenty of men and women here that could go out an scavenge themselves for this kind of stuff….plenty of places they could go out and look.

But somehow, through Negan's rule, this had become their way of life.

But as if though on cue, Simon's eyes quickly raised above Blake's head, looking at someone approaching behind her.

And Blake pursed her lips, keeping her arms folded, as she guessed exactly who it was.

"No dress today, Doll-face?" came the sudden low drawl of Negan. His boots chinking as he
appeared around her. "Hell, I'm disappointed."

He was today, stood in his black-leather jacket, dark pants, his red scarf wrapped around his neck again, with a shit-eating grin plastered across his long, tanned, bearded features.

Blake turned her head and shot him a look, unable to help the smirk that danced its way across her lips as she caught sight of him for the first time since their 'not a date' date the previous evening.

"Hmmmm, not really the right occasion for it," she murmured in a mild voice, lifting her had to her face and pretending to admire her nails disinterestedly.

Negan shifted his weight from foot-to-foot, lifting his chin and looking down at her grinning.

"Oh, Peaches," said the tall, dark-haired Saviour in husky tone, taking a small step towards her. "If this is you angling for another date with yours truly, then, I mean, shit, Sweetheart, I can set one up for tonight if that's what you want?"

But Blake eyed him, tutting.

"In your dreams," she bit back in a teasing voice, her eyes drifting up to his chocolate ones.

But Negan pouted, inching closer to her and arching his back as he spoke. He had Lucille held carelessly in one hand, but the other seemed to glide towards her hips.

"Oh, don't doubt that you aren't in every single one of my dreams, Darlin'," he said poking his tongue out through his pearly-white line of teeth. "Doin' all sorts of naughty fuckin' things."

Blake rolled her eyes yet again, peering up at him, feeling his fingers begin to skim lightly over her waist, travelling around to the small of her back, pulling her into him.

At this, Blake's breath caught in her throat and her cheeks flushed the slightest shade of pink, as Simon looked on nonplussed by Negan's flirting right in front of him.

"I hate you," she murmured in an unimpressed tone, shaking her head and offering him a simpering look. She blinked her eyes, titling her head to the side. "Ugh, don't you have better things to do, than follow me around all day like some sort of lovesick puppy?"

But Negan beamed down at her, admiring her fully at this close proximity.

Blake was used to this closeness by now. The tall bearded man's lack of awareness of other people's personal space.

But what she wasn't used to, was the way his fingers seemed to dance beneath her shirt playfully coming to stop at the small of her back.

"Oh I have all fuckin' day to be following you around, Doll-face," he said raising his eyebrows at her fiendishly.

But this only caused Blake to tut, lifting a hand up to his leather clad chest, as if making to push him away from her…

… but for the time being, she relented….instead fiddling with his jacket's zipper….her eyes locked onto his.

"Well maybe you should be focusing on other things instead of me," she said tilting her head to the side and throwing him a poignant look. "Like trying to provide a life for your people yourself,
instead of taking stuff from others."

Negan gave a hard sigh and was about to open his mouth to speak, but Blake cut across him once again.

"The Saviours can't survive like this this forever and you know it," she said matter-of-factly. "What if the group's you're taking from, all get themselves killed? What'll you then when you have no one to go out scavenging for you, and all of your people are too lazy and untrained to fend for themselves out there? When you have no one to provide for you?"

Negan looked down at her knowingly. "An' what are you suggesting' we do instead, Doll-face?" he replied to her in a slow voice, his brown eyes on her, and only her, right now.

Blake pulled on her lip with her teeth for a second, giving a small shrug.

"There's plenty of room out here for a garden," she offered, her green eyes gazing around. "You could grow crops...even if they're in planters. And you've got plenty of people here to help out with it too. And if that worst-case scenario ever happened, at least then you'd have a backup. You know I'm right on this one."

Negan stared at her for a long second, his face unreadable, as his thumb rubbed circles over the smooth bare skin of her waist.

And for a moment, Blake was almost sure that he was about to bark her down. Before-

"Anyone ever tell you, you'd make one hell of a convincing saleswoman, Peaches," uttered the bearded Saviour, as he leaned his face into hers, a grin sliding its way onto his face.

Blake let out a long breath, giving a relived sort of gulp, as her heart pounded inside her chest, hard and fast.

She wasn't quite sure why she was still feeling like this.

Last night had been strange...but Blake had just assumed it was the wine making her feel all woozy and warm...as Negan had backed her up against her door...his body close to hers....

And even when she had gotten into bed, her dreams had been filled with the tall, dark-haired leader of the Saviours...

But this was not something she was about to let him in on...that was for sure...

Blake smiled up at Negan, wrinkling her nose as she did so.

"I'm just looking out for your people in the long run, Negan," she uttered, tugging him forward with the zipper on his jacket just the slightest bit, as his eyes followed her lips. "Not you. Them."

The bearded man just smiled, glancing up at Simon for the briefest of moments, before turning back towards her.

"Like I said to you a long time ago, Darlin'," Negan muttered in a low voice. "It's shit like that, that makes you a Queen."

And at this comment, Blake couldn't help but smile up at him.

She hadn't even been her for two weeks, and yet in that time, despite losing everything in her life she thought she held dear, she felt now, filled with confidence...with a pride and willingness to hold her
head up high.

She felt like a queen. And if Negan was able to elevate her to that status, then so be it.

She would use it to her advantage.

Blake gave a smile, suddenly lifting her hand and sliding it over Negan's leather-clad shoulder, pursing her lips.

She knew full well what kind of game she was playing here, and as dangerous as it was, she knew exactly how far it was going to get her in this world. And with the dark-haired Saviour…

The caramel-blond woman teased herself gently from his grasp, and slid slowly past him.

"Cute scarf," she commented easily, throwing Negan a sudden dark, grinning, teasing look, at she waltzed by him….

….bumping his hip with hers as she went.

A very dangerous game indeed.

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Negan watched her go, grinning in awe as he surveyed her retreating form.

Fucking shit, he was besotted.

How the fuck was it possible for one person to have him so wrapped around her little finger? Someone who, a fortnight ago, didn't even exist in his peripherals.

And now, he had a hard time refusing her anything, and every sniping word that seemed to slip from her lips, just made him want her even more…

He was well and truly fucked, and he knew it. But right now, not in the way he'd preferably fucking want.

Simon beside him, glanced his way, smirking as the pair of the watched her go.

"You know you could just make her one of your wives," said Simon with a bemused look lingering over his features. "Wouldn't that just be easier?"

But Negan's eyes suddenly darkened as he tore them away from Blake, as she disappeared around the corner and out of sight, and looked instead back at Simon, his jaw tensed.

"Oh Simon, Simon, Simon," said the bearded Saviour with a dangerous chuckle, as he took an intimidating step towards the brown-haired, moustachioed man at his side, lifting Lucille suddenly to his face. "You say any more shit like that, or question me again, and I won't even think twice about getting myself a new right-hand fucking man. We clear 'bout that?"

If looks could kill, Simon at this very second would have been dead at least twenty seconds ago, as Negan glared at him furiously.

And Simon stared back at his notorious leader blankly for a few moments before finally, with a gulp, tearing his eyes away with a nod.

"Right, sorry Boss," he managed to utter in a genuine voice, as Negan shoved past him, instead,
heading over towards the trucks, swinging Lucille from his hand as he went.

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But what none of them noticed, not Negan, not Simon, not even Blake as she headed back inside….

….was a short woman with dark brown hair and heavy bangs, wearing a short black dress and small gold hoop earrings…

...a woman who had been watching the three of them from the shadows….

…a woman who quietly, and unnoticed by everyone, followed Blake silently inside…

….shutting the door behind her with a silent, watchful snap…
Red wine and drinking games

Blake smiled to herself as she walked down the long gloomy hallway that led down towards the library and makeshift gymnasium.

It had been less than a week since she'd met Negan.

Annoyingly irritating Negan.

The man who somehow, in this enormous place, kept bumping into her... 'accidentally'.

Blake smirked to herself, almost rolling her eyes as she turned the corner, thinking on him.

What made her so special, huh?

Surely there had been and still were plenty of other woman in his life he could give his attention to.

So why her?

But before Balke could take more than a few steps down this gloomy hallway, a sudden quiet voice from behind her called her name.

"I-Its Blake right?"

Blake swung suddenly around, her heart thudding in her chest.

Each and every time she had been cornered down one of the long corridors in the Sanctuary by someone, it had not ended well for her.

But to her surprise, she saw two women standing behind her, both in short black dresses and black high heels.

She recognised both of them immediately.

One being Tanya, the woman who had walked her back to her room, after Blake had thrown up in Negan's bathroom on one of her first night's here.

She had long dark bangs and was now holding her arms around herself, shifting her weight from foot to foot a little nervously.

The second was Frankie, taller than Tanya, with long red hair and skinny arms.

But Blake certainly recognised her too. As the woman who she had seen leaving David's room, several long days ago now.

Blake gulped, gazing at the pair of them tentatively.

"I'm Tanya and this is Frankie," offered the dark-haired woman, after Blake didn't respond.

And the caramel-blonde Blake just looked back at them, full of apprehension of uncertainty.

These were the same women who had blanked her out of the balcony. The women she had tried to say hi to, who had just fallen silent and began to whisper behind their hands, making her feel like a teenager again.
But that was then. And as she well knew, a lot could happen in a few days.

Look at her and Negan now…

Suddenly Frankie took a step forwards, glancing back at Tanya, as if both women were trying to pluck up the courage to say something to Blake, but trying to find the right words to do so.

"W-We just wanted to say h-how brave you were," said Frankie peering up at Blake. "I mean, I couldn't have done what you did."

"No me neither," said Tanya, nodding feverously and stepping forwards too.

Blake blinked, her eyes flickering down to the floor for a second. "It was…” she uttered, trailing off and taking a deep breath of air. "…all I did was grab a stupid stick…"

But Frankie and Tanya looked at each other a little sadly, before staring back at Blake.

"No, we meant how brave you were for putting up with him for so long," said Frankie in a voice filled with honesty. "Having him push you around like that…treat you so badly…hurt you. You did the right thing."

Tanya at her side nodded. "Yeah, h-he sounded like an abusive jackass. You were right to do what you did."

Blake felt a frown-line shift between her brows.

Everyone she had spoken to so far, had expressed their apologies and sympathy for David's demise, but it was only these women (and Negan of course) that had told her she'd done the right thing.

"Thanks," said Blake cocking her head to the side, feeling a little taken aback.

Blake had felt so, so lonely since coming here, and even Negan, as much time as he spent with her, was only one person she had any contact with on a daily basis. So right now, it felt good to have two women the same age as Blake, seemingly on her side.

Frankie, worried at her lip for a long moment, staring back at Blake reddening slightly as she spoke.

"I never slept with him y'know," she blurted out, shaking her head. "David. I know it might have looked like that, but I didn't, I was told to just give him a massage, to spend some time with him…see what he knew."

She cupped her hands in front of herself nervously, giving a half smile.

"He told me all about how awful his life was before getting here," Frankie continued. "As if we all hadn't been through the same shit, y'know?"

Blake's lips twitched up, returning the half-smile.

She was glad she wasn't the only woman here who had seen how much of a douchebag David had actually been.

Tanya, fiddled with her dark hair, currently tied up in a bun, looking at Blake.

"Hey," she said in a quiet kind of voice. "Y-You uh…..you want to come hang out with us?"

Blake parted her lips. Not really ever expecting…well, that.
Frankie nodded enthusiastically at her side.

"We know how shitty this place can be when you first get here," she added. "A-And we have chocolate if that helps?"

Blake hesitated for a long moment a little unsurely.

Why would these women want to know her? Want to invite her into their lives?

But knowing that she needed all the friends she could get right now, Blake bit at her lip for a long second before giving a slow nod.

"Uh…sure…that would be nice," she replied.

And with that, she followed Frankie and Tanya as they turned on their heels, down the long and winding corridor.

It was a long few minutes before they climbed a long winding staircase that led up towards a large set of rooms, Blake had not frequented before.

"We're just in here," said Tanya, pushing open a large set of double doors and ushering Blake into a wide room, with a large bay window on one side and several large squishy couches and day-beds in the middle of the space. In the far corner of the room was wooden drinks bar, the place probably having once been an office of sorts.

Here, in this expansive room, three more women lounged around, one reading a magazine, and the other pair talking and painting their nails at the same time.

The three other women, all wearing skimpy black dresses, all looked up as Blake walked in, in her dark pants, sneakers and long white blouse.

Frankie soon came to stop near to Blake's shoulder.

"That's Layla over there," she said pointing to a youngish girl with a long mass of blonde hair who was sat reading a magazine, alone, reclining against a couch cushion as she did so. "Then we've got Michelle and Layla."

Frankie pointed to the other two women who were sat talking together, who looked up at Blake, immediately hushing their conversation, looking a little startled by her appearance in this space.

Michelle was petite, with carefully curled hair and smooth black skin, whereas Layla had a tan complexion, with straight black hair that fell to her lower back.

Blake nodded a little unsurely at the three women, as Tanya moved hurriedly around her, heading over towards the bar, picking up a huge carafe of red wine and pulling out six glasses eagerly.

"So what were you before?" said Frankie suddenly, as the pair of them waked over to join Tanya.

Blake looked up at her. "Before?" she asked, a little confused.

Tanya nodded. "Like what did you do for a job?" she said pouring an ample amount of wine into each of the glasses. "I just worked behind a bar, but Frankie here, was a masseuse, Amber was in college, Layla worked in an coffee shop, and Michelle, well, she worked with people's feet."

The trio swung around as Michelle from across the room, gave a sudden huff, rolling her eyes.
"I was a podiatrist," she rectified, giving a mock-scowl. "Why do you have to make it sound so weird!"

A couple of the girls laughed, as Blake gave a small smile.

She hadn't been asked about her past life in a long, long time. In this world, what you used to be before the States had gone to hell, didn't really seem to matter. It was instead, all about what you had made yourself into here.

Tanya and Frankie looked up at Blake.

"I….uh…I worked in an office….doing admin…it wasn't anything special.." she uttered as Tanya handed her a glass of wine and the two women ushered her over to the couches in the centre of the room.

Blake took a seat near to Layla and Michelle, as Layla gave a melodramatic sigh.

"Oh I used to loooove flirting with the office girls in high heels and tight skirts who came to pick up their coffee in the mornings," she said with a far-away, dreamy look in her eyes. "Some of them…phew!"

Layla gave a wolf-whistle of appreciation, as Blake cocked an eye at her.

"You're-?" she asked suddenly, but Layla cut across her smiling.

"I'm bi," she explained, looking at Blake with kind eyes. "….and you must be the girl we have to thank for getting us off 'fucking duty' for the past couple of weeks. Blake, right?"

Blake frowned, looking at all the women a little confused, as the blonde-haired Amber finally joined them on the sofas, coming to sit down on the other side of Blake barefoot, tucking her legs beneath her.

"Negan hasn't been interested in us since you got here," Tanya explained after a second or two. "The last one of us that was called up to see him, was me, on that night that I walked you back to your room. He told me not to bother coming back, and ever since, he hasn't come to call on us. Any of us."

The women surrounding Blake all nodded enthusiastically.

"So you've done us a favour," Tanya finished, giving Blake a smile.

There was a brief murmur of agreement amongst the women.

"And I hear you're holding out on him too," said Michelle leaning forwards and wrinkling her nose at Blake, beaming. She gave a short whistle. "Man, this must be the longest he's gone without any, since we moved into here."

The wives all nodded, as Blake gave a gulp.

She didn't understand.

What did any of this really have to do with her?

What had she done to spur Negan on so much?

"He obviously likes you," said Frankie taking a sip of her wine, and using the glass to gesture
towards Blake. "The only other person he's showed even the slightest bit of attention to, was Sherry, and even then, you could tell he was only doing that to wind up Dwight."

There was another murmur of excitably agreement from the women, just as Blake felt a sudden hand touch hers.

It was Amber, who, with frightened trembling lips, and wide eyes, looked up at Blake.

"Just be careful," she said in a shaky voice, just a little louder than a whisper. "You have no idea what he's capable of."

Amber looked visibly upset, as she carefully retracted her hand from Blake's, looking instead down into her lap.

But Blake was already fully aware of what Negan was capable of. Wasn't she?

Ok, he seemed to have taken a shine to her, but she would not, and could not, forget, just what pain and torment he had inflicted on her's and Rick's group.

But she remained silent, instead taking a sip of her wine…feeling the vinegary, heady alcohol slip easily down her throat.

It was late afternoon and probably too early for Blake to be drinking like this. But it would be rude to say no. Especially when all of the wives surrounding her were obviously used to day-drinking like this.

The wives right now, all seemed to be looking at her expectantly, almost as if they were excited about having her here.

Everyone was silent for a long few moments as Tanya got up to refill Blake's glass, almost to the brim, before sitting down once again.

"Shall we play a game?" she offered, raising her eyebrows easily, as she handed the wine glass back to Blake.

"Ugh, if it's your stupid version of charades again, then I'm out," said Michelle rolling her eyes, causing Frankie to grin.

"No," said Tanya pursing her lips. "I was thinking a drinking game. Maybe 'I've never'?

Blake looked at the dark-haired woman a little tentatively.

"So," began Tanya, pre-empting Blake's question. "One of us says something like...um...I dunno....I've never been Negan's favourite'....now you, Blake, you take a drink if you have. So....drink."

Blake smiled gently, taking a small sip of her wine and rolling her eyes.

"Now Michelle, you go next," urged Tanya, nodding at the woman beside her.

"Uhhh...I've never hooked up with my teacher in high school," she said darting a look fiendishly at Layla beside her, who immediately shot her a look in return, grabbing a cushion and bashing her with it.

"Oh my god," said Layla, with a laugh. "That was one time! God, I am never confiding in you again!"
All the women, including Blake laughed.

It was nice to sit here with these women having fun and forgetting the world outside. Even if it was just for a while.

Next it was Layla's turn.

"I've never," she began, looking over towards the windows for a second, thinking. "…killed one of those dead shits."

Both Blake, Tanya, and Michelle lifted their wine glasses to their lips and took a deep sip.

Blake could feel the liquid making her feel nice and warm and fuzzy, as she crossed her legs, brushing down her dark pants.

Michelle raised an eyebrow over towards the women who hadn't taken a drink and tutted.

"How the fuck did you girls even survive this long?" she said shaking her head. But none of them answered her.

It was Frankie's turn next.

"I've never," she said tilting her head back and forth pondering what she was going to say. "I've never….seen Dirty Dancing."

All the other women, Blake too, took a long drink, as Tanya hopped up and brought over the bottle of red wine, filling up women's glass individually, before sitting once again.

"How have you never seen Dirty Dancing?" she commented to Frankie, as the red-head shrugged.

"I've just never really been into chick-flicks," she said giving an airy wave of her hand.

There was a long pause, where the women all looked at the nervy-looking Amber at Blake's side.

"Amber?" Tanya offered gently. "Your turn."

Amber indeed looked a little scared for a long moment. "Um…." she began, looking down into her lap. "I've never….had a baby."

At this, the entire room fell suddenly eerily silent, with even Blake herself giving a gulp.

For both she and all these women knew just how many people had been lost after the outbreak….many, many children included.

Michelle alone was the only one to take a drink for that one, as everyone else looked solemnly down….just remembering…..

It was a very, very long moment before Michelle was the one to give a small cough and look at Blake.

"Blake, it's your turn."

The caramel-blonde woman looked up, suddenly parting her lips gently.

Her mind had, of course, immediately gone blank. After the last question she didn't want to say anything to emotionally important.
She looked down into her wine glass swilling it in her hand, as inspiration struck.

"I've never...." she began in a slow voice, pulling at her bottom lip with her teeth before giving a smile. "...drunk wine quite as bad as this."

The wives all laughed, breaking through the oh-so-awkward tension that had filled the room.

Layla was the only one to drink, commenting out loud as the women all looked at her. "My roommate in college made it under her bed during the first semester," she said grimacing. "It tasted like ass."

Blake and the wives all cracked up in peels of laughter, even Amber, whose smile seemed to warm her otherwise shy and sad-looking face.

Blake knew herself that she hadn’t laughed this much in a long time, feeling so at ease.

Obviously the wine was helping, but even so, it was nice to be around women the same age as she was….it reminding her so much of the friends she used to hang out with back in the real-world, before David, before the apocalypse, before everything.

"Ok, ok," said Tanya finally, once the laughter had died down slightly. "My turn."

The women all looked over at her, as she fiddled with one of her gold hoop earrings.

"I've never been married," she said a little triumphantly, as all the women lifted their glasses a little before frowning at one another.

Tanya rolled her eyes.

"I meant before now. One that counted," she finished.

Just a couple of the women drank at this, as Blake looked on, not moving her own glass from her lap.

She could really see and hear how much these woman resented Negan…but at the same time, all of them, bar Amber, seemed pretty happy.

Although Blake wondered how happy they had been back when they were on a rota to have sex with the dark-haired Saviour each night.

Blake gave a small, internal gulp, as her eyes flickered down to her lap...feeling, for the first time in a long time, something tug at the back of her stomach.

Wait, was she jealous?

Jealous that these woman had slept with Negan? Surely not.

Blake hurriedly pushed these thoughts aside, as Michelle spoke next.

"I've never..." said the black woman, grinning. "...had Negan bring me pizza."

All the women now turned to Blake, eyebrows raised and smiling.

But Blake pursed her lips and threw them each a bemused look.

"How did you even hear about that?!" she said smirking and shaking her head, taking a long, deep
sip of wine

But Michelle's grin seemed to deepen.

"Sweetie, everyone heard," she said bluntly. "And you still think the Asshole doesn't like you?"

Blake gave a small frown, looking away dismissively.

"Whatever," she replied, as the women all gave a chuckle.

"She's right," said Layla, at Michelle's side. "There's not many people he's allowed this much freedom to. He's got a thing for you, that's obvious. Wait, wait, I've got one-"

And with that Layla shifted forwards in her seat looking at Blake.

"I've never used Lucille," she added finally, titling her head to the side as she spoke.

Blake suddenly looked up at her, her heart thudding rapidly inside her ribcage for a long moment, before dissipating again.

Silence immediately fell over the group. All of their eyes on her.

"Sorry, I didn't mean to…” said Layla, seeing the look upon Blake's face, before trailing off, looking awkward.

And it was a long moment or two, before Blake lifted the wine to her lips, drained her glass, and then opened her mouth to speak…

"It's fine," she said staring up at all the oppressed women surrounding her. "My fiancé….he was a prick, and he treated me like shit….and, well, in the end….he got exactly what he deserved."

The women were all quiet for a long excruciating moment, pondering what Blake had just said, before Frankie let out a loud- "Amen!", lifting her glass up in a toast.

All the women followed suit, as Blake peered up at them.

Every single one of them one her side.

Every single one of them glad for her.

Glad she had survived.

And with that, Blake let out a gentle, relived sort of smile.

"Amen," she whispered quietly to herself…

….as Tanya moved over to refill her glass once again…
A cheap threat

At least forty-five minutes of more wine and I've nevers had passed, with Blake and the other women descending into shrieks of crying laughter at some of the answers given….getting more and more tipsy as the minutes ticked by.

Blake hadn't had this much carefree fun in a long time, safe inside this room on the fourth floor of the Sanctuary.

But having had at least five glasses of wine (at her last count!), Blake felt more than a little drunk to say the least. It had gone down much better than expected, and the vinegary alcohol seemed to somehow taste better and better with each sip taken.

"Ok, Ok," said Tanya, as Michelle slapped at a cushion, laughing so much at the last answer, tears were still pouring down her cheeks. "I've got one."

She took a deep breath of air, composing herself as all the women suddenly blew out air, bursting into fits of giggles once again.

"Shhhhh," said Tanya, lifting her hand and hushing them as she spoke with elongated syllables. "Listen, listen…..I've never….hooked up with a younger guy."

No-one but Michelle drank this time, as everyone gaped at her.

"How young?" asked Blake with an incredulous laugh, feeling now oh-so comfortable and at home with these women. It was almost as though she had known them her entire life.

Michelle gave an easy shrug, playing it cool. "I was twenty eight and he was….nineteen."

"Nineteen?" shrieked Layla beside her, laughing.

"Oh my god, he was so hot though," murmured Michelle, taking another long sip. "Mmmhmmm."

All of the girls giggled at this again, cracking up completely at the tone of Michelle's voice…

….. just as the large double doors to the room were suddenly pushed open, and a tall, looming, and very recognisable figure, strolled casually into the room.

A sudden hush fell over the space, the smiles suddenly dropping from everyone's faces, bar Blake's, as they all looked up at him.

Negan.

Standing there with a wide, simpering grin plastered across his long, tanned face. His red scarf was now gone, but his barbed-wire covered baseball bat swung carelessly from his hand as always.

"Wives," came his low drawl of a voice, as the tall-dark-haired Saviour gazed lazily around the room at the women, who seemed to bristle at his voice, peering up at him nervously.

But it seemed that, right now, Negan only had eyes for one person…..his dark eyes finally landing on her.

"An' Peaches," he continued, wrinkling his nose and arching his back slightly as he spoke. "Now what are the chances of findin' you here, huh?"
Blake narrowed her eyes in his direction, taking a sip from her glass of wine, shrugging.

Even from here, she felt woozy, finding Negan pretty hard to focus on right now.

"Why? You miss me?" she bit back after a moment or two, repeating his own words back to him.

Negan's grin seemed to widen, showing off his line of straight white teeth, looking surprisingly impressed by her comeback as he eyed her.

"Oh, always, Darlin'," he said cocking his head at her, before tutting. "But you ain't supposed to be here. This is a place for my wives only and since you've protested so much about bein' one of them, I guess you don't get to enjoy their company either."

At this Blake couldn't help but smile back at his challenge, her unfocused green eyes meeting with his.

Even in her highly drunken state, she was more than willing to enjoy her's and Negan's usual fun and games.

But it was another second or two before she finally let out a long faux-sigh, as the previously-jovial women all around her remained silent.

"So you gonna make me leave?" she said tutting at him, and placing her glass down onto the small wooden coffee table in front of her, eyeing him goadingly. "Is that it?"

But Negan just shook his head, that grin still lingeringly heavily on his lips.

"Oh if I have to throw you over my fuckin' shoulder, Peaches, I will," he uttered with a husky growl.

Blake smiled, her green eyes on his.

"Oh you'd love that..." she replied, biting at her lip teasingly, before finally getting to her feet, sighing. "You know what...fine. I'll go."

She picked up her glass once again, draining the last bit of red wine from it, as the women around her gave a small giggle, looking at her.

"Bye ladies," she uttered in a slow, mock-upset voice, pouting, before placing down her glass once more and stumbling away from the couches, as another titter flooded over the room.

She reached walked in as much of straight line as she could manage over to Negan and shot him a look, arching her eyebrow in his direction.

"So, you gonna safely escort me back to my room then.....lover boy," she uttered, patting Negan on the shoulder lightly, knowing full-well that she was probably walking on thin-ice talking to Negan like this, in front of his wives too. But in her inebriated state, Balke didn't really seem to care.

But Negan just grinned, placing a hand to the small of her back, and leading her out of the room without another word, until the doors behind him were shut.

Not even saying goodbye to his wives in the room behind him.

Out here in the corridor, now all alone, Blake half expected him to use Lucille on her for being so insubordinate, but again he didn't, merely slipping his free arm further around her waist as she walked on unsteady feet down the long hallway.
"Fuck me, Sweetheart," he said after a long moment or two of silence. "I leave you alone for a couple of hours an' you get yourself wasted!"

Blake frowned, pressing herself further into the dark-haired man, more to steady herself that anything…that's all it was of course…innocent steadying…

"I'm not that drunk," she said pursing her lips slightly, as she tried to focus on the strangely winding corridor ahead of her.

Did hallways here always look like this?

"I was just having some fun is all," she muttered in reply, raising her eyebrow up towards him. "Is that a crime?"

Negan at her side, gave a sudden low chuckle. "Not at all, Doll-face," he said in a smart tone. "But since Sherry left, I think those ladies are lookin' for someone else to make their queen-bee around here. An' hell, you darlin', seem to fit that bill so fuckin' nicely."

Blake threw Negan an irritable look, as they headed around the corner, Blake stumbling slightly as she went.

"So have I just replaced Sherry then, is that what you're saying?" she uttered, giving a small huff, thinking that Negan wouldn't notice. But of course, the bearded Saviour was quicker than she gave him credit for.

"You jealous, Peaches?" Negan instantly asked her, raising his dark eyebrows fiendishly.

Yes.

She definitely was jealous right now. Her stomach jolting the moment Sherry's name was mentioned.

"No," Blake lied quickly her speech slurred, giving a deep scowl. "Of what? One of your wives? I've seen how much they hate you, Negan."

She tutted again, as Negan grinned, suddenly letting his hand slip from her waist and rounding on her instead, in the dim light of the corridor.

"That mean you don't?" he said leaning into her suddenly, poking his tongue out from between his teeth, as they both stopped in their tracks.

Blake could, right now, feel his warm breath trickling over her slender neck, smell that musky scent of his, that made her heart pound that little bit faster in her chest as she breathed it in.

But she didn't reply to him….merely gazing up into his chocolate eyes, blinking slowly, as everything around them disappeared.

Blake felt a heat rising in her…a welcome warmth spreading through her body, as his hand danced over her waistline easily…

But she suddenly shook herself…frowning….

She took a step away from him, jabbing a finger into Negan's leather and t-shirt covered chest.

"Nuh-uh, no way," she mutteredm frowning at him tipsily. "I know what you're doing. Just because I'm drunk, doesn't mean you can just…."
She paused, searching for the words and waving a hand in the air as she did so.

"…woo me!" she finished, almost stamping her foot in irritation.

But Negan gave a wide smile, chuckling and pulling back from her slightly.

"It was worth a try," he said with an easy shrug, re-adjusting his grip on Lucille in his other, gloved hand.

But having Negan give up so easily was not really what drunken Blake had wanted to hear. Although if she was sober, it was likely she would have realised that this was still all part of their cat and mouse game they both liked to play with one another. And that Negan knew just how much, him backing off, would rile her up right now.

"I'm never gonna be one of your wives, y'know," she said in a quiet, pouting voice, blinking up at him moodily, as they stood there facing one another, in the gloomy, silent hallway, that led down to the third floor.

But Negan just smiled that irritating smile of his, giving her a knowing look, and taking another step into her, possessively.

"An' what makes you think that I want you to be one of my wives, Peaches?" he said in a slow sort of voice, that sent shivers down Blake's spine.

She breathed hard, looking up into his brown eyes and parting her lips slowly, suddenly reaching up and pressing a hand lightly to Negan's chest.

And with that Blake stood on her tip-toes, despite her tallness, and leaned her mouth in towards the dark-haired Saviour's ear.

"I know that you want me, Negan," she said, in a mere ache of a voice, before slowly pulling back from him once again.

Blake batted her long eyelashes up towards him, as Negan went suddenly quiet, his smile having disappeared, and his mouth now fixed into a straight line, as he stared back at her.

But Blake just shook her head, widening her eyes slightly.

"But I'm not the kind of girl who wants to take it in turns with other women," she muttered, her fingers curling around the fabric of the white t-shirt that covered his taught chest. She bit at her lip excruciatingly slowly as she looked up at him. "If I want to fuck, I don't want to have to wait my turn."

She gave another shake of her head, pouting slightly.

Negan suddenly let out a low audible growl at this, tensing his jaw slightly, his eyes on her and only her right now. Looking very much as though he had not expected those words to come pouring from Blake's mouth tonight.

And even in her inebriated state, Blake was fully aware about how much tension had filled the corridor around them right now.

It was if they were the only two people that existed in the world. The only two people that mattered.

But Blake couldn't do this….could she?
Finally realising just what was happening between the pair of them, Negan looking ready to pounce.

She needed to pull herself together.

Blake suddenly gave a cough, tearing her eyes away from his, and letting her hand drop from his chest.

She threw him one last taunting smile, as she moved away from him, strutting off down the corridor ahead.

At this, Negan titled his head to the side as he watched her go, a sudden wide grin forming on his face.

Their game had just got waaay more interesting all of a sudden.

And with that, Negan began to follow her, catching up with her tipsy, stumbling form almost immediately, with long-legged strides, his black biker boots chinking as he went.

And it wasn't a moment later that the tall, bearded, charming Saviour, looked her way, as he fell into step with her finally.

"Oh, that soft-spot I've got for you is rapidly becomin' a hard spot, Doll-face," he uttered in a husky drawl, leaning into her slightly as he spoke.

But Blake just threw him a laughing look, swaying slightly as she surveyed him from the side.

"You are the most annoying man I've ever met, you know that?" she murmured slurring her words slightly as she spoke, with a smirk dancing its way across her pink lips. "But if you'll excuse me-"

Blake moved suddenly away from Negan, over to a small corner of the hallway, that looked particularly comfortable.

"I am just going to lie down here and have a nap," she finished in a firm voice, giving a nod, and making to lean forwards to get down on all fours onto the floor.

At this minute, Blake was far to pre-occupied with the weird way the floor seemed to be all wobbly and moving beneath her, to notice Negan give a low chuckle and a huge roll of his eyes.

He stepped forwards gritting his straight line of teeth together lightly, before suddenly, without a word, grasping Blake around the middle.

She frowned dismissively, pursing her lips.

"No….wait…what're you-" she began….

But before she could do a thing to stop him, Negan had thrown her swiftly over his shoulder, as earlier promised.

Blake gave a loud screaming laugh, before she could help herself.

"Wait…" she said in a tipsy, faux-voice of giggling urgency. "Wait…Negan…"

But the tall, dark-haired Saviour just ignored her, merely grinning that cocky wide grin of his, one hand resting easily on her ass as he began to walk, as Blake shrieked with more peels of laughter.

Almost immediately, Simon, Dwight, and a tall black Saviour Blake didn't recognise, all brandishing
guns, all skidded around the corner ahead of them looking bewildered and wide-eyed, obviously searching for the source of all the commotion.

But Negan just carried on grinning, strolling casually past them, Blake still over his shoulder.

"Nothin' to see here," said the bearded leader easily with a loud voice, as he passed the gaping men.

But this only caused Blake to hang her head over Negan's leather-clad back and laugh even louder, as he carried her drunken-mess of a form, swiftly away.
Blake laughed, as she heard a door creak open, and a second later felt herself being tossed unceremoniously down onto a soft bed.

She gave a drunken purr, stretching out, and looking around giving a frown.

"Hey, this is not my room," uttered the caramel-blonde woman, propping herself up onto her elbows and peering up at the four poster bed she was led across.

It had cool grey cotton sheets and four plump looking pillows, and Blake, from here, got the weirdest sense of déjà vu. As if she had definitely been here before.

"No, it's mine," came Negan's low matter-of-fact tone, as he stalked past her and headed over to the small wooden panelled kitchenette in the corner of the room.

Blake gave another confused, slightly unfocused frown, as she gazed around the large area.

It was indeed Negan's room. The large window on the far side showing nothing but a hazy purple sky outside.

Blake kicked off her sneakers and let out a small huff as she watched the tall dark-haired man who had carried her in, with glazed green eyes.

Negan was smirking to himself, as he placed Lucille down onto a kitchen counter casually, and pulled a bottle of water and a large glass tumbler from the side.

He was as tall as ever, with his usual leather-jacket slung over his slumped shoulders and a knife at his belt.

Blake knew, of course, that she should be scared of him. Everyone else seemed to be, so why didn't she?

But there was something about him that made her feel strangely at ease.

So, so safe when he was near her.

He poured half the bottle of water into the glass, before picking it up and strolling back over towards her.

Blake pursed her lips, that huffy frown still lingering between her brows, as she stared up into his sultry chocolate eyes.

"If you think that just because I'm drunk I'm gonna sleep with you-" she began with a pout.

But Negan cut across her with a sudden chuckle, running a free hand down his bearded face and placing the glass down onto the nightstand to her right.

"Give me a break, Sweetheart," he groaned. "I might be a fuckin' asshole, I ain't a monster. I'm too fuckin' old to be takin advantage of a drunk girl, when I've got five wives sitting all pretty, all nice and compliant downstairs..."

The Saviour knew for a fact how much this would rile Blake up, and he was, of course, right.
She instantly narrowed her eyes at him, giving a dark huff.

"I don't get you," she said pointing a swaying finger up at him. "You act like this horrible villain to everyone else, and yet here you are, David's gone, and you're still try to look out for me? What makes me so special, huh?"

But Negan gave a small sigh, moving around the bed.

"Like I said, Doll-face," he muttered shaking his head and looking down at his feet as he spoke. "Soft-spot."

Blake's own face softened slightly as she pondered the words, titling her head to the side, letting her long caramel hair drift over her shoulder, as she looked over at him.

"You're wives are beautiful, y'know…" she said in quiet voice, after a moment or two.

And at this, Negan looked back at her grinning.

"Oh, I know'."

But Blake turned onto her side, coming to rest her head against her elbow, her hand in her hair, as she stared up through dark eyelashes at the tall man, standing beside the bed.

"But most people only have one wife," she said in a blunt voice, letting out a small frown.

But Negan gave another groaning sigh, suddenly coming to lie down on the bed beside Blake, stretching his long body out and placing both hands behind his head.

The bottom of his white t-shirt rode up slightly, revealing a trail of dark hair leading down his lower abdomen and disappearing into his pants.

Blake gave a slow gulp, as Negan stared up at the underside of the four poster bed, his smile now gone and his face unreadable.

"I did only have one wife," he said in a low, drawl. "A long fuckin' time ago, Peaches."

And Blake, as tipsy as she was, knew then, that the mood of the conversation has changed slightly. The tenseness of Negan's voice a key factor in this.

This was a different side of the tall Saviour, that Blake had never been privy to before.

She gave a small gulp, staring over at him, as he lazied there beside her.

"What was her name?" she asked, sobering herself slightly as she spoke.

But Negan merely cocked an eye in her direction, throwing her a small sigh, as he turned his body in to face her, on the large bed, propping his own head up on his elbow.

His dark brown eyes suddenly met with hers.

"I'll tell you another day, Sweetheart," he said giving a knowing sort of smile and revealing his line of perfect white teeth. "When you're a bit more fuckin' sober."

Blake let out a stroppy sort-of puff of air, but smiled back at him, that frown still clinging on between her brows.
She could have protested, but was now fully aware of just how wasted she was, as Negan before her, moved in and out of focus.

They were close now, their bodies turned in towards the others…here on Negan's bed.

That alone, being a huge hint at the intimacy he was prepared to share with her right now.

A hushed silence filled the room, which only caused to flood Blake's body, with a warmth that made her heart pound ever-so slightly faster than before.

"So, I've been meanin' to ask you," said Negan after a second or two, as Blake pulled on her bottom lip with her teeth, her chest heaving. "Like you made me promise I would…"

She gave a nod, her green eyes staring at his mouth as he spoke….unable to look away.

"So…one more time….you wan' me to take you back home? To Rick the Prick?" Negan finally finished.

But this only caused Blake to let out a long huff of air.

That was it?!

But what else had she really been expecting?

A proposition?

A romantic speech?

Blake finally realised that she was far too drunk for all this…

She lowered her chin, pouting, and waved a hand dismissively in Negan's direction.

"Ugh, I don't know," she said shaking her head in irritation. "Ask me tomorrow when I'm more sober."

She blinked her eyes closed and flopped down onto her back moodily, as the dark-haired Saviour surveyed her, giving a brief chuckle.

"You mean after you get over tomorrow's hangover, or before, Sweet-cheeks?" said Negan, reaching over and making to grab for Blake's thigh teasingly.

But she quickly slapped his hand away.

"Nuh-uh. You can keep your hands to yourself tonight," she said warningly, turning her head towards him on the mattress and shooting him a look.

Though at this, Negan gazed back at her goadingly for an excruciatingly long moment.

"You sure about that Peaches?" he asked her. "Because there is a lot of really nice fuckin' things I could be doing for you tonight with these hands…"

Blake bit her lip and blinked at him, feeling her breath catch in her throat.
All it would take right now was for Negan to roll on top of her and pounce, and she would be all his...all night....

But he didn't...

In fact, the bearded Saviour just lay there with a teasing look plastered across his long, tanned face, knowing full well what he was doing.

Blake gave a scowl suddenly grasping up a pillow from behind her and tossing it unceremoniously at Negan's cocky face.

"Screw you," she huffed, as he caught the pillow before it could hit him, and gave a whining laugh in return.

"Oh, you fuckin' want me, Doll-face," said the dark-haired man, suddenly pushing himself from the bed with a sigh and getting to his feet. He pointed a finger at her briefly. "You can try and deny it all you want. But I know you.....an' I can see exactly what you're imaginin' us doin' together.....imaginin' every little dirty fuckin' thing I could do to you...."

Blake looked up at him, parting her lips slightly, and feeling a creamy wetness pooling inside her panties at his gruff and husky words.

Oh god...

But Negan just grinned, not even waiting for an answer from her, as he strolled back across the room, turning away from her and picking up Lucille.

Blake gave a frown, watching him, as he snatched up the barbed-wire covered weapon, and to her surprise, made for the door.

"Wait..." she said suddenly in an incredulous voice, propping herself up onto her elbows once again. "Where are you going?"

But Negan just stopped, one hand on the door handle, throwing her an arrogant grin over his shoulder.

"Well, shit, Doll-face," he said raising an eyebrow. "I mean it's only eight fuckin' thirty. Some of us aren't totally wasted and out for the count quite fuckin' yet. So I'm just off to play a lil' poker with Simon an' the guys in the rec room downstairs....maybe smoke a couple' cigars. That alright with you?"

She gaped.

He was leaving?

Now?

Blake, even as drunk as she was, could hear the utter teasing in his voice, dripping now with sarcasm.

And at this, she gave an instant scowl, huffing and folding her arms across her chest.

"Yes," she snapped, pursing her lips and looking down at her feet sulkily.

Knowing just how much he was trying to goad her into a reaction right now.
But Negan just smiled that oh-so cocky smile of his.

"Good," he replied, tugging open the door. "Oh, an' Peaches?"

Blake immediately looked his way, just as he knew she would….her eyes big and round and lightly expectant.

"Don' wait up," he finished, arching his back and letting out a wide grin….

…..as a second pillow was instantly thrown in his direction…

…..missing him by inches, and hitting the now door instead, as it shut with a gentle snap.
Blake's mouth was parched.

She turned over onto her side, opening a bleary eye and staring straight up at the large glass of water, sitting on the, oh-so unfamiliar, nightstand beside her.

Now that was exactly what she needed right now, suddenly propping her body up on her elbow and reaching for it.

She brought the glass to her lips and took a long sip of slightly warm water, which quenched her thirst no end.

But it was then and only then, once Blake had blinked her eyes a few more times, looking around, did she finally remember where she was.

The drapes were open sending a shaft of grey early morning light across Negan's large living space.

She slowly peered over her shoulder, at the figure she had heard come in last night, a few hours after she had made it to sleep, lying beside her.

He had been sure to shut the door quietly behind him as he came in, way past midnight, before tossing Lucille down onto one of the couches, stripping out of his leather jacket, and slumping down onto the bed beside her. Blake feeling it sag beneath his weight as he did so.

Blake had fluttered her eyes closed, half in a dozy sort of dream world, as she had felt his long fingers brush back a long strand of hair from her face.

She had immediately smelt whisky and cigars on his breath, before she had felt him grab at a pillow and squish it beneath his head, as she drifted back off to a warm comfortable sleep.

Now Negan, in the light of early morning, was stretched out beside her, still in the same clothes as yesterday, with all but boots and jacket still on, sleeping on top of the covers, one arm strewn over his abdomen haphazardly.

He looked so restful and so…well, human.

His utter vulnerability was abundant right now, and Blake knew that if she really wanted to, she could kill him….

One bash to the skull, or knife to the throat, and that would be the end of him.

But Blake didn't move, as she sat there, beneath the bedsheets, still in her t-shirt and pants from yesterday, just staring down at the bearded Saviour beside her.

Her face reddened slightly as she remembered how she had felt last night in her inebriated state, as Negan had uttered things, that made her stomach jolt and a warmth spread between her legs.

That had to the wine's doing…right?

There was no way she was into him…was there?

She had been held captive here…having just lost her husband…surely it was a little too soon to be thinking of things like that right? Let alone with Negan of all people…
But even now, as she looked at him…she wondered what it would be like to have his taut, long body pressed up against hers…tasting every inch of him…coming undone by his touch…

Blake hastily shook herself, giving a sudden gulp.

She needed to stop this.

She pursed her lips, and, as gently as she could, slipped from the bed silently, padding across the room on bare feet, making to use Negan's large bathroom, which lay through the doorway on the right.

As she moved across the wide open-plan living room, Blake fussed with her long, mussed up caramel hair, giving a yawning-stretch before peeling off her t-shirt and flinging it down onto the couch beside her.

Surprisingly, considering how much she had drunk, Blake felt surprisingly ok, having much less of a bad headache than she had after all that whisky almost two weeks ago.

She flicked on the bathroom light, which illuminated the cool, tiled space before her, before heading over to the large mirror that hung above the sink.

She unbuttoned her pants and slipped them down her slender legs, tossing them aside, before peering up at her reflection quickly.

The bruises that covered her neck were all but gone now…all that remained being a faint yellowish tinge which the previously dark-purple bruises lay.

Her ribs felt better now, her wrist too.

It was almost as though every trace of David was slowly disappearing from her life…..

Every hurt…every pain he had caused her, diminishing, like the bruises on her skin.

She wondered now, what people back in Alexandria would make of David's demise.

Would they blame Blake?

Take David's side rather than hers?

Why wouldn't they? As far as they were concerned, David was the hero, especially when comparing him to Negan, who, from their point of view, had done nothing but torture and kill innocent people.

They would be right of course. But Rick, Michonne, Maggie and everyone else, were not privy to how much hurt David had inflicted on Blake over the many, many months she had lived with them.

Blake gave a gulp, tearing her eyes hurriedly away from her own reflection.

Did she want to go back there? Back to that?

Right now, she wasn't so sure…

Blake peeled off her bra slowly, as well as pushing her panties down her slender thighs, before grabbing a fresh white towel, that was stacked neatly on the side, and taking it over to the enormous free standing shower that stood on the far side of the room.

It was decorated with elaborate faux-marble tiles and looked big enough for an entire football team to
shower in—compared to the grotty little cubicles she had in her hallway, at least!

Maybe she just needed to clear her head….to stop her thinking any more on David this morning. Or worrying what the pepe back in Alexandria would do when they found out what had happened.

A shower would certainly help with that.

Blake padded into the cubicle, sliding the large glass door closed behind her.

She hung up her towel neatly over the top of one glass-panelled side, before turning on the water.

It was, like the bath had been, hot in the tap, and Blake found herself surrounded by steam, as the well-pressured water fell instantly over her body.

She closed her eyes, gasping slightly, as she let the warm stream run over her face and down her long hair.

This was the closest she had felt to utter bliss since the last time she had been in this room, sat in that four-footed bath in the centre of the bathroom on that fateful day David had died.

Back then her feelings seemed to be few and far between, but now they came thick and fast, like a steam train…faster and faster…making a mark on every aspect of her life, until they were finally too far away for them to affect her any more.

She knew that Negan was good for helping with this….helping to take her cares away, with one smart remark or gentle touch at a time.

Blake took a deep gulp of air, as she ran both hands back across her head, shaking the water from her eyes…

…..just as she heard the shower door behind her suddenly slide open…and then shut again.

Blake's heart suddenly pounded as she turned hurriedly around as quickly as she could do on the slippery, tiled floor, and blinked up…

….to see Negan, standing there behind her, inside the showe….as naked as the day he was born.

Blake immediately reddened, her eyes widening as they landed on the bearded Saviour's tanned and lean body.

He had several dark tattoos across his chest and upper arms, and a scattering of dark hair that seemed to travel from his chest….all the way down to….

Blake gave another gulp, averting her eyes suddenly, as she placed both hands across her own body, covering her naked and exposed breasts and the region between her legs, from Negan's chocolate gaze.

He seemed to be enjoying every single second of this, a wide cocky grin residing across his lips, as he raised an eyebrow in her direction fiendishly.

"Mornin'," he uttered with a low husky growl, which echoed in the large shower room, causing Blake to feel all warm and slick at the sound.

He took a sudden, intimate step towards her.

But Blake scowled immediately, trying to right herself. To to act right now how any normal person
would, at seeing an uninvited person in a shower with them.

"What the hell are you doing in here?!!" she said angrily, looking anywhere but down at his lengthy penis.

But Negan just chuckled.

"Well, shit, Doll-face, I mean, this is my fuckin' shower," he said poking his tongue between his teeth. "So if there's anyone who shouldn't be here, it's you."

Blake huffed loudly at this.

It was warm enough in here as it was, without having Negan's naked body right next to her too…

Blake knew that the tables had certainly turned on her now.

Now Blake was the vulnerable one, and Negan was the one that could pounce on her….kill her…or fuck her…if he chose to.

But for now, he did neither…merely looming over her, grinning that usual smart-ass grin of his.

"I didn't ask for your to bring me back to your room last night," she snapped, raising both eyebrows at him. "And if your bathroom is only one with warm water, there's no way I'm giving up the chance of a hot shower."

Negan licked at his bottom lip.

"Oh, Peaches, I have some great ideas about how to make this shower hotter if you wanted?" he said, suddenly taking a step into her, his hands almost immediately making to reach for her bare hips, trying to pull her into him.

But Blake placed a hand to his chest suddenly, holding him at arms' length, before his hands could reach her.

And it was then, that a sudden moment passed between them, with chests both heaving, hearts thudding and lips both parted.

But Blake raised her chin defiantly, her eyes suddenly twinkling.

She was not playing his game today…..

…but he was certainly going to be partaking in hers.

"Nuh-uh," she said in a breathy voice, suddenly taking a step into Negan's firm body, and dropping her hand from her own breasts.

Now she was there, completely naked….covered in droplets of water…for him to see.

Blake immediately saw his brown eyes flicker down, the smile falling from his lips…..finally taking her all in.

And with that, Blake heard him give an instant starved growl of need….

But the caramel-blond woman merely smiled, licking her lips provocatively and leaning her mouth daringly close to the dark-haired Saviour's ear.
She let out a small, shuddering breath, before finally speaking….

"Oh you can look, Daddy," she uttered in a deliciously teasing voice. "But you can't touch."

And with that, Blake pulled away, shaking her head and gazing up Negan's deep brown eyes, batting her own long eyelashes as he did so.

She had him.

Oh, she had him.

And it was then that Negan returned a desperate, wanting look in Blake's direction, knowing full-well, that he had been played.

He gritted his perfect line of white teeth, breathing hard.

But Blake just threw a knowing smirk in his direction, as she turned back around, stepping once again under the water and running her hands over her smooth curves…

...knowing that Negan's eyes were very much fixed on her….his gaze full of dark need….

She smiled to herself at this, pulling on her bottom lip with her teeth, knowing he could easily push her up against that shower wall and have her right now….if he wanted…

But that would mean, that she would have won….

And Blake knew full-well Negan was far too arrogant to let that happen….

She lifted her head to face the ceiling and let the water pour over her hair and down her back once again, washing over her breast as she turned back around to face him.

Negan was, of course, still staring at her, but now with a huge grin plastered over his long bearded face…..(and Blake didn't dare to look elsewhere right now…)

The caramel-blonde woman obviously knew how to push Negan's buttons, just as well as he obviously knew how to push hers.

They were certainly becoming far to alike for words…

Blake just gave a goading smile, suddenly taking a step towards the dark-haired Saviour, who now had beads of water running down his own tanned body…..

…making it oh-so tempting for her to chance a glance downwards…

But Blake refrained (it taking all her effort to do so), as she leaned suddenly into him…

Negan looked at her expectantly….with a dark, hungry look present in his chocolate eyes…

But, to his surprise, Blake suddenly reached her hand up and over Negan's shoulder, pulling down her towel from over the door.

"Shower's all yours…" she murmured in a sultry voice, as she shoved suddenly by him, with her naked skin grazing his as she passed him.

And with that, Blake slid open the shower door, wrapping the towel around herself as she did so...
….leaving the dark-haired Saviour standing there alone…..

…..a needy smile still lingering on his lips as he watched her go…..
Once again, she had fucking played him.

How the hell was this becoming such a regular occurrence in Negan's life?

For years he had got exactly what he wanted….whether it was from his wives…his men….by force, or by charm…. 

But Blake was indeed proving to be a tougher nut to crack than he first had thought.

He liked her.

Hell, he more than fucking liked her.

He had been swept away by her character, her smart-mouth and her beauty, even on those first few days she had been here …at the Sanctuary…scowling at every little thing he did.

He had pushed her buttons…and back then, not in a particularly good way.

But since David's demise, Negan had seen a queen emerge….someone he had known had been in there all along.

And right now Negan was infatuated by her….by every little thing she did.

He had never met anyone who had him as wrapped around her little finger, as much as she did.

Well, not since his first wife anyway…

Both women had seemed to have breathed a freshness and a warmth into his life, that, at the time, Negan had been lacking.

He had needed Lucille back then.

And now, he needed Blake……in more ways than one.

Their games had escalated somewhat from snarky passing remarks…to seeing her in that shower a few moments ago…

Even Negan, as controlled as he usually was, had become hard in a matter of seconds….wanting her so, so badly.

And he knew from the way she had washed herself oh-so slowly in front of him…biting tenderly at her bottom lip….her perfect breasts catching his eyes as her chest rose and fell rapidly...that she had wanted him too…. 

But he would play her game for now….and she would play his….but he knew for the fact that neither of them would be able to keep this up for long, at the rate they were going…

Negan grinned to himself, as he strolled casually out of the bathroom, white towel neatly wrapped around his lower half.

Normally he was a lot more reserved when it came to strutting around the Sanctuary half naked….especially in front of his wives, who he didn't doubt would try and cut his exposed throat at
any given opportunity.

But with Blake, he felt much more comfortable and at ease. She had had plenty of opportunity to kill him if that's what she had wanted, and so now Negan gave her a lot more leeway than anyone else around here.

He strolled easily back into his living quarters, beads of water from the shower rolling down his tanned, tattooed torso as he went.

He immediately spotted her, of course, sitting there on the edge of his bed, a smile plastered across her face, looking like a naughty schoolgirl.

But it was what she was wearing, that made the edges of his lips curve upwards into a wide grin…

"You wearing my clothes now," Doll-face?" he asked staring over at her, hungrily. "Next we'll be putting a down-payment on a house and decidin' on the best school to send our kids to."

At this, Blake just smiled that coy smile of hers.

She was sat there, in the t-shirt Negan had been wearing yesterday, which dropped down to the top of her thighs, revealing still enough skin to get the blood pumping back down to his dick.

Her tanned and slender legs where crossed before her, leading Negan to wonder whether or not she was even wearing panties.

He wouldn't put it past her not to be, nowadays.

But she answered his question for him, re-crossing her legs neatly, revealing a flash of black lace, which only caused Negan to let out a needy groan of yearning.

He knew full well that he could easily go over there…tear those panties off of her and fuck her right there on his bed…. But he, with a great amount of restraint, instead just cocked his head to the side and licked at his lips.

"Oh, Peaches," he said suddenly strutting over towards her, shaking his head. "You have got to stop with that teasin' of yours."

But Blake just looked him up and down, smirking and giving a short roll of her eyes, before pushing herself to her feet.

She sighed.

"Why?" she uttered with a faux-pout, walking around the bed to where her pants were now lying. "Does Daddy not like that?"

Negan gave a growl of want, as she used that word.

God, he fucking wanted her right now, watching as she slipped the pants on, pulling them up over her thighs, and chanced a teasing a look in his direction.

But he didn't speak, biting his tongue, as she stood up straight, slipping on her sneakers, sidling past him, and heading for the door.

But before she could reach it, she stopped sudden turning back to him and wrinkling her nose.
"You realise I'm keeping this right?" she said in a firm voice, raising her eyebrows as she spoke and plucking at the white t-shirt covering her curves.

Negan smiled.

"You can always bring it back here to sleep in tonight, Doll," he said, lowering his chin as he gazed at her…his eyes dark and hungry….

Of course he expected her to bite back at him, but it came as an utter surprise to him, when Blake merely tilted her head and gave a small sigh, her eyes twinkling devilishly.

"I would…" she said, drawing out the word and giving a light shrug, one hand on the door handle. "But I don't usually wear anything to bed…"

And with that, leaving Negan hanging on those words, Blake tugged open the door and was gone, before the tall, dark-haired Saviour had a chance to utter a word in reply.

Damn…

She had fucked him.

And not in the way he had been hoping, either…
The sun was hot in the sky, and Blake stopped to take a long drink of slightly-warm water, as she wiped at her perspiring brow.

By the time she had emerged out into the lot to grab some fresh air, she had been surprised to find that work had already begun on making the area into a self-sufficient garden of sorts, under her orders from yesterday.

This was obviously Negan's doing. And Blake hadn't been able to help herself from smiling at the idea of him actually valuing her opinions.

He was the first man in a long time who had, that was for sure.

And so Blake, eager to help in whatever way she could, had soon got stuck in, clearing the yard of debris and helping to pull down the broken and disused fences than lined the interior of the medium-sized lot.

With a little compost and ground work they could easily lay the foundations for a plot of land suitable for growing basic vegetables…maybe plant a couple of fruit trees even.

Today Saviours of all shapes, sizes and status had been roped in to help. Some voluntarily, and some under Negan's direct orders, that was obvious.

But Blake today, had already met an older man in his late fifties who had used to own and live on a farm a few miles from here. Had had been working for points here, at the Sanctuary, for about fourteen months now and, as he had told Blake, was more than happy to help out organising people where he could. Had had informed her that this work would suit him far better than his previous job here, working in the laundry room down in the deep basements of the factory.

It was all progress as far as Blake was concerned. Not just with the gardens itself, but with giving people here, a better way of life. A purpose, if they were not able to go out there and fight on behalf of Negan, at least.

And it showed already.

The people she had seen just a week or so ago, sitting miserable and quiet in the courtyard around the corner, had all come over, smiling happily, patting Blake on the back and giving her water whenever she was low.

She guessed very rightly that they didn't do the same to Negan.

Of course they were scared of him….and rightly so….but with Blake…..they respected her in a different way…

….just like they would have a queen….

Blake had smiled on thinking about this….a queen was only what Negan had made her into….giving her this position here at the Sanctuary.

She could quite easily have still been in that cell, or forced to work for him for points. But that soft spot had for her, definitely helped matters, that was for sure.
But soon enough, the time would come where she would go back to Alexandria…where she belonged…..

Because that had been the goal all along…right?

David had left this world….and it had been his choice to come here, never hers anyway…

So eventually she would leave….like she had originally planned.

But even just the thought of going back there made her stomach churn…

What was pulling her to say here? Keeping her from leaving?

Not one part of her wanted to admit that it might be Negan!

But, speaking of which, as Blake paused in her work….thick gloves on, as well as a pair of shorts, boots and a blue shirt…she glanced over her shoulder, to see a person striding causally across the yard towards her, Lucille swinging from his hand easily, as he walked.

But it was what the dark-haired Saviour was holding in his other hand, that made Blake's stomach do a small flip.

She rolled her eyes smirking to herself, as she placed down her water and peered up at him, folding her arms across her chest.

Here he was.

Negan.

Clothes now on. Leather jacket still shucked over his sloping shoulders, despite the heat.

Today he had on grey pants, biker boots, and a grey t-shirt peeking out from the neck of his jacket, and to Blake, his black and grey peppered beard seemed to look even longer than it did, since she had seen him this morning.

He grinned as she approached her, parting the silent and nervous Saviours around him as he went.

But Blake did nothing in return but tilt her head in his direction, smiling as he reached her…

…..before he suddenly and with much cockiness…..held out a small posy of haphazardly-tied flowers, towards her….

Blake raised an eyebrow looking up into his chocolate eyes suddenly…

"And what have I done to deserve these?" she asked in a quiet sort of voice, never in a million years expecting to get given flowers today.

In fact, Blake couldn't quite remember the last time she got given anything that half-resembled a bunch of flowers…it must have been a long time even before the apocalypse anyway!

But Negan just smirked back at her.

"Well, I mean, goddamn, Doll-face," he said in an incredulous voice. "It's not every mornin' I get given my own private fuckin' strip-tease right there in my fucking shower. Thought I should say a proper thank you."
Blake rolled her eyes, looking at him half-scolding, but she softened.

David had never, ever given her flowers, saying it was a waste of money, so right now, this gesture meant a lot more to her than she was ever about to reveal back to Negan.

"It wasn't a strip tease," she reprimanded, pursing her lips, trying to stop the butterflies that were dancing about inside her stomach. "I was actually already naked when you decided to join me."

A couple of skinny-looking Saviours, in grey moth-eaten clothes, standing nearby, looked up at Blake wide-eyed, looking slightly horrified as she spoke.

She immediately reddened and snatched the flowers from Negan's grasp giving a tut, before turning her back to him and walking away.

She knew for a fact, of course, that Negan was likely to follow her.

And he did, strolling around her easily, as she came to stop next to a rusty old bench that she had earlier had been helping to unscrew from the ground.

She bent down to pick up a large, heavy wrench.

"You know if you play your cards right," began Negan with a half-sigh, gesturing to her with the dull end of Lucille. "You could be sharin' more than just a mornin' shower with me, Peaches."

And with that, much to Blake's annoyance, Negan sat himself down easily on the bench that she had been trying to remove.

She let out an immediate irritable huff, and glared in his direction.

"So….what? We just get married…live happily ever after?" she began in a slightly simpering, amused voice, cocking her head to the left. "What happens to your other wives in all this, hmmm? Do we all just sit around waiting our turn?"

There was a heat in her voice….a sarcastic tone that the dark-haired Saviour, of course, picked up on…

He leaned back in his seat lazily, giving her a hungry, dark sort-of grin.

"Oh, no, no, no." he uttered in a low drawl. "A queen like you deserves a special fucking seat, Peaches. On. my. throne."

He suddenly pointed down to his lap, patting his knee.

Blake felt herself getting suddenly hot again, but this time it had nothing to do with the sun, now high in the sky above.

"Very tempting," she just about managed to utter, in a simpering tone, trying as hard as she could not to let him win this one.

And with that, she tossed the flowers suddenly back down onto his lap, staring at him for a long drawn out moment….before turning on her heel and walking swiftly away once again.

He was getting to her today. She could feel it.

This morning she had wanted nothing more than for him to advance on her on that bed….rip both his t-shirt and her panties off of her, and screw her brains out….but he hadn't taken the bait…
Not that she had wanted him to of course…

This was all just a game…

An aim to rile up the annoying leader of the Saviours' as much as she possible could.

That was all it was…

Right?

Even Blake herself wasn't so sure nowadays.

She half expected him to follow her again, but before she he could do so, Blake noticed Arat stalk hurriedly past her through the lot.

"Negan," said the curly haired woman in a loud, respectful voice, keeping her chin lowered.

Blake's eyes followed Arat as she went, watching as she stopped just a foot or two away from the lounging Negan, staring down at him, her jaw tensed.

"Thought I'd let you know…we found a small group about thirty miles out," she said curtly, explaining, tossing a knife back in forth between her hands as she spoke. "They tried to fight us… and most of them escaped, but a couple of them, the ones we manage to capture, well, they led us to a huge weapons cache they've been keeping. Must have about forty guns…a lot of ammo….maybe more…..we brought back some of it…but there's more…at least another couple of truck loads…"

Negan almost instantly grinned that usual arrogant grin of his.

"Good job, Arat. Might be worth us all takin' lil drive then, huh…" he said with a nod, narrowing his eyes in Arat's direction, before his chocolate orbs flickered suddenly over her shoulder, landing instead on Blake.

"What do you say, Buttercup?" he asked her suddenly raising his voice. "You up for a road trip with yours truly?"

And with that, Blake's lips twitched up into a grin almost before she could stop herself.

She looked back at Negan for a long, long moment, before giving a nonchalant shrug.

"If you want me there so badly….I guess I could come along," she uttered in a teasing voice. As Negan leaned suddenly forwards in his seat, clapping his hands together.

"Then it's a date…." he said raising his eyebrows and pulling himself to his feet with a small groan.

Blake rolled her eyes obviously in his direction, as she pulled off her gloves, watching as he walked towards her.

"Wow, flowers and a date, all in one day," she uttered in a cool voice, as Negan closed the gap between them, strutting over, ignoring Arat as he went. "Don't I feel special?"

But the tall, dark-haired Saviour merely leaned in towards her, pressing the flowers back into Blake's hands, his lips grazing ear as he spoke.

"Well, I don' know about special …" he uttered in a low, husky tone, which made Blake feel a sudden warmth spread between her legs. "…but let's give it til' tonight, Darlin', an' I could easily be fuckin' you up against a wall, if that's the kind of special you're lookin' for?"
And with that, he shoved slowly past her, bumping her shoulder as he went…

Knowing exactly what he was doing…

……leaving Blake standing there, wide eyed and gaping….rooted to the spot….breathing hard….

Fuck….

She really was screwed, wasn't she?

Negan had certainly won this round…that was for sure….
Blake pursed her lips together, her arms folded across herself irritably, as the truck hurtled down the dusty dirt back road.

Normally she would have enjoyed being out of the Sanctuary, staring out at the open road stretching for miles and miles ahead of them…

But what should have been a normal journey, was, instead, full of annoyance for Blake.

Mainly due to the tanned hand that had been sitting on top of her knee for almost the entire journey.

Arat was driving in the seat just to Blake's left, but of course, Negan who had ushered Blake into the cab ahead of him, about thirty minutes ago, was now sat close to her other side, his hand placed up her leg possessively, and his other elbow leant lazily against the open window on his right.

Negan had touched her with more purpose than this before, that was certain, but it was the fact that he was being so blatant in front of Arat, and the other men sat in the back of the truck, that really put Blake on edge.

She had tried to shove his hand away from her, several times now, but Negan had just wordlessly grinned, smugly replacing his hand where it had been each time…inching ever-higher on her thigh, every time he did so.

It, thankfully for Blake, wasn't long into the journey, by the time Arat turned the steering wheel abruptly, turning the corner around a small farmhouse, and heading towards a penned-in lot of buildings up ahead.

Blake noticed Negan from the corner of her eye, run a hand over his mouth and give a gentle, groaning sigh.

And it wasn't a moment later she felt him lean in towards her.

"You gonna be able to handle yourself out there, Peaches?" he asked her in a low drawl of a voice.

Blake chewed on her lip, shrugging neatly.

Negan had already made Arat give Blake another knife before they left, which the curly-haired Saviour had done, slightly reluctantly. Obviously not sure whether she trusted Blake yet.

But Negan's orders were pretty much law here. Everyone knew that. So they all had to comply whether they wanted to or not.

Blake threw him a look.

"Of course," she said in a snarky voice. "I was out there a lot longer than you were, Negan. I can take care of myself."

But at this, Negan just grinned, his eyes gleaming with utter interest in her….as his fingers began to glide up her bare thigh…

"Oh, I do not doubt for a second you fuckin' can, Darlin'," he uttered, in a growling voice into her ear.
But Blake slapped his hand away, tutting, crossing her legs hastily and throwing the dark-haired Saviour an unimpressed look.

She mouthed words 'fuck you' to him, not wanting Arat to be aware of her current uncomfortableness with the situation. But this only caused Negan to give a laugh, staring down at her hungrily.

How was it possible for one man to drive her crazy in so many different ways?

But to Blake's relief, it was only a minute or two later, that the van pulled up in the midst of a group of large warehouse-style, industrial-looking buildings.

"We're here," uttered Arat bluntly, turning off the engine as the second truck, driven by one of the other Saviours pulled up beside them.

"Well then, let's get fuckin' to it," Negan said abruptly, shoving open the door beside him and hopping swiftly out.

Blake, of course, followed him after a second or two, brushing down the back of her shorts and gazing around, squinting through the sunshine.

The entire place looked deserted, bar a couple of walkers, that had already noticed their arrival and had managed to drag themselves slowly along the pathways towards the group, groaning as they did so.

Negan who was whistling easily beside Blake, arched his back, peering around, as one of the dead drifted near to him, giving a snarl of hunger.

But Negan merely gave a wide grin, and cracked the creeper over the head sharply with Lucille.

Blake blinked harshly …as she heard the sound….it reminding her suddenly of the last time she had touched Negan's trusty old barbed-wire covered baseball bat.…

She gave a small gulp…turning away from him. And even when he looked back at her raising an eyebrow, as the walker slumped to the ground, Blake still did not give him the satisfaction of a response to his work.

The tall-dark haired Saviours chocolate eyes seemed to linger on her for a long second before he finally tore his eyes away, tenseng his jaw in what seemed like put-out irritation at her failure to acknowledge his greatness.

"Alright," he finally uttered, his seething subsiding slightly as he turned back to the small group of Saviours as they all emerged from the trucks, weapons held aloft. "Show me the fuckin' goods."

Arat, standing before him looking stern, nodded immediately.

"It's just over here…" she noted, in a deep voice, gesturing with her head. "We've still got a one of them tied up….the other tried to escape so we shot him….but the guns are all still there. We left Mark and Eduardo standing guard."

At this, Blake gave a frown.

Killing people was not how things should be done. Although she was one to talk nowadays, after what happened with David… So the caramel-blond woman, hearing this, merely rolled her eyes, scoffing, and turned away from the group for a second, gazing at a boarded-up building beside her.
It was strange to think that Negan and the Saviours could have easily come across her group back when they lived out in the open. Often frequenting places like this for as long as they could hold them for.

Would she have been the one killed for trying to escape?

She could have easily been, she knew that, if things had been different…

Behind her, the group all filed out, heading over toward a large two story building in the centre of the lot. Obviously where the weapons cache was.

But Blake stayed where she was….as another of the dead drew near….

"You gonna just stay out here all day, Sweet-cheeks?" commented Negan suddenly.

Blake looked around to see the bearded Saviour stood there, back arched easily, a single eyebrow raised in her direction.

But she didn't give him a response, merely holding on in her spot for a second ,as the walker moved closer to her….and closer and closer…..

Blake pulled the knife from her belt, gazing back around and puncturing the dead figure easily through what was left of its skull with her blade.

She gave a sigh, as the freak stopped in all its movement, before retracting the knife and turning slowly, walking over towards Negan.

"I guess not…"she murmured in a cool tone.

But this only caused Negan to cock his head, peering at her.

"You pissed at me, Peaches?" he said after a moment or two, as she caught up to him. "Coz, hell, I can see that somethin's the matter here."

But Blake just gave him a dark scowl, rounding on Negan suddenly, stopping in her tracks.

She brought herself up to her full height and stepped close to him, jabbing a finger into his leather-clad chest.

"Yeah, there is actually," she said between gritted teeth, glancing this way and that, for a moment, making sure no one was in earshot of them. "You trying to grope me back in that van….Arat was sitting right there, Negan!"

Negan gave a bemused sort-of grin, peering down at Blake at this close proximity.

"Why the fuck would I give a shit what Arat sees us doin', Doll-face?" he muttered shaking his head, and giving another groaning laugh. "You ashamed of me or somethin'?"

At this, Blake opened her mouth as if to say something, but at the last minute changed her mind, instated closing it once again, before letting out a growl of frustration.

"Ugh, I really hate you sometimes!" she said giving Negan a gentle shove away from her and stalking off in the direction that the others had gone in.

She heard him instantly let out a carrying chuckle, hearing his boots chink as he walked along after her.
She wasn’t ashamed of him…not in the slightest…but mainly because there really was nothing going on between them.

Just a little harmless flirting on occasion…

That's all it was…..right?

But Blake wasn’t so sure about that anymore…as she entered into the cool building behind a scrawny man who looked like a black-haired Dwight.

She looked around.

The place looked like it had once been a large office block, probably made for the people who owned the farm to run some sort of business out of.

Several rooms snaked off a long corridor…and behind a desk at the front, was a large wonky-looking sign with a photo of a cat on it, with the words I hate Mondays emblazoned across it in bold white letters.

Blake’s lips twitched up slightly as she tore her eyes away from it, the seven Saviours ahead of her, all trailing off towards a room at the back of the place.

But Blake instead, turned left, making down the small corridor, lined with open doors to offices that had long been looted.

Footprint-covered paper lined the hallway carpet, as she walked, knife raised aloft….not really searching for anything in particular. But it was good to be out of the Sanctuary for a bit…

…and to feel just like she had in the long years she had been out here…surviving….

Blake had been in some sticky situations with the dead in the past, always helped along by the people she had travelled around with…

Not David, though, never David.

He had always been the one who volunteered to stay behind…ton take care of the camp… Fighting and scavenging were never his strong point.

But they hadn’t been Blake’s either before the world had gone to shit.

Blake had always been the girl in the high heels….with the long carefully waved hair….and tight pencil skirt….

Never in a million years had she expected a few years down the line, she would have been carrying a knife around, and wearing little to no make-up each and every day.

But she had got used to this life…she was far more tanned now…and leaner too….but her hips still had that nice curve to them, as did her breasts….which she was thankful for at least. She hadn't wanted to day to come where she wasn't able to recognise herself anymore.

Blake gave a sigh, glancing over her shoulder, half-expecting Negan to have followed her down the hallway, as he usually did.

But to her surprise, there for once, was no sign of the tall, dark-haired Saviour in the gloomy, and silent corridor.
It was likely he had followed Arat and her team to the weapons cache instead to look at their bounty, and so Blake headed off alone, turning a corner and finding herself near to a long, steep stairwell leading towards a door at the top.

She paused momentarily.

Was this a good idea? Wandering off on her own from the group.

She doubted of course that it was, but what interest did she really have in how many guns the Saviours were able to get their hands on? Surely that was just bad news for the people back in Alexandria, the Hilltop group, as well as any other people the Negan had reign over. Wasn't she better of not knowing what they were planning?

And so Blake, grabbing hold of the handrail, began to slowly trudge up the small set of stairs, her eyes darting this way and that, a little nervously as she went.

The area was pretty penned in, and Blake knew, that if a walker was to jump out at her right now, she would have little or no chance of escape.

But luckily for her, no such creature appeared, as she reached the top and shoved at the large wooden door.

It stuck fast for a moment or two, but Blake, putting her shoulder into it, managed to eventually prise it open….slipping hurriedly into a large open room.

There was a large window on the far side that illuminated one half of the space, but even in the shadowy corners, Blake could tell that every inch of this room had been lived in recently.

Sleeping bags, some dusty clothes, and the remains of a few empty tin cans and a small camping stove, littered the floor. And in the corner, a large bookshelf stood, which looked like it had obviously been moved back and forth in front of the door to protect from any intruders.

Not that it had been of any use on this occasion.

Blake gave a heavy sigh, strolling over towards the window, pocketing her knife once again.

This is what her life was like not so long ago….sleeping on floors….unable to wash….eat properly…with only another body, David's, to keep her warm at night…

It had been tough.

But Blake had survived.

Well, she was here wasn't she?

She peered through the grimy panes of glass, looking out onto the trucks that were parked below…..

…..just as a sudden creaking of floorboards behind her, made her swing around, her heart thudding rapidly and her eyes widening…

…but she breathed a sudden sigh of relief as she saw who it was.

"You out to give me a heart attack?" she said, pursing her lips irritably.

But Negan, who was stood in the doorway, just grinned.
"Just thought I'd come see where you'd wondered off to," he said readjusting his grip on a bloody Lucille and strolling over to her easily. "Wanted to make sure you weren't gettin' that oh-so fine fuckin' ass of yours, into too much trouble."

Blake couldn't help but smirk at him as he crossed the room towards her.

He was everything she wanted right now, and in the silent room, with just the two of them alone… the intensity of their situation upper her longing tenfold.

"A smile, huh?" he said cocking his head to the side. "That mean you've forgiven me, Peaches?"

Blake shrugged, and backed up against the wall behind her, titling her chin upwards as Negan stopped just an inch or two away from her finally.

She could smell that muskiness again….the scent of gasoline….of humidity….causing her breath to catch slightly in her throat.

She saw his tongue reach his back molars as he looked her up and down….looking almost as if he was about to devour her at any second, eager for her response.

Blake's heart thudded in her chest as a warmth spread between her legs, and up through her stomach.

"Maybe," she uttered, gazing up at the bearded man before her, through darkened lashes….

There was a heat between them, she could feel it…

An utter longing….

Blake's fingers' curled around the fabric of Negan's t-shirt, now visible through his unzipped jacket. Her skin was burning for him right now…wanting nothing more than for him to press himself into her.

And she didn't have to wait long either, as Negan grinned down at her, suddenly placing his free hand to the wall just above Blake's shoulder, and shifting forwards.

She was trapped there now, partly by Negan's closeness and partly by her own inability to move.

Her chest rose and fell rapidly causing the dark-haired Saviour's eyes to drop down to her breasts momentarily, before he stared up at her once more, his eyes dark and wanting…

He licked at his lips excruciatingly slowly.

"So….you plannin' on stayin' over again tonight, Doll-face?" he asked her in a low sultry voice, leaning his face into hers suddenly, causing a pool of sticky wetness to appear inside Blake's panties.

"Or we gonna start makin' out here instead? Either way, I'm easy."

Blake blinked once, before smiling up at him coyly.

He was trouble. She knew that for sure…

But part of her wanted nothing more than for him to kiss her right her and now, without even another thought.

"Well that depends on how badly you want me….doesn't it, Daddy?" she uttered in a breathless silky tone, parting her lips slightly and letting them linger dangerously close to Negan's own bearded face.
She gazed up into his eyes, never letting her own green ones leave his.

She knew just what saying words like that would do to him.

And, as correctly predicted, Negan at once, gave a gruff-sounding growl, staring back at her hard.

But it didn't all go to Blake's plan, as the tall, dark-haired man's hand almost immediately drifted down from the wall beside her head, instead, moving to the aching space between her legs.

A soft and needy whimper escaped her lips before she could stop herself…her breath catching at his sudden touch.

Here she was, pinned up against a wall by Negan himself…wanting him more than she could say right now…

Negan leaned his mouth slowly into hers, his lips curved up into a devilish grin…

….as they slowly brushed, excruciatingly slowly, against Blake's own swollen ones….

But as in-the-moment as she was….she couldn't help but pull back quickly, as there came a sudden noise to their right, braking through the utter silence that otherwise enveloped them…

A frown twitched it's way between her brows as she pulled her face from Negan's, blinking.

"W-What was that?" she uttered instantly.

Negan, who looked a little put-out to say the least, frowned back, giving a huff.

"What was what?" he replied in a low drawl of a voice, removing his hand from her thighs, instead sliding it easily up the side of Blake's slender hips.

But the noise came again.

Low and quiet….sounding sort of like a sniffling.

"I-Is that one of the dead?" she said blinking again and staring over to her right, where the noise seemed to be coming from.

If it was a walker they were certainly hiding well. There was no furniture in the room, bar the large bookcase, after all.

But Negan didn't seem interested in this, his attention still fully on her.

His hand drifted instead, to Blake's collarbone, slowly brushing a long stand of hair back over her shoulder, his gaze dark and playful.

"Didn't sound like it, Peaches," he uttered dismissively, as he suddenly leaned in towards her, making to press a needy kiss to her neck.

But Blake was distracted, and swatted him immediately away.

She gave him a gentle shove with the hand already at his chest.

"No, Negan, stop," she muttered in a softly-scolding voice. "There's something there…"

She prised herself from him easily and moved over towards the set of shelves, frowning hard now.
The noise came once more, louder now from this position…

….closer….

But what was it?

Blake moved around the bookshelf, listening intently.

It didn't sound like a walker, that was for sure…

She cocked her head, as the noise sounded again.

It was coming from behind the shelves…it could perhaps be a rat or mouse…but it sounded bigger than that…

….alive…

"Help me with this," Blake uttered suddenly to the Saviour at her side, as she grabbed a hold of one corner of the large piece of furniture.

The bookcase was empty save for a tin can or two, but was still much heavier than Blake could manage to shift alone.

Behind her Negan gave a huge, over-the top sigh, rolling his eyes, but, placing Lucille down between his feet, helped her anyway.

With great effort the pair dragged the large set of shelves away from the wall, about three foot or so, and Blake, happy it wasn't about to topple over, let go of the object, hurriedly moving around it, not really sure what she was expecting to see on the other side…

But much to her utter disappointment, there was, in fact, nothing there.

She parted her lips….that frown line still lingering between her eyebrows.

She could have sworn she had heard something…

But before Blake or even Negan, could say a word, the sound came again.

Much louder now, echoing across the space…coming from the wall…

Blake strode suddenly between the gap and crouched down beside a metal grate in the wall.

A vent of sorts, that had previously been obscured behind the bookshelf….hidden from sight.

She peered at it, noticing that two screws that held the grating in place, now lay strewn across the floor just beneath the vent.

There was something in there….something hiding…

Blake tugged her knife from her belt, feeling a little defensive…

Was that space big enough for a walker?

A racoon maybe….or a big rat….

But not a walker….right?
But Blake's curiosity got the better of her, and before she could question herself on what she was really doing, she had tugged the metal grate hurriedly away….

…..holding her knife suddenly aloft….

But Blake's eyes suddenly widened, her mouth falling slightly agape….

….as she peered down….and saw exactly what was inside…
The Discovery

Was she seeing things?

Blake blinked once, then twice more…

As she glanced up at Negan, who was staring at her darkly from around the bookshelf.

He shot a her a questioning look…

…but Blake could only stare back at him….mouthing at the air for a small second, before turning back to the dark, and now, open vent…

…unable to believe what she was seeing…

For inside, crouched there, with a pink smock on, tiny giraffe leggings, and her short mousy brown hair tied up in a tuft on top of her head….was a teeny little girl.

She couldn't have been more than two and half years old, and peered up at Blake with the roundest blue eyes, her face red and wet with tears, looking terrified.

What the hell?

Blake breathed hard…frowning….

What the heck was a toddler doing hiding in a vent?

The tiny girl peered up at Blake before sniffing again, giving a whining cry, before turning and crawling further away down the small metal shaft, looking scared.

Blake's eye immediately drifted back up to Negan, blinking again for a long second, before her gaze once again feel to the little girl, who had sat herself back down, her face turned away.

Even from here Blake could see that she looked frightened….left alone in here, for God knows how long.

Blake lowered the knife to her side once again.

"H-Hey, sweetie…." she said in a soft voice, placing a hand to the grate opening.

But at the sound of Blake's voice, the girl gave a sudden whimper and began to cry loudly.

"Jeez, is that a fuckin' kid in there?" said Negan suddenly from behind her, giving a dark frown.

But Blake ignored him, kneeling forwards and leaning further in towards the grate.

"Hey, shhhh…its ok…." said Blake in a quiet tone. "…everything's gonna be ok…."

But the girl's cries inside the echoing vent were loud enough to wake the dead. Quite literally.

But the little child, on squatted legs, looked at Blake over her shoulder, her lip jutted out.

Blake gave an immediate warm smile.

"Sweetie, it's ok…." she uttered in a kindly voice. "There's no need to cry."
The tiny toddler sniffled, wiping at her wet nose with her tiny hand, her eyes still on Blake. And at this Blake softened completely.

Who the hell would just leave a kid here like that?

"S-She must belong to one of the people who ran away…." said Blake to Negan, shaking her head. But she didn't look up at him.

Negan seemed to shift his weight from foot-to-foot.

"Well, hell, we checked the rest of this place out and there ain't nobody else left here…." he said bluntly.

Blake shot him a quick look.

"What about the guy downstairs?" she asked frowning, talking about one of the two men they had manage to capture earlier this morning.

But Negan gave a sigh, running his free hand down his face, before gesturing with the, now, bloody Lucille.

Blake should have figured it out sooner of course.

Why had she thought Negan had been any different now?

"Peaches, I-" he began, but Blake gave an immediate scowl, knowing exactly what he had done.

"You're disgusting, you know that?" she swiped back angrily, before turning back to the toddler, still in the vent.

If there was no one else here from the group that had just left, what the hell were they going to do with this little girl?

Blake forced another smile in the teeny child's direction.

"Sweetie," she tried gently. "You wanna come out of there? It can't be very comfy for you sat there like that, now can it?"

The little girl just looked at her curiously.

And it was a long drawn out second before she finally shifted on her tiny legs coming to face the caramel-haired woman, once more.

Blake tilted her head.

She knew how scary this world was for a fully-grown adult, let alone for a two year old girl.

"You gonna come out?" Blake asked her in a quiet voice once again, giving her a warm smile. "Pretty please?"

The toddler peered back at her, thinking.

But, before Blake could say another word, the teeny girl crawled suddenly forwards and into Blake's outstretched arms.
Blake immediately, pulled the tiny girl into her, hauling her hurriedly from the vent, just as the child burst into tears once again.

"Awww….shhhhh…its ok….shhhh….I've got you…" muttered Blake, readjusting her grip on her, as the toddler buried her face into Blake's shirt.

Blake pulled her close, feeling beneath her butt, which was wet and soggy to the touch.

God knows how long she'd been in there for, trembling in Blake's arms, her skin freezing despite today's sweltering temperatures.

"Shhhh. Its ok…its ok…"murmured Blake in soothing voice…looking up at Negan.

But the dark-haired Saviour just stood there ,a frown fixed across his bearded features.

She knew what he was thinking.

But she carefully ignored his gaze, heaving both herself and the tiny girl to her feet instead.

"Hey, hey, hey," said Blake pulling back slightly and peering down at the tiny girl, stroking back her tuft of short brown hair. "You thirsty, sweetie?"

With that, the little girl peered up at Blake through wide, wet eyes, clutching onto Blake's shirt with one sticky paw, and nodded.

"Yeah?" smiled Blake. "Then let's get you something to drink, shall we?"

The toddler gave a small sniffle, as Blake walked past Negan, heading towards the door the led back down to the staircase.

And it wasn't long before Negan, as always, followed her, looking grumpy.

It hadn't been five minutes ago that the pair of them had been making out against a wall. And it was of course unusual for Negan to not get his own way….

Blake walked slowly down the stairs, finally reaching the bottom and turning left, heading back down the corridor towards the main entrance to the building.

She had barley reached the large front doors that led out to the lot when a minute voice, came suddenly from her arms.

"Ca' I av' juice pwease…"

Blake looked down suddenly, to see the little girl staring up at Blake, chewing on her own pudgy, and now very drooly, hand, as she did so.

Blake smiled, cocking her head to the side.

"Uh, I don't think we have some juice for you right now," said Blake running a thumb across the toddler's tear-strewn cheek. "But how about we get you some water for the time being, and see about juice later, ok?"

"Okway," said the toddler in reply.

Blake bit at her lip.
At least she was talking. That could only be a good thing, right?

But as Blake turned towards the trucks, lined up in the yard, several Saviour's, who were loading various weapons and cases full of ammo, stopped suddenly to look at her.

She knew what they would think. But right now she didn't care.

Blake ignored them. Just as she had Negan, instead heading over towards the cab of the truck they had come here in.

She gently shifted the little girl onto her hip and heaved open the door, grabbing a bottle of, now, warm water from inside.

"Here we go," she said in a gentle voice, unscrewing the cap and offering the bottle to the little girl slowly, tipping it up, so that she could drink. "You must be very, very thirsty."

And she was right. The teeny girl drank and drank and drank, the water spilling down over her lips messily, until she pushed it away from her gently after a time, panting.

"That better?" asked Blake, wiping at her chin carefully, as the tiny toddler nodded.

Blake smiled in return, just as a figure suddenly appeared beside her.

She of course knew who it was without even looking, as the teeny girl buried her face suddenly in Blake's shirt again, turning away from him.

"Her family have gone," Blake said, shaking her head and staring up at Negan, who was stood beside her, Lucille slung loosely over his shoulder.

But Negan just looked at Blake darkly.

"We aint takin' her, Peaches…" he said sternly.

But at this, Blake gave an immediate scowl.

"You really gonna stop me?" she uttered in an angry tone, narrowing her eyes in his direction.

And that was when Blake knew for a fact that he wouldn't.

That soft spot, finally coming in handy.

Negan gritted his teeth, looking irritable, making to speak. But Blake cut across him before he could do so.

"I'm not just going to leave her here, Negan," Blake muttered curtly. "If you weren't so bloodthirsty, we could have asked that guy you had locked up, if he was her father, or least if he was able to tell us where her parents were. But no. Yet again, there you go…killing first and asking questions later."

"You're blamin' me for this, Doll-face?" said the dark haired Saviour in an incredulous voice. "Hell, I wasn't the one to leave my goddamn kid in a fuckin' wall and run the fuck away…"

But Blake scowled in his direction.

"One, don't be an asshole," she said leaning in close to him. "And two, don't swear in front of her."

Negan's eyebrows instantly shot up into his hairline, as he mouthed at the air like a fish.
But Blake didn't give him the satisfaction of giving her a response, as she shoved hurriedly past him, and pulled herself, and the toddler, up into the cab of the truck.

She knew Negan wasn't likely to let it lie any time soon, but wanted to get the teeny girl into the shade.

She moved the little girl around on her lap to face her. Prising her from her chest.

"Hey, hey, it's ok…" she said gently. "There's no need to be scared. "That's just Negan."

Blake pursed her lips, glancing at the Saviour through the door, seeing him obviously seething, now deep in conversation with Arat.

"And I'm Blake," sighed the caramel-blonde woman, giving a sweet smile and turning back to the girl.

Blake pointed to herself, smiling and peering into the child's large blue eyes.

She was as cute as anything with a teeny button nose and the softest little tuft of brown hair Blake had ever seen, tied up on top of her head with a tiny pink bow. She looked a little older than Judith had back in Alexandria, but still looked very small for her age, with chubby little legs and pudgy rosy cheeks.

"And what's your name, sweetie?" she asked carefully, tilting her head to the side once again.

The little girl stared up at Blake, her mouth fixed into a tiny O-shape.....but before she could answer, the door to Blake's left was suddenly hauled open, with Arat hopping up into the driver's seat.

She shot Blake and the girl a troubled sort-of look, before huffing and turning on the ignition.

And it wasn't a second after that, that Negan himself joined Blake once again on her right, sliding into the seat beside her easily.

Blake threw him a questioning look, but Negan read her easily, giving a growling huff.

"Don' say a fuckin' word, Darlin'," he sighed, pursing his lips together and slamming the door shut beside him. "I ain't doin' this outta the goodness of my fuckin' heart. I'm doin' this because I wanna screw you, we clear?"

Blake couldn't help the smirk that twitched its way up onto her own lips, as she stared at him.

He was obviously angry with her, but Blake knew how much she could get away with. And if using his soft-spot for her to save this tiny girl's life was possible, then she would use it to her advantage.

And so Blake turned back to the road ahead, as Arat started up the engine…

…and it wasn't another moment later that Negan gave another huff and placed his arm on the back of the seat around Blake's shoulders possessively…

…and as the toddler in her arms snuggled back into her chest…hiding from the dark-haired Saviour beside them.
The journey back the Sanctuary took no time at all, in the warm, hazy, late afternoon sun.

But by the time the truck had made it back through the high fences leading into the looming, abandoned factory, the tiny girl in Blake’s lap had fallen soundly asleep in her arms.

Blake had sat there, resting her chin on top of her teeny head, rubbing gentle circles on her back, soothing her the entire journey home.

Negan beside her, had been silent for the entire trip back too. Which Blake wasn't particularly worried about…as his hand, that had been positioned over the back of her seat haphazardly, had long-since drifted down over her shoulders instead.

She liked him. There was no doubt about that anymore. But his actions worried her….as the obviously did the rest of the Saviours too. It was his anger, his outbursts, his need for violence and his unpredictability that made them all uneasy. Always unsure about what he was going to do next. And with Lucille barely ever leaving his hand, that, sometimes was a frightening prospect as well…

The truck pulled up close to the building, and Arat turned off the engine, giving a brief sigh, eyeing Blake as she did so. But she too, didn't say a word.

It was then and only then, did the tiny toddler in Blake arms begin to stir.

"Hey, sweetie," whispered Blake in a kindly voice, as the little girl smacked at her lips quietly and rubbed her eyes, looking up at the caramel-blonde woman holding her. "You ok?"

The tiny girl gave a pout, but nodded, grasping at Blake's shirt once again with sticky little fingers and snuggling back into her as she caught sight of Negan, sitting beside them.

But Negan tutted.

"Looks like I'm as fuckin' popular with her, as I was with you, Doll-face," he said in a mock-voice of irritation, shoving open the door beside him, before grasping up Lucille and hopping out.

At this Blake smirked, eyeing him.

She hadn't forgotten how it had felt to have him pressed up against her…touching her…hips lips brushing hers….

But that had been earlier. And right now Blake's had other things to worry about.

Other things that now sat in her lap….

"You hungry?" she asked the little girl in a gentle tone, as the toddler peered up at her once more, making sure Negan had gone.

She nodded shyly, pressing her little fingers to her mouth, as Blake smiled.

"Come on then," she said heaving her up once more and jumping down from the cab. "Let's get you some food then shall we?"

Negan and the other Saviours, including Simon now, were lingering nearby, but Blake knew where she wanted to go.
"I'm gonna take her down to the canteen," she explained, walking towards them, as the little girl in her arms looked about curiously. "But she'll be needing some new clothes. These ones are wet through."

She ran her hand underneath the toddler's soggy butt. The teeny girl had obviously been in that shaft for so long that she had wet herself. But Blake knew she could not blame her for that.

But at her words, Negan rolled his eyes in her direction, almost immediately.

He took a deep breath in, looking slightly irritable.

"Fiiiine," he huffed, suddenly turning to Dwight who had appeared nearby and was helping to unload various weapons from the back of one of the trucks. "D, you wanna go fetch the kid somethin' to wear."

Dwight stopped in what he was doing, giving a slight frown.

"Uhhh, like what?" he replied, his eyes looking this way and that a little uncertainly.

But Negan just arched his back, his voice heated.

"I don't give a shit," he said in a loud voice, raising both his eyebrows towards the blonde man. "Just fuckin' get somethin', alright. Go."

Dwight nodded, his eyes flickering to Blake and the girl momentarily, before slopping off, as Negan gave a sigh, turning back to the pair.

"Any other fucking demands, Peaches?" he said in a simpering voice, eyeing her darkly.

But Blake merely pursed her lips, smirking.

"I'll let you know," she uttered back, as she shoved past him, wrinkling her nose as she did so.

She knew that would rile him up, feeling his eyes and his body follow her as she strutted neatly away, the toddler held tightly in her arms.

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Twenty long minutes later and Blake was sat in the canteen, on one end of a long table, with the teeny mousy-haired toddler, sat up on a cushion next to her.

In about ten minutes, the little girl, much to Blake's surprise, had managed to devour several dry crackers and cheese, a sliced up apple, a muffin half, and a large piece of chocolate, which she now clutched the remainder of in her sticky little fingers, most of it having melted around her mouth.

"That good, sweetie?" Blake asked in a caring voice, peering down.

But at her voice the tiny girl looked up at Blake with wide blue eyes.

She gave small nod and spoke with a tired sounding croaky voice.

"Fank you, 'Ake."

Blake pressed her lips together, giving a gulp and instantly melting at the teeny girl's words.

"That's ok, you're very welcome," she said smiling sweetly. "So you know my name. But I still
haven't found out what yours is yet."

Blake tilted her face to the side, as the little girl blinked up at her, shaking her head, causing the tuft of brown hair atop her head to wobble slightly.

"Well...uhhh...what did your Mommy and Daddy call you?" the caramel-blonde woman asked her quietly after a brief moment.

And at this, the tiny toddler thought for a second, before finally answering.

"Mee-yah," she replied gesturing up towards Blake's face with her melted piece of chocolate. "I Mee-yah."

Blake gave a small laugh.

"Mia?" she said brightly. "Well that's a pretty name."

And with that, Mia manged to smile back cheerily for a long second before a shadow suddenly fell across their table...and the light soon disappeared from the toddlers tiny face.

She gave a pout, inching closer to Blake as a figure loomed over them.

Blake, of course, knew who it was.

"Awww...there's no need to be scared," said Blake, rubbing at her tiny back. "That's just Negan."

In fact Negan was probably the one person here that Mia would certainly have a right to be scared of, if his reputation was anything to go by.

Yes, he was tall and intimidating, and his bearded features were perhaps a little frightening for someone so small.

But Blake glanced up at him as he placed a large pile of tiny clothes down onto the table in front of them.

"As fuckin' ordered, Doll-face," he sighed, Lucille cocked up over his shoulder, as he stood opposite them. He looked as haphazard as ever and ran a hand easily over his scrubby beard, as he gazed down at the duo, the toddler included, with dark chocolate-coloured eyes.

"She said anythin' yet?" he asked Blake, raising an eyebrow, as the little girl hid her face shyly from the tall Saviour. "Like where the rest of her fuckin' people might be?"

Blake frowned.

"She's practically a baby, Negan," she reprimanded, tutting and pulling apart a small piece of uneaten muffin and taking a bite. "How would she even know that."

But Negan gave an immediate huff, shrugging his slumped shoulders.

"Well, ex-fuckin'-scuse me," he scoffed, pressing a hand to his taut chest and gritting his line of perfect white teeth together. "I was just fuckin' askin' if shemight fuckin' know where the rest of her asshole people are-"

But Blake cut across him suddenly before he could finish.

"What so you can kill them too?" sighed Blake in an airy yet half- scolding voice, popping the rest of
the muffin into her mouth, before turning back to Mia. "You all done with your chocolate, Sweetie?"

The tiny girl slowly pulled her face away from Blake's side and glanced up at Negan, who admittedly did look a little scary. Standing there holding the baseball bat he had just used to bludgeon one of her people to death with.

"Fuck me, she gets chocolate now?!" uttered the dark-haired Saviour in an incredulous voice. "Hell, I don' even get chocolate!"

But this outburst caused Blake's lips to twitch up into a smile, as the toddler eyed him shyly.

"Mia," Blake said, leaning into the little girl and speaking in a quiet voice. "You wanna give grumpy-old Negan the rest of your chocolate? I think he'd like that. It might cheer him up a little bit."

Negan parted his lips and rolled his eyes.

But the pair watched, as the tiny girl just blinked up at Blake for a long moment, before turning and holding out her soggy piece of chocolate up towards Negan, looking a little nervous as she did so.

And Blake knew that, even Negan….as tough as old boots-Negan….would not be able to resist how sweet that gesture was….

It was a long few seconds before he finally tilted his head and spoke.

"Well, thank you, Beansprout," he said in a low growl of a voice, suddenly looking down at her and plucking the sticky piece of chocolate from her grasp. "I mean, you've been here, what….less than thirty minutes, and, well, shit, you still shown me more fuckin' gratitude than Peaches here, ever has…"

"…peechiz," repeated Mia suddenly, peering up at Negan, her little mouth hanging open, as she watched him intently, as if mesmerized by his tall stature.

Negan stood up straight once more, melted candy clutched in his free hand and gave a sigh.

"So what's the plan now," he said his eyes drifting back up towards Blake finally. "You know she can't fuckin' stay here, right, Doll?"

But Blake pursed her lips together.

She, of course, knew that, but there was nothing they could do tonight…..right?

And, as if on cue, beside her, Mia let out a tiny yawn.

Blake shrugged, glancing back up to the tall, bearded Saviour.

"Maybe someone can go and scout out that area tomorrow," she said with a small sigh. "See if they can find someone from her group…"

But Blake, thinking of the teeny girl's soaked butt and her ever increasing tiredness, swung slowly around on the bench, suddenly hauling up Mia into her arms once again.

"But tonight," she began, grabbing the tiny toddler's giraffe-covered foot, causing her to smile shyly. "Me and Mia have some business to attend to…"

Negan frowned as Blake got to her feet, shifting Mia onto her hip as she did so, and made to move around the table.
"And where do you two fuckin' think you're off to?" he asked with a smirk across his features, staring back at the determined look on Blake's face.

But he certainly was not going to appreciate the response she was about to give him.

Blake, knowing exactly what she was doing, just shrugged once more and smiled back at him brightly.

"Your room," she uttered bluntly, her green eyes suddenly catching his.

And it wasn't even a split second later that Negan blinked…gaping….mouth at the air…. But before he could say another word Blake had already turned back to the little girl.

"Yep, me and Mia are gonna go take a bath…..get changed….. have our hot milk…..and then go to bed…" she said in a gentle tone, booping the toddler on the tiny nose. "Isn't that right, Sweetie?"

Mia stared up at Blake, clutching onto her shirt tightly with her sticky, chocolate covered paw.

"Ca' I av' stowy?" she asked in a small, nervous little voice, that caused Blake's smile to widen.

She titled her head, looking up at the dark-haired Saviour beside them.

"Of course you can," she said in a kindly tone. "And maybe, if you're a good girl, like I am….maybe grumpy-old Negan can read it to you…..wouldn't that be nice?"

Blake immediately saw Negan about to protest this, shifting his weight from foot to foot…

…but the caramel-haired woman didn't linger long enough to hear his response, merely strutting past him, heading straight through the large hall and over towards the door that led up to Negan's quarters, smiling to herself as she went.

Oh, he was definitely going to kill her after all this was over, Blake was certain of it…..
Blake sat on the edge of the bathtub staring down the toddler who was currently splashing around in an inch or two of warm water, giggling and babbling to herself.

The caramel-blonde woman was absolutely enamoured. She knew that.

But Blake still knew that all this, it was only for tonight. Then tomorrow the Saviours would go out again and look for Mia's family.

For having a family…having children in this world…..well, it was a pipe dream…something she knew would never come true. Not for her…

Blake had miscarried twice.

Once, a long time ago, just a few months after she had met David….

Back then, it had been a stupid mistake, and the pregnancy hadn't lasted long. The doctor's had said it was just how things went sometimes. And that had been that. Just a blip on her life…but nothing that she wouldn't get through.

But her second time was about three years into her relationship…when many of her friends around her were falling pregnant themselves…having kids….having the perfect little families.

Blake had wanted that too…and it had happened by accident…surprising both her and David….

But she had been happy…excited…yearning for this kind of life…

But Blake had been just coming up to her second trimester when it had happened again…..

…..blood…..a panicked rush to the hospital…and then…

…nothing…

….just a feeling of hollow emptiness….

….of impossibility.

David, of course, had told her it was for the best. That they would never have been able to afford a kid anyway, not before he had gotten his art studio at least.

So they had never tried again….Blake knowing that it would probably never happen anyway….and David asking her to make sure she was taking her birth control pills properly.

But Blake had never forgotten what it had feel like to run a hand over her belly….to feel something growing inside her….something that was hers…that was special….

But she knew it was likely to never happen to her again. Not that she would ever risk trying anyway.

God knows what would happen if you miscarried in the world in the state it was…and Blake just gave a hard gulp, trying not to dwell on it, as her fingers now trailed through the clear water on the bottom of the tub.

She shook herself. She needed to stop this. Dwelling on a story that had long since passed her by.
She had more important things to think about now.

Things that were here, sitting beside her.

Blake peered down at Mia giving a small smile, and lifting her hand, stroking back her tiny tuft of mousy-hair.

She was the sweetest thing, peering up at Blake, her mouth fixed into a tiny O-shape.

But before either of them could say another thing, there was a sudden creak from across the room and a tall, dark figure appeared in the doorway.

Blake smiled as she looked at him, in that dusty old leather jacket of his, sloping into the room, Lucille now oddly absent from his hand. But instead he carried a small plastic cup and placed it down onto the counter beside the bathroom sink.

"Warm milk," Negan said, throwing Blake a look in return. "Seein' as I'm practically your fuckin' errand boy these days."

Blake poked her tongue out between her teeth, before biting her lip.

"Practically?" she teased.

Negan grinned, flashing her his pearly white line of teeth and coming to lean up against the sink, gazing down at them.

Blake felt her heart pounding in her chest.

It had been just a few short hours ago now that the pair of them had been about to make out against a wall…..and yet now, Blake saw something different in Negan. Something that pulled at her stomach and caused a small lump to appear in her throat when she thought on it.

But she hurriedly pushed these thoughts from her head…

Life just wasn't that kind….

"Y'know I'm kinda pissed that you ain't in that bath naked, too, Doll-face," uttered the tall-dark-haired Saviour, causing Blake to tilt her head, narrowing her eyes in his direction amusedly.

She gave a meaningful tut, tucking a strand of long, caramel hair behind her ear.

She shrugged, glancing down at Mia who was trying to peer over the edge of the bathtub to sneak a covert peek at Negan.

"Well I had no one here to scrub my back….so....." she uttered trailing off and giving a faux-sigh, smiling to herself as she did so.

But Negan just chuckled.

"Shame, because I could easily have done that for you this mornin' Peaches," he said in a growling voice, staring over at her. "But you decided to make a quick fuckin' getaway…"

Blake wrinkled her nose.

"Maybe another time then," she said, in a goading voice, licking at her lips and stroking the top of Mia's head once again.
The teeny girl looked up at Blake at the contact.

"Miwk?" she asked, staring up with wide, blue, questioning eyes.

And Blake's smile widened and she looked up at Negan, giving a formal-sounding cough.

"Well, now if you'll excuse us," she said to him with a small nod. "Us ladies have to get dried off and into our jammies, before we have our milk. Don't we, Sweetie?"

"Yesh, then stowy?" uttered Mia in return, placing her bathwater-wet fingers to her mouth and gaping up at the blonde woman.

Blake melted.

"Mmmhmm. Then you can have a story," she said in a mild tone.

Negan, a few feet to the side of the pair of them, merely gave a big roll of his eyes, but took the hint, pushing himself away from the sink and stalking back into the bedroom.

But Blake stared after him, as he disappeared around the doorway.

She smiled, pulling at her lips with her teeth once again and smirking.

"Hey!" she called on through to the tall, dark-haired Saviour after a long second or two had passed. "You got any more t-shirt's I could borrow?"

But this time, she would not be the one wearing one of them.....

Blake had quickly got Mia dried off, let her drink her warm milk, and shoved one of Negan's reluctantly-lent, white t-shirts over the toddlers' head.

The garment had swamped her even more that it had Blake, and the baby-girl had taken a long ten minutes or so to settle, being far too excited as she was plonked on top of Negan's four poster bed haphazardly by an already exhausted Blake.....

Mia had giggled and laughed as she had stood on top of the mattress, bouncing up and down on her chubby little legs and proceeded to bend over, showing both Negan and Blake her bare little butt in the process.

But Blake, as cool as she was, had laughed and scooped the little girl up into her arms once more, as Negan had lingered a little way away, near to his sleek leather couches, watching the pair of them.

"Come on. Into bed," Blake had commanded in a firm tone, pulling back the covers neatly, before plonking the tiny girl down onto a pillow.

Negan tutted.

"I swear to fuckin' god, Peaches," he said having -now retrieved Lucille once again, pointing it at Mia. "If that kid pees on my fuckin' sheets...."

But Blake just rolled her eyes, kicking off her own shoes and coming to sit on top of the covers beside the toddler.

"Shhhhh," she said in a teasing voice, flashing him a look before turning back to the baby-girl beside her. "Let's just ignore grumpy old Negan shall we?"
But at this, Negan merely huffed, as he had done a lot today, and promptly turned on his heel marching out the door, pulling it loudly shut behind him.

Blake smirked to herself, before turning neatly to Mia.

But before Blake could utter a word to the tiny girl, she had sudden piped up shyly.

"Why Eggy gone?" he asked, her tiny paw, clutching at Blake's leg.

Blake gave a small bemused frown.

"Eggy?" she asked in a gentle voice raising an eyebrow.

But Mia merely pointed to the spot that Negan had vacated just a second or two ago.

"....Eggy!" she repeated with a little more urgency.

But Blake grinned.

"Do you mean…Negan?" Blake asked her.

And Mia just nodded.

"Eggy!" she said giggling and placing her pointing-hand to her mouth naughtily.

Blake pursed her lips together.

Oh, she was never, ever going to let that drop, that was for sure!

"Well Negan's gone downstairs I think," replied Blake, explaining. Although she wasn't actually sure where the dark-haired saviour had stalked off to…

…to his wives perhaps….(but that thought only caused to make Blake's stomach churn with jealousy)…

…or maybe to take his irritation with her out on some poor Saviour somewhere…. (that could be likely)…. 

…..but Blake knew he would probably be back….at some point at least….

"Ca' I av' stowy?" repeated the little girl yet again in a shy little voice, shuffling into Blake slightly and nestling her head into Blake's side.

And Blake at this couldn't help but give a gulp and place her arm closely around the teeny toddler.

The girl had obviously very hurriedly gotten over the fact she had been sat in a vent for several hours earlier today. Making herself completely at home here, as though she had lived at the Sanctuary for years.

Kids were often resilient like that.

More than adults or Blake herself was, anyway…

"Ok…yeah….a story…” she muttered slowly, looking about, as Mia gave yet another yawn.

Negan had a shelf full of books over on the far side of the room, but Blake, as comfortable as Mia now looked, didn't want to disturb her, so glanced to the side, suddenly noticing a copy of Sport's
Illustrated 'swimsuit edition' magazine, sitting on Negan's nightstand.

Blake rolled her eyes, but reluctantly pulled the tattered old mag towards her.

She hurriedly skimmed forwards a few pages, hastily avoiding the images of scantily-clad women in bikinis, and instead found a page full of text with a couple of photographs of motorbikes and players from the NHL.

And with that, Blake began to read.

"Welcome to Friday night at Hammerjacks, and Al Lefratee could not be more at home. In fact, when he was not cranking a 110-plus-mph slap shot past a wincing overmatched goalie he was here…” Blake read in a hushed whisper, knowing that what she was reading wasn't so important, it was more the tone of voice she was using.

And Blake had barely got to the fifth sentence, when she heard Mia, now snuggled into her, let out a snuffling sigh and smack her lips quietly.

And with that, Blake silently closed the magazine and peered down at the toddler in her arms not daring to make a move…

…for the teeny, baby girl, was now sound asleep….

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Negan strolled down the gloomy corridor, with Lucille swung up over his shoulder, his teeth gritted together as he walked.

A fucking kid?

Seriously? She had to be kidding with this.

I mean, what the fuck did he fucking look like here?

Completely gullible, and pliable as shit, was what he looked like!

Why was it always the same with her?

How the fuck did she managed to always get him so impossibly wrapped around her little finger?

Here he was, leader of the fucking Saviours, being easily taken for a ride by a goddamn princess. And not in the way he had wanted either.

That's was Blake all over. Oh-so wholesome and perfect on the outside but he knew her true side. That side that didn't take any shit from anyone, least of all him.

Negan could feel himself falling deeper and deeper for her.

But that was not who he was.

He had come here…after Lucille, looking for nothing but an easy screw. Which, of course he had gotten at the first sign of danger. It was funny how women could be drawn to a man in power…. (men too of course)….but Negan had picked up his wives here and there….each of them willing and wanting….but none of them fitting the bill quite like Lucille had.

Negan hadn't truly appreciated what he had until she was gone.
But now Blake was here and had come into his life, shaking and tearing everything up like a hurricane….making his days drift by much quicker that they had in a long time.

But as much as he liked her…she did drive him fucking crazy…

She had this hold on him. She was his weakness by a country fucking mile. And Negan knew it was probably not gonna end well for both of them. For when did anything ever go right in this world anymore?

This life was shit-show for everyone. And even Negan, as in-power as he was, could see that.

There would be no happy ending for him, for Blake, or for that little girl….and that was just how it was in this life these days….

The dark-haired man let out a puff of air as he sloped down the hallway, running a free hand over his tired face.

He had just been downstairs making sure Arat and her team knew the score. They were to get back out there at first light and find that kid's people. And when they did, that would be the end of that.

The kid would then be gone, and Blake's attention would be firmly back in him. Where he wanted it to be.

He, of course, hadn't forgotten what they had been up to before that kid had turned up.

Negan could have taken her right there….up against that wall…..and it had been perfectly obvious she had wanted him as much as he had wanted her.

…it was just the way she had pushed out her chest…practically whimpering and mewling beneath his touch…

Negan grinned to himself as he ascended the last few steps back up towards his quarters.

Maybe if that silly kid was now asleep, then the two adults could carry on where they left off….

Negan could feel himself begin to stiffen inside his pants at just the thought of him bending Blake over the back of his couch, inside that room and fucking her…just like that….with her purring his name and begging for release.

But the dark-haired Saviour almost rolled his eyes, smirking to himself and shaking his head, knowing full-well it was unlikely Blake would ever beg him for anything…

He placed his tongue to his teeth, thinking on her…as he approached his door and turned the handle….his dark eyes gazing about…as he entered the room…

Hoping to find the caramel-blonde woman in some sort of compromising position…perhaps in his shower again….or in her underwear…

But as Negan gave the door a small shove and peered inside, his eyes suddenly landed on two figures, curled up into one another on his bed….

…..both of them fast asleep….

Negan stopped in his tracks, his lips parting as he took them in.

There was Blake, lying on her side, fully clothed, with one arm thrown gently above the kid's head,
as the teeny girl snuggled herself close to the tall, blonde woman.

He could see that their eyes were both closed…chests rising and falling gently…with slow, deep breaths fluttering from their lips…

Negan slowly lowered Lucille from his shoulder….

….and he could even seem to help it, as his lips curved up into a smile, and he gave a couple of slow blinks….staring at the pair, absolutely enamoured.

Fuck…

He was done for….and he knew it…

And it was a long, long second before the tall, bearded leader of the Saviours finally rolled his eyes, chuckling to himself, before tearing them away….and moving over to his squishy-leather sofas….placing down Lucille against his armchair and shrugging off his thick leather jacket.

"Jesus, sleepin' on my own couch in my own fuckin' room…" he said in a low, grizzled voice, tutting, talking, really, to no-one but himself. "The things I fuckin' do for you, Peaches."

And with that, Negan shook his head, grinning to himself, before flopping down onto one of the couches, rolling his eyes once again….

….as Blake and Mia slept soundly just a few feet away from him…

...never even hearing him come in…
Eggy laik Bwake

Blake gave a small groan as felt something move over her body….something small and soft crawling over her….

She wrinkled her nose and turned her head against her pillow…

….before slowly blinking open her green eyes…only to find a pair of wide blue ones staring down at her.

"Bwake wake up naw…" came a teeny, yet bossy voice from above.

Blake a gave a small frown and parted her slightly parched lips…as she remembered just where she was…

Had she really fallen asleep on Negan's bed last night?

Blake pulled herself up stiffly, into a sitting position, and stared about, as the tiny Mia, placed a sticky hair to Blake's shoulder.

There was no sign of Negan in the brightly lit room this morning and Blake wondered whether or not he actually even came back in last night?

Perhaps he had been with one of his wives instead….

But that thought, only caused to make Blake's stomach jolt with utter jealousy.

She liked those women. No, she loved those women. And yet the thought of Negan having sex with any of them, made Blake feel bitter and angry.

Not at them, per say, or even at Negan. But at her own stupidity for falling for the dark-haired Saviour.

But the tiny girl at Blake's side, still swamped in Negan's t-shirt, pulled Blake's attention back to the here and now.

"I wos awake on ma own…" said the toddler in a little voice, staring at Blake and bouncing slightly on chubby bended legs.

"Were you now?" said Blake in an interested-sounding voice, lifting a hand and rubbing the little girl's back gently.

"I saw Eggy, but he-" uttered Mia looking about- before suddenly getting distracted by something across the room.

She stomped to the end of the mattress hurriedly, as Blake sat up, running a hand through her own caramel hair.

"What tha?" Mia suddenly asked, pointing at something a little way beyond the bed.

Blake frowned and peered up, only to see a familiar-looking barbed-wire covered baseball bat, sat propped up against an armchair.

Negan must have come in then. If Lucille was here and if Mia had said she's seen him.
But this question from the toddler was not something Blake wanted to answer. For how could she?

Was she really going to admit to a little girl that this was the weapon that Negan had used, not only to killsome of Mia's people with, but many others too….

Blake rolled her eyes, leaning forwards and grasping the tiny girl around the middle and pulling her back onto her lap.

"That belongs to Negan, but we don't touch that, ok?" she said firmly, as the tiny toddler giggled and squirmed inside Blake's arms.

"Okway." she repeated, just as the door to their right was suddenly shoved open, and in walked Negan himself, leather-jacket over his shoulders and a large toothy grin fixed onto his bearded face.

Mia almost immediately clambered over Blake and cowered behind her slightly, staring over at the tall, dark-haired man.

"You enjoy your sleep, Darlin'?" he asked eyeing Blake, as he dropped a large pile of toddler clothes, that Dwight had acquired yesterday evening, down onto a couch cushion. "….in my fuckin' bed?"

But Blake just purred, brushing her hands down the front of her jeans, smirking.

"I did, thanks," she shrugged back nonchalantly, wrinkling her nose as she spoke.

But this only caused Negan to chuckle to himself, arching his back as he did so.

"Y'know, you're startin' to make this a bit of a regular thing, Doll…" he said poking his tongue to his inner cheek and turning to face the pair of them. "I think I'm gonna have to keep my eye on you…in case you start gettin' too fucking big for your boots."

Blake gave a small laugh, ignoring his comment, but instead, glancing at Mia, who was peering around her, at the bearded Saviour, with great interest.

"You wanna say hi to grumpy-old Negan, Mia?" asked the blonde-haired woman, cocking her head to the side.

Negan gave a bemused frown, as Mia placed a finger to her mouth shyly, her eyes drifting down to the sheet below her.

"Hai, Eggy," she uttered after a brief second, in a tiny voice, before burying her face in the crook of Blake's neck and giving a small giggle.

Blake laughed back, mainly at the look that was now passing over Negan's face.

He lifted a hand rubbing it down his chin, and pointed a gloved hand towards Blake, after a moment had passed, raising his eyebrows dramatically.

"Jeeeesus fucking Christ," he said in an irritable tone. "There goes any fuckin' shred of reputation I might have still had intact. I mean, I fuckin' dare to think what she'd fuckin call me if she actually liked me."

He shook his head and took a step closer to the pair of them, coming to stand at the edge of the bed.

"She does like you," said Blake stroking Mia's mousy-coloured hair, as the toddler spied her through her chubby little fingers. "She's just shy. Aren't you sweetie? You like grumpy-old Negan really,
right?"

Mia pulled her face slowly from Blake and side-eyed Negan apprehensively.

She nodded.

And at this Blake beamed.

"See," she said turning back to Negan, who was stood there grinning down at the pair of them. "You're not the big, bad wolf you make yourself out to be, y'know. Some people like you."

Negan clicked his tongue as he lifted his chin and looked down at her with dark eyes.

"You including yourself in that number, Peaches?" he asked giving a simpering grin.

But Blake was going to play it coy.

She wasn't going to give him what he wanted…..not right away at least.

"I mean like is such a strong word," she sighed. "Maybe tolerate is a better one."

Negan nodded back, with narrowed eyes, flashing her a wide grin as he did so.

But before he could speak again, Mia, who had been looking up at him curiously with big, blue eyes, waddled over towards him, her mouth open.

She peered up into his long, tanned face and pointed once again, over at Lucille, behind him.

"What tha?" she asked in little voice, looking back and forth between Negan and the baseball bat, a little demandingly.

Negan gave a bemused sort-of frown.

"What's what, sweetheart?" he said leaning to his side and tilting his head, as he glanced over his shoulder.

"Oh, you mean Lucille?" he said in a low slow drawl, a grin twitching its way up onto his lips.

Blake's smile slipped from her mouth, her face suddenly becoming fixed as Negan turned, grabbing the barbed-wire covered bat, and bringing back over to the bed.

Mia, who was now sucking on her hand curiously, nodded, her eyes on the weapon, before she looked back up to Negan, who loomed over her a little intimidatingly.

"Well this…." he said in a hushed, almost dangerous tone, as he slid his fingers up the smooth wooden surface of Lucille's handle. "…is my best girl. Now she might not be as beautiful as Peaches over here, but boy, does she have her fuckin' merits."

He tossed Lucille back and forth between his hands, as Mia watched him, entranced.

"…And let me tell you….Lucille here,well she's a bit like Santy-Claus….. in the fact that she knows when you….or your friends….or your family….have been very naughty….and well, she wouldn't want to let that go unpunished now would she…?"

"Negan…" uttered Blake in a sudden, warning voice.
But the tall, dark-haired saviour just smiled, about to open his mouth and tease the hell out of both of them even more, when he was suddenly interrupted by a tiny voice from below.

"Ca’ I pway wif dat, pwease?" said Mia suddenly, as Negan's eyes dropped instantly to her.

She pointed up at Lucille with her drool-covered paw, before looking back at Negan.

Negan faltered for a brief second, smirking.

"She ain't a toy, Baby-Doll," said the dark-haired man, suddenly reaching down and stroking a gloved thumb over Mia's chubby cheek, looking sort-of impressed.

But a smirk flickered back onto Blake's features, and she rolled her eyes.

"Could've fooled me…" she muttered under her breath.

Almost immediately Negan's dangerous chocolate eyes found hers once again.

He suddenly leaned in towards Mia and gave a smile.

And Blake, even before he had spoken, knew exactly what he was going to say…

"You know, I think, behind Blakey here's, snarky fuckin' remarks, she does actually like me," he suddenly uttered in a carrying tone, as Mia stared at him, mouth agape, mesmerized. "What do you think, Pumpkin?"

He wrinkled his nose and eyed Mia, his eyes twinkling devilishly, as the teeny toddler suddenly reached up and pressed sticky paw to his stubbly chin.

"Eggy layk Bwake?" she asked, before standing on her tip toes to get a better grip on Negan's beard with both hands now.

And at the contact between them, the dark-haired Saviour licked his lips and grinned.

"That's a good question, Mia," laughed Blake from behind them, staring over at the duo, and raising an eyebrow interestedly.

She looked at Negan, as he finally pulled away from Mia and stood up straight once more, and inside her chest Blake could feel her heart pounding a drumbeat, as his dark, knowing eyes, met with hers.

He liked her, she could tell. Every day that passed, the pair of them getting closer and closer…

But Negan just lifted his chin, flashing her a grin and raising his eyebrows.

"Oh, I think you know just how much I like you, Peaches," he uttered in a husky voice, eyeing her promptly, which caused a warmth to pool between Blake's legs. "I mean, I let you both sleep in my bed didn't I?"

He looked once more, down to Mia, who was now crawling back up the bed towards Blake, having obviously lost interest in the leader of the Saviours, or the baseball bat in his hand.

And before either of the adults could utter direct another flirty sentence at each other, Mia had spoken.

"I need potty," the tiny girl said in a firm tone, placing a chubby little hand to Blake's knee, bringing the caramel-blonde woman out of her daydream-world and back to reality with a bump.
The caramel-blonde woman gave a small sigh and smiled down at the toddler, before scooping her up into her arms and cuddling her to her chest.

"Alright then," she said tilting her head to the side and smoothing back the teeny girls' hair. "I'll take you this time…and then the next one can be Negan's turn."

Blake bit at her lip and glanced up at the bearded man to their side teasingly. She knew exactly how to push his buttons.

But Negan's face suddenly became serious. His eyebrows shooting up into his hairline.

"Nope," he said shaking his head, taking a sudden step back and pointing at Blake with the end of Lucille. "Not a fuckin' chance, Doll-face. I mean, fine, I'll admit, the kid is kinda fuckin' cute. But do I look like a fuckin' guy who does this kind of stuff, hmmm? I ain't a goddamn kindergarten teacher, Darlin'.'"

But Blake, who had hopped up off the bed, Mia balanced easily on her hip, shrugged, smirking, as she strutted past him.

"I don't know," she smiled, her lips lingering close to his ear. "I think you'd make a good Daddy…"

And with that, leaving Negan grinning to himself, Blake bumped him with her hip and disappeared off into the bathroom.….  

…shutting the door behind the pair of them with a gentle snap.
Blake and Mia, with both of them now up, bathed and dressed, walked down the corridor, Mia babbling into the tall, caramel-woman's ear as they did so.

Negan had been gone by the time Blake and Mia had exited the bathroom, twenty or so minutes ago, which Blake was pretty thankful for. As it had been difficult enough to contend with a naughty little toddler, let alone a grown man flirting with her the entire time too!

Blake smiled to herself.

The teeny girl was now, a little while later, balanced on Blake's hip, with one sticky hand on her shoulder.

"...I don' liyk tha cwoclat miwk wif tha' bunny on..." she said in a sweet-little voice, talking about nothing in particular. "...I liyk tha cow won."

Blake smiled, more to herself than to Mia, glancing up at her.

"Is that what you Mom likes to give you?" Blake asked in a gentle tone.

But Mia just blinked, squirming in the blonde woman's arms.

"Noh, I don' av Mommy, onwy Amy. She mai frend," said the teeny toddler, matter-of-factly, looking around the corridor interestingly. "Bry-yan is mai frend too..."

Blake at this gave a small frown, titling her head.

"And are they the ones who take care of you?" she asked in a slow, quiet tone, her heart beating faster now...although she didn't quite know why.

But Mia promptly replied.

"Yesh, I baby den..." she said with a small nod, her chubby hand moving up to fiddle with Blake's hair. "...naw I'm growd,"

Blake regained her smile at this.

She guessed that Mia's parents were obviously dead, in that case...perhaps they had been with Mia's now-group when it had happened, and that's how they had taken her in.

For who wouldn't want to take care of a girl like that?

Mia was as precious as could be, Blake having placed her into a dark navy dress today, from the pile that Dwight had 'acquired' (most likely from the marketplace), a pair of yellow leggings, and had brushed her soft baby-hair gently back up into a little bow on the top of her head.

"Yes you are," she said, jiggling the toddler gently on her hip, making her laugh.

Mia suddenly placed a strand of Blake's hair into her mouth, just as a sudden figure appeared in the corridor ahead of them.

"Oh my god! Isn't she just adorable!"
At the voice, Mai, pressed her face shyly into the crook of Blake's neck, as Frankie came around the corner, followed closely by Layla, hands pressed to their chests in delight.

Blake smiled, turning Mia on her hip to face them.

"Mia, you want to say hi?" she asked gently. But the teeny girl shook her head, frightened.

Frankie tilted her head, gazing at the toddler sweetly.

"She looks like just the cutest thing," she said shaking her head. "We were going to come and find you-"

But Blake gave a bemused sort-of frown.

"You heard from Negan about her?" she murmured a little confused.

But Layla shrugged.

"No we haven't seen him," she said, tickling Mia's side with her finger. "But rumour spreads pretty quickly in this place."

Blake gave a nod, just as Frankie cocked a sudden eye at her.

"Where have you two come from anyway?" asked the red-head, looking Blake up a down. "Isn't your room in the other direction?!"

Blake all of a sudden, felt very self-conscious, her face reddening slightly.

"I….uhhh….." she said trying her hardest to find the right words.

"Wait, were you in Negan's room?!" Layla asked her, her face suddenly matching Frankie's, a frown shifting its way easily onto her features.

Blake licked her lips.

"Yeah, but…..but it wasn't like that…..Mia just needed a bath….so…." she managed to utter, trailing off.

But Frankie grabbed a hold of Blake's wrist suddenly and took a step closer to her, her eyes full of something sad and worried.

"Just be careful, ok?" she said in a pleading voice. "Promise us…"

But Blake gave a blink.

She knew they both had more than a right to be worried about her…and knew that as far as the flirting went….Negan was a psychotic killer and shouldn't be trusted….

….right?

Then why couldn't she help how her feelings were changing towards him now…?

He had given her everything in this world…more than David ever had anyway….

She gave a small gulp.

"I-I promise…" said Blake in a quiet voice, as Mia suddenly peered up from behind Blake's hair and
stared at the two women.

Frankie's face softened instantly and she gave Mia a small wave, as the conversation moved, thankfully, on.

"Hi, cherub!" said the red-head in return. "Oh, god, she's adorable!"

She once again clutched at her heart, as Blake beamed down at the girl in her arms.

"I'm just taking her downstairs to get some breakfast," she murmured, pulling a now-sticky strand of hair caramel hair from Mia's grasp. "Aren't we sweetie?"

The tiny girl gave a nod, her mouth now fixed into an o-shape as she stared at the two women before her.

And at that, Layla placed a hand to her hip and pointed at Blake.

"Don't forget about us though," she said a playfully-scolding tone. "Bring her by later…the rest of the girls would love to see her, I'm sure."

Blake smiled.

"Of course," she said jiggling Mia once again on her hip. "I'll see you both later then…"

And with that, the two women gave Blake and Mia one last wave before disappearing off down the corridor, with mutterings of 'soooo cute' as they went.

Blake felt happy.

It was nice to have some fellow women looking out for her. Women from completely different backgrounds…all brought together by one person….

Although the wives' situation was a lot more unforgiving than hers.

At least Blake had a choice. At least Negan had given her a choice…

She couldn't have imagined just what had prompt those women to promise themselves to Negan like that…..and Blake knew that she needed to count herself lucky that the dark-haired saviour had provided her with so much grace….letting her pretty much get away with murder here….

Blake sucked in a deep breath.

Maybe Frankie was right….maybe she did need to be careful.

Negan was so unpredictable….could he even be trusted?

She doubted it….but for some reason, the minute he was close to her she knew it was a whole different story.

He did something to her which drove her crazy. Each and every time.

Maybe it was his charm…his good-looks…the way it felt when he touched her…..

But Blake blinked a couple of times.

She needed to snap of out of it.
Perhaps she was playing more of a dangerous game than she had first intended, here…

And so, hitching Mia up onto her hip once again, the pair headed off back down the corridor again…

Blake unable to get Negan out of her head.

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It was noisy downstairs in the large oversized and echoey dining hall.

But from the minute Blake's stepped through the doors, with Mia balanced on her hip, the whole place seemed to fall quiet almost immediately……with the only sound being heard, being the hushed murmur of whispers carrying starkly across the room.

What Frankie and Layla had said was, indeed true. News did obviously travel fast in a place like this. Everyone obviously having already heard about Mia being here. But whether that was a good thing or not Blake was unsure.

She prickled slightly.

Were these whispers the sounds of reverence? Or were they in fact something else?

But all Blake did know, was that if anyone did anything, or made a move to hurt this little girl, she would kill them with her own bare hands….

That was a fact.

Her eyes darkened instantly and she gazed around giving a sudden scowl.

"Anyone got a problem?" she snapped, her voice loud and heated.

And so, as if by magic , the whispers died away, with eyes now avoiding hers, and people all around her bowing their heads low and shuffling hurriedly away.

Obviously no-one here wanted a confrontation…

Not with her at least…

Perhaps being Negan's favourite did have its advantages.

She stalked swiftly through the parting crowd, and for the first time since she had gotten here, headed straight up to the front of the line for food.

Normally Blake would hang back and join the queue. But this time she wasn't in the mood to hang around while people stared at her and whispered behind their hands.

She prickled again, her eyes darting this way and that, grumpily.

At the front of the line, Blake was promptly handed a tray by a meek and scared-looking, older woman, gracing her with a small and polite thank you as she took the tray laden with breakfast with one hand, and brought it over to an empty table end.

Blake gently plopped Mia down onto a bench, before taking a seat beside her, placing the tray down, and tearing off a pancake end and handing it to the teeny toddler.

But Mia was distracted, staring up at the people moving to and fro, going about their business. And
Blake wondered whether she had ever seen this many people in one room before?

It was second before the little girl even noticed the pancake being help out towards her. Finally taking it and uttering a small, croaky. "Fank you, Bwake."

Blake pursed her lips together gently, and stroked the toddlers hair back….but it wasn't even another ten seconds later that Mia, mid chew, spoke again.

"It Eggy!" she said suddenly, bouncing up and down on her little butt, with urgency in her voice.

Mia suddenly clambered up onto her feet with great difficulty, coming to stand up on the bench beside Blake instead, the half-chewed piece of pancake now hanging limply from her hand.

Blake smirked, glancing over her shoulder to see the tall, dark-haired, and oh-so familiar Saviour, stalking across the room towards them, with people pausing in what they were doing all around him, and dropping hastily to their knees.

But Negan, who had his lips pursed together, merely waved a lazy hand in their direction, sighing tiredly

"As you were," he murmured in a carrying voice, as his eyes drifted up over towards Blake and Mia.

His lips twitched up into a small smile as he marched forwards and came to stop at their side.

But, almost immediately, and much to Blake's utter surprise, the moment he had, Mia reached up with both hands, bouncing on her legs…..

And it was obvious to anyone watching, just what she wanted…

Negan gave a small chuckle, his dark chocolate eyes flickering over the baby girl, and in a moment he had dropped Lucille promptly down onto the table beside Blake's tray and obliged the tiny toddler…..lifting her up into his arms with a stiff groan.

"Now why is it, every time I see you, you're stuffin' your face full of my goddamn food, huh, Beansprout?" he said as he pulled Mia's tiny form into his chest, looking her in the eyes as he spoke.

Blake gave a bemused frown. For this was indeed a bit of a turnaround from yesterday, that was for sure…

But Mia just patted the dark-haired man on the shoulder with her floppy piece of pancake with one hand, and the other, she used to grasp at his grey t-shirt with, her sticky fingers holding onto him tightly.

"Hmmm?" Negan prompted again, raising his eyebrows and pressing his stubbly face close to hers.

And it didn't take long for the tiny girl to giggle loudly, squirming in his arms, as he nuzzled her with his bearded chin.

Blake's breath caught in her throat as she watched them.

He was perfect with her….and Blake's heart seemed to melt there and then…her lips parting needily….her breathing shallowing…

Negan didn't seem to care that the room was full of people….his people, because it was likely that he knew, that even with his warmth towards Mia…he was still scary as hell…and definitely still the most intimidating man in the room by a mile...
"Noh, Eggy, don'!" squealed the teeny girl, laughing suddenly as Negan grizzled his cheek close to hers, teasingly, his lips curved up into wide grin, as another chuckle left his lips.

Blake eyed him…blinking slowly as she did so….her breathing shallow in her throat…..and in a moment Negan had caught her gaze….

And Blake knew, that in that moment, that she wanted him.

Him and only him. For good.

She gently pulled at her bottom lip with her teeth….as Negan slowly eased Mia back down onto Blake's lap with a sigh.

He stood up straight once again, running a hand tiredly down his bearded face, as she glanced at Blake.

"Listen, Doll, I just came to tell you, that I'll be out all day," he said conversationally to the caramel-blond woman. "I'm gonna have to go check whether everything is ship-shape out at one of the new outposts, since Rick-the –Prick and his gang of fucking assholes, decided to overthrow my last one….

He looked a little irritable at this fact, but his eyes soon glinted at Blake again, grinning and showing off his line of pearly white teeth in her direction.

"…you gonna be able to take care of yourself here, while I'm gone, Doll-face?"

His eyes travelled up and down her slender form as she grasped Mia to her, as the teeny girl squirmed in her arms, reaching for another piece of pancake, despite the limp end in her hand remaining uneaten.

But Blake gave a slow nod and smirked, her heart thundering inside her ribcage.

"Yuh-huh," she said, gazing at him through sultry, darkened lashes. "But, uh….don't be late back, ok….?"

At this, Negan's grin seemed to widen, as he stared suddenly down at her, narrowing his eyes, his tongue reaching his teeth, questioningly.

"An' why would that be….." he suddenly asked her in a low, husky drawl. "…Peaches…?"

But Blake merely shrugged, throwing him one last teasing look….

"Well, we might miss you…." she murmured lightly, before glancing poignantly away. "…Daddy…"

And with that, Blake heard Negan gave a low hungry growl, as she turned back towards the table and to their breakfast, kissing the top of Mia's head gently as she did so.

But Blake, usually these day, having the upper hand, had not been expected Negan to retaliate….

And so, she could only gulp, as before she knew it, she felt the dark-haired leader of the Saviours lean into her from behind, his fingers tracing her waist and his lips grazing her ear.

"…well if you wait up for me tonight, Darlin'…Daddy might bring you back something real fuckin' nice…."
And with that, as soon as Blake felt herself close her eyes, almost moaning at his words….he was gone…

….having walked away from her, rubbing at his mouth, smirking…

…..leaving Blake with dilated pupils, ragged breaths, and a longing for the bearded Saviour, like she had never felt for anything else before….

Fuck…..

She was screwed….
The bathroom counter

It had been a long day that was for sure, and Mia unceremoniously let out a humungous yawn, smacking at her lips, her eyes closing sleepily.

"Wow, well someone's tired," said Blake, who had been sitting on the floor of Negan's room, playing with the tiny toddler for the past hour.

The two of them had a had a busy afternoon.

After finishing up their breakfast, Blake had taken Mia outside, so that they could watch the trucks, that were taking Negan and some of the other Saviours to one of the outposts, driving away out of the lot.

They had lingered there in the sun for a while, Mia pointing at the walkers outside the fences below and asking why they couldn't come in.

But Blake had hastily danced around this question and taken the small girl back inside, back up to Blake's own room so that she could change into a fresh pair of clothes. Still having on the same jeans, shirt and underwear as yesterday despite showering.

While up there, Blake had stuck ghostbusters into the VCR and let Mia watch it. The tiny girl being mesmerised by the pictures on the screen.

Blake doubted she had ever even seen a TV before and that fact felt crazy to her.

That children in this world had grown up with nothing that Blake and others around had taken for granted just a few short years ago. No cell phones, no TV, no internet…

After Blake, who had found a couple of boxes of animal crackers in the cupboard in her room, had given Mia a light lunch, she had then taken her, as promised, to see the wives.

The afternoon, they had spent there, in the large room filled with couches and fluffy cushions, where Mia, who initially had been shy and hidden her face in Blake's t-shirt, had slowly warmed to the women one by one...

...she had babbled and run around the room being chased by Tanya….squealing happily…. before finally, after what felt like a blissful afternoon, the tiny girl had told Blake she needed to go potty and felt tired.

The duo had then hurriedly said their goodbyes and Blake had taken Mia back up to Negan's room, to the nearest bathroom she knew….

The door had of course, been open, but there was no sign of the dark-haired Saviour as the pair had padded hand-in-hand over to the large tiled bathroom, switching on the light.

And it hadn't been long, after the pair had emerged from said bathroom, as if on cue, that there come a sudden heavy knock upon the door.

Blake had chewed on her lip, looking a little worried for a brief moment before uttering an uneasy - 'c-come in…'

But thankfully, to Bake's relief, a short older woman, with long grey hair, had shuffled into the room
holding a silver tray, with two plates piled high with two large and juicy hamburgers.

One larger than the other, stuffed with lettuce and fresh tomatoes, and the second, quite a lot smaller, with just a patty and ketchup oozing out of it.

But Blake had smiled, thanking the woman who had hurriedly left without a word, knowing exactly who had arranged this for them…

Had Negan really known they would be here, in his room?

Was she really that predictable?

But even despite this, the pair were ravenous and dug straight into their food, neither of them needing much encouragement to do so.

And so, half an hour later, with delicious burgers both having been devoured….with Mia leaving a bit of the bread and some of the burnt bits of patty pickily…

….the pair had gotten undressed, filled the bath with bubbles, before splashing about together in the tub for a while.

It had been a lovely moment…with Blake being truly happier with Mia than she had felt in a long time…the tiny child bring her so much joy….

And soon, the pair got dried off. Blake shucking a white vest over her matching dark grey bra and panties once again, before placing Mia into a cute pair of black and yellow bumblebee-patterned pyjamas, before the two of them had sat down on the floor, upon Mia's request, to play for a while before bed.

But now, over ninety minute later, it was waaaay past what should have been Mia's bedtime, and Blake, getting to her feet with a sigh, lifted the tiny girl into her arms, hugging her close as she gave another tired yawn.

"Come on, let's get you to bed..." she uttered in a kindly voice, plopping the toddler back down onto Negan's bed, for the second night in a row.

Perhaps they could have gone back downstairs to Blake's room, now Mia had been acquainted to it…

But was it strange to say, that up here, Blake felt safer? More protected, and looked after?

That of course had nothing to do with the scent of the tall, bearded Saviour than seemed to linger everywhere here….  

….on the pillows…the couches…in the steam of the bathroom….  

….for this place, it was entirely him, and this was where Blake wanted to be right now.

She pulled the covers neatly over the tiny girl and brushed back her hair, watching as she blinked her eyes sleepily closed…mouth hanging open as she did so…..  

Blake smiled to herself…watching as she drifted off to sleep into a dream world….  

….and the caramel blonde woman thought on how enamoured she was with the tiny toddler.

This girl had come into her life and made it better….and Blake knew, that much ad it pained her to
admit, she loved her already…wanting to take care of her, at whatever the cost.

Did Mia really need to go back to her people?

From what she had said this morning, it didn't sound like she had any parents still alive. Just a couple who looked after her.

But Blake obviously knew that Mia's life would be much better served here…instead of out there…on the road…holed up in places like the one they had frequented yesterday…

That was no life for her.

But perhaps this was….

But Blake scolded herself internally. She was being selfish here….Mia wasn't hers and never could be.

She knew that life would never be that kind to her.. Never give her the family she wanted…

The caramel-blonde woman gave a gulp, tucking a long strand of hair behind her ear, before pulling herself from the mattress and back onto her feet.

She padded silently across the room before heading back into the large warm bathroom, a humid steam from their fragrant bath still lingering in the air.

Blake gave a short sigh and wiped the condensation from the mirror above the wash basin, peering at her reflection.

Comparing herself to what she had looked like a week ago…Blake looked positively healthy, bright…glowing even…

Her bruises were gone, her cheeks looked less sallow, and her eyes less ringed and tired, than before.

She felt happier inside too….not just with the arrival of Mia…but with her life here at the Sanctuary…

Negan had long stopped asking her whether or not she wanted to go back there, to Alexandria, and Blake, if truth be told, hoped he wouldn't ask again.

It wasn't as if she never wanted to go back there again….but since coming here, her life had changed…..for the better.

Far more than it had done back in Alexandria.

For who had she had to look out for her there? Had anyone even noticed the bruises she had tried to hide? The fearful glances she had shot David's way over dinner?

She doubted it…for Rick, Michonne, Maggie and the rest….they had all been too concerned with other, more important things, and rightly so too.

For why should Blake ever want to feel like a burden?

Because here she most certainly didn't.

She felt strong and cared for.
But she knew that was mainly by one person in particular…

Blake pushed her long, slightly curled, caramel-blonde hair back over her shoulder, just as, from the next room, she heard a door shut quietly, which caused her heart to begin to race at a mile a minute.

Was there someone there…? In the bedroom?

Had they come for her? Or for Mia?

Blake gulped.

But before she could even make a move towards the door, her questions were soon answered, as a tall, familiar figure appeared in the bathroom doorway.

She breathed a long sigh of relief, eyeing Negan as he stood there, a small smile fixed onto his lips.

He had come back….and earlier than expected at that.

As much as she had requested from him to not be too late, she understood how difficult it was to set a schedule on these things, and hadn't really thought that he would return until long into the early hours of the morning.

Blake lifted her chin, staring back at him, suddenly feeling incredibly vulnerable, stood here in nothing but her underwear and a white, almost see-through vest.

She could see him lift his bearded chin slightly, surveying her, licking at his lips, and revealing a long, slender, and tanned neck beneath.

A few weeks ago he had been a stranger…..a figure of grotesque legend around Alexandria.

And Blake would never have expected she would be here…half naked in front of him…willing to give herself entirely to the tall, dark-haired man.

Negan took a small step towards her.

"So…." he asked in dark and husky, voice, after a few long seconds went by. "…did you miss me after all, Peaches?"

Blake whimpered internally, feeling her breath catch in her throat slightly as his brown eyes slid up and down her slender form…taking her all in, almost greedily.

Blake parted her lips…letting out a shaky sort-of breath, before speaking.

"Maybe…." she murmured back, a smirk dancing its way over her face. "But it depends on what you brought me…."

Negan chuckled and crossed the room slowly towards her. Lucille was missing from her usual spot in his hand tonight, but that same-old leather jacket remained shucked over his grey t-shirt, haphazardly, his hair slicked back, and his eyes glinting.

He grinned back at her, showing off a line of bright white teeth, and cocked his head to the side, his eyes narrowing slightly.

"Brought you?" he uttered in a bemused sort of tone, as he came to stop just in front of the caramel-haired woman, staring down at her.
And at this, Blake could not help the feelings that were currently causing her stomach to jolt, as well as the drumbeat that was currently pounding away inside her ribcage.

How the hell could one man possibly make her feel like this?

Make her feel so much more than David ever had….even in the early days….

She had been through so much in these past few months….so many horrible words shot her way, that had grinded her down….made her feel worthless, insecure…never good enough…

But here he was…Negan…..the man in front of her….stood there, doing the exact opposite of what David had ever done…..lifting her up, instead of bringing her down.

He had called her a queen. And that is exactly what she felt when she was with him.

And it was then that she realised…..

…..she wanted to be his….

…..she wanted this to be the beginning…

Blake suddenly smiled, more to herself than to Negan on this occasion, looking down at her feet for the briefest of moments.

For she felt her stomach do a backflip at his proximity to her….

And slowly, with great care, Blake bit at her bottom lip, before gazing up at him once more…

…..as the dark-haired, bearded man pressed himself further into her…

……both of them knowing exactly what they were doing…exactly what they wanted right now….

Blake could feel a creamy wetness begin to pool inside her panties…a wetness that Negan could oh-so easily taste tonight, if that was what he wanted….

Her chest heaved needily…

…..as everything around the two of them seemed to disappear…leaving the pair of them alone….with no distractions….just each other…

"You promised you'd bring me back something nice…." Blake finally murmured, in a mere ache of a voice, as Negan leaned forwards, and Blake lifted a hand to his leather-clad chest….her fingers trailing up and curling around the fabric of his grey t-shirt. "…Daddy…."

But Negan just smiled that oh-so cocky smile of his….as his lips drifted close to hers…hovering over her mouth teasingly…

…..but this was no longer teasing….

…..both of them knew that….

"…An' I did, Darlin…." he uttered in that low, growling, drawl of his, smiling gently into her mouth, as one hand slid over her hip and the other moved up to brush a strand of hair from her face.

"…..me…."
Blake smiled.....

.....and before she could stop herself...

.....she closed her eyes, and felt her lips meet his.....

He tasted good.....like whisky, and lemon, and salt...

.....and Blake couldn't help herself, as she parted her swollen lips.....letting his tongue slip into her mouth.....licking at her.....tasting her...

She felt him immediately push her body back, a little roughly, against the basin behind her.....the small of her back colliding with the counter top...

.....but Blake wanted this more than she could say.....as she gave a moan, as they kissed.....with lips parting briefly every second or so.....readjusting their positions.....with wet, delicious noises that caused Blake to tug him into her, just a little bit more....

Negan gave a sudden needy growl....and before Blake knew it.....he had grasped her by her bare thighs, promptly lifted her and dropped her down onto the faux-marble basin-counter behind her.

Blake sucked in a breath of air.....as Negan pulled her forwards suddenly by her ass.....and grinded his hips into her hers with a dark, wanting groan....

Fuck.....she wanted him....

She could feel his cock, hard in his pants.....pressing into her wet core.....part of her desperately wishing that the layers of fabric between them were gone....

Blake pulled her mouth from his, suddenly panting hard.....her pupils dilated, and her panties now soaked and dripping with a creamy wetness.....

Her green eyes met with his dark, chocolate ones.....full of longing.....staring back at her lustfully, for a brief moment....

.....as Negan lifted his hands.....his fingers curving around the back of her neck, before he kissed her again.....hard...

.....as her hands moved down to his belt....

.....her fingers fumbling at his buckle.....as the tall-dark haired Saviour grunted into her mouth at the contact....

"What Eggy doin to Bwake?"

The pair jumped suddenly, Blake tugging her lips promptly from Negan's, as she stared suddenly around...

.....only to see Mia stood in the doorway.....peering up at the two adults curiously...

"You have gotta be fuckin' kiddin' me..." Blake heard Negan suddenly mutter, lifting his eyes up to the ceiling crossly.

But Blake immediately reddened.....pushing the dark-haired man gently from her, hopping down from the counter.....readjusting her vest as she did so.
"N-Nothing, sweetie," said the caramel-blonde woman, trying desperately to catch her breath, forcing a smile in the little girl's direction. "W-What are you doing up anyway. I thought you were asleep?"

But Mia peered over at Negan before looking back over at Blake, little mouth hanging open inquisitively.

"Why you doin' thot wif Eggy?" asked the tiny girl again.

But Blake, who could feel her cheeks burning red, gave a small cough…not daring to look back over at Negan…before speaking again.

"Nothing….me and Negan…..we were just, uh…playing," she said hastily, knowing that playing was not exactly what either of them had had in mind. "Now its way past your bedtime, sweet-pea. How about we get you back into bed, huh?"

Behind her, from the corner of her eye, she could see Negan, running a hand down his bearded face, letting out a low, frustrated puff of air.

"I ad' bad dweam," said Mia with a small pout, as Blake grasped the teeny, sweet little girl, under her arms, and lifted her up into her chest.

"Awww, no.....well let's make sure you stay snuggled up shall we, and we'll make sure you have only nice dreams from now on...ok?" said Blake lovingly, as Mia wrapped her arms around Blake's neck.

"Okway," said the tiny girl giving a cute little yawn, as Blake threw one last yearning look back at an tetchy-looking Negan, before heading back into the bedroom hurriedly.

The caramel-blonde woman gave a short sigh as she placed Mia gently down onto the bed, as she had done less than twenty minutes before.

"There we go…" began Blake making to tuck her in, but Mia gave a small wail.

"Noh, Bwake stay wif me, she said patting the space on the bed beside her with her tiny fingers. "Pwease, I be gud, I pwomise."

Blake glanced up to see Negan stood in the illuminated bathroom doorway, but after a second or two, she let lout a small gentle sigh, turning back to Mia and_stroking her head.

"Of course I will, sweetie," she said in a kindly voice, shifting around the bed and getting under the covers beside the toddler, chewing on her lips as she did so.

And in an instant, the teeny girl had pressed herself quickly into Blake, cuddling at her.

If Blake hadn't known any better it was almost as though the tiny girl was trying to keep the two adults firmly apart…

She sighed again.

The blonde woman glanced up one more time, at Negan, whose hand had drifted once more to his bearded face.

He eyed her with an unimpressed look, before huffing loudly.

"Then I guess I'm relegated to the fuckin' couch again am I?" he said in a pouting voice, placing his
tongue to his back molars, looking utterly pissed-off right now.

But Blake just smiled over at him, suddenly tossing him a spare pillow from the large four-poster bed, as she settled herself down beside Mia.

"…sorry, Daddy…" she murmured lightly. "Maybe tomorrow….”

And in that moment both adults knew what Blake meant, as she let out a long breath of air and cuddled Mia to her.

….gently closing her eyes….

…the last sound she heard before she drifted off to sleep, being the sound of the dark-haired Saviour slumping down onto the large leather sofa, across the room, grumpily…..

….damn….

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HOPE YOU'RE ALL STILL ENJOYING??
Blake smiled to herself, half in a dream-like state…as she felt a warm, soft light behind her eyes….and rough hands, skimming over her thighs….grazing up the side of her vest and pushing it up her side, revealing bare skin.

She hummed gently, nuzzling her face into the pillow sleepily, but greatly enjoying the sensation of cool hands on her body, fingers tracing across her collarbone, pulling her long hair away from her neck.

Was this a dream?

It almost felt too good for that…

She had had plenty of sex dreams in the past….but this one felt more real….

She gave a brief, bemused sort of frown before blinking open her eyes, only to see a long, tanned, familiar, and oh-so cocky face, hovering over hers…

She blinked herself into waking consciousness….

"N-Negan?" she managed to whisper in a hushed voice, suddenly remembering where she was, and who was sleeping right beside her.

"Mornin'," he uttered in a low husky tone. Negan this morning, was in just his grey t-shirt and pants, his jacket having long been abandoned on the couch most likely. "Thought we might be able to finish where we left off last night. See, I'm kinda yearnin' for somethin', an' I thought that you might be able to help with quenchin' my thirst, sweetheart."

And with that, Negan's mouth grazed Blake's neck, leaving a trail of open-mouthed kissed along her burning skin…

Oh god…

Now this was a way to wake up, that was for sure….

That longing desire still warming her stomach….causing her breath to catch in her throat…

But she couldn't do this….

Not here.

"Negan, no….Negan, stop," she breathed, her eyes drifting closed, in pleasure. "W-We can't…"

But the dark-haired saviour was pretty unrelenting….as his hands drifted up her side, rumpling her vest…her fingers inching achingly close to her breasts…

But suddenly there came a noise to Blake's right, and the tall, caramel-blond woman made a face, glancing around, to see the small toddler rubbing at her eyes…waking up.

Blake shoved Negan hurriedly from her yet again….and smoothed down her hair.

"Heeeey, sweetie," she said in a kindly tone, as Mia sat up and blinked at the pair of them. "You sleep ok?"
But before their very eyes, Mia’s face, as she eyed Negan lying beside Blake, became one of utter grumpiness…her face fixing itself into a tiny scowl.

"Why Eggy 'ere?" she said in a croaky, bossily little voice. "Eggy noh, sleep wif us."

Blake pursed her lips together.

Was this Mia being protective of Blake?

It certainly seemed that way.

"It's ok, baby," said Blake, pulling herself up into a sitting position, trying to block Negan from sight. "Negan's just come by to say….uh, good morning."

She almost tutted at her own comment.

He had certainly done that.

Blake did all she could to stop herself from rolling her eyes, as behind her, she heard Negan rub a hand over his scratchy, bearded chin, and let out a huff.

"Holy fucking shit…" he growled in irritation. "Are you really gonna deny me the chance to screw you again, Doll-face, just because that little cock-blocker's awake?"

But Blake threw him a frown, slapping him across the arm, scowling.

"Hey! Don't call her that," she tutted, before turning back to Mia and tickling her stomach gently. "You're not a cock-blocker are you, sweetie-pie?"

Mia gave a happily little giggle and squirmed beneath the bedcovers.

"And besides," continued Blake, throwing another look at the ruffled Negan over her shoulder. "Who said we were gonna fuck, anyway?"

She raised an eyebrow in his direction, teasingly, giving the dark-haired Saviour a long and lingering look.

He gave a moody sort-of pout and shoved himself dramatically from the bed, getting hastily to his feet.

"Oh, you want me, sweetheart," he said pointing a finger at her and raising both of his dark brows. "I could tell that you were drippin' wet for me last night…. just waitin' for me to just take off those soaked little panties of yours, and slide my-"

But Blake grabbed a pillow suddenly, and tossed it in his direction before he could finish, it hitting his shoulder as he turned away from her chuckling, and headed into his bathroom.

And it was a second or two later than Blake heard the sound of his clothes dropping to the floor, out of sight, and the shower switch on.

She stared down at Mia, giving a small, smiling sigh…but before she could reassure her of anything, she was promptly disturbed.

"You wanna join me Peaches?" came Negan's sudden head around the door….and from the sight of his bare, tanned and tattooed chest, Blake could tell he was naked…
Her heart pounded longingly….

"I'm good thanks," she murmured, tucking a long stand of hair behind her ear, as she bit her lip, looking away.

But had Mia not been here, Blake knew that she probably would have jumped at the chance.

But Negan, who could read her like a book, took one last look at her and gave a chuckle.

"Hmmm, suit your fuckin' self, then, Darlin'."

And with that, he disappeared out of sight…leaving Blake sitting there with Mia…smiling to herself and shaking her head.

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Blake, and Mia had promptly headed down the corridor back to her own room, before Negan was even done in the shower. The caramel-blonde woman not wanting to risk another seduction right there on his bed again.

And so, the pair had got dressed, Blake slipping on a pair of black matching underwear, clean black jeans and a white t-shirt, before placing Mia into a sweet little denim dungaree-dress, with yellow ducks on.

"There," she uttered, brushing a hand across Mia's cheek, as the teeny girl giggled to herself, sitting on Blake's long untouched bed.

Blake had just finished fixing the toddler's hair into a tiny bow on top of head, standing up straight once more and turning back to her vanity table.

She gave a small sigh, placing down the comb, her fingers suddenly moving across, and toying with the tube of mascara she had picked up from that first run she had been on with Negan and the other Saviours. That felt like a lifetime ago now….when in reality it was only a few weeks gone.

David had still been alive back then, and life had been so, so different for Blake.

Now look at her….making out with Negan, himself, and taking care of a two year old girl….

Back then she would never had guessed either would be possible.

She gave a sigh, picking up the mascara, before unscrewing the tube and coating her long lashes in the black substance.

"Bwakw pwetty," came Mia's sudden voice from behind her when she was done, and Blake turned to the girl, smiling.

But she didn't have a chance to say another word, as suddenly as their came a loud, tuneful knock upon the door, causing Blake to roll her eyes, already guessing who it was.

"Come in," she called loudly, placing down the tube of mascara on her tiny vanity unit and glancing around, only to see Negan strolling through the door. Lucille in one hand, and a plate of fruit in the other.

He was chewing on what looked like a grape, his dark eyes flickering across the room, his gaze going first to Mia, and then lazily over to Blake herself.
"Thought I'd bring you both some breakfast," he said to gesturing to the plate, piled high with grapes, blueberries, strawberries and chopped apple, before placing it promptly down onto the edge of the bed beside Mia, not taking his eyes off Blake. "Most important meal of the day….if you don't count me eatin' you out, which I am still up for doin' this mornin', if you were so inclined, Doll-face…"

He raised his eyebrows fiendishly, quickly closing the gap between himself and Blake, placing his hand quickly to her lower back and tugging her swiftly towards him.

But Blake tutted, pressing a hand to his chest and holding him at arm's length, smirking ruefully.

"I'll think I'll survive with just a couple of strawberries thanks…" she uttered playfully, turning around and making to pick up her hairbrush from the table.

But Negan obviously didn't like being turned down, suddenly giving a wanting growl, tossing Lucille unceremoniously down onto the small flowery couch beside them and pressing himself up against Blake from behind.

She smiled, leaning back into him and pausing in what she was doing momentarily, as she felt one of his tanned and eager hands, slide over her hip and the other make for the front waistband of her pants.

"Negan…” she uttered warningly, for second time in one morning. Well aware that Mia was only just behind them, sat up on the bed, minding her own business, watching them with interest.

But the dark-haired Saviour merely gave a deep chuckle into her ear, which caused the hairs on the back of her neck to stand on end.

"You sure about that?" he uttered in a husky tone. "Because it was only last night I had you pretty much creamin' yourself, wantin' me to screw your fuckin' brains out, Darlin'."

Blake closed her eyes, feeling suddenly very hot and bothered by his oh-so-close proximity.…

He was right….her panties becoming wet again, just at his words…

How the fuck was she always this susceptible to him…

Always letting him get the upper hand in these kind of situations…

But Blake could only give a gentle moan as she felt his tanned fingers expertly undo the top button on her jeans….knowing where his fingers were about to go next…

But before Negan could glide his digits down into that creamy wetness between her legs…there came a sudden loud knocking on the door.

At once, Negan gave a growl into her ear. But this growl was different. More angry and pissed-off than yearning, on this occasion……

And Blake had barely had a chance to hurriedly do up her pants button, as Negan's hands slipped away from her, when the door was swiftly shoved open….

…..to reveal a breathless Dwight, who came bursting in, his eyes flicking immediately to the ground, as he saw who was present.

He licked at his lips quickly.
"Boss, we've got-"

But Dwight didn't get the chance to finish, as Negan's eyes became suddenly black, his jaw tensing furiously, as he spun around, cutting across the blonde-haired man.

"You ever heard of fuckin' knockin' Dwighty-boy?" snapped Negan in a sharp tone….a voice hard enough to even make Blake give a gulp behind him, watching, as the bearded Saviour snatched up Lucille from the sofa and marched across the room.

Dwight. At this, immediately apologised, bowing his head.

"I'm sorry….Negan, I just-"

"I couldn' give a goddamn flyin' fuck if you're sorry," said Negan loudly, pointing at the blonde man with end of his barbed wire-covered baseball bat. "You still walked in, unannounced, into a lady's room. I mean what the fuck am I supposed to think about that, Dwight? Hmmm? What? You think you're gonna get a nice look at her titties after she's showered, is that it?"

But Dwight shook his head profusely, as Blake watched the situation pan out before her.

Mia, who was also watching the conversation before her unfold, was staring up at Negan, a tiny pout across her lips.

But Negan looked pissed.

More enraged than Blake had seen him in a long time. Not since David had been alive anyway.

He took a step into Dwight, leering over him intimidatingly.

"How the fuck am I gonna be able to trust you again after this, Dwighty?" said Negan loudly, suddenly bringing Lucille up to Dwight's face. "Huh? I mean, I have given you a lot of goddamn fuckin' chances….back when you double crossed me…stole my meds….when Sherry escaped…"

Blake bristled slightly at the sound of Negan's wife's name. As did Dwight….but he continued to stare down at the ground, his mouth closed and straight.

"But all that, I mean I'm a nice fuckin' guy, and I forgive and forgot…." shouted Negan angrily in Dwight's face. "But you burstin' in on Peaches and the kid here….well, shit like that don't fly on my watch……you understandin' me, Dwight? Or have I got to show the other side of your face to the iron too?"

But before Dwight, or even Negan, could utter another word…

….there came a sudden loud wail.

And Blake's eyes darted suddenly around, to see Mia, sitting there, head facing the ceiling, completely in tears…..her face red and crumpled.

At this noise the two men also swung around, Negan lowering Lucille slightly, a little distracted now.

But Blake hurried over to the little girl, picking her up into her arms.

"Hey, shhhh," she murmured into her ear, rocking her back and forth like a baby. "It's ok…..what's wrong… aawww shhhh….."
But Mia gave another heaving set of sobs, before finally, between cries…looking up at Blake.

"Eggy angwry…I–n-n-noh like!" she just about manage to blub out, before falling into another loud set of wails that seem to shake the room, deafening everyone.

Blake clutched Mia into her chest, before suddenly giving a dark scowl and rounding on Negan and Dwight.

"Right, that's it…" she said angrily. "You two, out!"

She gave Negan, who was closest to her, standing near to the door beside Dwight, a sharp shove.

But the dark-haired Saviour merely gaped.

"Me?!" he uttered in a defensive manner, his eyebrows disappearing into his hairline. "If you're gonna blame anyone, Doll, blame fuckin' Dwight!"

But Blake wasn't listening, pursing her lip into a thin warning line and staring back at the bearded man dangerously.

"Out!" she yelled, giving him another hard shove and this time the two men had no choice, but to exit promptly through the open door.

And Blake, shooting Negan one last furious look, that indeed rivalled his own, less than a minute ago, slammed the door in both men's faces, huffing loudly to herself.

"Assholes," she muttered under her breath.

And Mia, who had calmed down a little and had had been watching Blake's outburst with her mouth hanging open, gave a nod of her own, clutching tightly at Blake's, now, damp t-shirt, and repeated the words brightly back to Blake….

"…Ashhh'-oles…"
Picnic

It had turned into a warm, hazy day, and Blake and Mia had spent the rest of the morning, and early afternoon, lounging beneath a tree in a small, shady, grassy part of the Sanctuary.

The area was small and surrounded by trucks and vans all parked up around them, but that was a small price to pay to get away from the sight of walkers leering and staring at the fences nearby.

Blake had grabbed a few food items from the marketplace, as well as a large tartan blanket, and both she and Mia had come out here, for a sort of makeshift picnic.

So far Mia had enjoyed playing with the grass, running around barefoot…never straying far from Blake's sight the entire time.

The little girl was so precious, Blake could barely take her eyes off her…waddling about…nibbling on a few grapes and picking at blades of grass.

She was pretty much the child Blake had always dreamed of having. And now maybe….if Mia stayed with them, this was the kind of life the pair of them could have together….

Ok, this world was crappy and terrible sometimes…but here in the Sanctuary…with Negan and the Saviours watching over them….maybe they could be safe…maybe they could both find happiness.

Blake, sitting cross-legged beneath the tree, tilted her head and smiled down at Mia, as the tiny girl bent down on her chubby legs and picked a small, unopened daisy.

Mia hurriedly turned back around and ran to Blake.

"It flaver!" she said with a small squeal, holding the daisy out towards the caramel-blonde woman, and clambering awkwardly onto her lap.

Blake beamed and pushed the little girl's hair back from her face.

"It's very pretty," she said in a kindly voice, as Mia pushed the flower into Blake's hand, wrapping her free paw around Blake's neck and sitting down with a whump.

The toddler gazed out across the dry, dusty lot and leaned back into Blake.

"I shtay 'ere naw?" she asked in a small voice, after a moment or two, as Blake wrapped her arms around the little girl gently and rested her chin top of her teeny head.

She gave a small sigh.

Maybe this was all how it was supposed to be…maybe finding Mia….well, maybe that had always meant to happen.

After David…maybe the universe was trying to make up for all themonths of anguish and torment Blake had gone through.

For the first time in a long time, Blake felt truly happy….not only did she have Mia…but she had Negan too…

"Yes, you can stay here with us," Blake hummed into Mia's hair…looking up to see the man himself strolling across the lot towards them.
Her stomach automatically lurched when she saw him.

Granted, Negan was older than she was….Blake only just having reached thirty and Negan in his late forties, but regardless, he was no less attractive to her….with his dark hair, salt and pepper beard…tanned skin…and that smile….

That smile, that made her feel like a naughty little girl, every time he threw it her way.

Blake bit her lip and gazed up at him as he approached, wearing that same old leather jacket of his, shrugged over a white t-shirt, with Lucille swinging gently from his hand as he went.

But there was something different about him now…a look on his face that hadn't been there just a few hours earlier back in her room….

A frown line shifted itself between her brows for a moment….studying him carefully….

In the weeks Blake had been here, she was now able to read him pretty well…and knew when there was something wrong.

But in an instant, that look had disappeared from his face….as he forced a wide grin, revealing his perfect line of straight white teeth.

Blake blinked at him for a moment….surveying him cautiously before the dark-haired Saviour finally spoke.

"What's all this?" he said cocking an eyebrow at her. "You havin' a picnic and don't invite me?"

He pressed a hand to his heart.

"I'm hurt, Sweetheart."

Blake's lips twitched into a small smile, as Mia wriggled in her arms, pulling at the grass before her, barely batting an eyelid at the bearded man' presence.

"Didn't think it would be your thing," Blake said, wrinkling her nose slightly as she spoke. "Not nearly enough bloodshed for you."

Negan, poked his tongue out between his teeth and stared down at her, grinning back adoringly.

"Well, obviously you know me too fuckin' well, Peaches," he said tossing Lucille suddenly down onto the ground near to them, before strutting closer to them and easing himself slowly down onto the blanket beside them.

He gave a groan, as he lay down, side-on, and crossed his long legs over one another, helping himself to an animal cracker, tossing in into his mouth easily and surveying the lot around them.

Blake gave a bemused frown.

It was so unusual to see Negan like this, looking so relaxed….at ease…so normal.

He looked like one of the Dads who used to frequent the park that Blake used to pass through to get home from work every evening. The kind of men that would sit around with their families….having picnics…playing Frisbee with the kids…

Ok, Blake had to admit, he looked slightly more rough around the edges that those men ever did….but even so, Negan looked very much at home here….with the two of them….
"Haven't you got things to do?" she said after a second or two of silence had passed. "Like looting buildings and pissing people off? Isn't that more your thing, than spending the day here with us?"

She had no idea why she was feeling all of a sudden so defensive, but once again Blake tried to push that game of theirs on him. Trying to goad him into a reaction.

Her eyes travelled over his long tanned face, as he turned his head and looked back at her lazily.

"Why would I bother goin' out there, usin' up precious fuel, when I can just lie here and piss you off without moving from this spot, Darlin'?" he said eyeing her.

Mia pushed herself from Blake's lap and toddled swiftly off to pick at another daisy she had spotted a few feet away, as Blake tutted, staring back at Negan, playfully.

"You do piss me off," she said blinking over at him and giving a small goading sigh. "….but its lucky I have a soft spot for you ."

At these words, Negan's grin seemed to wide, his eyes twinkling, as he stared at her.

Blake pursed her lips, her gaze never wanting to leave his.

Everything was perfect right now…

Mia playing beside them on the grass…Negan lying there before her….it was as if it was all meant to be…as the sun trickled through the dappled leaves above their heads…

Blake parted her lips, licking at them slowly…letting out a small breath of air.

But Negan just gave a chuckle.

"You know I remember when I first saw you, with ol' Davey-boy knocking seven bells outta you, in that hall over there," Negan said, blinking slowly. "I knew that you'd amount to more than just being his fi-an-ce…"  

Blake rolled her eyes, smirking, before settling herself down onto her side, facing Negan and propping her head up onto her elbow, mirroring his stance.

"…I swear," she said in a warning voice, pointing a finger at the dark-haired leader of the Saviours. "If you ask me to be your wife again, Negan…"

But Negan just stared back at her, grinning that oh-so cocky grin of his, tiling his head to the side as she did so.

"Holy shit, Doll-face. I mean, I might be a fuckin maniac, but I haven't totally fuckin' lost it," he said in a growl of a voice, licking his lips as he stared back at her. "Hell, I saw you usin' poor old Lucille on that prick of an ex of yours. I ain't riskin' you doin' the same to me, Darlin'."

He raised his eyebrows, tutting at her mockingly.

Blake smiled.

He was such an asshole.

But an asshole that she kinda quite liked.

She certainly hadn't been lying about that soft spot.
Mia suddenly toddled over, braking, what seemed like both of them, from their thoughts, and waddling up to Negan.

"Eggy, I brot yoo fwower," she said holding a bent and dirty-looking daisy up towards his long face.

The dark-haired man gave a chuckle and took the daisy from Mia's grasp.

"Why, aren't you an angel," he said in a slow, almost charming tone, his eyes glinting at the toddler as she sat up and pulled herself onto his lap. "You forgiven me for earlier, pumpkin?"

But Mia was no longer listening, instead gazing over at Blake with her tiny mouth hanging open.

She looked between the two adults for a moment before speaking.

"Bwake an' Eggy 'av baybee, yesh?" she said suddenly, turning her head to look at Negan, giving a tiny, bossily little pout. "I wan' bruver."

But at these words, Blake gave an immediate gulp, her face reddening and her eyes flickering over to Negan.

There were so many things to contend with in that tiny girl's sentence.

But Negan merely laughed and tickled Mia's sides.

"I mean, fuck me, hold your horses there, baby-doll. Me an' Peaches there haven't even got to second base yet, all thanks to you," he growled, as the toddler laughed, squirming from his grasp and running swiftly away, to hide behind Blake.

The caramel-blonde woman smirked, shaking her head.

"Yet?" she asked teasingly, raising a slender eyebrow in his direction. "What makes you think we're even going to do anything like we did last night, again, Negan? Maybe it was a one off…"

She shrugged, looking down, biting her lip, toying with the blades of grass in front of her.

But Negan obviously took the bait, easier than Blake had expected.

"Oh, I know that you are hot for me," said the bearded Saviour grinning widely, suddenly getting to his feet with a groan. "I can tell because you do that thing where you bite those plump, pink lil' lips of yours, all so invitingly. Makin' me hope to god, you'll wrap them around my cock and suck oh-so fuckin' slowly, Darlin'."

Blake's eyes almost immediately stared up at him, a flush creep in its way across her chest and a pool of wetness soaking her panties.

And for the first time in a long while since she had arrived at the Sanctuary, Blake was indeed a little lost for words.

She gaped, mouthing at the air for a moment, before shuffling and coming to sit upright, folding her arms across her chest, defensively.

But this was a worse position to be in….her eyes now level with Negan's pants zipper.

She gave an instant gulp, her breathing suddenly feeling oddly shallow in her chest, before she tore her gaze away, scowling.

"You can dream, Negan," she said a in a pouting tone, before clambering to her own feet, noticing as
Mia made a beeline for Lucille, reaching out to pet it like a dog.

But Blake was quicker than the two-and-a-half year old was, quickly snatching her up and placing her down again a little way away from the barbed wire-covered baseball bat.

But as she righted herself, brushing down her hands and standing up straight again, watching as Mia, instead, waddled over towards the grapes, she felt a sudden hand snake its way around her slender waist and a pair of lips brush her ear.

"Oh I dream, sweetheart," he said in low and growling tone. "Mainly about you, me, an' that bathtub I got upstairs."

Blake smiled, staring down at the ground momentarily, before looking up again, turning to Negan.

He was mere breath away from her now, his chocolate eyes boring into hers...and his tanned fingers dancing their way around the waistband of her pants and underneath the hem of her white t-shirt, finding bare skin.

She smiled up at him, pulling at her lip, needily.

As much as she teased him, both of them knew that last night had not been a mistake...both of them wanted one another...and both of them would have carried on if they had had the chance.

Blake, right at this moment would have wished for nothing more than for him to take her by the hand, lead her up to his bathroom....and slip beneath the hot, bubbly water with her....fingers and hands skimming across naked and wet skin....kissing, licking and touching where they wanted...

She let out a shaky breath as she stared up at him, right here and now however, seeing that he had that look in his eyes.

That look of utter longing...

Blake moved her face forwards, brushing her lips teasingly against his.

"And if I said, maybe I could get someone to take care of Mia tonight..." she said, as she grazed her mouth, slowly past his, before his lips could capture hers, travelling up towards his ear tauntingly.

She pressed her hands to Negan's taut t-shirt covered chest.

But Blake waited there, half expecting him to grab her, pull her back slightly and press his lips to hers.

But instead there came nothing, his fingers hand stopped in their stroking of her skin....no cocky words from his mouth...

And for the briefest moments, Blake grinned, thinking that perhaps she had got one over on him yet again...

But it was only when she pulled back and saw the look on his face, did she realise that there was something wrong.

The dark-haired Saviour's face was now devoid of that usual confident smirk of his....in fact he looked regretful and almost.....well, sad.

Blake pushed herself back slightly, her eyes roving across his features, as he gave a long sigh, looking down at the ground for a long moment before running a hand down his stubbly face tiredly.
And it was almost half a minute later (although it certainly felt like longer), that Negan finally spoke….

"I told you we couldn't keep her here, Peaches," Negan said, his dark brown eyes locking onto her green ones.

Blake stopped for a moment, frowning and looking a little bemused at the whole situation, before all hint of joy disappeared from her face as she realised just what he was talking about.

"Arat and Dwight found the kid's people," he said poking his tongue into his cheek, and shaking his head. "That's what he came to tell me this morning'. There's two of them. They're claiming to be the ones that looked after her after her parents kicked the bucket. Look, I'm sorry, Doll-face, I was gonna try and tell you later this afternoon. But, well, now's probably fuckin' best…"

Negan immediately tried to raise a tanned hand up towards Blake's cheek, but she flinched away from him, taking a sudden step backwards and shaking her own head.

Her eyes travelled over to where Mia was crouch down helping herself to some fruit from a tiny dish.

No.

This wasn't how it was supposed to be.

Blake and Mia…they were going to be happy here…

Mia was going to be the family that Blake never had…the family she had found…

Blake shook her head again, harder this time.

"No," she said in a breathy voice, her heart pounding, but for a different reason now. "I can't-"

But Negan voice came firmer now.

"I told you that her stayin' here…that it wasn' gonna be for good, Peaches," said the Saviour in warning voice. "It ain't safe…"

Again the dark-haired man, made to reach out for her arm, but Blake pulled herself away from his grasp, feeling tears begin to slip their way down her cheeks.

She gave a painful gulp and looked into Negan's eyes.

"I-I can't."

"I-I can't."

But Negan gave her nothing in return, his dark eyes full of remorse, as his slid his hand once again down his bearded face. But he stared her out…trying to communicate something back to her… wordlessly.

For the dark-haired Saviour opened his mouth to speak, before closing it promptly shut again, clenching his jaw and turning suddenly away from her.

And for the slightest of seconds, Blake thought she saw something that resembled utter disappointment in his face…but he merely bent down, snatching up Lucille from the floor before striding away.

"You've got an hour," Peaches," she managed to utter in a slightly bitter tone, over his shoulder at
her, leaving at tall, caramel-haired woman, standing there, gaping, her cheeks wet with tears…..

…feeling utterly hopeless…. 
Blake gave a gulp as she stood beside her bed, staring down at the tiny Mia'-sized dress in her hands. The toddler was currently sitting on top of Blake's mattress, playing with her own sock-covered feet and letting out small intermittent giggles that seemed to make Blake's heart swell and then crash painfully as she thought on her impending fate.

She didn't want to let her go. Not now. Not after everything. This had been their chance. Her chance at happiness, after months of hurt.

Blake folded the tiny pinafore dress and placed it neatly onto the pile of baby clothes besides her, letting a tear fall from her eyes as she did so.

This was how it had been all those years ago.....Blake folding up the clothes she had bought for the baby she had been expecting….placing them away never to be brought out again….

She was aching now. For so much loss in her life….and for the loss of dream that would now never become a reality.

Blake suddenly gave a loud uncontrollable sob before she could stop herself, before clutching hurriedly at her mouth as Mia peered up at her curiously.

The tiny girl tilted her head slightly.

"Wha 'rong wif Bwake?" she asked in a tiny voice, blinking her wide, blue eyes up toward the caramel-blonde woman.

But Blake hurriedly wiped at her wet cheeks, forcing a smile in Mia's direction.

"Nothing, sweetie," she said in a gentle voice, reaching down and lifting the little girl up into her arms.

Mia happily snuggled herself close to Blake, her tiny, sticky fingers toying with the collar of Blake's white t-shirt.

It was a lie. Of course it was, but Blake hugged the little girl closely, feeling her warmth…her soft mousy hair tickling her face.

She was the child that Blake never had, and she felt nothing but heartbroken right now.

But what choice did she have? They two people who had brought her up to be the sweet little thing she was, were sitting downstairs….probably heartbroken themselves right now, in no better position that Blake was.

And so, Blake gave another difficult gulp, and popped Mia gently down onto the floor.

"Right then," she said in a shaky sort of voice. "Shall we go for a walk?"

And with that Blake heaved up the pile of clothes in one hand, and held out her other, towards the little girl, feeling more tears slip silently down her cheeks.

But Mia, not understanding what was going on, just smiled, taking Blake's hand in his tiny paw and giving a happy smile.
"Yesh, I liak walkin' wif Bwake!" she squealed with delight, falling into step with the caramel blonde woman, as they headed out of the door…

…..Blake's heart aching with sadness as they went….

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Negan dragged a hand down his face as he waited out in the hazy, sunny lot, beside the back of a large beaten-up truck.

He had been here for least five minutes, the sun's hot rays burning through the shoulders of his leather jacket, his fingers moving lightly across the smooth handle of the barbed-wire covered baseball-bat in his hand.

Negan's face was fixed, his dark eyes staring out blankly ahead, as Dwight, Arat, and a few of the other Saviours stood around them, guns all held aloft….just waiting…

And it wasn't long before the people they were waiting for finally appeared.

Negan, for a moment, felt his chest restrict slightly, as his chocolate eyes landed on the two figures padding slowly towards them…heads bowed low…talking to one another gently….  

Negan parted his lips…lifting his chin slightly and surveying them….  

There she was…the woman who had come into his life like a hurricane….messing up everything he had strived for…his relationship with his wives….his power….his dominance….all changed….because of her….  

But Negan had wanted that…she had been like his shining light in the darkness of this world….making him finally feel something for the first time since Lucille.

She wasn't just another wife there to screw when he wanted…she was funny, and beautiful….and smart….  

And as much as Negan had tried to fight it…he wanted her to be his queen…

But the dark-haired Saviour had heard just what she had said.

That without Mia…she didn't have anything….and that obviously included him.

And that hurt….caused a dark pit to form in his heart…making it feel blacker than before…

Blake walked towards him slowly, in tight black pants and her slightly rumpled white t-shirt, talking to the tiny Mia beside her, who clutched at her hand tightly.

The pair of them looked perfect together. But Negan had warned her that this wouldn't work out. That the Sanctuary was no place for a kid.

And the leader of the Saviours knew what needed to be done, whether it hurt Blake or not.

The caramel-blonde woman's eyes suddenly met with his…round and sad….full of pain and anguish…

But Negan dragged his own dark eyes away from her lazily….his face fixed into a blank, frowning stare….
For he would pretend not to care, if that's what it took. If that was what she wanted.

"Open the truck, Dwight," he suddenly called out loudly, just as Mia pointed happily up towards him. Not understanding what was going on.

"Hai, Eggy," she said giving him a wave, looking happy. "Me an' Bwake goin fo walk!"

Negan's heart immediately drummed in his chest at this, but he didn't look back at either of them. Merely turning on his heel, and arching his back, as Dwight lifted the heavily door of the truck, pushing it upwards with a heave.

He saw from the corner of his eye, Blake take a small step back, pulling Mia into her slightly, as two figures were suddenly revealed, sitting in the back of the truck, blinking up against the sunlight, wincing.

It was a woman and a man, both a little older than Blake, the man sporting a rather large bruised looking eye having been punched by Arat yesterday most likely. Negan recognising her work instantly.

But it was only a second or two before the woman, with a lined forehead, freckles and long vibrant red hair, scrabbled hurriedly to her feet, her eyes landing suddenly on the kid.

"Mia?" she said in a loud, carrying voice, drawing the little girls' attention at once to her.

The toddler stared up at the woman and man, and gave a wide smile.

"Hai, Amy," she said easily, waving at the red-head, just as she had done to Negan just a few moments ago. "Thish mai fwend Bwake."

But the woman called Amy, as well as the man with short brown hair beside her, suddenly, with one eye trained on the Saviours surrounding them, jumped down from the back of the truck and ran desperately forwards, towards the teeny girl.

Negan's eyes at once travelled to Blake, whose face was currently wet with tears, obviously trying as hard as she could to hold it together right now as the man and woman reached Mia, suddenly grasping her up into their arms.....pulling her swiftly from Blake's touch...

Blake intently parted her lips...mouthing at the air...making like she was about to say something...her eyes glassy and brimming with pained tears...as she watched the three of them embrace right before her.

"Oh Mia, we're so sorry, baby," uttered the woman called Amy rocking the little girl back and forth in her arms tightly. "We're so, so sorry."

And Negan saw Blake, at this, gave a sudden sob of her own, suddenly turning on the spot and facing away from not only the embracing trio, but Negan too.

Maybe this morning he'd have gone over and hugged her, kissed her temples, and told her everything was going to be ok.

But it was obvious that she didn't want him.

He just wouldn't be enough for her.....he could see that now…

What the hell would a girl like her want from a guy like him anyway?
He was an asshole…a man who killed people because it was fun…he wouldn't never be good enough for someone like her.

They were cut from different cloth.

He was just Negan….he had his wives…he had his people….but he wouldn't have her…

And thoughts like that….well, they would kill him if he let them.

So he needed to just stand here….showing no emotion towards her…because that was the way it had to be.

He gave a sigh and a small gulp and stepped forwards, his teeth gritted.

"Alright," he suddenly shouted, turning around and waving a gloved hand dismissively. "Load 'em up an' take up back to wherever they fuckin' came from."

He immediately heard obedient feet shuffling and the sound of guns been pointed at the figures in the centre of the lot, as he began to walk away.

But as he ran a hand down his tired, bearded face, he stopped suddenly in his tracks, as he heard a voice speak-

"If she's going, I want her in the front of a truck, not the back of it," Blake suddenly uttered in a shaky voice, loud enough for all of the Saviours and Negan himself to hear.

He glanced over his shoulder at the caramel-blonde woman, who was stood there trembling, hands balled into fists at her side.

She had already passed the man with brown hair the pile of Mia's clothes…staring at him and the red-head beside them.

"Take these clothes for her, and keep her safe," she said in a sudden warning tone, with a dark frown in their direction. "And if you ever leave her inside a fucking vent alone again, I'll find you and I'll kill you with my own bare hands. Are we clear on that?"

The man and woman both nodded hurriedly, looking terrified.

But Blake just raised her chin looking directly at Arat and Dwight who stood nearby.

"And if you don't get them home to wherever they came from safely," she said in a threatening tone. "Then I'll kill you both too."

And Negan in that moment could tell just how deadly serious she was…..seeing a flicker of himself in her steely gaze at that very moment…..before Blake suddenly turned away…..walking swiftly off…..heading back inside…..

…..without even a final goodbye to Mia….

The toddler for a moment, reached a tiny, chubby little arm out in the direction Blake had disappeared off in, looking sad, as Amy rubbed at her back…whispering gentle, soothing words in her ear…distracting her enough to turn her gaze away.

And Negan could only, purse his lips, sighing heavily, before looking around with dark eyes, as everyone stared at each other a little unsurely…
"Well you heard the fuckin' lady," he yelled fiercely, as everyone instantly got to work, scurrying this way and that, as Arat ushered Amy, the man, and Mia away.

And Negan chanced one last look at the tiny girl as she was pulled hurriedly past him.

"Eggy, wher' Bwake gonn?" she asked him, curiously…her wide blue eyes staring up at him. "I wann Bwake."

But Negan didn't give an answer to the toddler…he merely stared after her…as she was gently pulled up into the cab of a truck and disappeared out of sight.

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Blake licked at her lips, staring at the ceiling as she pressed her back to the dim hallway wall, trying as best she could to stop the endless tears from falling.

She had let her go.

Just like that.

Why had she not fought for her?….Demanded she stay here at the Sanctuary?

Salty tears slipped down her cheeks…overwhelming her…

Blake was angry, and frustrated, and in so much pain…

Pain that no bruises or broken ribs could compare to…

Things had begun to get better….she had found a good life here at the Sanctuary….with Mia…with Negan…

But now it was as if the tall, dark-haired Saviour had never cared at all.

She had seen the uncaring, dismissive look that had crossed his features out there in that lot. His inability to hold her gaze.

Was this what he was truly like? A man with no feelings, no remorse. For this was how people had described him all along… And maybe they were right. Maybe they had always been right.

Blake liked him….more than she could say….and so it wasn’t just Mia leaving, that was causing her heart to break right now.

She had been so foolish to put all her trust, all her faith in him, and so soon after David had died too.

And so, now it was just her in this world. Alone. Just as it should be.

She needed to face the fact that she would never have kids. Never have the family so longed for… and that…that hurt her more than she could say.

Blake closed her eyes, giving a muffled sob, as she clutched her trembling hands to her face…feeling more emotion now, than she had after David's death.

For that had been the start of something. The start of a new chapter in her life.

But this felt the opposite. For this was like closing the book. Admitting to herself that this was how it was always going to be for her now. Just Blake on her own. For good.
She wiped her fingers beneath her eyes and let out a long, puff of air, trying as hard as she could to steady herself.

She needed air. Air away from this place...this prison of hers...she was choking...running out of time...out of hope that there would ever be anything there to fill the void.

She had hoped for a moment that Negan would have been the thing to do that...that ray of something good in the darkness of her life...but he had broken her heart today.

Perhaps he had become bored of her...bored of Mia too...that was why he had broken them apart....

Maybe Blake had told him no, too many times...maybe he preferred his wives to her...maybe the chase had got stale for him...

Whatever the case...it was true that Blake had seen no utter longing or warmth in his eyes out there....

...only a darkness...a cold and indifferent gaze that had pained her to even look at.

Blake stared down at her feet, blinking slowly...the tears drying now on her cheeks...just as she heard a sudden set of heavy footsteps come walking down the long, gloomy corridor towards her....

...and without even looking up, Blake already knew who it was.

It sounded like the walk towards her was endless, as boots hit concrete, finally coming to stop just a foot or two away from her.

And it was another long moment after that, did Blake finally speak.

Her tone void of any emotion.

"Why?" she breathed, her eyes never leaving the concrete floor below her.

She could hear her heart thudding slowly inside her eardrums, as she waited for a response...but it was at least half a minute before one finally came.

"Why what, Peaches," came Negan's low, tired voice. His tone was stern and she could tell that he was looking right at her, feeling his dark chocolate eyes boring into her skull.

But Blake let out a difficult breath.

"You knew I loved her like she was my own, Negan," she said in a shaky tone, desperately trying to stop even more tears from welling inside her eyes.

But Negan's voice came again after a few long and drawn out seconds. Harsher than before now.

"I told you she couldn't stay here," he said in a quiet voice, repeating his word from earlier today to her. "I made that fuckin' clear. You're gonna have to remember who makes the fuckin' rules around here, Doll-face."

But Blake bristled at his tone of irritation, suddenly breathing hard and looking up at him.

"Is that it?" she said staring at him at a pained loss, giving a disbelieving, questioning frown. "After everything?"
She gave a gulp, her eyes searching his face in desperation.

"I-I thought we were good…” she continued, talking fast now…urgently. "...I-I thought you-"

But Blake stopped suddenly, before the words could spill out of her mouth, as she locked eyes with Negan.

He stared back at her sharply.

"You thought I what?" he urged, giving a pained and sad frown of his own, as if desperately urging her to say something.

But Blake couldn't.

Instead her eyes just fell to the floor once again.

"She was my chance…” said the caramel-blond woman, with a stark sadness in her voice, wanting so desperately to explain to him why.

She wanted to just spew about all that she had been keeping locked away inside her for so long.

Admit to him that she had miscarried….admit to him that a family was something she had yearned for, for so long….something she had been denied for all these years, first by circumstances, then by David, and then by the apocalypse.

But as Blake looked up, tilting her head, her green eyes meeting with his chocolate ones once again….she knew she couldn't…

She wasn't brave enough to tell him any of that.

But Negan's eyes were almost pleading now, that cocky look that he usually carried on his face, now gone.

Instead, he looked remorseful…

…human…

…tilting his own head, his tanned, rough hand, reaching gently for her face, his calloused fingers brushing gently over her cheek.

And at his contact, Blake closed her eyes, unable to help the tears that slowly began to fall freely now.

There was so much she wanted to tell him….but she knew that there was only one thing that she could manage to utter right now.

And she knew, deep down, that Negan knew what that was too…

"Ask me again…” she said finally in an aching voice, opening her tear-strewn eyes, but keeping them now trained on the floor…not wanting to look upon the face of the man she-

Her breath hitched, as she let out a small sob. God she couldn't even admit it to herself.

And Blake now knew, that what he was about to say, would finally break her heart for good.

Negan removed his hand slowly from her face, as the corridor fell deadly quiet.
His words being all that mattered now…

That one question, that would change everything for them.

And it was then that he asked it.

"You want me to take you home, Peaches?" he said in his low, drawling voice, raising his bearded chin.

And Blake couldn't look at him, as a tear splashed down onto the concrete floor beneath her feet, tolling her fate like a bell.

And she could only give a pained gulp, as she closed her eyes…

…giving a slow nod…

"….yes…” she whispered.
Blake sat up in the cab of truck staring out at the dusky open road.

The sky was purple above them now, the sun setting slowly behind the trees lining either side of the dusty track ahead.

It would be dark by the time they would reach Alexandria, of that Blake was certain…yet still, a quiet sense of foreboding filled the vehicle.

Almost immediately after she had uttered her need to be sent back there, to Alexandria…Negan had sloped off, with a hard gulp…barely even giving her a second glance…

And within ten minutes, the trucks had been ready, Simon and a couple of other burly Saviour loaded into one van, while Negan had immediately pulled open a door to a beaten up, red pick-up truck, finally staring up at Blake.

She hadn’t even been given any time to grab anything from her room or say any goodbyes. But she knew that allowing her that right now would not be fair. It was her decision to leave after all….

But part of her, had desperately wanted Negan to say something. To ask her to stay. But he didn’t. And that said more than a thousand words ever could.

Maybe he didn’t want her to stay. Maybe he was truly done with her.

There were no smart-mouthed Negan comments this time, no devilish grin….just nothing….as Blake had sidled past him and hopped up into the passenger seat and Negan had slammed the door closed behind her.

It was just the two of them now, as it had been for the past hour…sitting in the truck in silence…while the others followed in the van behind.

Blake knew why they had followed the pair of them of course….if Rick or someone from her group ever found that Negan was alone…without his usual protection, they would surely try to kill him. So he kept his right-hand man, as well as others, close by in case any trouble kicked off. Because was the kind of leader he was. Clever and calculating, and always one step ahead.

Blake who was sat on the far passenger side of the truck now, hands in her lap, chanced a glance up at the silent man.

He was still in his usual dusty old leather jacket, his beard looking flecked with more grey than she had noticed before, in warm dusky evening light.

But Negan, as he always was, was quicker that Blake gave him credit for.

His dark brown eyes drifting over to hers in the evening haze, catching her looking his way. Blak felt like she could cry again, her breath hitching slightly in her throat.

But all this….leaving…it was a good thing, surely?

Now Negan could go back to his life at the Sanctuary…his wives…his people…

And Blake could live out her life back in Alexandria….alone…
Negan's eyes slowly drifted from hers and he pursed his lips together momentarily, before finally speaking for the first time since back there in the hallway.

"You think ol' Rick the fuckin' Prick, will be hanging out the streamers when he finds out you're back?" he said in a low voice, as the truck skimmed easily around a wide bend.

Blake stared at the tall, dark-haired Saviour as he slid one gloved hand smoothly down the steering wheel, before tilting her head to the side gently.

"I doubt it," she uttered back in a quiet tone. "I'm guessing he'll be more interested in what I can tell him about you."

With that, Negan looked back at her and for the first time in a hours, a hint of a smile drifting its way across his bearded face.

"An' what exactly are you gonna tell him, Peaches?" uttered the dark-haired man interestedly.

There it was. That repertoire both of them had had with each other since her arrival at his camp.

Blake parted her lips slowly and gave a smile of her own, shrugging in a nonchalant fashion, running a hand down the knee of her tight black jeans.

Well she wasn't going to tell Rick, that Negan had almost fucked her up against a bathroom counter, that was for sure…

"I don't know," she said in a goading voice, wrinkling her nose slightly. "But I'm sure I'll think of something."

Negan grinned back at her, poking his tongue out through his line of pearly white teeth, before turning back to the road.

Blake gave an internal sigh, as they passed a group of abandoned buildings that Blake recognised.

They weren't far from Alexandria now.

And Blake gave a small gulp…a hollow feeling dropping to the pit of her stomach.

She ached.

Partly for the loss of Mia…and partly from the loss that was about to befall her.

But this was the right thing to do….

It had to be….

Even if it was breaking her heart to leave.

And it wasn't even a minute later, that Negan slowed to truck, coming to a sudden halt besides a sign near to a fork in the road, which read- 'Visit our beautiful new complex of homes at Alexandria- 1 mile'.

Blake dropped her gaze into her lap, hanging her head slightly…. knowing that this was it.

She gave another painful gulp, rubbing at her bare arm, her heart pounding.

Negan switched off the engine slowly and turned to her, shifting in his seat slightly one hand resting
on the steering wheel…the other he brought to his face, running a hand down his scrubby beard in
the dim evening light.

"Well, here. we. are," he said, his tongue reaching his back molars, as he looked up at Blake with
dark chocolate eyes.

Blake hurt so so much right now…

But this is what Negan wanted…

And this was what she wanted? Wasn't it?

A new start…a breath of fresh air?

Then why did Blake want nothing more than to be back there at the Sanctuary right now…in
Negan's room….maybe reading a magazine…going to take a bath…or even listening to the dark-
haired man flirting with her incessantly…

He was sitting now, just a couple of feet away from her…but somehow that distance felt like miles
and miles…

Blake was silent for a long moment before licking at her lips gently and staring up at the dark-haired
man before her.

"Thank you…” she murmured, her letting out a painful breath of air.. "F-For everything…all that
stuff with David…”

But Blake trailed off…unable to continue, for the pain and hurt was overwhelming...

But Negan just grinned up at her warmly, pointing a finger in direction easily.

"Ah, ah, ah, I don't need thanks," he reprimanded in a playful tone. "Just, no fuckin' spreadin'
rumours about me being a good fuckin' guy to Rick and his band of douchebags. We clear, Doll-
face? I gotta keep my reputation for bein' a badass intact."

Blake gave a small laugh and nodded.

He was everything to her. This man whom everyone around her had labelled a monster. And yes,
that was indeed what he was, but that didn't mean Blake could help herself from lov-

She gulped again…harder this time, not wanting to think about it, before brushing invisible dust from
her pants….trying to right herself.

Was this really goodbye?

"Oh an' I almost forgot," said Negan, his hand suddenly moving to the waistband of his pants.
Blake frowned, but relaxed a little as she saw him pull a small blade out, handing it to her.

"In case you get any of those dead fuckers on your tail on the walk back," he said with a gruff-
sounding sigh, sounding like he barely cared.

Blake tentatively reached out, her fingers brushing his as she took the knife from his grasp.

"I'd give you a gun if I didn't think ol' Rick would fuckin' bite your hand off of you himself, if you
were to stroll on in there with one of those," he said rolling his dark eyes at her, causing Blake to
smirk lightly.

"Thanks," she managed to utter in a voice just a little louder than a whisper, her green eyes reaching his.

And it was then, that it felt like the world was standing still.

Maybe she wanted it to stand still.

Maybe then she would be forever here…with Negan…not leaving him…..not going home…

But was Alexandria her home now?

Because it didn't feel like it….

Being back there…at the Sanctuary…. with Mia and Negan….safe in his bed….now that felt like home.

And with that, before Blake could stop herself she had shifted forwards in her seat, placing one hand to the tan leather of the car interior between them, and the other upon Negan's stubbly cheek…

…before gently closing her eyes and pressing her lips to his, as a single tear silently rolled its way down her cheek.

And it was only a short moment, before Negan's own hand drifted up to the back of Blake's neck and pulled her into him, his mouth slowly moving against hers needily.

He tasted like everything she had ever wanted….and it took all her strength not to whimper desperately into his mouth….wanting him….no, needing him so badly…

This moment…feeling like an eternity to them both……when in reality, it had only been a few seconds.

But Blake knew she had to stop….because they had to. This had to be the end.

And so, breathlessly, she pulled away, unable to look at him now, staring down between them instead….

But she knew that Negan's eyes would be on her face now, catching her tears…

And so, with a painful heart, Blake pushed herself away from him, hastily shoving open the passenger side door without another word.

For goodbyes were no good to anyone in this world…that was why she hadn't said one to Mia, and why she would not say one to Negan either.

Because any of them could be gone in an instant….Blake herself included…and so dwelling was pointless…

She was destined to be alone now….and that was ok.

That had to be ok.

And without even a backwards glance up towards the truck behind her, or the van full of watching Saviours parked up behind that, Blake had jumped out, shutting the door firmly behind her and heading down the dusty track, knife in hand.....
…feeling like her heart was utterly and hopelessly broken.

Negan ran a hand down his exhausted face, letting out a shaky breath as he stared at the darkening road Blake had just disappeared down.

She was now long gone…and Negan knew that he should have fuckin' done something to stop her.

Maybe he should have told her the truth for once in his cowardly fuckin' life. But it had been the same with Lucille.

He had only realised how much she had truly meant to him after she was gone. After it had been too late.

His heart now felt hollow in his chest…now wanting to beat as fast anymore.

And it wasn't a second later that Negan heard a brief crackle of his radio, sitting up on the dashboard ahead of him.

"We gonna stick around here for a while, boss?" came Simon's drawling voice over the line… sounding concerned.

But Negan gave a huff, frowning to himself before snatching up the radio in utter irritation. More to himself than to either Simon or the long vanished Blake.

For all this was his fault….he just wasn't good enough for her….and he was kidding himself if he thought he ever would be.

"No," Negan replied in a low voice into the radio, turning his key once again in the ignition and turning over the engine, hearing it splutter back to life. "We're headin' back to base. Let's move out."

And with one final growl of frustration, Negan pressed his foot down onto the gas and turned the truck around in the road heading back in the direction they had come from. The people of Alexandria, never even knowing they'd been there.

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A mile felt like a lot longer now….every step Blake taking, feeling like she was walking to her own ending.

It was dark now…the sun having disappeared completely, leaving only dim shadows and not even the moonlight to light her way.

Part of her desperately wanted to turn back…to see if Negan was still there waiting on the road…but she knew in her heart, that him and the other Saviours were probably gone already.

Her cheeks were wet with tears, and even in the darkness Blake wiped at them, not wanting to risk showing any emotion when she arrived back at the place she used to call home once upon a time.

This was painful and distressing.

Just a few hours ago she had been sat beneath a tree, happy and content with a tiny two year old eating grapes and playing beside her, watching as Negan waltzed across the lot cockily towards her….but now here she was….all that, far behind her now…leaving only a gaping darkness ahead… that the trees all around her, funnily, had nothing to do with.
She had strayed off the path a little...recognising a shortcut that led towards the large looming gates to Alexandria...not far from the place she had last been...scavenging for fruit...when she had been knocked out by David and taken to the Sanctuary.

Blake gave a sad gulp, and stared about at the trees silhouetted ahead of her...wondering if anyone in the houses up ahead had even noticed that the pair of them were gone.

It had been weeks now, and she knew that if they hadn't come looking for Eugene, it was wasn't likely they would ever bother searching for her.

Blake held her knife at her side, raising it slightly as a walker approached from her right, snarling and snapping its teeth at her.

But Blake took it down in a matter of seconds, the blade in her hand, sliding easily through its soft-decomposing skull, as she staggered backwards, back out of the tree line, breathing hard....

...just as a bright shining light was thrown unceremoniously across her face....blinding her....

"Who's there?" came a loud calling voice, from somewhere nearby. "Show yourself."

And Blake winced, throwing a hand over her eyes as she gazed up towards the source of the light, coming from a turret sat on top a high and very recognisable fence...

She lowered her hand, her lips parting suddenly as she stared up....looking very much right now like a rabbit trapped in the headlights...

But it wasn't a moment later, that the light was suddenly switched off...and Blake gave a hollow sigh....her heart pounding as she stepped forwards...returning to the life and memories she had thought were long behind her....

...to hear the sounds of the heavy gates ahead of her, being swiftly pushed open...

A figure suddenly stepped out. A figure she recognised quite well, with a frown plastered across his face, his head cocked to the side taking her all in....

And it was moment before he spoke in a sharp, gravelly tone-

"Blake?"
Blake rolled her eyes, glancing up at the clock.

It was 9.36 at night and Blake had been sat here, on a smart grey couch inside Rick's house for the past twenty minutes, her elbow propped up on the arm of the chair, resting her head against her hand tiredly.

"Look I've told you..." she sighed. "They kept me in a cell most of the time. I didn't see anything."

It was a blatant lie. But Blake wasn't quite ready to sell Negan out just yet...a dull ache tugging at her stomach, as her mind once again flickered to him.

Him and the rest of the Saviours had probably just about made it back the Sanctuary by now. Maybe Negan had gone in to see his wives, taken one of them by the hand and pulled them toward his bedroom. Or maybe he was sleeping alone tonight. Either way, Blake felt a bitter sting of pain and jealously as she thought on the dark-haired leader of the Saviours.

Rick and Michonne, who were now sitting on a couch opposite hers, perching on the edge of their seat, hands cupped between their knees, glanced at each other. A gesture which Blake, of course, caught.

They didn't believe her, that was obvious, but Blake would play along if that's what it took.

Why would she reveal the extent of her relationship with Negan now? It was over anyway before it had even begun.

She looked up lazily, to see Tara stood leaning up against a wall, beside a pacing Rosita, in a cap pulled down over her scowling face.

"And how did you escape?" the latter snapped, suddenly turning towards Blake and stopping in her tracks.

But Blake just gave a sigh, her eyes drifting uninterestedly down to her jeans.

"I didn't. They let me go," she said matter-of-factly, as Rick scooted forward even further in his seat, staring up at her.

"Look I understand that this is hard for you," he said in that raspy sort-of drawl of his, peering up at her. "I know that they probably did a lot of horrible things to you back there. But it's ok. You're safe now. And whatever you can tell us about Negan; about the Saviours...it'll help us."

But Blake looked up at him, crossing her legs and raising eyebrow in his direction.

"What makes you think I know anything?" she said in a slow incredulous tone. But before she could utter another word Michonne cut in.

"Blake, if you tell us what you know, we can go back there...we can try and get David out....and Eugene too...." said the black woman with a hint of concern in her eyes.

But Blake's green eyes suddenly shot towards Michonne, a frown twitching its way between her brows.

"David's dead," she uttered coldly. "And Eugene? Well, Eugene's happy there. In fact, he doesn't
want to leave."

She knew that this would rile up the people sat in front of her, and she was right. For in an instant all the figures before her, glanced at one another, as though a little unsure of what to do with all that information.

And it was a moment before Rick, shook his head.

"I'm sorry about David," he said looking down at the floor. "He was a good guy-"

"No he wasn't," said Blake suddenly, starkly and abruptly cutting across Rick.

Everyone right at that moment was staring at her, and Blake could feel her heart pounding like a drumbeat in her chest, a heat rising in her cheeks but she didn't care…

"He hit me, he abused me….called me things you wouldn't even call a dog…" she said with an angry snarl, her voice raising slightly. "…and no one here even noticed. So, no, you're wrong Rick. He wasn't a 'good guy'. He was never a good guy."

She paused, taking a pained gulp and staring down at the coffee table between them, as everyone fell instantly silent contemplating Blake's words.

From across the room, Tara stepped forward suddenly, looking devastated.

She, Blake, Rosita and David had all enjoyed dinner together on the night before they had been taken to the Sanctuary by Simon and the Saviours. And obviously, by the look upon her face, she had never suspected a thing.

"I'm so sorry…" Tara said with wide, sad eyes. "...I-I had no idea…"

But Blake closed her own green orbs for a long moment, not looking at Tara, but instead giving a tired sigh.

"Listen…" she said finally, staring up at Rick. "I'm exhausted. And I just want to go back to my house and sleep, ok?"

At this Rick glanced at Michonne before looking hurriedly back at Blake.

"Fine," he said blinking hard. "But are you sure there isn't anything you can tell us about Negan… any weaknesses he might have?"

And with that Blake gave the smallest of gulps as her green eyes met with his.

A day or so ago she would have said her.

That Blake herself was his weakness.

She felt like crying now, but held it together. For she had to.

"I didn't really see him," she lied again, her gaze suddenly flickering down to her lap.

Could they tell that she was lying to them? Blake hoped not.

For right now she had the same feeling of hopelessness as she had had on her first couple of days at the Sanctuary. Back when David had promised Negan she had information to give to him.
But on this occasion however, there was a lot she could potentially feed back to Rick….she had got to know the Sanctuary pretty well. Got to know the routes the Saviours had used to get in and out of the Factory itself.

And on top of all that, she had known Negan….better than most people ever would.

She had felt his gentle, a calloused hand upon her cheek…felt his lips brush hers….felt the way his eyes had met with hers, with a look in them that had said so much more than words ever could…

But all that. That was gone now.

Everyone in the room stayed silent, before Rick suddenly gave a slow careful nod, rubbing his lips together for a moment.

"Tara, would you take Blake here back to her house?" he asked in a hollow-sounding voice, before staring up at Blake once more. "We'll talk more tomorrow."

And with that he gestured for her to leave.

Blake gave a small internal sigh of relief as she got to her feet heading over towards the front door with Tara.

But before she, or the dark-haired woman beside her, could head out onto the porch, Rosita suddenly spoke.

"Did Negan kill him?" she asked in a bitter tone, staring at Blake with a steely gaze and angry gritted teeth. "Did he kill David, like he killed Spencer?"

Blake looked up at Rosita, seeing the fury in her face, the frustration that lingered there, over the scar that Arat had left on her cheek via Negan's orders.

But Blake felt an anger of her own building inside her. Feeling defensive of the man who had saved her in so many more ways than David ever could have.

And so, pressing one hand to the handle of the door, she turned around and looked at the small group of figures, staring darkly back at them, her face remaining blank and passive.

"Negan didn't kill David," she suddenly uttered bluntly, blinking slowly in their direction, her voice emotionless. "I did."

And with that, Blake stepped back out into the warm night air, without even a backward glance towards Rick, Michonne or Rosita.

She let out a long sign as she walked down the porch steps, her shoulders slumping tiredly.

It had been a long day and Blake had been in no mood for a meeting when she had arrived back at Alexandria.

Rick had hugged her, but one swift look at Rosita later and he had gathered up Michonne and Tara and led Blake back to his house and begun the inquisition, of sorts.

For that's what it had felt like to Blake.

Did they even care that she was still alive? Had they even thought of her whereabouts over the past few weeks?
She doubted it.

But now Rick had a glint in his eyes, eager to get information from her that might help his cause, help him in finding more guns... in taking down the Saviours and Negan himself.

But Blake didn't want that to happen.

She might have left that place, but it had still felt like more of a home that here ever had. And currently still did too.

"Hey, wait up," called Tara, behind her, running down the steps towards her, two at a time.

Blake stopped in her tracks, taking in a deep breath and turning to her friend.

Tara immediately eyed the caramel-blonde woman suddenly, shaking her head. "I'm so sorry Blake, I had no idea about David, or what he was doing to you," she said sincerely.

But Blake just turned, beginning to walk slowly in the direction of her house. The house she hadn't seen in weeks.

"It's fine," she muttered in a quiet voice, as the two women fell into step, walking silently down the block together.

It was strange for Blake to be back here... out in the open without a factory looming high above them.

This life here felt almost unreal now. A stab at a false reality where people were trying to kid themselves that they could live a normal life here, as if the world hadn't gone to shit out there.

There was a brief moment where neither woman spoke, before Tara finally broke the awkward silence between them.

"You'll have the house to yourself now," uttered the dark-haired woman. "After you left, Sara and Jeff went over to stay with Bruce and the Andersons. And... uh... John... well, he died... got into a bit of trouble with a walker out there..."

Blake looked down sadly.

She had come to this place with John. She and David had been on the road with him for at least a year before they had arrived in Alexandria. He had been a little older than the pair of them and could always be relied on to make a meal out of anything.

Blake gave a shaky sigh, but nodded, unable to speak.

Had coming back here been a mistake?

She felt worse here than she had done all those hours ago back at the Sanctuary, after Mia had gone. Somehow being here made everything seem a lot clearer to her. And now it was far more obvious just how much she had lost today.

But it wasn't until they reached the steps of the front porch to Blake's tall and looming former house, did she finally turn to Tara, pursing her lips together, unsure of what to say.

Part of her desperately wanted to scream and tell her everything that had happened over these few weeks. But another, more sensible part of her knew she couldn't.
If Tara knew, then as righteous as her actions were, it wouldn't be long until Rick found out too. And then god knows what would happen…

So she would keep quiet. Play the game, if that was what it took…. 

"You can talk to me, y'know, about what happened back there," said Tara suddenly placing her gentle hand to Blake's shoulder caringly. "I'm a good listener."

But Blake peered up at her, parting her lips worriedly for a moment, feeling like she was going to cry…

Before instead she forced a small smile at the dark-haired woman, aching inside.

"Thanks…" she said nodding. "I'm just kinda tired tonight, y'know?"

It was the truth….Blake was exhausted, and in pain right now. And this time the pain had nothing to with any bruises….

"Of course," said Tara quickly, dropping her hand from Blake's shoulder. "I'll see you tomorrow ok? And if you need anything you know where I am."

Blake watched her go, as Tara swiftly crossed the road, heading over to her own warmly lit house, before turning and heading up the steps towards her own empty abode.

The white front door pushed open easily, and Blake reached for the light-switch, instantly illuminating the neat white interior of a hallway and living room.

Everything here was tidy and perfect, smelling like fresh lavender and floor polish.

Blake glanced up towards the staircase, but didn't venture upstairs, for she knew that up there, would be her unmade bed, that both she and David had last slept in, over three long weeks ago.

She would wash her sheets in the morning, but right now, with heavy eyes, Blake moved into the living room and dropped down wearily onto her large grey couch, identical to Rick's back at his home.

The caramel-blond woman dragged a hand down her face, feeling tears began to prick at her eyes as she kicked off her shoes, tucking her legs swiftly beneath her, and pressing her head into the sofa cushions…

What had she done?

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It took Negan a while after his arrival back at the Sanctuary to make it up to his quarters.

He walked down the corridor, trudging tiredly, with his trusty barbed-wire covered baseball bat hanging limply from his hand.

Usually after being out there in the big wide world, Negan was celebrating a victory of some sort. Whether it be teaching another group a lesson, to looting somewhere, to killing walkers…..each thing making Negan feel alive…like all of this was worth it.

But tonight it felt like the opposite.

Tonight was not a victory.
Tonight was loss.

Although he had tried not to show that in front of his men.

Thy were all used to seeing Negan grinning fiendishly, ready to use Lucille on someone. But they were not used to seeing the dark-haired Saviour looking pissed-off and as downcast as he felt right now.

Negan had stopped outside for a bit, taken the long way back up to his room after exiting the truck, feeling Simon's eyes on him as he did so.

His right-hand man often knew what he was thinking…but Negan did not want him to see this right now.

The hurt that was coursing through him.

And so, Negan had made a joke at someone's expense, patting Si on the shoulder and walked slowly away.

That had hopefully convinced him that he was still a-ok. Like none of this had affected him.

But as Negan turned a corner, making to head down the long hallway towards his quarters, he noticed a warm, yellow glow, illuminating the far end of the long corridor.

Was there someone in his room?

Negan gave a dark, growling frown, as he gripped Lucille tightly in his gloved hand, not really minding a fight a right now.

If someone wanted to encroach on his space tonight he would be fucking ready for them.

And it took Negan less than ten seconds in all to close the gap between himself and his large doorway.

But as the tall dark-haired man turned the corner, jaw tensed and face set, ready to bring his baseball bat down onto the head of whoever was in there, to his surprise, sat on his leather couch in a black dress, was someone he certainly hadn't been expecting to see tonight.

"Now, Frankie," said Negan in a simpering tone, lowering Lucille slightly, feeling his shoulders untense a little as he laid eyes on her. "What the fuck are you doin' here? Did I fuckin' call for you?"

The red head merely gazed up at him simply, tilting her head.

He could tell she didn't want to be here, so why the fuck had she come?

He hadn't called for any of his wives in weeks. And none of them certainly called for him!

"Simon asked if I could come up here tonight to see you," she said giving a small, indifferent sniff. "He said he thought it might do you some good."

She took a breath, getting to her feet, her hands moving to the hem of her short black dress.

"You want to start now-?" she asked in a quiet voice.

But Negan, as much as he knew a good screw would let out a lot of his pent-up frustration right now, was angry, his eyes blackening darkly.
Ok, Frankie was hot…with her slender body, long legs and long red hair…but there was no spark there…

No teasing flirting…no hands trailing up his torso…no dirty words whispered into his ear…

She was not what he wanted right now.

But there was one person who was.

One person who was at least fifty miles away from him now…who only last night had been making out with him inside that bathroom over there.

Negan gave a scowling gulp…pointing Lucille at the door and lifting his chin.

"Just fuck off, Frankie, sweetheart" he said in a low, snarling tone. "I ain't in the fuckin' mood."

He saw Frankie lick her lips, dropping her hands to her sides and staring at him, narrowing her eyes slightly as she stared back at him.

"You let her go didn't you?" she said suddenly, tilting her red-head to the side and reading him.

It wasn't like Frankie to speak to him like this. Usually his wives reserved a certain level of respect for Negan, only speaking when they were spoken to…so this really was a turn up for the books.

But the dark-haired Saviour merely curled his top lip at her, keeping his mouth closed, not saying a word.

For she knew….

Maybe they all knew….

All come to the realisation just how much Blake had meant to him.

But Negan just gave a furious huff, marching over to the red-headed woman and grasping her upper arm firmly and pulling her towards the door.

"Go," he growled. "Before I change my fuckin' mind."

But Frankie's eyes searched his face, as she stumbled slightly in the hallway, turning back towards him, as he let go of her arm, and made to shut the door on her.

"You could have just made her your wife," she said suddenly, her hazel eyes, sad and wide. "But you didn't…."

And Negan, at once, knew what that meant…

Blake wasn't like the other women in his life…a quick fucking screw wasn't the only thing he wanted from her….

He closed his mouth and gave Frankie one last stern look, before closing the door abruptly in her face without another word.

Negan breathed for a second or two, furious…no, enraged….

And in the blink of an eye, Negan had let out a loud, audible roar of utter anger, and thrown his precious Lucille against the far wall…it hitting the plaster wall loudly before tumbling swiftly to the
ground.

But Negan right now didn't care..

He didn't care about anything.

He merely hung his head suddenly, his chest rising and falling hard, as his tongue reached his back molars in utter irritation at own stupidly.

What the fuck had he done?
Long, lonely nights...

The days seemed to drift slowly by…

You'd have expected that with each day that passed, for Blake, things would get easier, with memories of her short time at the Sanctuary slowly drifting away.

But they didn't.

Things of course went by as usual at Alexandria. Rick, Sasha, Michonne, Rosita, as well as others, would go out, day-to-day, try to find guns, or at least try and scavenge enough food to keep the Saviours at bay for their next offering.

But as the hours and days ticked by, Blake felt herself becoming more distant and withdrawn from the type of life she had so been used to here.

It had been strange, at first, to be back….with faces, some she recognised, some she didn't, all whispering behind their hands about her…gossiping, speculating….mainly about David's death…but sometimes Blake had caught sentences slip from people's mouths…callous and uncaring…

"I don't know….he always seemed nice to me…"

"Yeah…you don't know…maybe she's lying…..I mean, he seemed like a good guy…and if he did hit her, well, maybe she did something to deserve it…."

"What? Like betray us?"

"Well you never really know about some people do you…?"

This had been one example of a conversation two middle-aged women from across the street had murmured to one another, when they had thought Blake had been out of earshot.

But talk like that was common here. For what else did anyone have to gossip about these days? Although that still didn't make it hurt any less.

It seemed like no-one trusted her anymore, and they were probably right to. She, above anyone else, in both this place, and back at the Sanctuary, had held Negan's favour. And that was a rarity in this world.

Not only had the dark haired Saviour let her live, but he had given her a room, a view, a life, even pizza, for god's sake…

She knew the ins and outs of the Sanctuary far better than anyone else here did…and yet she was still feeling tentative about giving up any information to Rick.

For she knew what would happen….even if the people here did manage to storm the Sanctuary, then what? Their numbers would still be no match for the vast amounts of burly Saviours Blake had seen at the factory whilst she had been there, let alone the number of people Negan had at his outposts. It would be suicide.

And so Blake knew that she would keep her mouth shut, and reveal little to nothing about her stay there to Rick, or Michonne, or in fact, anyone who asked.

And they had asked. Again and again and again. ENDLESSLY.
At first, their words and questions were kindly, with a faux pretence of caring.

But after a day or two they became almost desperate...begging her for any scrap of information that might be able to use to help their cause.

"Are you sure there's nothing you can tell us about Negan?" Rick had asked tiredly as he had come to Blake's door one afternoon, under the pretence of coming to bring her some fresh vegetables they had traded from the Hilltop.

But Blake had stood there, one hand on the door, lips pursed, not wanting to let him inside.

Rick was a good guy, she could tell that. But she still wasn't about to give up any of Negan's secrets to him.

And even if she did, what exactly would he do with that information anyway?

Did Rick really want to know how firm Negan's mattress was, or how sweet he had been to a two year-old kid?

What Blake knew about the Saviour was probably of no use to anyone anyway.

"I told you, Rick," Blake had sighed. "I didn't really have much to do with him..."

Apart from sleeping in his bed, of course....

She had given a small gulp.

"Anything you might have seen...anything at all that could help us," Rick pushed.

But this only made Blake huff and roll her eyes in irritation.

"They kept me in a cell most of the time," she lied, her eyes drifting down momentarily, away from Rick's questioning ones. "I'm sorry but I've got nothing for you."

And that had been the end of that. But Rick hadn't given up.

By the end of the third day alone, he had already sent over Tara, Sasha, Gabriel, even Carl and Judith to see if they could ween any information out of her.

But Blake had just smiled, reassured them she was fine, fixed them up with some drinks before sending them on their way with excuse after excuse.

It wasn't as if she wasn't grateful for their company, it was just their motives seemed rather questionable at this current time. And if Blake was honest, she was tired of all the bullshit.

And so, for the third and fourth day of being back here, Blake had stayed inside with the curtains drawn, not answering the door to anyone who had called over.

Keeping, very much, to herself.

Alone. Just as she wanted it.

It had, of course, been hard adjusting to life back here in her large, echoey, pristine house, without David here alongside her.

They had come here together, many, many months ago now, and Blake had thought she had been
happy here with him back then, despite the bruises and marks he had left on her skin….dreaming that maybe they could live out the rest of their lives here together.

But it had only been when she had broken free of this surreal little dream-world, had Blake truly seen the extend of the damage David had done to her. The lies, the hurt, the pain, the constantly trying to convince herself that things would get better….

Blake, on her second day back here, had immediately taken what she could find of her ex-fiancé’s few possessions and chucked them out into the trash. For why would she have to put up with reminders of him everywhere she looked, huh? He was not part of her life anymore. He was a mere speck on her existence.

As Negan had said, over and over again…Blake was a queen. And she needed to remember that.

But it was admittedly, hard to get by there, in that house, without anyone, and after the sixth day had passed, Blake had ventured out one warm evening…just to get some fresh air….running into Aaron and Tara who had been about to ascend the step up towards the home Aaron shared with his partner Eric.

"Hey! Blake…wait up!" Tara had instantly called after her, as Blake had parted her lips giving a brief and nervous sigh, hoping that this was not another attempt to bombard her with questions about the Saviours.

The caramel-blonde woman had neatly stopped in her tracks, staring up at the pair as they lingered near to the lit porch, looking over at her concernedly.

"Hey…" she uttered quietly back, brushing her long hair back over her shoulder and walking tentatively towards them.

Aaron glanced at Tara briefly before, biting his lip and nodding back towards the house behind him.

"Tara was just coming over for some spaghetti….." he said in a soft, kindly voice. "You…uh…you wanna join us?"

Blake's eyes drifted suddenly down to her feet, feeling a sudden lump in her throat.

"No…I uhhhh…should probably get going…"she uttered in a shy sort of voice, making to turn away. "Thanks for the offer though."

For all of this…having dinner together, making polite conversation…it was killing her.

"Tomorrow then?" Aaron had pushed, stepping suddenly forwards, and drawing Blake's eyes back around to the pair.

But Blake had given another hard gulp, pausing for a long second. "Maybe…." she had muttered back, before walking swiftly away.

With her currently finding that being back here, well, it was all too much, too fast.

And after checking that Tara and Aaron had gone inside, Blake had doubled back to her house, gone inside and bolted the door, before bursting into tears, placing a hand over her mouth to muffle her sobs. Felling so, so alone…despite having people reaching out to her.

For these were not the people she wanted right now, as selfish as that sounded. She wanted only one person. Someone that was probably shacked up with one of his many wives right now…probably
not giving a shit about Blake or what she was doing.

Then why-oh-why could Blake not seem to do the same. To stop herself thing on the dark-haired bearded Saviour, every second of every day.

He was the first thing her mind was drawn back to when she awoke, and the last face she pictured at night…and it hadn't been long, lying in bed…with the windows flung wide open on a hot and humid night, wearing nothing but her underwear and lying across cool, white sheets, that Blake's hand had travelled down into her panties…now soaking wet with thoughts and memories of Negan's hard form, pressed up against hers.

She had moaned out gently and closed her eyes, as delicious thoughts of the dark-haired man's lips lingering over hers, drifted through her mind, as her fingers slid over her throbbing clit, so so desperate to feel his touch again.

And it hadn't taken long, maybe a few moments, for Blake to come utterly undone…breathlessly, moaning out his name.

But night after night of that wasn't enough…she yearned for Negan….more than she ever thought she would.

Yes, thoughts of losing Mia were utterly heartbreaking, and hurt her every day, but at least the little girl was well looked after by her two guardians. Safe and loved.

But losing Negan, she had chosen this path…to leave him like that…and that was a regret that Blake could right now, do nothing about.

Even if she was to take a car and go back there, that was no guarantee he would still want her. Maybe she had just been something to entertain him for a while, just like each and every one of his wives had been at some point. A conquest. A game.

And so, as the days drifted by, like clouds in the sky…Blake knew that if she didn't learn to settle in and belong here soon, she would lose all hoping of ever doing so.

So it was the ninth day of being back, after over a week of shaking off invites and conversations, that Blake had gone over to help Eric with taking the inventory of the food stuffs they still had in storage. He had reluctantly stepped in to fill the role after Olivia's death, and had admitted to Blake in passing that morning that he hadn't been doing so well with it, asking if she wouldn't mind helping him out.

It might have a been a small stab at trying to get some more information out of her, but Blake after pondering on it for an hour or so, had gone back over to help the auburn-haired man with his task.

And to Blake's utter relief, Eric had merely thanked her and the pair had got to work, taking notes side-by-side in silence. And for that Blake had been truly grateful.

It was hard now to open up to these people who she had once considered almost family, who now felt almost foreign to her. But perhaps she felt the same to them.

Was she more a Saviour now that one of Rick's group?

Did she hold herself differently now? Was she more confident? But maybe none of that had anything to with the Saviours anyway… maybe it instead, had everything to with David's demise.

Blake had gone back to help out Eric for the next day, and the day after that, and the day after that, until Blake found that she had been back here for two long weeks.
The days had peeled themselves slowly by, but her work kept her busy now, each day, with a couple of people calling in to talk and catch up with her, as she went.

And that act alone had helped Blake build up her confidence again. To chat to people.....to go for dinner with Tara...to join in with conversations about everyday things....like none of the last few weeks had even happened. Forgetting about that life. About those events, if only for a moment.

But then the nights came again. And then she missed him.

Negan.

As she touched herself…. as she tucked her head silently into her pillow…..as she awoke from horrible nightmares about David and walkers, glistening with sweat, breathing hard.

She needed him…and wondered, somewhere, somehow, two long weeks after she had left the Sanctuary, if the dark-haired Saviour needed her as well…

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Negan had returned from a run earlier that evening, his t-shirt soaked with walker blood, Lucille dripping red in his hand, his eyes dark and frightening to anyone who saw him.

Negan over these past couple of weeks had taken no shit from anyone, becoming more of a recluse, a haunting figure amongst the hallways of the looming factory, only descending on the rest of the Saviours when there was damage to be done…people to be punished…when he needed to step up take control and make sure those fuckers knew who was boss.

He had become far more ruthless, seeing the unsure look in Simon and Dwight's eyes two days ago, as he ironed one of his higher-up general's faces for insubordination.

Eugene had paled at this, as had his wives, as they had all stood in the towering hall, watching Negan roar with fury, taking out his wrath on those around him.

At his words everyone had flinched, no one had made eye contact with him, no one even daring to speak until the deed was done, and the dark-haired Saviour had sloped from the room.

He was undeniably bitter…undeniably angry….

…and he had a feeling he knew why…

It was killing him.

At least when Lucille had left his side, he had had other pressing thoughts to distract him. A fucking apocalypse for one thing. But now, it was just Negan alone with his thoughts.

Tonight Negan had dumped his pile of bloody clothes, as well as his barbed-wire covered baseball bat down onto the floor dismissively, before going to take a long, well-needed shower.

Naked, he turned on the faucet, instantly feeling the hot steam rising up, and filling the entire bathroom with a humid mist.

The water burned his aching skin as he swiftly stepped beneath the flow, but right now, Negan didn't care, as he held his face up towards the stream of warm water, closing his tired eyes and running both hands down his bearded face, letting out an exhausted sigh.

It was quiet in here.
And Negan was alone, again…unable to help his thoughts from drifting back to three long weeks ago, when he had been stood in this shower with somebody else.

He imagined her now, Blake….tall, with round hips, pert tits, and that slender collarbone that Negan had once peppered with open mouthed kisses. She had tasted like honey and the sweetest, ripest of fruits.

Negan groaned as he felt himself stiffen, thinking about her…about the way she had turned to him, pulling on her lips excruciatingly slowly, and whispered bad, bad fucking things into his ear right here in this cubicle.

He let his hand drift down to his, now, hard cock, feeling it throb in his hands, as he bit down hard on his own lip, imagining just what he could have done to her here, up against this wall.

He pumped at his length, as the water flowed over him, panting now, glancing down past his tight and tanned torso, and down to his cock, his head now purple, dripping with pre-cum.

But Negan's thoughts were entirely on Blake now, remembering back to when he had caught her wearing just his t-shirt and a pair of lacy panties…..as he jerked himself off, building speed, parting his lips, a frown littering his brow.

….he grasped tighter, as he thought about how it had felt to have her wanting him, just as much as he had wanted her, over there on that wash-basin counter….as her mouth had met with his, hungrily…

Negan panted hard as he worked his own cock expertly, his chocolate eyes staring downwards, desperately wishing that it was her mouth wrapped around his length right now and not his own hand…

Negan closed his eyes yet again as he pictured her here…just as she had been, on that day, in here with him…imagining what it would have been like if she had got down obediently on her knees, and sucked him….

Negan let out a low guttural grunt, as he felt his cock twitch in his hand…. Once..

Then twice…

…before he groaned, pressing one hand to the shower wall, as his knees buckled slightly, and he felt himself cumming, the ejaculate washing away down the drain as quickly as he unloaded it, as he held himself there, in the moment, his eyes closed…..

…..wondering to himself if somewhere, somehow… Blake was thinking about him, just as he was thinking about her…..
"So you think you'll be going to those drinks that Maud and Alan are hosting tonight?" asked Tara, one entire week later.

Two and half long weeks had passed now, since Blake's return to Alexandria, and despite how much the caramel-blonde woman's heart still ached, life was slowly getting more bearable.

It was currently mid-afternoon on a gloriously sunny day, and Blake and Tara had just helped with lugging sacks of compost and garden fertilizer over to the gardens in the centre of the walled-community.

It had been hard work, and the pair, grateful to go home and have a shower each, as well as a nice cold glass of water, were slowly making their way back to their homes on the far side of the long row of buildings.

Blake gave a sigh, retying the plaid shirt that sat, now, at her waist, long since having been unbuttoned from her shoulders in the burning heat of the day.

"I'm not sure," she said glancing down at the dusty ground before them as they walked. "I don't really feel in the mood to deal with small talk, and if Rick's there, he's only going to bother me about information on the Sanctuary again."

She rolled her eyes which caused Tara to give a laugh and stare up at the caramel-blond woman out of the corner of her eye.

"I'm sure he won't," she reassured her gently. "I mean you've told him all you know, right?"

Blake suddenly felt guilt wash over her.

She certainly hadn't told Rick everything she knew.

For the past two and a half weeks now, Blake had lied about the events that had taken place back at the Sanctuary. Merely telling Rick and the people here, that she had been kept in a cell most of the time, and the moment she had been released, well that was when David had struck.

As far as they were concerned, she had barely seen Negan during her stay there, not having anything much to do with him at all. And that had been the biggest lie.

In fact she had had more to do with Negan than any other person there.

And now, even after weeks, Blake still missed him.

She missed Mia too.

Missed the life she had once had there, with them both.

It was strange. Being back here, with a house to herself, breathing in the fresh air every day…it felt more claustrophobic that the large looming factory ever had.

The space and the open-air crushing her….making her feel small and insignificant.

There had felt like a queen up in her tower….walking beside a king each and every day.
But now Blake was trying her hardest not to dwell on Negan anymore. Memories of him. His touch, his scent…his taste on her tongue…it was all too much for her to bare.

He was probably back there right now, barley even remembering she existed, probably with someone else to distract him now…another woman maybe…

And Blake….well, the thought of that tore her apart inside. But she knew that, either way, she wanted Negan to be happy. She wanted him to be there, as smug and as arrogant as ever, enjoying his life…

And maybe she needed to do the same.

It was then, as if on cue, Tara nudged her with a sudden sharp elbow in her ribs.

"Ow, what was-" Blake began, before suddenly following the dark-haired woman's gaze, over to where a tall man, around Blake's age with dark hair was stood, a shovel in one hand, wiping sweat from his brow with the other.

That was Steve.

He had arrived here in the few weeks that Blake had been gone, having been found by Aaron off on a scouting mission for other survivors.

He was of course handsome and sweet, and had had accidentally bumped into Blake on her way back from the food stores with Eric one day, knocking the items she had been carrying from her hands, before politely helping to pick them up for her.

"Steve's cute, don't you think?" said Tara, shooting Blake a poignant look, and whispering less-than-subtly to her. "Maybe he'll be at the party later?"

But Blake pursed her lips, shooting Tara a bemused, unimpressed look.

"And so what if he is," she said tutting at her friend.

But as the pair of them walked by Steve, he lifted his hand, giving them a wave, his eyes immediately reaching Blake.

"Hi!" he said with a charming smile.

And Blake certainly felt her cheeks redden as she muttered a brief hello in return and grasped Tara's sleeve hastily.

"Hurry up," she hissed, quickening her pace slightly and marching her friend swiftly away, before they could linger near to Steve any longer.

But the moment they had rounded the corner out of earshot, a laughing Tara turned to Blake, jabbing her in the shoulder with her finger.

"You like him, don't you?" said the dark-haired woman, beaming and cocking her head to the side.

"And he certainly has the hots for you!"

Blake rolled her eyes and tutted yet again, shoving past Tara, but unable to help the smile that twitched its way onto her lips.

Steve was good-looking yes, and seemed…. well, sweet. But that did not mean she was interested in
him.

No, Blake didn't need anyone but herself right now, despite how much Tara nagged her.

"Come on," said Blake with a passive huff, shaking her head amusedly at her dark-haired friend. "I need to go shower. And maybe then I'll think about whether or not I'm gonna go to this drinks thing."

Tara grinned, swaying back and forth as she watched Blake go. "Yes! I knew I'd convince you," she said cheerfully, before raising a single eyebrow skyward. "Or, was it actually the idea that Steve might be there tonight, that convinced you-"

But Blake pressed her hand to her ears theatrically, as she headed up the steps towards her own porch.

"Nope, nope, nope," she said in a sing-song voice. "I can't hear you!"

But she did however, hear Tara laugh from behind her.

"Whatever, blondie," she called after her. "I'll see you at seven."

And with a smile to herself, Blake shoved open her front door, heading inside her cool and dimly lit house.

It was quiet in here, and it still felt odd to Blake that once that door was closed, it was just here, alone with her thoughts.

Before now, she had always had David sniffing round, and even after his demise, Negan had not been far behind, showing up and bothering her at all hours at the Sanctuary.

But here, Blake just had herself for company in the eerie silence that seemed to follow her around her large and spacious home.

The house had obviously been built for a family. With plush furnishings, soft throw rugs, plump cushion that lined the expensive grey couches. The kitchen was fully equipped with whatever Blake needed. Even the sheets upstairs had a high thread-count and were as soft as anything. Years ago, when she had lived in the city, Blake would only have dreamed of having a place as nice as this. Perhaps with a husband as well as a couple of kids running around.

This was the kind of home, you'd see in a catalogue at Christmas, a dream that had always been way off for her….but even now, despite her living here, she knew that dream of hers would never come true.

She had lost Mia….lost any hope of ever having that family she so desired.

Now it was just her.

Alone.

Blake let out a small sigh as she slowly climbed the stairs, untying the plaid shirt from her waist, before pulling off her white t-shirt and tossing it into a laundry hamper at the top of the long, wide staircase.

Kicking off her shoes too, she padded into the large white and pristine bathroom, stripping out of the reminder of her clothes and underwear, before gazing up at her reflection in the mirror above the
washbasin.

She looked good today, with tan lingering across her cheeks and collarbone now, and her eyes bright and fresh-looking. Remembering briefly how she had looked when David had had his hold over her, looking gaunt, steely and cold, with dark circles beneath her eyes almost constantly.

But that weight was now gone from her shoulders, which was a relief, not only on her body, but on her mind too.

She gave another long sigh and made to turn to step into the shower, but just as she did so, from the window she spotted a sudden figure staring up at her, a sudden figure who, as soon as his eye caught hers, hurriedly turned away, red-faced and went back to his digging.

Steve.

He lived just a couple of houses away, and Blake had never realised that with her window wide open, it had a direct view into his front garden.

Fuck.

She hurriedly pulled herself away from the window, covering her bare and naked body from sight, her cheeks turning pink.

Oh god.

Blake hurriedly tugged the window shut, cringing to herself, before heading into her shower like she was supposed to.

Crap. How the hell was she ever going to look him in the eye again?

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Ten minutes later and Blake had finished her shower, hair washed, tanned skin scrubbed and exfoliated, extremities shaved to perfection, as she headed back into her bedroom, towel wrapped around her middle.

She was still in two minds about going tonight.

As she had said to Tara, small-talk with people she barely knew wasn't high on her list of priorities these days. But this was the sort of thing around here that people were expected to go to.

That was the sub-urban life that she had so longed for after all.

Blake rifled in her closet, damp hair clinging to her shoulders.

Maybe if she could find something to wear then that would change her mind.

There were clothes in here that had already been in the wardrobe when Blake had moved in here, some that fitted her, some that she hadn't even bothered to examine since she had arrived.

She plucked at a pretty dark navy dress, but hurriedly shoved it aside. Perhaps something as clingy or as sexy as that was not appropriate for a drinks party at a sixty year-old's home.

But Blake smiled as her fingers suddenly drifted down a pretty black and white summer dress with a ditsy sort of flower print across the front.
It would probably be perfect, especially in this sort of heat, and so Blake tugged it hurriedly from the hanger, flinging it down onto the bed and admiring it.

Blake remembered back fondly to the last time she had worn a dress, given to her by Negan himself, and made to wear it to dinner with bearded Saviour.

That had been the start of everything for her. With David gone, Blake had truly felt like she had been given a chance…feeling beautiful…even under Negan's lustful stare.

But even that she had enjoyed…he had wanted her then…..and Blake had to admit, that she had very much wanted him too.

She gave another sigh, biting at her lip for a long moment as she remembered.

All that seemed like a lifetime away now. A bittersweet memory…of someone she would maybe never see again.

Blake dragged her eyes painfully away, plucking a matching set of plain back underwear from a drawer, before slipping them neatly over her curves.

Maybe tonight would be good for her. Maybe she could have drink. Maybe it would help her forget, to put thoughts of Negan aside….if only for one night.

Blake quickly ran a brush through her caramel locks, before throwing on the dress, zipping it neatly up at the side.

It fitted her well, falling to her lower thighs and accentuating her wide hips and small waist perfectly.

But Blake had barely a moment to linger, as there came a brief noise from downstairs. A loud knocking, which caused the blond woman to frown to herself, glancing over her shoulder down in the direction of the hallway.

It couldn't be Tara, as 7pm was still at least two hours away, but her mind suddenly drifted to Rick.

It had been a few days since he, Michonne, Carl or anyone else had come to bother her on the subject of the Saviours. But Blake knew for a fact that it wasn't likely he had given up that easily.

She let out an irritable puff or air before heading back out of her bedroom, onto the landing, and heading swiftly down the staircase, taking the steps two by two.

"Just coming," she called in a huffy tone, not particularly in the mood to be interrogated, as she reached the hallway and tugged open her large, white front door with a frown plastered cross her forehead.

But Blake immediately faltered slightly, as she saw just who was standing there.

Her eyes widening and her mouth going dry.

She let go of the door, letting it swing completely open, as her cheeks turned pink.

"S-Steve," she said slightly breathlessly, as her eyes fell on the tall, brown-haired young guy, standing before her. He was muscular with a broad chest, big biceps and blue eyes, and lifted his hand rubbing at the back of his neck, looking slightly sheepish.

"Blake," he said quickly back, mouthing at the air for a second, before his eyes drifted down to what she was wearing. "You- uh…..you look great."
Blake's blush deepened instantly at this.

"I…..um…..thanks…." she managed to gulp out a little awkwardly.

God, what was wrong with her…ok, maybe he had seen her naked, but he certainly wasn't the first guy who had.

Steve before her gave a gulp of his own, licking at his lips and shifting his weight from foot to foot.

"Listen," he said in a rushed sounding voice. "I wasn't spying on you…upstairs like that….I just…..I saw you…. and then you saw me…..a-and as soon as I realised….."

Blake winced internally.

He had seen her. Fuck.

That pink tinge to her cheeks certainly was not going anywhere now!

"Its fine," she murmured back, trying to force a smile. "I should've remembered to shut my window before I got naked…"

And at this, Steve gave a relived sort of laugh, as the mood lightened slightly.

"Again, I'm so sorry," he said shaking his head. "I don't want you to think I'm some sort of pervert."

Blake gave a small chuckle her eyes drifting down to the floor momentarily , before she looked up again.

"I don't," she said gently, flashing a smile in his direction.

And for a moment, Steve's eyes glazed over with a familiar sort of look, as he tilted his head, gazing back at her.

Oh fuck.

Oh fuck.

Blake recognised that look.

"I was wondering," said Steve once again after a moment, looking at her almost shyly. ".…are you going to Maud and Alan's thing tonight? I mean I don't really know them that well….I mean, I don't really know anyone that well…but I just thought….if you are thinking of going…then maybe….you might wanna walk there…..together?"

Blake's heart jumped into her throat, as she stared up at Steve a little startled.

He was nice and everything….but…..

"Uh, s-sure," Blake replied…delaying as long as she could. "I…ummm…well Tara said she's going too…so maybe I can just….uhhh….maybe I can just see you there instead?"

She gave a him a smile, trying to be as gentle as possible.

But to her relief Steve gave her a bright smile, puffing out his chest happily.

"Great," he said with a nod. "It's a date then!"
But Blake's face dropped slightly.

That was NOT what she had been suggesting.

But before she could say anything, she was distracted by a small commotion just over Steve's shoulder, across the street where Joni, a short blonde-haired woman was hurriedly ushering her two young kids inside, as her husband ran in the opposite direction, followed by two other men from over the street.

But Blake's eyes soon flickered back to Steve.

"I…uhhh…yeah…fine," she said a little distracted now, as the tall man grinned back at her.

"Cool," he replied, eyeing her again. "And, you really do look like a million bucks by the way. That dress looks great on you."

Blake blinked, and gaped momentarily, before flicking a strand of damp hair from her face.

"Ummm…thanks," she said politely, as Steve made to turn on his heel and leave.

"See you there at seven then," he called back over his shoulder at her, throwing her one last wave, as he strolled slowly back down the pathway and around the corner, out of sight.

Fuck.

What the hell had Blake just gotten herself into?

Not only had she pretty much flashed Steve her bare breasts, but she had now agreed to go on a date with him.

Well agreed was not exactly the word she would have chosen.

Blake grumbled to herself, placing one hand to the door and making to close it, but just as she did so….. Father Gabriel flew past her front door, running as fast as his legs could carry him, followed swiftly by Aaron.

Blake took a step forward onto her porch her lips parting as she watched them.

"Aaron," she called out, causing the brown haired guy to stop in his tracks and turn towards her, completely out of breath. "W-What going on? What's happening?"

But Aaron, placing his hand to the knees of his jeans, doubling over to catch his breath for a second, shook his head.

"I-I-It's him," he said catching his breath for a moment before standing once again, up straight, and looking at her. "He's here….

Blake took another step forwards and stared back at Aaron questioningly.

But before she could say anything else, he had answered the question for her.

"Negan's here."

And with that, Aaron had turned on his heel and was gone.

Leaving Blake standing there…completely alone…..
…unable to help, or even hide, the small smile that seemed to drift its way across her face…

Negan was here.
The visitor

It was a warm, hazy summer evening when Negan, grinning widely to himself, strolled in through the open gates of Alexandria.

"Oh Rick," he uttered in a cheerful voice, lifting his arms out wide, looking skyward. "Would you just look at this goddamn weather. Makes me wanna crack open a few cold ones, and throw a couple of steaks on the grill."

Negan glanced over to where the bearded Rick was stood, staring back at him with narrowed eyes, at this moment surrounded by his men who all looked pretty much as fucking defensive as he did.

"You're a week early," growled Rick back, shifting his weight from foot-to-foot, obviously uncomfortable with Negan's, and the army of Saviours that came behind him, presence here.

Ok, even Negan had to admit that this was a pretty impromptu visit, even by his standards.

But today had been the last straw for him.

The dark-haired Saviour had spent the last few weeks, brooding around the looming factory he called home, growing ever more irritable at both his men, and the life he led there, as the days passed him by.

But that wasn't because he missed her, of course.

No. Negan had his wives. He had his followers. And there was no way he was letting down his guard enough to admit to anyone, that the only person he cared for had walked out on him, to come and live here.

But it was only this morning, as Negan beat the holy-hell out of one of his more faithful men with his barbed-wire covered baseball bat, that he had caught Simon's eye.

His usually supportive, right-hand man, looking slightly unsure and a little wary of Negan's actions.

And it was then, as the leader of the Saviours, black eyed and furious, had realised what he was doing, taking out his bad-temper and his frustration on those around him. And so he had breathed, run a hand down his bearded chin, before approaching his moustachioed friend.

He had marched up, standing level to Simon's shoulder, and huffed. "I'm thinkin' of takin' a little visit to see Rick and his gang of pricks. That sound like a good idea to you, Si?"

And Simon had just stared back at his commander, nodding, a twinkle of something in his eye, that told he Negan he knew exactly why he wanted to go back there. But he did not let on.

"Sounds like a great idea, boss," he had replied, with a knowing nod. And that had been that.

Two hours later they were on the road, with three large trucks and about twenty burly-looking men and women, upon Negan's command.

The dark-haired Saviour, gazed about confidently. He was now, in a far better mood than he had been earlier today, standing here now in the small sub-urban settlement.

His chocolate eyes flickered back over towards Rick, who was still stood there, resentment on his face.
"Who said that this wasn't just a social call, Rick?" said Negan swivelling around on the spot, turning on his heel abruptly and pointing Lucille at the man at his side. "Maybe I missed you and I wanted to come and visit, huh?"

But Rick just stared back at Negan, looking as insolent as ever, his lips curled up into a snarl.

"If it's guns you're lookin' for," said Rick staring Negan out for a second or two before lowering his eyes and shaking his head. "You took the last of them from us. We don't have any. You can check if you don't believe me-"

But Negan, his eyes widening with glee, hurriedly closed the gap between himself and Rick intimidatingly.

"Oh we fuckin' will check, Rick," he said in a hushed threatening tone, leaning into the brown-haired man, pressing his face close to his. "In fact…Arat-"

Negan stood up straight, leaning back slightly, as his eyes drifted back over his shoulder, towards the large group of his own people, stood just a little way further back, near to the trucks obediently.

Arat, as soldier-like as ever, stepped immediately forward, her chin raised.

"Take some men and go check these good-people's stores….check to see if they've got anythin' we might be in need of," Negan continued to the curly-haired woman commandingly. And Arat almost at once complied, heading off with a group of five or six men. as Rick and the large group of people who had appeared now behind him, looked on hopelessly.

That is what Negan liked to see, Rick the Prick at a loss. If he was honest, that alone cheered him up.

But pissing off Rick wasn't quite the reason he had decided to make the journey here today.

Negan's dark eyes searched the crowd of people, looking amongst the faces for one in particular he wanted to see.

A light that always seemed to shine through the darkness that was his life.

But the dark-haired Saviour pressed his tongue to his teeth, not managing to spot her standing there in amongst the crowd of idiots that had gathered there.

But Negan, smiling to himself, changed tac slightly, suddenly swinging Lucille from his arm and strolling along past Rick, casually.

"You know in all the times I've been here," he said in a conversational tone, to the brown-haired man. "I have never taken a proper tour of this place. I mean Carl showed me around a little bit, but I have got a feelin', there is so much more to this little paradise of yours, Rick!"

Bringing Lucille up and onto his shoulder, Negan marched on down one of the long streets, lined with large white houses on either side.

He, of course, noticed Rick, look a little uneasy and follow him, shoulders hunched and head bowed.

"There's really nothin' to see-" he began, shuffling along after the tall and imposing Negan.

But Negan just glanced at him out of the corner of eye, strolling down the winding pathway, between the houses, large enough to fit a parked car on either side, cutting across him hurriedly, with a gloved finger raised to his face rudely.
"Oh I think there most definitely will be," said Negan beaming, as the warm evening sunshine above him, beat down onto his leather-clad shoulders.

For Negan knew that there was certainly something here he wanted.

He whistled a tune easily, as his boots chinked along the concrete below his feet.

He knew that now, most of his men had likely spread out behind him, watching Rick's people like hawks in case any of them decided to try anything.

They could keep a look out, and watch his back while Negan left himself to more pressing fucking matters.

Negan's eyes were instead, trained on the houses up ahead, as he rounded a wide bend.

And it was then, and only then, did he spot exactly what he was looking for. Stopping suddenly in his tracks. A wide smile flickering its way onto his lips.

For there she was, looking as hot as ever, wearing a sexy little summer dress, that somehow made Negan's heart beat just that little bit faster.

Blake.

Standing there at the top of a pretty-little porch, her arms folded across her chest, staring down at him, looking slightly bemused.

Negan opened his mouth, still grinning and blinking hard at her.

And it was then, without a second thought, and despite all that had happened between them, did he feel himself slipping into that same old routine of theirs…that teasing, goading relationship they had once shared, that Negan had loved every minute of.

The woman who could challenge him, snap back at him, and act all high and mighty when she really wanted to.

That was after all who he had really come here for.

Not for Rick.

Not for guns.

But to play with her, and only her.

"You miss me, Peaches?" Negan finally called up to her, poking his tongue out through his teeth.

And it was only a second later, that after a brief roll of her eyes, Bake tilted her head to the side and shot him a coy flicker of a smile.

Fuck, he was smitten. She was tanned and beautiful, with wide curvy hips, great titties, and that smile. That fucking smile.

"Why?" she said in that honey-like voice, that Negan had longed to hear for oh-so many weeks now. "You been missing me?"

Negan gave an immediate chuckle at this response, bouncing happily on the balls of his feet.
"Oh, every-fuckin'-day, sweetheart," he said in return, with a short groan of approval.

And with that, Negan lowered his chin, glancing momentarily over to Rick, who was staring wide-eyed up at Blake. A look of disbelief crossing the brown-haired man's features right at this second.

She obviously hadn't let on a thing about the pair of them, and Negan couldn't help but thoroughly enjoy the range of emotions that were passing over Rick's' face at this very moment.

Frustration, anger, disappointment, incredulity, loss…it was all there…and all down to one naughty girl, who was standing just a few feet away from him now.

Just where Negan had longed for her to be for so so many endless days.

Negan's eyes twinkled as he turned back up towards her, standing there like a vision in black and white…with long caramel hair drifting back over her shoulders in the warm evening breeze.

She looked more gorgeous now that he had ever seen her, and Negan couldn't help but give a growl of want, as his chocolate eyes met with hers.

"So," he said eventually, licking at his bottom lip excruciatingly slowly, making sure she saw it. "You gonna invite me in, Peaches? Or are you gonna leave me waitin' out here on your fuckin' doorstep all evenin'?"

And for a moment he saw a flicker of a smirk, dance over Blake's pink lips, as she stared back at him, before she raised an eyebrow in his direction, cocking her head back towards the doorway behind her.

She didn't say a word, but Negan could read her easily, as she turned on her heel and headed back inside…leaving the door open for him to follow.

….and it was only a second or two, before Negan, shooting the glaring Rick, one last goading smirk, followed her slowly up the steps…

….heading silently inside the large white looming house and shutting the front door behind him with a small snap…
Blake’s heart thudded inside her chest, as she bit at her lip, walking barefooted into her large spacious kitchen.

She turned around, at the sounds of footstep following her inside, coming to stop near to the large marble topped-island in the centre of the room, pressing the small of her back to the counter behind her….

Waiting….

And it was only a second later that he appeared, and Blake felt her breath hitch suddenly in her throat.

Negan was stood there before her now, as tall and as looming as ever.

He was still in his usual dusty leather jacket, with a crisp white t-shirt underneath, grey jeans and black boots with Lucille in his hand and knife in his belt.

His bearded face was barely any different….but there was a smile now, where there had once been sadness…

Blake breathed out a small sigh as she took him in, standing here, looking completely out of place amongst the sterile, model-home that surrounded the pair of them right now.

This was not the kind of place that she was used to seeing him in, and this alone, made her feel completely vulnerable right now, standing here before him, in a thin black and white dress, underwear and nothing else.

Her chest rose and fell rapidly, drawing the dark-haired Saviour's eyes there momentarily, before he raised them once again, biting down on his lip.

"Now that dress…phew," he said letting out a short wolf-whistle of appreciation. "You know I was comin', sweetheart? Or have you got another guy here you're tryin' to impress with that sort of outfit?"

Blake gave a small smile, almost rolling her eyes at his words.

There he was, that same old Negan. As cocky as ever. Not that Blake particularly minded right now. It was good to see him, to share their old repertoire once again.

She bounced slightly on her bare toes on the cool, tiled kitchen floor.

"Maybe, I do," she said in a naughty tone, lowering her chin and staring over towards the bearded man goadingly. "You jealous?"

At this, Negan let out a sudden growl, as though he had not quite been expecting these words to spill out of her mouth so soon.

His eyes darkened slightly, and his face became still, any hint of a smile dropping from his features.

And it wasn't a moment later that Negan, parting his lips, strolled silently over towards her, closing the gap between them.
Blake's eyes dropped to the tiny breath of space between them for a slight second, before raising her gaze once again and staring directly into Negan's eyes. They were full of something, now, lustful and needy, and the dark-haired Saviour, suddenly reached over her, dropping Lucille down onto the spotless marble-topped counter behind her without a word.

Right now it was as if they were the only two people left here in existence.

And Blake gave a smile, lifting a hand slowly to his leather clad chest, appreciating his closeness….and that heady musky scent she had so missed.

"So," she said after a moment or two, as his long, tanned face lingered a mere inch or two away from hers, taking her all in. "Did you miss me?"

And it wasn't even a second later that Negan replied. "Oh every fuckin' night, darlin'…" he uttered in a husky tone, blinking slowly down at her.

Blake took in a deep breath…so wrapped up in the moment, right now….as she felt Negan's tanned long fingers suddenly skim past the hem of her dress.

But she pulled at her bottom lip with her teeth, suddenly shifting to the left slightly and sliding herself from Negan's eager grasp, with a wrinkle of her nose. "That's good to know…" she said in a nonchalant airy voice, suddenly strutting suddenly off in the direction of the living room, leaving Negan growling after her in sweet irritation.

And she didn't even have to see the look on his face to know that he was pouting like a moody teenager right now… for once in his life not having got what he wanted.

But Blake liked this game of theirs…and perhaps she wasn't quite ready to give into him just yet.

She gave a small gulp, that Negan wouldn't catch, disappearing around the corner, out of sight of the tall bearded Saviour behind her.

These last few weeks had been long and hard for Blake for so so many reasons.

She had lost Mia….left the place she had felt so at home at. Even after everything that place had done for her….

And after she finally had just about come around to the fact, that she might have to put Negan and her feelings for him, behind her, here he was again…having turned up on her doorstep…bringing all sorts of strong and painful emotions flooding back.

Her stomach jolted slightly, as she reached a dusty old drinks cabinet that stood, unused in the corner of her living room. She hadn't touched it since David's demise, and as far as she was concerned, he had been the only person to touch the scotch or the other various bottles of brown and clear liquor that sat there.

"Drink?" she asked the dark-haired Saviour over her shoulder, knowing full-well he was likely to have followed her into the large plush living room.

And her guess was right, for as she glanced over her slender shoulder, she saw him stood in the doorway now, hands dug deep into his pocket, as he chewed on his lip. He nodded, but Blake noted that his smile was now gone, leaving just a long, blank, unreadable face. And as well as Blake thought she had known him, right now she had no idea what he was thinking.
She gave another small gulp, busying herself with pouring out two small crystal glasses full of dark brown bourbon, before screwing the lid back onto the bottle.

She certainly wasn't a hard-liquor drinker, but after the shock of seeing Negan again just now, she knew she needed something to steady her nerves.

It was all well and good, the flirting, but there had been good reasons for Blake leaving, reasons she still wasn't yet over.

Blake licked at her lips a little nervously now and crossed the room handing Negan a glass.

She stopped just a foot away from him tall and looming…. 

….but as he took the glass from her grasp, his thumb gently brushed hers…

…and Blake couldn't help but stare up into his deep brown eyes, full of something she just could not put her finger on.

This was not arrogant Negan. Not flirty Negan…not Negan who could bludgeon someone to death with the baseball bat that was now sitting on her kitchen counter….

….but this was Negan, trying wordlessly to speak to her…to say so many things she knew he would never manage to utter aloud.

Blake dragged her eyes hurriedly from him, grasping her own glass between both of her hands, holding it at her middle and staring down into the brown liquid.

She paced slowly over to the window that looked out onto her back, fenced up garden.

"How have you been?" she asked conversationally. Almost cursing herself as soon as the words had spilled from her mouth. For what kind of question was that to ask in this world?

But Negan didn't answer her at first.

In fact his delay was so drawn out, that Blake glanced up and over at him, her breath catching slightly.

But he blinked slowly, giving a small, silent sigh.

"How have you been?" he finally murmured back, not answering her question but instead turning it on her, his eyes questioning, and his lips fixed into a slight grimace.

But Blake, unable to hold this stare for very long, tore her eyes away, taking a shaky sip of the drink which burned as it slid easily down her throat.

How the fuck was she ever going to answer that one?

She pressed the back of her hand to her mouth, wincing slightly at the taste of the strong liquor, before giving a nod.

"Fine," she managed to mutter back.

But that was a lie and she knew it.

She was anything but fine.
She had lost Mia, one of the only things she had cared about in this world. And she had pushed the only man she had felt anything for, away from her….left him behind.

That man who was a standing just a foot or two away from her now.

All Blake really wanted to do was cry, to shout, to scream, to yell at him. To explain why she had left…to explain that she had loved Mia so much, partly because she had been her only chance at a stab at a real family in this world. She wanted to tell him about this miscarriages…and how the memory of them hurt her each and every day, more than she could say.

And on top of all that, Blake so desperately wanted him to hold her…to tell that everything was going to be ok.

But that…. that wasn't Negan. Perhaps she had created an image of him in her head that just did not exist. This loving, caring Negan, who didn't have five wives, or who didn't kill people with a baseball-bat.

Blake let out a shaky sigh.

She knew full well she wasn't strong enough to tell the dark-haired man in the doorway any of that anyway, so what was the point in dwelling….?

…but it was hard not to sometimes.

Her eyes darted back and forth for a second, before she looked up once again, trying to think of something else to say, but Negan, to her surprise did that for her.

"So am I right in thinkin' by the look on ol' Rick's face," he began with a small huff, as he pushed his tall form from the doorway and strolled casually over to her. "That you ain't told him anythin' about us?"

Blake tilted her head to the side, giving him a blank stare in return.

He could certainly read her like a book and knew her too well for her own good.

"I just told him you kept me locked in cell," she said shaking her head and letting her lips twitch upwards slightly. "I didn't give away any of your secrets, if that's what you were wondering."

But Negan came to stop at her side, looking down at her slightly bowed head, and slowly licked his lips.

"I ain't got no secrets, Doll-face," Negan replied. "Unless they involve you, me, and a shower, of course…"

Blake smiled before she could stop herself, using all her effort not to roll her eyes.

"Well, either way," she said turning fully to face him now, an giving a slow nod. "Rick is definitely going to kill me now that he knows I lied to him, so thanks for that."

Her tone now was teasing, and even Negan himself couldn't help but let out a low chuckle at her words.

"Well if you are ever lookin' for somewhere to crash, Darlin'," he said revealing is line of perfect white teeth in a smile. "My door is always open to you. An' if Rick the Prick does try and fuckin'
threaten you, then you are more than welcome to send him my way, because I'm sure Lucille would have somethin' to say about that."

But Blake gave a small sigh, lowering her eyes momentarily, feeling a blush appear at her cheeks, before she gazed up into the dark-haired Saviour's chocolate eyes once again. "Alright, Mr Protective," she teased, wrinkling her nose and nudging him with her hip as she turned away from him. "But I think I can take care of myself."

Blake moved slowly over to her large grey couch and took a seat, crossing her tanned, bare legs over one another neatly as she did so.

And it wasn't even a second later that Negan, gave a laugh, running a gloved hand down his bearded face.

"You know the place hasn't been the fuckin' same without you, Peaches," he said after a moment, arching his back slightly as he spoke.

And at this comment, Blake felt her breath hitch in the back of her throat, and her heart thud rapidly inside her ribcage.

His tone was honest-sounding with a hint of tiredness to his tone. Like he had aged another few years in the time she had been away. As if her absence had been all too much for him.

"...I mean, it's been a lot fuckin' quieter, that's for sure, And I've been able to sleep in my own fuckin' bed for once," he continued, his eyes meeting with her green ones. "But hell, the place hasn't been so goddamn entertainin' as it was when you were around. No-one to throw-up in my bathroom for starters."

Blake smiled, toying with the glass in her hands.

"Is this you admitting that you did miss me then?" she said pursing her pink lips and pushing back her long caramel hair over her shoulders, eyeing him.

But Negan grinned. "I already told you, sweetheart," he said lifting his chin. "I thought about you a lot. Every goddamn fuckin' night to be precise….all alone in that big fuckin' bed of mine…wishin' I had someone to cuddle up to…"

But Blake scoffed and rolled her eyes.

"Negan, you have a bunch of wives downstairs if you were really looking for someone to keep you company," she said, tutting.

Although that thought alone, caused a hollow feeling to form in the pit of her stomach, as she thought jealously of his relationship with those women back there.

But Negan just continued to smile that cocky smile of his, raising his eyebrows and slumping easily down into an armchair opposite her, placing his glass down onto the coffee table between them.

"You jealous?" he said, repeating the words Blake had asked him just a few minutes ago back in the kitchen, back to her, his dark eyes never leaving hers.

But Blake just smiled coyly, shrugging and lifting her own glass to her lips.

"Maybe," she murmured back to him playfully.
And at this, Negan laughed.

"Y'know, if you came back with me," he said after a long drawn out moment or two had passed. "There might be a nice spot for you there as wife number one. An' that way, you can keep me warm each and every night, Peaches."

But Blake just tilted her head, gazing over at the tall, dark-haired Saviour. Knowing full-well, that becoming one of his many wives was not something she was interested in doing.

She wanted him. Hell, she wanted him a lot!

But becoming one of six women in his life, was not high on her list of priorities. Even in this fucked up world.

"Thanks, but I think I'll pass," she uttered, in a quiet voice, her eyes drifting down to her lap, her tone more serious now than she had been intending.

She could feel her hands shaking a little so she brought the glass to her lips once again, taking another sip, desperately hoping the alcohol would settle her nerves.

Blake didn't know what she had been expecting. A happy reunion? After all that had happened between them it was hard to act like nothing at all had changed.

Blake had been happy if only for a brief moment, picturing her life with Mia and...maybe with Negan too.

But maybe that had all been a silly dream.

For what would Negan give her? A slot as one of his wives, in his harem of women? That wasn't a life......and she knew how much it hurt even to imagine him with any of them...with Tanya...with Frankie...with Michelle...let alone her being there, in that room, dressed up to the nine's, sitting obedient, all ready for him, only for him to come by and take one of them by the hand instead.

She gulped now, as she thought of that.

For somehow, being with the leader of the Saviours and sharing him, was worse than not being with him at all.

Blake got suddenly to her feet, pacing around the space in front of the window on bare feet.

Knowing that she needed to say...well, something...

"Negan, why are you even here?" she uttered abruptly, giving another gulp, her voice slightly raised now. She could feel her heart fluttering inside her chest, as the words spilled hopelessly from her lips. "Because if it genuinely is to ask me to come back....t-then I can't....I left for a reason....because I just couldn't bear to be there anymore without her....a-and."

Blake made to continue, but before she could do so, Negan suddenly spoke, his voice low and full of something that hadn't been there a moment ago.

"Because you- didn' have anythin' else...."

Blake turned suddenly to stare at him, parting her lips as she saw a sudden blackness that now lingering in his eyes, and a look of sheer anger and hurt plastered across his long bearded face.

She faltered for brief moment, a confused frown shifting its way onto her own face.
Wait…

Had he-?

But before Blake could utter another questioning word, there came the sudden sound of the front door opening, and footsteps striding into her hallway.

And both she and Negan looked towards the living room doorway to see Rick standing there, Michonne right behind him, a look of annoyed, breathlessness upon both their features.

But Negan, at this interruption, looked absolutely livid, his jaw clenching tightly, as Rick shifted his weight from foot-to-foot, looking between the dark-haired Saviour and Blake herself.

"You got a fuckin' problem, Rick?" said Negan in a dangerous-sounding voice. Very rarely had Blake heard him use this tone with anyone, Negan usually being jovial to the point of being unsettling.

But Rick merely mouthed at the air for a moment, his eyes darting anywhere but at Negan, before answering.

"I think you should go," he said in a grizzled voice, nodding his head.

And Blake almost winced, knowing just what Negan's reaction was going to be to this.

And, as if on cue, Negan narrowed his dark eyes and got slowly to his feet, strolling over silently until he was nose to nose with Rick.

"And why is that, hmm, Rick?" uttered the dark-haired man in a mere growl of a voice, his mouth fixed into a grimace. "Because from where I'm standin', I make the fuckin' rules around here NOT. YOU!"

He yelled the last part of his sentence into Rick's face intimidatingly, causing the brown haired man to flinch, blinking hurriedly down at the ground, his brow slick with sweat.

Blake breathed hard, knowing that although Negan didn't have Lucille in his hand right now, he still had well-positioned knife at his belt, ready to use at any given moment.

And so, before she could stop herself, giving a painfully hard gulp, Blake suddenly stepped forwards, placing her hand to Negan's leather-clad arm gently.

"Negan, please," she managed to say in what was barely a whisper now, her eyes pleading.

She did not want a fight, or to see anyone dead. Not because of her and the dark-haired Saviour wanting a moment alone together at least.

And it was then that both Negan and Rick both turned to her at the same time.

Rick of course, staring at her with an expression of utter disbelief, but Negan's face was much more complex…as his brow softened slightly, and his lips parted….taking in her imploring look.

The dark-haired Saviour took an almost immediate step back, before giving a gulp, sending his scruff-covered Adam's-apple sliding down and then back up his long tanned throat, his eyes now completely on her.

His lips twitched into a small pout for a brief moment, and for a second Negan looked as though he was about to say something to her, before he quickly, dragged his eyes away from her, glancing back
"You wanna give us a minute, Rick," he said in a short tone, uttering the brown-haired man's name with a small amount of contempt in his voice.

And it was a nervy moment where Rick stared him out, before eventually turning away coolly and dragging Michonne back out of the door and into the hallway.

Silence fell across the room now.

But Negan barely lingered a moment, striding forwards and shoving the door behind Rick closed, before stopping, facing away from Blake, closing his eyes and running a hand down his face.

Blake's stomach seemed to be doing endless somersaults now, but even so, she stared up at him, her chest rising and falling hard, as he wordlessly turned back towards her.

"I would 've given you the fuckin' world if you'd asked for it, Peaches," said Negan, tilting his head to the side, and digging the side of his cheek with his tongue, his chocolate eyes meeting Blake's green ones. "You know that?"

Blake stared at him now, tears slowly welling in her eyes. But she couldn't say a word, chewing on her bottom lip desperately.

Every inch of her aching…

Aching for him…

For Mia…

For a dream now in the dust.

But as she so hopelessly tried to find the right words to tell him exactly how she was feeling right now, the dark-haired Saviour obviously took her silence for rejection, as he lowered his eyebrows, staring down at the ground and giving a nod of understanding….

…before turning on his heel and grasping for the door handle with his gloved hand…

Blake's heart thudded a drumbeat, as her eyes widened into orbs.

"Wait…" she uttered suddenly, taking a step forwards…

…and another….

….and another….

…and before she knew it, she had closed the gap between her and Negan completely, placing a hand to his stubby cheek…

…. and pressed her soft lips to his.

Blake sank into the kiss immediately, closing her eyes as she felt Negan react quickly, his mouth moving hungrily against hers, his hand sliding its way around her waist, pulling her body flush with his.

And it was like this that they remained, after second, after second, after second, passed them by…just them together…them alone in this world…..
...before Blake finally pulled her lips from his gently, taking a moment or two to fall back into reality as her eyelashes fluttered open, and she took a shaky breath in…

But feeling Negan's fingers glide slowly back from around her waist, she drew her eyes up to his face nervously.

But she hadn't needed to be nervous, or indeed apprehensive in any way about his reaction, as a wide, smug grin slid its way easily onto Negan's face as he peered down at her.

"So does this mean, you won't mind me making another house call with you at the end of the week, Doll-face?" said the tall-dark haired Saviour in a sultry, goading voice, cocking his head to the side, as he eyed her.

But Blake just allowed herself to slip delicately from his grasp…swaying her hips easily as she padded away from him….making sure his eyes were certainly still on her.

And with a teasing glance over her shoulder at him, she gave a gentle shrug of her shoulders, biting down on her lip and smiling.

"Well maybe in that case, if you are coming back...perhaps I can make you dinner..." she said in a soft voice.

And at this, Negan beamed, just as his hand reached for the door once again.

"Then it's a date, sweetheart," he said giving her one last look, before he sighed and stepped once again out into the hallway, addressing an obviously impatiently-waiting Rick, finally.

"Oh I am so sorry for makin' you wait, Rick," he said in a simpering tone. "I know how much of a busy fuckin' guy you are after all. So don't you worry, we are gonna be on our way now and leave you in peace, to enjoy the rest of this beautiful fuckin' evenin'."

Blake took a step to her left, following Negan into the hallway, only to see him slip into the kitchen, watched by Rick and Michonne all the while, before snatching up Lucille and strolling casually back towards the open front door.

"See you later, Peaches," he called back to her over his broad leather shoulders without so much as one last look back towards her, as he disappeared off down the porch steps. "Oh an I expect you to be wearin' that goddamn hot-as-fuck dress for our date next week, we clear?"

But Blake didn't even bother answering, as Negan marched swiftly away, rounding up awaiting Saviours as he went, vanishing off around the corner and out of sight.

She rolled her eyes, smirking to herself, but before she could enjoy the moment for too long, Rick and Michonne suddenly rounded on her, their eyes furious, staring daggers back at the caramel-blonde woman.

But Blake merely sighed lightly to herself, knowing exactly what was coming, as she turned around and headed silently back into her large living room, a gentle smile passing over her face.

Fuck it. It had been worth it.
"Don't move," uttered Michonne in a raised tone, pointing a stern finger at Blake.

It had been a few minutes now since Negan had left them, and Rick, having followed the dark-haired Saviour to the front gates, making sure him and the rest of his cronies had definitely left, had left Michonne standing guard.

But Blake, having long since stopped caring, had settled herself into armchair, her slender and bare legs crossed over one another.

She arched an eyebrow up towards the tall black woman at her side.

"Don't worry," she said with a tired sigh, under her breath. "I'm not going anywhere This is my fucking house after all…"

Michonne turned her head sharply towards Blake, scowling. But she didn't have time to say anything in response, as sudden heavy footsteps entered the hallway once more.

Blake almost rolled her eyes now, as she saw Rick appear in the doorway, looking sweaty and harassed.

"They're gone," he said curtly to Michonne glancing at him momentarily before his beaded eyes flickered almost instant back towards Blake.

She knew what was coming of course.

"What the hell was that all about?" came Rick's sudden loud voice as he paced towards her, pointing back in the direction of the front door, which Negan had disappeared out of, less than five minutes ago.

But Blake kept her gaze down, instead slowly reaching over and grasping up Negan's half-drunk glass of bourbon from the coffee table easily.

"I don't know what you're talking about.." she murmured giving a shrug.

But at once, Rick had wrinkled his nose, cutting swiftly across her.

"You know exactly what I'm talking about Blake!" he shouted loudly, baring his teeth. "Why did you lie to us about Negan? You told us he kept you locked up…that you didn't see him..."

At this Blake paused for a second, lifting the glass to her lips and taking a sip of the brown liquor, and it was a moment before she finally gulped down the burning alcohol and peered up at Rick lazily.

But she didn't speak.

"What? You spying on us for him, is that it?" said Rick inching towards her and cocking his head to the side. "Feedin' him information?"

But at this, Blake immediately pursed her lips, a frown line shifting its way between her brows.

"No, I'm not, Rick," she said with contempt in her voice.
But Rick didn't seem happy with that response, his lips twitching, trying to search for the words. 

"Then what was he doing here, huh?" he asked in a raised voice. "Why did he come to see you?"

Blake gave a tiny gulp at this. Was she going to tell them the truth...about all that had happened between her and Negan...how her heart seemed to flutter the moment he came into a room?

She gave a small sigh, her fingers toying with the glass tumbler in her lap.

"I don't know..." she said in a quiet voice.

How could she tell these people the reality that he was really here because he wanted to speak to her...that he had wanted to see her...

But Rick looked furious right now, angrier than Blake had ever seen him.

"We trusted you," he shouted loudly. "We let you come back here...to live among us-"

But Blake frowned darkly.

"This was my home too Rick!" she replied in a sharp tone, her voice becoming heated. "You don't own these houses. You don't own Alexandria."

"When it comes to stuff like this, then yes I do," Rick grolwed angrily, pointing at the floor, almost stamping his foot in fury. "You betrayed us. You betrayed all of us."

But Blake scowled indignantly.

"What are you going to do? Huh, Rick? Kick me out?" she said suddenly slamming her glass down onto the table, sloshing liquid all over the sides. "For what?! He was the one that came to see me, not the other way around!"

She got hurriedly to her feet, as Michonne glared back at her, taking a step forward of her own, looking as if she was about to take Blake down at any given second.

But Rick shifted his weight from foot to foot uncomfortably.

"Just answer me Blake," he said his eyes twitching back and forth as he stared at her. "Are you workin' for them?"

But Blake just shook her head. "No, I'm not," she said exasperatedly. "And even if I was, what information would I be able to feed back to them? That you have no guns, no food and are out scavenging every day? What secret stuff am I gonna tell Negan that you haven't already told him yourself, hmmm?"

She shook her head, turning away and facing the large window over-looking her back garden.

"You said you didn't know anything about the Sanctuary...about Negan..." Rick pushed, shuffling forwards once again.

But Blake rolled her eyes, laughing incredulously.

"Fine, I lied, you happy now," she said in a dark voice, glancing back at the brown-haired man over her shoulder. "But there's nothing to tell. I mean, Carl went there...he told you everything about the place itself, and Negan...well, you've met him yourself...he's a pretty fucking open book. He's got five wives, carries a baseball bat he calls Lucille. He's got a penchant for irritating the hell out of
people, and he likes to strut around the Sanctuary like owns the place. That enough for you? Or what else is it you want to know about him, Rick? What his favourite colour is? Or his shoes size?"

Rick looked absolutely livid, but admittedly Blake's face wasn't far from the same look either, both of them seething right now as Michonne looked on, a dark scowl plastered over her own features.

Silence fell over the room for a minute or so, no-one even daring to speak.

For Blake had said her piece now and each point she had made, she knew for a fact, had been perfectly valid.

Ok, she had lied to Rick and the rest of the people here, but what good would it have done them to find out the truth?

But Rick, looked anything but satisfied right now, as he gritted his teeth and paced about in a small circle, doubling back on himself two or three times, obviously thinking.

"I'm gonna have Rosita keep an eye on you-" he said finally, as Blake gave a loud moan cutting across his sentence before he could finish.

"Not Rosita," she pleaded cocking her head to the side, knowing full well what the woman's reaction would be once she heard that Negan had started making house calls with Blake.

Rick pursed his lips for a small second. "Fine, Tara then," he said with a wave of his hand. "But we are not done here, you understand me?"

But Blake just stood there passively. Uncaring about whether Rick did return to interrogate her or not.

"So, what?" she said sounding slightly frustrated by Rick's words. "You just gonna keep me locked in here…for what? For good? How is that any better than what the Saviours did to me back at the Sanctuary?"

But Rick had already turned away, instead acknowledging Michonne now.

"See if we've got any sort of recording device," he said to her in a low voice. "A tape recorder or somthin'. That way if he comes back to see her, we can-"

But Blake scoffed loudly at this, folding her arms across her chest.

"Uh, there is no way you're putting a listening device in my house," she said in a loud voice, pointing a finger at Rick as he swiftly swung around to look at her. "If he finds it, he'll kill you, you know that right?"

She of course knew who they were talking about. And knew for a fact that Negan would certainly have something to say if he found out they were trying to secretly record their conversations.

Besides, did Blake really want evidence of their flirting on tape?

But Rick scowled darkly. "You don't have much of a choice right now," he murmured, turning back to face her fully now. "If he comes back, that way we'll know exactly what he's planning."

But Blake, at this, gave a loud groan of utter frustration, staring up at the ceiling momentarily before looking back at Rick and Michonne.

"Urgh! He's not planning anything!" she cried loudly. "He came to see me, alright? He just….he
likes me, ok? You happy now?"

Rick and Michonne stopped suddenly, at Blake's words looking back at her wide-eyed, with mouths hanging open.

Fuck.

Blake hadn't meant for the words to spill out of her mouth just like that, but here she was…looking now, sheepishly back at the pair of them.

And for a moment, Rick and Michonne glanced at each other, mouthing at the air, as if neither of them had really been expecting this outburst. Not really knowing what to say in response.

But it wasn't even a moment later, that Rick, giving a shake of his head, turned neatly on his heel, not even uttering another word in Blake's direction.

Storming swiftly away, looking furious with her.

But Michonne lingered for a brief moment, her eyes now much softer than Rick's, before tearing here own eyes away and following Rick back into the hallway.

"So, what? I'm just supposed to stay locked up in here?!!" Blake called on through after them, rounding the corner and heading after the pair.

But Rick now stopped, illuminated in the moonlight pouring out from her front door, just gave a loud irritable huff.

"You can stay here until I decide what to do with you next," he said breathing hard, his fists clenched at his sides angrily. And with that Rick headed out into the warm evening air.

Blake shot an incredulous look Michonne's way, but she just stared blankly back at her.

"Just do as he says," she finally muttered to Blake in a hushed voice. "Please."

And with that, Michonne turned on her heel and followed hurriedly after Rick….

….leaving Blake standing there, inside her hallway…completely alone….

Fuck….

…what had she done?

----------------------------------------

Blake gave a heavy sigh, standing at her darkened kitchen window, and staring out at the dimly lit street below.

It was almost 10pm and, having changed out of her summer dress and having put on pair of shorts and a vest, Blake, had her arms folded watching Tara and Sasha as they stood guard outside Blake's place, chatting to one another.

All this was what Blake had been trying to avoid all along. Feeling like a prisoner in her own home. First it had been David that had made her feel that way…but now all this, it was her own stupidity that was the cause.

She could have just confessed and come clean to Rick about her relationship with Negan from the
beginning. But it was hard, technically nothing had happened between them. Negan still had his wives….and Blake had only just lost David…so…

She pursed her lips together, as she noticed Tara look up and over her shoulder at Blake, giving her a brief encouraging smile.

Tara had not come inside to see her and Blake felt guilty about the fact Tara had been unable to attend tonight's drink's party hosted by Maud down the street, all because of Rick's orders.

It was so so stupid.

Why on earth did she need babysitting? It wasn't as if she was going to steal a car and run off after Negan?

Rick of course had heard what Negan had said after all. That he would be returning at the end of the week to see her….for their date.

But as happy as the thought of that had made her when she had been busy flirting with Negan…now it just made her feel worried and uncomfortable.

What if Rick tried anything while the dark-haired Saviour was here?

Negan or one of the Saviours, would surely kill him. Blake knew Negan too well now to know that he would not take any shit from anyone, least of all Rick the Prick, himself.

Blake glanced down now, letting out another tired sigh. Maybe she should just go to bed out of the way…trying to forget the events of earlier tonight….

But how could she?

It had been good to see Negan again after all these weeks.

He was everything to her. And as arrogant as annoying he made himself look to others, Blake had seen a different side of him…one that she had perhaps hurt a little by leaving just like that….

She herself hurt inside now at the thought of being apart from him…him brightening her day with every moment he spent in it.

But she couldn't turn back the clock just like that…..

How could she allow herself to open up…to get close to him…when she had so much inner turmoil she was currently dealing with.

Mia had been her one chance. And that was now gone. And as much as she pretended she was ok with that, she just wasn't.

But maybe Negan could make it all ok again…

…..but even that, that would take time for Blake…..

Her sad gaze now flickered back up to her porch outside, watching now as a tall figure strolled casually up towards the awaiting Sasha and Tara.

Blake shifted slightly on the spot, narrowing her eyes and craning her neck to get a better look at who it was, as they bartered with the women out there.
But Blake gave a tiny gulp as she realised just who the figure actually was.

It was Steve. Now in a pale blue shirt that was rolled up tightly around his biceps, carrying something large between his hands.

Blake saw Sasha nod a little reluctantly at him, before allowing him to slide easily past her.

And it wasn't another moment that he disappeared from sight momentarily, before bounding up Blake's porch steps two by two and knocking loudly on her front door.

The caramel-blonde woman gave a small frown to herself, slipping slowly back into the hallway, arms folded across her chest a little defensively before pulling open the door.

"Hi, Steve," she said in a tired sounding tone, not really in the mood for chit-chat right now.

But Steve gave her a wide soft smile in return, taking in a deep breath and cocking his dark-haired head to the side.

"Hey," he murmured in return, his eyes drifting over Blake's features. "I…err…..I missed you at the, uhhhh….the thing earlier…."

Blake forced a small smile, just to placate him for a moment.

"Sorry, yeah I was…." she began, before sighing lightly and changing tack. "…well, I just couldn't make it."

Steve gave a nod.

"Yeah, someone mentioned something about that Negan guy coming to see you…" he said questioningly, before smiling once again.

It was obvious Steve, not having been here too long, didn't know that much about Negan and the Saviours just yet.

"Uhhh…yeah…." Blake replied a little distantly.

God, had the rumours really spread that fast? People already whispered about her behind her back, so she dreaded to think just what they would be saying about her now!

But Steve, looking like a happy puppy, obviously not realising there was that much wrong with Negan just 'dropping by' to see her, just grinned, holding out a covered plate towards her.

"Well I just thought I'd bring these over to you, seeing as you missed out," he said in a kindly voice. "It's just a few pieces of fruit and some sort of cake. It tasted pretty good."

And with that Steve handed her the dish gently.

Blake's eyes flickered swiftly up to his, as she paused momentarily, one hand on the plate.

"…Thanks.." she managed to murmur in response, a little taken aback that anyone would even think of her like this.

"No problem…" he said sweetly. "And I promise I won't stare at you in the shower tomorrow. I swear."

At this Blake laughed, nodding.
"Noted," she said smiling now herself, as she chewed on her lips, staring back at Steve as she turned slowly and began to head back down the steps.

"Bye," he called back to her in one final gentle tone, shooting her one last look…..

Was that really it?

Had he really just come to bring her some food?

Blake hovered for a long moment, watching as he disappeared away…..

..before slowly pushing her front door closed again, shutting out the night, Tara, and Sasha….clutching the plate in her hand, tightly to her….

….before letting out the smallest of bemused smiles…

Damn.
Blake gave a huff.

The past few days had seemed to drift by slowly, and at first, Blake had been as upbeat as she possibly could be, about being kept trapped inside her own home, for no good reason. For the idea that she would see Negan any day now, made her heart beat that much faster inside her chest, making all of this worth it.

But after six long days went by, Blake had come to the conclusion that perhaps the dark-haired Saviour was, in fact, not coming back.

Maybe he had found someone else to capture his interest….

Maybe he had been killed…

But Blake not wanting to dwell on either of these things, had finally realised that perhaps he just didn't have the time, or the energy to keep visiting her.

It was at least an hour's drive from the Sanctuary, and gas was like gold-dust in this world.

Perhaps Negan had finally realised that she just wasn't worth it.

And that, really, was no-one's fault but Blake's, after all.

She had been the one who had decided to leave…

To come here…

To leave him…

So why did she expect Negan, of all people, to keep his promise of a date to her.

He didn't owe her anything after all.

They weren't a couple. They weren't….well, anything.

He wasn't hers.

But these fact still didn't serve to make Blake feel any better.

She had been under house arrest for almost a week now. And being trapped under this roof with no one to talk to, was driving her crazy.

Blake was currently sat on her large couch, as the sun set through the window behind her, having read and re-read the same paragraph of her book four times now.

She was frustrated and bored, and longed for…just a walk….or a chat with someone. Someone who wasn't Rick at least…

The brown-haired man had called in to see her about three times in six days. With both of them getting more and more irritated with each other with each visit that passed.

What good was it doing keeping her here?
Stopping her socialising with people? How did that even make sense?

She had, of course, vented these frustrations with him. But he had just scowled at her and warned her that this was for her own good…that he needed to be able to trust her.

But Blake knew for a fact that in a community this small, it was likely that no-one would ever trust her again.

Rumour spread fast here, and she had seen, through shaded blinds, across the street, the residents of Alexandria stopping and pointing up at her house, gossiping….talking about her.

Not much had changed there of course, but it was having no visits from people she had considered her friends that had hurt the most over these long six days of confinement.

Apart from standing guard outside, neither Tara, nor Aaron, nor Eric had come inside to see her…to talk with her…

She knew they had likely been told everything by Rick and Michonne now, but that didn't mean they knew the full story. Blake still had her own side to tell and it made her infuriated that she had not been given the chance to say her piece.

The only person, bar Rick, to actually try and confront her about Negan's visit had been Rosita. Who had stood on the doorstep of Blake's house, with eyes full of seething fury.

But the caramel-blonde woman had not bothered to open the door…not wanting to hear Rosita's bullshit right now.

She knew Rosita had her own vendetta against Negan...for both Spencer and Abraham's' death…..but that was something that Blake was not prepared to get involved in anymore.

She wasn't going to sell Negan out to her, of all people.

For some reason Blake felt slightly threatened by her…having seen a questioning, doubtful sort-of look upon her features that first night of being back here at Alexandria. The brown haired woman obviously not believing that David could ever have been so harmful to Blake. And that doubt hurt Blake a lot.

But to everyone here of course, Blake needed to remembered, David had been charming, with his blonde hair and good-looks, always saying the right thing at the right time. A model citizen.

So why would people ever believe that Blake was indeed telling the truth, the problem being that she herself, had hid his abuse too well from everyone at the time.

The caramel-blonde woman turned the page in her book with another small huffy-sigh. But her green eyes were no longer moving, fixed to one spot on the paper….no longer reading….her mind too busy focusing on other things.

But she couldn't help but jump suddenly, as there came a loud knock upon her front door.

She gave a sudden tired moan, closing the book and tossing it down onto a couch cushion beside her and getting to her feet.

It was guaranteed to be Rick again….probably wanting nothing in particular but to sit there, sigh for a bit and throw stupid questions her way about exactly what she was doing at the Sanctuary all that time.
Blake today, was just wearing a white t-shirt, tucked neatly into a pair of tight-indigo jeans, with a large brown belt slung around her middle…but not having the luxury of going out, she was barefoot, not having bothered with shoes and socks.

She had tried, of course, to leave, it had taken her less than a day to attempt it. But Father Gabriel and Sasha who had been standing guard at the time, had firmly told her to turn around and go back inside, both of their hands moving to knives positioned at the waists.

Blake, at this, had just rolled her eyes.

Had they really seen her as that much of a threat? But she had reluctantly scoffed and gone back inside, slamming the door furiously behind her, not wanting to try and find out what lengths either of them would go to, to keep her inside.

But Blake, now, striding through her hallway once again, tugged open the door with a loud, irritated huff.

"Look, Rick," she said in a tired voice. "I've told you-"

But Blake stopped short as she saw who was stood on the other side, silhouetted in the hazy evening light.

"Tara?" Blake murmured, parting her lips.

Tara was stood there, in a navy t-shirt and jeans, hands dug sheepishly into her front pockets, chewing on her lip…her eyes full of something sad and imploring.

She was silent for a long moment, staring up at Blake, before finally opening her mouth….

"I thought we were friends," said the dark-haired woman in a sudden dejected voice.

Blake immediately gulped.

"W-We are," she said reassuringly, cocking her head to the side.

It was strange to see Tara like this…..after six days of only seeing her through a window.

But the dark-haired girl just shook her head.

"You lied to me, Blake," she said, a sadness in her voice now. "You told me you had nothing to with him… with Negan….and then he comes to visit you here?!"

Blake chewed on her own lip now…a strong sense of guilt passing over her….making her stomach churn violently.

"It wasn't important…" she tried to argue.

But Tara cut across her.

"Bullshit," she cried suddenly, her voice becoming higher in pitch and louder now. "Of course it's important. They killed Denise, and Glenn, and Abraham and Spencer….and you're just standing there acting like it's the most normal thing in the world to be shacked up with that asshole Negan. He bludgeoned people to death, Blake!"

Tara was breathing hard now, her chest rising and falling rapidly from her outburst. But Blake wasn't far off mirroring her stance, standing there with wide eyes, rubbing at her own arms, feeling
defensive…her heart hurting now.

"I know…" she said in a quiet tone, her voice wavering as she spoke.

"No, you don't," said Tara shaking her head and staring at Blake sadly. "Because if you knew what was truly capable of, you'd have never invited him in, Blake. You'd never be involved with him at all. Because he's a monster."

But Blake gave a tiny frown, gulping again now, and shaking her head.

So many conflicting feeling rising within her, as Tara made to turn on her heel having said her piece, making to turn away.

But Blake spoke suddenly.

"But he's not," she said with a whisper, as she gazed back at her dark-haired friend. "He's not…"

Tara looked wide-eyed back at Blake over her shoulder, but it was a long, drawn-out moment, before she finally spoke again.

"I trusted you," she said despondently, Blake watching, as angry tears spilled from her friend's eyes.

But that was all Tara could manage to mutter, and she rubbed at her face, turned back around, and disappeared off down Blake's porch steps, without another word.

Blake gazed skywards suddenly, trying as hard as she could to stop the tears from spilling from her own eyes.

Shit.

What had she done?

She had pushed away one of her only friends in this world, for a man who she wasn't even sure was ever coming back anyway….

She let out a shaky breath now, making to turn around and head back inside. But before she could do so-

"Blake!" came a sudden voice from behind her drawing her attention back around.

She steadied herself slightly, to see the tall and handsome figure of Steve, coming bounding up the porch steps towards her, two at a time, looking like an excitable puppy.

He was tonight, wearing a light blue t-shirt, black pants, and was carrying a bottle of something in his tanned, muscle-bound arms.

Blake let out a small breath of air, still feeling like she wanted to cry right now, as she blinked at him.

"Oh...uhhh...hi, Steve...." she began, rubbing at her arms once more. "..I'm sorry, but now's not really a good-"

But Steve gave her a lop-sided sort-of smile, holding the large dusty bottle of wine out towards her.

"I just thought you might want some company, seeing as you're not allowed out," he asked tilting his head and offering her an encouraging look. "Thought you might do with some cheering up. And hey, what situation isn't improved by copious amounts of alcohol, huh?"
At this, Blake looked down her feet letting out a small laugh, as Steve's words lightened the mood slightly.

Well maybe a drink would help take her mind off of everything….and ease the pain of her conversation with Tara.

Because Balke now found herself hurting more than ever. Feeling oh-so alone.

Like she had no-one.

And so, Blake gave a small nod, before she could stop herself, taking the bottle gently within her grasp, and biting on her lip.

"Sounds good," she said taking in a deep breath, and gesturing for Steve to follow her inside.

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It hadn't taken long before the pair of them had found themselves sat on two high barstools beside the island counter in her open-plan kitchen, already on their second glass of the vinegary-tasting, red wine.

Their conversation had drifted from one subject to another for the past thirty minutes, Blake relaxing a little and opening up in his presence.

They had so far lightly touched upon the subject of David…or Steve's own deceased girlfriend, pets that they used to own, and cities they had visited in their youth, as well as brief catch up on what had happened at Maud's drinks party last week, slightly ruined by the Saviours showing up just before it kicked off.

"So what did you do before?" Steve asked now, in a gentle voice, taking another small sip of his wine. "Y'know, in the real-world?"

Blake could have skipped all the chit-chat if she was honest and just stuck to the alcohol, but she knew she needed to be polite.

"I worked in an office," she said waving a hand dismissively. "It's wasn't anything special. You?"

But Steve smiled, scratching back of his neck with his hand. "I was training to be a PT- Personal trainer."

Blake gave a nod. Of course he was.

Steve was lovely, of course. But she had been there, done that, with someone like him….with David….a handsome, carefree guy…..who had in fact proved to be the exact opposite of that.

Blake nodded….trying to think of something to say, but before she could do so, Steve had suddenly licked at his lips, staring over at her.

"I've missed not seeing you around lately," he commented, a little shyly. "I know Rick's trying to keep under wraps exactly why he's keeping you shut in here, but I just want you to know, that if you want me to try and talk to him, I can."

Blake gave a small smile.

"You're sweet," she began gently, shaking her head. "But-"
But before Blake could utter another word, Steve had, all of a sudden, scraped back his chair and got to his feet, moving around the island towards her.

"Listen," he said in an earnest tone, suddenly changing the mood in the room completely, and coming to stop at the still-sitting Blake's side, staring down at her. "I know I haven't been here that long...and we haven't known each other for even a month yet....but...hey, life's kinda short and, well......"

Steve paused momentarily, licking his lips slowly once again, before sighing and giving a brief shake of his head.

"...oh....screw it-

And with that, Blake felt her eyes widening into huge orbs, as Steve brushed back a strand of her caramel blonde hair from her face, leaning in suddenly towards her, his lips moving slowly to meet with hers.

Oh, fuck...

But before Blake could make a move to stop him, or even pull away...her heart hammering a drumbeat of fright inside her ribcage....

...a sudden loud and angry voice filled the room-

"Oh, you better be fuckin' jokin'!"

Steve suddenly pulled back from her, swinging suddenly around on this the spot, as Blake peered around his tall and broad form...

...only to see a person she recognised very, very well, stood in the doorway to the kitchen.

Negan.

He was stood, in his usual black leather jacket, white t-shirt, and black biker boots, with Lucille now grasped tightly within his gloved hand.

But it was his face, that made Blake's breath hitch slightly as she looked at him.

She could tell immediately that he was seething, his jaw tightly clenched and twitching with pure fury. His eyes were black and his chin lowered, looking more intimidating than Blake had ever seen him.

But Steve gave a frown at the dark-haired Saviour, eyeing him, looking a little confused. "Errr, can I help you?" he asked in a slow voice.

Blake knew that Steve, unlikely to have ever clapped eyes on Negan before, of course would not recognise him....but she prayed for his sake he would figure it out quicker that Negan would give him cause to.

But Negan ignored him, instead, his chocolate eyes were fixed on Blake.

"This fucking guy?!" asked the bearded Saviour with incredulous raised eyebrows, cocking his head to the side and arching his back with every syllable he spoke.

He pointed at Steve with the end of his barbed-wire covered baseball-bat, which unfortunately only served to make Steve's frown deepen slightly.
"Look I don't know who you are, but-" the younger man began in a sincere tone, but Negan suddenly turned to face him, narrowing his dark eyes.

"Well, holy fuckin' shit," said Negan in a loud, obnoxious tone. "Either we've not been introduced, or else I failed to make a strong fuckin’ impression on you’re the first time. Either fuckin’ way I think I’d better refresh your goddamn memory."

Negan took a step forwards, gripping Lucille threateningly, and coming nose-to-nose with Steve.

Both men were tall, but perhaps Negan had an inch on the younger man….or maybe it just seemed that way…the way Negan loomed over him frighteningly.

"Uh..can we not…." said Blake with a tired sigh, pushing herself suddenly from the chair.

But both men ignored her, their eyes fixed on one another.

"I'm Negan," said the dark-haired man in a sudden low growling voice, as Blake saw Steve almost instantly give a gulp.

There it was…

That dawning realisation….that look of utter horror appearing in his eyes as he realised just who he was dealing with.

"...and this, is Lucille," continued Negan, raising the end of the baseball-bat so that it was level with Steve's face. "And…well….she is lookin' kinda thirsty tonight, don' you think?"

But Blake pursed her lips together a little angrily now, marching straight up to Negan.

"Nope…nuh-uh…" she said in a scolding tone, suddenly rounding on Negan and coming to stand in between him and Steve. "Not in my fucking kitchen, Negan."

And almost at once, the dark-haired Saviour turned to her, a hint of a grin twitching its way onto his lips.

He gave a small sigh.

"You really doin' this to save your fuckin' tiles, Darlin'?" he began, leaning his face into hers. "Or are you actually doing it to save pretty-boy's fuckin' face?"

Blake shot him a sudden unimpressed look, gazing up into Negan's dark chocolate eyes, as he leered over her, his free hand suddenly snaking around her waist possessively.

She tutted, as Negan spoke again.

"I mean, hell, I know I'm a bit late for our date, Peaches," he said flashing her his pearly white line of teeth, as her tugged her body firmly into his. "But did you really move on that fuckin' fast? With this fuckin' guy too?! I mean, jeez, he looks like the goddamn missin' link."

Steve at their side, merely looked on meekly, trembling in his shoes, as Blake lifted her hand to Negan's chest and gave him a gentle shove away from her playfully.

"Stop it," she reprimanded, flashing him reproachful look, before turning swiftly to Steve.

The man, around Blake's own age, now looked about six-years old, standing there, wide-eyes and apprehensive.
"You should probably go, Steve," she uttered, offering him a sort-of apologetic look.

And almost at once Steve nodded reverently, and eased past the pair.

But Negan, as cocky as he was, stuck out Lucille suddenly stopping Steve in his tracks before he could go anywhere.

"Oh Steve-y–boy," he said in a low growl of a voice, staring back at the young guy, with an arrogant grin, now plastered across his bearded features. And with that, Negan leaned up close to Steve's face intimidatingly. "If I ever fuckin' catch you tryin' to kiss her, or in fact, even fucking looking her way again, I'll be painting these fuckin' floor tiles a nice red colour with the shit that comes out of your skull. We clear?"

And Steve certainly looked clear, as he gave a dry sounding audible gulp, before walking swiftly away as fast as his legs could carry him. And it wasn't a moment later than Blake heard the door slam loudly behind him.

Almost at once she turned to Negan, and offered him a reproving look, tilting her head to the side, letting her long, caramel hair drift easily over her shoulders.

"You are such an asshole sometimes," she said shaking her head and pouting.

But Negan merely smiled, strutting over to her and leaning in towards her closely, his lips almost brushing hers, before he brought his mouth slowly up to her ear.

"Don't pout, Darlin'," he said in a low and husky voice, pressing a grin into her hair. "It makes Daddy wanna do very, very bad fuckin' things to you."

And with that, Blake couldn't help but let a moan of want slip quietly from her lips….as her fingers suddenly curled around the fabric of his leather sleeve….

...before Negan pulled back, letting his mouth finally find hers...
Then stop me, Darlin'.

Blake couldn't help but moan in Negan's mouth as his lips moved hungrily against hers.

She could feel a heat rising within her, and a warmth -a need, which she had not felt since the pair had been back in Negan's bathroom all those many weeks ago.

Blake heard Negan drop his barbed-wire covered bat down onto the kitchen counter beside them, as one of his hands ran up, coming to linger at her collarbone…..and the other snaking its way slowly around her waist, pulling her body flush with his.

Blake tugged her lips from his for a split second, her eyes now dark, lustful and full of want and she stared at him, panting hard.

"Negan…" she uttered breathlessly, allowing her eyes to close momentarily. "…we need to stop…"

She couldn't do this here…..not with anyone from Alexandria able to burst in on them at any second….

But Negan didn't seem to care…his thumb drifting down the throbbing pulse point at her neck.

"Then stop me, Darlin'," he murmured back, as he began to press open-mouthed, lingering kisses to the place on her throat where his tanned digits had just been.

Blake felt her breath hitch and her eyes roll back in her head…her underwear already sopping wet with desirous longing for his hands to drift lower….for him to undo the buckle on her belt…take off her jeans and underwear, and fuck her…right here on this kitchen counter.

And knowing that Rick, or Michonne, or in fact anyone here, could walk in on them at any second, just made her heart race and her blood to pump faster through her veins.

But she knew this was crazy. She couldn't do this. Not here…not right now…

And so, placing a hand to Negan's leather-clad shoulders, she eased him from her.

"…stop…" she panted, her chest heaving now, as the Saviour finally tore his lips away and looked down at her with those dark, chocolate eyes of his.

For a moment, he looked slightly irritable that he had been disturbed….pouting like a moody teenager….

But as Blake gave a smile, he reciprocated, catching her mouth teasingly in one last gently-tugging kiss, before pulling away again, grinning widely.

"Well goddamn, Peaches," he said in a sarcastic tone. "I come all the way here to see you, you get me all riled up, and then you leave me half-fuckin' cocked?"

Blake almost immediately scoffed at his words, rolling her eyes and shooting him a look.

"Well maybe if you'd have arrived on time, like you said you were going to…" she said tutting and folding her arms across herself.

"Well, I told you it'd be at the end of the week, Sweetheart. So maybe if you'd have fuckin' listened-" Negan almost immediately retorted, raising his dark eyebrows and arching his back as he spoke.
They were both as bad as each other, Blake knew that for a fact. But she wasn't going to let him get away with just showing up here after six long days, that easily.

"How did you even get in?" she said moving around the kitchen island away from him, his brown eyes, of course, following her every move.

"Well I didn't scale the fuckin' fence, if that's what you're wondering," he replied in an incredulous voce, tilting his head to this side, his eyebrows up in his hairline. "I came I through the fuckin' gate. I got Dwight and Arat waitin' for me just outside."

Blake gave a short huff.

He was so so cocky sometimes…

But Negan picked up one of the wine glasses from the table, and strolled around toward her with a smirk upon his lips.

"An' since we're playin' twenty questions," he said coming to stop just in front of her, leaning up against the marble-counter top at his side easily and eyeing her carefully. "You wanna tell me who the fuck pretty-boy was? And what the hell I just walked in on?"

Blake let out a small sigh and looked at him earnestly.

"That was just Steve," she said, takin the half-drunk glass of wine gently from Negan's gloved grasp, before turning and moving over to the sink and pouring the remainder of the wine down the plughole. "He's harmless."

But before she could turn back toward the dark-haired Saviour, she felt him press up against her from behind, and lean his mouth in towards her ear.

"Well ol' Stevey didn't look that fucking harmless when he was trying to shove his tongue down your throat, Doll-face," she heard him utter in a low voice into her hair, his wandering hands running around her hips, and he leaned over her.

Blake arched herself back into a him, smiling to herself, as she raised her chin, exposing her long and slender neck.

"I knew you'd get jealous," she muttered back with a small groan, closing her eyes for a moment, enjoying the second of pure bliss, as Negan's hands dipped lower, skimming around the waistline of Blake's jeans, his fingers toying with her large brown belt buckle.

But she wasn't about to let him get the upper hand that easily.

She tutted and quickly sidled herself from his grasp, tucking a strand of long caramel-hair behind her ear and giving a small cough, righting herself once again.

But when she turned back to the dark-haired Saviour, he already had his bottom lip between his teeth, shaking his head at her.

"Hell, yeah I'm fuckin' jealous," he said in a loud voice. "I mean, I have wanted that mouth of yours ever since I fuckin' laid eyes on you. And I'm not really in the fuckin' mood for sharin', Doll."

But Blake rolled her eyes, scoffing. "Says the man with five wives…" she uttered scathingly.

At this, Negan just eyed her.
"This some kinda payback then?" he said raising a single eyebrow an advancing on her yet again, his boots chinking across the floor as he walked. "You tryin' to make me claim what's mine?"

At his possessive words, Blake felt herself getting hot, with the wetness between her legs distracting her momentarily, before she hurriedly shook herself, holding her head up high.

She gave a small audible sigh now, her eyes on his.

"Not in the slightest," she said, biting on her own lip, as he approached her once more. "I was just enjoying some wine with a friend. Is that a crime?"

She knew her words would rile up the dark-haired man and she was right. She heard him let out a low growl, as he lowered his chin and came to stop just a breath away from her.

"Not at all, Sweetheart," he said before licking at his lips excruciatingly slowly. "I just presumed you'd be askin' Daddy to give you what you want, an' not the whiny lil' pretty-boy, is all…"

She smiled, as they hovered close to each other, being careful not to touch. Both invested in this game of theirs. This cat and mouse pastime they liked to share.

"And what do I want?" she purred, gazing up at him through her eyelashes, pulling at her bottom lip hard now…

Wanting the dark-haired Saviour more than ever before.

And it wasn't a second later that she saw him lean over her, his mouth on her earlobe, his hot breath trailing down her cheek and down to her slender neck.

"Well, I think you want me to screw your brains out right here on this kitchen counter, Peaches," he growled into her ear, as Blake felt her breath hitch painfully inside her throat.

Fuck.

He could so easily do it too.

But with a grin and a small chuckle…. he didn't….knowing full well his teasing was killing her.

And a second later he pulled back and grinned widely, reading her like a book, and flashing his set of straight white teeth at her devilishly.

"So…" he murmured in a low voice, the moment now gone."…shit, Darlin', I mean correct me if I'm wrong, but there was me thinkin' that you offered me dinner the last time we met? An hell, after the week I've had, an' the amount of goddamn gas I've used up on comin' here to visit you…I think you at least owe me some spaghetti."

Blake blinked for a long second, still very much panting…and in the moment….waiting for him to pounce.

So it was a drawn out few seconds before she rolled her eyes and gave him a small huff in utter irritation at his arrogance.

How was it possible for one man to irritate the hell out of her so much, but also to make her almost putty in his hands, all at the same time?

"I suppose," she sighed, folding her arms swiftly over her chest and marching over towards the high cupboards, knowing that Negan was smirking amusedly after her now.
She promptly pulled down a packet of spaghetti, a tin of tomatoes and some herbs, and filled a pan with water. All the while, Negan took a seat in Steve's vacated chair behind her, watching.

"So I didn't see Rick when I came in here," he uttered after a minute or two had passed, slightly conversationally. "Usually he's eyeballin' me from the moment I come through those gates. Hell, I'm surprised he's not got his sweaty face pressed to the goddamn window already?"

Blake who was facing the tiled kitchen all, smiled at his words.

"I don't know," she replied, shrugging. "He's probably out scavenging for you."

"You know that's what I like about the folks in this place," Negan said in a warm voice. "So goddamn eager to please."

Blake rolled her eyes, as she threw a few ingredients into a simmering pan, as the large pot of spaghetti bubbled beside her.

"Ugh, probably because they know that if they don't, you're gonna beat them to death with a fucking baseball bat," she muttered in a simpering tone over her shoulder to him, as she stirred the ingredients with a large wooden spoon.

But that only caused Negan to chuckle.

"You got it in one, Peaches," he replied, as she heard him scrape his chair back, get to his feet and strut slowly over to her.

And it was only a short moment before Blake felt two leather clad arms wrap their way around her middle and a bearded chin come to rest on her shoulder.

"Mmmmmm, now this smells good," he said in a long, hungry voice, as Blake pursed her lips bemusedly and continued to stir. "So, not only do you look as hot-as-hell, have an ass like a goddamn fruit, all ripe and juicy and ready to be eaten, but you can cook too?!….I mean, shit… y'know, have I ever asked if you wanted to be one of my wives, Darlin'?"

His tone was sarcastic and playful, and Blake couldn't help but smirk as he felt him rub his stubbly chin against her cheek.

"Only every day since I've known you," she replied airily.

"Well y'know, Doll-face," he murmured once more. "Think about it, I could just picture you an ' me in a place like this. Livin' the American-fuckin'-dream. Apple fuckin' pie in the oven, me grillin' out in the back-yard, and you standing next to me in nothin' but a bikini and a nice smile."

Blake smirked and bit at her lip.

"Well for now, let's just stick to spaghetti shall we?" she purred back to him, as she lifted the spoon full of sauce to his mouth to taste.
"You want to dish up?" asked Blake after a long ten minutes had passed, the spaghetti now perfectly done and the sauce smelling mouth-wateringly good.

She was still in the kitchen, and glanced over at Negan who was setting the table in the adjoining long dining room just over her shoulder.

If she hadn't known him, she would have presumed that the tall dark-haired man, resembled almost a perfect husband. Setting the table for dinner, now having shrugged off his leather jacket, standing there in just a t-shirt, cocking an eye in her direction.

Negan, who was currently pouring out the remainder of Steve's red wine into two clean glasses, gave a playful huff.

"Jesus, sweetheart," he said standing up straight and walking slowly back into the kitchen towards her. "What the fuck do I look like? A goddamn bus-boy?"

But Blake just smiled, shoving a clean dishcloth into his middle as she swished easily by him, glancing back at him teasingly over her shoulder as she went.

But she didn't say another word.

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Shit.

Negan was truly and utterly besotted with her, watching she disappeared, now, through the doorway and out of sight.

She was everything he fucking wanted.

With a hot body, quick wit, and a dirty, dirty mouth to rival his own.

Every little part of them seemed to fit together so perfectly…as if she was exactly what Negan had been missing this whole time.

She was his weakness…and he knew that for a fact. But although, after the spectacle of her killing her own fiancé, he knew that his fellow Saviours were unlikely to ever try anything or use her as leverage, as lucky for her, she was indeed as formidable as he was.

She was a queen back there, at the Sanctuary. Just like Negan had always intended her to be.

But here….

Well, he hated every moment of her being back here.

That spark of hers not being able to shine so bright, stuck here like this…with these people.

Negan detested them, feeling bitter that in all the months Blake had been here with them, they had not spotted what David had been doing to her. Letting it go on unnoticed, while she sunk into herself.

And there was no way he wanted that to ever happen to her again.
This place, there people…they weren't her fucking people. But he was.

Negan knew exactly how he felt about her. And yet as arrogant and as cocky as he could be, he was far too cowardly to tell her.

Because fuck, the last person in his life he had felt this way about, had been Lucille…

And that….well, that, had destroyed him.

Negan ran a hand down his bearded face now, giving a short sigh, before turning back to the kitchen counter.

It took him just a few minutes to plate up the spaghetti, and use his pocket lighter to light a long candlestick, placing it neatly in the centre of the table. As he heard soft footsteps coming back down the stairs.

And Negan glanced up, only to see Blake stood in the doorway now, in that pretty little summer dress he had seen her in less than a week ago now.

"Do I look ok?" she asked lightly, tilting her head to the side and letting her caramel hair trickle down her side gently.

Fuck.

Negan's lips parted as he took her all in, standing their like fucking perfection in human form.

She was stood there, with round green eyes, the short dress reaching her thighs, and skimming over her gorgeous hips, making Negan almost drool with total longing. But somehow he managed to hold it together, grinning.

"Oh, Darlin'," he murmured, strutting suddenly forwards. "I am not sure if I wanna eat that spaghetti, or you right now."

He ran his tongue over his lips teasingly, as Blake threw him a smile in return, giving a tiny roll of her eyes, before sliding past him, bumping his shoulder with hers as she went.

She was definitely the whole package. And pretty much the only woman who could rival him at his own games.

Blake stopped at the table for a moment, before shooting him back a look.

"This all looks very romantic," she commented, gazing up at him through sultry eyelashes.

But Negan just lifted his chin, staring back at her warmly. "Well shit, Doll-face this is kinda our third official date. An' you know what happens on the third date-"

Negan raised both his eyebrows in a look of sheer goading, causing Blake to laugh and take a seat.

"In your dreams, lover boy," she said in a simpering tone, as Negan moved around the table and took a seat in the chair adjacent to hers.

But he grinned, poking his tongue out between his teeth, as he suddenly slid his hand under the table, placing it neatly on Blake's half-covered thigh.

"Oh, Peaches, now I know much you like to protest, but really, when all is said and fuckin' done…I think you like me, as much as I like you," he uttered, his hand sliding higher now up her thigh. "And
you are desperate to do as many bad fuckin' things to me, as I wanna do back to you…"

He noticed her almost immediately, let out a shaky breath at this, as his hand hitched up her dress, gliding up and up, towards-

But before his digits could reach their goal, Blake grasped his wrist and pushed him away, tutting.

"Eat," she said in a mock tone of sternness, pursing her lips and tucking strand of hair back behind her ear. "Before your food gets cold."

But Negan, at this, tugged his hand away and sat back in his chair, eyeing her carefully and smirking. "Hmmm, well the thing I want to eat, I've got a feelin', is pretty hot and wet right now…so I guess I can wait."

Blake immediately rolled her eyes at this, shooting him an amused smirk, as she picked up her fork, not giving him the satisfaction of uttering a word in response.

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It was twenty long minutes later, that Negan and Blake, forks down, plates empty, were now turned into one another, knees brushing beneath the table. Blake had a wine glass in her hand, laughing brightly and biting down on her lip, staring at the dark-haired Saviour before her.

"An' that was the moment I knew I didn' know shit about those dead pricks," Negan said in a loud carrying tone. "An' so there I was, covered in blood and guts and all sorts of other goddamn shit, with about twenty of them on me."

Blake smiled in his direction.

"So what did you do?" she asked interestedly, gazing at him, placing her chin into her hand, and resting her elbow on the table beside her.

Negan chuckled, running at his bearded chin, staring wholly back at her. "Well lucky for me, Simon shows up and mows them all down with an Ak-fucking-47."

Blake laughed, tiling her head, and shaking her head.

"Well that was lucky," she said in an charmed tone.

But Negan raised both his eyebrows.

"Fuck, luck, sweetheart," he said pointing at her. "That was surroundin' yourself with people who'll jump under a goddamn bus for you- no questions asked."

Blake tutted, placing her wine down beside her and toying gently with the stem of the glass. "You're despicable, you know that?"

But Negan merely leant back in his seat surveying her carefully with dark chocolate eyes.

"Yeah, but you still fuckin' love me, Peaches," he growled, flashing her his perfect set of white teeth in a wide grin.

And at this, Blake merely dropped her own gaze to her lap, her own smile littering her pink lips.

But she didn't say a word…
Knowing that Negan's words…as arrogant and as teasing as they were, were probably truer than he would have expected.

Blake knew how she felt about him…how she ached for him….for not only his touch…his taste…..but for his company and his closeness too.

But finding the right words…well that just seemed impossible in this world. And as much time as he spent with her…visited her here….he still had five other wives back at the Sanctuary…and she was still only one, in a long line of conquests.

Blake licked at her lips, her eyes finally drifting up to his once more.

But to her utter surprise the smile that just a few moments ago been on Negan's long tanned face, was now gone. Replaced instead with an expression of utter regret, his eyes wide and sorrow-filled.

His mouth was closed and his chin lowered as he stared at her, changing the entire atmosphere in the room.

Right now it was only the two of them….alone in this world.

There was no Rick…no wives…no Simon….no David…no Tara.

It was just them.

Blake gave a gulp now, pulling her head up off her elbow, and coming to sit up straight, her lips parting in an uncertain breathlessness that seemed to fill her body.

"Listen, Peaches," said Negan in an earnest tone, pausing slightly before he continued. "That stuff with the kid-"

He shook his head, his eyes falling now to his own lap momentarily before his gaze drifted back up to hers.

"…I thought…." he continued, giving a long visible gulp, before drawing his hand down his tired-looking stubbly face. "Hell, I know you fuckin' loved her…."

Negan trailed off, staring hard at Blake, his face awash with a remorse that Blake had never seen from him before.

"…I just want you to know…that maybe I can't turn back the goddamn clock….." he said, his eyes dropping away again momentarily, before he stared up at her sadly. "….but I'm sorry….for makin' her leave….an' for pushin' you away, Peaches."

Blake felt her eyes welling slightly at his quiet words…so different from the usual cocky spiel that usually dripped from his tongue. This was, instead, honest and regretful and full something that made Blake want to reach out and spill every pent up emotion she had been keeping inside her for so so long.

She gave a hard gulp, her mouth dry now, as her green eyes drifted down to the space in between the pair of them.

"I-I had a couple of miscarriages…" she uttered bluntly, the words almost spilling out of her mouth before she could stop herself. They sounded stark now, and it was strange hearing the sentence spoke aloud after so, so many years. "…must have been five years ago now, maybe."
She paused for a moment, unable to look at Negan, her cheeks burning red, as she lifted a hand tracing a scratch across the table with her finger, absent-mindedly.

"...I-I was young...and neither time it had really been planned..." she continued in a soft voice.
"...and the first one...well, I must have only been a few weeks gone anyway...and I wasn't carrying for long before it happened...

Her voice began to waver now, ever so slightly, as her vision became suddenly flooded and blurry.

"...b-but just before...well, all this..." she gentured around her with a wave of a her hand. ".I-I fell pregnant again...a-and that one...."

She took a gulp of air steadying herself, trying as hard as she could to find the right words.

"...I carried for about five months...I-I felt it growing inside me...a life...a-and I wanted it so badly...a baby...a family....."

She pressed her tongue suddenly to her back molars, shaking her head.

"...but I...uhhh...I-I woke up one night...a-and there was blood..." she uttered, shaking her head desperately again now. ".a-and we went to the hospital...and-

Before Blake could stop it, a lone tear slid its way silently down her cheek, saying more that words ever could.

".....they told me that 'these things just happen' and that there was nothing I or anyone else could have done...but it still hurt....it hurt....n-not physical pain....but the emotions....to feel that life being torn from you....to feel....just......empty...."

Blake mouthed at the air for a brief moment, hanging her head in shame, feeling the loss coursing through her, stabbing at her like a blade through her heart.

"...I thought maybe I'd get the chance to try again..." she said shaking her head now, giving a small sniff, as more tears fell into her lap. "...but then....it happened......and we had to leave the city...."

Blake took in a small breath and stared suddenly up at the ceiling, keeping her eyes firmly off of Negan, not wanting to look directly at him right now, to see his judgement.

"...and I wasn't able to risk it again..." she said, forcing a small smile now, accustomed to the fate that had been dealt to her. "...falling pregnant....not in this world...I just-

But she trailed off, shaking her head now, unable to finish her sentence.

She paused for brief moment, swiping away the tears from her cheeks and sighing.

"So that's why...when Mia came along..." she worried at her lip, finally dragging her green eyes upwards, sand staring up at the leader of the Saviours for the first time.

"...she was my one and only chance, Negan..." she said sadly, tilting her head to the side, as he stared back at her, his long face serious. "...I needed her..."

Blake let the tears flow freely down her cheeks now.

"...it wasn't your fault...."she said shaking her head. "...it wasn't anyone's fault....I just...I was never meant to have her is all....it just wasn't meant to happen for me...."
And Blake knew now, that she was finally done.

Now he knew the truth. About why she had left. About why the pain back there, having lost Mia, had been too much for her to bare.

The room fell utterly silent for a moment, as Blake's chest heaved slightly as she tried to steady herself, feeling totally embarrassed for crying in front of Negan like this.

But to her surprise, the dark-haired Saviour suddenly spoke.

"Before all this…..well, I was married," came Negan's voice now, low and sounding hurt and quiet. "And my wife…..she couldn't...."

Negan glanced down, placing a hand over his eyes for the briefest of moments, before sighing heavily. "I mean, hell, we tried…but she went for tests at the hospital…and the docs just told her…..that it was never gonna happen...."

The bearded Saviour tensed his jaw briefly, before continuing. "….and I couldn't deal with that….so I drank….and I cheated…screwed around……but I didn't think about how much me distancin' myself from her….well it was killin' her….not havin' a family….and not havin' me either...."

And with that ,Negan gazed up, his chocolate eyes locking now with Balke's….as something passed between them….

A feeing of utter understanding. Of loss. Of agony. Of sheer sorrow. That they had both been through….

And with that Blake shook her head and got to her feet, her face now completely wet with tears.

"What I said….when Mia left….about not having anything…." she uttered in a shaky voce, picking up the empty plates and turning away from Negan' now.

For looking at him….it was too much….  

".....it was a lie...." she muttered, placing the dishes into the sink and hanging her head. "...because I had you...."

She meant to turn and pace over to him…

But the words had barely even left Blake's mouth, when she felt a hand reach her waist, pulling her body back around.

And there was Negan, standing over her, a frustrated frown lingering between his dark brows, his bearded jaw tightly clenched.

But Blake had little or no time to dwell on the expression on his face, as his free hand reached for the back of her neck…

……and he tugged her tearful face swiftly towards him, instantly pressing his mouth to hers.

It took Blake a second or two to react...before she felt herself relaxing into him and her lips began to move against his….a neediness rising within her.

But this time it felt different. Not filled with a sexual longing and desire that usually filled her body… making her ache and become wet for him. This was instead, a desperation to be close to this strange man, as he pulled her into his taught and tall body, possessively.
Blake placed a hand to his t-shirt-covered chest, relaxing slightly, as she pressed herself into him.

And it was only a few moments after that the pair pulled away, panting and breathless, gazing at one another.

"Come back with me, Peaches.." said Negan imploringly, after a moment or two, cocking his head to the side as he stared at her seriously, one of his hands still lingering at her neck, while the other, now slid its way down to her lower back. Keeping her slender waist flush with his.

But Blake puffed out her chest, taking in a deep breath.

She truly wanted nothing more, right now, than to take Negan's hand and follow of him out of this house, out of those gates and back to the Sanctuary…..but there was still things left unresolved here…

People she still needed to talk to….

Tara…

Aaron...Eric…

Even Rick…

Things she needed to explain to them. Things she needed to make them understand.

And so, she lifted her eyes to Negan's, her own fingers curling around the fabric of Ngan's t-shirt. As she gave a small lick of her lips and sighed.

"Listen," she said, leaning her mouth close to him, trying to convey as best she could that this was not a no, by any account. "It's my birthday, two days from now…"

She shook her head and offered Negan a small smile.

"…David didn't really ever like celebrating birthdays….so this is kinda the first one where I get to actually do something nice…." she said gently. "….so how about you come back in two days and get me….then I'll come back with you. I promise."

She held her breath and watched, as Negan mulled over the words for a second or two, before giving a huff, but nodding slowly anyway.

Understanding exactly why she was doing this.

"That mean I've gotta get you a fuckin' gift then, Doll-face?" he said, raising an eyebrow at her, his face breaking into a small smirk.

And Blake couldn't help but smile back teasingly, standing on her tip toes and leaning her mouth into his ear.

"Oh…" she purred into him. "…..definitely."

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If any of you are interested please follow me over on 'Negan and Blake' on tumblr for lots of lovely imagines/AUs/oneshots.
This chapter contains smut, dirty talk, Negan's dirty mouth...enjoy ;)

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It was almost midnight by the time Negan and Blake finally wandered into the hallway.

The dark-haired Saviour had finally shrugged on his dark leather jacket, grasped up Lucille from the kitchen worktop and strolled into the small gloomy area behind the caramel-blond woman.

Blake had somehow just managed to finish washing the dishes with Negan standing behind her almost the entire time, bothering her.

She felt so utterly happy in his presence, despite his incessant teasing and the way in which, even when she attempted to bat him with a handful of soap bubbles, he barely relented with the constant flirting and dirty words whispered into her ear.

Despite them finishing their dinner a long while ago now, the bearded Saviour had made no move to leave. And since their heart-to-heart at the dinner table a good forty minutes ago, Negan had been more touchy feely than ever with her.

It had felt good to finally let it all out. To tell someone all she had been keeping inside her for so long. The fact that she would probably would ever be able to have a child of her own, hurt…every single day.

At first the apocalypse had distracted her enough to keep her mind off of it; then David's hurtful words and the bruises he left upon her skin…

…but then…..upon finding Mia…well, Blake hadn't been able to help but dwell upon that sorrowful fact…yearning for a family of her own…..for someone to love…

But it was tonight that she truly realised that she wasn't alone.

That she wasn't the only one with painful memories.

And that there had been someone here all along…who had been here for her….who had protected her…who had made her laugh….and smile…and feel whole again.

Someone who had made the bruises go away…who had wiped her tears….who had given her, not only his bed, but her life back too…

The tall, dark haired man standing before her now, in the dim light of the hallway.

He was everything to her, and Blake felt not only her body, but her heart ache for him, as he followed her out into the small space, coming to stand in front of the looming front door.

She wanted to be with him…..this fear-inducing, crazy man…with a penchant for killing….but who had somehow made er life ten times better in the short time she had known him.

She had gone from that woman, pushed around her her asshole fiancé, to a queen, revered by others, tangled up with Negan.

A queen to his king.

"So, you gonna walk me out, Peaches?" uttered Negan raising a dark eyebrow in Blake's direction,
as he strolled up to her, licking at his lips.

Blake desperately didn't want him to go, as his free hand skimmed down her hips, making her heart pound faster and her breath catch in her throat, here in the silent, shadowy hallway.

But it was late now and Blake knew that it was dangerous to be out there on the road at night. Even for Negan and the other Saviours, as hardy as they were.

So the caramel-blonde woman gave a small pouting huff now, stepping into Negan and toying with the zipper on his leather jacket.

"I suppose," she murmured, staring up at him through sultry eyelashes.

But Negan at this gave a chuckle, gazng down at her and brushing his thumb suddenly across her jawline.

"I just love it when you pout, Doll-face," he growled, suggestively. "Makes me wanna do all sortsa' bad fuckin' things to that mouth of yours."

And with that, he ran his thumb over her jutted out, lower lip, teasingly.

This of course, made Blake instantly hot, pressing her tall and slender form even further into him.

Here they were, alone, at long last…with everything out in the open between them…no secrets….no distractions…

"Guess I should be leavin, hmmm, Peaches…" Negan uttered, blinking slowly, his chocolate eyes almost twinkling in her direction, as his hand slid back down her side, before leaving her body completely.

Blake felt herself let out a needy breath, as he detached himself from her teasingly, a smirk plastered across his cocky features, as she reached for the door, tugging it swiftly open.

But to each of their surprise, in the quietness of the hallway, it was opened to the sound of torrential rain falling all around.

Blake stepped aside, peering around the door as Negan did the same, frowning.

It was blowing up a storm out there, with lashings of water pouring down the guttering, rain falling in sheets around them. But in the cool and intimate setting of Blake's house, neither of them had seemed to hear or notice this. Too wrapped up in one another.

"Holy shit," muttered Negan under his breath raising a dull eyebrow skyward, as he peered up at the blacked sky.

And it was only a second later that Arat, came running towards them, from her shelter beneath a nearby porch, ducking in and out of the recently formed puddles as she went.

She was wearing what looked like a now-rain sodden men's green shirt, and a carrying a large gun in both of her hands.

"Boss," she cried through the sound of ever-falling rain, wincing slightly under the drips that were currently falling over her face. "One of them told me that Rick and his group won't be back until morning. You think we should wait it out, til' he comes back?"

Blake glanced up at Negan momentarily, only to see a large wide grin suddenly shift its way onto his
"Maybe we should," said Negan lowering his chin, and chewing on his lip, before throwing a meaningful look in Blake's direction.

But the caramel-haired woman was, right now, already one step ahead of him, turning away from Arat, facing instead, Negan's side.

Perhaps this was her chance.

Now or never, as they said...

For Blake knew what she wanted tonight.

And that was totally and utterly him.

She stood up on her tiptoes…her fingers curling around the stiff leather material of his jacket, her mouth gently brushing his earlobe as she spoke….

"Well, maybe… you should stay over…" Blake finally whispered in a mere ache of a voice, sighing slightly and letting out the smallest of suggestive moans against the tanned skin of his neck.

She pulled slowly back, her eyes now dark and full of something lustful and needy… giving Negan everything he needed to know, in one lingering look.

Fuck, she wanted him right now.

For it had been too long waiting, on long, lonely nights for his touch.

And with that, Blake was unable to stop herself from letting out a shaky breath, as Negan cocked his long tanned face at her, the smug grin slipping from his mouth momentarily. As though he had never expected those words to escape her lips in a million years.

But it was a mere moment later that he smiled once again, pursing his lips, before turning back to Arat, stood in the doorway, soaked to her skin now.

"You, Dwight and the others, sure you're alright to take watch tonight?" he asked the curly-haired woman, who nodded firmly back at him.

"No problem," Arat replied as professional and as loyal as ever.

But she shot one last knowing look back at Blake, before disappearing off, gun in hand, back across the street, where Dwight couldn't just about be seen under through hazy lamplit downpour.

For a moment Negan just stood there, one hand still on the door, before finally taking a step back into the dark hallway.

And it was a long drawn out second later, before he finally pushed the front door gently closed with a quite snap….shutting out the storm…leaving the pair of them finally, truly and utterly alone.

Blake breathed hard, licking at her pouting and swollen lips as he stared up at him, willing him to turn around and face her.

But Negan, knowing full-well what he was doing to her right now, let out a small sigh, placing Lucille down onto a the small hallway side-table and clearing his throat, almost dramatically.
But Blake just smiled amusedly, as he rubbed a hand over his bearded face, sighing heavily, before his chocolate eyes finally reached her.

And it was in that instant, Blake forget about everything else in her life right now….

…about being here, under house arrest…

….about Rick and Tara and Michonne…. 

….about David and Mia, and all other past memories…

Now it was just the two of them…together….after so many long, long nights spent alone…

Negan blinked, his lips twitching up into a small smile, as he strutted towards her now…making Blake's heart pound in her chest…

He was tall and dark and handsome…everything that David was not….but everything she craved….from that stupid arrogant swagger of his, to the way his beard felt on her lips as he kissed her.

"You sure you're ok with me stayin' the night, Peaches?" he asked in a low growl of a voice, finally speaking after what felt like an age of silence between the pair of them.

Negan closed the gap between them now, but didn't make a move to touch her…despite how much Blake wanted him to….

She knew what he was like….his teasing…

But this, well, this was utter torture.

But she would play along, for as long as she could bare.

Blake gave a small shrug, and bit down hard on her lip, staring first, down at the mere breath of space between them, before suddenly gazing up at the tall, dark-haired Saviour, through lowered eyelashes.

"Well, it's kinda stormy out there," she said with a sigh, her chest rising and falling heavily in her skimpy summer dress, causing his eyes to flicker there to her heaving breasts, for a mere fraction of a second. "And I wouldn't want you getting stranded out there on the road in all this rain."

She brought her hand up, her fingers once again toying with the zipper on his jacket, inching it ever so slowly lower, but never breaking her eyes away from his.

But Negan licked at his lips, grinning and flashing her his wide set of perfect white teeth admiringly.

And with that he lifted his own hand up and pushed back a few loose stands of long caramel hair from her shoulder.

"Sounds like you actually care about my fuckin' welfare, Sweetheart," he said with a murmur, leaning his face suddenly into hers, and parting his lips gently and audibly….causing a creamy wetness to suddenly pool inside Bake's panties.

She blinked heavily, lowering her chin and giving a small playful nod.

"Oh I do, Daddy," she managed to whisper. "Very, very much…"

And with that, Negan, grinning down at her fiendishly, gave a guttural and possessive growl at her
words….

……before capturing her lips with his.

Blake immediately smiled into his mouth. Happy.

He tasted good…like whisky and wine, and good sex…and Blake couldn't help but part her own peachy lips, submitting to him and allowing his tongue to slip easily into her mouth.

Their lips parted and met again and again, lapping at each other, as Negan's hands slid to her slender waist, maneuvering her roughly backwards against the wall behind her.

He spine hit the wall with a hard thud, sending a picture frame on the wall beside them to shudder slightly, at the action.

Negan was strong and possessive, his tongue tasting her with such a need, Blake couldn't help but moan out gently into his mouth, as one of his hands moved to her hip, pushing up her thin, cotton dress.

She felt his fingers slide up the creamy skin of her outer thigh, finding her lacy panties beneath.

But Blake couldn't take it anymore, as she tugged her mouth from his and stared up at him, panting desperately.

She needed more than just his mouth right now…

Almost instantaneously, Negan shot her a frowning look, as if irritable that she had disturbed his enjoyment.

But Blake dipped her chin at him, staring up into his eyes wolfishly, and panting hard.

"Come on…" she breathed, biting her lip, and with that, she grabbed at Negan's hand and tugged him in the direction of the staircase.

But the pair only made it up four or five steps, before Negan had grasped Blake by the waist and pulled her back around to face him.

He was smirking at that cocky grin of his now.

"I don't think you gave me the tour yet…" he muttered, from a step or two lower than her now, his hands once again sliding up her leg, pushing up the thin cotton fabric the covered her creamy thighs, and the wetness between them.

A second later he stopped, arching a dark eyebrow up in her direction.

But Blake, who was already coming undone, let out a shaky breath, watching as he suddenly chuckled, before lifting her dress roughly, his hands grasping at the back of her thighs and pressing a hard, lingering kiss to her hip-bone through the waistband of her navy lace panties.

Blake placed one hand instantly to Negan's leather clad shoulder, her fingers gripping the firm material as she closed her eyes…knowing how close he was to giving her everything she had wanted for so so long.

His beard felt rough but pleasing against her smooth skin, as he pressed several open mouthed kisses to her thigh, travelling slowly inwards towards the damp covering of her dripping heat.
Blake let out a breathy moan at this….held here in a state somewhere between pure bliss and utter torture, as his tanned and calloused digits skimmed over her thigh darting hurriedly down to the lacy fabric stretched across aching core.

Blake tensed her fingers around his shoulder, her breath hitching almost painfully at the well-needed contact now, as Negan removed his mouth grinning up at her, before slowly standing up straight, and stalking up the two steps between them, keeping his hand in place all the while.

"Fuck me, Darlin'," he growled. "You tellin' me, that after all this time of you playin' hard to fuckin' get and fending off my goddamn advances, you were really soakin' your panties for me….waitin' for me to put me to slip my hand between those legs of yours…."  

Blake bit down hard onto her bottom lip and gave a slow, pouting, needy nod, as Negan's fingers slid over the lacy material, now slick with her creamy wetness.

She gasped out gently, her pink and swollen lips parting, and her green and desperate eyes locked now, with his, as Negan's other hand reached up, grasping her chin.

"You sure you want this, Peaches?" he said, his bearded mouth hovering carefully over hers. "Because I can stop this right now if that's what you fuckin' want."

But before she could answer, Negan's fingers expertly glided their way over her throbbing clit, as he gazed at down at her with knowing dark eyes, well-aware of exactly what he was doing to her right now.

Blake suddenly reached up, grasping his leather-clad sleeve in her hand, her chest heaving now… leaving her with nothing but breathless audible pants, as she began to come undone.

She gave the smallest of whimpers, a hard gulp travelling down her neck, as Negan peered at her questioningly.

"You want me to stop, Doll?" he asked in a husky voice, leaning his long and tanned face into hers.

But Blake could only shake her head desperately.

"I want you fuck me," she breathed out, aching for him now.

And it was then, that Negan's lips, brushing gently against hers, curved up into a fiendish grin.

"Right fuckin' answer," he muttered hungrily.

And with that, before Blake could do anything to stop him, Negan suddenly let his hand fall from her wet panties, instead, reaching down and grasping both of her thighs hard and lifting her up with ease.

Blake gave a short panting breath of surprise, as he carried her up the last few steps and up onto the small landing.

It was dark up here, but neither of them paid much attention to this, Blake's slender arms threading themselves around Negan's shoulders as he kissed at her with need, lips lapping gently against the others', with each of them trying as hard as they could to catch their ragged breaths in between kisses.

Blake could feel herself aching for him now….this being everything she had dreamed of on on those long nights alone, with her fingers dipping down into her panties, dripping with her own cum, as she thought about him and what he could do to her.
She kissed him back hard now, mouths making such delicious noises against the other.

Negan in the darkness somehow managed to find a her bedroom, shoving the already ajar door open with his booted foot.

The wind in here was loud, and from the un-draped window, Blake was just about aware of how noisy the rain was, lashing against the pane, as the storm raged over their heads.

But neither of them seemed to care...far too wrapped up in the other.

When they were half way across the room, Negan let his lips fall from hers, letting her body down from his grip and allowing her to drop to the floor on bare feet.

But there seemed to be a hunger now that they perhaps wasn't out there in the hallway on the staircase. Probably sub-consciously everything to do with fact that they were in close proximity to her bed now. As one of Blake's hands hurriedly unzipped Negan's leather jacket fully now, slipping it from his shoulders, it landing on the floor behind them with a loud whump.

They kisses at each other feverently, now, as Negan growled into her mouth wolfishly, as if he had been starved of her for years….desperate for her taste on his tongue.

Blake somehow manged to pull her lips away from his for the briefest of moments, as she stepped back, suddenly pulling her pretty summer dress up and over her head, before tossing it unceremoniously to the floor.

But at this, Negan's eyes almost at once darkened, any hint of a smile disappearing from his face, as he stared at her now, standing there in just a navy bra and matching set of navy panties. And it was in that look alone, Blake could tell just how much he wanted her right now….looking like a animal ready to pounce on his prey…to eat them alive.

He licked slowly at his lips and strutting forwards, his chin lowered to his collarbone domineeringly, taking her all in.

"Oh, Peaches," he growled in a hungry voice. "You have no fuckin' idea how long I have been wanting to fuck you. Ever since I heard that smart-fuckin' mouth of your talk back to me, back in that fuckin' cell."

But at those words…Blake couldn't help but smile fiendishly back at him, as she pressed herself suddenly back into him now, trailing her hand slowly down his white t-shirt, his fingers coming to rest at his belt buckle.

"Well maybe talking back to you, isn't the only thing I can do with my mouth," she replied with a soft purr, and licking her lips, as her fingers began to undo his leather belt, and she dropped slowly to rest at his belt buckle.

She blinked up at him, with large round doe-eyes, biting on her lips excruciatingly slowly.

A frown line shifted almost immediately between Negan's brows now, as he stared down at her with a lustful dark gaze, his lips parting.

And it didn't take Blake long to feel Negan's stiff dick beneath his grey pants, as she undid his belt and pulled down his zipper. Now eye-level with his waist, instantly noticing how the dark-haired Saviour was commando beneath his jeans.

She shifted the material aside, allowing his stiff member to spring from its confinement, as she
grasped it gently within her hand.

And it took her only a second or two to wet her lips, and take his purple and stretched head in her mouth.

Instantly she heard Negan let out a harsh "Fuck" at the contact between them, which caused Blake to smile once again and stare up at him, as her tongue ran expertly up and down his length before taking him full in her mouth again, tasting his salty pre-cum as it eased from his twitching dick.

Negan's mouth once again emitted a loud guttural groan she had never heard from him before, as his hand came to rest on her head…his fingers curling into her hair.

But Blake was unrelenting, as she licked at him, moving her hand up and down his lengthy shaft, feeling him stiffening further within her grasp.

Her lips bobbed up and down over his tip, making sure her tongue was doing half the work, as Negan tangled his digits into her caramel-blond hair, bucking his hips gently into her mouth.

She chanced another glance up at him, noticing him frowning, his eyes closed, as he gulped hard, sending his bearded adam's-apple travelling down his throat, before rising up again.

"Jesus fuckin' Christ, Doll-face," he managed to utter thickly, as Blake took his entire length now into her mouth, gagging slightly at the contact with her throat, before pulling herself from him with a audible 'pop', and repeating the process once again…knowing just what kind of sensation that would send coursing through the dark-haired Saviour's body.

She heard Negan let out a sudden hard grunt, as his belt chinked with the rapid movement between them, before Negan's hand slowly slipped from Blake's hair, instant moving around to her jawline insisted, as he lifted her gaze suddenly to his face, causing her to pull back from his dick, breathing hard and looking like a scolded schoolgirl.

"On the bed, Princess," he growled, his voice harsher now than before, with a dark wanting look in his eye.

And Blake didn't need to be asked twice, as she got to her feet, sauntering over to the bed and sitting down gently, as Negan pulled his t-shirt over his head, revealing a tanned and lean torso beneath, with a smattering of dark hair which led all the way down the his hard cock, still sagging out from his unzipped jeans.

It wasn't a moment later that he had drawn the gap between them closed, hovering over her and capturing his lips with hers yet again in an ache-filled kiss.

His strong hand wrapped around her waist, and dragging her now, further up the bed.

Blake could feel his hard cock pressed up against her bare inner thigh, leaving a trail of dripping hot pre-cum, trailing across her smooth skin, as he mouth dove in to hers, his lips attacking hers again and again.

But Blake had barely raised a hand to his salt and pepper bearded face, when Negan pulled his mouth from hers, staring down at her with hooded lidded eyes…conveying what he wanted to her wordlessly.

But her reading him in her fraught and heated state, didn't really matter now, for Negan lowered himself slowly down her body, dipping his dark head and pressing hard open-mouthed kisses firstly to her collarbone, her upper breast, pulling down the strap on her bra and pulling out her left breast
from it, sucking at her nipple.

Blake let out a breathless moan, as the muscles in her stomach tightened at the contact and her hips thrusted up from the bed….so desperate for him now…as he ran his tongue slowly down to her chest….her stomach, peppering her lower abdomen with gentle kisses…

Blake lowered her hands to her hips now, making to push down her panties for him.

But Negan caught her in the act, instead giving a small reprimanding huff and pulling himself up and grasping her wrists tightly in his hands, and pinning the down either side of her shoulders.

"You really gonna take that job away from me, Sweetheart," he uttered in a husky tone, grinning now from ear-to-ear, as lightning flashed outside, illuminating his face for the briefest of moments.

But Blake, too wrapped up in her haze of longing to reply, merely watched as Negan, relieved her wrists of their bonds and slid his hand down to her hips, curling a finger around her soaked panties and pulling them swiftly down her legs.

He tossed them to the bed beside them, still grinning smugly, as he shifted her legs apart, and ducked his head down, pressing a a gentle kiss to her, now-bare, inner thigh, his eyes gazing now, at the view before him.

Blake arched her back, breath hard, coming apart before he had even had the chance to touch her where she wanted.

"You have the most perfect fuckin' pussy I've ever seen in my goddamn life, Peaches," he said, almost humming the words into her hot and pink core, as his beard grazed across her thighs. "An' I bet it tastes fuckin' good too."

And with that, Blake barely had time to react, as Negan pressed his flat tongue to her soaked slit, and lapping up her creamy wetness, finally reaching her small throbbing clit.

She cried out in a breathy gasp, her fingers grasping now at the cool white sheets either side of her, as she felt Negan chuckle into her lips.

"Like fuckin' honey, sweetheart," he hummed, before pressing a gentle open-mouthed kiss to her nub, sending shockwaves through her entire body, jolting her abdomen hard.

But Negan didn't stop there, as Blake sat herself up onto her elbows now, watching him at his work, dick still out of his pants and looking as hard as ever, as his tongue worked wonders on her aching, sopping wet pussy.

She gave another hard cry, tossing her head back suddenly as Negan lapped at her juices again, as his fingers travelled up, rubbing knowledgeably against her clit, making it tingle beneath his touch.

Blake was run ragged now, feeling herself get ever wetter now, as her chest rose and fell, her body tense with desperation.

She gaped at the air trying to speak, as Negan continued with his actions, his tongue dancing over her.

But it took all of the caramel-blonde woman's strength, to press a hand to his shoulder, causing his eyes to meet hers.

She gave a painful gulp, staring down to his eyes, so, so needy now….wanting him and only him.
"Fuck me, Negan…." she managed to breathe out, her tone one of utter begging. "…please…"

Blake saw Negan smile that arrogant smile of his, obviously knowing he had bettered her at her own game…

But the dark-haired Saviour should have known better than to be so cocky...especially with her.

For as Negan made to come up and lean over her once again, Blake pushed him swiftly from her, one hand on his shoulder....instead manoeuvring him around so that he was sitting on the edge of the bed, undone pants now half way down his thighs.

"Nuh-uh…" she purred seductively, smiling a wicked smile and moving off of the bed. "I want to ride you."

And with that, undoing her bra and throwing it aside, Blake climbed onto Negan's lap, straddling him, as he gazed up at her adoringly through dark chocolate eyes…as if in awe of her every moment.

She sat up on her knees for brief moment, pressing a smiling kiss to his bearded lips, as Negan's rough hands, grazed down her bare spine, before reaching down between them and grasping his now throbbing dick in her hand.

She could feel his head tight, stiff and sticky with pre-cum between her fingers, as she rocked backwards, allowing it to slide slickly across her drenched entrance.

She saw Negan let out a brief gulp again, but his chin was lowered now, his jaw clenched in a a look of sheer frustration.

He manged to hold out for along few seconds, before he parted his lips, groaning out an urging-
"Just fuckin' ride me already, Darlin'."

And Blake once again, smiled, doing exactly as she was told and lowering herself down onto his large dick.

But her smile only lasted for a pinprick of a moment, as she gasped, as she slid down onto him, as his cock stretched her wide, filling her up to her core.

Negan too let out a severe groan, as his eyes darkened, and he lifted her slightly with one hand against her lower back and one at the narrow of her waist, before pulling her back down onto him hard.

Blake let out another sharp cry and her eyes rolled back in her head as the pair of them repeated the motion…again…and again…building momentum, Blake bucked her hips, placing both hands to his shoulders as she locked eyes with him.

This was everything both had them had wanted for so long….and was better than Blake could ever have imagined it being.

Their pace was building now, as she felt him sliding in and out of her soaking wet entrance, perfectly moulded for him.

Negan's hands were rough at her sides, and she guessed that his fingers would likely leave bruises and marks on her skin in the morning, but she didn't care. A few weeks ago, she would have been privy to much less pleasurable bruises than these.

Blake felt her eyes closing lazily, a pleasure building inside her now, as she rode his dick, faster and
faster...the sounds of rain outside barely masking the bed creaking beneath them, or the sound of skin on skin slapping against each other.

But there was only so fast Blake's hips could move, even with Negan's help at her waist…

….and so giving a small grunt, the bearded Saviour grabbed roughly at her waist, pulling her to him….and in one sleek movement, rolled her onto her back….all while his cock still twitched inside her.

The angle here was better…for both Negan and Blake, and he leaned over her, entwining his fingers with hers and pinning them either side of her head, leaving her utterly and hopelessly at his mercy.

Negan's speed now quickened, his hips pounding into her wet core hard and fast, as his lips caught hers, his tongue forcing its way into her mouth.

She could taste herself on his tongue now…acidic and yet sweet….as he grunted into her, before he could stop himself, causing Blake to let out a moan of her own as her please began to build.

"Holy-fuckin'-shit, Doll," he managed to groan out, as he pulled back, his breath now ragged as he pressed his heavy brow to hers, his gaze meeting with her green lust-filled orbs, as he plunged his dick into her again and again. "Daddy ain't gonna last long at this fuckin' rate."

But Blake knew she wasn't too far behind him now, hearing their contact wet between them now, Negan's throbbing cock now slick with her juices.

Blake arched her back, her eyelids fluttering closed, almost there, when she felt Negan's hand suddenly move from hers, instead sliding down to the space between them, and darting his fingers over her swollen and tingling clit.

And it was then that, Blake's breath hitched sharply, her free hand moving to Negan's shoulder, his fingernails grazing across his skin.

"Ohhh…" she whimpered. "…nghhh…Negan….I…"

But before she could let out another ragged, word, Negan's hips ground into her roughly, sending shockwaves flowing through her entire body….

…..coming completely undone…

She arched her back, her eyes rolling back into her head, as Negan pressed a kiss to the space between her breasts, before feeling her clench around his cock…

...as she came hard….

….her head taught against the cool sheets behind her….crying out in sheer pleasurable agony, her thighs shaking as she did so.

But at this, feeling her spilling her juices all over his already sodden cock, Negan let out a loud audible '…fuck…' before grasping his dick suddenly in his hand and sliding it from Blake's throbbing pussy.

He gave a few swift pumps, leaning over her tight and slender body, his eyes now black with a carnal lust, as he gazed down at her, before he finally parted his lips and grunted, as he doused Blake's smooth abdomen with load after load of hot cum sending it shooting up and peppering the underside of her heaving breasts.
His hand moved against his cock, pressing it to her skin, as the last of it oozed from his tip onto her stomach.

Blake blinked tiredly, exhausted, but somehow in the gloom of the room, with the rain lashing against the windows outside, her eyes still managed to find his chocolate ones.

She gave the smallest gulps, before giving a soft sort of smile…

..that was thankfully reciprocated just a moment later by Negan, who grinned, panting hard, trying to catch his breath as he stared down at her.

"Fuck me, Peaches," he finally huffed out. "Why the shit weren't we doing that weeks ago?"

And with that, he grasped up her abandoned panties from the mattress beside him, before wiping up every inch of his sticky cum from her body, before balling the underwear up in his hand and tossing it over his shoulder onto the floor.

He gave a chuckle, leaning over her before he once again captured his lips in her, pressing his fingers to her slender neck and pulling her up to meet him.

Blake smiled once again into his kiss, and gave a small relieved laugh, as a crack of thunder echoed loudly overhead.

"What's so funny?" he asked, pulling back slightly, his bearded chin tickling her cheek, as he eyed her bemusedly in the darkness.

But Blake just shrugged, licking her lips and coming to sit up on the bed as Negan eased himself from her.

"I guess now that we've fucked, you can leave," she said glancing away and looking at the clock on her nightstand in a mock-tone of boredom. "Door's over there."

But Negan merely grinned, letting out a small appreciative chuckle, as his hand suddenly darted to her waist.

"Oh I ain't goin' anywhere, Darlin'" he said raising both his eyebrows fiendishly.

He gave a poignant nod, and stared at her with a teasing look.

"You and me...well, we're cuddlin', Doll-face."

And with that, Blake let out a squeal of laughter as Negan pinned her back down onto the bed….

….kissing her hard once more.
Bed and chocolate pudding

It was unusual to have much many rainstorms in this part of the world, but the residents of Alexandria and the surrounding camps often found that these days, when it rained, it really rained.

And tonight was no exception.

Water was falling in sheets now, gushing down the guttering and flooding the pathways between the houses.

Arat, Dwight, and Danny, a large beefy black Saviour, were sat under a porch opposite Blake's house, with a bottle of whisky they had snatched from one of the homes nearby.

"I fold," uttered Dwight giving a huff and tossing his cards down onto the table on the deck between the three of them.

It had to be at least one thirty in the morning now, but the three of them, used to often being up all night under Negan's orders, cared little about tiredness, but more about the extra points they could score from this game of poker they were currently playing.

Arat gave a chuckle, keeping her cards against her chest, taking a swig from the bottle of whisky, before wiping her mouth with the back of her hand.

"Alright, I call," she said as she placed the bottle back down on the wooden table. "Lay them out."

Danny smirked up at her, before nodding confidently and laying his card down on the table as instructed.

"Flush," he said leaning back in his seat and folding his arms across his broad chest confidently.

But Arat gave a sudden loud laugh, slapping her own hand of cards down onto the table beside Danny's.

"Full house!" she yelled back, with a loud whoop, clearing up the pile of now slightly damp and ruined matchsticks that sat before her.

Danny gave a groan, staring up at the roof of the porch.

"Screw you, Arat," he said a little grumpily, as Dwight gave a chuckle, running a hand across his ginger goatee.

Suddenly from their left, one of the residents of the house they were currently sitting outside, drew back her drapes and peered out at them unhappily.

But the three Saviours merely ignored her, going back to their drinking, Arat grasping all the cards back into the pack and beginning to shuffle them in her tanned fingers.

After a moment or two of silence, with the only noise coming from the rain falling all around them, Arat chanced a glance up to the looming white house across the street opposite.

"You think they've screwed yet?" she asked in a casual tone, her eyes darting back lazily to the other two men, who knew at once who the curly-haired woman was talking about.

"Well it's about time that they did," said Danny, who, even at a rank below Arat and Dwight, was
still familiar with Negan's affection for the caramel-blonde woman who had comes to stay at the Sanctuary for a short-time. "I mean how long has she been holding out on him now? A month, maybe two? I've never seen anyone get under his skin like that before."

Arat sighed. "Well either way, I hope he takes her back with us this time. I'm getting' sick of coming here and dealing with these people's attitudes all the time."

She gestured to where the older woman was still staring out at them, mouthing something back to her husband behind her.

Danny, at this, eyed the woman, who hurriedly dropped the drape back down and disappeared from sight.

"I'm surprised he hasn't just made her one of his wives by now already though," said the large black man, taking a sip of whisky before pulling a face. "That way she wouldn't have much a choice, but to come back with us when he asked."

But at Danny's words, Dwight, at his side, gave a loud scoff, leaning his elbow on the edge of his seat.

"Or maybe Negan only makes women who don't actually want to be with him, his wives," he said in a scathing tone, which only made Arat give a dark frown his direction.

"Well don't let him or Simon hear you say that," said Arat in a low tone, peering at the skinny blonde man to her right.

Danny also nodded, a little sternly.

"Yeah," he agreed. "Maybe you shouldn't have any more to drink tonight, D."

The large black man instantly leaned across, making to grab the bottle of dark alcohol from the table….

…. just as, from around the corner, through the pouring rain, the three of them heard the sudden sound of the large gates to the settlement being dragged hastily open.

Arat almost rolled her eyes, picking up her gun and getting to her feet, pressing her lips together.

"Look like Rick's back," she muttered coolly, as the other two men hurriedly followed suit.

--------------------------------------------------

"Y'know, if I'd have known what kind of filthy fuckin' shit I was missin' out on, I'd have screwed your brains out a long time ago, Sweetheart," Negan murmured huskily into Blake's caramel hair.

The two adults were currently sat in bed in the dark, both completely naked, the storm still raging outside, with rain lashing violently against the window to their right.

Blake was lying back against Negan's taut body, as he sat up, propped against the headboard, his arms curled around her slender torso. But the caramel-blonde woman currently had a spoon in one hand and an ancient, battered old can of chocolate pudding in the other.

She smiled now, bringing the spoon up to her lips and sucking off the sweet chocolatey goodness.

"Who says I would've let you…" she murmured back teasingly, as Negan gave a chuckle in reciprocation.
"Oh, there is no way after what we just did, that you can deny how hot for me you actually are, Darlin'," he said in that usual low husky voice of his. "I saw how quickly you were willing to get down on your knees and blow me."

Blake bit at her lips, smirking naughtily and staring down into the tin of pudding.

"And I saw how quickly you were willing to have me ride your dick, Daddy," she purred back, taking a small amount of chocolate onto the spoon again and lifting it over her shoulder to Negan’s mouth. "You better get used to having me on top, by the way…"

Negan let out a throaty growl of appreciation at her comment, before taking the spoon in his mouth and eating what she was offering him.

They were a good match that was for sure. Blake knowing full well that she could get to him, as easily as he could get to her.

"So, you cuddle with all your wives after sex?" she asked in a nonchalant voice, as she placed the spoon back into the tin of pudding, sliding it onto the nightstand beside them, before settling back down against Negan's firm and tanned chest, as thunder crashed overhead once more.

She heard Negan let out a brief sigh, before answering. "I don't usually let them stick around long enough, Doll," he said as his tanned and calloused fingers threaded themselves easily through hers. "A guy needs his fuckin' beauty sleep."

Blake tutted shortly.

"So should I consider myself a special case then? Or is this more a one off thing?" she responded in a slightly sarcastic tone.

But Negan gave yet another dark chuckle into her hair, resting his bearded chin to the side of her head.

"Oh, Peaches, you've been a goddamn special case since you were dragged from that fucking cell, and I gave you some of my favourite lemonade," he hummed slowly into her ear. "And as for this being a one off thing, well that shit is up to you. If that's what you want, I can take the rest of that chocolate pudding there and go, and you don't ever have to hear from me again…or alternatively, you can hop back up onto Daddy's lap again and we can go for round fuckin' two."

Blake couldn't help but smile at this, taking in a breath and turning back to gaze at him.

"Well actually, I was talking about cuddling being a one off thing, not the sex," she said in a silky tone, wrinkling her nose slightly as she spoke. "….but if you think you can handle another round…"

And with that, as if on cue, Blake felt his ever-stiffening dick, press against her lower back, as she grinned, turning around and doing as he said. Coming to straddle his bare thighs with hers.

Negan stared at her with a smirk lingering across his smug, bearded face now, as he looked her up and down greedily, taking her all in…as his hands grazed down her naked sides.

She could see in his eyes the way he looked at her now….almost in awe of how her tits bounced slightly as she ground down on him, or how her waist nipped in at the middle…curving outwards again at her tanned, rounded hips.

He was enamoured…and so was she, right at this moment…the pair of them, completely wrapped up in the other, with no distractions….
"Oh, I can handle it, Darlin'," Negan growled, tilting his head forwards and kissing gently at her collarbone, as one of his calloused hands drifted up to one of her breasts giving it a hard and needy squeeze, which made Blake let out a soft moan, letting her head roll back and her eyes drift closed.

From this position, Negan had access the entirely of Blake's slender neck, peppering her smooth skin with open-mouthed kisses, as she felt herself becoming wet for him for the second time tonight.

But she had barely had time to get lost in the moment….when there came a loud bashing on the front-door downstairs.

And even through the noisy rainfall, Rick's loud voice could be heard shouting from outside on the porch.

"Negan!" he yelled, as Arat, Michonne and Dwight's voices were also heard yelling something incoherent to one another, from a short way away.

A frown soon shifted its way over both Negan's and Blake's faces, both severely annoyed that they had been disturbed in their moment, Blake eyes snapping open grumpily.

Negan growled under his breath, scowling in the direction of the front window that looked down upon the street below, arching a dark eyebrow.

"You gonna give me permission to kill that fuckin' prick, Peaches?" he murmured grimly, in a voice filled with utter contempt.

But Blake, who pursed her lips together, clambering off his lap, sliding from the bed and getting to her feet, shook her blonde head.

"No," she huffed, peering out of the rainy window pane and staring down at a blur of figures, now standing out in the darkness of the street below. "But I'll be glad to see the back of him…that's for sure."

Completely naked now, Blake turned back from the window, to see Negan sitting on the far side of the mattress pulling on his grey pants, belt chinking as he went.

She ran a hand through her long hair, before padding over to the bedroom door without another word.

"You goin' out there to confront him like that, Peaches?" asked Negan suddenly, just as she was about to head out into the dark upstairs landing.

Blake glanced back at him over her shoulder, to see the bearded man staring over at her naked body fiendishly, grinning widely from ear-to-ear. But the caramel-blond woman only tutted, rolling her eyes.

"No, I'm just going to use the bathroom," she said with a faux-huff of annoyance. "…get myself cleaned up."

She shot him a frowning look, gesturing to her slender abdomen, which only a short while ago, Negan had coated in his glistening ejaculate.

But Negan just tilted his chin back, with a knowing 'huh'…before poking his tongue out between his line of white teeth, before getting swiftly to his feet and pacing cockily across the room towards her.
"Or maybe…” he said raising both eyebrows suggestively, as he stopped a mere breath away from her, his finger trailing down between her breasts now and down her middle, coming to stop just below her belly-button, causing Blake to catch her breath slightly, getting lost in his lustful gaze. "…maybe, Daddy can cum over that pretty little body of yours again, before Rick realises the door downstairs has actually been unlocked this whole time."

Blake blinked, shaking herself. As her eyes suddenly blackened into a dark scowl.

She let out the angriest of huffs, before she shoved the dark-haired Saviour hurriedly away from her and turned on her heel, stalking into the bathroom across the landing.

"I hate you sometimes," she called back to him, in a pissed-off sounding voice, knowing full well that Negan was probably standing behind her right now, an arrogant grin plastered across his long, tanned face. "...asshole..."

…and with that, she slammed the door…leaving the tall, dark-haired Saviour, chuckling loudly behind her…
"Ok, Ok, I'm coming," said Blake in an irritable voice, as she hurried down the stairs, pulling her skimpy summer dress back over her head as she did so.

It was about 2.15 now and she had, of course, kept an impatient Rick waiting for at least ten minutes now, whilst she had hurriedly showered and Negan had gotten slowly dressed.

The tall, dark-haired Saviour came thudding down the stairs behind her now, chuckling to himself and running a hand down his scrubby salt and pepper beard, giving a hearty sigh.

"Jesus," Negan groaned as Rick bashed his fist against the outside of the front door yet again. "The fucker seriously doesn't give up does he?"

Blake, who tucked a strand of hair behind her ear, finally reaching the downstairs hallway, glanced at him over her shoulder and gave a brief smirk.

"You really have no idea," she sighed a little, shaking her head, before relaxing her shoulders, composing herself and turning back to the door.

Did she really want to do this? Try to confront Rick. Try to explain everything to him?

Not at all. But she knew she had to. All she wanted to do was to make these people, her friends, see just why she was going back with Negan.

Her plan was to stay here until the day after tomorrow, mainly to give herself the chance to make things right with the people here. And that of course would be easier without Negan's looming presence.

She understood completely why they didn't like him, of course she did. He was intimidating, unpredictable and menacing.

But there was a side of him now, that only Blake seemed to be privy to. A man who would do almost anything for her…who held her…who dried her tears…who brought her breakfast and let her walk all over him.

Blake knew for a fact this was a side he would never present to Rick and the people here, but she needed to explain to them just why she was making the decision to leave them. It wasn't because she had turned against them in any way, despite them having locked her in a house for a week, or even was conspiring against them. No. All Blake wanted, was to be happy. And that meant going back to the place she had never in a million years thought she would think of as home.

But the Sanctuary, well, it did feel like a home to her now….as dingy and as dank as certain parts of it could be…there she felt safe and cared for…there she felt like she had a purpose…knowing exactly what that was now.

She hadn't realised it at first, but she had slotted into the position Negan had given to her so well….

For here Blake was just a person….a boring, lonely woman….who had been knocked around by her husband, who people here had actually liked, perhaps even preferred to her!

But there at the Sanctuary, she was a Queen. A force to be reckoned with in this world…revered by all. And that was all down to one person…
The man stood just a few feet away from her now.

"Here, let me, Darlin'" Negan muttered into her ear as he grasped up the long-abandoned Lucille from the sideboard in the hallway, reaching over Blake and grabbing for the door handle.

He had control of this situation, she knew that. But part of her feared his big and bolshy attitude would only make matters worse here on this stormy and already-turbulent night.

But before she could stop him, Negan had tugged open the white front door…. to be met, not only with Rick stood there, soaked to the skin and looking furious. But also a large group of both Saviours, and folks from Alexandria who had gathered there, on the street below, in the torrential downpour.

The people out there all seemed to illuminated from the orange streetlamp just outside Blake's porch, all now turned towards both Blake and the bearded Saviour, who stood smugly before her.

"Well hello there, Rick," uttered Negan, flashing his pearly white teeth in Rick's direction once he had seen that his men and women had control of the situation, guns all pointed at the Alexandrians. "Now what did I do to deserve this late night call, hmmm?"

But Rick just scowled back at Negan, raising his chin and narrowing his eyes. "I should ask you the same question," he snarled in reply. "We had a deal. You said once a month-

But Negan suddenly made a face, obviously not appreciating being spoken to in that manner.

The dark haired Saviour suddenly rounded on Rick on the porch, licking his lips and raising Lucille up in front of the brown haired-man's face.

"Well shit, Rick," he snapped loudly, causing a small hush to fall of the crowd of people below. "Last time I checked, I made the decisions around here, an' not you. And if I want to drop by for a visit, then I goddamn fuckin' will."

Blake watched as Rick gave a short gulp, his eyes flickering from the Saviour's strong gaze uncomfortably.

But Blake took in a short breath of air before stepping out onto the porch herself and gazing around the mass of people below.

And it was, at this, her breath caught in her throat. For there, standing in the rain, were people she had considered her friends…..Tara, Eric, Aaron, Steve, even Rosita, just a few months ago. But now, here they were, staring up at her, with nothing but disgust and hatred plastered across their grimacing faces.

"Negan," Blake said suddenly, braking her eyes away and staring around at the bearded Saviour on her left, who was stood, leering over Rick.

Negan at once turned his head to look at her questioningly. For her voice was now softer than before, full of a pleading that only she might be able to manage to use with him.

"….I need you to go…..please….

She stuttered out the words, her eyes almost welling with something. A frustration and a desperation. A hope that perhaps she could make these people come around to her way of thinking. For them to see sense.
If they listened to her…cooperated with the Saviours….perhaps she could try and bargain with Negan himself….make him ease off them a little. They were her people after all. Maybe this could be good…for all of them. Maybe Blake could work it so that Rick could be more an ally to Negan, than a minion.

She took another deep breath and waited for a response, watching as Negan pursed his lips firmly together, gazing back at her with a dark chocolate gaze.

She knew that despite all that had happened between them up on that bed just an hour or so ago, Negan still remembered her request. She would stay here until her birthday in two days’ time. And then she would leave with him.

But right now, he did not in fact look completely at ease with this situation.

He clenched his jaw, his dark eyes not leaving hers.

"You sure about that, Peaches?" he asked somewhat imploring, looking as though he wanted nothing more than to take her by the hand, drag her down the steps and as far away from these people as possible.

But to Blake's relief he relented.

And she gave a short nod in return, wordlessly conveying to him what she wanted, without trying to dictate anything to him in front of Rick or the others. For she knew just how that would look, if Negan seemed like he had any sort of weakness.

Negan let out a long huff of air, looking a little irate and dragging his eyes away from hers.

"Arat, Dwight," he called out loudly. "Alright, let's move out, leave these good folks to their beauty-sleep."

He gave a wide grin, looking down at Rick and leaning his face close to the brown-haired man’s. "An you, Rick, will have to remember your goddamn manners the next time you see me. Because you are getting' to be mighty fuckin' insolent, compadre."

And with a small satisfied chuckle, Negan stood up straight again, turning on his heel and marching back over the top of the steps coming to stop at Blake's side for a brief second.

"You sure about all this, Sweetheart?" he asked, his tone much softer now. "Because we have space for you in my truck if you change your mind and wanted to come back with us right now?"

Blake bit at her lips, wanting so much to do that right now, but she merely lifted a hand, placing it gently to Negan's leather jacket, before pulling her digits swiftly away before anyone could really notice.

"I'll be fine," she said with a small hint of a reassuring smile. "Just make sure you bring me back a gift on my birthday, ok?"

And with that, Negan's lips just curved up into a small smirk, and he bumped his lean shoulder gently with hers as he swiftly stalked down the steps, swinging Lucille up onto his shoulder confidently as she did so.

Within a few seconds Negan had marched through the crowd, followed by Dwight and the other Saviours, beginning to walk away off around the corner, before finally disappearing from sight.
Blake gave the smallest of gulps, wandering down the porch steps, stepping into the rain for the first time, coming to stop at the very bottom, as she watched them go, knowing exactly what was coming.

And as predicted, Rick was the first one who spoke.

"Blake!" he called angrily from behind her, once the Saviours were all gone from view of the rainy street. "We need to talk. Now-"

But before Rick even had time to yell out the last word, Rosita has stepped forwards emerging from the crowd looking angrier than Blake had ever seen her….. pulling a large knife from her belt.

"I should kill you!" cried the brown haired, cap-wearing woman furiously, suddenly lunging at Blake.

Blake almost immediately let out a small muffled cry, as she reached out her hand just in time to grab a hold of Rosita's shoulder, as the woman pushed her backwards, causing her to topple to the ground.

Blake's spine collided painfully with the wooden porch steps, as she stared up into Rosita's seething face through the falling rain.

"We should never had trusted you," cried the woman loudly, as Blake tried desperately to grasp a hold of Rosita's skinny wrist, trying to keep the knife that was pointed at Blake's face, as far away from her as possible. "You and him!? You utter bitch!"

Rosita kneed Blake in the ribs, causing her to cry out sharply, wincing, all whilst trying her hardest from being impaled.

"You don't know anything!" shouted Blake back, as Rosita jabbed the knife at Blake's neck….but Bake managed to dodge out of the way just in time, as the blade's sharp edge missed her by a mere fraction of an inch.

But thankfully, before Rosita could try again, the brown-haired woman was suddenly hauled off of Blake.

"Enough, Rosita!" cried the hoarse voice of Rick, as he and Sasha grappled with the angry woman, pulling her away from the now soaking-wet and muddy Blake….who was now laid across the ground, panting, her heart racing at a mile a minute.

But Rosita let out a loud cry of frustration, her teeth gritted, trying desperately to escape from Sasha and Rick's clutches, so much so that a nearby Father Gabriel even helped them in keeping her pinned to the spot.

But that did not stop Rosita from launching poisonous words back at Blake yet again, as Blake with a heaving chest, and aching wet body, propped herself up onto her elbows, staring up at the manic woman with a frown lingering between her brows.

"He killed Abraham, and Glenn, and Spencer, and you're here…..screwing him!?” Rosita shrieked, as Rick managed to prise the knife from her hand, sending it clattering to the rain-sodden ground.

Blake felt her breath hitch painfully at these words, knowing they were indeed nothing but true.

Now all around, cold faces stared down at her…people she had said hi to, each and every morning… people's whose houses she had gone around for dinner…people she had considered friends. But now they had nothing but an indignant upon their faces, as they frowned darkly back at her.
She would of course not find any sympathy here….she had known that all along….

But trust…..trust was something she had hoped she would always have from these people. But here and now, even that was, too, absent.

"I should have killed you the first chance we had, as soon as you walked back through those gates," Rosita snarled again, as Blake noticed Tara step forward too, out of the crowd, staring down at Blake, her brows turned downwards in a look of utter worry. "Back when you gave us all that bullshit about David-"

But Blake's eyes suddenly snapped back towards Rosita darkly.

Her heart thudding to a stop inside her chest, as everything around fell silent.

"What did you say?" murmured the caramel-blonde woman in a quiet voice, as rain fell all around her now. She blinked heavily and got to her feet, her eyes never leaving Rosita's.

But Rosita, still struggling in Rick, Sasha and Gabriel's arms let out another growl of anger, snapping at Blake.

"Well, we're all thinking it," said the brown-haired woman suddenly, calming slightly and shrugging her captors' arms from her and standing up straight, pointing over at Blake. "How do we expect to believe you didn't just plan all this with Negan, huh? You just kill David to get him out of the way, so you could get what you wanted, and then make up some stupid story about him hitting you-"

But Blake, at this, gaped, anger building inside her. Her cheeks flushed brightly as her blood began to boil.

She dragged her eyes away, looking now to Tara….

To Rick..

To Eric…

"I-Is that really what you all think!?" she said shaking her head as angry tears pricked at her eyes.

But none of them answered her, all of them staring back with a kind of hopeless, hurt-filled indifference.

Blake could feel her lips quivering, looking once again, back to her friend, who was stood just a few feet away from her now.

"Tara?" she asked in a questioning voice.

But Tara just looked away, unable to keep up with the eye contact any longer, turning her back on Blake almost at once, before disappearing off into the crowd.

And that alone hurt more than a knife ever could.

Blake stared after her, wanting to call out, but before she could, a voice to her left spoke again.

"We all liked David," said Rosita, with a sneer, as rain dripped down the front of her cap. Blake's green eyes flicked back to her now. "He was a good guy. And suddenly you come back and tell us that he was hitting you. And now you have that asshole Negan making house calls as well? Well excuse us for not believing you, Blake!"
But at this, Blake gave a snarl, lowering her chin darkly, her eyes blackening.

"You have no fucking idea what I went through," she said taking a couple of steps forwards, not just addressing Rosita now, but the whole crowd. "...back in this house with David. While you were all going about your fucking business...talking...chatting...sleeping...killing walkers...he was hitting me...spitting on me...practically forcing me to have sex with him, even on nights where I didn't want to. He made my life hell and that's the truth."

Everyone around her's gazes suddenly dropped away now, all looking ashamed.

"And I came out here each and every day and spoke to you like everything was ok, because in my eyes it was. Because you know what? I just blamed myself from all the things he was doing. Because David had told me it was my fault, that I made him do these things. And yeah, that's when he could go out there, turn on the charm and talk to you...socialise with you...because forget the walkers out there....David was a bigger monster than any of them, because unlike those dead shits...or like Negan...he was able to hide all that from the outside world. And the only person he took it out on was me," Blake continued. "And yes, in the end, I couldn't bare the words...the beatings...the bruises...I-I just couldn't take it anymore."

Blake gave a difficult gulp.

"So I killed him," she said half blankly, raising her chin defiantly. "I took Negan's baseball bat and I killed him...beat him half to death and shoved him into a cage full of walkers. And why? Because I'm not taking it anymore. Not from David, certainly not from bitches like you....and not even from Negan."

Blake brushed down the back of her pants, bring herself up to her full height.

"And just so you know, I wanted to give you all another chance, I wanted you all to see things from my point of view, make you understand that the Saviours...that Negan...that they aren't the monsters you think they are. But now...well, I see that's there's no point I even trying to make you see sense," Blake uttered grimacing at them all, staring at the faces in the crowd she recognised so well. "Because all lot do is gossip about me behind my back, keep me locked inside a house, doubt what I've told you about being abused....all of you....you're not even worth saving..."

She stared darkly out at the crowd....of the people she had once considered her friends, who were only strangers to her now.

"...you aren't anyone..."

And with that, Blake, still now her rain-sodden dress, bare feet, wet caramel hair sticking to her shoulders, walked forwards, parting the crowd as she went.

But this only caused Rosita to gape, looking at once to Rick, who was stood there, staring blankly after a Blake, a tick moving in his jaw.

"Aren't you going to stop her?" Rosita cried angrily, looking wide-eyed and furious.

But Blake turned her head to look at both her, Rick and Sasha as she passed, giving a growl and narrowing her eyes blackly.

"You even try to stop me Rick, and the moment Negan comes back here, I'll get him to make the Saviours gun you all down. We clear?" she snarled, not even waiting to hear answer.

And so, lifting her gaze back up ahead of her, she marched forwards. She was trembling now, but
she wasn't about to show any of these people, not Rick, not Rosita, not Sasha, not anyone else, how
nervous and frightened she was.

For here she was saying goodbye to this life, to these people she had once considered family. But all
this. It was their doing, not hers.

And so, shoving through the crowd of people, Blake emerged onto the empty asphalt road, turning
left and following in the direction Negan had gone, just ten minutes ago... rounding the corner and
leaving, heading out of sight of the large crowd of people, having left her home and her front door
now wide open...

...for that was no longer her home. She completely knew that now.

But Blake raised her head, picking up the pace now as she walked through the rain on bare feet.

Perhaps the Saviours were still around now, loading themselves into the trucks....

But as she paced down the puddle-filled walkway, there was no sign of the Saviours battered old
trucks through the fenced off gate up ahead.

"Shit," Blake muttered to no one but herself.

But she knew for a fact she couldn't stay here. Not now.

And so, heading a little further around the corner, Blake spotted just what she was looking for, letting
out a shaky breath of air.

For there it was, where she had expected it to be..

The blue car Rick normally used on runs out.

It was speedy, reliable and usually gassed up.

Blake hurriedly paddled over to it and peered inside the rain-sodden windows. And her heart almost
skipped a beat as she saw what was inside.

There they were, the keys, with a small furry monkey keychain hanging limply from them, still there
in the ignition where Rick had likely left them just a half hour ago.

Blake hurriedly got inside, out of the torrential rain, slamming the door behind her, adrenaline still
pumping through her veins.

She didn't really have a plan, but all she wanted to do was to get out of here pronto, and hopefully
catch up with Negan on the road.

And so, turning over the engine easily, the tank gauge almost reaching half-way full, Blake put her
foot onto gas, swinging the car around and coming to slow stop just in front of the gates.

She rolled down her window and peered out, only to see an youngish black man she barely
recognised amble over.

"Uh, isn't that Rick's car?" he asked a little unsure, leaning against the window to talk to her under
the sound of the falling rain. He obviously hadn't been witness to the spectacle outside her house just
a few moments ago.

Blake wiped hastily at her tears strewn face, hoping the drizzle would have done most of the work in
covering them up anyway.

"Yeah, he told me I could borrow it," she said in her most convincing voice, flashing him a small smile.

But again the man looked a little hesitant.

"Are you sure you want to be going out there in the middle of the night on your own….in this?" he glanced up at the stormy sky.

But Blake gave him an easy wave of her hand.

"I'll be fine," she said smiling again at him, her knee jiggling just off the peddle nervously.

And it was a long, drawn-out, excruciating second, before he finally sighed and stood up straight.

"Well, suit yourself," he murmured shrugging and walking over and tugging open the large looming gates.

And with that, throwing him one last wave, before winding up her window, Blake drove swiftly through the gates, and the walls of Alexandria…

…..heading out onto the open road.

--------------------------------------------

It seemed to be raining harder now, with puddles forming on the road and the car's windows peppered with ever-falling raindrops.

Blake hoped now that the Saviours' hadn't gotten far, but even switching on her headlights and putting on her wipers, it was still pretty difficult to see anything out here.

Blake had been driving for a good twenty minutes….not taking the usual way out of camp, but instead, taking the route that Negan had used when he had dropped Blake off here several long, long weeks ago. Surely he would go this way, the fastest route back to the Sanctuary?

Being out here….out the confinement of that house…Blake couldn't help but feel her spirits lift….feeling happier than she had in weeks.

Last night had certainly helped in that. Sharing that particular moment with Negan, was more that she could ever have expected.

His touch, his taste….his body pressed against hers….he was everything to her. And Blake could only hope that from his reaction, it had been the same for him too.

She smiled to herself now, sitting there in the driver's seat in nothing but a sodden summer dress, her foot all the way down on the gas, going at least eighty down the empty, dark, tree-lined road, as the rain fell heavier than ever, all around her.

Blake flicked a strand of damp hair from her eyes, distracting herself for the tiniest of moments….

But that had been the worst mistake she could have made…

As the moment she focused her eyes through the rain…back onto the road ahead…. 

…..a sudden dead and decaying figure appeared, illuminated in her headlights on the road ahead….
"Fuck!" Blake could only cry, in fright as she turned the steering wheel sharply, desperately trying to avoid an impact with the figure, for she could not afford a broken windshield out here alone on the road.

But as she swerved out, she found that the wheels of the vehicle just skidded sideways across the wet asphalt below…

…the car spinning out of control….

Blake let out a sharp scream, trying as hard as she could to regain control….

But it was too late….

As the vehicle careened off of the road at a high speed, tearing into a set of trees…

….and finally landing sideways in a large ditch….

A hissing from the engine, as well as a beeping coming from somewhere near the steering wheel was the only thing that could be heard….

...everything else was still...

….including the rumpled figure of Blake, who was sprawled forwards, lying unconscious against the dash...
The dark road ahead

It was silent in the cab of the truck, with the only sound that could be heard, being the heavy rain, hammering down against the roof. But everyone else inside, was silent, Arat in the driver's seat, Danny to her right, and Negan with his elbow propped up against the window, hand over his bearded mouth, staring out of the steam-covered window beside him.

He was slumped down into his seat, with Lucille propped up over one knee, and his brow fixed into a heavy frown.

Neither Arat or Danny had dared speak since Negan had given the order to park up here, just a little way away from Alexandria, about ten minutes ago.

And Negan, feeling huffy and a little irritable to say the least, had not explained the reason why they were stopped here instead of speeding back down the road ahead, and making their way back to the Sanctuary.

But to be honest even Negan himself did not really know why he had told them to pull up the trucks….just waiting….

Perhaps part of him wanted to go back for her….to make sure she was ok…Blake….

He didn't trust those people even the tiniest fucking bit. And knew just what they were fucking capable of.

So he would wait for short time here, while he made his mind up whether or not to go back for her tonight.

Blake, as Negan knew full-well, was pretty strong willed. But even so, Negan wanted more than anything to make sure she was safe….wanting to protect her beyond anything else in this fucking world.

Negan was besotted with her, and after last night, even more so now than ever before.

She was perfection to him, in fucking human form, and right now she was the only good thing he had in his life.

For the first time in a long, long time, Negan wasn't just living day-to-day….instead, he looked forward to getting up, to seeing her smirking face….hearing her teasing voice….

He had known for what seemed like an age now, that he was well and truly fucked.

Smitten with her.

Completely and utterly.

They had only been there about fifteen minutes, sitting in utter silence with the engine turned off, when suddenly seemingly out of nowhere, speeding down the road adjacent to the one they were currently waiting on, came the bright headlights from a vehicle of some sort.

It was going a fast, pelting down the road, going perhaps a little more than seventy down the road, its lights flickering between the trees as it went, before disappearing from sight.

Negan pulled his hand from his chin, sitting up a little straighter now.
The car or whatever it was, had taken the second route out of the small settlement, down the path that Negan and the Saviours usually used to travel in and out of Alexandria.

But tonight, thinking that anyone that might follow them, might take this main road out of the town, Negan had dictated to Arat that they go this way, coming to stop here just a little further up the track.

Negan from the corner of his eye, saw Arat and Danny both look in inquisitively his way.

"Want me to get the other truck to go follow it boss?" Arat asked promptly, with the right amount of respect in her voice.

But Negan let out a hard huff and was silent for a long long moment, pondering.

Maybe it was time they took off anyway. Negan knew he had a hard time listening and honouring other people's requests but knew that with Blake he needed to be different. He need to respect what she wanted…

And if that meant leaving her here for a couple of days to talk things out with Rick the Prick and the others, then he would allow her that at least.

And so, with a wave of his hand, sinking back down into his seat, Negan finally spoke.

"No, let's get on after it ourselves," he said in a gruff tone. "See what ol' speedy-fuckin'-Gonzalez is up to at this time of night."

And, with a sharp nod from Arat, the curly-haired woman started up at the engine and circled the truck promptly around, doubling back to re-join the side road…

….following slowly after the speeding vehicle…..

------------------------------------------------

It was dark now…

And somewhere nearby Blake could hear a muffled snarling and a snapping of jaws…

But parting her lips and letting out a small groan, her eyes still squeezed tightly shut, she shifted against something hard…a sharp ringing in her ears, clouding her head and thoughts completely.

What was going on?

Where was she?

But before Blake could dwell any longer on anything…

….she slipped back into the darkness…

….passing swiftly back into unconsciousness…
The car wreck

Rain splattered the windscreen now, the wipers on Negan's truck going at full speed, as Arat navigated the darkened, sodden road.

It was hard to see now and even the dark-haired Saviour, as cool and collected as he usually was, hand his hand over his scruffy beard, within half a mind to tell the curly-haired woman in the drivers-seat, to turn back around.

Perhaps abandoning a fruitiness chase for a car, now long gone in this storm, was the best case for all of them. They could then go back to the Sanctuary, and Negan could wait it out, until the day after tomorrow- Blake's birthday, where he would take a drive back to Alexandria to fetch her.

Hopefully by then, the storm would have cleared in its entirety, and the roads would not be so dismal and treacherous either.

But as their truck, followed by larger van behind filled with several more Saviours, chugged along down the gloom-filled track, Negan still did not make to tug his hand away from his mouth, or indeed utter any words at all.

For something….some niggling feeling, was stopping him….

Something that he just could not put his finger on.

But it wasn't even a minute later, that Arat slowed the truck, leaning forward in her seat, peering out through the darkened windshield in front of her.

"Uh, boss," she uttered in a slow yet serious tone. "We've got a herd of dead up ahead."

Negan gave a frown and sat up a little straighter now.

He couldn't see shit in front of him through the rain-drop covered window, and so giving an irritable huff, the bearded Saviour, wound down the window beside him and stuck his head out, frowning through the darkness.

There was certainly something up ahead….moving….just off the road a little to the right…. But as Arat slowly eased the truck a little further up the track, it became clear that the female Saviour had indeed been right….

….for dragging themselves across the road ahead, in packs of two or three, had to be about twenty or so walkers of varying levels of decomposition.

A couple of them looked up at the headlights….throwing a light across the road ahead of them…but the majority kept on walking….drawn by something a little way off the path….

Negan gripped Lucille tighter in his hand, narrowing his eyes and squinting out at through the trees up head….at something which caught his eye….

Was that a light?

"You see that?" Negan said in a low drawl, pointing his barbed wire-covered baseball-bat through the window….towards the source of a bright light, just about visible, shining through the trees…..
Negan clenched his jaw...his dark eyes darting through the rain at a gap obviously made by some sort of vehicle through the trees at the side of the road.

"Want us to go investigate, Boss?" said Danny to Negan's left promptly.

But Negan gave a small grin.

It had been a long time since he had been out here...with the threat of walkers this great...

It was something that really seemed to get the adrenaline pumping through him like nothing else.

"Actually, Danny-boy, you can follow my fuckin' lead on this one," he said wickedly, shoving open the truck door beside him, causing the sound of the rain hitting the asphalt below them, to echo through the cab. "And stay fuckin' tight. I don't want any of these fuckers creepin' up on me in the dark. We clear?"

Both Arat and Danny both immediately nodded, as Arat yelled orders through to the other truck via the crackly radio.

Negan sighed. This would be good for him. An opportunity to let off a bit of steam.

And so, swiftly followed by Danny out the van, as well as Dwight and a couple of other men from the second vehicle, Negan strolled easily out onto the soaking wet asphalt road, rain immediately drenching him from head to toe.

He gritted his straight white line of teeth and lifted Lucille cockily, swinging it sharply across the head of one of the dead, as it ambled close by.

He immediately got drenched with spray of stagnant blood.

"You absolute goddamn cocksucker!" he yelled in faux-anger, staring down at his already wet dark leather jacket for brief moment, before tackling yet another walker, caving its head easily in.

All around him the Saviours got to work, destroying walkers here there and everywhere, as the rain continued to fall. This is what he liked to be witness to. His people stretching their legs...doing what they did...and well, he noted, each one of them strong, being perfect examples of soldiers. And that's why Negan had chosen each and every one of them. For their strength and their abilities.

None of them lingered. None of them paused for even a second.

But it was difficult tonight.

It was hard to see anything out here now, and within just a few minutes, even Negan himself had almost been caught out a couple of times, with one decaying deceased even managing to get as close as to sink its teeth into the shoulder of Negan's jacket.

But luckily for him, the leather was thick and tough, part of the reason he wore it, and the freak's teeth were no way even close to getting through.

From here, from the side of the road, the tall, bearded man could just about make out a vehicle through the trees. It was tipped up onto its side, with a loud continuous beeping sound, obviously alerting walkers from the surrounding woods.

The car they had seen hammering down the road from Alexandria.
It was likely there was certainly someone still in there, maybe even Rick if Negan played his cards right.

He almost gave a chuckle to himself right then and there, as he stomped through the undergrowth, Arat and Dwight either side of him, taking down walker after walker as they went.

There looked to be about eight or so of the dead surrounding the car now, with rotten hand scratching at the doors and pawing at the cracked windows. And it would only be a matter of time before they got through, and ate the sorry shit inside alive, most likely.

But perhaps whoever was inside could be of some use to Negan….leverage maybe, to use against Rick and those other pricks back at Alexandria. Blake wouldn't have to know of course, for the dark-haired Saviour was well aware of how defensive she could get about those assholes back there.

So, bashing yet another of the dead aside with the bloody end of Lucille, Negan stormed forwards, trampling soggy leaves underfoot as he went, as the men and women at his side did the same.

It didn’t take the long, with more than one Saviour to two walkers by this point, tackling the living corpses down, stabbing them through their soft skulls and shoving them away.

One of the walkers, who once was probably a large guy, turned to Negan with a moan, reaching its torn arms out towards him greedily. But Negan easily swiped him aside with a growl giving a loud 'Aha!' as he did so….

But before the menacing leader of the Saviours could turn back toward the car once again, he suddenly heard Arat's voice loud and clear…

"Negan…y-you should come here…"

He stopped in his tracks.

…her tone was different now and certainly not one Negan was used to hearing being uttered from her mouth. Usually Arat was sharp, commanding…a great general….

….but there was something different now…something wrong….

Negan glanced up to where the curly-haired woman was standing, at the side of the now-tilted open car-door….as Dwight and Danny stood either side of her…..all with the same worried expressions on their faces.

The rain seemed heavier now….as Negan’s eyes blackened, closing his lips tightly...his mouth immediately going dry…

….silence falling all around them…..

The Saviours all stood around now...seeing something Negan couldn't….their faces solemn and anxious.

But Negan, re-adjusting his grip on Lucille, strode forwards….his eyes fixed on Arat for a long moment….approaching the car….

….but it was only when he was side-on with the beeping vehicle…did he finally drag his eyes away from hers, and peer inside…

…..staring down at the unconscious figure of Blake, sprawled across the dash…
Shit.

Negan felt a tick in his cheek…a feeling of pure anger….as he gazed at her…in the same dress he had left her in not even forty minutes before.

The bearded man licked his lips carefully, before reaching swiftly in and pressing his fingers to her neck…

He waited…

And waited…

Until he finally felt it…a pulse…faint but still there…

Her face was just about visible in the darkness now, caramel-blonde hair strewn across her damp cheeks, as he reached his fingers now up to brush the strands away. But he flinched away suddenly, her skin like ice to the touch.

"Get her the fuck out of there…" he just about managed to utter in a low, furious voice, pulling himself up and out of the car, standing up straight once more.

He could feel his hands shaking with anger now…

And at once, the Saviours around him all did as they were told.

Negan could feel his blood boiling…his heart pounding like a drumbeat in his chest.

What the fuck was she doing out here? Why the fuck was she alone….having left that place in a speeding car? What the hell had happened?

But Negan knew that this was no time to dwell on questions. For all he could dwell on, was getting Blake back to Sanctuary safe and sound.

Carson was there…the only known doctor for miles around…and if he couldn't save her, Negan would sure as hell be throwing him in the furnace, just like he had done to his brother.

Negan right now felt angrier than he had in a long, long, long time, watching as Arat and Danny prised Blake's limp body from the driver's seat.

For all he knew, she could be paralysed…brain dead…have mere moments left to live.

But as her lifeless body was gently dragged from the vehicle, her pretty face was momentarily illuminated in the light from the headlamps…and thankfully Negan could make out no head-wounds as such. Just a large bruise across her right temple and a few scratches that littered her face and upper body.

"Give her to me," he uttered in a dark tone, placing one arm beneath her shoulders and one in the crook behind her knees, as rain fell down on them hard, and pulling her from Danny's grasp.

She was freezing now, her skin wet against Negan's calloused fingers….that had just a few hours ago been tracing the outline of her curves, back on that bed in Alexandria.

Whoever was responsible for this would pay, that was for sure. Negan would see to that one way or another.

It must have been obvious to everyone standing around the dark-haired Saviour right now, just how
seething he truly was, for no-one uttered word.

Dwight sliced through a couple of walkers skulls just a little way over to his right. But apart from that, the only sound that could be heard, was the hammering rain up on the undergrowth below their feet.

Even the car's beeping was soon switched off by one of the Saviours. But Negan did not linger to dwell on this anymore….his mind on one thing and one thing alone right now.

And so, clenching his jaw tightly, Negan marched back over towards the their awaiting trucks…his eyes black and livid….Blake held tightly in his arms.

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The ground underneath her was humming…

Or was it the ground at all?

Perhaps it was something softer…the smell of leather and rain and musk filling her nostrils now…

"W-Whe-re-" she murmured, her eyelids flickering but unable to open.

She felt a thumb drag its way across her cheek, as she frowned, groaning slightly.

"Da-" Blake just about managed to breathe out…trailing off….

…before slowly slipping back into a state of unconsciousness once more…

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The rain was still falling hard by the time morning came, dark and cloudy, barely feeling like morning at all with the huge storm clouds that seemed to swirl around the high, dingy windows of the Sanctuary.

Negan had been here all night in the makeshift hospital room, pacing back and forth irritably while Dr Carson checked Blake's vitals and made sure she was ok.

From what he had murmured, still in just a t-shirt and sweatpants having been woken in the middle of the night, Blake seemed stable, with no major injury….most likely suffering from a little concision after a quiet a hard bump to the head.

He had reassured Negan that she would likely be awake by morning….

But as the hours drifted by, the dark-haired Saviour had started to become more and more impatient….growling and snarling at every word spoken by both Carson himself, and any other Saviour who disturbed them.

He was irate right now, furious with both himself for leaving her, Blake herself for leaving Alexandria, and the people responsible for forcing her out. There had to be a reason why she had decided to leave in such a hurry, and if anything happened to her, that would be on, not only Rick, but Carl's head, and that pretty-boy Steve, as well the heads of every other fucker back in that goddamn place.

Negan was sat back in his chair now, just staring at Blake's face, as she lay there on the trolley bed beside him…her eyes closed and her head hanging limply on its side against the pillow.
Her cheeks had regained some colour after coming here, drying off and getting into the warm once again, which Negan was of course relieved at…

But the bearded Saviour would not be happy until she had woken up. Until she could tell him who was responsible for all this shit.

That was if she ever woke up at all.

Carson was efficient, perhaps even better than his now-deceased brother. But even so, the equipment he had to work with….it wasn't up to shit….not compared to what things used to be like….

Negan's mind flickered back to all those hours spent sitting beside another bed…in a hospital long ago…

Watching as another woman in his life, drifted away from him…. But Negan's thoughts were now finally disturbed by a heavy set of boots pacing around the corner, coming to a stop in the doorway to his left.

He shifted his brown eyes up to see Simon standing there, with a frown plastered across his moustachioed features.

"I heard what happened," muttered his right-hand man, with a small shake of his head. "She doin' ok?"

But Negan dragged a sudden gloved hand down his long bearded face sighing heavily.

"The Doc ain't too sure…” he replied starkly, shooting a scowl over towards Carson who was busying himself at the back of the room. "But if I find out it was that fucker Rick who drove her out of there, Si. Then holy shit I am comin' for them. You understandin' me?"

And almost immediately, Simon gave an very understanding nod, his eyes full of seriousness. "Loud and clear," he said cocking his head to the side as he spoke, folding his arms across his chest as he leaned up against the doorframe.

And Negan was about to utter another swift word to his friend, when suddenly, there came a soft stirring from the bed.

Negan's eyes immediately darted back over to the figure of Blake, lying under the cover of cool sheets, still in her skimpy, yet now damp, summer dress.

A frown line slowly seemed to be forming between her brows, as she parted her lips, trying to mouth something under her breath.

Negan hurriedly got to his feet, damp jacket still shrugged over his shoulders, watching as Blake shifted under the sheets, letting out the smallest of moans….

…as her eyes blinked themselves gently open…

Thank fuck.

The dark-haired Saviour took in a breath of air for what felt like the first time in hours, as Carson behind him swung around to see the patient blink and stare around.

Negan felt his heart resuming pounding at a normal pace now, as Blake, looking groggy, pressed her hands to the mattress beside her and eased herself up slightly…her lips parting…
Fuck…she really was everything to him…and Negan finally realised what he felt about her.

She was more than just that girl he flirted with. More than just that smart-mouthed woman. That queen. She was his everything. And Negan truly realised how strong his feeling were now that he had almost lost her.

His chest rose and fell hard now beneath his damp t-shirt, as a smile twitched its way onto his lips in a look of what could only be described as utter relief.

"Hey, Peaches…" he managed to breathe out, in a low husky voice….finally causing Blake's green eyes to suddenly shift up towards him…

…but his smile she did not return….

….instead her brow seemed to furrow slightly, as she let out a trembling breath…..staring up at him….her mouth opening….

"Y-You…" she merely murmured in a quiet voice, her eyes widening suddenly as she looked back at the dark-haired Saviour.

There was something wrong here..

"I-It's you…." she repeated again, her voice becoming slightly higher now, a gulp appearing at her slender throat. "…y-you're Negan."

At once Negan's chocolate eyes blinked suddenly, as his brown eyes became black.

What?

But he could only tilt his head, watching, as panic seemed to fill Blake's face.

Her green eyes quickly darted this way and that, as if she was desperately searching around the room for something. But what?

But the answer to that question came sooner than expected. And it was just a short moment later, that the caramel-blonde woman spoke again, making Negan's blood run cold for the second time tonight, with the words that spilled finally from her mouth.

"Where is he?..." Blake uttered aloud, her gaze filling with utter alarm. "W-What have you done with him……."

But Negan gave a growl under his breath.

"What have I fuckin' done with who, Doll-face?" he asked in a dark tone.

But before he could even finish, Blake had looked back up at him, frowning. Staring back at the dark-haired Saviour like she truly and utterly hated him.

And it tore him apart to hear the next words that finally spilled from her lips…worse than any walker ever fucking could.

"…..David…" Blake finally murmured back.

"…my fiancé….."
Negan looked shell-shocked at the words that spilled from Blake's mouth, his bearded jaw clenched together tensely and his already brown eyes becoming black.

"What?" Negan managed to breathe out in a low, deadly, growl of a voice.

This couldn't be fucking happening.

Every fucking moment they had spent together….her coming her to the Sanctuary….their time spent taunting each other…flirting…having fun…sharing showers…having dinner….

….even last just a few hours ago when they had been back on that bed together….

….all of that couldn't be gone. It just fucking couldn't.

This kind of thing didn't happen in real life. This was he kind of shit-trope you usually came across on crappy daytime tv. But this wasn't something that happened here….

The dark-haired Saviour stared down at Blake now, his orbs locking onto those familiar green eyes of hers.

Those eyes he knew so well.

This couldn't be happening. It really fucking couldn't.

"D-David…" she muttered again, answering his question with wide eyes, shaking her head. "My fiancé….

Fuck.

Just fuck.

Blake tilted her head, shifting under the white sheet before her slightly.

"Yeah….m-my fiancé," she said again, biting on her lip for a small moment, her eyes never leaving Negan's. "…y’know….the asshole who pushed me down a set of stairs and tortured me for months on end….?"

A frown darkened Negan's face slowly, as he gazed back at her…wholly confused right now…

But as he glared, he noticed Blake's expression change from one of seriousness….to now, see a small smirk dance easily across her lips….

There was a lengthy pause…Negan holding his breath, not knowing what the fuck was going on.

Before eventually, after what felt like an age…Blake's mouth curved up into a knowing grin.

"Gotcha," she suddenly uttered, raising her eyebrows fiendishly and poking her tongue out through her line of white teeth.

But Negan, his chocolate eyes twitching back and forth searching her face, didn't move or speak or fact react at all. And despite how quick the bearded Saviour usually was, he was still utterly bewildered right at this very moment.
And he was barely any more enlightened, even when Blake gave an enormous sigh and nodded encouragingly.

"I was fucking with you, Negan," she murmured goadingly, her face bright and her eyes twinkling wickedly. "And you should see your face right now…"

She gave a laugh, the noise lighting up the room, and causing both Simon, still stood silently in the doorway, and Carson, stood just a little way over Negan's shoulder, to both glance back and forth between each other, a little lost for words. Mimicking, of course, how Negan felt right at this moment.

But Blake, shifting once again on the bed and positioning herself more comfortably against the pillows behind her, sighed softly, amused, as the last of her laugh dissipated.

But Negan felt a tick working its way against his stubbly jaw right now, his eyes cross and challenging as he stared down at her.

He shook his long, tanned head in disbelief.

"So you haven't got fucking amnesia?!!" he said in an incredulous voice, cocking his head to the side, his brow furrowed so deeply, he was certain his face was almost fixed into this position now….anger bubbling inside him.

But the look on his face only caused to make Blake roll her eyes, pulling one of her dress straps, that had slipped down, back up over her shoulder carelessly.

"Of course I haven't got fucking amnesia," she scoffed smirking and giving yet another half-laugh at his words. "This isn't Days Of Our Lives, Negan."

She tutted, turning her head and reaching for a glass of water than was sat near the side of the bed, wincing slightly as she did so.

"But for the record, if I ever did get amnesia, and I was really asking to see that asshole ex of mine, again," she continued, taking a small sip of water before placing down the glass and turning back to face the leader of the Saviours again. "You seriously have my permission to use Lucille on me."

Right now, Blake's pretty pink lips were pursed together, as she stared up at him smiling. She had red scratches across her face and neck, and her eyes looked tired and worn. Her damp caramel hair was loose, if not a little tangled and hanging around her face. But even despite all this, to Negan, she looked more perfect than he had ever seen her.

Utter perfection…..who had yet again, played him like a fucking fool.

He was breathing hard now….his chest feeling tight beneath that damp t-shirt of his.

But Blake, once again, gave a laugh, staring up at Negan's obviously still-unimpressed face, his jaw still tightly clenched and his brow deeply furrowed.

"Ugh, Negan," she huffed, as the dark-haired Saviour stepped forwards suddenly. "Can you seriously not take a joke anymor-"

But before she could finished her sentence, Negan had leaned down, grabbed her chin roughly and pressed his lips to hers…cutting her off completely.
It was second later before Blake relaxed into him, smiling into his mouth and deepening the kiss. Wholly aware of just how pissed he must be right now.

But Blake hadn't been able to resist.

She was fully conscious of just how much of an idiot she had been, going out in that car alone like that in the middle of the night.

And waking up here, feeling bruised and headache-y and feeling like shit, hadn't particularly been top of her priorities today. But upon rousing and seeing the worry in Negan's eyes she hadn't been able to help herself. It was a rare thing to see Negan so vulnerable…and she knew she wasn't likely to ever get that opportunity again.

So it was payback for all the shit he had pulled on her in the past.

From getting her trapped in a room with walkers...to setting it up so that Blake would see Frankie coming out David's room...

...not to mention the numerous occasions he had just simply pissed her off with that smart mouth of his.

A long moment later, Negan finally tugged his lips away from hers, his fingers still gripping her chin hard, as he stared into her eyes, his face still set into that deep frown of his.

But at this, Blake couldn't help but smirk.

"Oh, now pulling that type of shit on me- not fuckin' funny, Darlin'," he said in a deep warning tone. "I mean, do you really want me to fuckin' explain to you, just how un-goddamn fuckin' funny that was?"

He shook his head seriously, before Blake grinned.

"You're just bitter because I got you, good," she said in a teasing voice, before leaning up and brushing her mouth against his once more.

But Negan pulled back with a growl.

"NOT fuckin' funny," he repeated darkly, before snatching another hard and needy kiss from her pouting lips.

But the pair were suddenly disturbed by a loud 'ahem' from just over Negan's shoulder.

Negan gave a snarl into her mouth at this interruption, before pulling away from her and standing up straight once again.

Blake glanced over to see Dr Carson sliding swiftly around the leader of the Saviours towards her.

"I…uhhh….I just need to take a look at you," he explained in a short voice, avoiding Negan's glare.

But the dark-haired Saviour seemed more preoccupied with Blake sitting on the bed cheerfully, at this very moment.

"You better check she ain't missin' her fuckin' funny bone while you're there, Doc," Negan snapped moodily, taking a step back and folding his leather clad arms across his broad chest.

But Blake merely tilted her head and pursed her lips, shooting him a simpering look.
"Ha ha, you're hilarious," he snipped back, as Dr Carson shone a bright light into each of her eyes in turn.

"How are you feeling, Blake," asked the kindly, yet frazzled looking doctor, his hand reaching down and checking the pulse at her wrist. "Any pains in your chest…? ….your back?"

"No, I'm just a little groggy," she replied truthfully, finally dragging her eyes away from Negan's and giving a short sigh. "But I'm fine…..maybe a little nauseous if anything."

"Those symptoms are all pretty normal with concussion," Carson commented, examining the bruises and scratches at her temples. "But just take it easy these next few days alright? No off-road driving."

Blake gave a smiling laugh and nodded, as Negan shifted his weight from foot-to-foot, staring hard at Carson, as the man stood up straight.

"So she's gonna be fine?" the bearded Saviour asked the doctor in a low voice. "You fuckin' sure about that?"

But Carson nodded.

"I'll check her over in a few hours, but she seems ok, just a little knock to the head," said the doctor a little stiffly. "She just needs to rest now."

And with that, Carson edged around Negan and strolled from the room, looking utterly relieved to be leaving Negan's presence, pushing past an awaiting Simon still stood in the doorway as he went.

The moustachioed man on that far side of the room, after brief moment pointed too over his shoulder.

"I'll leave you guys to it," said Negan's right-hand man in a poignant voice, before giving the bearded Saviour one last look…. before pulling the door closed behind him…

…leaving the two of them finally alone…

Blake waited, knowing what was coming.

And as predicted, it was barley a second later that Negan turned back to Blake, his eyebrows now in his hairline and his mouth fixed into a straight line.

"Jesus. Fucking. Christ, Doll-Face," he said in a slow, incredulous voice, arching his back as he spoke, and pointing to her with a gloved hand. "You think you could give me a bigger fuckin' heart attack? First I find you out-cold in goddamn ditch! Then you fuckin' screw with me the minute you finally do wake up! I mean, hell, I've got to give you some fuckin' dues for windin' me up so fuckin' well. But if you were anyone else, I wouldna' thought fuckin' twice about knockin' the shit outta them with Lucille here."

He pointed down the floor to where his trusty barbed wire covered bat was lying, propped up against a chair.

Blake pursed her lips and narrowed her eyes at him.

"Well its lucky you have a soft spot for me, then isn't it?" she replied in a simpering tone, noticing now, for the first time that Negan's previously white t-shirt was stained pink with the remnants of blood.

She wondered just where he had gotten that from in the short time Blake had been unconscious.
Had he gone back to Alexandria?

Confronted Rick?

Or Rosita?

But Negan took a step closer to her now, poking his tongue into the side of his cheek, in a look of utter irritation. Distracting her from her thoughts.

"Soft-spot, or no soft-spot, Peaches," he said in a reprimanding tone. "You've still kinda pissed me off."

But Blake, knowing full-well just how much she had riled him up, just shrugged, giving a soft, airy sigh as he approached her yet again.

"And what exactly are you going to about that?" she said, unable to help the small smirk that twitched its way onto her lips now, as her green eyes met with his chocolate ones, her eyebrows lifting curiously.

But Negan tensed his jaw.

"Well just because I'm not gonna beat the shit outta you like I would any other fucker that gets on my goddamn nerves," he said loudly pointing a finger in her direction. "Daddy, can still throw you over his fuckin' knee, Princess."

Blake's lips cured up into a wide smile….as she wrinkled her nose….leaning forwards off the pillows tauntingly, as her dress strap slipped down her shoulder once again.

"In that case, I think I should be a bad girl more often," she remarked…..letting out a small squeal as Negan leant into her again, kissing her roughly and pushing her backwards against the cushions behind her head..

….as she laughed gently into his mouth…

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"So, you still haven't told me what the fuck you were doing out there on your own anyway, Doll?" asked Negan tossing a blueberry back into his mouth.

Twenty minutes later and Blake was sat up on her bed, lying back against the metal headboard in the large clinical medical room. With Negan now sat at her side on the bed too, his lean form also propped up against a stack of pillows, his arm haphazardly tossed over her shoulders.

True to Negan's 'don't give a fuck' nature, his boots were still, of course, on, creating muddy footprints across the bottom of the clean white sheets.

Blake leaned her body into him a little more, blinking slowly and letting out a small tired sigh, as she placed the small dish of blueberries (brought up by a weedy looking Saviour upon Negan's request) onto the makeshift trolley at her side.

"I just…." she paused momentarily, thinking hard. "I just…..changed my mind is all…"

It was a lie. But as much as she detested those people back there in Alexandria right now, thinking about the way they had turned against her so easily, accusing her of lying about the things David had done to her. She knew what Negan was likely to do if he even found out the way in which they head
treated her.

She didn't imagine the dark-haired Saviour would take Rosita trying to kill her lightly either…knowing full well that after, taking in her previous run ins with him as well, she would soon feel the sharp end of Lucille if she wasn't careful.

No. Blake could try and forget what had happened back there last night but there was no way she could forgive. For even Tara, one of her closest friends in that moment had turned her back on her. After all Blake had been through as well.

She understood, really she did, how it would seem to Tara, of course. That Blake had just shacked up with Negan and betrayed them all. But Blake had desperately tried to explain.

If they had just given her a chance and listened, things might have been ok. But no. All of them had acted first and thought later…taking a dead abusers side, instead of Blake's in this instance.

And that was what had hurt the most.

"Really?" said Negan with a hint of cynicism in his voice. "Because it seemed like you were tearin' out of that place pretty fuckin' quickly for it to be just a fuckin' change of heart, Darlin'."

But Blake tutted. "Just leave it, ok?" she pressed as her hand moved to his thigh.

But Negan gave a small frown, glancing her way.

"You really expect me to leave it, when I know for a fact that this is probably down to that sweaty fuckin' prick called Rick, actin' like he owns the fuckin' place, yet a-fuckin'-gain," he uttered in a heated tone. "Because I swear to shit, that if that goddamn side-eye-givin' motherfucker, laid even one fuckin' finger on you-"

"Negan," said Blake in a quiet voice, cutting him off and giving him a nudge. "Please… let's just forget it….."

She could tell that the dark-haired Saviour was seething, but she gave his thigh a quick squeeze, pressing her body into his lean torso further.

Trying to communicate to him that she wanted off this subject.

For now at least.

"…Maybe you should start concentrating instead, what you're gonna get me for my birthday tomorrow," she continued, biting on her lip with her teeth and shooting him a small teasing smile.

At this, the mood in the room changed slightly, as Negan let out a small chuckle, turning to face Blake fully now and grinning down at her with his line of large white teeth.

He tugged at the sheet covering her waist, pulling it down and dragging it off her body easily.

"Oh well I did have somethin' in mind….somethin' pretty fuckin' special if I do say so myself," he growled, leaning over her now, and teasing away a strand or two long caramel-blonde hair that lingered on her neck, his mouth hovering close to her ear possessively.

"Oh yeah?" said Blake, feeling herself getting hot and flushed now, as Negan slid a hand up her side, causing her skimpy cotton dress to ride up her thighs.

She felt Negan press a smile into her neck now, as she closed her eyes, allowing his lips to graze the
throbbed pulse point at her neck.

"Yu-huh, Darlin', Negan murmured with a dark, grinning growl. "….imagine you….tomorrow….all nice and ready for your birthday surprise…"

Negan pressed another gentle kiss to her neck, causing Blake's panties to soak with a creamy wetness. She bit down hard onto her lip, eyes closed, nodding eagerly at his words…

"Mmmhmmm," she replied, urging him on.

"…and then imagine openin' your eyes…" he continued in a husky voice. "…to find yours fuckin' truly stood there, with a nice big fuckin' bow wrapped around my dick….ready for you to enjoy, Doll-face."

Blake's eyes suddenly snapped open….coming back down to earth from her dream-world she had been in, with a hard thud.

"Ugh," she said scowling and giving him a shove away from her. "Screw you. I am not giving YOU a blow job on MY birthday."

But this only made Negan give a loud carrying chuckle, as she shoved him, not only from herself, but from the bed too.

"You are such an asshole sometimes," she carried on, as she wrinkled her nose, brushing herself down. "Ugh and you stink of walker blood, you know that?"

But Negan getting to his feet with a pleased groan, snatching up Lucille from the floor, and pointing down at Blake with the end of the baseball bat.

"Now that is what you get for tryin' to fuck with me, Sweetheart," he said arching his back easily as he spoke, smirking devilishly.

Before strolling across the room smugly, with a cockiness to his swagger now, fully-confident that had had got one over on her.

But Blake was not in a million year going to ever let him win that easily.

And so, the caramel-blonde woman just rolled her eyes, giving a sigh, as Negan reached the door tugging it open, before chancing one last arrogant look her way.

But Blake was already looking away from him, examining her nails….

….before finally speaking with a note of airiness in her voice….

"I think I'd have preferred the spanking," she commented nonchalantly, glancing up with glee….just in time to see Negan's bearded mouth drop open.
It was late evening and after a long sleep, getting herself back to rights, Blake was now wandering alone down one of the long corridors of the Sanctuary, heading towards the canteen, following the request of her rumbling stomach.

It was good to be back.

And as gloomy and dank as the place sometimes could be, it felt so much more like home to her than being back at Alexandria ever had.

Blake, despite her throbbing head and aching body, had today, managed to take a shower, getting changed afterwards into a pair of comfortable sweatpants and a tight black sweater. Her hair now hung loosely over her shoulders, her cheeks finally having regained a little colour.

She felt ok. A little groggy but ok.

Better at least than when she had been pushed down a flight of stairs, that was for sure.

After another lazy make out session with Negan this morning after her mark remarks about spanking, the dark-haired Saviour had muttered some bullshit excuse about having some business to attend to, which Blake most likely assumed either ironing someone’s face….or threatening someone.

She wasn't particularly happy with the way Negan conducted himself of course, but she knew that she had very little choice about changing his mind about being so gun-ho in situations.

That was just…well, him. And no, Blake was not defending it. But the side of Negan, Blake was privy to, was far from the monster he was usually painted as.

She was pretty enamoured with him now…feeling her heart pounding faster when he came into a room…

Perhaps he had worn her down…but Blake had a sneaking suspicion that she had always felt that way about him…even that first time she had laid eyes on him standing there imposing and cocky.

Him, even back then, being one of the only men to ever challenge her in a constructive way…to make her feel better, and not worse about herself…

Building her up, instead of stamping her down, like David always had.

Blake gave a sigh, her thoughts somewhere else completely now, as she wandered the winding hallways of the third floor.

But, turning a corner, before she could do a thing to stop herself, she had barrelled straight into someone, giving a short 'oof'…..as she stumbled backwards, wobbling slightly and trying to catch her balance.

But before she could topple over, a swift hand grabbed her waist , pulling her upright and flush into his lean, familiar body.

"I mean, I know you like me, Peaches," said the snarky, growling voice of Negan, as he peered down at her, his mouth set into a wide grin. "But you have got to stop tryin' to run into me like this. People are gonna start talkin'."
The dark-haired Saviour was stood before her now, in a clean grey t-shirt, grey pants and boots, with his trusty baseball bat hanging loosely from one hand.

Blake immediately rolled her eyes, giving him a gentle shove away from her and tutting, brushing herself down.

"I highly doubt anyone would be talking about us, Negan," she said a little scoldingly. "After all, you've got five wives sitting upstairs. Why would anyone bat an eyelid at another woman in your life?"

She was teasing him, she knew that, but she had to admit that with all that had happened between the pair of the over the last twenty-four hours, it did hurt thinking about the weeks Negan had spent back here with his wives.

Negan, cocked an eyebrow at her, smirking down at the caramel-haired woman bemusedly. "You jealous, Doll-face?" he asked, eyeing her. "Because it kinda sounds like you are."

But Blake shoved swiftly past him, bumping his hip with hers as she sauntered by.

"I'm not jealous," she said shrugging lightly, as Negan swivelled on his booted heel and stared after her as she went, raising his chin playfully. "I'm just saying that no-one's going to talk… I mean, especially when there's not really anything going on between us…"

She knew that this would get a rise of out of him.

And as predicted, it was only a second later that a familiar barbed-wire covered baseball bat, was shoved between her and the wall, stopping Blake in her tracks.

She pursed her lips, giving a small faux-huff of irritation, and turned to glance over her shoulder to face the dark-haired Saviour.

But Negan strutted around her, coming to stand in front of Blake now, and cocking his long tanned face to the side.

"You could've fooled me, Darlin'," he uttered in a yearning voice, tugging on his lips with his teeth and staring down at the caramel-blond woman before him. "Especially after you were just beggin' me to fuck you, only last night….so fuckin' desperate to take those soaked lil' panties of yours off of you…"

But Blake gave a coy grin as he leant in, but she was not going to let him see how much he was getting to her.

And so, she brushed him aside yet again, placing her fingers to the smooth end of Lucille and pushing the weapon away from her.

"It was just sex, Negan," she murmured with a short, airy sigh and she walked away from the bearded man once more, a smile twitching its way across her pink lips.

Knowing she had him.

For what else did she have to do with her day, if she couldn't wind the leader of the Saviours' up?

From behind her, she heard Negan utter a slow chuckle.

"Oh, so that's how we're gonna fuckin' play it?" he remarked, after a short moment. "That mean I
can invite Frankie to join us tonight, Sweetheart?"

But at that, the smile instantly dropped from Blake's features.

She bristled, stopping in her tracks in the middle of the long gloomy corridor.

He could be such an asshole sometimes.

But Blake gritted her teeth, before turning back to him (it taking all her effort to look cool, at this very minute) and gave a nonchalant shrug.

"You can invite Frankie, by all means," she uttered in a simpering tone. "But I won't be there…..I've got my own room….remember?"

And with that she turned on the spot again, and headed off, feeling sulky and a little put out, rounding the corner and disappearing from sight of the bearded Saviour.

He stomach was already twisted into knots that she knew likely had nothing to do with her hunger.

As much as her smart remarks were meant to be a joke, Blake knew that having a relationship with Negan. Well, it was a fairy-tale.

He had a reputation to uphold. And that involved a certain level of control over his wives, and not a normal relationship with just one person. Blake was well-aware of that.

But she couldn't help the feeling of utter hurt that seemed to course through her veins.

But Blake needed to remember, that this was a different world. A different life.

She would not be able to have kids…she would not get married (unless it was part of a bigger harem of women of course)…and she would never have a big house in the suburbs, where she could spend Christmas with a family all drinking egg nog around a Christmas tree.

Blake had come to realise a long time ago, that dreams like that didn't exist

She needed to be grateful for the fact that she was alive. And that alone should have been good enough.

But before the caramel-blond woman could dwell on miserable thoughts any longer…..she felt a strong hand grasp at her upper arm and pull her back around.

It was of course Negan, who gave a long sigh, his face looking tired now, and without that hint of cockiness he usually exuded from every pore.

"Peaches…" he began, staring down hard at her now, as his hand slipped from her arm, sliding instead, down her side coming to a stop on the small of her waist. "…if you've got it into your fuckin' head that somehow you are just another notch on my fuckin' bedpost, then I think you're goddamn underestimatin' how much fuckin' shit I went through just to get you back….."

Negan gave another huff, suddenly lifting his hand from her middle, and dragging it down his beaded face, looking exhausted. And Blake, for the first time, realised that the dark-haired Saviour, unlike her, was likely running off zero sleep right now. And why? All because she had raced off in a car and almost gotten herself killed.

"...I mean, not only have I had to deal with Rick-the-Prick givin' me THE most 'homo-erotic side-eye' every time I came to visit you in that place….but I also had to fight off a goddamn swarm of
dead-dicks to save your ass from a car wreck…” he continued in a carrying tone, placing a hand to his chest. "So forgive me for trying to make a fuckin joke at your expense, sweetheart. But only this morning you were sat in that bed back there, tryin' to convince me you had fucking amnesia. And yet you still think I'm the one out to just screw around with you, Doll-face?!

Blake stared up at him now, her chest rising and falling hard.

Just say it, she thought…

Just say it….

Blake gazed deeply into Negan's eyes willing him to say the words….

…..but he instead, gave another hard sigh, rocking back on his heels.

"You eaten anythin' yet?" he asked her after a drawn-out few seconds had passed.

Blake shook herself now, giving a gulp, before dragging her eyes away from his and staring down at the floor.

The moment was gone.

"Uh…no," she said matter-of-factly, her voice warmer than it had been a few moments ago. "…I was just on my way down to the canteen."

Negan chewed on his lips momentarily, his hand moving back around to Blake's body and plucking at the tight black sweater she was wearing absent-mindedly.

"Want me to get someone to bring somethin' up to you?" he asked in a low voice, full of a thoughtfulness Blake had never heard from him before.

But at this she smiled and shook her head.

"No, its fine," she replied, her heart beating fast, as her stomach lurched happily. "I could do with the walk…"

And it was in that moment that something passed between the pair of them….something bright…that seemed to fill the whole corridor with a light that hadn't been there before….causing the gloom and the dankness to dissipate….leaving only a warmth…

Negan blinked slowly, his face earnest now, as he dragged his teeth from his bottom lip.

"Well, in that case, I'll escort you down there," he said with nod, leaning into her ear as the pair of them turned around and made to head back down the long hallway. "I could do with showing my face, remind my people who's boss, that kind of thing."

But Blake smiled, and nodded knowingly.

"That would be….me, right?" she teased, nudging him.

But Negan just scoffed in return.

"Pfft," he said throwing her a wink. "Well correct me if I'm fuckin' wrong, Peaches, but if I remember rightly, you were the one on your knees for me last night, and not the other way around."

At his words, Blake just laughed and shook her head, bumping him with her shoulder this time.
"Asshole," she muttered under her breath, tutting.

But Negan, at her side, merely grinned, reaching out his free hand and holding it in front of her.

Blake paused and glanced down at it a little unsurely, before giving the smallest of bemused frowns.

"What?" she quirked back at him questioningly, cocking an eyebrow in his direction.

But it wasn't a second later than Negan let out the most enormous huff Blake had ever heard in her life.

"Jesus, Doll-face," he said in an incredulous tone. "Let me just hold your fuckin' hand."

And with that, Blake couldn't help but let out a laughing smile as she gave in…

…slipping her hand into Negan's, down between them…

….entwining her fingers neatly with his…

…as if that was where they had always belonged….
"An’ that is how I managed to bag my one hundredth fucking rotter kill," Negan said cockily, as both he and Blake strolled hand-in-hand into the large open-plan canteen area. "Not bad for a week after the shit-hit-the-fuckin’-fan, huh?"

The place was busy this evening, with a large line of people all queued up, as well as many people moving here and there weaving in and out of the long tables.

Blake rolled her eyes, nudging him.

"What? Are you expecting me to fan myself or something?" she said with a loud tut. "We've all killed walkers, Negan. It's just that some of us are less vocal about it than others."

She allowed her hand to slip from his easily, flashing him teasing smile before strolling off ahead of him.

But as she turned, Blake could feel almost instantly almost every person in that hall's eyes land on her, feeling the top of her cheeks turning pink.

A few Saviours dropped to their knees as she walked by, part of her presuming that Negan was of course at her side, but it was only when she turned around and saw the dark-haired Saviour still back near to the doorway, did she realise that these people…her peers…were actually kneeling for her.

Blake gave a small gulp, a lump appearing in her throat.

She stopped in her tracks, half way through the room, as people all around followed suit, all either bowing their heads or falling swiftly to their knees, as Blake heard Negan's footsteps approach her from behind.

And it wasn't a moment later that she felt his hot breath of her neck, his lips brushing her ear.

"Feels good, don' it?" he uttered in a silky voice, pressing a grin into her hair.

But Blake merely tutted, batting the dark-haired Saviour away gently with her hand.

"To you maybe," Blake quipped back, rolling her eyes. "But me….if I were you, I'd want people to look me in the eyes while they 'cower' before me."

She threw a teasing look Negan's way as they continued to walk, which made the bearded leader of the Saviour's grin widely, looking impressed.

"Now that is what I call a fuckin' kink, Sweetheart?" Negan growled back, dragging his white teeth over his bottom lip, awestruck. "We can try that out later if you'd like…just you, me…and that goddamn knee-bendin' pussy of yours.…"

But Blake shot him an amused, yet warning look. Well aware of how close they were to other Saviours right now and how likely it was they some of they had heard that.

"Just….shut up," she murmured back, the tops of her cheeks turning slightly pink, as they made their way over to the head of the queue for food.

"Well, heck, Darlin' I ain't gonna judge if you're into folks bein' submissive to you too," winked Negan, leaning into her as they walked. "Why do you think I like givin' Lucille to Rick, to hold?"
Once again, Negan's lips brushed her ear as he continued in a slow voice. "I mean it's practically like getting' a fuckin' hand-job from him," chuckled the dark-haired Saviour.

But this only caused Blake to give a small smirk as she pulled her head away, eyeing him bemusedly.

"And getting hand-jobs from Rick is something that you're into is it?" she uttered in a sarcastic voice raising an eyebrow in his direction.

But Negan just scoffed, grinning.

"A hand-job's a hand-job, Doll," he said in a goading voice, bumping her shoulder with his, and strutting cockily forwards, up to the head of the line for dinner.

Blake yet again for the second time in a minute, rolled her eyes dramatically, before following him.

"So, what is on the specials board today?" asked Negan to an older woman with curly red hair and watery blue eyes, stood serving behind the counter in a neat white apron, as a short, white-haired man at her side, scratched points out in a large ledger.

The woman immediately mouthed at the air, looking frightened, trapped like rabbit in the headlights as Negan arched his spine, presenting a smug grin and staring back at her.

Negan probably didn't often make polite conversation with the regular, low-ranking Saviours around here. Being nice was not really on his to-do list of a day, Blake assumed.

So it was no surprise, after probably, her only contact with the dark-haired man, being when she witnessed him ironing someone's face, that the woman looked petrified.

"Well?" Negan pressed, blinking innocently, waiting for an answer.

But the woman without another word, suddenly and without warning, burst into tears, right there in front of him…causing Negan's eyebrows to shot up into his dark-hairline.

He turned back to Blake throwing her a confused and incredulous look, before swinging around once again, as the woman pressed both hands over her face, sobbing loudly…

But Blake just tutted, stepping forwards and bumping the bearded Saviour aside with her hip.

"Hey," she said in a soft voice. "It's ok. There's no need for you to cry."

And with that, upon hearing Blake's voice, the woman's tears subsided slightly, as she dragged her hands from her eyes.

Blake gave a kindly smile, as she felt Negan slide a hand around her waist possessively.

Everyone in the room seemed to be staring at the pair of them now…at the closeness between them….and the way the tall, dark-haired Saviour seemed to press a chuckling grin into the side of her hair.

But Blake lifted her chin, not wanting to look like the meek little thing she had once been, upon first coming here with David, all those many weeks ago.

She was far more than that now.

She was a challenger to Negan. A force almost as formidable as him.
And so Blake tilted her head, staring straight ahead at the red-haired woman, smiling as warmly as she could.

"If you could just plate some of this up for us, that would be great," she said, wrinkling her nose as she spoke.

And at once the woman nodded hurriedly at Blake's words, lifting her ladle and pouring out two large portions of a rich-smelling broth into two bowls.

Blake chewed on her lip, and shot Negan a covert 'I told you so' look, nudging him in the ribs with her elbow.

And it wasn't a second later that the woman had placed both bowls onto a tray, along with four freshly baked soft bread rolls, as well as a few packets of salted butter.

Blake flashed the woman another smile, as Negan let go of Blake's waist and snatched up the tray with his free hand.

"Thanks," uttered the caramel-blonde woman to the mild-looking Saviour with a kind nod, before turning away and heading over towards a table alongside Negan, who gave a grumbling growl of annoyance.

"Like I said…." began Blake giving an over the top sigh. "…it pays to have your people look you in the eye when they do things for you. And not crying at your feet."

But Negan grumbled. "We'd have both got the fuckin' food in the end, Sweetheart," he muttered darkly, as the pair of them reached a couple of centre seats of one of the long wooden tables. "It's just that my way is a little more hard to fuckin' swallow."

Blake smiled, staring up at him now as he dropped the tray down on the table and eyed her.

"But alright…I admit…." he said after a moment, giving a nod and dragging his eyes away from hers reluctantly. "…..maybe your way was slightly fucking quicker."

At this, Blake beamed and closed the gap between the two of them, allowing her fingers to graze all the way down Negan's t-shirt covered torso, coming to a stop on his belt buckle.

She hovered her face close to his, as Negan blinked slowly, allowing his lips to curve up into a wide, adoring smile.

"So…when all said and fuckin” done," he murmured in a low, husky voice. "I think you and me make a great fuckin' team, Peaches."

Blake felt her heart pounding in her chest hard now, her breath catching in her throat.

"Me too…." she replied, smiling hazily…so wrapped up in the dark-haired Saviour at this very moment, she couldn't even bare to tear her eyes away.

She knew how she felt about him…but there was no way she was going to be the first to say it.

What if he didn't feel quite the same? What if this was just a fleeting thing? What if it didn't mean quite as much to him, as it did to her?

But these thoughts were pushed swiftly from Blake's mind, as a sudden figure appeared, just over
their shoulders.

The pair glanced over, shaking themselves, to see Simon stood there, a couple of feet away, looking a little wary about disturbing them.

"Uh, sorry," he said, cautiously looking between the two of them, as Blake took a blushing step away from the dark-haired man before her, dropping her hand from him and moving to sit down on the bench bedside them.

It was another moment, prompted by a sighing nod from Negan, that Simon continued.

"We found what you wanted," chimed the moustachioed man. "Roy radioed in from one of the outposts. It's about forty miles off, just west of Calreen. Sounds like it's in pretty good shape too."

Blake quirked an eye up.

"What's this?" she asked interestedly, reaching over and tearing apart one of the bread rolls with her fingers.

But Negan pointed in her direction, smirking.

"Now you, Doll-face…" he began in a tone of faux-scolding. "…have got to start mindin' your own fuckin' business."

But Blake just threw him a tutting look in return, raising her eyebrows curiously.

"Funny. Because I thought you just said we were a team?" she said in a simpering voice, pointing up at him too, a hint of a smile drifting across her lips.

But Negan grinned, turning and leaning over her, before moving a single digit to her slender chin and lifting her face until her green eyes were level with his own.

"Oh I did, Princess," he said in a devilish tone. "But on this occasion, I've got birthday surprises to be fuckin' plannin'."

And with that, before Blake could gaze up at him needily any longer, Negan had dropped the contact between them with a knowing chuckle and pulled away….

….completely aware of just what effect he had on her.

She gave a pout, turning half to face the table now and picking up her spoon, taking a small mouthful of the hot rich vegetable broth, that immediately warmed her insides.

Just as Negan gave a sigh, dragging a hand down his long face.

"It's gonna take a while by the time we get there and get back, right?" he uttered to Simon conversationally in a low voice, before giving a drawn out huff. "Alright. Round up Arat and the others, and I'll see you outside in five."

And with that Simon gave an obedient nod, waking swiftly off.

But Blake pursed her pink lips and stared up at Negan.

"You're leaving?" she asked, giving a tiny frown.

But her concern was not being apart from Negan yet again. It was more to do with the fact that, even
from here, she could see just how tired he was. Running now, on no sleep after last night's antics.

"Quicker I'm gone, quicker I can come back and we can start celebrating your birthday, Darlin'," he said arching his long back as he spoke.

But Blake tilted her head slightly, staring at him carefully.

"You're gonna kill yourself at this rate," she reprimanded, shaking her head. "I was kidding with what I said about a birthday gift, you know. I don't need anything. I haven't celebrated my birthday in like six years, Negan. So I really wouldn't worry."

She threw him a half smile of encouragement, patting the seat beside her and crossing her legs.

"Stay," she implored. "That way you can be there to help me ring in my birthday….and maybe we can have some naughty fun up on that bed of yours while doing it too…"

She bit her lip and smiled, throwing the salt and pepper-bearded Saviour a suggestive look. And at this Negan gave a heavy, groaning sigh of want….but he still shook his head.

He leant down into her once again, and pushed back a long strand of caramel hair from her face now, before sliding his fingers to her chin once more.

"It'll be worth it, Peaches," he growled seductively, before suddenly and without waring pressing a gentle kiss to her swollen lips.

And Blake could do nothing, but feel herself smiling into his mouth. Knowing full well that there was a good chance that the dark-haired Saviour was likely to end up in collapsing from exhaustion if this was the way he was going to conduct himself.

But Blake knew that she could lecture him all she wanted, but he wasn't likely to listen to her. He knew his own mind.

And so, Blake gave a soft sigh as he eventually pulled away, knowing that they had likely both drawn the stares of practically every person in the room now.

But Blake was past caring.

But before Negan could turn on his heel and leave, she had reached over grasping for the bowl of broth.

"Here, at least take this, if you are going to go," she said, pressing the bowl into Negan's middle.

And it wasn't even a second later that Negan took it, no questions asked, his face completely lit up with a wide, beaming, doting grin, but for once in his life, he didn't even utter another a word in retort, as he turned on his heel and strutted off, throwing one last wink in her direction as he went….

…..bowl of food she had given him clutched tightly in his hand, as he disappeared through the parting crowd.

And Blake couldn't help but smile affectionately, giving the smallest of inward sighs as he watched him go.

Well, after all….a Queen did have to look after her King….
Happy Birthday, Peaches

It was just gone 1 am by the time Blake finally wandered the lonely corridor up towards Negan's room.

She had stayed up late, hoping of course to have seen in her birthday with the dark-haired Saviour himself. But despite leaving almost five hours ago now, with Simon, Arat and a few of the others in tow, there was no sign of him returning any time soon.

Blake, had intended, after finishing off her dinner alone in the canteen, to just head back on over to her room…maybe use that TV and VCR than Negan had given to her, what felt like a lifetime ago now, to watch a movie. But before she had even made it up to the second floor, she had been accosted by Frankie, Michelle and Tanya in one of the hallways, who had squealed and thrown their arms around Blake as though she had been their best-friend since childhood.

From the sounds of it, all the wives were pretty happy to see her back, telling her that the place hadn't been the same without her here, and informing her about Negan's terrible moods since she had been gone. The idea that Blake's presence here had even the slightest effect on anyone, really tugged at the back of her stomach and made her feel more happy than she had felt in a long time.

She truly felt at home here. And facts like those just helped to confirm that to her even more.

The three women had swiftly convinced Blake to come back to their plush room with them, and from there, Blake had spent the rest of the night, sitting with them on luxurious couches and squishy cushions, drinking wine and catching up on all the gossip.

Not that there had been much from this end, mind you.
"Ugh, you know what it's like here," Tanya had huffed, after Blake had enquired. "Boring as usual."

Frankie had nodded in agreement.

"Only one of us has been called up to see Negan too, since you've been gone," the red-haired woman said conversationally. "But even then, he sent me away almost straight away in a fucking horrible mood."

The women all around had nodded.

"So," said Michelle lightly, arching an eyebrow up towards Blake. "Are you and him-"

But she had trailed off before uttering another word.

Blake, however, of course, knew what she was getting at. She had chewed on her bottom lip, her eyes falling to her glass in her lap, as she shrugged her shoulders.

"I….I don't know…" she had replied in a quiet voice, her heart pounding as the words slipped from her mouth.

Blake had felt her cheeks immediately reddening.

But the wives had just smiled encouragingly.

"Listen," said Tanya, pursing her lips and placing her hand on top of Blake's. "He's a monster…and some of the things I've seen him do…."
The dark-haired woman paused, and sucked in a breath.

"...but he seems different with you. Like he actually gives a crap about you. And you should have seen the kinda mood he was in, when you were gone. I mean, all those guys downstairs had to do was breathe the wrong way, and he'd be using that stupid baseball bat of his, on them before they had time to even apologise. So don't feel guilty. Having you here....it makes life better.... for all of us."

The women had all nodded at this, and Blake had felt herself giving a relived sort of sigh, as she had brought her drink up to her lips.

The conversation soon after that, had moved onto, firstly how Blake's plan for a garden was getting on. For not having ventured outside yet, Blake was so so please to hear that the Saviours had manged to get a hold of several large greenhouses which had been assembled around the disused part of the lot. And work had also begun on digging a plot for some vegetables.

But secondly, the five women had somehow managed to worm out of Blake that it was her birthday tomorrow. And, confessing that Negan was currently out and wouldn't likely be back until late, the dolled-up women had refilled Blake's wine glass fiendishly and encouraged her to drink-up to toast her birthday, which Blake had laughingly obliged them.

And so, the six girls had giggled and joked, having a great evening. Blake finally feeling like she had some friends in this world. Women her own age. Who had totally different backstories from one another, but who had all been brought here because of one man.

Negan.

The leader...who had stepped up. Protected them all when they needed it.

For how was that any different to what Rick had done, really?

Defending his people at whatever the cost.

But it wasn't long past midnight, after a couple of swaying hugs from the scantily clad women, that Blake had given her excuses and said her goodbyes and left, promising them at their request with a playful roll of her eyes, that she would hang out with them more.

And so, a couple of minutes later, Blake found herself here...padding down the gloom-filed hallway...her fingers trailing along the wall beside her as she walked.

She had had a few glasses of wine, but felt anything but drunk ...just tired, if anything...

Her body was really beginning to ache now, feeling stiff and painful in places from the car accident the previous evening. But she needed to be grateful. It could have been a lot worse. What would have happened if those walkers had gotten in while she was unconscious...or if Negan and the Saviours hadn't have turned up when they did?

Blake gave a shallow sort-of sigh as she reached the large set of doors that stood at the end of the long hallway.

This was where she wanted to be, above anywhere else in this entire world.
The place she had dreamed of being, on all those empty nights spent back in Alexandria in that big bed alone.

And so, giving the door a gentle shove open and flipping on the light switch. Blake couldn't help but smile to herself as she laid eyes on Negan's room, still as neat and tidy as the last time she had seen it….when she had been in here with Mia in that bed…as Negan pressed kisses onto her collarbone, waking her dreamily...

Unfortunately neither of them were here with her now….but Blake hoped that soon enough Negan would arrive back….smelling of dirt and gasoline and leather…and that would be enough for her….for now at least.

Gently shutting the door behind her, Blake ran her fingers through her long hair, before walking over to the bathroom and flipping on the light.

It was quiet in here….shut off from the rest of the Sanctuary. Divided by at least a corridor and a half…and so Blake felt her shoulders un-tensing, relaxing more now than she had in weeks.

Feeling safe…..feeling protected, even when Negan wasn't here….  

Strolling over to the washbasin, Blake peered up at her reflection in the large modern-looking mirror hanging above it.

There she was…looking tanned and bright (if not a little tired). A few scratches lifted her temples and upper cheeks, but they were not too noticeable now.

Blake remembered back to all those many months ago….when she had looked a whole lot different…with hollow eyes, grey sallow cheeks…worry lingering upon her features…all because of one man.

David.

He had taken years from Blake's life. So much time wasted worrying over him….fretting about what he thought…what he might say if she did this, or that…or looked a certain way…

That same man who had never even once bought her a birthday gift or even given her a card.

The first year Blake had put it down to forgetfulness….they had only been dating for a few months by that point, and Blake had shrugged it easily off. But by the following year, David had explained that birthdays shouldn't be such a big deal and he didn't really believe in celebrating them. And so again, she had gotten nothing, the pair of them treating it like a normal day.

But by the time David's birthday always came around, almost six-months later, Blake would always feel so guilty about not getting him anything, and so had always scraped the money together to buy him the watch she knew he had his eye on, or tickets to see a basketball game. But yet again….hers would soon come and go, with nothing more than a dismissive wave of David's hand and a chuckle from him, muttering that they should be happy about not wasting money on something as trivial as a birthday.

It wasn't about the gift really to Blake, it never had been, and so she had just smiled and carried on…not really worrying too much about it. Just considering it as just another day.

But now….looking back, Blake felt sad that she had gone so many years without even so much as a hastily-picked bunch of flowers, or even a homemade meal from her fiancé on her birthday. She had never wanted for much….just, well, something….
But Blake sighed contently thinking of the difference a year made.

This time last year Blake had been holed up with David in some god-forsaken warehouse with four or five others, eating cold vegetables from a can…with David not even gracing her with a 'Happy birthday'. She remembered they had just sat there in the darkness, as David had sulked, because he wasn't able to eat heated food that evening. And so Blake had sat alone, mentioning to no-one else that it was her birthday, because, of course, over years of wearing her down, David had convinced her that no one cared now about her birthday, and no one ever would.

And yet one year on and here she was….waiting here….while Negan was out getting a birthday surprise ready for her for tomorrow.

Blake had only been teasing him when she had pushed him to get her a gift…knowing full-well the response she used to get from David when she teased him on the same matter….but she never expected Negan to actually try and make an effort…for him to try and made her birthday special.

Blake rubbed at the back of her neck with her hand, kneading at her aching shoulders.

She was exhausted now….so perhaps she would just get into bed and read for a while until Negan got back.

And so, Blake peeled off her clothes, dropping them into the laundry basket behind them bathroom door….before heading back into the large living space in just a matching set of white underwear….

She threw her caramel-hair back over her tanned shoulder, before wandering over to Negan's four-poster bed and peeling back the crisp, white cottons felt cool and so inviting so her as she hopped up onto the mattress and slipped down beneath them.

And it was no more than a minute after her head fell back against the pillow, that Blake, as tired and as slightly tipsy as she was….fell straight to sleep, with the light still on.

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It must have been at least 3am…

Late and silent….

Blake was deep asleep now and stirred only slightly, hearing the sound of the light-switch being knocked off, and a pair of heavy footsteps pace through the darkness, over to the bed.

She was still half in her dream-world now…letting out a long, tired breath of air and shifting her face slightly against her pillow…as she felt the mattress sink slightly, beneath another heavy weight dropping down onto the bed behind her.

She parted her lips, before closing them again, hearing the seemingly distant creak of a mattress…..as the weight shifted slightly on the bed, over her shoulder…

And a brief second later, to her sleepy delight, Blake felt a calloused hands skim over her waist, pulling her backwards, and into a strong and taut body…

...as a heady, warm, musky scent drifted into her nose…and at once Blake recognised who it was, even in her drowsy state...

Negan.
Blake smiled sleepily…feeling a scratchy beard nuzzle into the crook of her neck from behind, as the leader of the Saviours wrapped his arms tightly around her.

Perhaps he wanted sex….but right now…it seemed like something else completely…a need to be close to her…to feel her in his arms…

And Blake could only giving a small contented sigh as she felt Negan's lips reach her hair..

…and as he uttered just three words into her ear….three words that made her smile widen into her pillow…

"Happy birthday, Peaches," growled Negan in a whisper…

….uttering just six syllables, that managed to make Blake feel happier than she had felt on any birthday, ever.

And it was not even another second, as Blake, smiling blissfully to herself….drifted off to sleep once again, feeling totally and utterly safe in Negan's arms. As the dark-haired Saviour, behind her, did the same….
Blake gave a soft moan, grizzling her face into her pillow, as she awoke many, many hours later.

It must have been at least 11am, as before the caramel-blonde woman had even opened her eyes she felt the late morning sun on her face, drifting in from the large window across the room.

And it was only then, before blinking her eyes open, did she realise just where she was…that thought alone warming her completely.

From here she could feel a body at her side, and a single hand throw haphazardly across her abdomen.

Negan.

It took Blake no time at all for her to turn her head and open her green eyes, gazing at the dark-haired Saviour, lying there beside her, fast asleep.

He looked so peaceful now…sleeping there, bare-chested and tanned, with his grey pants still on… looking like he had come in last night and completely crashed, passing out before properly getting undressed.

That was likely, of course, since Negan had been running on little to no sleep over the past couple of days, and even now still looked pretty exhausted.

His beard looked flecked with more grey in the morning light, and across his brow lingered the faintest frown, as though he was having a bad dream…but Blake was happy he had made it back last night….glad to feel his arms wrapped around her body, pulling her close in the early hours.

Blake just in her own white underwear, stared at him for a long moment, smiling to herself.

She knew how she felt about him…an overwhelming feeling coursing through her when he spoke to her…touched her…teased her…and even now, with him asleep at her side Blake knew that she had made the right decision….not just coming back here to the Sanctuary, but getting rid of David, and attempting to live her life like she wanted. She was stronger than she had ever believed she could be, and she knew that Negan saw that too. This frightening, monstrous man…who had treated her like nothing less than a queen since the first day she had clapped eyes on him.

Blake gave a soft sigh, reaching her hand up…making to run her digits down his stubbly face….

…but she stopped just an inch away from his bearded cheek…not wanting to disturb him right now. He looked like he needed this sleep, oh so very much, and Blake was not about to deny him that.

And so, she ever-so-gently eased his arm off of her waist, and slipped silently out of the sheets and off of the bed…ruffling her long caramel hair and padding over to the bathroom.

She closed the door behind her before flipping on the light, not wanting to wake the man asleep in the next room, before moving over to the washbasin again and gazing about.

There was nothing here apart from a single bar of soap and so Blake, giving a frown, bent down and slid open a drawer underneath the basin.
Inside was just what she was looking for, a pack of brand new toothbrushes and a tube of minty toothpaste.

It wasn't long before, with teeth brushed, feeling slightly fresher, Blake, having grabbed a bottle of purple bubble bath, had headed over to the white bathtub sat in the centre of the large tiled room. Hurriedly running the water, she fussed with her hair and peeled off her white bra and panties, waiting until the bath was half-way full, with mounds upon mounds of soft white bubbles.

It was then that, with a gentle sigh to herself, Blake stepped into the water, making her gasp out at the contact and she lowered herself down.

Her entire body tingled, the hot water burning her skin slightly…but she knew that this would be good with helping get rid of her stiffness and her aches.

She settled back, dipping her tanned shoulders beneath the water momentarily, before bringing herself back up, and lying against the side of the porcelain tub.

Her skin, in the windowless light of the bathroom, glowed healthily…as beads of water ran down her collarbone, dropping down onto her breasts as they floated just beneath the surface of the bubbles.

Blake closed her eyes, feeling all her cares drift away now, as she lifted a hand to her long slightly damp locks. And in a second, she had used the hair-tie at her wrist to tie her hair up into a messy knot at the top of her head carelessly. Drying your hair in this world could be a nightmare at times, so that, right now, was a good solution.

She let out a long puff of air, settling herself back down and placing both her hands against the sides of the tub.

Now she could relax.

This was how she had dreamed of spending her birthday on all those years on the road. Well, not even just her birthday. Any day in fact!

Being able to close her eyes for long enough to bathe in peace, was something spectacular to her. For out there…it was hard not to jump at any small noise behind her…flinch, thinking a walker was about to jump out at her at any given moment.

But now, upon hearing a creak of floorboards behind her and the door to the bathroom swing gently open, Blake didn't even bother to open her eyes, merely smiling to herself, guessing correctly at just who it was….

"Oh, so you think that just because it's your birthday you can use up all my goddamn hot water, Peaches?" came Negan's low drawling voice.

Blake bit down hard on her lip and gave a smile, opening her eyes and peering up at him, as the bearded man strode easily into the room.

Negan was, as she had left him, shirtless with his just his grey pants and brown belt on. Even Lucille right now, was nowhere to be seen.

Blake watched as he moved around her, coming to stand at the edge of the large bathtub looking down at her greedily, flashing a hungry grin in her direction.

His lean and tanned torso was speckled with dark hair which trailed all the way down into his
pants…leading somewhere that made Blake feel awfully hot and bothered thinking about right now.

She cocked her head to the side and stared up at him seductively.

"Well I'm willing to share…" she offered with a smirk…lifting her legs slightly, allowing Negan to see a flash off skin above the water.

And in second the dark-haired Saviour had his own bottom lip between his teeth, shaking his head at her, as if in awe.

"Fuck me," he growled his fingers moving down and beginning to undo his belt. "This is what a guy needs to wake up to every fuckin' mornin'."

Blake could feel a neediness rising within her now, as her green eyes looked him up and down expectantly.

Again, as Negan unzipped his pants, Blake could see that he was commando beneath…. his ample member already stiff and twitching…springing easily from its confinement, as Negan stripped, tossing his jeans aside.

Blake sat up slightly, licking her lips wantingly, making room for the bearded Saviour as he stepped into the burning water and sat at her feet.

Once positioned well, he grinned, reaching beneath the water and grasping Blake by her calves giving her a swift tug towards him.

She squealed and laughed out happily as Negan leaned in, his digits moving up to her bare sides…the pair of them close now…legs either side of the others.

"Happy birthday, Darlin'," he said, repeating last night's sleepy words to her again, causing Blake to blush profusely, not used to any sort of attention on her birthday at all….let alone something this intimate from someone that she lo-

She gave a quick gulp, shaking herself, but smiling nonetheless as the bearded man's lips hovered close to hers.

"So, do I get to see my surprise ,?" she asked teasingly as she lifted a hand and pawed at Negan's damp chest, as the water surrounding them lapped gently against their skin.

But Negan gave a harsh sigh, lifting his chin slightly as his chocolate eyes studied her face.

"Patience is a fuckin' virtue, remember that, Doll," he said after a moment had passed, throwing her a devilish wink.

But Blake pouted like a scolded schoolgirl at this…before suddenly sliding back a little from him and bringing herself up onto her knees.

Her bare breasts bounced slightly, beaded with water and soap suds, as her lips slowly curved up into a wicked grin.

She knew what she wanted right now…

Oh so so much…

And so, placing two hands to each of Negan's shoulders Blake clambered over his legs and came to straddle him, feeling his hard and throbbing cock just beneath her aching pussy, as she sat herself
down onto his lap.

"Are you sure about that, Daddy?" she said in a delicious voice, leaning down and pressing a gentle kiss to Negan's throat. "How long can you wait for what you want?"

Blake felt a hard gulp rise up Negan's neck, as she pressed another kiss to the pulse-point beneath his ear…before slowly biting down softly onto the dark-haired Saviour's earlobe.

Negan, at this, gave a short, stiff groan, as his hands skimmed her bare sides.

But Blake was not about to stop there, shifting forwards slightly against her knees and sliding her hot, creamy slit over his hard dick.

Negan again let out another guttural groan, it escaping his lips before he could stop it.

But Blake smiled reached up with one hand and grasped his beaded chin between her fingers, biting her lip. Her lips traced his, but she pulled back as he made to kiss her, grinding down upon him yet again.

"Ah, ah, ah," she uttered playfully.

And with just a grin, Blake slid her other hand down Negan's chest…dipping under the warm water…before slowly grasping Negan's hard cock between her slender fingers.

Negan's hands tensed around her lower back, his eyes blackening at the contact.

But Blake was unrelenting, her hand moving up and down his engorged shaft slowly.

She dragged her teeth across her bottom lip, before leaning forwards and pressing a kiss to the other side of Negan's bearded throat.

"…Unfff….Darlin'….I….uhhh….I think I should be the one doin' somethin'…" the dark-haired Saviour managed to murmur between ragged breaths, as Blake worked his cock, faster now.

"….uhhhf…..doin' somethin' dirty to that perfect fuckin' pussy of yours, and not you jerkin'….me….off…."

But Blake smiled into his stubbly skin, letting out a small naughty chuckle.

"Well, patience is a virtue," she chimed, repeating Negan's words back to him.

Before suddenly and unceremoniously, Blake stopped what she was doing, letting go of his dick and pulling her face back from his.

She raised her eyebrows at him teasingly, cocking her head to the side…playing with him….but not in the way he wanted right now.

But Negan almost at once let out a harsh grunt…not taking no for an answer…as his wet hand slid up to the back of Blake's damp neck, tugging her swiftly in towards him, and pressing his hot mouth to hers.

This wasn't exactly the way Blake had expected her game and her teasing to go….but she could work with this….

They peppered each other's mouths now with wet, delicious-sounding kisses, tongues finding the other's, fingers scrabbling at skin, pressing themselves into the other, desperation rising in the pair of them now.
Blake felt her heart begin to pound faster and faster…feeling the bearded Saviour hold her hips against him as he bucked his up into hers.

At once his stiff member slid across her swollen clit, and the caramel-blonde girl took in a sharp intake of breath at the contact.

Fuck…she couldn't take it any longer…neither of them could….frowns darkening their brows…both of them panting hard…as mouths grazed the other's…

And within a second, Blake had once again reached down beneath the water, and grasped his hard dick in her hand, but this time her digits would not linger there….instead Blake sat up slightly positioning his cock at her entrance before sliding slowly down onto it.

Her eyes rolled back into her head as she felt him stretch her hot, sopping wet pussy, and Negan wasn't far behind, parting his lips and letting out a groan of want, kissing her again, harder this time.

His calloused hands moved to her hips as Blake sat up, sliding up him, before bringing herself back down hard, causing soapy water to spill over the sides of the bathtub. But right now, neither of them cared about that…their eyes were on each other, and each other alone….as Blake began to ride his cock…faster and faster…building up speed…

…ragged breaths escaped their throats, as Negan's chocolate orbs flickered to Blake's tits bouncing up and down above him…

He leaned in easily, cupping one and pressing a hot, open-mouthed kiss to it and tugging on her nipple with his teeth.

A frown grazed over Blake's eyes, as she opened her mouth in awe, staring down at Negan as he got to work, his tongue expertly darting over her pink, and pointed nipple.

But even that wasn't enough to stop the movement between them, as Negan's dick managed to hit the sweet-spot inside her, again and again and again…

They were going fast now. This wasn't as slow and needy as the other night had been granted, but this instead was hot and sloppy and dirty, and, oh-so much fun.

Blake gasped out, as Negan let go of her breast and stared up at her, in a look that was half-questioning, half-telling.

And as quick as Blake could move, she knew Negan could move faster, and so, almost reading her mind…..the dark-haired Saviour grasped both her hips hard now, pulling the down onto him….keeping her in place….

…and it was then that Blake began to see stars as Negan began to thrust up into her, building momentum…

"Uhhhhghhh…..ohhhhh…please…yes…oh yes…." Blake breathed out with a soft, gasping moans…as he slammed into her again and again…his eyes fixed on hers…

And it was only a few second later than Blake felt herself clenching around him…her walls convulsing…..as she came hard….waves of pleasure washing over her…causing her to cry out…and her eyes to roll back in her head.

And before she could stop him, obviously seeing the look of utter ecstasy on her features, Negan had too, let out a harsh 'fuck', and stopped, pulling her down onto him firmly…. 
….and with that before either of them could stop it, Blake felt his twitching cock filling her with a load of his hot, white cum.

She knew in the back of her mind that that would have to be dealt with sooner or later, but right now she didn't care….her chest rising as falling hard, as the pair of them caught their breaths.

Blake, still sat on his dick, pressed her face into Negan's shoulder, as he lifted a hand to the back of her head tenderly, his fingers curling gently into her hair.

"You know I think that's the first time I've ever had birthday sex…” she said after a long drawn out moment or two had passed, before pulling back, causing the water to splosh slightly around her.

But Negan keeping his hand at the back of her head just stared up at Blake, almost awe-stuck by her, grinning widely, his eyes roving over her face.

"Oh, Peaches, I am fuckin' sorry to disappoint you," said Negan in a goading voice. "But that wasn't birthday sex…"

Blake felt the smile drop from her face as she shot him a pouting, questioning look.

But the dark-haired Saviour merely leaned in, running his thumb over her swollen bottom lip desirously.

"That was just morning sex," he murmured in a gravelly voice, explaining, his chocolate eyes meeting with hers once again. "The birthday sex comes later…along with your surprise…"

And with that, Blake gave another laughing smile, wrapping her arms around his tanned neck, as Negan's mouth met with hers once more…. 
Just wear somethin' pretty

Thirty long minutes later Blake strolled out of the bathroom, just a white towel wrapped around her middle, fussing with her damp, messy hair with one hand and carrying a pile of yesterdays' clothes in the other.

"That shower is so good," she muttered, catching sight of the now fully-dressed Negan sitting on his leather sofa, checking off accounts in a large ledger propped up on his lap. He was dressed, as he always was, in a white t-shirt, dark grey pants, with his black leather jacket now shrugged back over his broad shoulders.

Blake, after her and Negan's hot, wet, and anything-but-relaxing bath, had headed into the shower to clean up properly, spending all of twenty-five long minutes, washing her aching body under the hot, steamy water.

It must have gone midday by now, but Blake was past caring.

It was her birthday after all…

Negan glanced up at her, grinning and raising a dark eyebrow in her direction.

"Hmmm, well I think that bath was fuckin' better," he chimed fiendishly, his pen hovering over the page before him. "You ridin' me, and me watching those perfect fuckin' titties of yours, bouncin' up and down on top of me while you do so. Nothin' better."

Blake gave a satisfied sigh, her lips twitching up into a smirk, as she readjusted her towel slightly.

"It was fun…" she agreed. "…as morning sex goes…"

"As mornin' sex goes?!" said Negan in an incredulous voice. "Well don't you know how to make a guy feel fuckin' special, Sweetheart!"

Blake laughed, padding across to the now-rumpled four-poster bed and placing down her second-day old clothes gently, feeling Negan's eyes on her.

It was strange to think how far they had come in so little time.

Blake remembered back to when she had first been in a towel in front of Negan. Just a couple of days after she had arrived at the Sanctuary…back when he had found bruises on her arm, given to her by David.

She had felt so vulnerable under his gaze back then…but now….she revelled in it. In the feeling that he could easily pounce on her at any minute.

And, as if on cue, Blake smiled to herself, as she heard Negan behind her, placing down his ledger and getting stiffly to his feet.

"Y'know…" he uttered in a low growl of a voice, strolling over towards her, as Blake looked his way. "We could screw off today altogether…spend it in here instead…fucking each other's brains out…"

He threw a suggestive look towards the large bed before them, wagging his dark eyebrows, as he approached her, sliding his hand around her towel-wrapped waist possessively.
But Blake raised her own eyebrows, turning to face him now and giving a pout.

"As tempting as that sounds, do you really expect me to give up my birthday surprise?" she asked in a simpering voice, pressing a hand to his taut, leather-clad chest and giving him a small, playful shove away from her.

At this Negan gave a familiar growl of want, hovering over Blake's shoulder, as she turned back towards the bed, and her pile of clothes.

But the dark-haired saviour wasn't done yet, pressing his mouth to her ear, sending a hard shiver coursing through Blake's slender body. She gasped out slightly, as he pressed himself up against her from behind.

"Well, just make sure you wear somethin' real fuckin' pretty today, alright, Peaches?" he said giving a short possessive growl into her ear, his hot breath trickling down her neck. "Because Daddy is gonna make today worth remembering."

Blake smiled, reaching up with her right hand and cupping her palm across Negan's stubbly cheek, over her shoulder.

Her stomach meanwhile doing backflips.

"How pretty are we talking?" she asked, wrinkling her nose and leaning back against him, pressing her cheek against his.

But Negan merely pressed a single hungry kiss to her exposed and damp throat.

"Well let's be honest here, Sweetheart," he hummed into her skin. "You could wear nothing but a nice fuckin' smile and I'd still wanna screw you….so I'm easy."

At this Blake gave a small roll of her eyes and let out a laugh, as Negan pushed himself off of her, grinning widely, showing her his row of straight white teeth.

"Helpful," she uttered, tutting at him over her bare shoulder as he backed off, raising his hands aloft in a goading manner. "Real helpful."

But the dark-haired Saviour just chuckled, snatching up his trusted barbed-wire covered baseball bat from the side.

"What can I say, Darlin'," he said in an arrogant voice. "I'm a fuckin' catch."

And with that, before Blake could utter a retort of any sort, Negan had tugged open the door to his room, and headed out, flashing her one last cocky smile as he went.

It had turned into a lovely, hazy afternoon…the warm, start of Fall, sun, beating down onto the grey lot outside.

Blake could see that, as she started down the long hallway that led out to the breezy open space….where she had heard Negan would be.

She had no idea what kind of 'surprise' Negan had in store for her. But she wouldn't put it past him for it to be something ridiculously stupid. Like an engagement ring for starters.

Was this how he got all his wives? Promised them a nice birthday surprise and instead shocked them with an ultimatum.
No surely he wouldn't do that now...right?

But even now, after all that had happened between them, Blake still questioned his motives sometimes. He was unpredictable...a challenge...and Blake even now wasn't completely convinced he wouldn't become bored of her after a while...now that he had got what he wanted.

But was that all he saw her for? Just a screw he had devoted this much time to? He had given her so much. Let her walk all over him at times. And Blake wondered how many other wives he let sleep in his bed, cuddling them close to him while he slept...

Perhaps she was being irrational now...

But in this world it was hard not to be sometimes...

Blake pursed her lips together as she tried to push all these conflicting thoughts aside, tugging at the hem of her pretty blue dress, making sure it definitely covered her ass, as she stepped out into the lot.

It had taken Blake a while to get ready….finding this little number in her closet, along with a pair silver strapped sandals and a set of matching black underwear.

She had then fussied with her hair, teasing it into some sort of shape, before putting on some lip-balm and a couple of coats of mascara.

And it was then, after that taking her an entire fifteen minutes, that had Blake began the pacing….

..the deliberating…

Wondering if perhaps she should change…

If perhaps this was too much for just a birthday surprise….

For what was this surprise even really likely to be? A run? A chance to raid some looted mall? Dinner?

For in this world there wasn't much else.....no chance at a real date. A real gift.

Not that Blake had had a 'real' birthday girl in a long long time.

Blake's Mom had lived a couple of hundred miles away. And so Blake had never been privy to much attention during celebrations. Usually spending the holidays working or hanging out alone. And even when David came along, his feelings on spending time, money or effort on these types of things were just deemed frivolous and pointless...and so Blake had never had a special gift given to her well, ever! For her birthday, thanksgiving, to celebrate a job promotion, or for Christmas either. And that was just how life was...

So it wasn't surprising that Blake was a little torn by the entire situation.

For why would anyone go to the effort of doing anything special for her? She wasn't worth it...and never had been.

And so, stripping out of her dress at least twice, Blake had eventually put it back on with a huff and finally headed out of her room, down on the second floor.

It hadn't been long after that, that giving an impressed whistle, Simon had appeared from behind her at the staircase that led down onto the ground floor.
"You look real great," he said encouragingly, offering her a knowing smile, placing a hand on the railing beside him, as Blake had turned to face him.

Simon was pretty hard to make out. Obviously he was loyal to Negan, but to Blake, he gave very little away, sometimes his smile saying more than his words even did.

But Blake had just huffed again and plucked at the blue cotton material of her clingy dress.

"Well, he asked for pretty, so..." she said, suddenly hearing the words as they spilled from her mouth. "...God...what am I doing..."

She shook her head, rolling her eyes.

But Simon gave a chuckle, reading her completely.

"He's outside, in the lot" he merely grinned, gesturing to the long hallway behind her with his chin. "Enjoy. Oh and happy birthday."

And with that he strolled away, gun visible at his side as he went.

Blake had stared after him for a long moment, before sighing, turning on her heel and heading towards the lot.

There were a few trucks parked out here this morning and the place seemed to be alive with the hustle of bustle of Saviours moving about, going this way and that, carrying things, loading up vehicles...and chatting to one another.

But Blake, threw her hand up shielding her eyes from the sun's ray, as she walked out into the wide space and gazed about.

She couldn't see any sign of Negan now...moving over and making to peer around an enormous silver vehicle parked in the centre of the lot, taking up almost all of the space.

She gave a frown, trying to search for him amongst the figures moving to and fro... but before she could even move another inch, a door to the side of the large silver truck was thrown open, and out stepped a familiar face.

"Well, hot-diggity-dog, Peaches," came the loud and carrying tone of Negan, who hopped down from the step of the vehicle and strutted over to her easily...tall and looming, a wide grin fixed onto his bearded face, with Lucille thrown up and over his leather-clad shoulder. "Don't you look like a million goddamn bucks!"

His chocolate eyes looked her up and down, as he bit down hard on his bottom lip, giving an admiring frown.

"Mmmhmmm," he said with an approving shake of his head, suddenly swinging Lucille from his shoulder and holding the barbed-wire covered baseball bat out in front of him, trailing it at the hem of Blake's dress. "I would let you ride my face any fuckin' day wearin' that, Sweetheart."

But she immediately stepped back, snatching the material away from him, giving him a dark scowl.

"Such a charmer," she bit back in a sarcastic voice, narrowing her eyes at him huffily.

But Negan merely continued to grin, closing the gap between the two of them and arching his lean
figure back as he spoke.

"So what do you think?" he said after a second or two, raising his eyebrows.

But Blake stared back at him, looking a little confused.

"About what?" she replied in an unimpressed manner, shaking her head.

But Negan lifted his gloved hand and bashed it, palm-first, against the side of the huge silver van beside him.

"A goddamn beauty ain't she?" he said with a glint of something in his eye.

But Blake just tilted her head to the side, staring up at it carefully.

"It's an RV, Negan," she answered, a little bemusedly, raising a slender eyebrow and folding her arms over her chest now, a little defensively.

But the dark-haired Saviour came to stand at her side now, his free hand slipping around her slender waist as the pair of them stared up at the silver vehicle before them.

Negan gestured up at it with Lucille.

"And it's your fuckin' birthday surprise, Darlin'," he chimed, tugging her into him.

Blake let out a sudden laugh, suddenly eyeing him.

"My surprise?" she said making an amused face, scratching the side of her temple with her fingers and looking at Negan's long face...waiting for the gag...

But her smile soon faltered as she realised that he was not, for once, joking.

Negan nodded earnestly, a smirk still lingering over his lips.

"Yup," he said in a low voice, tugging at his lips with his teeth, arching his back once again as he spoke. "She's loaded up with all sortsa' fuckin' nice shit, all ready for you and me to take a little trip, Peaches."

Blake stared at the man at her side now, letting his hand slip from her waist as she turned to face him fully.

Of all the things in the world she had expected him to surprise her with, this was not one of them…

But the more she thought on it….the better it became.

For how long had Blake been cooped up…whether it be here, or at Alexandria…or even on runs…even out on the road she was always limited with where she could go…but with something that looked as suped-up as this….they would have no problems being out there…

"So we just….drive?" she asked a little bemusedly, the smile reappearing on her lips as she tilted her head, stepping into Negan once more and allowing her fingers to reach the zipper on his jacket.

But Negan eyed her warmly…staring down at her like she was the only woman he had even laid eyes on…with something that resembled awe in his dark gaze.
"I've got a place in mind we could go..." he grinned, running his tongue over his lips now. "...if you're up for it, Doll-face?"

And Blake felt her breath catch slightly in her throat, as her tanned and ample chest, shown off to perfection by her tight fitting dress, rose and fell hard.

But even so, she nodded happily, and chewed on her pink lip, giving the Saviour a small nod.

"I guess you'd better show me around then..." she said excitedly...her hand slipping easily into his gloved one. "...Daddy."
"After you," said Negan with a wide grin, offering a gloved hand out towards the open door, leading up and into the RV.

Blake rolled her eyes, knowing exactly why he was being so kind, as she, strutting up the next few steps, heard the predictable growl of want from behind her.

"Fuck me, Darlin'" he said with his lip caught now between his teeth. "…you tryin' to kill me with those goddamn panties of yours?"

Blake took in a tired breath of air.

"Is it a crime to wear underwear now?" she sighed, her hand moving back to brush down the rear hem of her dress.

But Negan gave a wolfish whistle of appreciation. "With a pussy like yours, it should be," he said in a delicious voice, causing Blake to smile and shake her head, tutting, as she reached the top of the narrow steps and stared around at the interior of the RV.

It was plush in here, with leather and dark mahogany furnishings wrapping around the entire vehicle. The space in front of them looked like a sort-of living area, with a small table, comfy-looking benches, a couple of large grey fitted couches, and a small kitchenette. There were two doors off to the right, and to her left she could see the driver's seat up front.

Blake could tell a lot of effort had been made to make the place look nice, with a couple of extra throw pillows on the couches, and a large pile of food and supplies laid across the table. There looked to be fresh fruit, bread, crackers, and even a bottle of wine…

…and Blake couldn't help but smile as she pressed herself back against one of the cabinets, allowing Negan enough room to climb the last few stairs behind her.

"Looks nice," she said in a an eager tone, biting down hard onto her lip and peering up at him, as he leered over her.

"Oh darling, you ain't seen nothing yet," he said in a husky tone, his face hovering a mere breath away from hers as he grasped her hand in his free one, and pulled her over to the closed-off doors on their left.

"Bathroom's busted so you're gonna have to go outside," he explained, nodding matter-of-factly to the first door. "But this…is the bedroom…"

Negan gave the door ahead of him a short shove open, to reveal a large king sized bed, covered in what looked like hundreds of fake rose petals.

Blake at this, gave an enormous smile, unable to help the laugh that escaped her lips.

"Are you serious?" she said airily, taking a step further into the room and allowing her hand to slip from his.

But Negan behind her, gave a defensive frown.

"Mmmhmmm," he replied easily. "I thought we could stay over tonight."
Never in a million years had Blake expected this.

She let out another giggle before turning back to the dark-haired man.

"I never had you down for the romantic type..." she said shaking her head bemusedly.

But Negan ran a hand over his stubbly beard, tensing his jaw slightly as he looked down at her.

"Well it is your goddamn birthday, so I thought I'd make a fuckin' effort, Darlin'," he uttered in a slightly irritable tone, placing a hand to the small of her back and beginning to lead her out of the room with an annoyed shove. "But if you're gonna be so fuckin' ungrateful..."

Blake laughed, hurriedly clutching hold of his leather sleeve and turning to face him, pressing her body close to his.

"I love it," she purred up him earnestly, pressing her face into his collarbone. "I just never expected it..."

And with that Blake pressed a gently kiss to his throat.

No one had ever made this much effort for her in her life.

Even David had used Blake's own grandmothers engagement ring to propose with....getting down on one knee in a restaurant they had had a fifty percent voucher off at.

So this small gesture from the dark-haired man before her, was not insignificant to Blake....

Not at all.

"Thank you," she murmured into his skin, the moment she pulled away....feeling Negan's free hand shift around her waist, his fingers, gliding over the small of her back possessively.

Things had changed between them now, since Blake's return from Alexandria. And the caramel-blonde woman, more than ever before, felt an desperate urge to be close to him, to never have to leave his side again. And from the way in which Negan had been these past couple of days, using any excuse to touch her, to hold her body close to his, she had a feeling, he felt exactly the same.

Was this crazy?

Feeling this way about a man that others, despised.....feared.....revered...?

A man who had five wives sitting upstairs at the Sanctuary waiting to be called on at any moment...

A man who had killed people Blake had known...

But she couldn't help it. Things had altered so much in Blake's life since David. She wasn't the tiny mouse she once had been.....she felt stronger.....less willing to put up with shit from people....

And the strange thing was, Blake didn't even need Negan's protection. That wasn't why she was here.

She was here because she felt like his equal...a personal who could challenge him as much as he could challenge her.

They were a good fit together...
But Blake feared how long all this would last.

There were no fairy-tale endings in this world…not for someone like Blake at least.

"You all set to get goin', Doll-face," Negan suddenly asked, breaking Blake from her thoughts. "'Cause this place I'm taking you to, it's gonna take a couple of hours to get there, at least…an' I kinda wanna make it there by sunset."

Blake shook herself and gave a bright smile, her hands pawing at his chest, as she leaned into him.

"If I didn't know any better, baby, I'd think you were going to propose…" she said in a teasing voice, as she pushed herself from him finally.

But Negan merely chuckled, digging his cheek with his tongue.

"Oh I fuckin' would, Sweetheart," he replied, raising his eyebrows into his hairline. "…if I didn't think that you'd say no."

But the caramel-blonde woman gave a sigh.

"Well, you obviously know me too well," she said eyeing him playfully, as she turned on her heel heading back into the living quarters….as the dark-haired Saviour slowly followed behind, letting out a long troubled sigh of his own.

The truck sped down the road now, as the hazy warm summer sun drifted lower and lower in the sky.

They had been out here for over two hours, with Negan up front and in the driver's seat and Blake going back and forth between sitting in the passenger's side, on his right, still in her skimpy blue dress, and moving back into the living quarters of the truck, picking at the food sat upon the table and bringing out bit and pieces for Negan to enjoy as he drove.

The pair had chatted for a long while….laughed…joked…teased each other endlessly…with Negan even goading Blake into feeding him grapes directly into his mouth, at some point, before he had made a classic Negan move, and let out a token joke at her expense, causing her to tut and slope off back into the rear of the RV again in annoyance.

But it was twenty minutes ago, that after a brief playful chat about nothing in particular, Blake, enjoying the warm sunshine, had propped her head up against her elbow and dozed neatly off, her head falling onto her shoulder tiredly.

For these last few days had been exhausting, despite Blake's lie in this morning. She had gone from being locked inside her own house for days on end, been torn apart by the people she considered her friends, almost killed in a car wreck, and then brought all the way back to the Sanctuary. Back to the place she considered her home now. And amongst all that, things with Negan had of course become a lot more hot and heavy.

But it was easy to see how things had taken their toll on her, Blake now drifting off into a comfortable slumber as the van rumbled down the empty road.

Although it didn't feel like she had been asleep very long, before she heard a short, sharp whistle, from her left, waking her at once.
Blake blinked her eyes open, gazing around to find that the RV had slowed slightly, heading now through two lines of tall redwoods on either side of the road ahead.

"We're almost there, Doll-face," Negan said, throwing her a slow, blinking smile over his leather clad shoulder, eyeing her as she stretched and yawned at his side. "An' I wanted to make sure you see this fuckin' view….

Blake pursed her lips together, smirking, as a frown twitched its way between her brows.

"What view-" she asked questioningly.

But the blonde woman was cut off suddenly, as a single shaft of warm orange light appeared from around the tress.

Her eyes widened into huge orbs, as she parted her lips, gazing out at the spectacular sight before her eyes, as Negan rounded the corner and slowed the RV to a stop on what looked like the edge of large viewpoint, overlooking the valley of trees below.

But it wasn't just the view that seemed to take Blake's breath away, but the sight of the huge sun setting in the sky before them, throwing a beautiful orange glow over both them, and the entire rolling landscape before them.

"…Wow…." she breathed out, feeling Negan look instantly her way, his face blank and unreadable, as if waiting for her reaction.

And right now, that reaction was truly sincere.

Never in her life had Blake seen something so beautiful….so pure and warm in this fucked up world….

She felt like the sun was creating this beauty for her eyes only.

Like her and Negan were the only people who would appreciate this moment for what it was…and not just the oncoming night….where walkers were more rife than the day time.

But here, with the dark-haired Saviour at her side, Blake felt all her worries all her concerns disappearing completely.

With him she felt safe……

….and for once in her life, at home… with him…

"Thank you," she whispered out, dragging her eyes away for just the tiniest of moments, and staring over at Negan who was gazing back at her….his eyes honest…waiting…

And she truly meant it. Knowing that, all of this….it was for her…

This crazy, frightening man being the first person in Blake's life to ever go out of their way to do something special just for her. To make her feel like, maybe, just maybe, she was worth something more than just a sorry excuse.

Blake knew what she felt about him. Wanting so much to tell him right now…taking in a deep breath…

….but before she could speak, Negan opened his mouth…
"Happy birthday, Peaches," Negan uttered in a low voice, his face breaking finally into a wide, devoted grin.

And Blake, as much as she very much wanted to kiss him right now, just smiled, her heart filled with such overwhelming happiness…

… turning back to the beautiful sunset once more….
"So you've never played 'I've never' with your wives?" said Blake with a small laugh just five minutes later.

The sun was still bright orange in the sky, throwing a warm, hazy sort of glow over the caramel-blonde woman, still sat in the front of the RV, staring out at the view ahead.

Negan, strolling back through the partition that divided the seats up front and the living area behind, gave a bemused chuckle.

"Nope," he replied with a shake of his head, popping the 'p' and making a face as he eased the cork out of a dusty old bottle of red wine. "Never had the fucking pleasure, Doll."

Blake smiled up at him, as he uncorked the wine, before dropping down into the passenger seat immediately beside her with a stiff groan, throwing a leather-clad arm over the back of her seat possessively.

"Well then, maybe in that case, we should play," she purred in a fiendish voice, turning her body to face him now. "Seeing as you brought the alcohol."

Negan looked her way, leaning back comfortably against the seat and cocked a dark eyebrow at her, grinning.

"This the game that got you so fuckin' inebriated that one time, Darlin'?" asked Negan questioningly, tilting his long tanned face towards her.

Blake felt her cheeks flush now, but waved a hand dismissively at him.

"Yeah, but it'll be fun," she uttered in an airy tone, snatching the bottle of wine from his hand and crossing her bare legs neatly, feeling his eyes fully on her now. "I'll go first…"

Negan licked his lips, his hand drifting eagerly to Blake's thigh, barely covered now by her pale blue cotton dress, but Blake raised both eyebrows and pressed a hand to his chest, swatting him away.

"Ah, ah, ah…" she said in a delicious tone, eyeing him. "You play with me first, and then I'll play with you."

At once, Negan's grin widened amorously, his dark eyes trickling over her features.

"Fine…" he said in a husky voice, providing her with a simpering look in return. "Go ahead…"

Blake chewed on her lip thinking for a moment and staring back out at the eye-catching sunset to her right, flipping her long caramel-hair back over her shoulder.

"Ok, I've never….driven an RV," she said happily as she turned back to face him finally. "So, because you have, you have to drink."

Negan offered her a goading look, narrowing his own chocolate eyes in her direction, but soon snatched the wine bottle out of her hand once again and took a long swig before wiping at his mouth with his fingers.

"Alright," he said, shifting in his seat slightly, as he stared at Blake. "I've never…played 'I've never'."
Blake grinned and rolled her eyes, allowing him to hand her the dusty bottle of wine before taking a long sip of her own.

It tasted good, better than the wine the wives were allowed at least, and Blake smiled almost shyly as she pulled the bottle from her lips.

The pair of them were close….not just physically….but it was as though they were the last two people left on this earth now…up here….where nothing else seemed to matter.

"Ok, my turn," she sighed, tucking a strand of hair behind her ear, as Negan parted his lips, leaning his elbow up on the back of the seat, gazing at her.

"I've never…" she looked about yet again, as the sun slowly set in the burning sky before them. "…I've never……been here before."

Her eyes travelled back and forth over the beautiful scenery stretching out in front of them, like a postcard.

But Negan, who unbeknownst to Blake had his eyes fixed on her and only her now, just took the bottle of wine and took another swig, nodding his head.

"I used to come here a fuckin' hell of a lot on field trips, right before the entire fuckin' world went to shit," said the dark-haired Saviour matter-of-factly.

But Blake just eyed him in a bemused manner, cocking an eyebrow his way.

"You were a teacher?" she asked in a tone of utter disbelief, pulling a smirking face. Unable to ever picture Negan standing at the front of a class, teaching kids about calculus or history.

But Negan merely ran a hand down his bearded chin, letting out a heavy sigh.

"Not quite," he answered. "I was a coach….among other fuckin' things."

But Blake just smiled widely...feeling here heart flutter.

It was as though for the first time, sitting here, Blake was seeing Negan for what he really was….more than just the leader of the Saviours. What he had been like before all this…

"Figures…" she murmured, chewing on her lip, her green eyes roving across his own blinking orbs.

But Negan threw her a grin.

"An' why's that, Peaches?" he asked in a low, urging voice…the tension in the truck, thick now...as Negan's hand drifted back over to Blake's thigh…

"Well I'm guessing that's where you get that commanding tone of yours from," she said wrinkling her nose teasingly as she spoke.

Negan cocked his head to the side, his fingers gliding easily up her skin…gently pushing up the fabric of her blue cotton summer dress…

"An' I'm guessin' you like when I use that tone with you, Darlin'…" he murmured in reply, reaching up with his other hand and brushing a stand of hair away from her collarbone.

But Blake knew exactly what he was trying to do…. 
She smiled seductively but gave a sigh…not allowing herself to lean forward and her lips to meet his…instead, crossing her legs over one another once more, and allowing his hand to slip from her skin.

She knew what was coming….

And, as predicted, Negan almost at once, let out a hungry growl under his breath.

But Blake jus, ignored him, merely smirking and turning her head back to the setting sun.

"Alright, I'll go," said Negan with a small huff. "I've never….

He bit down onto his lip, staring around for a moment and thinking, before his chocolate orbs finally landed back on Blake, his mouth curving up into a wide, shit-eating grin.

"…given head to a guy…"

He offered Blake a suggestive look, which only caused to make her smirk and roll her eyes, sighing, before bringing the wine bottle up to her lips.

But she was mid-way through a small swig, when she felt Negan tip up the bottom of the wine bottle with his hand.

Blake squealed, trying to hold back her laughter, trying not to choke at the same time, before shoving his hand away and pulling the bottle from her lips, gasping for air.

"Ugh, stop, Negan!" she scolded, shaking her head, and wiping at her mouth with the back of her hand.

But Negan raised his eyebrows in a failing attempt to look innocent. "I'm just sayin' Sweetheart," he chimed in a low gravelly tone. "That you're gonna need to drink a lot more. Cause', hell, I know that you're pretty much a fuckin' expect when it comes to givin' blow-jobs, if the one you gave me the other night was anythin' to go by. I mean, shit, I've been tryin' not to cum ever since, just thinkin' about it!"

Blake gave a laugh, shaking her head, her cheeks turning ever so slightly pink.

"Shut up," she reprimanded, before taking another sip of wine to recover, as Negan chuckled, his tongue reaching his back molars, as he eyed her fondly.

The caramel-blonde woman gave a small sigh and shifted in her seat slightly staring out at the view.

It really was incredible, and Blake still could not get over the fact that Negan had thought to bring her head…dragging her from the monotony of life down there in the real world…and taking her to someplace where they could be alone….him wanting her company, that much.

She wondered if he had brought any of his wives up here…Tanya…Frankie…perhaps Sherry… Or was this a privilege only she had earned?

But she smiled softly to herself now…hoping it was the latter that was the truth.

"Y'know, all this…” said Blake chancing a glance back at Negan siting close beside her. "…it's kinda romantic. If I didn't know any better, I'd have said you had a soft-spot for me….."

She half-expected the bearded Saviour to chuckle, but instead he merely stared back at her, his brown eyes earnest.
"From the first time I fuckin' saw you, Darlin," he answered in a low voice. "Standin' there defying your fi-an-ce enough, for him to hit you upside the face."

Blake rolled her eyes and let out the smallest of huffs, setting down the wine bottle on the floor beside them.

"Ugh, I do not want to talk about David on my birthday, thank you," she uttered firmly.

And Negan gave a slow nod of understanding.

"Noted sweetheart," he said blinking slowly, his lips twitching up as he went in for a third try at her thigh, sliding his tanned digits up and over her smooth skin, heading upwards…. "So let's go back to first fuckin' impressions shall we?"

Blake pursed her lips, smiling now.

"What did you think of me when you first clapped those pretty green eyes on me, back at the Sanctuary?" he pressed, staring back at her expectantly, his hand sliding higher.

She pressed her lips together, narrowing her eyes and thinking for a second or two before answering.

"Well your reputation kinda preceded you, so I pretty much thought you were a crazy asshole who was gonna kill me at any moment," she sighed, her eyes glancing down to his hand that was steadily inching ever higher on her thigh.

But Negan just licked at his lips, his dark eyes still on her face.

"So it took me a while to wear you down, huh?" he said leaning in towards her now, a hint of a cocky grin littering his long and tanned features.

But Blake merely sighed once more dismissively, arching an eyebrow up towards him.

"Who says you've worn me down?" she asked in a light tone, glancing away and beginning to examine her nails…knowing exactly how much that would rile Negan up.

And, as if on cue, Negan marvelled at her hungrily, a bemused frown shifting its way between his brows.

"Oh, Darlin'," he began, suddenly moving his body over hers now, and pressing her back against the seat behind her. "…you can deny it all you want. But I can tell just how soaked those lil' panties of yours get…when I look at you…"

He hovered his lips over hers now perilously, as Blake raised her eyes to meet his, her heart beginning to thud in her chest.

She felt a lump appear in her throat and warmth spread between her legs…hot and slick…

"…when I touch you….." Negan continued, his hand sliding up her tanned and slender thigh, and pushing up the skimpy fabric of her cotton dress. "…when you're beggin' me to slide my hand up that goddamn hot-as-fuck dress of yours….."

Blake stared up him with heavy lust-filled eyes, letting out a short sharp gasp before she could stop herself, as his digits suddenly met with her soaked core through the damp fabric of her underwear.

But Negan was unrelenting now, lowering his chin, his eyes suddenly blackening with utter need….
.....as he parted his lips, watching her face carefully, as his fingers pushed the fabric that lay between them and her sopping wet slit aside, sliding their way easily inside her.

Blake's own fingers, positioned on the seat at her side, dug into the grey upholstery instantly, as her other hand curled around the fabric of Negan's t-shirt, visible through his now-unzipped leather jacket.

Her stomach convulsed at the contact, her breaths coming ragged in her throat, before he had even started anything.

"Oh, fuck me, Darlin'," he groaned, his frown deeper now, flicking his tongue over his bottom lip, as he felt just how wet she was…

….all for him…

And it wasn't a second later, that he had leant over her even more, his free hand rising up to Blake's neck, as he captured her swollen and panting lips with his.

He tasted like wine…sweet and woody….as Blake couldn't help but open her mouth to him…..moaning as she licked at his tongue with her own.

She could feel her abdomen tightening, as Negan's tanned fingers dipped their way expertly in and out of her dripping core, before sliding up and across her clit. Massaging her throbbing and aching mound, as his lips lapped against hers…making the most deliciously-wet sound, Blake' had ever heard…

At that moment, she could barely breathe…so intoxicated by Negan's scent, his taste, his touch… everything about him in fact…

….so vulnerable to him right now…

But this was not how this game of theirs worked….she could not let him get the upper hand….he was not about to win this round.

And so, with that, she gave his leather-clad chest a small shove, causing his mouth, and also unfortunately his fingers to leave her.

But as Negan shot her a dark, questioning look, Blake could only smile in response as she hitched up her dress, pushing him back down onto the seat beside them, before coming up onto her knees and straddling his lap easily.

Negan's tanned and calloused fingers found her thighs now, gripping them tightly….but even so, the caramel-blonde woman did not lower herself down onto him…

….instead, it was barely a moment later that her hand moved down to the space beneath her, and found his hard dick, tight and straining against his pants.

Now it was her turn to whisper words into his ear that would make him come undone.

"And I know just how hard you get when you think of me, Daddy," she murmured into his ear in retaliation, leaning into him, and beginning to massage his stiff cock through his tight jeans.

Negan let out a sudden loud, guttural groan which caught Blake by surprise, but made her continue with her teasing nonetheless.
"Do you want to fuck me, Daddy?" she purred, suddenly removing her hand and instead lowering herself down onto him and grinding on him hard, causing him to immediately buck his hips, his jaw clenching as he placed a firm hand to her hips holding her in place.

He looked completely captivated by her now…enthralled by her every movement and by every single syllable that left her tongue…

But she blinked up at him, through her long lashes, running her tongue over her bottom lip.

"Do you want to fuck my tight, wet little pussy….on my birthday, Daddy?" she asked with a pout, tilting her head to the side and allowing her mass of long caramel hair to drift over her shoulder.

Negan was, at those words, rendered completely speechless, parting his lips and mouthing at the air…

…but Blake was nowhere near done yet….

And with that, Blake took his hand, that had, just a moment ago, been inside her, and brought his digits up to her mouth, carefully sucking each one of them clean of her juices, on-by-one.

It was only when she was done, did she slowly lift her gaze to finally meet with his…giving an immediate gulp.

For Blake had never seen the look that had passed over Negan's face before….

…dark and possessive…

…and he growled with an animalistic need…

…suddenly grasping both of Blake's thighs between his sticky digits, both lifting them both up from their seat.

Blake grinned, pressing a hungry kiss to his mouth, as her hands moved to his bearded face, holding onto his tight as he carried her, first, through into the living room…..but the pair did not stop here, Negan lingering only long enough to readjust his grip on her ass, as he walked with her through the narrow doorway at the end of the RV, and into the dimly lit bedroom, illuminated now by just a faint light streaming through the shaded blind up on the far left of the room.

Ignoring the fake petals completely, Negan dropped Blake down gently onto the large bed, hovering above her as he reached up beneath her dress and pulled down her panties with one swift swoop….

…before crashing his lips into hers.

The intensity of him right now was overwhelming…the growling groans of want being emitted from his mouth…as his tongue swirled against hers, pinning her down against the mattress below.

But Blake wanted him more than she could say, and it wasn't a second later that her hands slid down, fumbling between them and undoing his belt buckle and pulling down his pants zipper hurriedly.

Negan pulled his lips away from hers for a brief moment staring down as she pulled his stiff and throbbing cock from its confinement, him letting out a harsh growl of want as she did so.

But they were as eager as each other, Negan's hands too drifting down and hitching up Blake's dress, his fingers sliding between her thighs once again making for the creamy wetness at her centre.

But his digits barely lingered there long, as, with bodies aching for the other's, Negan's dick was
already at her entrance, his swollen tip sliding across her sopping folds.

A guttural grunt escaped his lips, as his chocolate eyes met with hers, in the hazy darkness of the rear of the truck.

And before Negan's mouth reached Blake’s once more, he was already inside her, with one slow, wet thrust, jamming his hips down hard onto hers.

Blake's eyes rolled back into her head, letting out a soft, carrying moan of pleasure, at the contact between his dick against her g-spot, as well as his pelvic bone against her clit.

"Jeez, Sweetheart," Negan breathed in a gruff voice, pressing his face into her collarbone, as he paused in his movements for a lengthy moment. "You're gonna make Daddy blow his entire fuckin' load early if you keep makin' noises like that."

Blake lifted the back of her hand to her face smiling, as Negan lifted his own head up to gaze at her.

That frown was still there, across his now, sweat-laden brow, but he seemed to look down on her now, almost awe-stuck, as she lay beneath him, still in that cotton dress…waiting for him to bring her to the edge.

And it was a long moment, as the pair of them breathed, staring back at one another, before Blake lifted her head off the mattress behind her, to capture his lips with hers.

She felt him press a grin to her mouth as he began, bucking his hips once again inside her, almost as though he was reminding her that he was still in control here….and, for the first time all evening, Blake wanted him to be…

She drew her mouth back from him, panting, her ample chest rising and falling hard beneath his own, fully clothed one….for there was no time now to slip the leather jacket from his shoulders, or indeed shuck his white t-shirt from his skin…

She wanted him…oh so badly…drawing her chin down and peering up at him with rounded, darkened eyes full of lust…

"Make me cum, Daddy," she purred, almost begging him now…

And it didn't take Negan a second to frown down at her wantingly….with black, thirst-filled eyes…

Was this what he looked like when he was killing someone, Blake immediately thought? But any serious mental ability was cut short, by Negan's hand sliding down to her waist, throwing up her dress further, despite it not even being in his way, before thrusting up into her hard.

"Oh, I'm gonna make you see fuckin' stars, Darlin'," he said with a growl, leaning his face into her ear, grunting once again as he thrusted again sharply, sending wave of pleasure washing up through Blake.

Blake moaned out again, arching her back against him and moving her hand's up to the back of his head, curling her fingers into the back of his dark, damp hair.

But Negan pulled back from her slightly, his tanned digits moving up and wrapping themselves around her throat.

Blake gasped for breath, tingling at the pleasure as his grip tightened against the skin of her neck…
Negan began to quicken his pace now, pounding into her, the sound of the his belt chinking, and skin slapping against skin, filling the entire RV now…combining in the atmosphere somewhere with the pair's hot humid breaths.

"You want me to make you cum?" pressed the bearded Saviour, his fingers tightening around her throat. This was power play for sure…but one that Blake liked very much, wanting to submit to him right now.

But she could only let out a hurried nod, as he buried himself deeper and deeper inside her with every stroke, causing pleasure to build deep within her abdomen.

"Then I want you to fuckin' beg for it, birthday girl," he growled, staring down at her with black, need-filled eyes. "Beg me to make you cum, Sweetheart."

Blake moaned again as he choked her hard, the breath seeming to expel from her lungs, leaving her completely at his mercy now…

But she revelled in it…knowing that right at this moment, he wanted her and only her.

"Please…" she managed to gasp out, as Negan slid his dick into her breathing hard. "Negan…I… I...."

But before she could utter another word, Negan had pulled out of her and let go of her throat.

Huh?

Blake's eyes snapped fully open, to see Negan, sat back against his knees, throwing his jacket off of his shoulders, before tugging his t-shirt over his head, before tossing it, too, down onto the floor beside the bed, where both items landed with a loud whump.

But the dark-haired Saviour's eyes were not on her face any more, his gaze now instead fixed to the still throbbing, soaking-wet slit between her legs….

And, with one swift movement, he had grasped her thighs, shucking Blake's entire body further up the bed, before leaning over her, and peppering several small achingly soft kisses to her inner thighs.

Blake let her head fall back against the sheets, her eyes rolling back into her head, yearning for his mouth to move closer to her hot folds….

…but Negan held off….his beard feeling deliciously scratchy against her legs, as he kissed every inch of her…apart from the place where she really wanted him to…

"Please…" she breathed out desperately, feeling Negan finally press a grin into her skin……before suddenly, licking at her achingly tender clit…

The action itself sent an intimate wave of pleasure coursing through Blake now, making her grasp at the sheets beneath her frantically, her spine curving….as she gasped out.

"Ohhh…please…yhhmmm….t-there…."

At her words Negan repeated the action again, slower this time…allowing Blake time to revel in the moment…letting a short heady groan leave her lips….as a wave of desire shot up through her entire body.

Negan obviously enjoyed hearing these illicit noises leaving her throat…as it was barely a moment
later that he picked up his pace, flicking his tone over her throbbing nub, before two fingers joined his tongue, burying their way beneath her folds.

Blake gasped out...already feeling her orgasm building inside her now, as Negan pumped his two fingers into her, and his tongue licked at her sensitive clit...working her into submission.

Blake's eyes fluttered closed, as she panted her lips...gasping for breath, finding it harder to breathe now than she had when Negan had had his hand wrapped around her throat....

...her mind dwelled on that now, as he hummed into her pussy, licking at her juices and fingering her.....how she was fully his...powerless beneath his touch....

Blake moaned out as his tongue darted over her, the quickening movements between his tongue and his fingers syncing up...building up a sensation of pure bliss into of her abdomen.

And it was only when Blake, almost whining out now, felt him give a growling groan against her clit...that she finally came apart...her walls clenching around his soaked fingers...

Oh god...

Oh godddd....

She cried out loudly, her back arching off the bed, her thighs clenching around the dark-haired Saviour's head...

Feeling her orgasm hit her again....and again....and again...

The sheets were balled inside her fists now, as Blake's thighs trembled, clinging onto every last moment of sheer pleasure he had given her.

She breathed in and out, and in again, as her heart resumed its normal pace as she let go of the sheets, now damp beneath her grasp.

Negan somewhere near to her, gave a small stiff groan, easing himself back up onto the mattress beside her. Blake feeling it creak beneath his weight.

The caramel-blonde woman finally turned her head and opened her eyes, seeing him at her side, grinning that oh-so-smug grin of his.

He had his head propped up against his elbow now, his chest tanned with its usual smattering of dark hair, as his still-stiff dick, sagging out of his pants, looking very much like it had enjoyed the show, had the smallest amount of pre-cum dripping from its straining purple tip.

Negan lifted his hand and cupped her cheek, as she panted along beside him, smoothing her dress back down over her exposed legs.

He widened his grin now, his brown eyes grazing over every inch of her face.

"You see those stars, Peaches?" he asked, blinking slowly at warmly down at her.

And Blake could only grace him with a smile in return.

"Yhhhmm," she said, dragging her teeth across her bottom lip slowly, giving him a nod.

God, he was everything to her right now...
Everything she had ever wanted. The first man in her life to give a shit about her on her birthday…

…and that was why, the moment Blake had caught her breath enough, throwing the dark-haired Saviour a devilish smile as she did so…she lifted herself from the mattress, before crawling to the space in between Negan's legs.

"…but now it's your turn to see them…" she said in a deliciously naughty tone, as she grinned taking his hard length in her hand, before moving her mouth down to meet it.

But right at the last second, she peered up at the bearded man, now propped up onto his elbows watching her in awe, as she licked her lips and grinned up at him fiendishly.

"….Daddy…."
Blake lay back against the cool sheets, as Negan's tanned arms curled around her shoulders, pulling her firmly into him.

She was still, at this moment in time, in her pale blue cotton dress, as the dark-haired Saviour beside her, lay back, his grey jeans still undone, with his now-satisfied cock sagging from his zipper, with his heavy black boots still on.

Blake had sucked him, hearing him emit copious amounts of swear words from his lips, as his fingers had tangled into her hair urgently. Her tongue had licked expertly at his length and it wasn't surprising that the bearded man had not lasted very long, grunting out harshly, before cumming hard into her mouth, sending a hot streams of ejaculate over her tongue, dousing her throat slickly.

Blake now, turned her body into his, feeling him let out a heavy sigh, as she pressed her face into his tanned collarbone.

"Why the fuck haven't we been doin' that since the first day I fuckin' met you, Sweetheart?" uttered the dark haired Saviour reaching up and dragging his free hand down his face lazily.

But Blake just pressed a smile into his skin, her digits reaching up and coming to rest upon his lean, hair-smattered torso.

"Well I was otherwise spoken for at the time," she murmured, closing her eyes lethargically. "…and you have five wives. So…"

She heard Negan give a chuckle, readjusting the position of his arm around her momentarily, his thumb rubbing circles against her bare skin.

"Even fuckin' so," he uttered with a small scoff, glancing down at her. "Now that was good fuckin' foreplay we could've been enjoyin' for at least the last couple of months, by now."

Blake smirked, lifting her head up and staring down at him bemusedly, raising an eyebrow.

"That was just foreplay, huh?" she inquired, a smirk dancing its way across her features now.

But the dark-haired Saviour just sighed and gave a cocky shrug of his broad shoulders, closing his eyes contentedly.

"Yup," he replied matter-of-factly. "That, was just round fuckin' one, Princess. Daddy's got at least another couple of sessions in him before sun-up."

Blake let out a small laugh, lifting herself up into sitting position, facing him now, as he opened a single chocolate eye, peering up at her.

For a moment neither of them said anything, with Blake staring down, toying with the sheets beneath her as Negan merely stared back at her for the longest time, his eyes roving across her face. Before Blake finally, after an age, opened her mouth to speak.

"Thanks…f-for all this…" she said, her eyes finally flickering up and meeting with his again. "This is the first time since I can remember, that my birthday's been more than just a single five dollar bookstore gift-certificate from my aunt."
Negan remained blank-faced for a long moment, taking in every inch of her pink cheeks, before he finally parted his own lips…reaching his hand out and snatching up hers.

"You're welcome, Darlin'," uttered the bearded man, bringing her hand to his mouth and pressing a gentle kiss to her smooth knuckles affectionately.

This was certainly a different side of Negan that Blake had never seen before. Vulnerable…caring…sweet…

Blake pursed her lips offering him a coy grin, giving the slightest of perplexed frowns. And it wasn't a second later, that she had moved over him, her hand still in his, coming to sit on his lap.

Negan, with his member still hanging from his pants, and Blake with no panties on, could feel how precarious and teasing this position was, but Blake would play this game anyway, straddling him, as her hands fell to his abdomen.

"You know I never had you down for the caring type," she said biting down slowly on her lip as she smiled down at him.

Negan quirked an eyebrow up, his hands moving to her bare thighs now, his digits tensing around her soft skin.

"Well shit, sweetheart," he said with a goading grin, showing off his line of perfect white teeth. "I mean, don' start spreadin' it around. I've got a fuckin' reputation to uphold."

Blake gave a small giggle, blinking down at him.

"So does that mean we have to keep whatever this is on the down-low when we get back to the Sanctuary?" she said, pointing between the two of them.

But Negan just grinned that wolfish grin of his, and within the blink of an eye, with the smallest of growls leaving his throat, he had grasped Blake hard around them middle and flipped her over onto her back, coming to lean over her possessively now.

Blake let another laugh escape her lips at this, as Negan pinned her against the mattress, and began to press hot open-mouthed kisses to her throat, his fingers threading through hers, either side of her shoulders.

"Well, I mean, I've had mistresses in the past, Darlin', but none I've wanted to screw on a nightly basis," he mused, almost humming the words into her skin.

Blake rolled her eyes, letting out the smallest of tuts at his words.

"And monogamy's not an option for you, is it?" she asked, with the smallest of frowns gracing her brow now.

But Negan's hands slid from hers, instead gliding up her slender sides, causing her dress to ride up slightly at her thighs, as he pressed another firm kiss to her collarbone.

"Well shit, I mean I've already suggested you take the spot of wife numero uno, Peaches," he murmured easily, his gaze remaining fixed upon her chest, rising and falling before him as he peppered it with kisses.

But Blake, whose eyes were now on the ceiling above, pursed her lips.
"Maybe I don't want to share," she mumbled back, her heart starting to beat hard now. "I mean, would it really be impossible for me to be the only one who gets to be with you?"

Her throat was dry now and a painful lump appeared in the back of her throat making it hard to swallow.

And this was made no better by the low chuckle that followed from Negan's lips.

"Well I have a fuckin' feelin' my other wives might have somethin' to say about that," he murmured into her throat.

But at his words Blake couldn't help but bristle.

She was silent for a long moment, as she turned her head away from him slightly, coming to face the stark wall to her right.

She wanted so much right now to tell him how she felt….the way she had felt for a long time.

But it was likely useless…

From the sounds of it, maybe she was just a passing fancy to him…a bit of fun until he moved onto the next woman…or back to one of the ones he already had.

Maybe one night she would be sent back to her own room and told that he wanted Tanya in bed with him tonight…or Michelle….or Amber…

Her heart sank completely as she dwelled on this now, licking gently at her lips.

He was never going to give them up…not for her at least…that was the reality of this whole situation.

But Negan, who had obviously noticed her lingering silence and lack of a reply, stopped in his kisses and lifted himself up off her, propping himself with his hands, that were now pressed to the space either side of her head.

"Everythin' alright, Doll?" he asked with the smallest of frowns gracing his tanned brow, peering down at her questioningly.

But at this, Blake shook herself slightly, giving a hurried nod.

She knew the score. And for her own benefit she needed to face facts. This was fun. Just a bit of fun and would be good while it lasted. But it couldn't go on forever and Blake would need to brace herself for the day to finally come, where she would be dismissed just like all his other wives…traded in for the next model in the store.

For in this world, there was no time to have feelings like the ones currently bubbling up inside her. and she needed to remember that.

"Yeah….fine…" Blake breathed, taking in a short sharp breath of air, steadying herself.

But Negan eased himself from her, coming to rest at her side, his frown heavier now that it had been just a moment ago.

"Don't give me that shit, Peaches," he said as Blake felt another small gulp slide down her throat. "I can tell when a gal's pissed at me."
But it was Blake's turn now to give a frown of her own, suddenly pushing herself up into a sitting position and tucking a strand of long caramel hair behind her ear.

"I'm not pissed at you, Negan," she tutted, smoothing down her dress and staring around, trying to act as uncaring as possible right now.

But Negan too, sat up to face her, his eyes on her face.

"Darlin',' he began with a heavy sigh, taking in her look and tilting his long face to the side, surveying her carefully. "I ain't a kid. An' I know when I'm in the fuckin' doghouse…"

But Blake merely pursed her lips, and looked away.

She hated the fact that he could read her so well sometimes.

"…is this because of me talkin' about my goddamn wives…'cause if it is-" he said shaking his head…

But Blake cut-across him before he had the chance to finish his sentence.

"No…" she lied, toying with the hem of her dress absent-mindedly. "…i-it's not…..I know the score….

But Negan gave a harsh laugh at this, suddenly lifting his rough hand to her chin.

"Hey," he said suddenly drawing her gaze up to his once more. "Darlin,' there ain't been any fuckin' score ever since you woke up in my fuckin' cell and back-talked the fuck outta me."

His chocolate eyes were honest now, frowning hard, gazing into Blake's green orbs trying as hard as he could to say communicate something wordlessly to her.

Something important….

But it was only a second more that the dark-haired man spoke again…and the moment was gone….that silent confession disappearing as quickly as it had come.

"But….like I said, I've got a goddamn reputation to uphold back there, Darlin'" he said suddenly shaking his head, looking troubled, letting go of her face, and instead, running a hand down his tired features. "Those women….we had an agreement….I can't just….I mean, it ain't that fuckin' simple anymore…I gotta be seen to be the one in power, Doll-face…"

Blake immediately let her eyes drop to her lap once again, nodding hurriedly, but her stomach was churning with utter jealousy now…a pain coursing through her body, hard and fast.

She had been right. There were no fairy-tales in this world. Just a hard and cold reality.

A reality where she wouldn't fall pregnant, where she wouldn't have Mia….and where she wouldn't have Negan….well, not totally, anyway.

"It's fine," she said repeating her words from earlier. "Really. Its fine."

But both of them could tell it wasn't, right now.

"Listen," said Blake, quickly moving over to the edge of the mattress and hopping up onto her bare feet. "I-I need some air…."
But Negan merely stared up at her.

"Peaches…" he began in a low, yearning voice… but Blake just stared up at him finally, flashing a forced and fixed smile onto her face encouragingly.

"It's ok…..really, I…uh… I just need to pee," she uttered matter-of-factly with a small nod, brushing down the back of her dress, as Negan got to his own feet, doing up his zipper and rethreading his belt at his waist.

"Want me to come out there with ya?" he asked in a gruff tone, moving around the bed to meet her near to the narrow doorway. "I can hold the flashlight…'case you get lost?"

But Blake just smiled, this time a little bit more realistically than the last, chewing on her lip as she did so.

"I can pee in the dark, Negan, ," she said in a faux-reprimanding voice, with a short shake of her head, feeling his hand reach the small of her back as she moved back into the large living area of the RV. "I'll be fine. I'll only like two minutes top, ok?."

She could see Negan wasn't particularly happy with having her go outside alone, his tongue poking into the side of his cheek, his jaw clenched tightly. But it wasn't as though Blake was a rookie in these types of situations. Unlike the other women in his life, his wives, Blake had spent a long time out there…surviving….

Not that she was bitter or anything. She liked those women.

And yet why now, could she not seem to get this horrible feeling of utter jealousy out of her head?

She didn't even bother slipping on shoes, moving over to the door to the RV easily. If walkers came she would be quicker barefoot than she would with silly strappy sandals on anyway.

But before she could reach for the door-handle, she felt a firm hand at her waist tug her back around.

It was of course Negan, his chocolate gaze boring into hers, and before she knew it, he had closed the gap between the pair of them, tugging her body flush with his possessively.

But he gave an uncharacteristic sigh, closing his eyes for the slightest of second before peering down at her, that frown still littering his tanned brow.

"Listen, Darlin', I told myself, hell, I told you, I wasn't gonna ask you this again…" he said his voice quiet now….growling out from his throat.

He licked at his lips for a long drawn out second, before finally speaking again…his words coming far slower this time.

"…be one of my wives, Peaches…" he uttered, his tone almost pleading with her.

But Blake gave a gulp as she stared back up at him.

There he was, standing there offering her protection, a home, security…

But this wasn't what she wanted.

And so Blake left her eyes fall from his…. as she slowly and surely shook her head.

"No…" she murmured out, suddenly turning on her bare heel and giving the door behind her a swift
The door slammed back in Negan's face as Blake left the RV.

But his dark brown eyes were fixed to the space ahead of him now, the space where the caramel-blonde woman of his fucking dreams had been standing just a mere moment ago.

Fuck.

What the fuck had he done?

He had pushed her away…and why?

Because it wasn't because he wanted to keep his wives close or keep any stupid fucking promises that he'd made to them that was for sure.

If he wanted to get of them, he would, in fucking heartbeat, because with or without the women in his godforsaken harem, Negan was still a fucking powerhouse, and was still the leader of the Saviours. He was dangerous and terrifying and he didn't need to have wives to prove that.

But there was another reason. A reason that fucking terrified him like nothing else in this fear-inducing world ever had.

For getting rid of his wives would never be a weakness for Negan.

But keeping Blake was.

SHE was his weakness…by a country fucking mile.

She was perfection to him. And he had not been lying when he had told her that things had changed back at the Sanctuary from the moment Blake had turned up there, and flipped everything he had onto its head.

He knew deep down that he hadn't felt this way about anyone since Lucille.

But with every moment he spent with her, showing her favour above any of the wives he had failed to show any attention to over these last few months, he was straying into dangerous territory.

For the dark-haired Saviour knew full well, that it wouldn't take long for one of his enemies or even his allies to cotton onto the fact that she was his entire fucking world.

All they would have to do was use her as leverage and he would be screwed. Everything he had worked so hard gone, just like that.

And if anything happened to her…

Negan gave a gulp now as he thought on this.

If only he could make her see, that by her just slotting neatly in with his wives…cloaking her from view…that she would be safe and that way she could be his…for good.

And he wouldn't need to worry.
But he knew her too well now. He knew she was going to say no again.

For a queen like her, was worth more than that, and he knew it.

And the longer this went on…the more it was going to tear them apart again.

Negan lingered there for a long moment, letting out a long huff of air and dragged his hand down his face.

He was screwed.

But all he could do now was turn around and heading back into the bedroom, running a hand down his long, tanned face as he did so….awaiting Blake's return…

Blake trudged through the undergrowth nearby, trying as hard as she could to see her way through the ever-darkening trees.

She did not need to pee, but with a busted bathroom in the RV, at least she had the excuse to come out here, giving her some time alone with her thoughts.

She was always going to have said no to him….to his offer of becoming a wife. Just like she always had.

And her feelings for him, rather than make the proposition better, just made it so much worse.

It would kill her to sit in that room in a skimpy dress, day in day out, like some sort of trophy.

And to see him come in one day and not choose her, well it would truly destroy her from the inside out. Blake could feel her heart thudding in her chest even now when she thought about it.

If that was the only way, then she would rather not have him at all….

But did she have a choice in this anymore? Or was this an ultimatum now?

Become one of his wives or let that be it. For good? After all they had been through?

Blake sucked In a breath sharply, coming to stop a little way away from the truck now, leaning up against a tree.

She could see it there even in the dim light, tall and looming…the vehicle that contained the most dangerous man she had ever met.

And yet that same man had saved in her in so many ways….

The caramel-blonde woman let out a faint, shuddering breath, blinking up at the RV.

Her mind racing now at a mile a minute…as he heart pounded against her ribcage.

But Blake had barely been stood there for a couple of seconds, when there came a sudden rustling behind her.

Blake was used to walkers now, but with no weapons on her at all and poor visibility, she knew she needed to get back the RV, and fast…
…but before she could do so, a sudden hand was clamped over her mouth…

Blake yelled out, but behind the dirty palm, nothing could be heard, as a pair of strong arms grabbed her around the middle….pining down her limbs roughly….as the dank smell of sweat and dirt and death filled her nostrils…

…but Blake could barely scrabble at the soft dirt underfoot with bare feet...

…but before she was dragged swiftly away…back into the darkened undergrowth beyond…
The Wolves

Warning this chapter is rated M. Proceed with caution before reading. Threats and mentions of violence/rape.

---------------------------------------------

Blake let out another muffled cry against the hand that was clamped over her lips, scrabbling at the ground beneath her feet for any kind of traction.

She was tall and not exactly slight in stature but the men carrying her along were bigger, pinning her arms back behind her as they shoved her forwards through the undergrowth. She could tell they were men. Even through the darkness she could hear their low grunts and smell their putrid sweat as they held her roughly.

Blake's heart was thudding in her chest now, so loud that she was sure everyone for miles around would be able to hear it.

But was there anyone else around? Just Negan stuck in that RV back there….probably not even having realised she was gone yet.

They had been walking for at least ten long minutes now….surely he would wonder where she had got to?

Fuck.

How the fuck was she going to get out of this one?

Blake glanced down at the ground, spotting three pairs of muddy boots.

There were three of them, and she was guessing they all had weapons too….taking her someplace unknown.

But Blake had been out here for long enough to know there was only one reason why men like this would take a woman like her and cart her away…

Her blood ran cold, trying to push these thoughts from her mind now, gritting her teeth together, and trying as hard as she could to tug her arms free from their grasp.

"You'd better stop struggling, bitch," hissed a sudden voice into her ear, sharp and cold. "You're just gonna make this worse for yourself if you do."

But Blake was past caring what any of these men 'suggested ' that she do.

She would keep struggling….keep trying to escape….only stopping, only giving up, when the last breath left her lungs.

She stared straight ahead, her eyes growing steely and determined as they trudged forwards, dragging her along, and it wasn't a few minutes later that they came to a small, dark clearing.

She could her noises now and the groans from walkers close by.

"Tie her the fuck up," one of the men ordered the other, moving off a little way away, as Blake was shoved over towards a tree, and her hands were bound with a stiff blue synthetic rope, before she
was pulled over towards a tree and shoved roughly back against it.

The hand was removed from her mouth, allowing her to finally catch her breath, panting hard, her eyes darting this way and that, but it was hard to see anything around her now, in the darkness, with not even moonlight overhead to light up the surrounding area.

She could hear the man moving around the tree, trying as hard as she could to pin point the exact moment when he would come to stop in front of her, hoping to kick her knee up and collide it squarely with his testicles.

But as she twisted her neck around to try and listen out for where the man was, a sharp blade was pressed into her throat.

"I know what you're thinking of doing, sweetheart," came a snake-like voice from her side. "But don't even try it or I'll cut that throat of yours and whatever else I feel like cutting too."

The knife slid down her neck and came to stop at the point in between her breasts.

Blake breathed hard now.

"You sick fucks! I'm going to kill you-" she began furiously, but she was cut off, as a the man before her gripped her face hard, squeezing her cheeks together.

Blake could just about make out his features now as he hovered in front of her, his hot putrid breath in her face. He had a reddy sort of hair that hung long and unkempt around his face along with a straggly, dirty beard. But Blake's eyes suddenly roved across something that was etched across the man's forehead…something she recognised….

"Oh, after we're done with you, you're gonna wish you had killed us," he suddenly hissed brutishly, as Blake gave a the tiniest of gulps.

But before she could say a word a small light suddenly appeared just over the man's shoulder, a fire, lit in the centre of the clearing, illuminating all three of the men's faces now…

….confirming to Blake what she had thought she had seen…and causing her to give the tiniest of gulps…

….noticing that all of them had the letter 'W' scratched deeply into their sweat-laden temples.

The Wolves.

Blake paled slightly, her eyes flickering between them, as the man removed the knife from her chest and strolled back over towards the other two Wolves stood around the fire

"A-All of you died," she blurted out in confusion before she could stop herself. "We killed all of you…back in Alexandria…"

But one of the other men with brown curly hair glanced over at her, giving her a grotesque sneer.

"Not all of us," he said in an almost sing-song voice, grinning widely, before he dragged his eyes away from her and back to the other two figures, the three of them talking together in low whispers, Blake could not quite make out.

Blake had arrived at Alexandria just a week or so before the Wolves had attacked. She had seen many die that day, even holed up in her basement with David and several others, and so she knew
just how dangerous these men were. Ruthless and uncaring about anything and anyone.

Blake tugged at her arms desperately, but her hands were bound tightly at her back, tied taut to the large tree behind her.

She glanced this way and that, looking for any way of escape when suddenly something caught her eye... just a few feet away on the far side of the clearing opposite her... vaguely lit by the orange glow of the fire...

It was walker... tied up, just like she was, trying as hard as it could to reach out and grab for one of the three men, but failing miserably.

Maybe there was some way she could use the dead to her advantage here....

Maybe she could make a lot of noise...

Scream.... try to catch the attention of Negan maybe...

But Blake knew that if she did, her being tied to a tree would mean she would be the first to be killed. As even now, without the threat of noise, she was still easy target for any passing walker.

She gave a small sharp whine, as she tugged at her bonds once more, the twine cutting painfully into her wrist. But this small sound, only caused to make the three men turn to face her.

"Y'know you're only going to make this worse for yourself in the long-run," said one of the men, a third one that Blake hadn't had the 'pleasure' of seeing close up. He had black hair, tied up into a small nub on top of his head, with green beady eyes and a pierced earlobe. "There's no point in struggling anymore... it's not going to help you."

He bit his lip, showing a mess of broken, crooked teeth as he did so, peering over at her greedily.

The red bearded man beside him gave a grin too.

"Yeah....mmmmmmmm," he said gleefully."....the things were gonna do to you....I mean we might as well just cut that dress off of you now...because you're not going to need it much longer...."

Blake gave a dark scowl... seething now...

She knew exactly what these men were talking about... only out for one thing... for it was a lonely.... pathetic world out there for them....

"Fuck you," she spat, wrinkling her nose in disgust. "I'll kill you if you come anywhere near me."

For a moment the trio looked at each other, before all three of them raised their eyebrows and burst into peals of laughter, before turning back to face her.

"And how the fuck do you plan to do that, huh? You stupid bitch," said the black-haired man with contempt in his voice. "You've got no weapons and no way out... and when we're fucking you from all angles, we'll just gag you so you can't scream-

"-Or cut your throat while we're inside of you and wait for you to bleed out..." interrupted the man with curly hair. "Either way works for us."

The three of them laughed again, as Blake breathed hard through her nostrils.....her blood boiling in her veins.
She clenched her fists hard behind her back, her fingernails digging into her palms in utter fury.

But the red-haired man gazed back at her lazily, rocking back onto his heels.

"Don't worry, girl," he sneered. "You're not the first girl we've found and done this to, and you won't be the last."

Cue yet another bout of laughter from the Wolves, before the green eyed man took a step towards Balke…and another…and another….closing the gap between them…

Blake bared her teeth as he approached.

"Although," said the man suddenly reaching out towards Blake's chest, and curling finger around the strap of Blake's dress. "You will be the best dressed. You know it's been a while since I've raped a girl wearing so little….what were you doing out there, huh? Hot date?"

Her heart thudded in her chest….as his hot sickly breath passed over her face, thinking back on what she had been doing before she had left the RV.

Enjoying the last of her birthday with the man who had made her night oh-so special.

These guys had no clue who had been inside that truck with her….or what he was capable of.

Negan had killed innocent people…so she had no doubt he would destroy every inch of these men sooner or later…even if Blake didn't survive long enough to see that….

Regardless of all the stuff that had happened between them before tonight, Blake was a Saviour now…..and knew how much both Negan and his people protected their own.

And even then, she wasn't just a common saviour now anyway….she was a Queen….and in Negan's eyes she always had been.

She had survived the apocalypse….

Survived David…

And hell, she was going to survive this too…. And so suddenly to their definite surprise, Blake let a tiny chuckle pass through her lips, her eyes drifting down to the ground beneath her scratched up bare feet.

"What's so funny?" snarled the green eyed man quickly, taking a step back and surveying her coldly…obviously not expecting this reaction from her.

But Blake just gave a whining sigh, shaking her head, before finally staring up at him once again.

"You really have no idea who you're dealing with, do you?" she said in an amused tone, gazing back and forth between the three figures.

She gave another small chuckle, as the trio all frowned back at her.

"What?" said the curly-haired man, in a high-pitched, mocking voice. "You think your boyfriend is gonna save you?"

The men laughed at her once again.
But Blake just smirked, shrugging her shoulders and giving a small sigh.

"He might..." She answered easily. "I mean....you might know him..."

But the red-haired man scoffed.

"Pfft. And why the fuck would we know your boyfriend?" he bit back at her, pointing at her with the sharp blade in his hand.

But Blake just gave a soft smile, glancing back down at her feet.

She was playing for time now....and this could only be a good thing surely?

And it didn't take her long for her to lift her green eyes again, staring at the wolves.

"Just thought you might have heard of him is all..." she said with a mock sigh.

"Bitch, this isn't high school," barked the curly haired man, pointing at her. "We're here to rape and fucking kill you, not here about the latest gossip from band camp..."

The men all laughed again, but Blake was unrelenting now.

"Yeah, what makes you think we'd be interested in your sad, pathetic little life," the bearded wolf spoke again. "The world has gone to shit and we're just taking from it what we can....you deserve to die...like all the other people we've killed along the way, and even if your boyfriend is some ex-high-school quarterback and works out a lot....he's still not here right now.....but we are....and when we're finished with you....he won't even recognise you anyway. You're a nobody, and so is he, and in the grand scheme of things no one will miss either of you if you died tomorrow..."

"Or tonight..." chimed in the black-haired man with the green eyes, causing the trio to burst into chuckles again.

But Blake bristled at these words, but carried on, lifting her chin up confidently.

"He's not a nobody though...." Blake said in a low hushed voice now, cocking her caramel head to the side and eyeing the three men. "And I guarantee you've heard his name too.""Oh yeah?" scoffed the black haired man nearest to her in a disinterested, mocking voice. "And what is this asshole's name? Superman? Batman?"

But Blake could only smile, in spite of this entire predicament and narrowed her eyes fiendishly....uttering just a single word.

"...Negan."

At that word, the entire camp fell deadly silent, save for the groans of the walker across the space and the crackling of the small fire.

And almost immediately, Blake could tell that they recognised the name.

The three men looked between each other now, with wary glances, shuffling their feet almost uncomfortably.

The curly-haired guy lowered his chin, revealing now the deep W scar upon his forehead.

"Y-You're one of Negan's people?" he said in a slightly wavering voice.
She could tell that these three had likely had run-ins with Negan, or at least the Saviours in the past. His reputation definitely preceded him, that was for sure.

"No," she said smartly, blinking slowly up at the men. "I'm not one of his people….I'm just…his. In fact, he's the one waiting for me back in that RV…"

She saw a gulp trail down the black-haired man's throat almost immediately at her words.

"Derek," muttered the red bearded man to him, but 'Derek' shot him immediately down with an angry, anxious look passing over his thin face.

"Shut the fuck up and let me think," he snapped, his chest rising and falling hard now.

"You know…." began Blake with another easy sigh, letting her eyes drift down to the floor. "…he isn't that far from here….and when he realises I'm gone-"

But before Blake could say another word Derek had leapt upon her, grasping a handful of her hair hard between his fingers, and tugging her head back, as he pressed a blade into her naval.

"You shut the fuck up!" he roared at her, as flecks of putrid spit landed on her face.

And in that moment Blake's eyes widened… her mind flashing back to the last person who had spoken to her in this way….

David.

Even now she paled, not seeing 'Derek' anymore, but seeing the face of her ex-fiancé, feeling his fingers tugging at her hair as he threatened her….the vile contempt that lingered across his features as he did so.

"….I couldn't give a shit if you were the fucking Queen of England," Derek continued, baring his broken and yellow teeth just an inch from her cheek as Blake winced away from him. "I'm going to have my fun with you, then I'm going to slit your throat…and then I'm going to set you on fire. That way if Negan does come looking, all he's going to find is a burned up walking corpse, and us three will be long gone."

Negan could feel herself trembling now….no longer hearing the man in front of her speaking but David instead…that familiar voice she had spent the last six years of her life with…coming back to haunt her from the grave…

…..would she see him after she died?

Would he be the first face she would meet in the darkness of the beyond? Trapped with him for all eternity?

She was stuck now…

With no way out…

And Blake could do nothing but close her eyes as she heard Derek undo his belt with a carrying chink of metal, as the knife in his hand trailed down and dragged its way up her thigh, pulling up her dress…

Maybe there would be no fairy-tale ending for her…

….maybe she wouldn't get rescued…
….maybe she was doomed….yet another victim in this world as David her intended her be all along.

She felt Derek's grimy hand slipping beneath her dress now…

And Blake let a small, scared whimper escape her mouth, squeezing her eyes tightly shut…wishing she had never left that RV…wishing she had never left Negan's side….

….wishing that all this was just a nightmare she would wake up from at any second.

But this wasn't….

All this it was real…

And as far as Blake was concerned…

….if this was the end…she wanted it all just to be over…..and quickly…

But before she could even take in another petrified breath, a loud shot was fired from somewhere nearby….and Blake let out a tiny scream as she felt a bullet fly past her hair and land in the tree just behind her head, showering her with bark and splinters.

Blake's eyes snapped open suddenly, as the black haired man, looming over her, pulled himself back and swung hurriedly around…

But immediately two further gunshots were fired…..and almost instantly she heard the men the other side of Derek cry out in pain, collapsing to the floor.

Blake's eyes flickered over Derek's shoulder now…

….just in time to see Simon stood there, across camp, between two trees, an unimpressed frown plastered between his eyebrows.

The bearded man and the curly haired guy were both on the floor now, one of them with a bloodied foot, and the other clutching at his thigh as his pant leg became redder and redder by the second.

Simon pursed his lips, his gun raised aloft with one hand before pulling a radio to his lips with the other.

And Blake had to admit, she had never been happier to see anyone in her life….

And it wasn't another second after that, that Simon finally spoke.

"I've got her, Boss, and she is alive and well. But you'd better get over here pretty fucking quick," he said into the walkie-talkie shortly, obviously talking to one person and one person only. "'Cause it looks like she's made herself a couple of friends who you might wanna come and introduce yourself to…"
Blake's Saviour

Rated M for violence and themes of rape.

Blake breathed hard now, staring at the moustachioed Simon as her eyes met with his.

She wasn't particular surprised that he was here, knowing that Negan had likely asked them to follow him at a distance. But she was truly and utterly relieved that Negan had sent a search party after her so fast.

But before she could say anything to him, the wolf named Derek readjusted his grip on his knife and staggered over to her, tugging Blake's head hastily back by the hair, before pressing said-blade, to her slender and exposed throat.

Blake felt the air leaving her lungs now…as she struggled to keep still, feeling the weapon press deeper and deeper into her skin.

"I-I'll fucking do it!" said the black haired man through gritted teeth, pointing at Simon with his other hand. "I'll bleed her out right now!"

But Simon just stared back at Derek lazily, not saying a word, as suddenly, there was movement in the undergrowth behind him.

And it was then, as casual as ever, that Negan stepped out of the shadows, with that cocky swagger of his, his usual dark leather jacket shrugged haphazardly over his torso, with Lucille propped up across his slumped shoulders.

Arat followed closely behind now, along with four or five other Saviours, Blake vaguely recognised, all carrying guns and intimidating weapons of their own, coming to stop just at the tree line.

But Blake still couldn't relax, not when she knew just how bloodthirsty and unpredictable the Wolves could be.

Although, so could Negan…..

And right now, if looks could kill, then Derek and his buddies would have been dead hours ago…

For Negan looked livid, his face set grimly, his lips narrow. And even from here, Blake could see a tick in his cheek, as he clenched his long jaw tightly, obviously grinding his teeth.

If Blake hadn't have known him, she might have thought him to be the scariest person she had ever laid eye son.

But the dark-haired Saviour's chocolate eyes were on hers and only hers right now….unblinking…seething at the state she was in, scratched up, tied up, with a knife at her neck.

"You ok, Peaches?" he said finally, addressing her directly, his eyes drifting up and down her bound, dress-covered body as Blake breathed hard, trying not to panic.

But the caramel-blonde gritted her own teeth, a dark frown passing over her face.

"Does it look like I'm ok?!" she snapped back, seething now. Angry at everything.
At these stupid wolves, at the knife at her neck, at David for all that he had put her through for so many years…..and even Negan now as he stood before her, because of his arrogance.

Negan's lips twitched up slightly, but he could obviously tell that there were slightly more pressing matters at hand than having their usual back and forth banter right now.

And so, the dark-haired Saviour strolled easily forward, his eyes flickering down, passing the snapping walker on the far side of the camp fire, and coming to stop just a little way in front the two men on the ground, bleeding onto the dirt and grass around them.

"Well, shit," he muttered bluntly, arching his back with every syllable that he spoke. "You folks thinkin' of havin' a party with Peaches here, and you don't. even. fuckin'. invite me?"

Even from here Blake could see that the red-head and the curly haired guy were both cowering where they knelt, looking petrified at this very moment.

Negan raised both his eyebrows down to the pair, now ignoring the man with the knife at Blake's throat completely.

Blake at such close proximity could hear Derek breathing hard now, obviously not expecting to be overlooked right now.

But Blake knew just how unpredictable Negan could be.

And that was what made him more feared and more infamous that anyone else Blake had ever known.

"Now I have to admit," Negan said in a loud, intimidating voice, placing a gloved hand to his chest. "I am mightily fuckin' offended right now…"

He began to pace just in front of the two men before him now….tall and imposing-looking...his eyes blackened…

"...I mean, I am the life and soul of a fuckin' party, ain't that right Si?" continued the leader of the Saviours, chancing a narrow-eyed glance back at his right hand man, who was stood beside Arat and the others, with his gun still trained on the Wolves.

"Oh definitely," said Simon with a nod, as Negan turned swiftly back to face the cowering men.

"But on the other hand," continued the dark-haired saviour, removing Lucille from his shoulder and holding her out towards the brown-locked Wolf. "Maybe I'm a little too fuckin' pissed off right now to be able to enjoy myself."

"I-I'm sorry….Negan….Sir…." blurted out the red-haired man suddenly, clutching at his leg and pointing accusingly at Derek behind him. "I-It was all his idea…I-"

But before the Wolf could say another snivelling word, Negan had stamped down hard onto the his bleeding leg with the heel of his boot.

The man cried out loudly, sending the noise echoing for miles around…

But in the blink of an eye, Negan had leaned his face in, pressing the barbed end of Lucille to the other side of the man's beaded cheek

"I could not give a flyingfuck whose idea it was, you cock-sucking asshole, " roared Negan into the
man's face, as he gave a sorry whimper. "But what I do really wanna know, is why you thought that
you could take what's mine, tie her to a fuckin' tree, and try and fuckin' rape her?"

Negan's straight white line of teeth were bared fiercely now, as he hurriedly got to his feet again,
standing up tall on his long legs, before stomping yet again on the red-haired man's leg.

Another cry of pain shot out through the clearing, causing the walker across the way, to moan out
even louder.

But not one of the surrounding Saviours even flinched at this noise, obviously used to the brutality of
Negan's regime by now…all of them standing there stony-faced, weapons eagerly trained on the
three Wolves.

Now Negan rounded on the curly haired-man too, moving Lucille in between the two Wolves.

"Because' rape….forcing yourself on a fuckin' woman when she's told you to fuck the fuck off, is
NOT something people in civilised society do, now is it?" barked Negan, arching his back as he
spoke, leaning back on his long legs. "And that is something I absolutely do NOT fuckin' stand for.
'Cause those women…that woman over there, in fact, puts us men to fuckin' shame."

Now Negan's eyes shifted up to Blake, his mouth fixed and his chocolate eyes serious.

"Because Peaches, here, is a fuckin' queen, and I swear on my Lucille here, that you three are gonna
pay for what you've fuckin' done to her tonight."

Blake gave a gulp….knowing exactly what he meant by this…

…but Derek before her, was unrelenting, pressing the knife further into the tender skin at her throat,
looking severely unsettled.

"I'll cut her….d-don't think I won't do it!" the green eyed man warned Negan, his voice raised and
shaky-sounding.

Blake's own eyes widened slightly, as she felt the smallest amount of warm blood trickle down her
slender throat.

She felt alarm rise within her again, her eyes darting back and forth between Negan and the man at
her side holding her hostage.

Blake felt genuinely scared now…for the second time tonight, her mind flitting back to all those
times David had used her to get what he wanted… using her as a human shield of sorts…. 

And despite how strong she felt when she was with Negan…inside, it was hard to shake that feeling
of being ground down…of being hurt and betrayed and used….made to feel like she was worth
nothing. Just as Derek was doing to her tonight.

To him she was just a pawn in his game…and if he was going to die either way, he might as well kill
her and take her down with him too…

And so Blake, despite how relieved she had been to see Negan and the Saviours, could right now
see no way out of this…

Was this really it for her?

She pulled sharply at her bonds again, feeling the familiar sensation of the ropes cutting into her
wrists.

It was hopeless… and Blake felt nothing else now but anger….

Angry and frustrated that this was the end of everything for her, after all she had been through…

But Negan looked as livid as Blake felt right now, taking a long-legged stride forwards, passing the two Wolves on the floor and walking directly over towards Blake and the black-haired Saviour.

"Oh you've made a huge fuckin' mistake," said the tall leader of the Saviour's looking more fearsome than Blake had ever seen him, his expression dripping with pure fury, his brown eyes glaring forwards, fixed upon the wolf now cowering at Blake's side.

"Stay the fuck back," yelled Derek, now shuffling around Blake and coming to stand behind her shoulder and to the side of the slim tree at her back. "I-I mean it….I'll slice her throat…"

But Blake, in that instant, saw red….

….and, taking her chance, she kicked her foot back….hoping, praying….

….and it wasn't a split second later, that she felt her heel collide with the soft space between Derek's legs…

And with that, the black-haired wolf instantly doubled over, tugging the blade from her throat, staggering backwards with a loud 'oof'…

And quicker than her eyes could follow his movement, Negan had stalked forwards...swung back his barbed-wire covered baseball bat, and collided it squarely with the underside of Derek's chin, with a loud 'thwack'.

Derek was hurled backwards off of his feet, pieces of skin and blood spurting everywhere as he tumbled onto the ground.

As Blake turned her face away, wincing.

"You sick fuckin' son of fuckin' bitch!" shouted Negan now, advancing on the man again, swinging back his leg and kicking him in the ribs hard. "Oh, you are gonna regret fuckin' crossing either of us."

Derek gave a wheezy whine, rolling about on the floor, just beyond Blake's eye line….but it wasn't another second before she heard someone's hot breath's up on her neck again and her body press up against her from behind.

She flinched immediately away, thinking for a moment It was the black-haired wolf again, but she turned her warm and bloody neck again, just in time to see Negan at her shoulder, tall and seething, hearing him tug his familiar old knife from his belt and slice the bonds that were keeping her prisoner, in two.

It was second before she felt Negan's long and warm fingers grasp one of her hands in his own and tug it back around in front of her once more, his chocolate eyes now staring down at her wrists, his thumb tracing the deep purple bruises that the tight blue twine had created across her skin.

But Blake parted her lips, catching her breath now as she followed his gaze up, so that his chocolate eyes met with hers…
He stared her over…taking in every scratch and imperfection that now littered her face….looking pained at the dirt and blood now covering her neck and collarbone.

"I'm so fuckin' sorry Darlin," said Negan suddenly lifting his hand from her wrist and pressing it to her cheek comfortingly, his eyes now earnest and almost sad looking. "I fuckin' shouldn't'a' let you go out there alone…"

But Blake let out a trembling breath of air and shook her head.

"I'm alive aren't I…" she whispered back quieter than she had intended….latching onto his warmth now…wanting to feel him close to her….feeling oh-so much overwhelming emotion washing over her now…

……fear….frustration…anger…..

And it was that anger, that now made her lean herself into Negan…..her blood boiling, as she thought on what had just been done to her….

"But I want them to pay…please…" she uttered coldly.

Blake drew back her face, her eyes levelling with Negan's as he stared back at her, blinking hard, before letting out a hard nod of understanding… knowing exactly what she wanted from him right now…..

The pair of them were good together, Blake knew that….and perhaps they were more alike than she first that thought.

He was hers…and she was his…

……and fuck anyone who cared to get in their way…ever….

Negan was her everything…and the fact that he was a dangerous monster of a man, only worked to Blake's advantage now.

She wanted him to do this, to use his anger…to use Lucille….not just for her…but for all the women raped and murdered by the Wolves.

She felt bloodthirsty now, eager to see them utterly pay for what they had done…

Blake's fingers curled around the leather-fabric of Negan's sleeve as she pressed herself into him and brushed his ear with her mouth.

"…and I want it to hurt…" she uttered with a disgusted grimace, feeling a gulp rise up her throat as the words spilled from her mouth, serious and meaningful.

And for a second, Blake saw the smallest of dark smirks twitch its way onto Negan's lips…as he leaned in and pressed his lips to her cheek.

"…consider it done, Darlin'," he growled ominously, before he pulled back and brought himself up to his full height, swivelling around on his booted heel.

Blake saw him gesture over to Simon with a nod of his head, and in a moment the moustachioed, loyal man, had stalked to her side, placing an arm around her and pulling her over towards the safety of the rest of the Saviours. All standing there ready to protect her at all costs…because she was one them now….and more importantly, she was Negan's.
But the tall, dark-haired man in question was alone now in the centre of the camp, save for the three wolves, and in a matter of moments he had already stalked back over towards the heavily bleeding Derek, grasping him by the shirt collar, and hauling him back over towards the campfire, where the other two men were now cowering on the ground.

Derek's face was a bloody mess, with pieces of skin hanging down his throat and bone of his jaw on show, but Negan of course, showed no mercy, throwing him swiftly down onto the ground.

The dark-haired Saviour now stood back and eyed the three of them before him, all looking at pitiful and as weak as they possibly could now…but for Blake it was hard not to forget the gleeful malice they had had in their beady eyes just a few long minutes ago.

But Negan, swinging Lucille in front of each of their faces, began to walk now, dragging a hand down his bearded chin and giving a notably gruff, sigh.

"Now..." he began after a moment or so had passed, the only other sounds in the camp being the groaning of the walker nearby and the sounds of Negan's boots on the ground as he paced. "...I'm a fuckin' reasonable guy....and I've got a feelin' when you took, Peaches here...kidnapped her...whatever the fuck you want to call it...that you had no fuckin' idea who she was, am I right?"

The curly haired Saviour, twitched his head into a hurried nod, his eyes wide and glassy.

"You had no idea she was one of MY people, right? No idea that she was the person that I probably care about more than any of fucker in this entire goddamn world.....right?" continued Negan, earning another eager nod from not only the curly haired Wolf, but the beaded man at his side too, who was clutching at his bloody and broken leg painfully, almost rocking back at forth where he sat. "And....am I right in guessing that had you known that she was so fuckin' important to me...you'd have never gone after her....tried to rape her....put a knife to her goddamn, perfect as fuck, throat!?"

Negan's voice was loud now, carrying across the clearing like a gunshot....making the three men wince where they sat, but all nodding once again desperation in their faces now, even Derek, as he lay there, half propped up on one hand, facing the floor.

"...we're s-sorry...." suddenly snivelled the curly haired man in a weak, tearful voice, lifting his face to Negan's now, his now-red face, plastered with tears. "...we didn't know.....sir.....Negan....sir....if we had-"

But Negan suddenly cut across him with a bark, leaning down into the wolf's face, his teeth bared dangerously.

"If you had," yelled Negan. "You'd have still gone ahead and done it anyway....and if it wasn't to her, it would have been some other sorry fuckin' girl who you carried here kickin' and screamin', not wantin' your dirty fuckin' dick anywhere near her!"

And with that, before Blake could blink, Negan had swiped the knife from the black leather holster at his waist once again, and plunged it deep into the space between the curly-haired man's legs.

The cry of pain that the wolf let out was utterly unimaginable, his head flung up towards the cloudy and darkened sky above, screeching in sheer agony.

But Negan wasn't done yet, retracting the knife, now trickling with ruby red blood, and standing up straight once again.

"You three fuckin' think that you're above it all, huh? That you can have any fuckin' woman you
want, just because she's outnumbered three to fuckin' one, you sick fuckin' pussys?" Negan continued, lifting the knife to his face and admiring the coating of red that now covered it. "Cause I've gotta tell you….I am anythin' but than fuckin tolerant to rapist bags of fuckin' shit like you."

And with that Negan grabbed the knife and plunged it into the curly haired-man's eye.

Blake, perhaps two months ago, would have looked away, as blood spurted everywhere grotesquely…but not now….not tonight….standing their raising her chin and keeping her eyes fixed on the scene before her.

Derek and the bearded red-head almost screamed in fear, shuffling away urgently, as the curly-haired wolf gasped out, mouthing at the air…his other eye staring forwards horrifically…

…but the blade was large, and by the time Negan pulled it from the man's skull….he had slumped forwards landing on his face. Dead.

At this, Negan gave a grin of malice.

"One fuckin' down…two to go," he noted fiendishly, with a hint of glee in his voice…as the other two Wolves whimpered where they lay.

But Negan's attention now, turned to the red-haired man, coming to stop in front of him. The leader of the Saviours, pointed down, with the dripping knife in his hand.

"Your fuckin' turn, Ginger Spice," he uttered callously, in a low growl of a voice.

But the red-haired guy gave a whimper, sobbing to himself, now, hunching his shoulders, almost waiting for the impact of the knife.

But Negan merely laughed coldly.

"Oh I guarantee you weren't so fuckin' upset when it was Peaches here that was bein' fuckin' threatened, you sorry sack of shit," said Negan loudly, leaning down and bearing his teeth into the Wolf's face. "Were you bawling your goddamn eyes out when you're fuckin' buddy over there had a knife to my girl's fuckin' throat? Hmmm?"

The man gave a another terrified mewl of fear now….the sound now appetisingly pleasing to Blake's ears.

She was glad they were frightened and suffering….just like all the other girls who had been snatched and attacked and killed by them, must have been.

These men would all get what they deserved…

"Well maybe….just maybe…"said Negan taking a deep sniff of air and glower down at the red-head. "Maybe…I should show you how it feels to have a goddamn fuckin' knife slicin' open your throat."

And with that, as Blake gave a gulp of her own, Negan had brought the already bloody knife up and drew it neatly across the Wolf's bearded neck, slicing open his jugular with one swift motion.

The man choked for a moment, lifting his hands up to his throat, his eyes bulging in their sockets….as he tried to stem the bleeding.

But it was too late for him now, as blood trickled neatly through his fingers and pouring down the
front of his shirt.

Blake turned her head away monetarily…not because of the violence of the act per say, but more because that was what could have happened to her…just a few minutes ago….if Derek had got his way…..

Her green eyes now, instead, landing on the tied up walker over her right, getting more and more incited by the noises and the smell of hot blood that filled the camp. From here she could see it better, her view no longer obscured by the campfire.

The walker looked freshly turned, its pasty pale skin not yet decomposed, with blood-matted short brown hair, and the only one small part of his lip torn away, revealing a set of white gnashing teeth beneath…

But Blake gave a frown….tilting her head to the side…distracted now from the scene in front of her…

She vaguely heard Negan turn now to Derek, sat on the floor, the last wolf standing…but her attention was no longer on that anymore, as she moved around Simon…moving slowly over towards the walker….

Blake narrowed her eyes, as she walked on bare feet around the tied up, dead figure, reaching its pale arms out and grasping at mid-air….

To anyone else…it was just regular walker….but Blake, strangely, was almost certain that she recognised it……but from where?

She moved around the figure now, coming to stand straight on, facing it….with her back to Negan, barely hearing him yelling over her shoulder into the black-haired Wolf’s face.

Why did this dead rotter bring back memories…..bubbling inside her stomach….as it noticed her now, snapping and snarling at her with its bared jaws.

Then all of a sudden….it dawned on her, her blood running cold….a shes he took two hurried steps backwards…her eyes widening….

For now she knew exactly who this was...

...this man….

...this now, dead man...

...had once been one half of the young couple, who had come to take Mia away all those weeks ago…

She tried hard now to try and remember his name….to remember what Mia had called him…

Then it came to her.

Bryan. That was what Mia had called him…partner to Amy, the woman with the red hair and freckles….

She had last seen them at the Sanctuary, piling out of the back of a truck and rushing forward to hug Mia tightly….

But now what the hell was doing here….dead…..?
She felt a panic rising within her now.

If Bryan was here, then where the hell were Amy and more importantly, Mia?

Blake swung around suddenly, balling her fists at her sides and marching hurriedly around the campfire towards Negan and Derek.

Negan, who had Lucille pressed to the side of Derek’s cheek, his nose now broken and bleeding… suddenly glanced up, noticing her there, coming to a stop beside him and standing up straight, eyeing her cautiously.

But Blake didn't have time to explain.

"That walker," she said to the remaining wolf in a slightly raised voice, pointing back at the dead figure of Bryan, his hands trembling slightly as she spoke. "You killed him...right? Then what did you do to the rest of the people he was with?"

She could feel anger and frustration rising back within her now, as she faced the blood-covered Derek now.

But the black-haired wolf merely raised his green beady eyes to meet with hers, sneering back at her grimly, his neck half hanging open and his face covered in blood now…looking utterly grotesque…

"What we do to everyone," he hissed back at her gleefully. "We killed them...."

Blake parted her lips, her heart hammering inside her chest now….

…Mia….

This couldn't be real…it just couldn't be…

Blake gave another gulp, taking a woozy step backwards…everything feeling so very distant all of a sudden…

She could feel Negan's eyes on her face now….as her stomach convulsed.

She wanted to vomit…to scream….to cry out….

But Blake didn't do any of those things, as she saw Negan look back and forth between her and the walker behind them now. ..realisation dawning across his bearded face.

But before either of them could speak, Derek spoke again, his voice as poisonous as ever…

"You know I would've raped the fuck outta you, and made you hurt real-fucking bad, if your boyfriend hadn't showed up, you stupid bitch," he sneered in a foul voice, spitting a gob of blood-tinged bile at her feet.

And it was at this that Blake suddenly snapped out of her haze…seeing red now, grinding her teeth together hard as she lowered her chin.

And before she even knew what she was doing, her hand had found Negan's gloved one... and she had grasped Lucille tightly between her fingers, pulling the baseball bat from his loose grasp…

…and to her utter surprise, Negan did nothing to stop her…

Not even when she stepped back, raising Lucille high above her head with both hands now…using
all her effort and strength with every fiber of her body...

...before swinging it quickly down, the barbed wire covered bat colliding squarely with Derek’s skull with a loud, carrying crack.

Derek almost at once, crumpled to the floor…but Blake was in no way done yet, lifting the bloodied baseball bat again and again, and bringing it down onto the Wolf’s now-broken skull, harder and harder with every swing she took, blood splattering her bare legs.

This was payback…
For her…for Mia….and for all those men and women killed by Derek's hand…

And it wasn't until there was nothing left to recognise of the black-haired man's head any longer… did Blake relent…breathing hard now…her shoulders tensed as her heart hammered away inside her ribcage…

She wasn't regretful.
She wasn't sad.
She didn't feel sick with the sight before her eyes….

Because despite knowing that Derek and the Wolves had paid like they were supposed to for what they had done… nothing….not even this, would ever bring back Mia….from wherever she now was…

It just wasn't enough...

But it wasn’t a second later, that she felt Negan's arm snake around her, pulling the bloodied Lucille from Blake's limp grasp…as she stood there, staring down at the sight before her eyes.

"Let's go, Peaches," she heard Negan's warm voice into her ear utter now, as his other free hand curled around her fingers and eased her away.

Blake felt herself stumble slightly as she blinked hard, her eyes falling to the floor.

But Negan could read her well, tugging her into him and making sure he was close to her…..

…..as he pulled her from the bodies.....from the campfire.....and from everything here….

Making sure she was safe at his side, her fingers threaded tightly through his….as though they never wanted to be apart from hers ever again…

--------------------------------------------

Rick ran a hand over his tired eyes.

It was late now and he had been stood up on the high wall, just to the right of the gates to Alexandria keeping watch for the past two hours now.

The past couple of days had been tough for him. With what had happened with Blake…the way she had left the settlement, just like that...leaving them all behind.

Why the heck couldn't she see that Negan was pure evil? That he wasn't to be trusted? That alone frustrated Rick. How blind she had been, not willing to listen to anything they had had to say.
But it had only been the next morning that they had found the car the caramel-blonde woman had stolen, bent up on its side, on a track just a couple of miles out of Alexandria.

He, Aaron and Sasha had scouted the nearby woods to see if they could find her, but it had been useless.

Either the Saviours had found her, or she had died in the crash and become a walker. But either way it wasn't likely she was ever coming back.

And that was one ally less for Rick and his team at the end of the day, as he had so aptly put it to Michonne that afternoon. But the black woman at his words, had marched off in a foul mood, telling Rick not to be so arrogant. And Rick hadn't seen her since.

He had later heard that she was out with Aaron, in Daryl's absence, searching for survivors out there, as was Aaron's usual daily task.

But it was late now, and despite knowing that Michonne could of course handle herself, he wanted to keep watch at the gate....to make sure she got back ok, before midnight came.

Rick leaned forwards now, palms pressed down onto the sides of the wall before him, peering out at the never-ending darkness that stretched ahead, letting out a long sigh...waiting...

But he didn't have to wait long, as he suddenly noticed a pair of headlights in the distance nearing them now…

He gave a sharp whistle, drawing the attention of Gabriel who was stood on a second tower, a little way away from him, with a gun of his own. This was their signal. And if there was any trouble, Gabriel would be the one to run and get help.

But luckily for Rick, he recognised the car as it pulled up close to the gate, as being Aaron's that the man usually took out on runs like this.

The brown haired-Rick gave a small relieved smile, ambling down the ladder at his back, before making for the gates, heaving them swiftly open…glad to see Michonne home.

But as he pulled back the thick barred fence, Rick gave a deep frown….his eyes locking onto Michonne and Aaron finally, as they walked towards him….

But they weren't alone…

Rick blinked a few times...taking in just what he was seeing...

…for cradled in Aaron's arms was tiny girl, a little bigger than Judith in age, with a small tuft of brown hair tied up on the top of her head.

Rick cocked is head to the side questioningly, as Michonne gave a heavy sigh.

"We found her….about forty miles out…locked inside a car with a freshly turned walker on the outside," explained Michonne grimly in a hushed voice. "Might have been her Mom."

Rick's eyes flickered over the tiny girl, her face wet with tears as she peered up at him looking terrified, as Aaron approached with her.

Rick gave a small gulp, looking a little unsure now, placing his hands to his hips.

"Does…she…uhhhhh…" he began, giving a small cough, as the tiny girl buried her face in Aaron's
jacket, sobbing hard. "...does she have a name?"

But Michonne shrugged, pursing her lips.

"She hasn't stopped crying since we found her," sighed the woman in a sad voice.

And all Rick could do was nod in reply, gazing in between the two adults.

"Well I guess we should get her inside..." he muttered, as the foursome headed through the wall to the small settlement...

...before pulling the gate safely shut behind them.
Through the trees

The rain had begun to fall through the trees now, as Negan and Blake trudged through the woods, closely followed behind by the rest of the Saviours, all walking in silence.

The dark-haired Saviour, with Lucille gripped tightly in his free hand, strode forwards ahead of everyone else, pulling Blake whose hand he still had attached with his own, along behind him.

But they hadn't been walking five minutes, when the dark-haired Saviour felt a tug on his fingers, Blake pulling herself to a sudden halt.

"Wait, Negan, can we….can we stop for second…please…” she uttered, her voice quiet now and distant sounding, as Negan stopped in his tracks and swung around to gaze at her.

She looked exhausted now, staring back at him with watery, pleading green eyes, that conveyed to him how much hurt was coursing through her right now.

She pointed down at her feet, and Negan's eyes flickered down remembering, only now, that she had no shoes on.

He gave a guilty sigh, lifting a hand to her shoulders and tugging her into him slightly, before he glanced around at his team of marching Saviours.

"Hold up," he uttered in a loud voice to them, causing them all to stop where they stood, raising their guns to the dark wood around them and standing guard for a moment.

Negan glanced back to the woman before him.

The person who meant more to him right now than any other fucking thing in this fucked-up world.

"You want me to carry you, Darlin'?" Negan asked in a low growl of a voice, lifting his hand to her cheek now.

But he moment that he did, he noticed a tear slide down Blake's face, her eyes fixed on him, wide and imploring.

He knew what she was going through right now….not only with what had happened with the Wolves tonight, but also finding out about Mia and her guardians.

Negan let out a harsh breath of air. Not knowing what to say right now. He was usually quick with the smart-mouthed comments, but now wasn't quite the time. But it was Blake who spoke suddenly, before he had to.

"No…I'll be fine…I just…can we take it a bit slower…..")

Negan at once gave a serious nod, his chocolate eyes roving over her features.

"We're almost back at the trucks anyway," said Negan matter-of-factly. "We'll get goin' as soon as, and get you back to the Sanctuary and checked over."

But at his words Blake gave the smallest of shakes of her blonde head.

"No…" she said a little hurriedly, pursing her pink lips together now. "…please, I'd like to stay here tonight…like we planned to…"
But Negan frowned back at her, tensing his jaw slightly.

"Like hell, I am lettin' you stay out here in the state you're in, Peaches," he uttered his voice full of concern, as he trailed his thumb down her neck, cut and covered with blood, that trailed all the way down her throat, soaking through the front of her cotton dress.

But Blake looked a little irritable at this, taking a small step back and tugging herself suddenly from his grasp.

"I'm fine, Negan," she scolded, sounding a little defensive now. "Stop fussing...I-I just want to stay in the RV...like you said we could."

A couple of the Saviour's, noticing the couple's raised voices, peered over covertly, but Negan merely shot the few a dark look, causing them to immediately turn away again, before turning his own attention back to the caramel-blonde woman before him.

Negan gritted his teeth, eyeing her, watching as two tears slid their way down her face.

Why the fuck was she being so fuckin unreasonable right now?

"Listen, Sweetheart," said Negan, trying to keep his cool, his hand sliding down and grabbing a hold of her wrist tightly. "After what just fuckin' happened back there, I ain't taking no for an answer. We are goin' the fuck back. to. base."

He made to turn around and pull her forwards, in the direction of the parked up RV and trucks, but yet again Blake snatched her arm away from him.

"What, you think you can just take me back there and never let me out again, is that it?" she bit back, looking tearful and angry, shaking her head. "I don't need your protection, Negan!"

The dark-haired Saviour did not know what the fuck was going through Blake's head right now. But her tone with him made his hackles raise ever so slightly.

After what had just happen to her, what the fuck was she thinking?

"Well you could've fuckin' fooled me, Peaches!" snarled back Negan. "'Cause I could've sworn I just saw you tied to a goddamn tree not even fifteen fuckin' minutes ago."

But Blake raised herself up, lifting her chin and scowling back at the leader of the Saviours.

Her face was strewn with furious tears right at this second, but Negan had his teeth gritted tightly together, waiting, just waiting, for her to respond.

And respond she did.

"Well then you should have just left me there!" she yelled back starkly, causing Negan to stop, wrinkling his nose down at her darkly and staring into her green eyes.

"What and let you just be raped and fuckin' slaughtered, Doll," barked the dark-haired Saviour in a loud incredulous voice. "'Now why the fuck would I do that, huh?"

The tension between the two of them was deadly now, and even Arat and Simon nearby had their eyes diverted consciously.

But Blake shifted her weight slightly, shaking her head in desperation.
"What difference does it make if I live or fucking die, Negan?!" she asked in a high-pitched voice, gesturing with her hand, as tears sloshed down her cheeks. "Mia's gone…and what the fuck can I do to ring her back, huh?"

Negan bristled at this, frowning down at her.

"There's no pint fuckin' dwellin' on shit that's already happened-" he began to utter, trying to convey to her as well as he could, that at the end of the day, she wasn't the only one who had lost people in all this….he knew how she felt...he knew how much it truly fucking hurt.

But Blake blinked a couple of times, taking another step back and staring up at him with wide, disbelieving eyes.

"You sent her away, Negan!" shouted Blake pointing to him, as tears slid their way down her cheeks, watering down the blood at her throat. "If she hadn't have gone back with them….those people…she might still be alive….she'd be safe….with me."

But Blake's choice of wording at the very end of her sentence made Negan's eyes darken angrily.

"You weren't her goddamn Mom, Peaches!" snapped Negan before he could stop himself.

Blake parted her lips, as the camp fell deadly quiet now…with nothing to be heard apart from the tiny pitter-patter of rain as it fell across the canopy of trees overhead.

Her eyes were on him now, her bloodied chest rising and falling hard, as he noticed a tiny gulp slide its way down her neck.

"Don't you think I realise that?" she whispered out, in a hurt-sounding voice. "But that doesn't mean that I didn't love her, Negan."

Blake chin was raised now, her face wet and her gaze full of fury and resentment.

"Or is the idea of actually giving a shit about anyone but yourself, too much of a big deal for you?" she finished with an empty scowl, sucking in a harsh breath of air to steady herself.

Negan stared back at her, his own chest tight now, as the rain began to fall heavier now onto their heads.

That hurt him. More than he could possibly say.

To hear that from Blake's own mouth.

Negan gave a dry gulp, staring back at her through darkened eyes, trying not to show any emotion now.

And so, the dark-haired Saviour merely grimaced, giving a sniff and standing up tall once again.

"I guess it is," he said in a callous voice, arching his back mockingly as he spoke, before offering her one last simpering look, before turning on his heel, his gaze now finding Simon, who was stood there to Negan's left, head bowed low…..obviously having overheard every word of their argument but barely flickering with any sort of acknowledgement now.

Simon was a good soldier and an even better friend to him because of that.

"Si," he said at once drawing the moustachioed man's attention towards him. "Take Blake here back to base and make sure Carson gives her the once over before takin' her back to her room. We
clear?"

He used her name….not wanting to grace her with anything more affectionate now.

She had showed him what she thought of him tonight. And if that was how she wanted it to be, then fine. Negan had his wives…he had his men…he didn't need her.

…but that was a fucking lie and he knew it…

Negan gave a huff, but didn't turn around, knowing what the look on the caramel-blonde woman’s face would be right now.

But he couldn't bare to look at her anymore…to see to hatred in her green eyes…

And it was second later that Simon, giving Negan a half questioning look, nodded.

"Cryst-al, boss," he replied promptly, swiftly heading past Negan and tromping over to where Blake stood, wet and bloody and alone.

But Negan didn't turn back to her, merely trudging off ahead of the pack, making his way back to the RV, swinging Lucille from his arm as he went...

...his chest aching...

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Blake stared straight ahead at the shadowed tree-line where she had just seen Negan's retreating back disappear into.

He was gone, just like that…proving to her now how little he really did care.

Was she really surprised?

It had only been an hour or so ago the pair had been standing inside that RV, with Negan telling her that he would not give up any of his wives for her. So was it really any shock to her that this had happened.

She had pushed him. But he had pushed her back.

All that stuff with Mia. That little girl had been everything to Blake, and yet Negan had just waved his hand and treated her loss like it was nothing.

But at the end of the day, he was right, Blake hadn't been her Mom…..and even if she had wanted to be, it was too late now.

That had been Blake's last chance…..her last chance for a happy ending in this world.

Now she had lost Mia and now Negan had turned his back on her too.

She was shaken, hurting, a ghost of David lingering over her shoulder, haunting her...his words...the words of the Wolves floating about in her head...

A pain shot through her, undeniable...torturous.

She was all alone now and that was all she deserved...
David hadn't wanted her...perhaps she hadn't been good enough for him after all, and perhaps this was how Negan felt now too.

Another tear ran down her cheek, dropping onto the ground below, just as Blake felt Simon's hand reach her back, suddenly beckoning her forwards gently.

"Come on," he urged and Blake didn't argue now…hanging her head painfully…

…for this was one birthday she would not want to remember….
Way-past midnight

It was way past midnight when Simon finally shoved the door to Blake’s room open, holding it open for her to enter.

The caramel-blonde woman, letting out a shaky breath of air keeping her eyes trained on the ground before her, slid past him, going inside, into the darkness that was her ample bedroom on the second floor of the Sanctuary.

She was exhausted now…hurting….but not just because of the cuts, bruises and scratches that littered her entire body….this was a different kind of hurt…one that rose from inside her…tugging at her stomach muscles…and causing her heart to ache sadly.

"You, uhh, you need anything?" asked Simon from behind her.

But Blake didn't look back at him again, merely giving a brief shake of her head. "N-No…I'm fine….thanks," she managed to murmur now sounding hollow, before hearing the door being pulled quietly shut behind her, just a second or two later.

The journey back to the Sanctuary had taken a long couple of hours, sitting in the front of a beaten up truck with Simon at the wheel beside her, not even uttering a single word to her throughout the entire journey home.

She hadn't seen Negan again after he had trudged off through the woods, and it was only when they arrived back at the Sanctuary, seeing the enormous silver RV parked up outside, did Blake even know that the dark-haired Saviour was already back.

But it hurt her now to think about him. To have seen how he had turned his back on her, just like that. So uncaring…after everything that had happened between them.

Blake had thought that maybe, just maybe, he had cared about her, felt about her, the same way as she felt about him. But obviously she had been wrong.

Perhaps this had all been just about finally getting what he wanted. He had pressed her, on many, many occasions, to be his wife. And perhaps that was all that he had actually ever wanted from her. For her to be just another submissive woman,sitting pretty up in that room with the other girls, wearing a skimpy black dress and waiting for him to come and pick her.

Maybe all this…maybe it had just been about the chase for him. And now that he had had her…maybe that was all that it ever was supposed to be. The thrill of the game was over for him now…and he the dark-haired leader of the Saviours had tonight proved that she meant nothing to him. Just nothing.

Blake clutched a hand to her mouth, stifling a harsh sob that escaped her lips before she could stop it.

She could smell antiseptic now on her hands and wrists from where Dr Carson had cleaned her up in the medical room just a few minutes ago...

The sandy-haired doctor, woken from his sleep because of her for the second time in only three days had just gave a dismayed sigh, wordlessly getting her cleaned up, wiping the dried blood from her neck and checking her over.

And it was only a minute or two after that that Blake had been brought here, to her room.
It was strange being here now…without a familiar figure beside her…

Even when she had gone to bed just a single night ago alone, she had been happy in the knowledge that Negan would of course be returning to her. And return to her he did, slipping inside the covers beside her in the early hours and pulling her close.

But that was over now.

There would not be any warm hands holding her tightly tonight.

She let another tear slip down her cheek silently as she sat down onto her bed….at a loss….hurting so so badly.

For the child she had lost…for Mia…and for Negan too. The man she had lo-

But Blake gave a hard, dry gulp…unable to think on this anymore. For it was truly tearing her up inside.

And so, in the dark gloom of her dusty, disused room, Blake lay back against the creaky mattress, staring up at the shadowed ceiling hopelessly.

Negan sat down on his leather couch, head in his hands.

His calloused fingers ran their way over the dark hair that reached the nape of his neck, before he stared up once again…at nothing….'

Shit.

He couldn't focus right now. Angry, no, furious.

At both himself and at Blake too.

She had proven tonight how little she thought of him. How she would never accept him as part of her life.

Even if Mia was alive, it would always be Blake and the baby girl….he was never considered anything more than a passer-by to her in this relationship.

For who was he trying to kid.

He'd never have a fucking family. Not in this world anyway.

It was just him now. Back on his own again.

Because fuck it. He had his wives who he could screw when he wanted….

He had his men, loyal until the end…

What more did he need?

Negan pulled a bottle of whisky from the table towards him now, but didn't make a move to open it.….

For he knew what he needed right now, and that was not alcohol.

It was her.
The one person who had made him feel whole again after so so long.

But Negan now knew that he had to face fucking facts.

Because it was over, before it had even really begun

Blake had shown her true feelings tonight and that was that.

But even now, as Negan unscrewed the cap of the bottle of whisky, pouring himself a few glugs of the brown liquor into a dirty glass, he knew just how much it was killing him to admit that he was done.

But even if Negan hadn't wanted it to end, he had no choice in the matter. For as far as he was concerned, the person that he wanted, no longer, in fact, wanted him back.
Blake wandered down the long corridor alone, keeping her head bowed low, not even acknowledging the few Saviours she had passed along the way down here.

It was mid-morning and had turned out to be a warm and sunny day. Much different to the rain storms and showers the region had been privy to over the last few days, at least!

Blake had slept terribly last night, tossing and turning until the early hours, where she had finally drifted off into a dream-world filled with visions of David, of hungry snapping walkers, and hands pulling her down into the darkness….

She had woken, drenched with sweat, sitting bolt upright and scaring herself half to death, with her undraped window filled with a grey early morning light. She had then somehow managed to get in another hour or two before, finally waking again and making a move to drag herself up.

Blake had then promptly taken a cold shower in the communal stalls in the bathroom down the hall, before drying of her long caramel hair as best she could, slipping on a pair of black jeans and a grey t-shirt, and wrapping a wide black belt with a huge buckle around her curved hips.

And it was then that he had begun to pace, worrying at her lip with her teeth, thinking about last night….at what had happened between her and Negan.

Had it all been just a silly argument?

Because right now it felt like more than that. Worse than just a silly tiff, with both saying hurtful things to the other.

But Blake was stubborn, wounded by the Saviour's words….

At his blasé attitude towards Mia’s death…

He had shown his true colours, and the last thing Blake was about to do, was fall back into his arms…to forgive him…

For how could she, after everything?

But the caramel-blond woman knew that she could not stay cooped up in this room here forever.

Perhaps today she could leave the Sanctuary, take a pack full of stuff and just….go…

But where?

She had burned all her bridges with Rick and the folks back in Alexandria now, and there really weren’t many other safe places out there in this world anymore…

So she would try and get through today at least…think about it a while longer…hunger distracting her for the time being.

And so Blake had headed down towards the large canteen. Hoping to god she did not run into the dark-haired Saviour while she was down there.

For she was still upset. Angry at what had been said between them last night. She realised now that she was nothing more to Negan than a conquest. He hadn’t cared about Mia, and he certainly hadn’t
cared about her!

Blake had just been a distraction to him, and that's all she would ever be. She could see that now.

And so, keeping her eyes on the ground now, Blake she turned the corner, heading into the large open-plan hall that acted as makeshift canteen for the Saviours.

Here, several long tables were set up, with plenty of people going to-and-fro today, carrying tray and bowls full of food.

But as Blake walked through the open door's leading inside, an eerie hush fell over the entire area almost instantly.

Blake immediately bristled, lifting her eyes for the first time since she had left her room, before giving a dry gulp.

Almost every single person in the room's eyes were on her now. But unlike yesterday, this was not reverence. None of them fell to their knees, but all of them kept on looking at her…like she was a some sort of mythical creature, a thing of legend here.

Had news of her and Negan's argument, really travelled that fast?

Probably, Blake pondered.

For what else was there to gossip about in this world? What else peaked everyone's interest here, but the private life of their leader and the woman he had had hanging from his arm these past couple of months, like a trophy? Appearing and reappearing here and there.

Angry and distraught tears pricked at her eyes now….bitter at what she had become here.

And so Blake, let her head fall again and walked silently forwards…feeling just like she had all those many weeks ago, when she had first come here with David…feeling so small and helpless…

She headed over to the end of the queue for food, and stood alone, a little away from the person before her, keeping herself to herself.

But even before the long line had moved more than a couple of feet, she felt someone suddenly part the crowd over to her left, striding purposely towards her.

She glanced up suddenly, thinking that it might have been Negan.

But it wasn't.

Instead, Blake's eyes fell upon the curly-haired Arat, who came to stop at her side, wearing a long checked shirt shucked over a black vest, with a large gun attached firmly to her belt.

"Hey," she said, her face fixed, neither smiling nor angry, giving Blake nothing.

Blake parted her lips, but didn't reply. Was she here with a message from Negan?

"I, uhhh," said Arat after a second or two, looking almost a little awkward, shoving her hands into the front pockets of her jeans, before glancing Blake's way again. "I just wanted you to know, that what you did last night, to those fuckers that tried to hurt you…"

Blake's heart pounded in her chest. Arat had been there, of course, witnessing everything…
"...that took guts...so, I uhhh, don't, uhhhh, don't beat yourself up...about other things, ok?"

The curly-haired woman frowned a little and offered Blake a small important nod, before marching swiftly away, as Blake's green eyes followed her across the room.

Not in a million years had she ever expected that from Arat. From the woman oh-so loyal to Negan, there for every brutal moment of last night, from Blake bludgeoning Derek to death, to her and Negan's argument.

Blake sighed, before turning away once more, taking a step forwards in the line, and pondering Arat's words over and over inside her head.

Blake had eaten alone. That obviously, of course, wasn't a first for her, having been on her own many, many times at the tables at the Sanctuary before. But today she felt more aware of the whispers, of the covert glances, as she ate her meal of an omelette and a bottle of water, before getting hastily to her feet, needing some air.

She had swiftly hurried out of the dining hall, making her way past the library, past the makeshift-gymnasium, pursing her lips together tightly, feeling as though she couldn't breathe right now. Until finally she burst out of a door at the end of a long gloomy corridor, out into the bright sunshine.

But Blake stopped in her tracks suddenly, blinking.

For here, out in the courtyard she hadn't frequented since she had left the Sanctuary all those many weeks ago, was something indeed strange to behold.

A garden.

Plonked here amongst the dust, and the dirt, and the grimy factory windows.

The same garden she had asked Negan to create for his people all those many weeks ago. The same one she had encouraged him to set up. A garden that certainly hadn't been here in this entirety before she had left!

And yet now, it looked, well...beautiful.

The entire place was now covered in fresh green plants, some in tubs, wrapped around trestles, some surrounded by plastic greenhouses scavenged from different places. There were tomato plants, lettuce, beans, pumpkins, and on the far side under a shadowy grass area stood a little pen with a hen coop.

A few Saviour's both men and woman moved here and there, with watering cans and weeding tools, looking cheerful...like they had a purpose.

And Blake, at this, despite all her inner turmoil and the pain she was feeling right now, couldn't help but smile. Feeling happy.

"Blake," came a sudden voice from behind her, causing her to suddenly swing around.

The caramel-blonde woman blinked up now, to see Eugene crossing the courtyard towards her, wearing black button up shirt, black pants and matching black overcoat.

"Hey," Blake managed to utter out, her eyes flickering up towards him momentarily, feeling the top of her cheeks reddening.
Had he too heard about her and Negan's argument?

But the scientist merely nodded back, coming to stand before her, before suddenly, much to Blake's utter surprise, lifting a hand and placing it to her shoulder.

"It's good to see you. When I head you'd gone back to...well...back to Rick....and his... uhhh....people..." said Eugene in a low, earnest-sounding voice, speaking about the Alexandrians like had had never really known them. "...I thought I might never see you again."

Blake gave a small sniff, but didn't utter a word, her eyes instead drifting away over to where a small teenage girl with a green baseball hat on was plucking eggs out of the side of the hen coop easily, placing them into a square basket in her other hand.

Blake did not want to dwell of the happenings back at Alexandria, pushing the conversation instead to other things.

"This place..." she said finally, after a long moment or two of silence, as Eugene removed his comforting hand. "It looks....really, really good."

Eugene nodded slowly at her side.

"Yup," he mumbled back. "Negan's orders. He told us to get this place lookin' like a proper self-sustaining farmyard. Well, as much as it can be here anyway. We've got all sorta' scouts goin' out there every day with a list full of stuff to bring back. Fertilizers, peat, breedin' animals and so forth."

Eugene's tone was matter-of-fact as always, but Blake glanced at him, softening slightly.

Had Negan really taken all her words on board, and made a garden, not for himself, but to sustain his people? The people he had taken upon himself to take care of...

But she shook herself. Negan had proved to her that he thought very little about anyone but himself, so there had to be an ulterior motive to all this.

Blake bit at her lip, staring around the garden before turning back to Eugene.

"You think I might be able to help out here?" she asked a little tentatively, but Eugene gave her a blank, blinking look in return almost instantly.

"All this is yours anyway," he muttered bluntly. "I was just acting as an administrator in all this, until you got back."

Blake gave a small smile now.

All this.....hers?

This wondrous living part of the Sanctuary? Something she had helped to create here?

And for someone who had gone through two miscarriages and lost the one child she had loved more than anything, it was almost heart-warming to hear that this...something pure and hopeful in this hellish existence...could belong to her...to look after...to help grow...

"Thank you," Blake murmured back earnestly, letting a small gulp slide down her throat.

But Eugene, gave her a small, stiff smile.

"I really don' think I should be the one you should be thankin'," he said in a low voice, nodding
slowly before heading quietly away and disappearing off inside.

Blake stared after him for a long moment, parting her lips and letting out a short breath of air.

Maybe, just maybe, this was her chance for a fresh start. A chance to build something good.

But even now, in the back of her mind, the voice of David, a voice that had been absent for so many weeks now, rang clear in her head.

With hateful, hurtful words that caused Blake to bow her chin low, and divert her eyes from the Saviours all around her, as she moved over toward the tomato plants.

Thus undoing all the good work Negan had managed to put right over these past few days, weeks and months….making her feel insignificant again.

It was late in the evening and getting dark outside, by the time Blake finally ventured inside, slightly dishevelled, with a sheen of perspiration lingering over her tanned collarbone.

But for the first time in a long while, exhausted from hard work, her bones aching from tending to the crops, weeding, shifting pots about.

But she felt happy after all that….contented even. Like she finally had a purpose here. And doing all that, well, it had helped take her mind of other things…

Other things that almost pained her to think about right now.

She was stubborn and proud and still so, so angry with Negan. But that didn't stop it from hurting… making her feel oh-so hollow and empty inside to be apart from him now.

She hadn't seen him the dark-haired Saviour all day. And apart from Arat earlier in the canteen, she hadn't even glimpsed Dwight or Simon, or one of the higher up General's that usually marched around in Negan's absence.

But maybe he didn't want to see her. Maybe that really was it. Maybe he was done with her.

Blake paced down the corridor that led back into the large canteen, busy now with people holing up inside for the evening, done with their work for the day, hoping to just grab a small bite to eat before heading back up to her room.

But Blake, sweeping her long slightly ruffled caramel-hair back over her shoulder, had barely made it a few feet into the room, when her eyes fell suddenly on a familiar face, striding across the open-plan hall, brow furrowed darkly, looking severely pissed-off, and talking in, what looked like, angry mutterings, to his right hand man beside him.

Negan.

Blake stopped in her tracks, her green eyes gazing over at him….

Seeing him for the first time since their argument. It all coming back to her now, painful and wounding.

And for a moment, Negan too, found her in the crowd, stopping immediately in what he was saying, his chocolate eyes staring her way.

Blake felt her heart almost instantly fall into her stomach, trying as hard as she could to find any sort of air in her lungs, as her heart pounded faster and faster, making her cheeks burn red.
But despite how much she yearned for him at this very moment, her gut jolting hard…she was still angry at what he had said to her. Upset at his choices.

And so, Blake, unable to take it anymore, tore her eyes swiftly away, dropping them to the floor and heading over to the line for dinner…

….just as Negan dragged his own irritable gaze away too, before turning and stalking off angrily himself…

Both of them as hot-headed, stubborn, and as furious as the other right now.

And neither wanting to be the first person to admit they were sorry…
The warm summer sun seemed to still linger high in the sky, as the first few days of September drifted slowly by.

The leaves on the trees surrounding the dusty Sanctuary lots had begun to turn a golden brown colour, as the fruit and vegetables in the walled garden began to grow and grow, ripening and becoming perfect for harvesting, ready for the Saviours' suppers (if they had enough points for them of course).

Blake had spent the last few days, since her arrival back here at the Sanctuary after that fateful night with the Wolves, tending solely to said-garden, only leaving it to grab a bottle of water and a hasty bite to eat.

Toiling here, meant she was safe and distracted, and she didn't have to think about other things that were indeed currently weighing on her mind.

That one other thing, being a certain person she had not managed to subdue her stubbornness enough to speak to yet.

Negan.

She had seen him of course, every single day since. And each and every time, the pair had merely shot each other frowning, lingering glances, before Negan had clenched his jaw and Blake had given a small huff, and both had stormed swiftly away….both of them hurting.

For it was killing Blake to be apart from him. But the longer the two of them went without speaking, the easier it was for her to presume that he was the one that did not want to speak to her.

That had to be it….right?

And so each time they had seen one other, be it in the canteen, passing down a corridor, or heading through one of the lots, Blake and Negan had stormed hurriedly away, leaving in a much fouler mood than a few moments prior.

But so far today, as the sun drifted lower in the sky that afternoon, Blake had been without a glimpse of the dark-haired man since yesterday…which had both infuriated, relived and saddened her, in equal measure.

Now, as the sun began to set, Blake found herself knelt on the ground, with a pair of heavy duty green gloves over her hands, plucking gooseberries from a small potted bush.

She had a silly old pop song playing over and over in her head and felt contented, plopping two or three gooseberries into a basket beside her, before brushing down the knees of her tight black jeans….just as a large, looming shadow fell across her.

The caramel-blonde woman, glanced up, squinting through the sunlight now, to see a tall, black Saviour named Danny standing there, with something heavy held tightly between both his hands.

"Where can I put this?" he asked her, his voice sounding slightly strained under the weight of what looked like some sort of huge tree, stuck into a large brown pot, far too small for it.

Blake gave a frown, tucking a stand of hair behind her ear now, looking slightly bemused.
"I….uh...I guess…..over there.." she said taking off her gloves and dropping them down beside her, before getting swiftly to her feet, brushing down the back of her pants as she did so.

She pointed over to a sunny corner of the walled space, leading Danny over to it.

He followed her, looking slightly grumpy at being made to carry the huge, heavy tree, before plonking it hastily down at her feet.

Blake pursed her lips together, eyeing both the bald-headed saviour and the weary-looking plant between them.

"W-where did you even get this?" she asked in confused voice, giving the Saviour before her the slightest of frowns.

But Danny merely brushed together his dirt-covered hands and forced a small, uneasy smile in her direction, avoiding her gaze.

"Uhhhh, we, uhhh, we found it," he said obviously lying through his teeth, scratching at the back of his neck with his hand, looking oh-so awkward right now, as Blake pouted, placing both her hands to her hips.

"Really?" she uttered out in a voice of utter disbelief, but Danny seemed to redden at this, searching desperately for something to say.

But in the end he just gave up, giving her another frozen smile and hastily turning on his heel, strolling quickly away.

Blake's eyes followed him as she went, smirking slightly.

What the hell had all that been about?
And why were the higher-up Saviours out and about finding stuff for her garden?

She glanced down at the tree.

And good stuff too! This looked like an apple tree of sorts and would of course be very useful to them here.

And so, giving a small bemused shake of her head once again, Blake bent down, repositioning the pot slightly…

….unaware that in a room high above the walled garden, she was, in fact, being watched....

Negan dragged a hand down his chin giving a sigh, staring down into the walled garden five floors down. Watching as Blake circled the apple tree, eyeing it admiringly.

Negan had found this room three days ago when he had been in a foul mood…stomping around the Sanctuary, searching for any sort of breathing space.

And that was when he had come across this disused office at the back of the factory….with just a desk and a few chairs inside, littered with papers strewn across the grimy floor.

But Negan, seething at the time had gone over to the window, noticing almost immediately that it overlooked the back of the looming set of buildings and overlooked the one place that Blake now seemed to spend most of her time. He had noticed of course, taking in every little thing she did, every little thing she wore…or spoke about…or looked at…even from a distance.
And so after a quick clean-up and a few homely touches later, this room, this office, had become Negan's own Sanctuary…where he could sit or stand, staring out of the window, down at the paradise below. Even passing on a trip to Alexandria today for the monthly offering, and sending Dwight and Simon instead.

And so Negan had instead stood here by the window from sun-rise, until way after sun-down, and watched intermittently, as Blake had toiled, still of course, furious about what she had said….mad at the entire fucking situation…but keeping a fond eye on her nonetheless.

But so far, days later, it was obvious now that she didn't want to speak to him, for if she had, she he'd have come to find him by now, approached him…and Negan was as stubborn as he was proud, and wasn't going to push her.

He still had that fucking soft spot for her, and so, no matter what, he wasn't about to kick her the fuck out of this place…

…but instead, he yearned for her almost constantly….

He had his wives, sure, but this wasn't just about sex.

It was about being with someone who meant more to him than just a quick screw, someone who had been through the same shit as he had….someone who had lost things and got hurt and managed to rebuild herself from the ashes of her old life.

Negan tore his chocolate eyes away from the window now, turning back towards his bare desk, decorated with just his trusty baseball bat and a single empty whisky glass.

He had fucked up.

Said stupid things which he hadn't meant because he had been angry.

But how the fuck was he meant to say sorry to her now?

The last few days…he had watched her….trying to create something fucking perfect down in that garden down there. And in his own stupid way he had tried to help….sending some of his men and women out on supply runs to search for things that could help her….

Tools, plants, shrubs….that kind of thing…

But even so, he knew that still wasn't really good enough.

He needed to grow some fucking balls here. Man up. Do the right fucking thing.

But Negan wasn't usually the one to back down first. To admit he was in the wrong.

And so, slumping down into his chair, jaw tensed, he grasped up the smooth wooden end of his barbed wire covered baseball bat, before letting out a roar of frustration and bashing the weapon down onto the table in sheer annoyance at himself, with a loud, carrying 'thwack'.

It was late now, the sun having long dimmed, leaving a grey and purple tinge across the sky above. But Blake was still out in the low walled lot, doing what she could to pass the time, as crickets and mosquitos chirruped and buzzed all around her.

Helping with the garden had indeed been a good distraction these past few days, but it was when the nights came, that Blake found it the most difficult….having trouble sleeping, lying awake for hours
alone, wondering if Negan was, just two floors up, perhaps with one of his wives….having sex…kissing…laughing…joking….

It killed her to think that, but it was hard not to.

So Blake would spend as long as she could, each and every evening, alone out here, tending to the plants and the chicken coop, sweeping up and doing crappy tasks, long after the other Saviours who frequented this space and worked here alongside her, had gone indoors.

And tonight was no exception.

Blake having worked as admin in offices all her working life, hadn't even owned a garden in her small city apartment. But here it felt good and pure to be doing something like this, to be bringing life into a world full of the ever-walking dead….in a different way than the way she had always truly wanted to….

The caramel-blonde woman, who had been finishing off planting some spinach at the far end of the garden, tucked her hair behind her ear now, still humming that same old pop song from earlier, that seemed to be going round and round inside her head.

But she was mid-way through cheerily humming the chorus, when she heard a low toot of a car horn and the sound of a truck swinging around into the fenced off parking lot adjacent to the garden.

The Saviours only tended to use this part of the yard when they had a large haul to come in. So that of course meant they had today, gone to collect their monthly takings from one of their sorry groups.

Blake got to her feet, her interest peaked, wondering of course, where they had collected from this time….

The hilltop? Alexandria? Or maybe someplace else?

But perhaps that alone wasn't quite why she was quite so curious….

If there was a collection to be made, it was likely Negan himself had gone to fetch it. And that meant he would be there…close by….

And so, dusting herself down, Blake peered around the archway leading into the courtyard, keeping her head down and out of sight…eyeing Dwight as he hopped down from the front of the truck.

But there was no sign of the dark-haired leader of the Saviours however.

Blake pursed her lips, sighing internally.

All this, it was her own fault.

Perhaps she had been idiotic to let herself fall for Negan far too fast after David's demise.

But before she could drag her eyes away, her gaze was suddenly drawn by the man himself, strolling casually across the large darkening lot, towards the truck.

There he was. Negan.

Her breath hitched in her throat now, as she stared at him, her heart almost aching.

His dark brow was furrowed now, arching his leather-clad back as he came to a stop in front of Dwight, pointing up at the rear of the vehicle authoritatively with one hand, clutching Lucille loosely
in the other.

The scrubby salt-and-pepper beard of his seemed ever so slightly longer now, but perhaps that was just her imagination…Blake remembering just how it had felt against her skin when he kissed her….

On her lips…
…her neck…
…the soft skin of her inner thighs…

Blake hastily shook herself, as she watched Dwight give a sudden obedient nod.

But before she could peel her eyes away, all of a sudden Negan, running a hand down his tired-looking face, spun around on his booted heel…his eyes drifting around and, by chance…coming to land on her.

For a moment the pair of them stared the other out…neither able to look away….with Blake's wide green eyes meeting Negan's chocolate ones'.

It was if they had been apart for years now….with Blake's heart utterly aching right at this very second.

She saw Negan's face soften before her very eyes, his expression sad…as a gulp trailed its way down his bearded throat.

And Blake right now, half expected him to turn away from her, as the pair of them had done each time that they had seen one other, for the past few days.

But to her surprise, Negan merely uttered something briefly to a passing Dwight, (who had got to work beginning to unload goods from the back of the truck) and hunched his broad, leather-clad shoulders slightly, before strolling slowly towards her.

Blake felt the top of her cheeks turning almost instantly pink, as she turned away quickly, pretending to look busy, brushing dust from her pants and turning back towards the rows of spinach.

But it wasn't a second later that she heard the familiar, chinking sound of boots on asphalt, trudging their way through the archway that led into the garden.

She glanced up over her shoulder again, her heart pounding in her chest like a drumbeat.

There he was, just a few feet away from her now…tall, looming, exuding that same old cockiness and swagger that he always did…but something about him was different now…softer…dejected-looking…

…but before she could help herself, her gaze flickered away from his...unable to hold it now at this close proximity to him.

This was killing her…as she felt a tug at the back of her stomach and her mouth go completely dry.

Negan gazed slowly around and was silent for brief moment, before finally speaking.

"Well ain't all this lookin' pretty fuckin' impressive these days…" he commented in that familiar low voice of his, his eyes drifting back to her now.

At his words, Blake instantly caught his gaze yet again, nodding almost immediately.
"Yeah...I...uhh...." she muttered in a polite, earnest reply. "...we have, um...pumpkins...umm...some other types of squash growing over there, the chickens of course...and someone brought down an apple tree earlier that might come good."

She pointed over to the potted tree in the corner of the garden conversationally, almost cringing at her own words.

Why the fuck was she talking to Negan about fucking plants?

But really, what else was she going to talk to him about these days with the situation as it was between them?

Mia? Rick? His wives?...His sex life?

Blake gave another small gulp, as Negan nodded, his lips pressed together, offering her a politely-impressed sort of look.

There was a short moment of silence, before the dark-haired leader of the Saviours spoke again.

"Well shit, darlin', you're makin' me hungry just talkin' about all that..." he sighed, offering her a small nod.

But Blake merely stared up at him nervously, as the pair fell into a pool of silence once more.

What the hell was she supposed to say? The awkwardness eating her up inside.

Think, Blake think...

...it had never been this hard for either of them before!?

She was about to open her mouth to speak, to say something completely inane about the cabbage plants, when Negan suddenly spoke again first-

"Listen," he said giving a small frustrated frown....as though he was desperately trying to communicate something to her. "....Peaches...I-"

But before Negan could utter another word, there came a loud carrying yell from over the wall, and the sounds of a small commotion breaking out.

Both Negan and Blake blinked suddenly, dragged from their moment...

And it wasn't a second later that she heard the dark-haired man give a short, furious growl under his breath, gritting his teeth together, before swiftly marching off in the direction of the noise. It was his duty to do so after all.

But Blake gave a frown of her own now, as the carrying shouts of Dwight, as well as couple of other men, could be heard just around the archway leading into the lot beyond.

And so, feeling curious, Blake promptly followed him...moving around the wall and over to the arched gap that separated the garden from the trucks beyond.

Negan was a little ahead of her now, standing there looking angry, Lucille clenched tightly between his gloved fingers....but all Blake could make out was a group of men scuffling about on the ground.

And it was a moment, pacing around the dark-haired Saviour, that Blake made out Dwight, Danny and another of the high-up Generals, all scrabbling to their feet and pointing their guns swiftly, at a
now-kneeling figure…

A kneeling figure, that Blake only recognised when she had moved further into the lot properly, coming to stand just a few feet away.

But all the breath seemed to disappear from her lungs, as she took in the sight before her eyes…

...both of her green orbs widening in shock, as Blake looked upon the face of a man she recognised very well indeed…

….a man she had not seen since she had left Alexandria…uttering out his name in disbelief…

"…S-Steve?!"
Blake breathed hard, looking down at the broad, tall and handsome man she had last seen back in Alexandria just a few days ago.

What the hell was he doing here?

Steve was on his knees, wearing a slightly rumpled blue tshirt and jeans, surrounded by five Saviours all holding guns pointed towards his head.

But he looked anything but scared, his lips pressed together firmly, his arms held aloft, staring up at Negan as well as at Blake, who stood now at the dark-haired Saviour's side, her chest rising and falling hard.

This was not good. Oh this was not good at all.

By the looks of it, Steve had stowed away on one of the Saviour's trucks to come here. But why?

But whatever the reason may be, Blake knew that Negan would not be happy.

The leader of the Saviours wasn't stupid…and it barely took a nervous glance from Blake to see that he looked furious now…obviously recognising the brown haired thirty-something before him...

…and Blake of course remembered the last time that Negan had laid eyes of Steve…back in her kitchen at Alexandria just over a week ago….

….she remembered too what Negan had almost seen Steve doing…moving his mouth towards hers…wanting more than what he had initially suggested he was coming over for…

But the leather clad man glanced back and forth between the back of the truck and Steve for a second or two, before finally speaking.

"Now, what, brings you here, huh, pretty boy?" said Negan in a sudden deadly voice, taking an intimidating step forwards and lifting Lucille to Steve's face momentarily.

There was a short pause, until the brown-haired man on his knees finally found his voice.

"I just wanted to come here and see you...to talk to you-" he began shortly, but before he could finish his sentence, he was cut off, by Dwight hitting him sharply across the face.

Blake clutched at her mouth, and took in a short intake of breath, staring wide-eyed at the situation.

No, no, no this couldn't be happening… why the hell had Steve done this to himself?

But the brown-haired man just panted, before peering back up at Negan…seemingly ok.

But the looming Negan just smirked arrogantly, taking another step towards the kneeling man before him.

"You really fuckin' stow away, like some sort of goddamn rat?" uttered the dark-haired Saviour, narrowing his eyes and lowering his chin dangerously, as he readjusted his grip on the baseball bat in his hand threateningly. "Because, I mean, I thought you looked fuckin' stupid….but I didn't think
you'd be fuckin' dumb enough to pull shit like that and come all the way here…to do….what exactly…..kill me? Bring my head back to Rick on a platter?"

His chocolate eyes were on Steve now, a dark frown plastered between his brows. But that dangerous smile was still there, dancing its way across his lips….waiting….

But Steve looked calm, shaking his head and opening his mouth to answer.

But again, before he could do so, he was cut off by another punch from Dwight.

Blake winced, shifting her weight from foot-to-foot, but again, Steve, spitting out a little blood onto the floor in front of him, took in a breath, and continued steadily.

"I just wanted to come here, to see if I can be of any help…" he began with a dry looking gulp. "….I want to come work for you….to become….Negan…."

Blake blinked?

What?

Negan licked at his lips, any hint of a smile dropping from his face.

"So…what? I let you in here….make you one of my men…begin to trust the fuck out of you….only to have you fuckin' double cross me?" said Negan, with a dark-grimace. "Why the fuck should I trust you when less than a week ago, you didn't even know who the fuck I was?"

But Steve blinked, shaking his head…his eyes suddenly drifting over to Blake...

Her breath hitched in her throat now, her heart beginning to pound hard inside her ribcage.

"I heard what Blake said about you…" Steve muttered honestly, his eyes lingering on hers for a long moment, before finally dragging his gaze back to Negan. "….and if what she said about you is true, it's your side I want to be on, and not Rick's."  

Fuck. Was Steve being serious here? Valuing Blake's opinion that much?

But Blake almost immediately, from her side, heard Negan let out a low angry growl as his chocolate orbs flickered to Blake suddenly, before travelling back over to Steve.

"Well ain't this all very fuckin' romantic," snapped Negan, arching his back as he spoke, staring between the pair of them, his chocolate eyes finding Blake's for a moment before swiftly looking away again. "I mean you musta' really fucking fallen for her pretty fuckin' bad, back in that quaint-ass village of yours, for you to trust her opinion of me that fuckin' much!?"

There was a bitterness to his voice now that Blake picked up on straight away.

"What? Were the pair of you goin' fuckin' steady or somethin' while I was gone, Peaches?" continued Negan, eyeing her again, and cocking his dark haired to the side. "Makin' out?Screwin'? Because if you weren't, that is a big fuckin' leap for pretty-boy here to make, to start trustin' you that fuckin' much…"

Blake parted her lips, giving the slightest frown now as she stared back at Negan…hurt.

Was that really how little he thought of her? That she would just jump into bed with Steve…

But Negan immediately clenched his jaw taking Blake's stunned silence as proof, as he nodded
knowingly, looking wounded now, as he turned back towards the brown haired man, letting out a puff of air and dragging his hand down his chin.

"It don' fuckin' matter anyway," Negan said in a dark low voice. "I got myself plenty of fuckin' men I can trust the shit out of, one hundred percent….but sayin' that, I can't really let you go, now can I? So….-

And with that Negan took a step forwards. And so , looking furious, the dark-haired Saviour raised Lucille aloft above Steve's head.

No, no, no….

Suddenly before she could stop herself, Blake had stepped forwards.

"Don't!" she cried aloud, drawing the attention of everyone in the lot right now. "Please don't!"

And in that moment, Blake remembered the time where she had defended another man from Negan's wrath….a man who had turned on her almost immediately afterwards…a man who she once had loved.

Within a second, Negan's eyes were on hers, his jaw clenched furiously… and Blake almost half expected him to carry on, he looked that mad…

…but instead he slowly lowered Lucille, his eyes never leaving hers. And in that moment all Blake could see was utter disappointment and hatred in the dark-haired Saviour's eyes.

She gave a gulp, her hands trembling now…as Negan turned on her instead, marching over to her and closing the gap between the pair of them.

But instead of a kiss or a dirty word whispered into her ear, as was usually the case between the pair of them at such close proximity, she saw a Negan's lips curve up into a dark grimace as he leaned into her now.

Closer than he had been to her in days, but now, there was no warmth between them…..only hurt… and anger and frustration….as Negan pressed his lips to her ear.

"If he screws up...if he tries anythin'...if he even breathes the wrong fuckin' way….on your head be it, Sweetheart," he murmured, his voice thick with contempt…before pushing himself from her and tearing his brown eyes away.

And Blake could only gulp, as Negan swivelled on his heel and stalked silently away, looking furious and far more uncompromising than he had looked just a few days ago when the pair of them had argued in the woods.

Now Negan, looked like his blood was boiling….but in all honesty Blake's wasn't far behind either.

Had Negan really thought so little of her to think that she had slept with Steve the moment she had gone back to Alexandria…?

Just because Negan slept around and had a harem of woman bowing to his every whim, did not mean that Blake was the same! There had only been one man she had been interested in. But now even he had let her down...

Her stomach convulsed now, and any hope she had had just a few moment ago in the garden, of any sort of conversation or reconciliation, was gone.
She watched Negan's retreating, leather-clad form, disappear off inside, out of the darkening lot...as the Saviours surrounding them, including Dwight, all lowered their weapons a little unsurely, backing away from Steve.

The brown haired man, merely knelt there for a few long seconds before pushing himself unsteadily to his own feet and wiping at his face.

Why the hell had he come here?

Why now?

Negan had been right....Steve hadn't even known who he was, just a few short days ago....so what had changed now?

Steve couldn't value her opinion that much, couldn't he? She barely knew him for god's sake.

But as the brown-haired man brushed himself down, he looked at Blake, still standing there. a few feet away from him. looking shell-shocked.

"Well that was-" he began, giving her a small encouraging smile.

But Blake cut across him suddenly, turning to him and frowning hard.

"What are you doing here, Steve?" she uttered imploringly, tilting her caramel-blonde head at him.

She needed answers now...feeling upset...pained...

But Steve eyed Dwight, who was passing nearby them holding a crate full of vegetables, before looking back to Blake once again...

"I just....I wanted out of there...." uttered the brown haired man, blinking slowly down at her. "And I....well, I wanted to come here....I wanted to become a Saviour...to do something with my life"

Blake studied his face carefully...

Where was the lie here? Surely this couldn't be that simple?

But Steve just lifted his hand and rubbed at the back of his tanned neck, gazing back at Blake with imploring eyes.

"So...you uh...you wanna show me around...." he muttered in a kindly voice, again eyeing a nearby Saviour as she passed close to Blake. "....after crouching in that truck for the past couple of hours I could sure go for stretching my legs a bit."

But the tiniest of frown lines appeared between Blake's brows at his words.

Was that it? Did he really think everything was a-ok here? Just like that?

Did he even realise just what he had done?

Blake right now, just did not understand how seemed so cool with all this. As if this was normal for him.

Did Steve even actually realise just how close he had just been to being clubbed to death by Lucille just then?
He offered her another smile, but Blake couldn't do this…not right now…

And so, rather than help him, the caramel-blond woman merely grabbed the sleeve of Dwight's arm as he passed close by her, holding a large tub of chocolate pudding.

"Uh, Dwight," she asked seriously, hoping she still had some swing over the Saviours, despite her and Negan not being on good terms. "Can you show Steve to a room and let him how things work around here…please…"

Blake's voice was slightly cold now, and she waited until the scarred, blonde haired man looked her way, throwing her a slightly bemused look, and gave a complaint nod...before she turned on her heel and made to walk away…

But before she could do so, Steve called out to her again.

"Hey," he said, lightly touching her hand. "Thanks…Blake….I meant what I said y'know…I listened to everything you had to say…back there in Alexandria…"

And in that moment, his eyes met with Blake's, with something in them that Blake certainly did not want to read too much into right now…

But Blake just gave a curt nod, obviously less of a reaction than the brown haired man had been expecting, as he looked slightly disappointed now, as Blake turned away once again and walked hastily away…heading back over into her walled garden, making sure she was out of sight of Steve, or Dwight, or anyone else in fact…

…and it was only when she was here…out of earshot and alone, did Blake press her back to the high, stone wall behind her…

…and finally clutching a trembling hand to her mouth and bursting into streams of muffled sobs…

What the hell had she done?
Working for points

Blake awoke early the next morning, it taking a her a few moments to remember the events of the previous day.

But of course, they soon came rushing back to her, jabbing at her senses like a knife to the stomach.

Just the way Negan had looked at her…with pure hatred and anger in his eyes…that had hurt more than Blake could even say.

But what had hurt more had been his words. Had Negan really supposed that she and Steve had slept with one another, back in Alexandria? Did he really think that little of her?

She had told him at the time, when Negan had walked in on Steve trying to kiss her in that kitchen, that there had been nothing to worry about…so why now had he changed his mind and began not to trust her? After all they had been through together?

The pair had said a lot of hurtful things to one other over this past week but it was the lack of trust that pained her the most…

…but then perhaps Negan was merely hurting Blake in retaliation for all the things she had accused him of….for not caring…for only being concerned with himself.

Blake had given a sigh, rubbing her face with her hand now…praying she wouldn't start to cry again.

Last night she had stood in the garden alone, sobbing, long after the sky above her had grown dark, and the lots surrounding the Sanctuary had emptied completely.

She had gone inside and not bothered grabbing anything to eat, not feeling up to it right now and so had gone straight to her room collapsing onto her bed, with puffy eyes and red, tear-streaked, cheeks.

But this morning Blake knew she needed to pull herself together. There were lots to be getting on with in the garden and she would try and use that as a good distraction. For what else did she have right now…?

She had contemplated leaving. But where would she go? She had cut herself off from Rick and the people back at Alexandria….aligned herself with the Saviours who, of course, had enemies everywhere.

She was screwed. So she would stay here…for as long as she could bare at least…

Although at the rate she was currently going, that wouldn't be long.

But Blake, shook herself now. For this wasn't the time to start feeling sorry for herself. She still had it good here…with three meals a day…running water….whatever supplies she needed…

…she of course knew that life could be a lot worse out there on the road all alone.

And so, lifting herself up and out of bed, the caramel-blonde woman, grabbing towel and a bottle of shampoo she had taken from the marketplace downstairs, padded out into the hallway, heading to the bathrooms.

Less than thirty minutes later, with stomach rumbling, Blake walked into the large canteen, damp
hair tied up in a loose knot on top of her head, with a pair of indigo jeans on and a white blouse.

She gazed about now, spotting Arat, Danny and a couple of other Saviours chatting in the corner, but no Negan today, which was a relief. For Blake was not yet ready to face the dark-haired Saviour again. Not after what had been said between them last night.

The place was fairly busy today with most of the Sanctuary's residents frequenting here at this time of the morning to pick up whatever sustenance their points could afford them, before beginning the working day.

Even Dr Carson could be seen on the far side of the large hall sat alone at a table eating a plate of waffles with a book spread out on the scrubbed wooden table before him.

Blake walked across the room, avoiding the eye of most people as she did so, before reaching the end of the short line for breakfast. And from the glorious smell that was wafting towards her, it looked like they were serving eggs, with waffles, and syrup, as well as freshly baked bread. Just that alone was enough to make Blake's mouth water these days.

And so in less than a minute she had reached the front, coming to stand before the two Saviours stood behind the makeshift serving counter.

Blake recognised the pair of them immediately, them being the same watery-eyed red-head and the white haired man, who had been here just last week when Negan had made the woman cry. And yet again, today the woman was stood serving, while the older man stood beside her, crossed out items and scored off points in a huge ledger.

The woman offered Blake an immediate warm smile and busied herself piling Blake's try high with food items.

But as Blake reached out a hand to take the tray from the woman's grasp, giving her a brief thank you of sincere gratitude, the white-haired man at her side suddenly snatched the woman's hand back.

"Wait," he said, his fingers running across a place in the large book before him, not even raising his eyes to look at either of them. "She doesn't have enough points for that."

Blake blinked and stared at him suddenly, the hint of a smile dropping from her features.

"Yeah, she's got enough for the waffle and the syrup but not for the eggs or the roll," he uttered again, to the red-head beside him, speaking as if Blake wasn't even there.

The female Saviour almost immediately retracted the tray, looking guilty, as she scraped the eggs from the plate back down into the vat before her.

But Blake could only gulp now as she stared up in shock at the pair in front of her now.

"I…errr…I don't understand…" she said in a quiet voice.

But the white haired man gave a short huff, scratching out points against Blake's name, before finally gazing up at her beneath arched eyebrows.

"We've had the order to add you to the points system as of yesterday," he said shortly. "And working in that gardens for what…ten hours… that gets you forty points."

Blake felt her heart pounding as her eyes drifted down to the plate of waffles and syrup before her, a nervous frown appearing between her brows.
"So if I take this…does that mean I won’t have enough points to eat later this afternoon…o-or this evening?" she asked, her voice wavering slightly as she spoke.

But the man gave a grumbling sigh.

"Well I guess you can take just the bread," he said huffily. "And that'll mean you might have enough for a portion of fresh vegetables tonight…depending on how hard you work today."

Blake felt her heart plummet into her stomach now, feeling the eyes of the people stood behind her in the line on her now, causing her cheeks to burn red.

She gave another gulp, her eyes drifting down to the plate before her.

"I-I'll just take the bread then," she said, hearing her voice begin to break.

But she willed herself to hold it together as the red-haired woman looking sad, switched the plates over, instead handing Blake a small plate with a single bread roll on it.

"If you want spread, that'll be five extra points," said the man turning back to his book disinterestedly, and calling forward the next Saviour in the line. "Next!"

Blake gave another hard gulp, staring down at the piece of bread in her hand, feeling so guilty for the amount of food she had been entitled to these weeks living at the Sanctuary while everyone around her, not in Negan's favour, had scraped by just to fill their bellies even half full.

Quietly, feeling wholly embarrassed, Blake hurried over towards the long table far off in the corner of the room, sitting alone now not wanting any more attention.

She wasn't however, aware of Arat's eyes following her across said dining hall, stopping abruptly in her conversation with Danny.

Blake took a seat, with her back to the grimy wall, tearing apart the dry bread roll with her fingers and eaten it silently, thinking on everything.

She wasn't surprised of course that Negan would make her work for points. For that was, of course, how things worked around her for everyone else. Why shouldn't she be any different?

But, feeling utterly despondent, Blake barely noticed the curly-haired general come to stand before her.

"Hey," uttered Arat, breaking Blake suddenly from her thoughts, as she blinked up at her.

But instead the woman just shifted her weight from foot-to-foot and chewed on her lip for a moment, before speaking again.

"…listen…" she said, giving a a small frown. "…for the record…I think putting you on the points system is kinda a shitty move."

Blake bit at her own lip now, gazing up at the tough looking Saviour before her.

For she knew it took a lot for Arat to speak out about Negan, as loyal as she was to him.

"…and I just wanted you to know that…” Arat gave a small sigh, peering down at Blake earnestly.
"...that if you need anything...anything that you don't have enough points for...I'll get it for you...no questions asked."

Blake felt tears pricking at the back of her eyes now at Arat's generosity at her own risk.

"T-Thank you," stuttered back Blake, as Arat gave a swift nod before turning on her heel and marching swiftly back over to the small group of generals on the far side of the room.

That was the second time in just a few days that Arat had reached out to her, and Blake honestly appreciated it. Feeling less alone here now that she should have done.

For at the end of the day, even without Negan, Blake still had Arat, the wives, Eugene...

She was not alone.

She had hope.

Hope for a better life that she would have out there anyway. Even it did involve working for her supper.

And Blake had barely been sat alone for even a minute, when suddenly, a young boy of about seven or eight years old approached her looking a little nervous, holding out a plate piled high with yellow scrambled eggs.

He had short brown hair and was missing a front tooth, but smiled politely, setting the eggs down onto the table before her.

"These are from us..." he said in a sweet-little voice, pointing back over his shoulder, to where a couple in their forties, who must have been the boy's Mom and Dad, sat alongside a few other skinny-looking Saviours.

They all grinned over at Blake, and the caramel-blonde woman almost immediately recognised the teenage girl she had one given the tampons to, back in the marketplace several long weeks ago now.

"Thank you so much," said Blake to the kid, giving a shaky gulp, as the boy skipped happily away, heading back over to his parents.

She felt overwhelmed now, that people would think about her and be so generous... especially when they themselves had so little to give. She promised herself she would return the favour one day.

But this had been exactly what Blake had been trying to tell Negan all along.

Sure, he had an empire here, but sometimes being good and kind to other people would get you so much further than a dictatorship where people were starved and forced to work for very little.

Blake ate every last morsel of what was on her plate...hoping to god she could drag out her points enough to manage to get herself up to at least two meals a day.

Working out there in the garden was exhausting and without some sustenance, that kind of toil would be hard.

And so, picking herself up and clearing her plates to the side, she began to head out of the dining hall, making for the corridor that led out to the walled garden.

But before Blake could make a move, she heard a sudden voice behind her.
"Hey! Blake, wait up!"

She recognised the voice, instantly, grimacing a little as she swung around, coming face to face with –

"Hi...Steve..." she murmured, a little irritably, gazing up at the tall, brown haired man as he crossed the room towards her, drawing the eyes of several women as he did so.

He was conventionally handsome, with large tanned biceps bursting from the tight white t-shirt he had obviously loaned from the marketplace.

He ran a hand through his ruffled hair, as he beamed down at her. Happier than he probably should be here, noted Blake.

What was his MO?

Surely he hadn't seriously come here to become a Saviour or one of Negan's men? Right?

Blake eyed him a little cautiously, but Steve seemed unperturbed.

"God this place is like a maze isn't it?" he grinned, stepping closer to her now, looking like a hulking great puppy with wide cheerful eyes. "I came down here earlier looking for you, but didn't manage to spot you."

But Blake scratched at her arm, giving a dry gulp.

"Yeah...I was just about to head out to get some work done on the garden," she muttered back in an attempt to get away from Steve. The more the pair of them hung out the more likely it would look to Negan and the rest of the Saviours, that what Negan had implied, had indeed been true.

But Steve clapped his hands together brightly.

"Great, I'll join you," he uttered happily as a couple of skinny women waltzed by, looking him up and down as they passed the pair of them. "It'll give me something to do around here...so I can get some points to my name.... and prove myself a bit, y'know?"

Blake did know....

And that was what worried her.

For she knew just how far Negan would make his men and women go to 'prove' themselves to him...

"I dunno," she said, darting her eyes away and chewing on her lip.

But Steve took another intimate step into her, grasping hold of her upper arm gently and coaxingly. "Oh come on," he urged nudging her slightly, and leaning into her. "Give me a chance to prove myself to you too, huh? How about it?"

Blake didn't want to, but the way Steve was looking at her, almost pleading right now, his face right up close to hers, she didn't have much choice.

And besides, he was bound to be safer with her in the garden, keeping out of Negan's way, than he was walking the halls and getting under people's feet with his eagerness to help.

"Ok, fine," she said with a soft sigh, twitching a smile up towards him. And with that the shoved past...
him, making her way out of the marketplace towards the long corridor, bumping Steve's shoulder as she did so.

"But you can do all the heavy lifting, we clear?" she murmured.

And Steve gave a chuckle and barely lingered for a second, before following obediently behind her out of the large open-plan room.

But what neither of them had noticed, was that on the walkway high above the room, Negan was stood, jaw clenched watching the pair's every move…their closeness…their touching….the way Blake had just smiled gently before leading Steve away…

His blood was boiling with fury and pure jealously now, his grip tightening on the barbed wire covered baseball bat in his hand….

But what the fuck could he do now?

Kill the stupid fucking son of bitch? After Blake had defended him?

Nope. For Negan knew that if he did that, he might as well send her away right now, for she would never ever fucking forgive him.

But Negan was angry…hurt…and wasn't happy about the pretty-boy's fucking appearance here, not one fucking bit.

But turning on his heel...he headed once again from the canteen...heading up to his office...determined to keep an eye on the pair of them...even if it was the last thing he fucking did.

It was long after lunch, as Blake picked herself up stiffly, a short spade in one hand, covered in dirt and fresh soil... that a large bag of fertilizer was suddenly dropped down at her feet, making her jump in fright.

"That's the last sack of it," said a sudden panting Steve from her left coming to stop just a foot or two away from her now.

The pair had worked here all morning in the morning sunshine, Blake putting the brown-haired guy to work moving bags of compost from one end of the lot to the other, working as far away from her as he could possibly get.

But Blake, who clutched her hand to her chest, glancing up at him now…. gulped almost immediately at the sight that met her eyes….

For there was Steve with his shirt off, revealing a taut and tanned torso, almost hairless, perfect-looking and beaded with perspiration.

What the hell was he doing?!

There were plenty of other Saviours working out here now…a few men just a few feet away from them in fact. And none of them had felt the need to start working without their tops on.

Blake averted her eyes almost instantly.

"Oh…right…ok…" she nodded, placing her hands to her hips, trying to search for something to say.

But she barely needed to. As before she could utter another word, Steve had stepped close to her….
Blake's breath caught in the back of her throat now, staring up….

…as the brown-haired man suddenly leaned in towards her…

Fuck.

Blake held her breath, her mouth going completely dry…as Steve lifted his smooth hand to her face….

Fuck, was this the kitchen all over again?!

Here in front of everybody? Really?

No, no, no…

Had she led him on in any way? Given him even a hint that she was interested in him?

But to Blake's utter relief….Steve merely brushed at her cheek gently with his thumb.

"You had some dirt on you," he uttered with a warm smile, licking gently at his lips.

And Blake couldn't help but let out a shaky breath as she realised just how close they were now…

His lips just an inch or two from hers….Blake peered up at him…hoping to god he wasn't about to try anything…when suddenly, something glinting in the sunshine, caught her eye….

….movement in a window…high above the garden….Blake at once squinted against the sun and blinked suddenly…seeing a figure stood there…. ….a figure now watching the pair of them….

Blake hurriedly pulled away from Steve, taking a couple of sudden steps back as she frowned darkly….

…realization of just who that person was, dawning upon her, as she took him in…

Negan.

Stood in that window, leather jacket shrugged over his shoulders… watching her….no, spying on her….

Checking up on what she was doing with Steve….

And in that moment, Blake let out a roar of anger, tossing down her spade with a loud clang, drawing the attention of every single person in that garden at that very moment.

That was it.

Fuck it, she had had enough.

And so, shoving Steve aside, Blake stormed back into through the large doorway that led back into the Sanctuary…her teeth gritted tightly together…

…angrier than she had been in a long, long time….
...heading off to find Negan...
The Argument

Blake marched up the stairs, first clenched blood, boiling inside her veins…

She was furious now.

So mad that Negan would have the gall to be watching her from a window…checking up on her like she was some sort of kid.

Well she had had enough now…so done with Negan's games.

Even as accustomed to the winding hallways as Blake had become, it still took her a few minutes to get her bearings and work out exactly where Negan had been watching her from.

But it was less than five minutes before Blake found herself up on the fourth floor on the West side of the large looming factory, climbing up the last few steps that led onto a long corridor Blake had never been down before.

It was gloomy and dingy up on this floor, with no windows and just a flickering sterile light from the lamps hanging above her head. But down the far end of the hallway, Blake could see a tall-tale shaft of bright sunlight shining out of an open door.

She gritted her teeth together….strands of her loosely tied up hair hanging down past her face now… but she didn't care what she looked like, her cheek still smeared with dirt and her knees grubby from the garden.

And with fists clenched at her sides, it only took the caramel-haired woman a second or two to reach said-room, bursting in through the door, before anyone could do a anything to stop her.

Blake's heart was pounding in her chest now…as her stomach did backflips…

And it wasn't a moment before her eyes fell on a familiar figure slouched down in a chair in front of the window, his boots propped up on the scrubbed wooden desk in front of him.

Negan.

Looking as arrogant now as he had been the day she had first met him. But there was no hint of a cocky smile upon his features today…

Instead he merely stared up at her now, his jaw clenched tightly and his eyes black.

He had obviously been expecting her.

But regardless, Blake wasn't going to let him get the first word in, anger bubbling inside of her.

"What the fuck is your problem?" she said in a sudden raised voice, pointing at him, a frown plastering itself across her brow, as she came to stop just a foot or two from the desk, eyeing him darkly. "You're spying on me now? Really?!"

But Negan merely wrinkled his nose, giving her an incredulously scornful look in return.

"Jeez, darling, you conceited much?" he scoffed. "I was merely fuckin' checkin' on how much work you lot were getting' on with down in that fuckin' garden of yours….or had I interrupted something' important between you and pretty-boy down there? That why you've come up here screaming the
fuckin' odds?"

Blake gave a growl at his words, lowering her chin furiously. He was trying to get a rise out of her, she could tell. But it was indeed working…

"What the fuck are you talking about, Negan?" she yelled, lifting her hands aloft in sheer exasperation. "Are you jealous? Is that it?"

Negan grimaced up at her now, scowling.

Luckily for Blake, Lucille today was nowhere to be seen, but he still had a knife visible at his belt, peeking over the top of his grey jeans and black t-shirt and under his leather jacket.

"Jealous?" he snarled, raising an eyebrow. "Of that stupid fuckin' son of a bitch? Give me a fucking break, Sweetheart.."

But Blake took a step forwards.

She knew him better than he thought she did obviously.

"You are jealous….why else would you be acting like such a fucking child?" she uttered in a loud voice, her chest rising and falling hard, as her heart hammered away inside her ribcage.

But obviously Negan did not appreciate her words, as in a second he had dropped his boots from the table and got to his feet, marching around the desk towards her.

Blake's breath caught in her throat, watching as he strode towards her.

"You'd better watch your fuckin' tone with me, Doll-face…” Negan quickly growled in a low voice, his chocolate eyes meeting with hers, as he came to stop just an inch from Blake's face now…leering down at her intimidatingly.

She bristled, never having seen Negan like this before.

But she could still feel her blood boiling at his words…

"Or what, Negan? Huh?" she pushed, closing the gap between the pair of them and pulling herself up to her full height until she was nose to nose with him. "What are you going to do to me? Because whatever it is I guarantee you David did a lot worse."

She was being honest there.

After what her ex-fiancé had done, there wasn't much the dark-haired Saviour could do to scare her these days. She had been hurt by someone she had feelings for once before. So what difference would a second time make?

Blake's chin was raised defiantly now, staring into Negan's eyes. Standing up for herself, like she had ben so frightened to do to David all those many months ago.

But Negan just gave her a long, lingering look, before suddenly shaking himself and backing off, turning on his heel and running a hand down his bearded chin, looking guilty.

Blake gulped, allowing herself to catch her breath once again. But she wasn't going to let this rest, to pent up to do that now.

"So what….your checking up on us doing work now? Is that it? Making sure I was earning my
"Well you got what you fuckin' wanted, Sweetheart," Negan replied in a bitter tone, shrugging. "Now you and lover-boy can live happily ever fuckin' after...working for shit...under my goddamn rule, just as it fuckin' should be round here."

But Blake felt wounded, scowling hard at the dark-haired Saviour.

"You call yourself a leader?" she snapped back in retaliation, her voice raising slightly again, as Negan gave an amused cocky chuckle. "Those people down there are ten times what you'll ever be."

She was angry now...not even meaning what she was saying. But she just wanted to hurt him now. Just like he was hurting her.

But the leader of the Saviours shot her a bemused look.

"And what? You think you'd do a better job, Doll?"

But Blake took a step towards him now, narrowing her eyes and tilting her head to the side formidably.

"You made me into a fucking queen Negan, and I think given the chance...if they had a choice....those people down there would choose me over you, any day," Blake uttered smartly, lifting her chin up, her eyes meeting with his.

At this Negan stared her out for a long moment as the seconds drifted by, Blake noticing a harsh gulp rising up his bearded throat before falling once again.

But this wasn't the conversation over, Blake was sure of it, and as she predicted, it wasn't a moment later that Negan pointed a finger in her direction, turning to her.

"I swear, if that goddamn asshole even puts a fuckin' foot outta line-," he uttered in a coarse voice, digging into the side of his cheek with his tongue irritably.

But Blake cut him off, frowning, knowing exactly who he was talking about.

"Steve's fucking pledged himself to you, Negan..." Blake said in a frustrated tone, trying to reason with him now. "Why are you so paranoid he's out to fucking turn on you?"

They were just going around in circles now...the strain between them deepening once more.

But Negan gave a chuckle, shaking his head and gazing at her in disbelief.

"Shit, darling, are you really that fuckin' naive?" he uttered, cocking his head to the side and approaching her again. "This ain't the circle-jerk village-fuckin' life, Rick-the-Prick makes this world out to be. This is survival of the fuckin' fittest, an' I've learned to see right fuckin' through assholes like that pretty-boy out there."

Blake pursed her lips together, staring at Negan hard.

"Steve's not like that..." she uttered giving a gulp and biting on her lip hard.
But Negan eyed her smugly.

"What? He convince you of that while you're getting to third base?" he scoffed in a heartless voice.

God, he could be such an asshole sometimes, and Blake, right now, had had enough.

She blinked hard, scowling and closing the gap between them, jabbing a finger into his t-shirt covered chest.

"Do you really think that little of me, that I'd just jump into bed with him?!" she said tilting her head to the side, looking up at him a little sadly now.

But Negan just pursed his lips into a thin line, staring down at her, frowning.

"Well by the looks of you and him, you've moved on pretty fuckin' quickly, Darlin'-" Negan stressed.

But Blake took a step back from him now, shaking her head, her face filling with disappointment.

"Says the man with five wives," she murmured back in a hurt-sounding voice, a lump rising to her throat.

But Negan looked angrily back at her.

"Hell, I gave you the fuckin' opportunity, Doll-face," he said jabbing his finger down at the ground. "An' you didn't want to take it."

Blake gaped.

"Do you even hear yourself sometimes?!" she yelled in an exasperated voice, staring up at him wild eyed. "You know how I felt about you…"

The tension in the room was thick now….filled with rage….and anger and frustration…as Blake trailed off…unable to finish her sentence.

For her, the hurt was too much now, as she stared at Negan, shaking her head.

Both of them were breathing hard, those breaths coming ragged in their throats, as they stared each other out….

….until suddenly, Negan, frowning hard…

….looking like he so desperately wanted to say something…..

….but instead he almost immediately closed the gap between him and Blake…

….and before she could even take in another breath, the dark-haired Saviour had pressed his lips to hers roughly.

And, feeling so caught up in the moment, it didn't take Blake another second for her to react back, kissing him hard in return…

Fuck.

Negan's lips moved against hers hungrily, as she slipped her tongue into his mouth, desperation rising within her….wanting so much to taste him after all this time apart.
This was what she needed now. This was what they both needed.

Feeling the tension between them, drift away, with every moment their tongues brushed together… making the most delicious wet noises as their lips lapped against the others.

Blake immediately pressed her hands to Negan's taut chest, feeling her digits curl around the fabric of his black t-shirt, as Negan tugged her close to him, his calloused hands griping her hips hard…as if never wanting to let her go.

A warmth was building inside her now…wanting so much to feel his hands….his lips….his tongue on her skin….as she reciprocated…tasting every inch of him…

But Blake couldn't do this. She was still mad at him now…

Angry at all the things he had said to her… wounded painfully by his words…

And so shaking herself, her darkened eyes snapped open and she tugged her lips suddenly from Negan's, pushing him gently away.

Blake was confused now…pain coursing through her… her head spinning with how conflicted she was feeling right at this very second.

Negan gazed back at her, his face softer now, panting hard, giving her a frowning, questioning look.

But Blake just shook her head, her green eyes widening now in fright, as she gave a painful gulp… …her heart thudding in her chest…feeling like she could cry…

….before suddenly, Blake turned on her heel and fled from the room hurriedly…

….before Negan could even say another word….
Blake appeared out in the garden again, eyes staring forward, as pale as a sheet.

What had happened up there in Negan's office. It had felt so good, so right, so needed…

But Blake's heart seemed to ache now. For this just couldn't be. It couldn't be that easy to just fall back into his arms. She was still angry, hurting…

She felt like she was drowning now, scrabbling for air….

How the hell could one stupid argument turn into, well, this. With so many hurtful things banded about, that now, could not be un-said.

Blake stepped out into the early afternoon air, placing a hand to a nearby wall to steady herself, swaying slightly as she stopped in her tracks.

But Steve, who Blake barely noticed nearby, glanced up almost instantly, spotting her from across the garden.

"Hey…..you ok?" she heard him utter in what seemed like a voice, oh-so far away, despite him strolling over to her.

The caramel-blonde woman blinked once, then twice, her eyes drifting up to his…trying as hard as she could to snap herself out of it.

"Uh…yeah. I'm…uh, I'm fine," she mumbled in response, shaking herself slightly, as she stared up at the brown haired Steve who came to a stop just in front of her, peering down into her face.

The garden was still busy with Saviours all hard at work going to and fro, but none of them seemed to care about Blake's reappearance in the garden. Only Steve, who suddenly reached a hand out to her cheek.

"Babe, you look like you've seen a ghost," he said, giving her a trying smile, as his digits met with her skin, but Blake flinched away from him suddenly, pulling back.

She blinked a couple of times, as Steve stared at her questioningly, before tearing her eyes away.

"I've got stuff need to finish is all," she said in a quiet voice, brushing swiftly past him and heading back over towards the tomato plants on the far side of the walled lot.

Right now she did not want to deal with Steve.

His arrival here at the Sanctuary had only sought to exacerbate things tenfold between her and Negan. And Blake was not in the mood for his affection right now. All she wanted to do was get on with her work, earn her points, eat, sleep and get up in the morning and do it all over again.

For that was what her life had become here now.

This was no fairy-tale. There was no happy ending for her.

Negan would go back to his old life and Blake would go back to creating what little life she could, in the looming factory building she now called her home.
But without Negan, it did not feel like a home.

Blake felt so conflicted.

Struggling to understand what she wanted right now.

All the things Negan had said to her…scornful…stabbing her through her chest like a knife.

But in that moment that they had kissed, everything had felt right again, all of Blake's troubles and pains washing away.

But maybe that was all she was to him. Maybe that's all she had been. Another conquest. Although thoughts like that, they hurt her. Tearing her apart from the inside.

Blake knew how she felt about the dark-haired Saviour. And feelings like that didn't just disappear overnight.

But she tried think about something else now, bending down and picking up a pair of gardening gloves and shoving them swiftly on, hoping to distract herself with work as best she could…from now until she made a decision on what she was going to do.

Perhaps leaving would be the best course of action now and the easiest thing to do.

Or perhaps it would make matters a hell of a lot worse.

The hours drifted by ever so slowly, and Blake, as much as she tried to think about other things, was struggling.

It wasn't until 5pm came and went, that Blake noticed the first few Saviours head inside, done with their days work. But she wasn't hungry, nor did she want to go inside and be alone right now…

At least out here in the warm golden evening sun, she could persevere with what she was doing, as Steve and a few others worked nearby.

Blake placed a hand to the small of her back as she eased herself up into a standing position, unscrewing the cap from a bottle of water sat up on the bench beside her, before taking a grateful sip.

She wondered whether Negan was watching still from his vantage point high above. But Blake didn't look up…not wanting to see him again. At least not for tonight.

She drew the bottle back from her lips, gentle wiping her mouth slowly, just as there came a sudden 'clack-clack-clack', of familiar high-heeled footsteps from behind her.

And Blake peered around, only to see Tanya and Frankie walking towards her, arms folded over their short black dresses, looking as perfectly poised and polished as ever.

Blake gave the tiniest of gulps.

The last time she had seen any of the wives had been the day before her birthday, and from the looks upon the two women's faces right now, they had obviously heard what had happened between her and Negan. News obviously travelling fast in a place like this.

The two girls offered Blake a sympathetic smile as they approached her.

"Hey," said Frankie, tilting her head to the side as she surveyed Blake. "You ok?"
Blake instantly felt her heart plummet into her stomach, wanting to cry.

"Yeah we heard about what happened…with those fuckers that tried to hurt you…a-and with…..him…" said Tanya, her brown eyes looking sad. And it didn't take a genius to work out exactly who the dark-haired woman was referring to.

"It's fine, really," lied Blake, chewing on her lip and giving a gentle shrug.

But Frankie pursed her own lips momentarily, before speaking again.

"If it's any consolation, he's in a terrible mood," said the red-head. "We heard him shouting at Dwight earlier. He seemed pretty pissed."

Tanya nodded in agreement.

"It's not your fault that you found someone else," she said suddenly, glancing over Blake's shoulder to where Steve was busy painting one of the trellises, chatting to an older, male Saviour with cropped blonde hair. "You were never one of us. One of his wives. You're free to date who you want, it's not any of his business who you choose."

But at this, Blake gave a frown, gazing around to look at the brown haired Alexandrian behind her, before turning back to the two wives.

"No, me and Steve, we aren't-" she said in an urgent voice, but Frankie cut across her, placing a hand to her forearm.

"Blake, it's fine, you don't have to answer to us-" murmured the woman, shaking her head.

But Blake pulled her arm back, shaking her head.

"No listen, Steve….he's a nice guy….but we aren't…." she said trailing off before she could finish, giving a gulp, tears of frustration pricking at her eyes. "…he's not who I want."

And with that Blake stopped. Listening to her own words.

She had never wanted Steve. But there was one person she had felt truly happy with. Who she had wanted to give her forever to, in this crappy world.

Tanya and Frankie gazed back at Blake, reading her sad and upset features.

"Sorry we just thought…" began Tanya, taking in a breath and glancing at the red-head at her side for a split second, before looking back at Blake. "…look….if its Negan you want, the you should just-"

But Blake cut across her hurriedly.

"Negan's made it clear what he thinks of me…" she said quickly and woefully, her voice wavering slightly as she spoke. But she caught herself finishing the end of her sentence off carefully. "I wasn't what he wanted…"

Her heart felt like it was broken in two, saying the words out loud now, as her green eyes drifted down to her feet.

And for a moment Frankie and Tanya were silent, all of them standing in the warm evening sunlight, as people milled to and fro all around them.
But a second or two later, Tanya opened her mouth to speak.

"Blake, I-"

But before she could even say another word, there came the sound of a metal door being thrown open behind the three of them, and pair of heavy footsteps stride into the walled garden.

Tanya and Frankie swung around before Blake did, and from the look upon their faces, for a moment, she thought it may have been Negan himself.

But the caramel-woman quickly glanced up, to see Simon, with thumbs hooked through his belt loops, come to stop at their side.

His moustachioed face was grim now, his lips pressed into a straight line.

He took in a sniff of air before speaking. But his attention as not on Blake on this occasion, but of Tanya instead.

"Tanya," he uttered bluntly. "Negan wants to see you in his quarters."

Both of the wives suddenly paled slightly at Simon's words, glancing at one another.

Blake saw a gulp slide its way down Tanya's throat before she spoke.

"What does he want?" she asked with the slightest hint of insolence to her voice, but Simon tutted, shifting his weight from foot-to-foot.

"What do you think he wants," he snapped a little heatedly. "Go freshen up. He wants to see you in ten minutes. Go."

At Simon's words, it was like all the light suddenly fell out of Blake's world.

She knew what he was talking about. She knew exactly what Negan wanted to see Tanya for. And why shouldn't he? She was one of his wives after all.

Things between Blake and him, well, they were done now.

For the slightest of seconds a frightened-looking Tanya looked like she was about to protest, but shooting one last desperate look towards Frankie, she suddenly turned on her heel, bowed her head and hurried off inside upon Simon's orders.

Simon lingered for a moment as Frankie shot him a scowling look. But Negan's right-hand man looked at her warningly.

"And before you say anything, Frank, you're up tomorrow night," he said sighing huffily and pointing a finger at her. "He wants you girls back on rotation, same as before."

At this Frankie clenched her jaw looking angry, as if she too wanted to say something to Simon, but at the last second refraining, turning abruptly and storming off after Tanya.

Silence fell across the garden now, as Simon and Blake stood there, with the moustachioed man's eyes finally drifting across to her...as if he had only just noticed she was there.

But the tall man, only offered Blake a hard lingering look, but didn't say a word, merely sighing internally and strolling past her, running a hand over his mouth as he did so.
Blake's whole body felt tense…feeling like if she tripped and fell, she would shatter into a million pieces.

That was it.

Whatever had happened between her and Negan…..well, it was over. By him going back to his wives, that was the last straw.

And so, feeling a tear slip silently down her cheek, Blake hurried off inside…wanting to run, to flee from here, to go somewhere…anywhere….just not here…

….barely even noticing Steve watching her carefully as she went.

---------------------------------------------

Negan was sat on his plush leather couch, in his gloom-filled room, a large ledger propped open on his lap, pen in his gloved hand.

He had been here for the last hour or so…not having been able to face sitting in that office anymore after what had happened between him and Blake.

He was angry now….bitter that she would run out on him just like that.

He was a tough fucking guy of course, but even Negan, as hard as he made himself out to be. still felt stung by Blake's words.

After all they had been through together, she still. even after all this time. had such little faith in him… choosing that fucking asshole pretty-boy over him.

Well, if that was her decision, them so be it.

Negan knew where he stood now.

But that didn't stop it hurting any less.

He was supposed to be checking the Sanctuary accounts now, in the book propped open before him, as he tried to do every other day if he was lucky. But for the past fifteen minutes, Negan had been staring at the same four lines of text, his eyes still and unmoving.

He was distracted, irritable, pissed that she had made him feel like this….

One person who had tipped everything he had built up, on its head. Changed everything.

But Negan's thoughts were suddenly interrupted now, by a soft knock upon his door.

It was expected of course, but that didn't stop the dark-haired Saviour gritting his teeth together, and let out a low, growling- "Come in."

A second later, the door swung open and in stepped Tanya, her long dark-hair down now, swooping over the shoulders of her neat black dress.

She had her head bowed low to the ground, staring up at him through dark-lashes, but somehow her gaze never quite met with his.

"Close the door," Negan commanded darkly as his wife obediently did as she was told.
His wives were loyal like that. They had chosen this life that he had created for them…Negan himself never doing anything against their will. And that was a fact he reminded himself of each and every day.

But these women, as beautiful as they were, didn't have that same fire, that spark that Blake seemed to ignite in him. They were attractive of course and had helped him pass the time in this god-forsaken fucking world, but with Blake. Negan had felt different…human again…like everything in his life had been driving him to this point. Meeting her…sleeping beside her….feeling her skin against his….the warmth of her in his arms….

With the door now shut, Tanya took a couple of steps towards him, her hands cupped before her.

"D-Do you want me on the bed?” she asked in what was a hollow voice, with no hint of a smile on her face.

There was no flirty smirk here…no naughty words…

Tanya did not want him, and right now, Negan did not want her. He never had done, not tonight at least. This had all been one big ploy…one big game of his…arranging it with Simon…to call upon one of his wives at an opportune moment…a moment which would inflict the most pain upon Blake.

Fuck, she had been right, he was a fucking asshole, and this, well, this just proved it.

Negan gave an uncaring grimace and gestured the couch opposite.

"Sit," he muttered in a low voice.

Tanya looked at him a little warily, before doing as she was told and taking a seat upon the leather sofa directly opposite him, folding her arms across her chest a little defensively.

"You want a magazine?" Negan asked nodding towards the pile of glossy magazines he had made sure were stacked on the table before him.

Again Tanya looked up at him, parting her lips, as if looking for the trick here.

"Go ahead," said Negan with a sighing wave of his hand. "Take your fuckin' pick."

Tanya eyed him for a long second, but did not make a move.

"I-I don't understand," she murmured out.

But Negan gave a huff, clenching his jaw and staring up at her grumpily.

"Jeez, Tan', what's not to fuckin' get," he said in an incredulous voice. "I want you to sit there, shut up and read a goddamn magazine. Oh and if anyone asks, I screwed your goddamn brains, out, we clear?"

He stared at her seriously, and it was a long moment before his wife gave a gulp and a hurried nod before leaning eagerly over and picking out a magazine about home décor from the pile.

Negan gazed at her for a moment, before his eyes dropped back down his ledger.

He would try and distract himself with work, for now at least.

But his chocolate eyes had barely flickered to the next line of text, when Tanya suddenly spoke, loud and clear.
"You know that her and Steve aren't a thing, right?" said his dark-haired wife, as Negan glanced up, his eyes meeting with hers. "There's nothing going on between them."

Negan knew who she was talking about, and paused for a moment, before giving a dismissive scoff. "An' she told you that did she?" he said, his chest constricting slightly. But Tanya spoke again.

"It's not him she wants, Negan," she said softly, her brown eyes large and round and sad-looking.

But Negan just gave a huff, running a tired hand down his long, bearded face, before dropping his eyes away from Tanya's again.

"Just read your magazine, Tan', Sweetheart," he said in a softer voice now, as his eyes fell slowly to the book in his lap once more.
Blake burst into her room, hand clutched over her mouth, her chest rising and falling hard.

And it was only a second later, when she had shut the door behind her hurriedly, making sure she was safe and out of earshot of anyone else, did she burst into floods of tears, unable to hold it in any longer.

This was killing her. Truly and utterly.

Blake couldn't bear to think about Negan with his wives…touching them, kissing them, holding them, just like he had done with her just over a week ago…in that RV…in the bathtub…in her bed back at Alexandria.

Blake gave another sob, closing her eyes and crouching down to her knees.

Everything felt hopeless now…even as the warm evening sun drifted in through her window, shedding a golden light across Blake's neat and tidy room.

But like that she stayed, crouched there crying, for what felt like hours….but might only have been mere minutes...aching from head to toe.

She felt worse now than she had felt with David. For this was a crushing pain…a pain of knowing what she could have had….that feeling being torn away from her.

In the space of a little over a month, not only had she lost Mia but now she had lost Negan too. And things had changed too much to ever go back to way things were.

Blake was alone now…stronger...built up to be a queen in this world.

But that was no good on her own. For she had revelled in the feeling that Negan had given her…boosting her up…making her feel invincible…the king to her queen.

Blake now lifted herself back up to her feet, wiping at her cheeks and letting out a shaky sigh, before gazing around at the small room.

Her bed was made, a pretty blue vase sat empty upon the table, and a couple of pairs of jeans littered one of the couches here, but apart from a few items of clothing, Blake had no personal effects. Nothing she needed.

Perhaps leaving now would be the best thing to do. Pack up what she could, and just….go.

That had to better than staying here and seeing Negan with his wives again, wouldn't it?

But where could she possibly flee to? She had exhausted her options at Alexandria…

So perhaps Blake could just hope for the best. Pick a direction and just leave.

But before Blake could ponder this even a moment longer there came a sharp knock upon her door, causing her to jump where she stood.

The caramel-blonde woman hurriedly wiped at her eyes, just as the door was suddenly shoved open before she could protest.
Blake gave a gulp and took a hasty step back thinking for a moment it might have been one of Negan's men…here to inflict a punishment on her for something.

But instead Blake's green eyes suddenly landed on-

"Steve?" she uttered in a slightly wavering voice, crossing her arms over her chest.

What the hell was he doing here?

Steve glanced her over, tilting his head to the side and taking a wide step forwards into the room.

"I…uh….I just wanted to see if you were ok?" he mumbled earnestly, chancing a quick glance into the empty corridor over his shoulder, before closing the door behind him with a gentle snap.

Fuck.

Now it was just the two of them here, alone.

And as sweet as Steve seemed, Blake was not in the mood for his advances, again.

He wasn't who she wanted.

Steve was tall and muscly, with a great physique, and to many a woman he looked-like the perfect guy. But Blake had had all that in David. A guy who seemed oh-so-wonderful on the outside, but on the inside he was a true monster.

Not that Blake was tarring Steve and her ex with the same brush.

Over the past day or so Steve had obviously tried his best to prove that he was one of them….that he was Negan…

But coming onto her now, would only exacerbate matters, Blake was sure of it.

Maybe now would be the time to let him down gently.

"Listen-" she made to utter, but Steve swiftly cut across her, turning back around and taking a hurried step into the room, his face serious now.

"Thank god. I've been wanting to get you on your own since I got here but haven't found the chance yet," he said closing the gap between the pair of them and staring down into Bake's eyes.

Crap.

Oh, crap.

Blake felt her heart thudding in her chest…her eyes widening slightly and meeting with his.

This wasn't who she wanted. Steve wasn't who she wanted…

This wasn't right.

She could see his gaze flickering to her mouth, as he took in her entire face.

Fuck…this was it. Was he going to try it on with her again?

Blake needed to stop this.
But before she could say even a word, Steve had spoken again.

"I think we can do this, if we're careful," he said with a small nod, lowering his voice slightly.

Blake gave another gulp now, a little confused by his words.

What? Did he want to keep their relationship on the down-low? Was that what this was all about?

"I-" she began, but again, Steve interrupted, talking fast.

"It's going to take us a while to figure out how we're going to do it, but I know we can," he said giving her a small encouraging smile and lifting his hand up, giving her upper arm a squeeze. "We can kill him, Blake. We can kill Negan….take him down."

Blake blinked suddenly.

What had he just said?

She parted her lips staring up at the brown haired man before her.

"Y-You want to kill Negan?" she uttered in a hollow tone, not really believing what she had just heard.

This had to be a mistake. It had to be.

But Steve gave a nod, sliding his hand down her arm and finding hers, gripping it tightly.

"Like I said, I know we can do this together. You don't have to do this alone anymore, I can help," he said in a soft voice, cocking his head to the other side now, his body close to hers.

From here Blake could smell his sweat through his white t-shirt.

After all this…after defending Steve all this time….Negan had been right about him.

He was out for only one thing.

To kill the dark-haired leader of the Saviours.

"T-That's why you're here?" she murmured, her voice shaking slightly as the words spilled from her lips, the smallest of frowns darkening her brow.

But Steve stared down at her purposefully now, gazing at Blake imploringly.

"I'm here to do exactly what you have," she began, licking at his lips. "To live among his people… infiltrate them."

But Blake's eyes darkened, and she tugged her hand out of his grasp, taking a step back.

"I haven't infiltrated them," she said shaking her head, her frown deepening. "I chose to be here….I-I want to be here!"

She couldn't believe what she was hearing. Gazing at Steve like he was an alien object now And in a way, perhaps he was.

"Why?" uttered the Alexandrian, in a confused-sounding voice, staring at Blake hard.

But Blake couldn't no longer give a reason to that particular question.
She turned away from him now, reaching the table and lifting her hands to her face, thinking hard.

"Steve, listen, you need to go. Now," she said chewing on her lips worriedly. "I-If Negan figures out what you're doing-"

But Steve cut across her quickly, causing Blake to look back at him, as he approached her again, taking a step closer.

"He won't," Steve urged in a calculating voice, his fingers reaching her spine. "He trusts you enough now. You and me, Blake. We can be the team that takes him down."

But at his words and his touch, Blake flinched away from him, angry now, remembering.

For there was one other person who used to speak to her like this. One person who used to try and manipulate her into to doing things on his behalf.

And right now, as much as tried to shake herself, Blake could see flashes of David in Steve's face.

"I don't want to take him down, Steve," she said in a louder voice, feeling her cheeks burning red. "I lo-

But Blake stopped herself before she finished her sentence, the words hurting her too much to say aloud right now.

But Steve took another step into her now, relentless.

"You know this is the right thing to do Blake," he said with a sigh, shaking his poignantly. "Once we've done this, you can come back to Alexandria…with me."

Once again, Steve's hand reached her forearm this time, but yet again, she shrugged him off of her, turning to face him.

"Steve, he's going to kill you!" she pleaded with him in an incredulous tone, her eyes desperate now.

Steve couldn't do this. Blake knew what Negan would do to him if he even got a sniff he was about to try anything.

But Steve just smiled reassuringly.

"He won't find out," he uttered with a shake of his head.

But Blake pursed her lips together, her face serious now, staring back at him hard.

"He will if I tell him," she said firmly.

At her words Steve was silent for a long moment, his eyes travelling over her face.

"W-Why would you do that?" he asked, his voice wavering slightly as he spoke now

But Blake blinked just twice, already knowing the answer to this one, as her eyes dropped slowly to the floor, a lump appearing in her throat.

And that was when it hit her. A fact she had known to be true for a long, long, long time now….

"Because I belong here," she said in a pained voice. "Even if I live out the rest of my days working in the gardens scraping together just enough points to eat…it'll still be my home. Negan is my
Blake gave a gulp, feeling an ache wash over her, finally having admitted the truth to herself.

She would never have left earlier….for how could she….this place was the only thing she had in the world.

Negan had been the only thing she had in the world…

Both him and Mia had been everything to her, and it hurt her that they were both gone now.

And even despite Negan's words, Negan's actions over these past few days….she still cared for him….enough at least to stop him being killed by Steve.

Although she doubted Steve would get very far in doing so, and then what? Steve would feel the full force of Lucille. And Blake did not want to witness that.

But as her eyes drifted back up to Steve, she saw now to her surprise that he was scowling down at her, looking furious. His features twisted up into a dark grimace.

"You know, Rosita was right about you," he suddenly muttered in a dark voice, pointing at her and taking a threatening step towards her. "She told me you were a traitor...going off with the Saviours, lying about your ex hitting you. At first I didn't believe her, I mean, I thought you were cleverer than that. But you know what? You really are as spineless as she said you were."

Blake stared at him, and in that moment she saw red.

Seeing only David's face scowling down at her….hearing his words from Steve's lips.

And before Steve got the chance to utter another stupid syllable, Blake had grabbed the blue vase from the table behind her and thrown it sharply across his face.

Steve, as tall and muscular as he was stumbled at the impact, falling to the floor and clutching at his cheek.

The vase in Blake's hand cracked, but did not shatter, but the impact was loud enough to have hurt.

"Fuck you," uttered the caramel-blond woman advancing on him now, standing over him frowning darkly.

Her mind was whirring. What the hell was she supposed to do now?

If she called upon Simon or Dwight and told them what Steve had been suggesting they do, Steve would likely find himself dead in a matter of minutes.

And so, her fists clenched and chest heaving, fill of anger and betrayal right now, Blake made up her mind.

"Get up," she uttered out blackly, through gritted teeth.

Steve, with his hand on his red cheekbone, stared up at her, his eyes wide now.

It was obvious that he had never expected this of her. Not in a million years.

"Get up," Blake repeated louder now. "I don't have you down for a fucking martyr, Steve. So come on, lets go."
Hurriedly Steve scrambled to his feet, seemingly eyeing the vase still in Blake's hand, instantly doing as he was told.

He really was just a big puppy wasn't he?

But once he was on his feet, Blake gave him a hard shove towards the door.

"What are you going to do?" asked Steve trying to sound confident now, but his shaky voice gave him away slightly.

Jesus, Blake had seen some idiots in her time but Steve really did take the biscuit. How far had he really expected to have gotten if he had given up already, submitting to Blake's will.

But, hurling open the door, Blake, jabbed the vase into the small of his back, pushing him out into the gloomy corridor….

…but not answering his question just yet anyway….

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Blake gave Steve another sharp shove down the winding Sanctuary corridors, making sure they avoided any of the popular route that led down towards the dining hall where she knew most of the Saviours would be at this time of the evening.

Instead she took the back route, dingy and dirty as they were, and barely ever used by the Saviours, let alone by Negan or his generals.

"Are you taking me to him? Is that what you're doing?" mumbled out Steve, in a nervous voice, looking at Blake.

But the caramel-blonde woman merely sighed shaking her head now, cracked blue vase still clutched between her fingers.

She was tired and disappointed in herself for trusting Steve.

Negan had been right about him all along, reading him like a book this entire time.

She didn't utter a word to Steve until they were down on the ground floor, in an empty hallway beside a door that Blake knew led to an underused lot of the far side of the Sanctuary. There was a fence here, but unbeknownst to anyone but the Saviours, it wasn't chained up or locked and so would make for an easy escape for anyone who needed it.

Blake came to a stop beside the white peeling door, and turned to him finally, letting out a huff.

"You need to go, Steve," she said firmly, her eyes large and pleading now.

But the brown-haired man stared down at her, parting his lips.

He looked sad, like a huge puppy dog, his brown hair a little messy, and his white t-shirt that was far too tight for him, slightly dusty and rumpled.

"I came here for a reason, Blake," he said shaking his head.

But Blake merely gave a dark frown giving the door to her right a hard shove open.

"It's leave or die right now," she murmured back, as the last of the setting sun sent orange rays
shining over the pair of them, through the open door. So please, just go. Before I change my mind."

Steve lingered for a long moment, gazing out at the lot beyond.

"I-I have no idea to get back to Alexandria from here," he mumbled sounding a little worried now.

But Blake pursed her lips together unsympathetically.

Finding his way home was the least of his problems right now. If Negan ever found out about him…

Blake gave a gulp, not wanting to think on that.

For this was her doing.

She had chosen to defend Steve. To let him stay here.

This was on her head.

Negan had said so himself.

'If he screws up…on your head be it, Sweetheart.'

Blake nibbled on her bottom lip for a moment, staring at the brown haired man before her, before she gave her head a small shake.

"Just go, Steve, please," she whispered.

And with that, with a short downward glance, with his Adam's apple bobbing slightly inside his nervous throat, Steve turned on his heel, heading out into the sunlit lot.

And Blake just watched, as he reached the fence, easing it open, before closing it once again with a creak behind him, throwing her one last long and lingering look.

And a moment later he was gone…

Blake stared out at the empty space for a few moments….before pulling the door silently closed, her hands trembling as she did so….clutching the blue vase in her clammy hand tightly.

For she knew now what she had to do…

…and no matter the outcome, this was sure too hurt more than she could say….  

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Blake raised her chin aloft feeling a gulp slide its way down her throat, as she brushed down the front of her indigo jeans, the blue vase still clutched tightly one hand.

Here she was, outside a familiar looking door…

….not quite wanting to see what might be on the others side…

Perhaps he was in there…with her…but right now Blake didn't care. All she wanted to was to inform him how right he had been all along…and how she was willing to face any punishment he wanted to send her way.

And so, without so much as even a knock, Blake gave the door to Negan's room a hard shove open, storming inside.
But she stopped short, just a few steps into the room to find the dark-haired Saviour sitting there on his black leather sofa, alone, hands pressed to his face.

Blake blinked, a little shocked to see that there was in fact no Tanya…no rumpled bedclothes…no hint that she had actually been here at all…

But Negan, upon hearing her enter, looked up suddenly, dragging his hands away from his face looking furious, about to snap at whoever had disturbed him.

But he stopped suddenly, the scowl falling away from his face, as his chocolate eyes landed on her, standing there before him.

Blake breathed hard, her chest feeling tight, like all the air had been sucked from her body.

But she steadied her nerves, and, lifting her chin once more defiantly, she strode forwards, slamming the blue vase in her hand down onto the small coffee table in front of him, beside a small stack of magazines.

"You were right about, Steve," she finally uttered in a hollow voice, staring down at him, trying to hold it together enough to stop herself from crying. "He was going to kill you."

Negan stared up at her now, the smallest of frowns drifting across his tanned features, but he kept his mouth pressed tightly together, his chocolate eyes narrowing in her direction questioningly.

But Blake just stood up straight, allowing yet another gulp to slide its way down her slender throat.

"I let him go," she said answering Negan's question before he could ask it, feeling her hands trembling, but she clenched her first tightly at her sides, trying to stay strong now. "But I'm still here, if you're looking for someone to punish…"

Her heart hurt now as she stared over into Negan's eyes. But she could not hold his gaze for long, her tear-filled, glassy gaze dropping to the floor, as she gave a small hopeless shrug.

"...so you can kick me out...o-or lock me back in that cell or whatever, I don't care anymore," Blake finished, shaking her head and letting a single tear slide down her cheek, falling silently to the floor.

She would take her punishment. Of course she would.

But not right now…. He could come find her to do so, if he wanted…or send his men after her.

Whatever he chose, Blake was way past caring now.

She had been an idiot for trusting Steve….just as she had been an idiot for trusting David.

And so, turning on her heel, Blake left the room, without even a second glance up at Negan, heading back out into the gloomy corridor beyond….awaiting her fate…whatever it may be.
A promise

The sky had now become dark and shadowy outside by the time Blake finally made it back to her room, shutting the door behind her with a snap.

She leant back against the dark wood and let out a shaky breath of air, closing her eyes as she did so, feeling tears slide down her cheeks.

Everything right now felt hopeless. More so than it had done since the very start of the apocalypse.

All of the things Blake had strived so hard to build here had vanished into dust. Leaving only her alone.

There was no Mia…no Tara, no Aaron or Eric having her back…she was on her own here, ready for whether fate awaited her.

And Blake did not have to wait very long…

…for she had only been back a minute or so…

….when behind her head, there came a sudden loud knocking upon the wooden door at her back.

The caramel-blonde woman gave a sudden gulp, blinking open her tearful eyes once more and turning around on the spot.

Had Negan sent his men to get her so soon?

Was she to spend the rest of the night in a cell?

Or worse?

Perhaps she would be dead by morning, for Negan had surely punished people for much less.

Blake had let Steve go…just like that.

And from what she had heard, Dr Carson's brother had been burnt alive for doing a very similar thing.

But, ready and willing to face what was coming, Blake let out a shaky puff of air, her fingers grasping the door handle tightly.

And so, composing herself, she took a step back, slowly pulling open the door and awaiting whatever fate beheld her.

But Blake gave a sudden gulp as her eyes landed on a familiar figure stood there, face set, barbed wire covered baseball-bat propped up against his leather-clad shoulder.

Negan.

Right now he looked more intimidating than ever before, but Blake was done with playing the scared little victim, lifting her chin up defiantly, her green eyes meeting with his.

"May I come in?" he growled in a low voice, his face unreadable now.
Blake waited for a long moment, before finally giving him a curt nod and standing aside for him to pass.

Was this it? Was he about to use Lucille on her?

If so, Blake was ready and oh-so willing to stand her ground.

She hadn't forgotten all the things that had happened between them lately. She had been stupid, granted. But even Negan himself wasn't blameless in all this.

Blake shut the door behind him as the dark-haired Saviour strolled into the room, rubbing a hand across his bearded chin as he did so.

His shoulders were slightly hunched now, his head facing the ground.

At his presence, the room almost immediately filled with a smothering tension. Blanketing both of them in ghosts and memories of their arguments over the past week.

Blake pressed herself back against the door once again, awaiting whatever was to come next from him.

Perhaps he was here to kill her himself? Perhaps he would ask her to leave?

But no matter, Blake was not about to go down without some sort of a fight.

For all this. All their arguments. All their betrayal an hurtful words. It was destroying her from the inside anyway.

"If you're here to kill me-" she began, her voice raised, but wavering more than she had expected it to.

But almost as soon as she had spoken, Negan stared up at her, his jaw clenched and his eyes dark.

"Jeez, sweetheart, I mean I know you have a fucking low opinion of me," said Negan suddenly, in a sarcastic voice. "But do you really fuckin' think I'm here to fuckin' kill you?"

Blake hesitated for a moment, another dry gulp sliding its way down her exposed throat.

"T-Then what are you here for?" she asked in a voice suddenly quieter than before.

Negan dug the inside of cheek with his tongue for a second or two before speaking again, lowering Lucille from his shoulder and rubbing at his chin once again.

"I just wanna talk," he said in a short voice, his chin dipped low, but his dark eyes meeting with hers.

His tone immediately caught Blake off guard, and before she could stop herself, she felt her hackles raising slightly.

He wanted to talk? Now? After everything?

But Blake wasn't standing for it, anger bubbling up inside of her.

"What? So you can tell me what great sex you had with Tanya earlier?" she stated in a scornful voice.

She hadn't realised just how hurt she had really felt about the entire situation until she said the words
aloud, tears pricking at her eyes.

Negan stared at her.

"Nothing happened..." he said giving a short huff and shaking his head.

But Blake bit across him.

"And you expect me to believe that?" she yelled suddenly, pointing down at the floor, anger rising within her.

But Negan, suddenly taking two long-legged steps towards Blake, closed the gap between the pair of them, gazing down at her intimidatingly.

"Jesus Christ, Doll-face, you really think after everything, I would just jump into goddamn bed with those fuckin' girls?" he said in an incredulous tone, frustration in his voice.

But Blake breathing hard, fixed her eyes on his.

"Well that's what you thought I'd done with Steve," she said her voice breaking slightly. "And I didn't, Negan. I didn't do anything with him. I just thought-"

She trailed off...her eyes roving across Negan's long, tanned and fixed features.

"...I just thought he was a good guy....but I made a mistake about that....." she said licking her lips. 
"...so you were right...."

And with that, Blake dropped her eyes to the floor despondently and turned away from Negan now.

All this was her fault.

She had believed the wrong man and not for the first time in her life either.

God, she felt so stupid.

All of the tension all of the anger seemed to dissipate from the room now, leaving only an aching sadness between the pair of them.

Blake hugged her arms around herself, feeling a lone tear slide its way down her cheek, facing her bed. But she quickly swiped it away, as she heard Negan swiftly approach her from behind, placing a hand to her shoulder and tugging her back around to face him, before she could do a thing to stop him.

There he was.

The man who had changed her entire life.

Standing there as looming as ever...and just as formidable as the first day she had met him.

But here, now, Blake saw a softness in him under that hardened exterior.

A softness that had been hers to keep.

For a time anyway...

"Peaches..." Negan murmured, his eyes looking sad now, as Blake stared up into his long face.
But the dark-haired Saviour trailed off, blinking at her slowly.

There was so much between them.

These past few months had meant more than anything to Blake, and for the briefest few days she had felt truly happy for the first time in her life…here with him…

She wanted so much to be close to him now…to feel his warm skin against hers….

But she knew that it was probably too late.

That things had been said, that could not be unsaid.

The room was quiet, with both Blake and Negan standing merely a breath apart.

But to her it felt like an ocean between them now.

And it was moment later, that Blake said the words she knew would break her heart to say.

"Maybe this…us…maybe we were never meant to happen, Negan," she confessed in a sad voice, staring up into his deep chocolate eyes. "You have your wives, and I-…well, I'm here, and that's ok."

She tilted her head to the side, letting several messy strands of caramel hair trickle over her shoulder, as Negan gazed back at her, his eyes full of loss and pain and anguish…knowing that Blake's words were probably true.

And before she could stop herself, Blake had lifted her hand to Negan's leather-clad sleeve, grasping his forearm gently. Offering Negan the smallest of warm, caring smiles.

If this was definitely over, the Blake needed to say this.

She had to.

"But I'm still grateful to you," she murmured, as Negan stood in silence taking her all in, almost in awe of her every movement, of every syllable that spilled from her lips. "You're the most annoying, arrogant person I've ever met….and the most frightening sometimes. But you've given me more than I can you ever know….and I -"

But Blake stopped herself before she could finish, dragging her eyes back down to the floor.

But now it was Negan's turn, taking a step into her and placing her free hand upon her chin and lifting her gaze once again up to his face.

"Darlin', I made you into a queen," Negan uttered in a low growl of a voice. "And a queen's eyes should be anywhere but the goddamn floor, we clear?"

Blake felt a warmth and a calmness pass over her at Negan's tender words.

She knew how she felt about him deep down, but perhaps all this was for the best.

They could be here…side by side….but not together, if that was what it took.

It would be hard, but perhaps this was the way it had to be.

Blake gave a slow nod, staring into his eyes.
Wanting so desperately to say something else…

…but the moment never came, as suddenly, before either of them could make a move or utter another word, a figure suddenly burst through the door. Both Blake and Negan glanced around simultaneously, to see Dwight stood there looking ever so slightly harassed.

"Boss..." he stuttered out hurriedly, his eyes falling to the floor obediently. "I'm sorry for disturbin' you. It's just that we've got some trouble out at one of the outposts. Arat and Simon have taken a truck down there already, but I thought you should know…"

Negan looked severely put out for a brief moment, before giving a slow sighing nod.

"Alright then," he said tiredly waving his hand haphazardly. "Well round everyone up and load up the rest of the trucks for move out in ten."

Dwight nodded hurriedly, but lingered by the door waiting attentively for his dark-haired leader.

Blake almost instantly dropped her eyes down to the a space in between her and Negan, her hand dropping quickly from his arm.

Their conversation obviously over now. But maybe that was for the best.

Negan had not come here to kill her and Blake trusted him enough to know that he never would.

But at the loss of contact between them, Negan's attention turned back to her, as he chewed on his lip, a small frustrated frown line appearing between his dark brows.

And this time it was his turn for his hand to reach sleeve, giving her forearm a small squeeze, as he leaned in towards her, his mouth finding her ear.

"I'll see you later, Peaches," he murmured in a low warm growl that seemed to send shivers coursing through Blake's entire body, filling her with something she had not felt in days.

A happiness of sorts….and a feeling like everything might just turn out ok.

But in a moment, Negan pushed himself past her, dropping his grasp on her arm, and making his way over toward Dwight and the door, as Blake's lifted her eyes following him.

But it was only when Dwight had headed off out into the corridor and Negan, with one hand on the door, was almost out of the room, did Blake take in a deep breath and summon all her courage to say two little words.

"You promise?" she uttered suddenly.

And it was a short few seconds that Negan stopped in his tracks, bowing his head for a brief moment before glancing up at her again over his leather-clad shoulder.

And to her delight, the dark-haired Saviour's face broke into a wide grin, showing off his row of straight white teeth.

"Oh I fuckin' promise, Darlin'," he replied, giving her one last look, before heading off into the hallway and puling the door closed behind him.

And even standing there alone in the darkness of her room, Blake couldn't help but do the one thing she had not done since her birthday over a week ago now-
She smiled.
Bartering for tampons

Days often seemed to pass by slowly at the Sanctuary.

Sometimes it felt to Blake that time did not quite exist here, in this space outside the realms of a normal existence. Like this was a different universe, prone to making minutes feel like lifetimes. And hours feeling like an eternity.

Negan had only been gone just a little under a day. But the looming factory building seemed to feel a lot different without the dark-haired leader here.

Not that Blake missed him or anything…

…of course not.

It wasn't as though she had spent the entirety of this morning glancing over at the fenced gates that led into the Sanctuary or anything…

…not at all.

After all that had happened between them over this past week or so, it felt good to be back on fairly good terms with Negan.

The air felt clearer between them now…and perhaps Blake had been right with what she had said, perhaps the two of them were just never meant to work out…

Blake couldn't have that happy life. It just was never meant to be for her. She wouldn't have kids, she wouldn't have Mia…and now she had come to terms with the fact that maybe she wouldn't have Negan either…but that was ok.

That decision was probably best for both of them.

This way, Negan could be with his wives, and Blake, well, Blake could just be here…living…

…for in this world…that should have been a good enough reason for survival as anything else.

Although all this reasoning with herself, all this telling herself that this was the right thing to do, did not stop her heart aching for him, even now.

It was early afternoon, and after spending a long morning in the garden outside in the hot-morning sun, Blake had come inside and taken a long cooling shower, washing herself perfectly clean…feeling more like herself again that she had in days.

Blake had never in her life done any sort of gardening, sticking to office work all of her adult-life and living in a city with barely any green space.

She had always been much more of a lipstick and high-heels kind of girl, rather than an outdoorsy type.

So it had been a surprise, even to herself, that she had taken so well to working in this garden of hers.

One of the older guys, Frank, who helped out down there too, had even called her a natural, but Blake felt like she was still far from that at this time.
But there was something about this work that she certainly enjoyed….but often did not want to dwell upon.

For gardening was about growing something…urging something from the ground up and attempting to make it as perfect as she possibly could….which was really what Blake had always wanted to do…if she had been able to have a family to do so.

But with two miscarriages, it would never happen for her. And so, this, growing, plants and crops and vegetables…this was the closest she would get to creating something good in this world. Something that she could be proud of.

Blake was, at this current moment, stood in her room up on the second floor, as the sun shone in through her large window, in just a white fluffy towel, her slightly damp caramel-hair clinging to her shoulders.

Plucking a matching pair of clean white underwear from her drawer, she paced over to her bed before removing her towel and shucking the lace panties and bra over her smooth curves.

She already had a fresh set of denim shorts, a black vest and a flannel shirt laid out on the bed before her, and it didn't take her long at all to pull them on, before stepping eagerly into her tennis shoes.

These clothes were indeed a far cry from the outfits from her past life.

Back then, before the world had gone to shit, Blake would barely be seen without a pencil skirt and blouse, sitting at her desk, commuting to work, grabbing a double-shot-soy-caramel-latte on her way in.

But things had changed a lot since then. For how the hell was anyone supposed to run from a walker with a pair of patent high heels and an oversized purse hanging from the crook of their arm?

Blake gave a small smile to herself, running her fingers through her hair before tossing it neatly over one shoulder and making for the door.

She had just one errand to run this afternoon, before heading out to the garden again, and then coming in in time for supper.

Blake had indeed got into the swing of things with her points now…knowing that if she skipped breakfast and lunch, she would have enough for a full meal at dinner as well as being able to save for another few items from the marketplace, she so needed.

And that was indeed where she was headed now….to grab a few items she was running out of.

So, pulling the door to her room shut behind her, Blake wandered down the empty hallway, heading towards the staircase at the end of the long row of doors.

But the tall, caramel-blonde woman had barely made it a few steps, when a sudden whistle from behind her, caused her to jump slightly and glance around, giving an irritated frown.

But she stopped blinking almost immediately, as her eyes landed on the perpetrator, heading down the long dimly-lit corridor towards her, leather jacket shrugged over his broad shoulders and barbed-wire covered baseball bat swinging limply from his hand.

Negan.

And Blake, even now, couldn't help the twitch that appeared at her lips, as she turned to face him…
her heart thudding in her chest.

There he was, looking as tall and as looming as ever. Today in a grey t-shirt, with grey pants, a knife at his waist, as well as his dusty old jacket throw over the top. But he looked happier now than he had this past week, a smug-sort of grin now plastered over his face.

"You're back then," Blake commented in a snarky voice, before she could help herself, falling into that same old repertoire with him, as though it was the most natural thing in the world.

But her smile gave her away, as she narrowed her eyes, offering him a questioning look.

Negan was alone now, his eyes glancing her up and down as he strolled towards her, closing the gap between the pair of them, coming to stop just a foot or two away.

"Well you did make me promise to come see you when I was, Darlin'," Negan uttered in a low, humming voice, that caused an instant warmth to flood Blake's body.

God, what was wrong with her? She had to stop this.

This was Negan. And they were just friends now. Nothing more.

Blake's gaze met with his for a moment, before she dragged her eyes hurriedly away, smirking coolly and folding her arms over herself.

"Did I?" she muttered in an airy tone, a hint of teasing to her words. "I don't really remember…"

But this only caused to make Negan's grin widen, as he stared her way admiringly.

"Hmmm. Seems like you've got a pretty short fuckin' memory, Sweetheart," Negan remarked in a light tone, before silence fell over the pair of them one more.

Was this really them back playing this game of theirs, so soon?

Blake's breath hovered in her throat, her eyes flicking back to his, in the quiet of the corridor.

All seemed right between them now…things had been said and done that could not be altered, but perhaps they could move on with their lives….go back that banter they shared, but nothing more.

Blake knew, of course, how much she missed his company …so maybe they could allow themselves a brief conversation every now and again…

Yes. That couldn't be such a bad thing, could it?

Just a chat.

But a thick sort of tension hung in their air between the pair of them for a moment or two, Blake desperately trying to think of something to say, as she pursed her lips together, her eyes dropping to the floor between them again.

"I was just heading down to the marketplace to pick up a couple of things…if you wanted to walk with me…" she said in a quiet voice, before glancing up into Negan's chocolate eyes. "…seeing as it doesn't look like you have anything else to do…"

She bit her lip, watching, as Negan gave a smile, raising a dark eyebrow at her.

"Well, hold you fuckin horses there, Sweetheart," he said as a chuckle escaped his lips. "This you
tryin' to insinuate that I don't do anythin' around here?"

But Blake gave a sighing shrug, smirking, as she turned on her heel, bumping his hip with hers as
she did so.

"Well only if you count swaggering around, acting like you own the place, doing something," she
said breezily, begging to walk back in the direction she was originally headed. Knowing full well
that in a second or two Negan would follow.

And, as if on cue, from behind her she heard the dark-haired Saviour let out a carrying laugh, before
catching her up and falling into step with her.

"Well fuck me, Doll," Negan uttered. "Last time I checked I did actually own this fuckin' place. Or
has somethin' changed since yesterday?"

But Blake just stared up and over her shoulder at him, wrinkling her nose, smirking, but didn't say
another word as the pair began to head of down the hallway towards the set of doors at the far end
that led to the staircase.

Blake remembered back to oh-so many months ago, when she had been dragged out to this stairwell
by David…threatened…bruised…and then pushed down the metal steps themselves.

The memory still haunted her even today. So it was no surprise than Blake gave a tiny gulp as Negan
gave the doors ahead of them a small shove open with the end of Lucille and led the way out into the
gloomy hall.

Blake gripped the railing beside her tightly as she reached the very top andbegan to descend. And
she was grateful when Negan finally spoke again, his presence beside her, calming….like with him
here, someone like David would never be able to hurt her again.

And it was then that Blake truly realised how much she needed him in her life. In whatever form it
might take. Be it lover, friend, or just fearless leader.

He was everything to her and she hasn't been lying when she had told him that he had helped her in
more ways than she could even say.

Blake glanced his way now as the pair headed down the metal grated stairs.

"So," said Negan, running his tongue over his lips, his chocolate eyes gazing back at her "You been
keepin' yourself busy since I've been gone?"

His tone was polite, but behind it Blake could just about make out that teasing voice he reserved just
for her.

She smiled now, rolling her eyes a little.

"If by keeping busy, you mean working in the garden? Then yeah, I have been," she muttered
casually, as Negan nudged her with his leather clad arm gently.

"See I never really had you down for the gardening type, Peaches," he said giving a small, impressed
huff. "But what I've seen of it so far, that shit is lookin' good. Looks like we might have ourselves a
bountiful fuckin' harvest this year."

Blake smiled to herself now, sliding her hand easily down the railing to her right.
"Looks like we might," she said, chewing on her lip and shooting the dark-haired Saviour at her side a playful look. "Does that mean you'll be laying off Rick a little bit then?"

But Negan almost instantly gave a scoff, nodding his head.

"Well although that might be a fuckin' option, Doll-face," murmured Negan in a low voice, leaning into her side a little as he spoke in a low growl of a voice. "Rick-the-fuckin'-Prick needs to learn his place in this world…one that preferably doesn't involve givin' me that goddamn resentful side-eye of his, every fuckin' time I call in on him."

Blake rolled her eyes fully this time, and tutted, knowing full-well that Negan's chocolate eyes were on her, as they reached the bottom of the long staircase and headed down the lengthy hallway that led to the marketplace.

Things felt natural between the two of them now, but Blake couldn't help but remember back to the days before her birthday when Negan had held her hand…feeling her fingers entwined neatly with his. That moment in time feeling perfect to her. As if that was where she had truly belonged.

But now, Blake, glancing down at their hands between them, felt her cheeks turning pink. And before she could stop herself, she had hurriedly stuffed her hands into the back pockets of her jeans…glancing quickly down at the floor, as the pair of them strolled past a couple of Saviours lingering in the hallway.

The two men and one woman, at once, dropped to their knees, but Blake heard Negan give a huffy sigh and a wave of his hand.

"Yeah, yeah, as you fuckin' were," he muttered tiredly, as Blake dragged her green eyes up to him.

He looked exhausted now, like he hadn't slept properly in weeks. His beard seemingly flecked with more grey than when she had seen him yesterday.

He looked worn and strained. But why?

"So, you have a busy night last night?" Blake asked him conversationally, as the pair of them reached the heavy double doors that led into the large marketplace in the middle of the Sanctuary compound.

Negan placed his hand to the door ahead of her, but paused suddenly, peering down at Blake curiously, as if never expecting her to have come out with that question.

He gave a brief sigh.

"Lil' bit of trouble at one of the fuckin' outposts," he said nonchalantly. "But nothing me and Si couldn't fuckin' handle."

He gave a hard blink, the corners of his lips twitching up fiendishly.

"You concerned about my fuckin' welfare, Darlin'?"

But Blake gave a loud scoff, before shoving past him and pushing open the double doors.

"I was just asking," she commented lightly, raising both her eyebrows, but in a second Negan had caught up with her, appearing at her side once again, as the two of them entered the large and looming hall, filled with people bartering and standing in lines at tables filled with numerous types of items.
"Hmmm," purred Negan into her ear, not sounding very convinced, but that only caused to make Blake smile, before turning away from him and gazing around, finally spotting the stall she was searching for on the other side of the room.

A couple of Saviours here and there, stopped what they were doing, as Negan and Blake passed, all bowing their heads respectfully, but Negan just ignored them. His attention seemingly fully on Blake now, as he hovered by her shoulder.

Blake didn't need to turn her head to know he was there, of course, his presence making her entire body warm, smelling that hot musky scent of his as he lingered close by.

Oh god…

She shook herself hurriedly.

They were friends.

Just friends.

Maybe not even that.

"So," uttered Negan suddenly into her ear, breaking Blake from her thoughts. "Just what is on the shopping list for today, Peaches?"

But Blake pursed her lips.

"Well, I need some toothpaste, some more shampoo, and I'm saving some of my points for a couple of other things I'll eventually need," she said in a matter-of-fact voice.

Negan gave a brief huff, as he strolled on by beside her. "Doll-face, you know you don't need fuckin' points for that shit, don't ya? Hell, I'm fuckin sorry for putting you on them in the first fuckin' place. I acted like a fuckin' asshole ."

But Blake gave a frown, shaking her head and turning to face him, suddenly stopping in her tracks.

"Negan," she began earnestly, her green eyes searching his face. "Believe it or not I'm actually happy to be on them. Working for points….well, it gives me a purpose around here. You know I can't go by getting things for free for the rest of my life, all because you once had a 'soft spot' for me."

Blake wavered slightly at these words, a lump appearing in her throat, before carrying on, before Negan could make move to reply.

"It's fine, really it is," she said reassuringly, offering the dark-haired leader of the Saviours, a brief smile.

But a moment later she came to stand in step with him again, bumping her shoulder playfully with his, as she urged him along.

"But I have got to talk to you about some of this pricing, Negan," she said in a mock-scolding voice. "120 points for a box of tampons is insane!"

Negan's eyes met hers, parting his lips slightly as he glanced her up and down, pausing momentarily.

"So you're-"
But Blake tutted, rolling her eyes dramtically, as she grasped at the sleeve of his jacket pulling him over to a small table near to one of the far walls, laden with all sorts of bathroom products and cosmetics.

An older man sat on a stool behind the table, a large ledger propped open in front of him who gave them both a reverent solemn nod as they approached.

"No," said Blake, shaking her head. "I've got another week or so yet until…um, well, mine, but there are so many women here who won't be able to afford that amount of points for these every month!"

And with that Blake snatched up a box of tampons from the pile of items and held them up to Negan's face, before plonking them back down onto the table beside a pair of nail clippers and a bottle of mouthwash.

But Negan let out a long carrying sigh, turning his leather-clad shoulders into her, as he eyed her face, digging his tongue into his cheek.

"What can I say? It's just supply and fuckin' demand, Sweetheart," said the dark-haired man, giving a shrug.

But Blake wasn't happy with that.

She knew how much people struggled around here, and if she was still on speaking terms with Negan, she would try as hard as she possibly could to win him around to her way of thinking.

Blake turned her body into him now, standing side-on to the table, and taking a step closer to him, raising her chin defiantly.

"Don't give me that crap, Negan," she murmured, a frown line sliding its way between her brows, as she raised a finger, pointing at him. "You're making what's already a horrible time of the month, a whole lot worse for these women!"

But Negan frowned back at Blake now, looking irritable.

"Well what do you want me to do about it, Doll?" he said in an incredulous voice. "I ain't about to go around with a cold-fuckin' compress, handing out bars of fuckin' chocolate to these gals, now am I?"

But Blake tilted her head to the side, allowing her long, still slightly damp, caramel hair to drift over her shoulder.

"No but you could lower the amount needed to get them…" she said, gazing up at him now and wrinkling her nose. "…to, say…30 points?"

At this, Negan's eyebrows almost instantly shot up into his hairline, as he arched his back, surveying her as though she was crazy.

"Thirty fucking points?! Jeez, you have got to be fucking kidding me Doll-face. I mean I'll lower it to ninety for ya, but that is my fucking limit."

Blake's lips twitched slightly as she eyed him at this close proximity.

"Thirty," she repeated goadingly.

But the dark-haired Saviour let out an, almost immediate, growl of annoyance.
She was getting to him and she knew it. But this wasn't like their arguments of late. This was back to the same old teasing they had always shared.

That spark of theirs still alight somewhere in the darkness and tension between them.

"See, the last time I fuckin' checked," said Negan, lifting Lucille up and pointing it at Blake's chest before carefully lowering it once more. "I was the one who made the goddamn rules around here, not you."

She could tell that his tone was different to the one he used to scold his subordinates with. This was different. Filled with something that Blake could not quite put her finger on.

But she just smiled now.

"Thirty," she pushed again, smirking up at him and biting down hard upon her bottom lip.

Negan clicked his tongue.

"Fine, sixty, but that's my final offer," he said warningly.

But Blake just smiled, her green eyes never leaving his.

"Forty," she tried finally, knowing that she had him now.

And it wasn't a moment later Negan gave a hard huff, running his free hand down his face in annoyance.

"Fuck me! Al-fuckin'-right, forty fuckin' points then. Christ, you're fucking killing me here, Princess," Negan said, shaking his head and giving a wave of Lucille towards the stall holder who was standing at their side and had been watching their bartering unfold. "Forty fuckin' points for that shit."

But Negan lifted a finger, pointing it first at Blake, before turning to the stall-holder. "But we fuckin' ration them, no more than one box a month. Shit like that is hard enough to come by without practically handin' them out for fuckin' free."

Blake gave a wide smile, and with her hand that was still gripping Negan's sleeve tightly between her fingers, she gave his forearm a small squeeze. Her eyes meeting with his.

"Thanks," she said earnestly.

And Negan, the irritation falling immediately from his features, stared back at her warmly, blinking down at her with those chocolate eyes of his.

He looked softer now, looking as though he very much wanted to say something important to her right now, but it never came. And instead, all the dark-haired Saviour managed to murmur out, was a low, growling-

"You're welcome, Peaches."

Blake bit at her lip wanting to stay there close to him forever, but she knew she couldn't.

This wasn't how things worked between them anymore. She needed to remember that.

And so, grabbing a tube of toothpaste and a bottle of shampoo, Blake clutched them to her chest, before turning on her heel and heading off in the direction of the garden.
And it wasn't a moment later, after she had barely gone a pace or two, did she hear Negan's sudden voice calling after her-

"I'll see you later for dinner maybe, Darlin'?"

But Blake just glanced back at the tall-dark haired Saviour over her shoulder and smiled.

"Maybe," she murmured gently, as Negan gave a chuckle of appreciation at her insolence, biting on his lip…

….before Blake turned away once again, heading out of the hall…

….and smiling to herself as she went…. 
Pizza and a slow f*ck?

Dusk had just begun to settle over the Sanctuary lots, sending pink and gold streaks across the dimming sky above.

Blake, with her flannel shirt tied around her waist, removed her gloves, standing up straight and wiping the perspiration from her brow with the back of her hand.

Her and the other Saviours had made a lot of progress today, repotting some tomato plants that had far outgrown their pots. As well as putting up yet another makeshift greenhouse, which some of the generals' had brought here on the way back from their run to the outpost this afternoon. The glass house had been in need of a lot of work in its disassembled state, with a few panes missing here and there. But with a couple of quick patch-ups later, it looked pretty good, and definitely functional.

For not having much experience with this kind of thing, Blake was proud of herself for what she had managed to do so far. It was indeed a far cry from admin work in an office, but perhaps this was something she could really get behind. Making this place, well, better…

A warm evening breeze seemed to dance over her shoulders now, causing Blake to shudder slightly, tossing her gloves down beside an empty wicker basket, before turning on her heel, and making to head inside.

She was the last one out here, as always, alone in the eerie quietness of the small walled garden.

But as she turned towards the door that led inside, Blake stopped suddenly. The smallest of smiles dancing its way slowly over her lips.

She cocked a slender eyebrow skyward.

"Can I help you?" she muttered out, her eyes coming to rest on the tall and looming figure of Negan, stood there, illuminated by the light of the doorway.

He had his arms folded across his chest, accompanying the smug grin he had plastered over his long features, as he stood there, leaning causally up against the doorframe.

The dark-haired Saviour marvelled at her for a moment, giving an impressed sort of chuckle, as his chocolate eyes studied her face carefully.

How long had he been standing there for, Blake wasn't quite sure…

She gave a small bemused frown, pushing a strand of loose caramel-hair away from her dust-strewn cheeks, as he finally spoke.

"What can fuckin' say, Darlin', I'm just keepin' a close on eye on my goddamn empire out here," Negan said in a low drawling voice, as Blake, shifting a large ceramic pot aide with her foot, smiled down at the ground.

"Ah, I see," she commented lightly, giving a knowing nod. "So does all this meet your approval then?"

But Negan just gave a grin.

"It certainly fuckin' does, Sweetheart," he said in an affectionate tone, causing Blake's heart to pound
just a little bit faster out here in the quietness of this place.

Silence almost immediately fell between the pair of them for a brief moment, the light growing more and more strained out here as the seconds ticked by, as the first of the crickets began to chirp in the tall grass just beyond the garden walls.

"Well, if you ever wanted a change in vocation," said Blake in warm voice. "I do have some weeds that need tending to."

She cocked an eyebrow up in his direction once more, as Negan agave a laughing scoff.

"Hmmm, sounds fucking tempting, Sweetheart, but I think I’d prefer to stick to bashin’ people's brains in,” uttered the dark-haired Saviour in a enthused voice, arching his back as he spoke and raising the barbed-wire covered baseball bat in his gloved hand with zeal.

At this, Blake rolled her eyes, smirking slightly, and watching as Negan pushed himself from the doorframe, slowly strutting over toward her.

Blake gave a small gulp, but shook herself hurriedly.

What the hell was wrong with her tonight?

She had to stop this…

…didn't she?

Within just a moment, the dark-haired man had come to stop just a foot or two away from her now….his boots chinking along the dusty ground as he did so.

Blake blinked up at him, desperately searching for words.

God, why was this so hard They had managed all this with no problem before, so what was different now?

But Blake knew exactly what was different.

Things had changed between them now.

Things had been done, people had been lost, words had been spoken…and things were just, well…..they were just different now…that was all…

But that didn't mean that Blake cared any less.

Far from it actually….

Her heart aching, ever since the RV…

That night had been the most perfect and yet the most horrendous night of Blake's life, and something, she, for some reason, could not get out of her head.

Negan had done something so special for her…and yet in one foul swoop, the Wolves had taken from her the person Blake had cared about oh-so dearly. Her one chance of perfection that had been snatched from her grasp…Negan going with it too.

He had acted so callous towards her that night. So uncaring that Mia was gone.
Blake had thought the pair of them had meant more to him than that, but she had obviously been mistaken.

And Blake, although she could forgive….she could not forget.

She was hurting. Even now.

And so Blake did not want to slip into that same routine…lulled into a false sense of happiness…..for Negan to ask her yet again to become his wife…

His prize…

His trophy…

For Blake couldn't face that. Not now.

To her, these emotions were too strong for that.

So perhaps distancing her from him was the right thing to do.

This way they could talk, laugh….be friends perhaps.

But that was all…

For it would kill her to feel something for Negan, which he didn't feel back.

Blake parted her lips, feeling her throat go dry, as the seconds of sheer silence drifted by the pair of them.

But it was Negan who spoke first, gazing at her face as though trying to read her almost distant expression right now.

"You always work out here alone this late, Peaches?" Negan uttered in a soft, sort-of questioning tone.

But Blake gave a smiling shrug, biting gently at her lip.

"I just like the peace and quiet I guess," she murmured back, as Negan stared down at her with something in his eyes that almost resembled awe.

Blake had never seen him look at anyone the way he looked at her…but then again, Blake had never really seen him around his wives for very long. Maybe this was something he revealed when he was with them too…this side of him…

"Well, I just thought I'd come out here to see if you we're headin' in for dinner sometime soon…" said the dark-haired man, blinking slowly, his tongue reaching his back molars.

Blake's lips twitched upwards slightly as she remembered to their conversation back in the marketplace just earlier this afternoon. And at her recollection, the leader of the Saviours had mentioned seeing her for dinner then….but Blake had not of course taken him seriously.

She chewed on her lip, attempting to mask a small smirk.

"This mean you really don't have anything better to do that escort me to mealtimes, then?" she said in a goading tone, folding her arms over her chest, mimicking Negan's earlier stance.
But the dark-haired Saviour eyed her back, grinning and giving a hugely over-the-top sigh.

"Well, you got me," he teased back. "Maybe I am gonna have to get myself a job in this fuckin' set-up of yours after all, doll-face."

But Blake just laughed before she could stop herself.

"And what makes you think I'd even employ you anyway?" she bit back, raising both her eyebrows before staring away out across the lot. "You seem like a bit of a troublemaker to me. And maybe not the kinda' guy I want on my team."

But her eyes were drawn back to Negan, as he took a step into her suddenly, grinning widely and revealing his line of perfect white teeth.

"Oh, I've got a fuckin' feelin' you could handle me, Peaches," he growled into her ear, sending a shiver running down her spine.

Blake's green eyes met with his, as she pulled back slightly…their faces just a mere breath apart.

She felt herself instantly heat up…despite the temperature slowly dropping outside, now that the sun-ray's had long since disappeared.

But the moment didn't last for long, as the caramel-blond woman gave a smirk, and dragged her eyes away from his….remembering what she hadn't long told herself….

Just friends. That all they could allow themselves to be. For either of their sakes.

"So…to the dinner-hall then?" Blake said gently, peering up at Negan once more, a gulp sliding its way down her slender and exposed throat.

But Negan, had already eased himself back onto his heels and widened the gap between the pair of them once again.

And instantly, another large grin slipped over his long and tanned features, as he eyed her.

"Well, I mean that is a fuckin' option," he nodded playfully. "Although I was thinking that maybe you'd wanna do somethin' a lil' fuckin' different tonight, maybe…."

Blake gave a small bemused sort of frown, her eyes meeting with his.

"Like what?" she asked a little tentatively.

But Negan just leant in towards her again, bumping her shoulder with his broad, leather-clad one, playfully.

"I was thinking a change of scenery perhaps," he growled in a low voice. "If you're up for it, Darlin'?"

Blake stared Negan out for a long few seconds, blinking hard up at him….feeling her breath catch in her throat momentarily.

Just friends…

Blake slowly smiled and gave a tiny nod, as Negan stepped aside to allow her to walk with him charmingly.
"Al-right," he chimed. "Pizza and a slow fuck it is then."

And at once, Blake tutted loudly as she dug him hard in the ribs with her elbow.

"Uh, in your dreams, asshole," she purred in reply, as Negan glanced her way, nudging her back, as they began to walk.

"Told you, you could handle me, Peaches," he uttered back. "In any fuckin' way you like."

And Blake could only roll her eyes, smirking, as the two of them disappeared off inside, closing the door to the gardens with a clang behind them.
"So where exactly is this change of scenery then?" asked Blake as both she and Negan walked along the dimly-lit hallways of the Sanctuary, side-by-side.

"Well, Christ, Peaches," hummed Negan beside her, letting out a low chuckle, as he swung Lucille from his hand between the pair of them. "You've really got no fuckin' patience have you?"

Blake gave a scoff, her green eyes darting his way, as she gave a small smirk.

He could be so annoying sometimes.

"I'm just curious is all. Is that a crime now?" she swiped back.

But Negan just raised his dark eyebrows.

"No, but you know what curiosity did to the fuckin' cat, Darlin'," he said, leaning his tall form in towards Blake slightly, causing her to roll her eyes, tutting.

This back and forth between them reminded Blake of how it had once been, back when she had first arrived here…long before Mia…or her return to Alexandria…long before she and Negan had been, well….anything.

They turned a darkened corner, as Negan dragged a hand over his bearded chin, giving a heavy sigh.

At this, Blake eyed him carefully.

"Have you actually slept since you got back from the outpost?" she asked questioningly, her gaze roving across his long and tired-looking features.

She knew that Negan wasn't really one for getting much sleep anyway….but he looked far more worn-out and exhausted these days than he had before Blake's birthday….as though everything now was weighing heavy on him.

Perhaps just the same as it was weighing heavy on her….

Blake hadn't really considered that perhaps she wasn't the only one lying awake at night, tossing and turning, unable to sleep.

But Negan grimaced a little, shrugging his broad, leather-clad shoulders easily.

"I'll sleep when I'm fucking dead, Doll," he muttered with a small scoff, striding along on his long legs.

But Blake narrowed her eyes gently.

"At the rate you're going that'll probably be sooner than you think…" she murmured back, pursing her lips a little reprimandingly.

But Negan just licked at his lips, giving a grin and turning to face her. "That a threat?"

Blake rolled her eyes once again.

"You know what I mean," she tutted, nudging him affectionately with her hip.
As much as she pretended not to, Blake really did care for Negan. A lot.

Nothing would change that. Not now. Not after everything.

The pair of them turned another corner as Negan looked her way for a brief moment, before nodding over towards a rickety-looking metal stairwell at the end of the long corridor up ahead.

The two of them had already made it up to the sixth floor….a space full of disused dusty rooms, barely frequented by anyone. So Blake didn't quite understand what would be yet another level up from this.

"Up there?" Blake asked, glancing at Negan a little warily, as the pair approached the staircase.

But Negan just gave a nod, coming to stop at the bottom, his chocolate eyes peering up at the small wooden door, covered in peeling paint, at the very top.

Blake watched as the dark-haired man chewed on his lip, grinning.

What was he up to?

She narrowed her eyes in his direction yet again, before grasping the railing beside her and stepping forward.

If he was planning to kill her he'd have done it by now...so this wasn't some elaborate plan to send her to her death at least…

But what the hell else would be all the way up there?

But there was only one way she was going to find out.

And so, taking a steadying gulp of air, shoving past Negan as she did so, Blake climbed the set of metal steps one at a time…before reaching the door at the top.

She brushed down the back of her shorts, her eyes moving down the door before her….raising her other free hand to the rust-covered door handle.

But before she could make a move to open it, Blake suddenly jumped out of her skin, as Negan, suddenly let out a harsh sigh from behind her.

"Jeez, Darlin'! You really gonna take all fuckin' day with this? I've got shit gettin' cold up there," he said in a loud, teasing voice.

Blake twisted her head around, eyeing him a little bemusedly over her slender shoulder.

At this their eyes met for a second, and Blake felt her entire body warm, her breath catching inside her throat.

How the hell was she ever going to get over him at this rate when he still made her feel, well….like this…

She turned back around, letting out a small huff of her own, before slowly shoving open the door….…her eyes suddenly widening at what was on the other side…as she took a step forwards before she could stop herself, walking out onto a small flat rooftop.

It was dark up here, but a small kerosene lamp sat in between what looked like two camp chairs, on a
small wooden crate that had been tipped on its side to create a low makeshift table.

But the lamp wasn't the only thing on the crate... for next to it, was a plate piled high with homemade pizza as well as a six-pack of dented beer-cans.

Blake stared about, parting her lips in sheer disbelief. Just as their came a sudden voice, low and growling into her ear.

"A change of scenery, Doll," uttered Negan, nudging her shoulder with his, as he pushed gently past her, causing Blake to stare up at him, titling her head.

She couldn't help the butterflies that were currently swarming inside her stomach right at this moment, smelling the musky scent of leather and whiskey and oak on the air as he passed her...

...and it didn't take him a moment, to ease himself down into one of the low camp chairs with a heavy groan, setting Lucille down at his side.

He cocked a sudden eyebrow up at Blake, smirking arrogantly.

"You gonna join me, Sweetheart?" he quirked, his chocolate eyes twinkling in the reflection of the lamplight.

And Blake couldn't help but smile for a second, biting down upon her bottom lip, before walking slowly over towards the set of chairs.

Had Negan set this up for them?

Blake certainly didn't see anyone else around.

She lifted a hand to her face, self-consciously brushing dirt from her cheek, feeling ever so-slightly dirty and underdressed for this, still in her denim shorts and vest, with her flannel shirt tied around her waist.

But why?

This wasn't a date, right? What did she even have to feel silly about?

This was just two friends... eating pizza together... that was all.

Although she didn't know the last time anyone else had done anything like this for her, ever.

In fact, over the short couple of months that she had known him, Negan had done more things to make her feel special than David had ever done in their entire six year relationship.

The caramel blonde woman chanced a glance over to the dark haired man to her right who had already picked up a piece of pizza and taken a huge bite, before dropping the slice back down onto the plate beside him.

But he obviously felt her stare, as not even a second later his gaze flickered to hers, a grin sliding its way across his long features.

"I just thought, considering you spend so much of your fuckin' time so low to the fuckin' ground these days," he said in a growling voice. "You might wanna enjoy a different view tonight."

The dark-haired Saviour lifted his eyes skyward momentarily, causing Blake to do the same, her eyes drifting up to the now-darkened sky above their heads.
She let a gulp slide suddenly down her throat, seeing a deep indigo sky, dusted with shreds of pink and purple tinged clouds.

It truly was beautiful and Blake felt her heart pound…her mouth going dry.

She didn't deserve this….

She didn't deserve any of this…

Blake looked quickly back at Negan…but she was no longer smiling now, her eyes sad, as she parted her lips gently, making to speak…

But before she could say even a word, she stopped suddenly, to find Negan already looking back at her…the same subdued and pained expression now painted across his own features, talking suddenly before she even had the chance to.

"Listen…all that shit with the kid…." the dark-haired man suddenly began, blinking hard. "…with Mia…hell, all that is on me. And I can't tell you how truly fuckin' sorry I am, Peaches. From the bottom of my fuckin' heart."

His words were earnest, as his eyes dropped from her face momentarily, sucking in a deep breath before continuing.

"When I sent her away, I thought I was doin' the right fucking thing," he said, lifting his eyes skyward once more. "I mean, this goddamn hell-hole ain't no place for a kid like her. But I was wrong…and I regret it every fuckin' day."

He paused again, his eyes meeting with Blake's as a lone tear drifted its way down her cheek before she could stop it.

"I could see how much bein' without her was killing you, Darlin', and yet, back in those fuckin' woods…I pushed you the fuck away…and I am so fuckin' sorry for doin' that…." Negan finished, a deep frown littering his brow now, as he shook his head, looking angry at himself.

But Blake rubbed her lips together for brief second, her eyes never leaving Negan's face.

"I'm sorry too…." she murmured, her voice wavering slightly as she spoke. "I-I was hurting and said things that I didn't mean that night...I just…I-I loved her…and I thought that she was my only chance to have a something I could take care of….to have a baby girl…who I could love…."

She trailed off, as two more tears slid their way down her face.

"...when I had those miscarriages…all those years ago now…..I don't know, I thought maybe it was my fault….like I'd done something to deserve it….." she said in a quiet voice, shaking her head, hurting so much right now. "…so maybe Mia…it was my fault too….karma for killing David-"

But Negan's frown darkened upon his brow now as his dark eyes roved across her upset features.

"Peaches, do not for one fuckin' moment regret what you did. Shit, I saw those goddamn bruises on your arms the moment you strolled into my life. I could see that you were fuckin' hollow inside, ground down to shit by that son-of-bitch, day in and fuckin' day out. You never shoulda' been his…and my biggest regret, above anything fuckin' else……it's that I didn't find you sooner, Peaches."

Blake wiped at her face now, giving a small sob as she stared up into Negan's eyes...so earnest....so regretful.
And she agreed with every word that he said. She wished that her life had been different.

That Negan had found her years ago...back when the world went to shit...maybe even before that. Long before the bruises and marks appeared on her skin...long before the cruel words scarred her from the inside...

Blake chewed on her lip, willing the tears to stop falling now...as she spoke gently.

"You've made this place my home, you know that, right?" she uttered shaking her head.

And Negan suddenly dropped his eyes to his lap, nodding slowly.

But Blake faltered for a brief moment, her eyes falling, too, down to her hands that were clasped over her bare thighs, feeling yet another few tears swim from her eyes, landing on her knees.

He was her everything and she truly wished she could tell him how she felt. But all this. She couldn't have happiness again. Not like she had all those weeks ago with him and Mia...

A life like that was a pipe dream for someone like her.

Negan had people here he needed to protect...he had his wives...people he had to be there for...

And so Blake...as much as she was grateful to him...she knew that all this...it could never be more than just a hope...a day-dream of a life she had imagined herself having.

She was the woman with the abusive ex...the woman who had come here and become a queen...once upon a time at least......

But if Negan had wanted her to become anything more than just one of his wives...he would have told her so, a long, long time ago....

And so perhaps this was just the way it was meant to be.

"You've given me everything, Negan...and I'm so thankful to you for that....I always will be...." she gave a gulp now, painful and hard, before nodding and sucking in a deep breath, swiping away the tears that lingered on her cheeks hurriedly. "But now..."

Blake steadied herself slightly.

".....I am gonna eat this pizza, and look at the stars...and hopefully I can manage more than one of those beers without getting too tipsy tonight."

She gave a small encouraging smile, as Negan gazed up at her.

He was silent for a brief moment...a sad kind of tension still clinging to the air...before his face softened slightly once more, and he let out a small appreciative chuckle.

"Sounds good," he sighed out, shifting down further in his seat and clasping his hands over his torso, lifting his eyes skyward once again.

Blake's green gaze roved across his features now.

He did look tired...but certainly that weight seemed to have shifted off his shoulders since their
conversation just now.

This was hard for both of them…and Blake ached.

She couldn't help how much she wanted to feel him close to her right now. Feeling his body, tight against hers. To feel his lips pressing hot kisses to her burning skin. To hear him whisper things into her ear she been dying for him to say for oh-so long.

But she tore her eyes finally away, giving an consigned inward sigh, before taking a slice of pizza from the plate and taking a huge bite…..

….as her eyes drifted, once again, up to the starry sky above….
Blake held dented can of beer at arm's length as she pulled back the ring-pull, avoiding the spray of white beery-foam that spurted from the top.

"Ugh," she grimaced, wringing out her free hand, as Negan at her side, gave a chuckle, his bearded mouth half-full of pizza.

"I'm guessin' you ain't much of a beer drinker huh, Peaches?" asked Negan, running his tongue over his lips a little smugly, as he eyed her.

But Blake merely tossed a simpering look in his direction.

"Hmmm, I always preferred wine….or cocktails…." she muttered, taking a brief sip of the stale beer, grimacing a she did so. "But I'm guessing Simon isn't gonna knock me up a Sex on the Beach tonight, now is he?"

But she should have guessed the smug look that soon plastered its way across Negan's features, at her words.

"Well, I mean, I'm sure if you asked him nice enough Darlin', he'd give it fucking good try," bit back the dark-haired Saviour, causing Blake to scoff and roll her eyes.

She pursed her lips, looking out at the dark sky ahead, feeling Negan's gaze upon the side of her face, as he soon spoke again.

"Y'know I can just imagine you….in a nice dress…sixteen dollar cocktail in one hand and cell phone in the other…at a bar…" said the dark haired man, biting down onto his lip and staring at her.

"….and I'm guessin' you wouldn't even notice that every guy in that place had his eyes on you all night, either…"

But Blake gave a smile, blushing slightly and shaking her head, as her eyes fell to her lap.

"That never happened…" she murmured softly.

But Negan blinked slowly, lifting his own, already opened, can of beer and taking a long swig, before pulling it from his lips and gesturing her way, with the white can.

"Oh, Doll', I can almost fuckin' guarantee you it did," he uttered in reply, his voice low and growling. "An' I'm probably right in guessin' none of them had the balls to come and talk to you too either. City boys have all the talk, but they ain't got shit when it comes to flirting with women."

Blake smirked, staring up at Negan now, quirking an eyebrow up towards him bemusedly.

"So would you have had the balls to come up and flirt with me then?" she asked in a goading voce, cocking her blonde head to the side.

And Negan, for a moment, gave a slight amused frown, parting his lips.

"Oh, Sweetheart, I'd have been inside you up against the bathroom door at least four times before midnight," he growled devilishly, before turning away from her, and lifting the beer can to his lips once more.

But Blake narrowed her eyes, scoffing, despite a needy warmth suddenly flooding her entire body.
"Oh yeah, what makes you so certain I'd have fallen for your...charms...that quickly? Hmmm?" she asked, raising a slender eyebrow skyward.

But Negan let out a sharp hiss as he gulped down another sip of beer, before dropping the can to his lap.

"Because I know you too fuckin' well, Darlin'," he said in a breezy voice. "And back in the real world, you'd have fallen for me in a heartbeat."

Blake grinned widely, resting her elbow on the arm of the chair, and propping up her chin against her palm, amusedly.

"Oh really?" she snarked back a in sarcastic tone. "And I'd have been...what? Your bit on the side?"

She remembered that Negan had told her he was once married and that he had screwed around a fair few times.

But almost immediately at her words, a gulp drifted its way down Negan's tanned and bearded throat, and his smile fell from his face.

He looked almost remorseful now....his eyes flickering back and forth between his knees....as he dragged a hand over his chin.

"I guess we'll never fuckin' know..." he said, looking a little distant for a brief moment, before taking another long and drawn-out swig of beer.

Blake watched him as he drank. Wondering just what Negan had been like back then...back in the real world.

Had he been as cruel and as villainous as he had seemed when Blake had first met him? Or had he been softer back then...before the apocalypse had struck, and life as they had known it had become ashes before their very eyes?

A long moment of silence clung to the air, thick and cloud-like, like incense....making Blake's thoughts become distant and misted.

She desperately tried to think of something to say now...understanding completely that she had perhaps overstepped the mark somewhat with her last comment.

Negan had only spoken of his wife once before with utter hurt in his voice, and so, her words now, making him obviously think back to painful time in his life, were most likely as cruel as someone bringing up Blake's miscarriages to her.

"Sorry..." she uttered out, a frown line hovering between her brows.

Blake's words were quiet and humble, and caused Negan to give a blink, staring out ahead of them, licking at his lips with his tongue.

"You ain't got any fuckin' reason to be sorry, Doll-face," he stated, running a hand all the way down his tired features. "An' for the fuckin' record...a gal like you...you'd have been too fuckin' good to have just been my 'bit on the fuckin' side'."

Blake smiled softly, chewing on her lip with her teeth as she stared over at the dark-haired Saviour.

And for a moment, quiet fell over the pair of them again, before Blake glanced down at the last few
slices of pizza still sitting on the plate in-between them.

"So…" she murmured after a few long, drawn-out second had passed. "…how many points is pizza and beer gonna cost me?"

And with that, the caramel-blonde woman picked up a slice, taking a big bite, eyeing Negan as she did so.

It took him a moment or two to glance her way, but when he did, he gave a wide grin, showing off his line of perfect white teeth.

"Oh well this is on me tonight, Peaches," uttered the dark-haired man in a deep voice. "But date number two…well, that one can be on you."

Blake smirked, raising both eyebrows and tilting her head to the side.

"I'm not sure 'friends' go on dates…" she murmured tauntingly.

But Negan merely smiled back at her fondly, taking another sip of his beer.

"Hell, darlin'" he growled. "I think 'friends', can do whatever they fuckin' want in this screwed-up fuckin' world."

Blake nodded, taking a sip from her own can of beer. It tasted flat and she was certain she had definitely tasted better things in her life. But alcohol was still alcohol and so she drank it easily down.

A brief moment later she pulled the can from her lips, and stared upwards once more, looking at the stars now dusted across the sky above her head, before reaching her hand suddenly to the back of her neck as a twinge shot across her shoulder blades.

"Ouch," Blake winced, making a face, as she set the beer can down beside her and rubbed at her sore neck. "As beautiful as those stars are, I don't think I'm gonna be able to stare at them much longer."

Negan gazed over at her.

"Wait until you get to my age, Sweetheart," he scoffed. "Everything hurts then. Hell ,I can't even fuckin' stand up these days without pullin' somethin'."

Blake grinned at his words, shooting him a look.

That obviously did not stop him bashing people's brain's in however….

"Oh yeah I forgot how much of an old man you are…." she teased, as her hand slid over the nape of her neck, sliding her long caramel hair over one shoulder. "You'll be swapping Lucille for a walking cane soon enough."

She poked her tongue out between her teeth, waiting for a reaction, and she certainly got one, as Negan tutted, rolling his eyes back at her.

"Well this 'old man's still got enough fuckin' life left in him, Doll-face," he bit back.

And Blake smiled, a heat suddenly growing inside her once again.

"Oh, I'm well aware of that. I know just how well you can keep up with me, Negan," she uttered in a low, delicious voice, before turning away from the dark-haired man, but knowing full-well that his
eyes were very much on her right now.

God, she needed to stop this.

They were friends now…

Just friends…

Negan ran his tongue over his teeth hungrily, as Blake pursed her lips together, kneading her sore shoulder blades with her fingers.

But it wasn't a moment later that with another tut escaping Negan's mouth, he had reached down on his other side and picked up a large tartan blanket, before easing himself suddenly to his feet.

Had he really brought a blanket up here?

Blake, resting her free elbow to the arm of the chair and placing her fingers to her lips, eyed him with curiosity. Watching, as Negan unfolded the blanket, before placing it out onto the floor before them neatly.

Blake gave a bemused frown at this.

Had he planned this all along? A night on a blanket under the stars.

But Negan turned back to her now, smugly, and pointed a finger in her direction, arching his back slightly as he spoke.

"That gonna stop you complaining now, Peaches?" he uttered in a simpering voice, gazing at her incredulously.

But Blake just raised both eyebrows staring up at the dark-haired man before dropping her hand from her neck.

He was such a mystery to her sometimes despite how open with her he was.

And so, Blake slowly, before she had time to second-guess herself, had got easily to her feet, and stepping over towards the dark-haired man...came to stand just a foot or-so, away from him.

"Maybe," she replied in a voice than was just a little above a taunting whisper. "But are you sure you're gonna be able to get down there....Grandpa?"

In truth there was only about fifteen years between the two of them, but Blake would continue her teasing nonetheless.

Negan now gave a heavy, goading sigh, nodding his head and letting out an uneasy hiss.

"Well I mean, I ain't necessarily the expert you are, on getting down on my knees, Darlin'," he growled, taking a heavy booted step into Blake now, closing the entirely of the gap between them, pressing his leather-clad and t-shirt covered body, almost flush with hers without even touching her.

Blake felt her panties flood with a creamy wetness, and her heart began to pound at the close proximity between them...but she held off…

She would play this game they enjoyed. But that didn't mean anything had to happen between them…right?
They were just…friends. That was all.

Just friends.

It was Blake's turn to give a teasing sigh now, however, as she dragged her eyes hurriedly away from his and strolled past him, bumping his broad, leather-draped shoulder with hers as she did so.

And in a moment, she had dropped down onto the blanket, before lying lazily back horizontally against it, without another word.

She could feel the concrete rooftop, hard beneath her spine….but the view of the sky above them was much more easy to take in from down here.

It truly was beautiful.

And it wasn't even a second later that she heard Negan ease himself down beside her with a stiff groan, plonking the four cans of beer that were left, down onto his other side, before placing both his hands behind his head.

Blake smiled to herself now, before her eyes flickered across to the man beside her, his long body stretched out across the blanket, boots crossed, one over the other.

He looked perhaps more relaxed now than Blake had ever seen him, his chocolate eyes fixed on the sky above.

"Peaches, now I know how goddamn gorgeous I am, but I ain't the view you should be fuckin' concentrating on here," he murmured out without even looking at her, a smug grin inching its way over his lips.

Blake rolled her eyes, gazing back upwards once more.

"You're so annoying," she muttered out.

But Negan gave a sighing chuckle now, shifting himself slightly against the ground.

"Still not the worst thing you've fucking called me lately, Sweetheart," he chimed, causing Blake to let out a small appreciative laugh.

"True," she said gently, biting down onto her bottom lip, just as a cool breeze fluttered over the silent rooftop.

Blake gave a small involuntary shiver at this, bracing herself, before she suddenly untied the plaid shirt at her waist, before sitting up and tugging out from underneath her butt, as Negan quirked an dark eye in her direction.

"You know if you're cold, I am always up for a cuddle, Peaches," he uttered in a low, goading voice, causing Blake to glance at him over her shoulder, smirking.

"Hmm, sounds tempting, but I think I'll survive," she tutted, unfolding the crumpled shirt before tugging the red flannel material over her shoulders.

But Negan gave a short sigh.

"Suit yourself," he merely groaned, closing his eyes easily, as Blake gazed over at him, smiling bemusedly.
In the warm flickering light of the kerosene lamp, Negan's face looked more lined and tired now than it had ever done before.

Was this just a lack of sleep? Or had their argument and not speaking over this past couple of weeks got to him, just as it had gotten to her?

Blake wasn't sure right now, as she wavered momentarily…

Considering carefully what she was about to do.

But, letting out a smile and tugging her lips between her teeth, Blake slowly took a deep breath…

…before sighing…

….and before either she, nor Negan, could say another word, the caramel-blonde woman had shifted herself slightly closer to the dark-haired Saviour…before gently easing herself down onto the blanket once more.

But this time she was close enough to Negan for him to feel her presence beside him, causing him to let out a small chuckle and open a single chocolate eye, peering down at her.

"Oh so youdo want a fuckin' cuddle, Doll-face?" he commented, suddenly lowering his arm around her shoulders and tugging her gently into him.

Blake smiled to herself now, as she closed her eyes, feeling his warmth and that musky smell of his, wash over her completely…..before turning her body slightly into his, and resting her head on his shoulder.

"This isn't a cuddle," she murmured, curling her fingers around Negan's t-shirt-covered side gently. "This is just friends keeping warm."

Again she heard Negan let out a small approving laugh, stifling a short yawn as he did so.

"That what the kids are calling it these days, hmmm?" he uttered in a low voice, Blake hearing smallest of contented groans leaving his throat.

But she just nodded into his shoulder, feeling oh-so comfortable right now.

"Yhhhmmmm," she said slowly, as a warm breeze trickled over the pair of them laying there in the silence of the otherwise empty rooftop. "Get with the times…old man."

Negan once more let out a soft appreciative chuckle…a small growl slowly leaving his throat. But he didn't reply…

And it took Blake a second or two, surprised at not hearing a snarky reply from the dark-haired Saviour's mouth, to open her eyes and gaze up and over at the dark-haired man beside her…..

…..only to find that Negan was, in fact, sound asleep…

…..looking more peaceful and contented now that Blake had ever seen him.

And so, giving a small smile to herself, pressing her body further into him now….Blake closed her own eyes once more…

…..blocking out the faintest golden lamplight behind them….as well as the sheet of stars above their heads….
….before she too, drifted off into a warm, comfortable sleep...
Cold mornings and rooftops

Blake gave a small groan as her eyes flickered slowly open.

It was early morning. So early in fact, that the sun was not yet up, but a strained white cloud sat heavy and pale across the sky.

Blake's entire body right now felt stiff and achy and utterly freezing, and it took her a moment or two to realise just why she was outside, her entire body shivering with cold.

She lifted her head a little, every part of her body, including her neck feeling sore and bruised now, as she turned to look at the soft body she was curled up neatly into.

There he was, lying on his back, eyes closed, his arm still thrown lazily around her, still in that dusty old leather jacket of his…looking far less-exhausted now than he had done last night.

But Blake's gaze soon flickered across to her own body. This morning, she had one edge of the tartan blanket pulled around her, but even that wasn't helping her to feel any warmer, as she gritted her teeth together just as they began to chatter.

Had the pair of them really been so stupid as to sleep out here all night?

Idiots.

Maybe a few months ago when she was sleeping in barns and broken down cars each night on the road, she would have managed a night on a cold roof, but not now. She had certainly grown accustomed to sleeping in a nice comfy, warm bed these days, that was for sure!

But Blake's thoughts were suddenly disturbed, by Negan stirring suddenly at her side.

She looked groggily over, to see a deep frown shifting its way between the man's dark eyebrows, a groan emitting from his lips.

"Jeeesus fucking Chriiiist…" he murmured in what was barely a growl, lifting his hand up and running it down his bearded face.

He too, blinked his eyes open, as Blake pulled herself up into a sitting position and running her fingers through her mussed-up caramel blonde hair, staring out bleary-eyed at the stark-quietness all around.

The kerosene lamp by the looks of it had long-since gone out behind them, leaving only a white early-morning chill to the entire rooftop.

Negan sat up beside her, groaning again and pressing a hand to his side scowling down into his lap.

"Fuck me, are you fuckin' tellin' me I put my goddamn back out and didn't even get laid doin' it?" he huffed, sounding severely irritable right now.

Blake wanted to roll her eyes, but still feeling a little delirious, merely blinked several times, attempting to pull her flannel shirt tighter around herself.

She wasn't quite sure if it was really that cold out here, or perhaps just the fact that her body temperature had dropped while sleeping? But either way, Blake was freezing, her skin almost icy to the touch.
And so, it was not a second later than she had pushed herself to her feet, crossing her arms over her chest, giving a wincing shiver.

She needed to go inside. She was certainly awake now….but could definitely go for perhaps a nap somewhere warm and cosy….mmmm…that definitely sounded good right about now.

Negan, who looked half-asleep himself, stared up at her with squinted eyes, before clambering stiffly to his own feet.

But, feeling wholly disoriented and a little dazed because of the cold, Blake barely noticed him eye her groggily.

And it was only a second later, drawing her attention up to him almost instantly, Negan placed his hands to her arms, frowning hard down at her.

"Shit, Sweetheart," he commented suddenly. "You're fuckin' freezin'."

Blake parted her lips, staring up at Negan properly for the first time and nodding.

"Yeah…uh…we should probably go inside…" she murmured quietly, giving a small yawn, wanting nothing more than that right now.

But Blake peered up to see Negan suddenly shucking his arms out of his battered old leather jacket. What the hell was he doing now?

But Blake didn't have a chance to even question him on this, for less than a second later, she had her answer, as Negan in the blink of an eye, had dropped the garment down onto Blake's shoulders with a soft 'whump'.

The caramel-blonde woman instantly warmed at the contact….breathing in the musky scent that filled the heavy jacket.

It was like wood smoke and sex and whisky and just….well….Negan. And Blake wanted to almost bury herself in it….oh-so much…

But this was the tiredness and cold talking. It had to be.

But even so, she pulled Negan's jacket further around herself, slipping her arms inside the sleeves, greedily taking in every ounce of warmth the material had in it, before she looked up at Negan, tilting her head to the side softly.

The dark-haired man was stood there now in nothing but a t-shirt, pants and boots. But he didn't look that bothered, merely strolling causally over to where he had left Lucille the previous night, grasping her swiftly up and readjusting his grip on her a few times like a baton.

And it wasn't until he turned around, his chocolate eyes meeting with Blake's, did something catch in her throat…she finally remembering why she had come up here last night with him. Why she had fallen asleep wrapped up in him…wanting to be close to the leader of the Saviours.

He gave a sudden chuckle. His tired features curving upwards into a slick grin.

"Well, hot-diggity-dog, Doll-face," he remarked admiringly, shaking his head and biting down on his bottom lip. "That shit looks good on you."

Blake smirked slightly, taking a huge, sleepy intake of breath.
He took a step closer to her now…and another…and another, until he had closed the gap between them almost completely, staring down at her smiling.

Blake was too tired for his games now, but even so, she laughed as he tugged her suddenly forwards by the lapels of his jacket.

"I mean, not as good as it looks on me," he continued in a goading voice, raising a single dark eyebrow in her direction and revealing his line of perfect white teeth as he did so.

At this moment in time the pair of them were just a breath apart, and if Blake hadn't been so cold, she might have thought she was dreaming.

But suddenly, this time, giving a huge roll of her eyes, she eased herself from the Saviour's grasp, tutting lightly.

"Come on," she said, suddenly taking his hand in hers without really thinking. "I need a hot shower…"

She almost cursed herself at her own words and cations, but even so, she didn't relent, as her fingers entwined with Negan's, as she pulled him over towards the door leading back down onto the main building.

But true to his devilish nature, it was no surprise to her, that not even a split second later, with glee in his voice, Negan was at her side, looming over her and pressing his lips to her ear.

"That you fuckin' invitin' yourself to use my goddamn bathroom, Peaches?" he murmured in a sing-song voice, making Blake feel even warmer now…for reasons she did not want to think too much on, in the early hours of the morning.

They were friends, she reassured herself.

Just friends…

But she nudged him slightly with her hip as they walked.

"Mmmhhmm. I think I have a right to. Especially when you're to blame for bringing us up here in the first place…" she bit back playfully. "Or do I need points to use your hot water nowadays?"

With that, she glanced up at Negan, as he gave an appreciative whine of laughter, giving her hand a gentle squeeze.

"Oh, Sweetheart," he growled again, arching his back slightly as they reached the door. "You know you don't need points for any damn thing in this fuckin' place. Especially when it comes to getting' naked in my fuckin' shower."

Blake rolled her eyes, smirking, as she pulled open the door, glancing over her shoulder and shooting Negan a look, and making to give him a snappy retort.

But as she looked up at the dark-haired man, she stopped suddenly before she could say a word, watching his face contort right in front of her…his brows slowly forming into a deep, dark and dangerous frown.

Blake stared up in confusion and horror...for there was only one thing that caused this look to pass over the dark-haired Saviour's face, noticing that his eyes were no longer on her now….but on something directly behind her instead…..
And the caramel-blonde woman had just enough time to turn, seeing a tall figure suddenly leap through the door at the top of the steps .......and, not even a second later, he lunged towards the pair of them, brandishing a large serrated knife in his hand...

And Blake's eyes could only widen into two large orbs, as her eyes took in the face of a man she recognised very, very well.....

...a man she had helped escape the Sanctuary just two short days ago...

And it was in that split-second, that Blake knew just how much of a big mistake she had made, as the large knife swept violently across her vision...

A very big mistake indeed....
A foolish confrontation

Fuck.

There he was. Steve, looking dishevelled, with hollow, staring eyes, looking a far cry from the man she had seen a day or so ago, lurching towards the pair of them now, weapon raised aloft.

Almost immediately, before she could even take a breath, Blake's eyes widened in sheer fright as the blade swept across her vision. But she staggered backwards, as the hand holding hers, tugged her violently out of the knife's reach.

The blade sliced past her, narrowly missing her leather-clad sleeve by a mere fraction of an inch.

At this, Blake stumbled slightly, toppling backwards into Negan's strong and taut body behind her as he pulled her roughly around to stand behind him, blocking her body from Steve sight.

But Steve was unrelenting, taking three or four big strides over towards them, as both Negan and Blake backed away slightly, with Negan standing protectively in front of the caramel blonde woman now.

Shit.

Shit. Shit. Shit.

This was all Blake's fault. She had let him go.

After what he had threatened to do, she had still let him leave the Sanctuary, despite knowing what lengths he had been willing to go to.

And right now, he was truly proving just what these lengths were, as he stood before the pair of them, chest heaving, in a ripped shirt, muddy jeans and boots, with what looked like stolen bread knife in his hand.

Steve hair was wild, and his eyes even wilder, as he panted, jabbing the blade at them, looking deranged.

"Steve, w-what the hell are you doing?!" Blake asked quickly, tugging her hand from Negan's grasp and staring hard at the tall, brown haired-man in front of her.

But Steve was unrelenting now, advancing on the pair of them before they had a chance to barely say a word to him.

Positioned close in front of her, Blake heard Negan let out a low and angry growl under his breath.

She could tell he was seething now, his t-shirt clad shoulder's tensed and bearded chin lowered darkly. He was currently being set upon, in his own goddamn home, so Blake could definitely understand why.

"Oh, well, aren't you a clever fuckin' pretty-boy," remarked the dark-haired Saviour. "Sneakin' up here, past my men, to come find me."

Steve shook his head, jabbing the knife towards them again. But he ignored Negan's words, instead addressing the caramel-blonde woman alone.
"I-I have to do this, Blake!" he said thickly, his voice wavering slightly as he spoke, sounding almost distraught…at his wits end…

But Blake moved around Negan, coming to stand at the dark-haired Saviour's side, gazing desperately up at her fellow Alexandrian.

"No, you don't Steve," she cried in a voice of sheer frustration. "I let you go…you didn't have to come back here!"

Blake knew what was likely to happen now. All Negan needed to do was lift that familiar old baseball-bat in his hand and take a swing, and that would be the end of Steve. Completely and utterly.

"Yes I did," Steve replied with malice in his voice, his eyes moved now from Blake to Negan instead. "I'm doing this for everyone hurt by this asshole and his people. And I'm just disappointed that you didn't want to be a part of it. You could have helped me, Blake!"

But Blake frowned, shooting Steve an incredulous look.

"Why the fuck would I do that?" she barked back angrily, as Steve brandished the knife before him, his eyes flickering almost at once back to her. "You don't have a clue about any of this stuff, Steve. Rosita's obviously filled your head with all of this—"

But Steve stepped forwards suddenly, looking mighty threatening right now.

"Shut up. Just shut the fuck up," Steve yelled suddenly, cutting across Blake before she had finished her sentence. "This is my decision….and if you're not here to help me, Blake, you're just in my way."

And once again, Steve jabbed the knife at the pair of them, holding it just a foot or two away from them now.

But Negan, at this, merely gave a cocky scoff, readjusting his grip of Lucille, another growl escaping his throat.

"Believe me," he said in a low voice. "I've had a lot bigger and scarier fuckin' guys try to kill me. And guess what, shit-for-brains? None of them have fuckin' succeeded."

Steve pressed his lips together for a moment, staring up at Negan definitely.

"Well I will!" he shouted back, acting like a petulant child.

Blake bristled slightly, as Negan gave a short whining laugh, leaning back against his knees and arching his back, pointing at Steve with the end of his trusty barbed-wire covered baseball bat.

"So, what? You're here to kill me? That it?" he chuckled in an arrogant voice. "Coz' I think Lucille here, is gonna' have something' to say about that."

Blake saw a gulp suddenly slide its way down Steve's throat, as his eyes took in the ominous weapon before him.

But that moment only lasted less than a second or two, as Steve visibly steadied himself.

"I-I have to do this," he reiterated, his eyes looking slightly watery now, as he looked at Blake, almost justifying himself to her. "I have to."
But Blake took a step forwards, raising her hands aloft almost pleading with him now.

"No you don't," she uttered shaking her head, her green eyes filled with sadness. "You can just turn around and leave…right now."

But Negan interrupted her, glancing her way, his eyebrows disappearing up into his hairline.

"Uh…no he fuckin' can't," scoffed the dark-haired Saviour.

But Blake, with her heart pounding, was desperate for Steve to do as she said. Just turn around, leave this place….before Negan could do anything to stop him.

"I can't…" breathed Steve, tears pricking at his eyes now…looking like a confused puppy, with arms too big for his body, waving the knife in front of him, looking upset. "This is what I'm supposed to do…".

But Blake shook her head, frowning.

God, he really was an idiot.

But an idiot that was going to get himself killed here this morning.

Although before Blake could say another word, Negan spoke again, looking severely pissed-off right now, his jaw clenched tightly and his chocolate eyes dark.

"Then fuckin' do it," goaded the leader of the Saviour's in a loud voice, urging Steve on. "Come on, motherfucker."

But Steve, with tears trickling down his cheeks, looking severely lost right now, just shook his head, and wiping hurriedly at his face with his free hand.

"N-No…" he said with a hard sniff. "I'm not going to kill you. Y-you're going to kill yourself."

He sounded pretty certain about that, as both Blake and Negan gaped at the air, a little confused.

And it was just a long, drawn-out second later that Negan suddenly burst into peals of obnoxious laughter.

He looked indeed mightily bemused by Steve's words, as Blake shook her head incredulously, taking a short step towards the brown haired Alexandrian….not really believing that one person could be so stupid.

As Negan behind her now, ran his hand down his long, tanned and bearded face, letting out a heavy sigh of amusement.

"Wow, you really are a stupid piece of shit aren't you," Negan murmured, shaking his head. "I mean, I had to give you some credit for coming all the way up here with a goddamn knife and shoving it front of mine and Peaches' faces here….but jeez…I mean…..really?!"

But Steve gave another sniff now, his hand that was holding the knife trembling slightly as he took a stride towards the pair of them.

"You're going to kill yourself," Steve reiterated however, in a voice of utter sternness, now, almost finding his feet again.

But Negan grinned, eyeing the man before him with such merry distain, it was visible across every
inch of his bearded face.

"Huh," Negan commented sceptically, his eyes fixed and unblinking on Steve now. "That so?"

But Steve paused for a long moment, pursing his lips tightly together, looking very much as if he was about to burst into tears at any second.

But he didn't.

Instead, to Blake's utter horror, as quick as a flash, Steve suddenly pulled a gun from the back of his pants and pointed it at Blake.

"I-If you don't," he said sounding far more confident now than he had just a second ago. "Then I'll kill her."

Blake paled, all the colour draining almost immediately from her face, as she looked down the barrel of the gun in Steve's hand.

It was a small revolver, ancient and dusty-looking, but that didn't mean it couldn't put a bullet in her skull at any moment.

And at this close range, it was very unlikely that Steve would miss.

Negan was silent for a long moment now and Blake prayed he would stay that way, as her breathing became erratic in her throat.

Don't panic.

Please don't panic.

But Blake wasn't quite sure if she was talking to herself now, or perhaps one of the men before her.

Negan gave a large snarl, breaking Blake suddenly from her thoughts.

"Oh you should not have fuckin' done that, you stupid fuckin' prick," Negan said in a voice louder than Blake would have liked, and she winced as Steve shifted his weight from foot-to-foot at Negan's words, bristling. "Coz' I am definitely gonna' be painting this rooftop with your fuckin' brains in goddamn minute, you cock-suckin'-mothfuckin'-asshole."

Blake gulped.

Steve could pull the trigger at any second and that would be the end for Blake, so she prayed that Negan didn't try anything silly now.

Steve looked blankly at the dark-haired Saviour, before gesturing with his head over towards the roof edge.

"Jump…o-or I'll shoot her," uttered the brown haired man bluntly, as Blake parted her lips staring up in disbelief that Steve would do this to her.

After everything she had done for him.

She had saved his life for god's sake. And yet here he was…with a gun to her head, asking Negan to kill himself.

Why the hell would Negan even do that anyway? Yes they had history, but was the bond between
the pair of them that obvious, that people expected Negan to sacrifice himself for her? They weren’t married…. This wasn’t some great love story…. 

Negan was no knight in shining armour here. And actually, Blake didn't want him to be either!

She could handle her own shit and did not need someone throwing themselves under a bus for her.

God…

Negan had been right. Steve was spineless. And he was a piece of shit.

"You stupid fucking dick," Blake spat out before she could stop herself, glaring at the brown haired man, as both Steve AND Negan turned towards her.

And for a long moment Steve gaped, as though not expecting her to be addressing him like this, even after everything he had done today.

"You really are that fucking idiotic, aren't you?" she continued, shaking her head in true disbelief.

Again, Steve, blinked at her, a little taken aback by her words for a moment, a gulp sliding its way down his thick throat.

Negan, his chin lowered to his collar, stared up between Steve and Blake, his jaw clenched and his grip so tight around Lucille, his knuckles were white. But even so, he let Blake finish.

"I thought you were just a stupid fucking puppy-dog that just wanted to get into my pants…." Blake carried on, sneering at Steve, her eyes looking him up and down judgemen tally. "And fuck me! I really wasn't wrong was it?!"

She pulled a face now, sickened by Steve's idiocy.

"Because that's literally all you are aren't you? A stupid fucking puppy dog," Blake carried on. "You're pathetic, Steve. Fucking pathetic-"

But Steve, suddenly and without any warning, dropped the serrated knife in one of his hands with a clang and an angry roar, before suddenly storming over towards Blake, looking thoroughly enraged, and pressing the barrel of the gun to her temple.

"No, you're the pathetic one, Blake!" he yelled into her face, spittle flying everywhere at his words, as Blake screwed her eyes tightly shut, holding her breath. "Maybe your fiancé had a point. You deserve to have the shit beaten out of you on a daily basis you stupid fucking bitc-!"

Blake winced at both the words, and the contact of the barrel, hard against her forehead…waiting for the end…..

For this had to be it…..

But her eyes opened suddenly, as she heard a sudden choked noise come from the space right in front of her.

A gulp slowly slid its way down Blake's throat, watching now, as Steve stood there, mouthing at the air, his eyes widened in horror.

A gulp slowly slid its way down Blake's throat, watching now, as Steve stood there, mouthing at the air, his eyes widened in horror.

For there he was, with the large serrated knife sticking out of his back, with the tall, looming form of Negan stood directly behind him, looking furious right now.
And it want even a second later that Steve gave Blake one last lost-looking gaze, before falling suddenly forwards onto his face, the gun skidding out of his grasp as he did so.

Blake's lip trembled for a brief instant, before she hung head hurriedly forwards catching her breath, taking air in to her lungs, for what felt like the first time in minutes.

She could feel her while body trembling now…with adrenaline and hurt and sorrow and relief…

Barely even noticing Negan stride forwards and pick up the fallen revolver with a swipe, checking the rounds.

"Fuckin' empty," he murmured, tossing the gun down onto Steve's lifeless body with a small 'whump'.

Blake lifted her head, looking up, as Negan approached her slowly.

No bullets?

So Steve was never going to kill her after all?

It was only Negan he had really come here for. Just him.

And yet….Blake could not forget just what Steve had said to her….just a mere moment ago.

For in the stark light of day that big puppy-dog, had really, been no better than David.

Neither man having the balls to kill Negan….but both finding it perfectly ok to take their anger and frustrations out on her instead.

Well Blake wasn't standing for it anymore.

For in this world, she was a queen.

And a queen was not about to take jewels out of her crown for any man to be able to hold her up.

For at the end of the day, all she needed was a man with bigger hands…and the strength to put that crown onto her head and have it stay there.

A man who was now standing right in front of her, with his chocolate gaze fixed upon her face…taking in her pained and distant-looking features.

And it was in that moment, that Blake's eyes finally found his….

The dark-haired Saviour looked at her for a long moment, suddenly lifting his rough hand to her face, cupping her cheek gently.

"You alright, Peaches?" he asked earnestly.

And Blake blinked for a second, before nodding slowly up at him…knowing what she wanted now.

"Lets' go," she murmured out, pulling his hand suddenly down from her cheek and, instead, interlacing her fingers with his tightly. Just as they had been before.

Negan stared at her solemnly for a instant , before nodding himself and taking the lead, pulling Blake gently in the direction of the door that led down to the staircase.
But he paused momentarily, as the pair of them stepped past Steve's body. With the knife still grotesquely sticking out of his t-shirt-clad back.

Negan bent slightly, obviously making to pull the blade out and most likely impale it into the man's skull.

But Blake suddenly tugged at Negan's arm, stopping him in his tracks. And a fraction of a second later, the Saviour turned around, gazing at her questioningly.

"No.....I want him tied up on the fences....just like the others," Blake said in a cold voice.

For she could not forget Steve's last words.

Actually she didn't want to anymore...his words, as well as David's, still haunting her like a ghost.

For that person.....that woman, who 'deserved' to be beaten and bruised and hurt by men, was but a shadow now...gone.

For a queen was stood here now. Tall and strong and not willing to take anymore bullshit from anyone.

And so, with Negan nodding understandingly, his chocolate eyes on hers, Blake gave him a short tug, leading him from the rooftop...

....leaving Steve's deceased body there, slowly stirring in the pale, early light of morning....
Primal Urges

It dark and quiet as Negan strode through the windowless hallways of the Sanctuary, with Blake's fingers still entwined firmly with his.

Neither of them had to say a word about where they were going, but both of them knew. And it was just a mere moment later, that Negan gave the large wooden doors to his quarters, a firm shove open, the pair of them moving silently into his dim room.

The window was undraped, shedding a pale, white early morning light across one side of the large expansive space.

Both of them had forgotten their tiredness and cold now…Blake's warm hand suddenly drifting away from Negan's….

The dark-haired man just watched as she tucked a loose strand of caramel hair behind her ear, her green eyes finding his in the gloom.

"Is it ok if I take a shower?" she murmured in a soft voice, standing there as fucking beautiful as ever, still draped in his oversized leather jacket.

He hadn't lied when he had told her it had suited her. For there she was…. as fucking perfect as she always was…dressed in something that was his.

This was like her wearing his t-shirt all over again…

That oh-so-primal feeling of her being his, flooding his veins.

Negan turned his entire body into her, parting his lips gently, as his chocolate eyes looked her up and down.

"Darlin'," he pressed in a low, drawn-out voice, shaking his head and staring at her earnestly. "You know you don' even have to fuckin' ask…"

Blake blinked at him a few times, offering him a look that was warm and gracious, as she nodded shortly, before turning and padding softly away from him, and heading into his bathroom, on the far-side of the room.

Perhaps a couple of weeks ago, he'd have followed her….but Negan wasn't quite sure what it was she wanted anymore.

Was she still hurting as much as he was?

Or perhaps more…..seeing that guy die right in front of her like that, just a mere ten minutes ago….that had to have affected her in some way, right?

Negan couldn't help but remember what Blake had been like after her prick of a fi-an-cé had died….lost…exhausted…distant.

He had found her in his bathtub that night…staring into space….but even then she had felt the need to be near to him that night. Sleeping in Negan's bed…curled up…tossing and turning all through the early hours, and crying out while she slept…battling unknown ghosts Negan wasn't able to help with, in that dream world of hers.
The dark-haired Saviour paced across the room now, glancing up over towards the bathroom door, slightly ajar with a crack of stark yellow light shining into his living quarters, hearing the shower switch on.

He wouldn't question her actions today…and whether she wanted to soak her troubles away, talk about it, or ask him to give her some space….hell, Negan would allow her any of that.

Because despite how much they had yelled at each other….shared cruel and unkind words…it had all been a fucking act.

Negan still cared for her more than he could say.

He had not felt this way about anyone in a long, long fucking time.

Not since Lucille…and his heartbreak from being apart from Blake this past week or so was killing him, one drawn-out day at a time.

He wanted her to be ahppy….as pathetic as that fucking sounded.

From the moment he had seen her standing there shouting David down in that dining hall on the very first day she had arrived at the Sanctuary, she had entered Negan's life like a whirlwind, tearing down every barrier he had made sure was up since Lucille.

Negan had screwed around a lot in his life….pushed people away….pretended that they didn't matter to him….but with Blake…well, shit…..there really was no hiding it.

She was his utter obsession….like a drug….

In a world where people revered him so wholly, she had been the only one to give him as good as he gave. It was sharp and refreshing to him….like lemonade in a stark drought-filled desert…and Negan knew how he felt about her. How he had felt about her for a very long time now….

And nothing said over the past week or so would change that. Nothing.

And whether she was with him…..or any other fucker…..Negan would still give her the world if she asked for it….

The dark-haired Saviour, standing there in just his t-shirt now, still without his leather jacket, dropped Lucille gently down onto the small, low coffee table, nestled in between his two leather couches….placing the weapon down beside the cracked blue vase Blake had brought in, just a couple of short days ago…

…the vase she had brought in when she had submitted to Negan…when she had told him just how much she had misjudged Steve.

She had, that day, looked Negan dead in the eye, her chin raised defiantly….accepting her punishment in whatever form she expected Negan to give it to her.

Fuck.

She really was a fucking queen.

And Negan wanted that crown back on her head….whether he was going to be the one to return it to her head or not.

The dark-haired leader of the Saviour's gave a short sigh, lifting his hand now, and dragging it down
his long bearded features, before strolling slowly over to his large four poster bed, before settling down upon the edge of it. The mattress beneath creaking slightly with his weight…

...waiting…

…and to his surprise, it wasn't a moment or two before he heard the shower turn off….a humid, fragrant mist seeping out from the crack underneath the bathroom door.

Negan's eyes drifted down to the floor…blinking heavily….wondering what Blake was likely to be like when that door opened.

Would she be tearful? Angry with Negan for doing what he did?

The dark-haired Saviour wasn't sure…

His heart thudding quietly in his rib cage, as a sudden warm shaft of light poured suddenly out from the bathroom doorway, as the door creaked opened wide, and out stepped Blake.…

Fuck…

There she was…like a goddamn goddess…

…with her lengthy caramel hair hanging loose around her shoulders….as she padded out…dressed in nothing but a white fluffy towel, clutched around her middle….covering only what Negan had longed for this past week or so….what he had dreamed about in the middle of the night…lying awake….thinking of her mouth….her hands….every curve that body of hers.

For a moment, Negan half expected her to be lost in thought, to turn away from him distractedly… but instead, her green eyes were fixed intently on his right now, causing his breath to catch in his throat slightly, a gulp easing its way over his adam's apple.

But Blake didn't look away, as she tilted her head slightly, gazing over at him….as her blonde hair trickled across her slender shoulders in a breeze that wasn't even there…

Shit. That was it….

He was screwed.

Fucking screwed….

…for Negan knew that no matter what she wanted…or who she wanted….it was going to fucking break his heart to be apart from her again….even if they were just down the hallway from one another.…

But luckily for Negan….right at this minute, that wasn't an issue…as Blake wordlessly walked towards him….the grip on her towel tight, as she came to stop just a foot or two away from him now.

From here, Negan could make out every single, almost evaporated, droplet of water, that clung to her skin….looking like she was almost glowing in the early morning light, here in his room.…

He felt hot now…licking at his lips…a frown passing over his brow, as he looked up at her, almost questioningly.

This was about as silent as the pair of them ever got…Negan as cocky and as loud as he usually was, not wanting to be the first person to speak.
His heart quickened it's pace now as he stared at her….gorgeous…like a fucking painting Negan would indeed hang on his fucking wall, anyday.

She was perfection to him….in almost every way. And Negan couldn't help but let out a small internal sigh….taking her all in.

But his attention was suddenly caught by her hands moving up and over the top of her towel…

…and the dark-haired Saviour could do nothing but let out anther gulp, as, in the blink of an eye….Blake had undone the only fabric between her and utter nudity…

…and letting her towel drop to the floor with a small 'whump'.

Negan almost immediately felt his dick stiffen in his pants at the sight of her stood there, completely naked, in front of him now.

And, granted, Negan had seen a lot of women naked in his life, but none that made him feel the way she did…with smooth skin…glorious fucking pert tits, and those curved hips that gave him the most primal and animalistic of urges, making Negan just want to bury his cock deep inside her and impregnate her, right here, right now….

But Negan barely had time to take her all in…as, in just a split-second later, Blake, gently licking at her pink and swollen lips, had closed the gap between the pair of them, pressing both her hands to his shoulders…climbing onto his lap.

She placed a knee either side of his seated form, as her hands moved up into his dark hair, running her fingers through the strands of his dark locks…and Negan's rough hands instantly found those hips of hers, tugging her into him.

Fuck….he wanted her…

No, he needed her…his throbbing dick straining against his jeans, before they had even started anything.

Negan's eyes became dark and lustful….not moving his gaze from hers, as he bit down hard onto his lip...that frown still lingering across his tanned brow.

But Blake merely parted her own peachy lips...making a wet sound, as she pressed her mouth close to Negan's ear.

He could smell her now….like honey and vanilla….causing him to almost drool with longing…wanting, so much, to taste every inch of her…as her lips grazed his ear….sending a warm trickle of breath onto his neck.

But the words that came out of her mouth, despite the pair's compromising position, still shocked Negan slightly…which was indeed a surprise, considering how unstable and unpredictable the dark-haired Saviour himself could be.

She let out another breathy sigh.

"...I want you inside me..." she whispered in a delicious tone, drawing back, her fingers still tangled in his hair, as she stared deeply into his eyes. "Daddy."

And Negan couldn't help the groan that escaped his lips, needy and guttural, as his grip tightened against her waist.
But the moments pause didn't last long, as the pair of them, breathing hard now, crashed their lips suddenly into the other's….kissing at one another, oh-so desperately.

Their mouths met again and again….tongues lapping against the other's, parting and meeting again and again, making such deliciously wet noises.

Negan bucked his hips up into her before he could help himself…wanting, so much, to give her what she had asked….wanting his hard and straining cock deep inside that dripping wet pussy of hers…

Fuck.

Negan couldn't breathe right now…so intoxicated by her…as her hands moved down with urgency, fumbling at his belt buckle, before moving onto his zipper.

The dark-haired Saviour, letting his fingers leave Blake's skin for a mere second, reached up, tugging his t-shirt over his head, before tossing it haphazardly to the floor beside them, before readjusting his grip on her waist., holding the caramel-blonde woman in place as she sat up slightly, shucking his pants down his thighs, and allowing his stiff cock to spring from its confines….as she settled her back down onto his lap.

Blake bit at her bottom lip momentarily, staring down at Negan's engorged shaft hungrily, before suddenly glancing up into the dark-haired Saviour's eyes yet again…her hands instantly repositioning themselves in his hair once more, as she pressed herself close to him, sliding herself further up his lap.

Her eyes were filled with a desperation of sorts….a look of utter desire hovering over her gorgeous features.

He could feel her now…soaking wet…as she slid her hot slit over Negan's dick, his tip finding her entrance, as a hard and shaky gulp slid its way down his throat.

This was the first time in a long, long time that the leader of the Saviour's found himself rendered utterly speechless…the sensation of her sopping pussy hovering so dangerously over his throbbing head….her creamy wetness mixing with the pre-cum he could feel running down from his own engorged tip.

"…nnngggfffffff…Daaarlin'…" Negan groaned out, parting his lips and staring down now at the space between them, awestruck….his chocolate eyes trickling over her heaving breasts….her stomach…and down to the space in between her legs…where his cock now sat….

He knew full well, that all it would take would be one sharp thrust upwards. and his dick would be there, encased in her hot walls where he needed it to be now…

…but the waiting, was almost as good as he knew the act itself would be.

Negan stared at Blake now, their eyes finding each other's once more…communicating silently with one another, things they would never dare utter outside this situation.

She was everything he could ever have wished for in this lonely fucking world….and despite the thousands of people still left in existence….he had somehow managed to find the person he needed in his life. The one person who could make him feel like no other person ever had….not since Lucille…

…for he longed for Blake now….with every fibre in his body….barely able to breathe….his chest tight….and his grip on her ever tighter…waiting, just waiting for the moment to come where she
would give him everything he had ever wanted….everything he had missed in the weeks he had been apart from her…..

And Negan could only let out a harsh 'fuck' now, as Blake lowered herself down onto Negan's throbbing dick, excruciatingly slowly….all his breath, and hers, leaving their bodies, at the pleasurable sensation of him filling her up entirely….

Negan's eyes rolled back in his head as Blake's did the same…her fingers grazing over his shoulders…tensing around his sore muscles…

…but a night of sleeping on the cold, hard ground outside, was now forgotten…as Negan felt himself straining to keep control, knowing that if he didn't stay focused, he would cum before they had even begun….

…but perhaps they had started minutes ago, with that first whisper into his ear…

…for that had been all it took to make him come half undone…

She alone had the ability to do that…and it didn't help that Negan had missed her so much.

Blake let the softest moan escape her pouting lips now, as she lifted herself up slightly, before sliding down onto his cock once again ever so slowly…

Negan, once again, grunted out, his eyes blackening with a carnal lust…hot and humid breath's filling the room as they stared into each-other's eyes….their pace gradually quickening, as Blake began to ride his dick….

The Saviour let a gulp trail its way down his tanned throat, as he raised his neck, his lips capturing hers….feeling her moan softly into his mouth….his tongue swirling against hers, hot and wet…

She tasted good…..just like the peaches he called her after…sweet and juicy…as his grip tightened against her waist, feeling her bouncing up and down on top of his lap.

Right now, it was as if it was only the two of them, alone in this world…like no one else mattered….as Negan, breathing hard, pulled his lips from Blake's, watching as her breasts hovered close to his collarbone, rounded and pert, making him feel even stiffer, as Blake slid her pussy down and over his engorged shaft once more.

If this had been any other situation, the cocky Saviour had likely made a joke about how he had been right about the pair of them having 'pizza and a slow fuck', as he had earlier teased. But now the dark-haired man was so wrapped up in the moment….entranced by her…he had no time for arrogant teasing…that would come later…

Shit.

Shit. Shit. Shit.

Blake bounced on his dick, faster and faster, her wetness glazing his cock thickly.

The sensation was driving him wild now, and Negan, barely able to contain himself any longer, could take it no more.

And so, gripping Blake tightly by the thighs, as her hands reached his stubbly face, he flipped both of them over roughly. Blake's spine hitting the mattress behind her, hard, all while Negan still held his twitching cock inside her dripping folds.
The dark-haired leader hovered over her now, his hands skimming down the smooth skin of her thighs and then back up them again, as his bearded lips attacked hers…this angle better for them now…allowing Negan to take control…..doing what Blake oh-so wanted him to do.

He thrust into her hard, filling her up to the hilt, as her fingernails grazed over his shoulder-blades, drawing, what was likely, red scratch marks over his tanned skin. But Negan was far from caring, as he picked up his pace, feeling his own orgasm building….sweat beading at his brow.

It was the way she looked now, lying beneath him…all powerless…all his….as he pressed her thighs apart, allowing himself to plunge his dick deeper and deeper into her hot slit.

They kissed again, before Blake parted her lips, crying out into his mouth, as she panted…making the most fucking wonderful noises, as his dick pounded into her core…hitting what Negan knew was her g-spot, again and again and again…. 

Negan was close himself, trying as hard as he could to hold off for as long as possible…for her….

He had always been pretty selfish in bed. But with Blake, his thoughts were no longer on himself….and the knowledge that this was what she wanted….that he was what she wanted…was enough for that selfishness to dissipate in her presence….for now at least….

The sound of skin slapping against skin filled the room now, alongside Blake's ragged breath and cries…and Negan could only watch as her eyes began to roll back in her head….her spine arching against the bedsheets beneath her…coming hurriedly undone.

She was there….he could feel her…moaning out in ecstasy….

And the pleasurable sensation of her cumming, her throbbing walls clenching around his swollen and dripping cock, caught Negan off guard.

And before the bearded Saviour could stop himself, he had frowned darkly, given a harsh grunt, unable to control himself anymore, and so, gripping Blake's body hard….

…. his twitching dick had sent streams of thick, hot cum, shooting up into her hot entrance.

Negan’s breaths were ragged in his throat now, as he pressed his face into the space between Blake's neck and shoulder, as her hands drifted back up into his hair.

He could feel her trembling, trying to catch her breath, as hard gulp after gulp, travelled audibly down each of their throats.

Fuck.

And that was the moment that Negan…. 

after months of this….

….of her….

…..that was when he finally realised he was done for. For no one else in this screwed-up world would ever be able to make him feel like that. Like she just had.

This wasn't about orgasms or pleasure now. This was about intimacy, and something else that Negan wasn't quite yet ready to admit to the caramel-blonde woman lying beneath him now.

Letting out another loud and tired groan, Negan rolled himself gently from her, his coated dick
sliding slickly from her pussy.

"Holy fuckin' shit," he managed to murrmur out in a low voice, brining both hands up to his face and rubbing them down his bearded features exhaustedly.

But at that same second, Negan heard Blake let out a small light-hearted chuckle, as her weight shift suddenly from the mattress.

He looked up now, only to see her strutting naked back across the room, heading back into the bathroom.

Negan propped himself up ono his elbows…watching her disappear, and waiting for her return, sighing a little.

Well that certainly fucking made up for the last couple of weeks of arguments and turmoil, that was for sure.

And Negan grinned slightly, arching an eyebrow in Blake's direction as she padded back into the room, less than a minute later, her bra, panties, sneakers and denim shorts shucked back onto her tight body.

"You goin' somewhere, Peaches?" he asked, gazing over at her a little bemusedly, as she jumped slightly where she stood, doing up the button on her pants.

But she glanced up at him now, her swollen pink lips twitching up into a small smile in the morning light, shining in from the large paned window across the room.

"I said I'd be down in the gardens from about 8ish this morning," she uttered easily, giving a gentle shrug. "I want to make sure the last of the pea-shoots are in before lunchtime. It's supposed to rain tomorrow."

Negan shot her an amused sort-of frown now, eyeing her carefully.

"So you just fuck me and leave, that it, Princess?" Negan swiped back smartly, grinning widely and flashing Blake his wide set of white teeth. "I know your fuckin' type, don't you fuckin' worry..."

His tone was sarcastic and playful now, but again Blake gave another easy shrug and she tugged her t-shirt over her head, scooping her long, slightly-ruffled, caramel hair over one shoulder.

She was quiet for a short moment smirking and fiddling with her long locks, before she casually paced over, past Negan, making towards the door.

Fuck, she really was serious about leaving wasn't she?

Blake chanced a small glanced back over towards him now, stopping short of the side-table near to the door, gazing up at the dark-haired Saviour beneath her long eyelashes.

"It was just sex, Negan. It didn't have to mean anything," she murmured lightly, wrinkling her nose and shooting him a warm smile. "You and me…..were just….friends."

Negan's eyes travelled across her face for a long moment trying to read her, as his own lips curved up into a wide, devilish grin.

Hot-diggity-dog, she had some fucking balls didn't she?

"Huh…just friends who like to screw each other's brains out?" he asked, thoroughly enjoying this
now. And judging by the look on Blake's face, she was too.

But she, yet again, for the third time, gave another easy shrug and reached for the door handle, tugging open the large wooden doors both she and him had stepped through perhaps not even twenty-five minutes ago, before stopping in her tracks and looking Negan's way once again.

"Mmmmmmm," she said licking at her lips and offering him deliciously poignant look. "Yep."

And with that, without any more than a single final glance his way, she was gone, pulling the door shut behind her with a snap…

….leaving Negan staring after her…

….biting on his lip and shaking his head, grinning after her in awe…

…looking, at this very moment…

…..totally and utterly besotted.
Not the classiest place to have s*x

It had turned out to be a gloomy grey day. And even by the late afternoon, the sun had never quite managed to break through the thick clouds that hung overhead like a blanket. A bleak humidity clung to the air, letting everyone know that rain was certainly on the way.

It was weather like this that reminded Blake of times out there in the road, hiding in closed-in wooded areas, huddled together for warmth, never quite feeling dry for long weeks on end.

It had been a tough existence, surviving like that, but Blake had done it. She had made it through the worst of those times.

And yet almost a year later, here she was, with a roof over her head, at the Sanctuary.

In a place she now called home.

For it did feel like far more of a home than Alexandria ever had been for her.

Sure, this looming factory compound could come off a little bleak and sterile at times….but it was safe, and dry, and here, Blake had a purpose. Far more than as she had done when she had lived in her house back in the suburbs with David and Rick and Tara and the others.

There she had just been David's fiancé.

But here she was much more than that.

Negan had slipped a crown onto her head here before she even realised it...building her up, instead of knocking her down as David always had.

She felt happy now. Ok, she would never have a perfect life….she wouldn't have a family or have people around her all singing Christmas carols around a piano…. But she could still enjoy what she had here. For as long as she had it.

Blake licked her lips smiling to herself now, as she lifted her water bottle to her lips.

This morning had been a whirlwind of events…but one she did not regret.

Steve's demise was as much on his own head, as on hers or Negan's. After all, it had been his choice to come back here. She had let him go, and yet the idiot had been stupid enough to have come back. To try to kill Negan and her…after all she had done for him.

So she did not have any regrets about him dying, or about the events that had taken place directly after.

She had needed Negan, oh-so much, and Blake was done with pussy-footing around and not getting what she wanted in this crappy world.

And feeling the dark-haired Saviours lips on hers….his calloused hands sliding down her bare skin….that had been exactly what she had desired, for so so long.

She couldn't deny that sex between them was incredibly good.

There was a spark there.
A bond she had not felt with any guy she had even been with. And the pair of them knew exactly what to do to get each other there, easing over the edge oh-so well.

It had been hot, intimate and very much needed.

And as long as she realised that this should be just about sex, it would all be ok.

Her and Negan….well, Blake knew how she felt about him.

But she would keep a level head and keep this as just a casual thing.

This way, they both would get what they wanted…and the issue of Negan's wives, or Blake becoming one of them, didn't ever need to be brought up.

Now Blake gulped down the water gratefully before pulling the water bottle from her lips once again, leaning across the metal barrier before her and wiping the back of her hand across her mouth.

Blake having worked for the last few hours in the gardens down in the lot just around the corner, and was mid-way through taking a break, just heading inside to use the bathroom for a moment, when she had stopped in her tracks, up here on the balcony the overlooked the Sanctuary fences surrounding he large compound.

It was up here that Negan had brought Blake out onto the first day she had been here, the second day too, where he had given her lemonade and no-end of snarky remarks.

But today it was something else that had drawn the caramel-blonde woman's eye, just as her hand had reached the door, causing her to move over and lean up against the railing, watching, as Dwight, Danny and a grey sweater-wearing, lower ranked Saviour, had hauled the snarling and snapping, newly turned figure of Steve, over to the looming fences, where many other walkers were chained and welded.

It was hard to believe, looking at his white eyes and greying sagging skin, that just a few hours ago, the man she had known from Alexandria, had been alive and pointing a gun at her skull.

But after what he had said…his cruel chosen words about David…about her……Blake had nothing now, but contempt for the dead man.

And so, lifting her chin, she merely blinked, showing no emotion for the ghost of the man that may have been her friend.

Yes, perhaps she was ruthless. And Blake could just imagine what people like Rick or Michonne or even her friend Tara would say if they found out…

But she was long past caring. For they had all shown their true colours back there…shown that they cared very little about what she had gone through….thinking only of themselves, and never considering that there were other people going through shit in this world, not just themselves.

Steve had been tall and broad chested, but even so, it didn't take the three Saviour's long to secure him to a metal post about ten feet from the chain link fence, where he bared his teeth and tried to grab for them hauntingly.

But Blake barely even bristled at the sight of him there…a living-dead person….

She wanted him there now as a reminder of the person she once was…and the person she needed to be from now on. For Blake had proved to herself that she was stronger than David….or Steve… or
the Wolves…or indeed, any person who had tried to take her on.

She was a queen…and, she had the might of, not only Negan behind her, but all the Saviours too.

She worked hard here, in the gardens, providing for these people as much as the generals did, going out on runs, or pick-ups. She was liked by the folks around her….the people she saw every day…

They had her back…as much as they had Negan's.

But while they revered him because of fear and rules…they revered Blake because she was fair and kind…and because she was probably the only person around here these days, to give the dark-haired leader a piece of her mind and encourage him to come around to her way of thinking.

She was a good influence on him. That could certainly be said. And as far as Blake was concerned, Negan quite enjoyed having her around.

Well, if this morning was anything to go by anyway.

Blake licked at her lips now, thinking of the time spent there in Negan's bedroom this morning, as she turned on her heel and headed inside.

She had been so wrapped up in him, barely able to breathe….with such powerful emotions swirling around inside her as they had kissed, fucked….stared into the other's eyes.

That had not been like the fun and dirty sex they enjoyed before… this time it had been different….a need encompassing them both…..bringing them both to the edge they had needed to get to, for so so long.

Blake walked now, down the lengthy hallway, passing couple of mousy-haired female Saviours about Blake's own age, as she did so.

They both nodded at her politely, offering her gentle smiles, before walking quietly off.

Everyone knew Negan here, of course they did…but now it was getting to the point where most people knew Blake too. Even people she had never even met before.

The caramel-blonde woman turned the corner, shoving open the door to a set of washrooms at the very end of the corridor.

A yellow light flickered on above her head as she entered the stark room, strolling into a dingy cubicle. And in a minute she was out of there again, washing her hands in the sink, as her green eyes flickered up into the grimy mirror above the basin.

She looked good today, dressed in a tight black t-shirt tucked into tight black jeans, and her long caramel-hair tied up into a neat ponytail.

Working outside these past couple of weeks, Blake had acquired a nice tan over her temples and cheekbones which made her eyes look far brighter than they once were.

She remembered back to just how sallow and washed-out her features had been when she had first arrived here at the Sanctuary with David.

It had been like her fiancé had drained all the colour from her face himself….sucking the very life from her veins.

Blake seemed like a wholly different person now. Confident and, dare she think it, happy too."
And that really did show…in everything, from her complexion, to the way she held herself…walking down the Sanctuary hallways with purpose.

But a bemused frown suddenly slipped its way between her brows as she thought on this.

God….was she turning into Negan?

She stared at her reflection.

Would she soon be swaggering around the place, carrying a stupid baseball bat in her hand and calling everyone 'Doll'?

She shook her head, smirking now, as she switched off the faucet, drying her hands on the sides of her pants, before tugging open the door once again and heading back out into the hallway.

It was quiet around here now, that late afternoon time where most people were either heading down to the canteen for dinner, or still hard at work somewhere.

So it was really no surprise that, barely taking a single step around the sharp corner, Blake jumped almost out of her skin, as she bumped straight into the tall, and cocky form of-

"Negan…" said Blake a little irritably, as she wobbled slightly, trying to keep a hold of her balance. "God, you want to watch where you're going?!"

There he was, as arrogant-looking as ever, today being no exception in THAT department, standing there, close to her, in a grey t-shirt (with his leather jacket slung over the top), grey pants, and Lucille in his hand, with the biggest smug-grin plastered across his features.

But he gazed down at her now, his dark eyebrows reaching his hairline.

"Me watch where I'm goin', Sweetheart?" he scoffed, lifting the barbed wire covered-bat in his hand and nudging her delicately in the chest with it. "You're the one that came stridin' around that corner on a fuckin' mission. What is it? You got some pumpkins that urgently need pickin', Doll-face?"

Blake scowled at him, taking a step back away from Negan, and Lucille, and folded her arms across herself defensively, raising her own eyebrows.

"Fuck you," she bit back playfully, eyeing him accusingly. "You'll be eating your words when you're getting your five fruits and vegetables a day because of me!"

But Negan agave his own scoff in retaliation. Leaning back on his heels and gesturing to her with Lucille once again.

"Pfft, I'll have you fuckin' know I was doin' ok scavenging shit from other people before you came along, and wanted to make the place into a goddamn free-for-all farmyard," he uttered, staring down at her and digging at his back molars with his tongue. "I mean, hell, give it a couple of months and you'll have my people wearing straw fuckin' hats and singin' cum-ba-ya 'round a goddamn campfire."

Blake rolled her eyes, tutting and shooting the dark-haired man a scathing look.

God, he really did wind her up sometimes, but even despite this, this was kinda getting her blood pumping in her veins, making Blake feel warm again…

Fuck, she wanted him. Her eyes meeting with his own arrogant chocolate orbs, as he surveyed her in
But the caramel-blonde woman tugged on her bottom lip with her teeth, before giving a drawn-out sigh, shifting her weight over onto one hip.

"Was there something you wanted?" she said tutting and frowning up at him, but somehow unable to help the smirk that drifted across her mouth.

But Negan, keeping his eyebrows up in his hairline, merely gave a chuckle.

"Well, I mean, shit, Peaches," he said in a simpering tone. "I think you were the one to run into me, not the other way around."

But Blake wasn't taking that.

As if she would go searching for him around the hallways of this place. That was far more of a Negan thing to do.

Although, perhaps they were more alike than she first had thought.

"Ugh, well some of us actually have things they should be getting back to, so-" Blake murmured, dragging her eyes away from Negan's, and making to push past him….

…. but before she could do so, Negan's free hand suddenly gripped her waist, spinning her back around to face him, almost a little roughly now….

And before she could ever uttered a word of protest, the dark-haired man had manoeuvred her back against the way behind her, pressing his tall and firm body up against hers.

Blake immediately feel a flush creep its way across her cheeks, as she lifted a hand to Negan's taut chest, her fingers curling around the fabric of his grey t-shirt.

"What's the rush, Darlin'?" Negan suddenly murmured in a low voice, his chocolate eyes almost twinkling now in the gloom of the corridor.

Blake grinned, her other hand coming to rest on Negan's leather clad shoulder, tensing around the thick material, as her eyes once again drifted away from his. Instead coming to rest on the garment in question..

"You know, I think this jacket suited me, better that it suits you," she said in a delicious voice, titling her head to the slide slightly now.

She could feel a heat forming inside her abdomen, soaking her panties, with sheer longing for the man pressed up against her now.

His hold on her waist was possessive and the growl that soon escaped his lips about as animalistic and as hungry as Blake had ever heard.

"Hmmm," Negan mused, licking at his lips, his bearded mouth hovering dangerously close to hers. "See I've got a bit of a short fuckin' memory, Sweetheart. So maybe you're gonna have to try it on again for me. Preferably with nothin' on underneath it."

Blake felt a gulp trail its way down her throat at his words, as she pushed herself against him now, feeling him push back.

And she could only give another smile, as she trailed her tongue over her own bottom lip, wetting it
slightly, seeing his eyes catch the movement, before pulling him even closer to her, tugging at his t-shirt.

"Oh, most definitely," she purred, unable to stop herself anymore, as she closed her eyes, feeling their lips meet gently…

He tasted good, like salt and whiskey….and the pair of them slowly found their rhythm, kissing almost languidly at each other's mouths to begin with. Enjoying every lazy moment, as their lips parted and met again, and again, making the most deliciously-wet sounds.

Negan had now pinned Blake firmly to the wall, as her hands grazed over his broad and angular shoulders, remembering just how it had felt this morning, bouncing up and down on his lap, her fingernails dragging across his tanned skin, as he made her moan out, orgasming onto his cock.

But that thought was a precarious one now, as Blake felt her panties getting wetter and wetter, as Negan's free hand drifted down from her waist, finding her thigh, as Blake equally read his mind, hitching her leg up and allowing him to press his groin into hers.

She could feel his tight erection straining against his jeans and Blake couldn't help herself, as she slid her hands down, as his tongue entered her mouth, making for his belt-buckle.

Fuck, she wanted him inside her, just like this morning, as Negan now grunted into her mouth, giving a single hard thrust against her pelvis urgently.

Blake's chest was rising and falling hard now, as her fingers found his belt, undoing the thread of leather, the chinking metal buckle echoing loudly in the wide empty corridor.

God, she wanted him to fuck her, the sound alone driving her crazy, as they kissed again desperately at each other's mouths.

Up against the wall in one of the Sanctuary corridors- ok, granted, it wasn't the classiest place Blake could ever say she'd had sex…but right now, she could barely control herself, the pair of them unable to keep their hands, or mouths, off of one another…

They continued to kiss, their lips parting for just a moment, as their eyes met, both of them breathing hard, as Blake's fingers grazed down, undoing the button on the dark-haired Saviour's jeans, before finding his zipper, as their lips met again hungrily, kissing at one another as though each of them had been starved for weeks.

But suddenly, before Blake could make a move to pull down Negan's pants zipper, their came a sudden loud and carrying squeak from over on their right. And Blake, her eyes snapping open, tugged her lips hurriedly away from Negan's...

She turned her head, suddenly spotting the two mousy-haired women she had passed earlier, on their way back down the corridor now, with a small tray of food clutched between them, their eyes blown wide in shock and surprise.

Blake felt her face instantly flush bright red as her eyes met directly with the pair of them, looking as startled as she was, to to see Negan and her in such a compromising position in one of the inconspicuous first-floor hallways of the winding Sanctuary.

Blake, her cheeks now burning, feeling wholly embarrassed, gave the dark-haired Saviour a hard shove away from her now, as he too, gazed around over his shoulder eyeing the two girls, his mouth curving up into a wide grin.
He looked back at Blake fiendishly, before staring the women's way once more, raising his eyes brows in a devilish fashion.

"Enjoyin' the fuckin' show ladies?" he uttered goadingly, his tongue poking out from between his wide, white set of teeth in a smug-fashion.

The two girls hurriedly shook their heads, suddenly looking down at the floor reverently, almost shaking with fear and embarrassment, as Negan turned on his heel, approaching the pair of them intimidatingly, his free hand re-threading his belt as he did so.

"Oh, do not start actin' all shy on me now," Negan teased, arching his back as he spoke, coming to stop just a foot or two from the pair of them. "I mean, you are more than welcome to carry on and watch the rest…cause' I have a feelin' me an' Peaches over there, are in for one hell of a fuckin' session."

Behind him, Blake let out a hearty scoff, shaking her head, as Negan's glanced at her over his leather-clad shoulder, running his tongue over his teeth happily.

"Or," he said finally turning back to the two women, a little more kindly. "You can just run along and eat your-"

He paused momentarily, giving a small bemused-looking frown as he eyed the food growing cold on the tray before him.

"-what the hell is that anyway?"

But Blake gave a sigh, pursing her lips.

"It's chicken pot pie tonight," she muttered tiredly, folding her arms over her chest.

"Right, right," said Negan with a faux-serious nod. "OR you can go and enjoy your chicken pot pie someplace else."

The two girls nodded hurriedly, murmuring a not-really-needed thank you, as they slid quietly by Negan, hurrying off down the corridor as fast as their legs could carry them, disappearing off, around the corner and out of sight, before Negan could, indeed, corner them again.

The dark-haired Saviour ran a hand down his bearded face, giving a long and heavy sigh of his own, before turning back to Blake, with an eyebrow cocked.

"Shit, that wasn't like no chicken pot-pie I've ever fuckin' seen," he said in a simpering voice, strolling casually over towards her. "Hell, remind me to check with Seven-foot Pete exactly what the fuck he's playin' at servin' shit like that to paying fuckin' customers."

But Blake, leaning up against the wall behind her, gave a tut, ignoring the dark-haired leader's comment as he approached her once more, coming to stop just a mere breath away from her and pressing his free hand flat against the wall one side of her head.

He licked at his lips darkly.

"Now, where the hell were we, Peaches," he murmured in a growling voice, as he leaned in towards her once more, his lips almost grazing hers.

But Blake, no longer in the mood after their embarrassing interruption, pressed a sudden hand to Negan's t-shirt-clad chest, giving him the tiniest shove away and holding him at arm's length.
"Ugh, well I was heading back to the gardens," she said with a long, teasing sigh, sliding herself out of Negan's grasp. "And you were doing-"

She paused, stepping around him, further into the corridor, as Negan, with a frown between his brows, eased himself back onto the heels of his boots eyeing her a little irritably.

"-well, whatever it is you do around here," she finished dismissively, waving a taunting hand in the Saviour's direction, knowing just how much that would annoy him.

But that was only as much as the had annoyed her just now with his comments to those two girls.

God, how the hell was he ever going to able to live that down?

But she was grateful at least that they hadn't been interrupted just a minute or two later, before things had gotten perhaps even more hot and heavy...

Negan scowled at her, shifting around, turning his entire body to face her now.

"You seriously fuckin' ditchin' me twice in one day, Darlin'?" he said in an incredulous voice, pointing at her with the end of Lucille.

But Blake just paced away, swaying her hips as she did so.

"Yhhhmm," she said biting down on her bottom lip and calling back at him over her shoulder. "But y'know, if you're lucky, I might just run into you again later…"

And Blake didn't need to turn back to know that Negan was grinning after her now…

…for his unprecedented silence, on this occasion, really did say it all.
On your knees, Princess...

A grey day had turned into a grey evening, and by the time darkness fell over the expansive lots of the Sanctuary, there wasn't a soul left outside…

….not even Blake on this occasion. Although Negan wasn't to know this…sat up in his room for the last couple of hours, checking on the inventory and points system against numerous large ledgers.

Although he trusted his men to keep a close eye on things around here, and to make sure every single thing in this place was running smoothly, Negan every now and again, took it upon himself to check up on them too….scratching out figures that didn't quite add up, memorising names and making sure those responsible, were adequately punished for screwing up.

But the dark-haired Saviour was indeed so into his work this evening, he barely even noticed the sky outside grow dark, as droplets of water, illuminated only by the warm yellow lamplight inside the room, slid down his large window panes.

It was only when a loud rumble of thunder crashed across the sky above, did Negan even pause in what he was doing, glancing up at the ceiling ominously.

Although he barely had time to even dwell on this interruption, as though in sync with the thunder, there came a sudden soft knocking upon his door.

His chocolate eyes glanced quickly over to it, as he clenched his jaw together, waiting for it to be Dwight or Simon disturbing his peace as they so often did.

Negan grunted out a hard – "Yeah, come in", pausing for a short second or two before the large wooden door to his quarters swung open with a loud, carrying creak…

But Negan's lips almost instantly curved up into a wide grin, as his eyes settled on the figure in the doorway….looking like every fucking wet-dream he had had as a kid…and everything he pictured on long lovely nights jacking himself off too.

Her.

Blake.

There she was…a vision unlike anything Negan had seen in a long time.

For she stood there now, her curves draped in a clingy black satin dress, tied at the waist, with her long caramel hair ruffled and sexy-looking.

It looked like she had coated her long lashes in mascara and perhaps something else that made her green eyes sparkle now in the dim light. Her lips were stained slightly red, like they had been stung or bitten….all ripe and ready to be kissed by him.

Negan felt his dick stiffen almost instantly, pressing against his pants at the mere sight of her.

Sure, Negan had his wives who dressed up for him….in clothes he had given to them to wear….but this…. 

…Blake had chosen these clothes especially for him. Because she wanted him to see her in them. And that thought alone drove him, now, totally and utterly wild….
Negan's chest restricted slightly, drinking her all in, as he watched her press the door closed behind
her with a snap, her lips curving up into a suggestive and naughty smile, as she pressed her back
against the hard wood. Not making a move to come over towards him.

"Damn," he coaxed out from his mouth, before he could stop himself. "What have I done to deserve
this?"

But Blake just continued to smile, her green eyes now fixed to his chocolate ones, as she shrugged
her shoulders lightly.

"I just saw a couple of things in the marketplace I liked and thought you might like to see them?" she
murmured out softly, tugging on her lip gently with her teeth.

Negan grinned.

"So is this a fuckin' fashion show or are you gonna treat me to strip tease, Doll-face?" Negan teased,
slowly closing the large ledger still-propped open on his lap, before sliding it onto the coffee table
before him.

But Blake let her eyes fall from his, momentarily, giving another shrug.

"Well it depends on how much you like them?" she said plucking at the clingy material at her waist,
causing the dress to slip slightly around her leg, revealing a flash of thigh beneath.

Negan let out a growl.

Fuck. There was only one fucking reason she was here tonight wasn't there?

Negan very much liked this new found confidence she had… Not that it hadn't always been in there.
But now, it was like a switch had been turned on inside her, with her finally realising that truly, she
was a queen. And whatever she wanted, she could just take…for her own. Even him.

"Oh, Darlin'" said the dark-haired Saviour getting to his feet with a short groan. "I have a feelin' I'm
gonna like that shit a lot!"

Negan bit down onto his bottom lip, his eyes flitting over every inch of her, as he paced across the
room.

"Well I hope so," she said in an airy voice, wrinkling her nose slightly as she spoke, as her fingers
moved to the knot tied in the front of her dress. "Because I had to use ALL my points to get
these…"

And with that, her eyes meeting with his once again, Blake untied her dress, letting it fall open, to
reveal a matching set, of the most gorgeous lacy black underwear Negan had ever seen….

Shit…she had fucking taken him, alright…

Blake lifted her chin, pressing her head back against the wooden door behind her, as she slipped her
dress from her shoulders, letting it pool to the floor at her feet.

Here she was, baring herself to Negan…not for the first time, granted….but even so, she had done
this for him tonight…because she had been unable to shake him from her thoughts all day.

The entire evening, Blake's mind had been on one thing, and one thing only after their tryst in the
hallway earlier, and she had welcomed the interruption of rain as a good excuse to head, first to the
marketplace, and then up to her room, with a few items in her hand she had had her eye on for a while.

And after at least a good hour of getting ready, here she was…

She sucked in a deep breath, as Negan's eyes grazed up and down her slender form, his lips parting, taking her all in.

She hadn't felt this good for a long time….about as close to what she had looked like before the apocalypse, glamorous and tall, with a good figure and perfectly blow-dried hair.

And as much as she had wanted Negan to see her like this, she could deny that she had equally done this for herself.

She was a queen…and she deserved this. She deserved pampering every once in a while, and she deserved a first pick of the new clothes down at the marketplace when she wanted.

The only thing she hadn't tonight been able to get her hands on, was a pair of high-heels in her size, and had instead padded down here barefoot, being careful not to tread on anything sharp or dangerous, that one of the men might have tracked in from outside.

Blake titled her head to the heavy sound of silence clinging to the air now, as she wet her bottom lip with her tongue, blinking her heavy eyelashes over at the dark-haired man in front of her.

She was done now, with not getting what she wanted.

Done with tears, and apologetic words….and dwelling on things that were over.

For tonight, all she wanted was the company of one person. One person who made her feel better than anyone else in this world.

And from the look plastered across his features at this second, he wanted her just as much as she wanted him.

"Jesus, fucking Christ," said Negan in a needy voice, his hungry eyes travelling over her breasts, her stomach, her legs, and down to the space between them, as he soon closed the gap between the pair of them. "I'm gonna need that fucking mouth of yours now, Darlin'."

His voice had a hard edge to it, and Blake stared up into his eyes as his gaze caught hers, seeing something wolf-like in them.

Blake gave a slow nod, conveying that she was oh-so willing to comply with him now.

But she could already tell, with the look he returned back to her, this wasn't going to be like the sex the pair had shared only this morning….intimate and needy…

This was already something far more dominant and intoxicating, with Negan's eyes darkening with lust, his brow furrowing, as he came to stop just an inch or two away from her now.

Blake could already smell him…his heat, his musk, his perspiration, delicious in her nose.

He was her mate. Hers only.

And with blood coursing through her veins, and a heat pooling in those lacy panties of hers, right now, she would have been willing to tear apart any other woman that got in her way of him.
Negan's calloused hand reached for her chin, his thumb dragging it way over her bottom lip a little roughly, as he pressed himself against her, the zipper of his leather jacket grazing over her bare abdomen.

But Blake couldn't take her eyes off of him now, just waiting for him to kiss her….waiting for him to take her mouth as he had requested.

But Negan, on this occasion, had other ideas, lowering his own chin towards her, his face set.

"On your knees, Princess," he growled out bluntly.

And Blake could only blink for a moment, a little taken aback by his request, before immediately complying, as though she was a scolded puppy. His pet.

But she liked this new game….

….a lot.

And so, doing as she was told, the caramel-blonde woman slid down the narrow space Negan had left between her and the wall, getting carefully to her knees, as his hand's slid down to his own belt chuckle.

He hadn't even touched her yet…but Blake could feel herself getting wet for him. Watching, as the dark-haired Saviour, un-looped his leather belt, before pulling down the zipper on his pants, just like Blake had almost been about to do earlier today.

He didn't bother inching down his pants even a little, instead grasping inside for his dick and pulling it out, it springing easily from its confinements, hovering in front of Blake's face now, like a treat ready to be devoured.

She glanced up for a long moment, her eyes meeting with Negan's, before she shifted herself forwards slightly, reaching up, and grasping his hard length in her hand.

She gave it a couple of slow pumps, her fingers tensing around it, already feeling sticky pre-cum leaking from his engorged tip…

…before she licked at her lips, and, without warning, took his head in her mouth.

She could hear from above her, Negan give a hard grunt at the contact, as Blake swirled her tongue against his end, licking the cum from the tip expertly, and smacking her lips together wetly.

"Oh, you're a bad fuckin' girl, suckin' Daddy so well," the dark-haired man growled out from above her, as Blake felt his fingers tangle themselves into her hair.

But that only prompted Blake to dip her head, taking his dick fully into her mouth, her lips running down his entire length, before she pulled back, and repeated the motion two or three more times.

The way he was talking to her was driving her crazy, as she felt her own messy cream soaking through her black lacy panties and onto her leg.

He tasted oh-so good now as Blake jerked him off him, making the most wet, delicious-sounding noises, as she licked at his head like a lollypop.

At that, Negan bucked his hips into her mouth harshly.

"That's it, Peaches," Negan grunted. "Nnnnff, keep goin'."
Blake felt Negan's cock twitch in her mouth now, as she bobbed her mouth up and down his shaft. But a moment later, he had shifted his feet forwards and grasped a handful of her hair tightly, thrusting his hips towards her again.

"Mmmmfff, I love usin' your mouth like this, Sweetheart," he said wholly fucking her mouth now, as Blake tried not to gag at the contact between his cock and the back of her throat.

He could hear him breathing hard above her now, as she caught her own breath just enough to look up at him, to find his eyes closed, a frown glazed across his temples.

He groaned out again, hard, relenting a little and allowing Blake to take control again now, as her hand did most of the work, pumping his cock up and down, as her lips and tongue swirled around his throbbing head.

"Holy fuckin' shit," breathed Negan at the sensation. "I'm gonna cum all over that pretty tongue of yours., Sweetheart. Are you ready to taste Daddy's load?"

Blake looked up again to see Negan's eyes on hers now, obviously enjoying seeing her in this submissive state, pleasing him with her mouth.

She pulled back for a moment, giving a gentle obedient nod, as a frowning Negan reached down for his cock, taking it in his hand and pumping hard at his ample length.

And Blake could only open her mouth, revealing her tongue, just in time, for Negan's hips to buckle slightly as he orgasmed, coating her flat tongue with, stream-upon stream, of hot white cum.

Negan groaned out, easing himself forward into the balls of his feet and making sure he was well and truly spent, before coaxing his dick from her mouth.

Blake hovered there for a moment, her lips and tongue drenched in Negan's hot ejaculate, as the dark-haired Savour stared down at her now.

"You gonna lick every drop of that up, Darlin'?" he growled, as his hand fell to her chin again, lifting her face up to face him so that he could admire just what he had done to her.

And what a mess he had made too…

But she just smiled naughtily now, wrinkling her nose, before sucking her lips into her mouth, making sure she did as she was told and gulping down every last thread of Negan's cum.

She knew that she probably wouldn't have let anyone else talk to her the way he just had, or do the things to her he just had either….

….but there was something about the looming leader of the Saviours, that fed every primal urge she had…..

He grinned down at her admiringly now, that smug, shit-eating smirk drifting its way over his face, as he did as he had done earlier, dragging his thumb over her bottom lip, making sure she had complied with his wishes.

"That's my fuckin' girl," he purred out in a low voice, letting a small whining chuckle leave his throat, as he lifted his chin - beckoning for her to stand.

It was only when Blake moved did she realise just what he had done to her, feeling wetter than she ever had ever done before.
She stood now, but had barely made it to her feet, when she felt Negan's fingers slide their way down between her legs, finding that wetness.

She saw him catch his lips between his teeth now, shaking his head at her.

"Oh, that make you wet, Sweetheart? Did suckin' Daddy's dick make you wet?" he said questioningly, as his fingers slid their way past the lacy fabric that coated her pussy, dipping inside of her hot folds instead.

Blake let out a needy nod now, almost whimpering out, desperate for his touch.

For she had pleased him so well…but now it was her turn, the lustful look returning to Negan's eyes, as he grinned smugly down at her…

…still denying her any sort of kiss she so longed for…

But this was a dynamic she was enjoying. Far from the her dominant stance during their session this morning.

Now Negan was the one in control. And that was something she definitely wanted from him right now.

She licked at her lips, drawing Negan's eyes there almost immediately, as his digits skimmed over her throbbing clit, his fingers already coated in her wetness.

His other hand reached her jaw now, before sliding swiftly down her neck, to her shoulders, to her sides, as he took in her pretty underwear…his touch hovering ether for a brief second or two.

"Did I ever tell you how fuckin' gorgeous you are?" Negan said suddenly, giving an approving frown. "And this lingerie? Fuck me...I think I'm gonna have you keep these on, Peaches."

And at his words, Blake couldn't help but smile, the dynamic changing between them slightly now, as Blake stared up into his chocolate eyes, to see Negan catch her look, and immediately smile back.

She felt her entire body un-tense now, and whether it was the sensation of Negan fingering her, or the way he was staring at her …she felt more happy now, than she had done in a long time.

Like she had finally found her place….

Where she wanted to be in the world….

No, ok, she wouldn't be one of Negan's wives. She didn't want to be labelled like that.

But there was, and always would be, a connection between them..

A connection she had never ever shared with anyone else…

And from the look on his face, Negan felt that too, as he wet his lips with his tongue and leaned into her…

….his mouth gently grazing hers…

Blake lifted her hands to his chest now, curling her fingers around the lapels of his jacket, as he pressed her into the door behind her.

Fuck, she wanted him…..no, she needed him……feeling him pull his hand up from her pussy
suddenly, pulling his lips away from her, and playfully holding his glistening fingers to her mouth.

Blake smirked, blinking up at the dark-haired man for a brief moment, before suddenly grasping his palm and sucking each digit clean of her juices.

She tasted good…fresh and sweet….like honey and oranges…

And Negan’s grin widened now, revealing his side set of white teeth in a wolfish manner, before he pressed himself into her, hovering his face to her ear.

"Oh I think Daddy is gonna have to get himself some of that..." he groaned, in what was barely a whisper, but still managed to almost make Blake come undone, a she gave a moan, her fingers tensing around his forearm now, her nails digging into the stiff material covering his skin.

And Blake could only smile, barely even having the chance to blink, as Negan giving a sharp and guttural growl, pulling back, his face hovering just a mere breath away from hers.

But this time he did not make a move to kiss her, instead saying just three delicious words that were enough to make Blake smile, vixen-like, her heart pounding hard in her chest.

"Bed…now, Darlin'."

Blake let a gulp trail down her slender throat, as she slowly slid past Negan, moving over to his large four poster bed, before lowering herself down onto the soft luxurious sheets below her.

They had been changed since this morning, the bed made perfectly, with fresh white coverings that starkly contrasted Blake and her lacy black underwear now, as she sat near to the edge…waiting…

But it wasn’t even a second later, that Negan joined her, removing his jacket and tossing it down onto the back of the couch nearby.

And in an instant, to her delight, he had grasped both of her thighs, shucking the caramel-blonde woman further up the bed, before dipping his head, his hands lingering at her legs, parting them widely so that he could gain better access to her soaked pussy.

His face made immediately for the lacy material at her hot mound, ignoring every other part of her body completely.

Normally Blake might have missed the teasing kisses and touches that Negan had provided her with in the past…but she knew right now what she wanted, just as he had, lifting her ass off the bed needily.

Negan glanced up at her, cocking an eye in her direction, smirking now, but didn't say a word, as his fingers trailed down the sensitive skin of her inner thigh, pulling aside the damp lace material of her panties.

He had kept his word about keeping her underwear on, but Blake barely had time to dwell on this, as she felt Negan’s hot breath trickle over her exposed slit.

Fuck…

Blake closed her eyes, a lump appearing hard and painful in her throat.

"Please, Neeeegan…" she breathed out quietly before she could stop herself.

And, as if urged on by the sound of his own name escaping her lips, Blake sighed softly, feeling
Negan press a single lingering kiss to her delicate clit.

Her fingers tensed around the white sheet's at her side, her stomach convulsing at the sensation.

Fuck, it felt god to have him doing this to her again…after so long.

She dropped her head back against the mattress beneath her now, as Negan licked slowly down the full length of her sopping wet cunt, dragging his tongue languidly in and out of her hot folds.

She gave a gasp, her fingers travelling down into Negan's dark hair.

He paused for an instant at the contact, but Blake was too preoccupied to care, as after a moment he carried on his work…

…allowing two fingers to join his tongue.

Blake already knowing how close she had already been, just by his words….had to hold herself back, trying not to cum too early.

Enjoying every single tingling sensation Negan provided her with.

She smiled to herself now, groaning out a little, and lifting her free hand to her face….thinking on the fact that this was probably the longest she had heard the leader of the Saviour's be silent for, in a long, long time…

But her thoughts were torn away from this, as his two fingers slid in and out of her soaked cunt and his tongue darted over her sensitive nub, bringing her teetering along the edge of ecstasy.

And it didn't even take a minute, for Blake, with carefully preened hair, now tangled…. 

… with stained lips, now smeared and breathless…

… with perfect lingerie, now damp, with bra straps hanging down off of her shoulder carelessly…

…for her to finally part her lips, mewling out, as Negan's tongue worked her over the edge…. 

…..where she came, hard….

….. a frown littering her brow, as she gazed desperately up at the bed frame above….

…..her walls convulsing and her back arching…

…..moaning out Negan's name, in sheer, delicious agony.
What are friends for?

It was just ten minutes later, that Negan, ambling back in from his bathroom totally naked with Blake's now-abandoned lingerie clutched in his hand, gave a, tutting, shake of his head.

"Jesus, Sweetheart. One fuckin' blow job and you've got me pickin' up after you in my own fuckin' bathroom," he said in a faux-accusative tone. "I mean, do I look like a goddamn maid?!"

But the dark-haired man stopped short, as he gazed back over to his bed, his lips curving up into a wide smile as he caught sight of Blake there, now, under the covers, with a sheet clasped tightly around her body.

The sight was certainly one to fucking behold and Negan took a short breath in, as his heart pounded just that little bit faster.

He cocked an eyebrow upwards, as she smiled back at him, vixen-like, her green eyes staring his exposed body up and down.

"You anglin' for a slumber party, Peaches?" he asked questioningly, before continuing to pace over towards her, tossing her abandoned underwear down onto the couch as he passed, haphazardly.

God, she really was the most amazing fucking creature he had ever laid eyes on, lying there with her long caramel-hair ruffled and her lips plump, swollen and inviting...

The last hour or so had been a fucking dream, the dynamic between them changing slightly…with both of them getting exactly what they wanted…how they wanted.

Because, fuck it, both of them were adults. And the two of them were more than strong and confident enough to take whatever they wanted from each other.

Blake bit her at her pouting lips now, smiling widely as Negan approached, lifting up the white sheet for him to join her under the covers.

"Maybe," she purred, giving a small appetising giggle, as Negan grinned back at her warmly and slipped inside, in-between the cool sheets...

"So how are things going with you and Rick?" said Tara, lifting her steaming mug of hot coffee to her lips and eyeing the black woman sitting opposite her.

But Michonne just rolled her eyes.

"Fine," she murmured, flushing slightly and looking away.

But Tara gave a laugh, barely noticing the small clap of thunder outside, as rain lashed against the window pane to the left of the couch.

"I bet it is," goaded the dark-haired woman, poking her tongue out from between her teeth as Michonne tutted, glancing back over at her friend.

"How's being a full-time parent?" asked Michonne in return teasingly, causing the smug-ish smile to drop instantly from Tara's face.

She gave a groan, placing her head into her hands for a brief second, sighing.
"Don't," she said warningly. "She's the sweetest thing, but being a stay-at-home Mom….Jesus….why did I even agree to it? Babysitting for Judith is one thing….but this….”

But she had barely got to the end of her sentence, when suddenly, another crash of thunder almost shuddered the entire house, and it was barely a split second after that, that a long carrying-cry filled the house.

Tara gave a heavy sigh and whined out.

"Ughhh…duty calls…" she huffed, placing down her cup of barely-touched coffee and getting to her feet with a sigh.

But now it was Michonne's turn to give a laugh, waving her hand and placing down her own mug.

"I'll see myself out…" she uttered smiling, as Tara made her way upstairs.

Blake turned onto her side as Negan joined her in the bed…the atmosphere in the room feeling warm and hazy in the soft lamplight.

Placing a hand to her mussed-up hair, she propped herself up onto her elbow, biting her lips once again, as she eyed him at this close proximity.

He was so hot to her, even after her orgasm. With a lean, tanned torso, smattered with dark hair and faded tattoos.

He mirrored her stance now, grinning smugly and showing off his line of straight white teeth.

"So that was fun…" Blake mused, letting her eyes drop to the sheets between them briefly, before lifting her gaze once again to Negan's long, bearded face.

He, of course, knew what she was talking about, his face lighting up instantly into a devilish smirk.

"Oh, Darlin', you have no fuckin' idea how fun that was!" Negan murmured in a growl of a voice, inching himself closer to her now, as Blake let out another laugh. "Seein' you down on your knees. I mean, shit, I knew you were a dirty fuckin' girl...but I didn't quite know how fuckin' much!"

She rolled her eyes, as she felt his skin reach hers beneath the sheets. He was warm and it didn't take long, for his nimble hands to graze up her bare sides, as he blinked his chocolate eyes heavily at her.

"What are friends for…" she purred, as Negan let out a low chuckle.

"In-fuckin'-deed, Sweetheart," he shot back, suddenly tugging her in towards him, sharply.

Blake laughed again, as he held her naked body flush against his, her fingers trailing up his firm chest and coming to rest upon his broad shoulders.

But she tilted her head to the side, pursing her lips now.

"But y'know, you weren't exactly an angel either…" she teased back in what was merely a low murmur of a voice, lifting her chin slightly and grazing Negan's ear with her lips. "Hmmmm, did I taste good, Daddy?"

Negan almost immediately let out a low possessive growl at her words, his dick stiffening against her thigh.

She pulled back a little, frowning bemusedly and dipping her chin questioningly. "Already?" she
asked delicious voice, wrinkling her nose in utter delight. Before Negan stared down at her arrogantly, running his tongue over his lips.

"Well I'm only fuckin' human, Doll-face," he uttered in return. "An' I mean, is it really any goddamn surprise, when you're whispering bad fuckin' things like that into my ear?"

Blake, at this, gave a small laugh, pressing her face into the crook of Negan's neck, her lips finding his skin now, as she kissed her way along his collarbone, feeling a groaning gulp slowly trail its way down Negan's bearded throat.

At her back, she felt his hands slip up and down her spine, as if trying to memorize every inch of her smooth skin, holding her close to him now.

Blake felt safe in his arms, and it wasn't long before she had pulled back, and their lips had found one-another's in the dim light of the room, with Negan threading his fingers through hers and coming to lean over her, pinning her down onto the mattress.

Their kisses were slow and wet….but very much enjoyed, as Blake felt herself smiling into Negan's mouth, his roving free hand running across her bare breasts a little roughly, his calloused thumb grazing over her exposed and perky nipple.

But he pulled back from her a little, after a few long and delectable minutes, as tongues swirled against the other's, Blake having placed her thighs now to either side of his hips, feeling his ever growing erection pressing against the hot-space between her legs.

Negan's chocolate eyes roved over her features, as he stared down at her, his brows knotting themselves into a frown and his mouth curving up into a curious smile…

And at his look, Blake couldn't help but tilt her head to the side questioningly.

"What?" she purred, placing a soft hand to his scrubby salt-and-pepper speckled cheek.

But Negan just continued to gaze at her, almost awe-struck, like she was the strangest thing he had ever seen…

Blake's heart began to pound faster in her chest…her breathing shallowing in the low light of the room.

Here they were, tangled in sheets together….just the two of them, alone…

They could be anywhere right now….without the threat of walkers….away from this crazy world….anywhere, and Blake wouldn't even care….the pair of them so wrapped up in one-another right now, that nothing else mattered.

Blake saw a gulp trail its way slowly down Negan's throat as he parted his lips, looking like he was desperately trying to say something but the words never seemed to come.

And it took Blake to tilt her head once more, her eyes almost pleading with him to say it…..

….to say what she had been so craving him to utter these last few weeks…even months now…

…..for Negan to let out a long difficult breath of air.

"Peaches, I-"

But much to Blake's dismay, Negan wasn't able to say another word, as suddenly, there came a sharp
knocking upon the large wooden doors across the room.

Before her eyes, Blake saw Negan's jaw tense with utter irritation, but even despite this, he lifted himself off of Blake slightly, turning around to face the door.

"Come in," he called out, to Blake's surprise, in a deep voice, causing her eyes to widen in her skull, her mouth dropping open in shock and horror, as the door was almost immediately shoved open at the dark-haired Saviour's request.

And Blake had just enough time, to tug the sheet tightly around her exposed body, as the tall and moustachioed Simon strolled easily through the door.

It took him less than a second for his eyes to find the pair of them in bed, with Negan, of course grinning smugly from ear to ear.

He could be such total fucking asshole sometimes!

"Sorry to, uh, barge in like this, Boss," said Simon, giving a small knowing smirk as his eyes met, first with Negan's, before glancing over to Blake. "But I thought we had poker night scheduled for tonight, down in the rec room?"

Negan, almost at once, gave a small hiss and a nod.

"Fuck, you're right, that's tonight isn't it…” he said, dropping his gaze monetarily and chewing hard on his lip.

Blake, looking between the two men, suddenly reddened slightly, pulling herself up into a sitting position, making sure the sheet was clutched tightly around her bare limbs, as she leaned into Negan, feeling a little embarrassed.

Perhaps she had outstayed her welcome anyway…

"I can go-" she started, but Negan, almost instantly, glanced at her over his shoulder, shooting her a bemused sort-of look, as he made a grab for her covered waist, holding her in place.

"Hold on there, Peaches…” he murmured swiftly to her and only her, before turning back to his right-hand man and giving a huge sigh. "Si, let's move it to tomorrow night instead. I'm not really feelin' on top of my game tonight anyway, and the boys could do with buildin' up another day's worth of smokes before I wipe them clean."

Simon's smirk widened, as he raised both eyebrows. "Riiiiight…” he replied a little unconvincingly. "Well I'll let them know, and I'll, uh, see you tomorrow then, Boss."

And with one last lingering look at Blake, he turned on his heel, pausing for a moment, one hand on the door.

"Enjoy your night," he finished, and within a blink of an eye he was gone, the door closing with a snap behind him, once more.

Blake smiled to herself, the tops of her cheek turning ever so slightly pink as Negan sighed heavily again, turning back to face her.

"Now where the fuck were we, Darlin'," he said lifting a hand to her neck and making to kiss her again, but Blake pressed a hand to his forearm, stopping him in his tracks.
She tugged on her bottom lip with her teeth, her heart pounding now.

Was this to do with Simon's interruption or was it something else completely? She wasn't really sure anymore…

"You should go to your game," she said gently. "Look, it's getting late, I should probably go anyway."

She made to shift under the covers, making it look like she was inching towards the end of the bed ready to hop out, but she paused, hoping that he would say what she wanted him to say, and stop her…

And to her delight, it taking him a long drawn out few seconds to do so, he finally said it…causing Bake's breath to hitch in the back of her throat and her stomach to fill with butterflies.

"Stay," he commanded in a low growling voice, his forehead painted with a needy, and almost-pained, frown. As though he was pleading with her now.

And, taking in a deep breath and letting her hand drop from Negan's forearm, Blake gave a tiny nod…

"Ok," she murmured back, in what was barely a whisper now, her eyes big and round, staring up into his….her head spinning with so many unsaid words she desperately wanted to let slip from her mouth…

…but she held back, just a little, as Negan's lips found hers, letting a playful growl escape his throat, as he pinned her back against the mattress once again, her hands immediately tangling in his dark hair…

…and Blake couldn't help but laugh into his mouth…enjoying herself far too much…

….so caught up in the moment, in fact, that she completely forget what she had so so wanted to tell him…. 

It was late now, with a torrential rain pouring down the gutters of the neat row of houses, and thunder crashing overhead.

Rick, who had his collar pulled up, winced, as the rain pelted down onto his head, coming to a stop outside Tara's place, as the tall figure of Michonne exited the front door, giving a heavy, almost dramatic sigh and looking his way.

But the bearded man barely had a chance to question her on this, when all of a sudden, from a window high above them there came a loud, carrying, child's wail, as another clap of thunder rang out.

Michonne had been over for a coffee and a check-in with the Tara for the night, but now just shook her head at Rick.

"She tell Tara her name yet?" he asked in a low drawling voice.

But Michonne gave a weary shake of her head.

"Not yet..." she murmured a little sadly.

But Rick, grimacing against the rain falling down the collar of his sheepskin coat, gave a huff. "But
it's been…what…two weeks now….

But Michonne folded her arms across herself protectively, as she ducked out of the cover of the porch and hurried down the steps, coming to stop by her partner.

"From what she has told her…..it sounded like she's been through a lot…she's still just a baby…its really no wonder she's so traumatised. Losing her parents like that….

Rick dropped his gaze, looking a little distant for a brief moment, before giving a sniff and nodding his head.

"Yeah but she's gotta at least tell us her name at some point..." he murmured, as he and Michonne began to walk back towards their house. The frightened cries of the tiny girl carrying along the wide street as they did so.

"She will. I mean she's talking, eating, playing with Judith ok.....we've got to just give her time, Rick," Michonne uttered soothingly, dropping her arm and clutching his hand in hers.

And at this Rick glanced up at her.

"I guess..." he said in reply, chancing one look back up towards the high window of Tara's house… …wondering if the they'd ever find out the tiny toddler's name…

"Has anyone ever told you how fuckin' hot you look when you're cumming, Peaches?"

Blake, who was currently lying with her eyes closed, her head resting upon Negan's bare chest, and her fingers lazily drawing patterns over his tanned torso, smirked.

The pair had somehow just manged to have sex yet again tonight, as after ten long minutes of their kisses growing more and more needy and heated, Blake had positioned herself in such a way, that Negan had only to give one perilous thrust, for his stiff dick to slide to way once again into her hot folds.....

…it had been a tangle of sheets and sweat and lip-biting and hot, delicious kisses…. 

…and the pair had come undone pretty quickly, Negan filling her up to the brim with hot, spurting cum, that coated her clenching walls, oh-so well…

"No, I don't think anyone ever has," she murmured back tiredly now, feeling Negan give a small throaty chuckle, which sent vibrations coursing through her entire body.

"Well here I am fuckin' sayin' it, Sweetheart," Negan announced in a cocky tone.

And at this, Blake gave a small sleepy laugh, broken by a yawn escaping her lips before she could help herself.

"Do you ever stop flirting," she purred out, smacking her lips a couple of times languidly.

But Negan just laughed again, his voice sounding grizzly now. 

"Well, shit, Doll-face. What the fuck else am I gonna talk to you about? You don't know shit about poker, or sports, or guns….and all you seem to be fuckin' interested in is as that goddamn garden of yours."

If Blake had had her eyes open, she would have rolled them.
"Uhhh, excuse me, that garden is going to feed the majority of your people, Negan," she tutted in reply. "And for the record, I'm pretty good at poker, I'll have you know….I used to play regularly with some friends back in college."

Negan paused for moment, lifting his head slightly to gaze at her.

"Well la-de-dah, Ms fuckin' 'college education','" he said in a simpering voice, causing Blake to laugh. "Well if you're really that fuckin' good, how 'bout you join me an' the boys for our game tomorrow night? We'll be playing for cigars and smokes mainly, but you can bring a sack of fuckin' potatoes with you if you want."

Blake dragged her teeth over her bottom lip, and opened a single eye now.

She couldn't see the dark-haired Saviour from this position, but even so, waited intently for his next reply.

"You asking me to be your date?!" she uttered in a teasing voice.

But from behind her, she heard Negan lick at his lips, as his arm's tightened around her almost possessively now, pulling her ever closer.

"Well," Negan uttered repeating Blake's words from earlier back to her. "What are friends fuckin' for…"

And with that, Blake merely smiled contently, closing her eyes again…

…and it wasn't a moment or two later, that feeling safer than she had done in years, both Blake drifted off into a warm and comfortable sleep…with Negan not far behind her…

…..the best either of them had had in a long, long time…..
Blake awoke to a soft, warm sunlight trickling gently over her face. It was supposed to have been raining today, but it seemed as though the rain had passed through overnight, leaving nothing but a clear, bright day ahead.

The caramel-blonde woman smiled to herself, grizzling her face into the fluffy pillow beneath her head and let out a small purr of contentment, soon feeling two strong arms drift their way lazily around her body.

"Mornin', Peaches..." hummed a low, gravelly voice into her mussed-up hair, as the hands pulled her back with a sharp tug into a firm body behind her.

Negan.

She could smell him...that heady musky scent that made her want to submit to him so badly...that primal feeling of 'him being hers' overwhelming her now.

But Blake gave another soft groan out, feeling almost at once, Negan's stiff erection press up against her ass.

"That how you say good morning, huh?" she murmured softly, opening a single bleary eye and peering at him over her shoulder.

There he was this morning, looking husky, baring his wide, white teeth in a devilish grin, as his lips reached her bare shoulder, pressing a single kiss to her warm, smooth skin.

"You fuckin' complainin', Darlin?" he growled, as his mouth reached the space between her neck and shoulder, kissing oh-so deliciously slowly there, making Blake roll her eyes back into her head and give a pleasurable shiver.

She smirked to herself now, biting down onto her lip.

She certainly wasn't complaining...

And that was proved by Blake shoving her body backwards and grinding her ass against Negan's swollen member.

He gave a throaty grunt in reaction to this, but Blake was unrelenting, doing it again.

She was fully aware of how precarious the situation was, with both of them naked beneath the tangle of sheets.

Right now ANYTHING could happen....

And it wasn't long before it did, with Blake unable to resist.....lifting herself up a little, and allowing Negan to give his cock a swift few pumps, before positioning it at her entrance from behind.

Blake could already feel her chest tightening and her breathing become shallow in her throat.

God she wanted him so much.

'Four times in twenty four hours' much, in fact!
And right now, feeling herself slide herself down onto his throbbing dick, was no less wanted that the three other times that had had sex since this time yesterday morning.

That feeling of desperation….of longing….of being unable to keep their hands off one another.

Blake let out a soft moan, as Negan held her taut body in place by her hips, thrusting up gently into her.

It was as though both of them were still half-asleep, lost in a wonderful and pleasurable dream…as whispers of hot breaths and moans, filled the sunny bedroom.

It felt so good to have him inside of her now, fucking her from behind….

But these slow and languid strokes lasted for only a few moments, as both of them almost frustrated at the easy pace, feeling things gradually heating between them…

…and so it was no surprise, that, slipping his cock from her for a brief couple of seconds, Negan, grabbing Blake a little roughly, flipped her forwards against the mattress (as she gave a playful squeal), and sat up against his knees, positioning himself once against at her hot, wet entrance, before letting out a groan, burying himself in her hot folds.

Oh god, this angle felt good…. 

And it didn’t take a moment for the dark-haired saviour to grab at her hips, pulling her ass up a little towards him, as he fucked her hard.

Blake grabbed at the sheets beneath her, frowning slightly in pleasurable agony at the pace and feeling of the leader of the Saviours pounding her tight pussy.

She panted out hard, giving a gulp, and turning her head slightly, as he grunted behind her.

"This how you fuck all your wives?" she asked, licking her lips, goadingly, expecting a reaction from him.

And a reaction she got, hearing him gave an amused hum, catching his own ragged breath.

"Not fuckin' quite, Sweetheart," Negan grinned. "Is this you finally callin' yourself one of my wives then?"

But Blake let out a whine as he thrust into her hard.

"Uhhgghh…definitely not," she uttered out. "Less wife…more…hmmm….lets go with fuck buddy."

From behind her she heard Negan pause momentarily in his work and suck at his teeth, before suddenly, she felt two hands press against the mattress either side of hers, feeling his broad torso body fall down against her back. And it wasn't a second later that his lips found her ear.

"Now that is a fuckin' title I could get behind, Peaches..." he said thickly, as a harsh groan suddenly escaped his lips.

Blake closed her eyes, feeling exactly what he did…a sudden wave of pleasure washing over her.

And this feeling was soon joined by an even better one, as Negan rode her ass, allowing one of his tanned hands to slip down beneath her and find that hot space between her legs.

Blake cried out now, feeling his digits glide over her sensitive clit.
"Unnnff….oh, please….yes…touch me there…" she pleaded now, giving a frown of pleasure and hanging her head low.

But into her ear she heard Negan give a chuckle.

"There?…Does my fucking girl want it there? Hmm?"

With that last word Negan began to thrust harder into her, matching his pace with the thumbing of her nub.

And Blake could barely give a nod in return, as stars suddenly appeared across her vision, and a pulsing orgasm shot through her entire body.

"Unnnghh…yes….ohhhhh…."

And Negan, lifting his hand from her, pulling himself upright once more, grabbing her hips hard, plunged his cock again and again into her tight convulsing entrance….

And it wasn't even a minute later, that Negan, with a deep frown plastered across his features and a hard gulp trailing its way down his bearded throat, grunted out harshly, pulling his glazed dick from her slit and holding it to her ass, as stream after stream of hot cum covered Blake's smooth skin….

Thirty short minutes later, Blake stood in front of the full-length mirror hanging inside Negan's closet on the far side of his ample room, doing up the back of her lacy black bra.

She had just spent a long ten minutes languishing in Negan's hot shower, and had quickly escaped with peals of carrying laughter, as Negan had come up behind her and decided to join her.

But now she was here, dried off and admiring her rosy-cheeked complexion, as she heard the shower switch off and a second later a pair of heavy footsteps make their way out of the bathroom.

Blake plucked her black satin wrapped dress of the corner of the wardrobe door, before shrugging it neatly over her shoulders, just as she recognised a familiar face approached her from behind.

And less that a second later, Negan had pressed him warm, damp and looming form up against her back, looping his arms around her middle possessively and resting his wet and salt-and-pepper speckled chin against her shoulder.

"Hey, you're getting my dress all wet!" Blake scolded in playful voice, but despite this, still nuzzling back into him.

Negan gave a wide grin.

"Well if that means you'll have to take it off again, Sweetheart…" he goaded, gripping her middle hard and causing Blake to smirk.

"Stop it," she reprimanded softly, attempting as best she could to tie the dress at her waist, wrestling against Negan's calloused hands. "I promised I'd be down to help out in the gardens early today, and it's already almost eleven—"

But she suddenly stopped what she was saying, and closed her eyes in a state of utter bliss as Negan began to press hot and scratchy kisses to her neck.

He pulled his mouth away just long enough to growl and argument in reply.

"Well, as leader of this goddamn shit-heap of a place, I am givin' you the day off, Princess," he
murmured out in between lazy kisses. "That's means you can come the fuck back to bed. And that way, you can show me what else 'just friends' can fuckin' do for each other…"

Blake smiled, rolled her eyes and tutting as she swatted his hands away and tied her dress up tightly. "Later, ok?" she purred gently, lifting a hand to Negan's cheek and drawing his gaze up to meet hers in the reflection of the mirror.

Negan gave a scathing grumble, but even so relented as Blake pulled herself gently from his grasp and waltzed over to the door, swaying her hips tauntingly as she did so.

She knew of course that Negan's eyes were on her, and it brought her a lot of pleasure to know that right now he wanted her, just as much as she wanted him. That was obvious.

The pair were smitten with each other. Absolutely head over heels.

And Blake would claw the eyes out of anyone who said otherwise.

Blake planning to hurriedly change into something more comfortable for gardening in before heading outside, into the morning sun for the day, tugged open the large wooden door to Negan's room.

But she paused there for a moment, glancing back at the towel clad-Negan over her shoulder, still stood by his closet, eyeing her with a bemused, grin dancing its way across his lips.

"What?" she questioned gently, narrowing her smudgy eyes bemusedly back at him.

But Negan just blinked heavily and was silent for a long moment before shaking his head.

"Nothin', Darlin'," he muttered, but there was a knowing hint to his voice, that made Blake's gaze travel over his long, tanned and bearded face for a long minute.....

......before she pulled herself away with a smile, and headed out of the door, shutting it closed behind her with a small snap.

Negan still grinning happily to himself, long after she had gone.
Blake had had a pretty unproductive morning, unable to keep her mind on anything she was doing.

She had been out here, amongst the six or so other Saviours working on the garden alongside her, trying to tie a couple of trellises together for the past fifteen minutes, but getting nowhere, finally giving a hearty huff of frustration and dropping both panels to the floor with a clatter.

All she wanted, was to be back upstairs with Negan in that bed…not so much for sex right now…but just for the feeling of having him beside her….having him want her.

But Blake couldn't allow herself to give into him too much. What they had going on right now…well, it was just a little bit of fun.

And after what Blake had been through with David, perhaps it was too soon for her to be having a serious relationship anyway.

Having been hurt too much there…

That had of course been proved with Negan and the situation with his wives. And Blake knew she really couldn't contend with them.

So she would keep things casual. That way, both of them got what they wanted out of all this…and no one had to get hurt.

But even so, Blake relished every moment she spend with the dark-haired Saviour, besotted with every little thing about him….

…his scent…

…..the way his scratchy beard grazed against her neck when he kissed her there…

…..the way he held her, so possessive and dominating….

But Blake, in a world of her own, barely noticed the two figures who approached her now, almost jumping out of her skin as one of them suddenly spoke.

"Hey, Blake. How's it going?"

Blake swung around instantly, placing a hand to her heart, her green eyes coming to land on Frankie and Amber.

Both women were standing there, hands cupped before them, with short black dresses on and Blake couldn't help but bristle slightly at the sight of them.

She liked these women…a lot! But seeing them, even now, after everything, just served as a reminder that these were Negan's wives…something which Blake would never be, down to her own stubborn choice. And although she was more than happy with that, it still stung to know that Negan, even now, still hadn't gotten rid of these women from his life…

"Sorry, we didn't mean to scare you," uttered the watery-eyed Amber, looking worriedly up at Blake.

But Blake just shook her head, removing her hand from her chest and instead sliding it down into the
back pocket of her tight, indigo jeans.

She had changed since earlier, now dressed in a pair of dark pants, and a black t-shirt.

"It's fine. Sorry, I was just...daydreaming," murmured the caramel-blonde woman, offering the two women a smile.

But Frankie shifted her weight onto one hip, folding her arms and cocking a bemused eyebrow up at Blake.

"Oh yeah…about anyone we know?" she enquired fiendishly.

And Blake, at once, knew what she was getting at.

It was probably no secret that Negan and Blake had been seen together, especially after their run-in with the two girls in hallway yesterday, as well as Simon catching the pair in bed together last night.

Word spread very very quickly in this place, and that was obviously helped by the visibly far-more cheerful leader of the Saviours, strutting cockily around the place, without his face being as thunderous as it had been of late.

But Blake shrugged, dropping her gaze to the dusty ground momentarily, before glancing up at the wives once again, shielding her eyes from the early-afternoon sun as she did so.

"Perhaps…" she said, pursing her lips and catching her mouth before it managed to curve up into a smile.

But Amber nudged her in the side gently with her arm.

"It's ok to be happy, y'know?" said the meek-looking blonde girl, shyly. "You being around….it's made our lives so much better….like, you have no idea how much!"

Blake gave a gulp at her words, tilting her head to the side slightly.

These women really had been through so much, and Blake felt nothing but utter compassion for them….

They had obviously gone to great lengths to protect, not only themselves, but people they cared about too…..and that was a lot to ask for in this big, bad world….for someone to provide that for them.

Blake wavered, opening her mouth to speak, but somehow she was unable to come out with any words.

And it was only when Frankie took Blake's free hand in hers, did she stare up at the red head, giving a short, shaky sigh.

"Listen, we miss you….and we came to ask….well, if you wanted, maybe, to come by tonight?" Frankie asked, her eyes imploring and honest. "We were all saying how much fun it was when you came up and played drinking games with us."

"Yeah," interrupted Amber. "We don't get to socialise with many people here. A-And we could play some music….I know Dwight's got some CDs stashed away somewhere, and we have plenty of wine!"

At this Blake couldn't help but smile, biting her lip and looking back and forth between the two
That genuinely sounded lovely.

"I'd love that, thanks," Blake replied, with a warm softness to her voice, so happy to have women like these in her life.

She had been so stupid to think of the wives as rivals to her, when at the end of the day, her peers seemed to be far more aligned to her than they were even to Negan himself.

Frankie gave her hand a tight squeeze, as Amber looked happily on.

"Ok then, we'll see you later then….about sevenish?" she asked, looking excited, as Blake gave a nod.

"See you at seven then," she replied gently, as the women waltzed slowly away, giving her a last wave as they did so.

In a good mood now, Blake, an hour later was now stood next to one of the greenhouses, picking ripened gooseberries growing on a large bush against it, along with two other Saviours, a husband and wife named John and Joyce.

They were both in their late fifties, but as fit as anything and certainly both knew their way around the garden. They were very friendly and had taken Blake under their wing, showing her the correct way to plant certain types of vegetables, and getting stuck in wherever they could.

John had just been regaling them with the story of how he had tried to save Joyce from a heard of walkers and had ended up accidentally going around in a giant circle, and instead of leading them away, had accidently brought the herd back to her.

Blake laughed hard, shaking her head as Joyce tutted beside them, wagging her finger at her husband.

"He was seriously in my bad books after that, I can tell you!" she giving a laugh of her own. …

…but suddenly her bright face fell slightly, as her eyes drifted over Blake's shoulder, as did John's....and it was barely a moment later that they turned from Blake suddenly, busying themselves with work inside the greenhouse.

But at this, Blake couldn't help but roll her eyes, for there was only one person who seemed to garner this sort of reaction out of people. …

Negan.

And Blake turned on her heel, suddenly arching her eyebrow up towards the man himself, marching across the yard toward her, with Lucille balanced against one shoulder and a shit-eating grin plastered across his long, bearded features.

Today he had a scowling Laura and a tall and looming Danny both shuffling behind him, carrying what looked like a veritable feast, with plates piled high full of sandwiches, bowls of chips and even cookies of varying descriptions.

And Blake, flicking her long caramel-hair back over her shoulder, folded her arms over her t-shirt-clad chest, eyeing him a little confusedly.
"What all this?" she questioned, staring up into Negan's cocky face.

But the dark-haired Saviour merely shrugged, coming to a stop just in front of her and leaning back against his heels, arching his back as he surveyed her.

"Well, being the fuckin' gentleman I am, I just thought I'd bring you and these fine folks out some lunch," he said in a simpering voice. "But considerin' how fuckin' ungrateful you're soundin', Peaches...I mean, fuck, I might just take all this shit back to the kitchens instead."

But despite his words, he gave a nod without taking his eyes off Blake, as Laura and Danny to place the plates of food down onto a small picnic bench in the centre of the walled garden.

"Bon-appetit!" Negan yelled obnoxiously, not only her, but the surrounding workers, causing Blake to roll her eyes so hard, she almost gave herself a headache doing so.

A few of the Saviours looked up from their work, looking extremely nervous at his presence here.

It was obvious that they had very little to do with the man in question, and they, of course, weren't to blame about not taking risks regarding Negan's kindness. After all, his unpredictability was one of the things that made him just so frightening to people.

Blake gave a small, faux-tired sigh, taking charge and stepping forwards, shoving past Negan as she did so and bumping her shoulder against his leather-clad one as she went…making her way over to the plates of food, piled up high.

She certainly was hungry, having had nothing more than an apple to eat this morning and she couldn't deny that some of those sandwiches looked delicious.

She picked one up, shooting Negan a look as she did so.

"Since when have you ever been a gentleman Negan?" she asked teasingly, before taking a big bite of the sandwich and strolling back past him once again.

But Negan just arched his back, his eyebrows shooting up into his hairline, as he lowered Lucille from his shoulder, instead gesturing to Blake with the sharp end of it.

"Well, ex-fuckin'-cuse me, Doll-face," uttered the dark-haired man in carrying voice. "I give you pizza, a night under the stars, I let you sleep in my goddamn bed, AND I go the fuck down on you. And you're still sayin' I ain't a fuckin' gentleman?! Jeez, Sweetheart, what more can I fuckin' do?!"

Blake meant to scold him, but merely burst into laughter at his words, her face brightening up.

God, had he really just admitted to going down on her, in front of, not only his generals, but these lower ranking Saviours too?

Between the pair of them passed a lingering look now, as Negan grinned back at her, knowing, of course, exactly what he had said and meaning every word.

"Fine," Blake murmured back smirking. "I guess you've got me there."

And Negan merely continued to grin back at her now, his chocolate eyes roving across her features...gazing at her like she was just his favourite thing in this entire world.

But after a moment or two, Negan tore his eyes away, gazing around at the garden interestedly.

"So THIS is where all the goddamn magic happens, huh?" he commented, plucking a gooseberry off
of a nearby bush and tossing it into his mouth.

"No, don't, that's not-" Blake began, suddenly frowning, but it was too late as Negan made a face.

"Shit, that is notfuckin' ripe," he winced as he swallowed the piece of fruit with a pained grimace, causing Blake to chuckle and take another bite of her sandwich.

"And that's why you're in charge of the intimidation," she said smartly, turning back toward the greenhouse, where John and Joyce were busying themselves hurriedly, obviously trying as hard as they could to keep under Negan's radar. "And I'm in charge of this place."

But Blake had barely been turned away for a second or two, when she felt a stiff body press itself up against her from behind…

She smiled now, as a gloved hand slipped around her middle and a scratchy mouth reached her ear.

"Hmmm, that sound about fuckin' right," he began in husky tone, now speaking to her and only her. "Sooo. You wanna find a nice shady spot where I can remind you just how much of an intimidating fuckin' gentleman I can be to you, Peaches?"

Blake knew at once what he was taking about, the tops of her cheeks now reddened slightly, knowing full well—that despite Negan whispering, John and Joyce were still in earshot.

The caramel-blond woman pursed her lips together gently, feeling herself growing warm now beneath his touch. But she held-off.

"I've got work to do.." she purred back in return, slowly turning around into his arms and pressing her body into his, as Negan settled himself down on the arm of the nearby picnic bench.

The dark-haired Saviour, pulling her in towards him and allowing her to stand in between his spplayed legs, gazed up at her, biting down on his lip, looking as though he was almost in awe of her now.

"You sure about that, Darlin'?" he asked smiling. "'Cause I'm sure my people won't mind if you took a quick fuckin' lunch break?"

Blake bit down on her own lips….contemplating how it would feel to have Negan inside her now….a heat pooling inside her underwear at the thought…. 

…but she merely, sighed, tilting her head and offering the dark-haired man an earnestly apologetic sort-of look.

"I'm sorry…" she said gently, lifting her hand to Negan's long, bearded cheek and parting her lips as she did so, her green eyes meeting with his. "Thanks for the lunch though…and, you know, you're more than welcome to stay and help out here instead for the afternoon, right?"

She raised a playful eyebrow towards him, watching as he scoffed, admiring the teasing look dancing its way across her face.

"Sweetheart, if I ain't screwin' your brains out up against that goddamn greenhouse then I ain't gonna be workin' in it, that's for fuckin' sure!" Negan tutted, as John and Joyce, reddened and hurriedly ushered each other out of 'said'-greenhouse, looking thoroughly embarrassed.

But Blake just rolled her eyes, as Negan got to his feet, leaning into her instead.
"Daddy, ain't no fuckin' farmer, Doll-face..." he growled in a low voice, into Blake's ear causing shivers to run down her spine and her breath to catch in her throat slightly as he eyed her. Knowing just how much he was able to drive her utterly crazy with his words alone. "Daddy's a king of this goddamn empire."

And with that, Blake blinked up through long thick lashes, taking a small step into him, raising her chin and bringing herself up to her full height, as their lips brushed.

She wrinkled her nose...

"That make me the Queen then?" she murmured back in a vixen-like voice.

And Negan could only smile into her mouth deliciously now.

"From day fuckin' one, Peaches..." he said, before his mouth met with hers...kissing at her pink lips gently.

This was almost the pair's first public display of affection...almost....

But Blake was long past caring about what anyone thought of her.

She was just here having some fun...living her life the way she wanted.

She was well-liked...she had Negan...she had her friends, the wives...what else did she need?

But suddenly something tugged at the back of her heart and in the pit of her stomach....a feeling like even now, there was still something missing in her life...and Blake was fully aware of just what that was....

She pulled away after a few seconds....breaking from the kiss, long before it was over, causing Negan to frown, opening his eyes and gazing down at her questioningly.

"You alright, Sweetheart?" he asked his voice gentler now than before.

But Blake gave a nod, pressing her hand to his leather-clad forearm and giving it a short reassuring squeeze.

"Yeah, I'm fine," she lied, licking at her lips and taking a short step back from the dark-haired man before her.

Negan's eyes lingered upon her for a long few seconds before he lifted his hand, scratching along his top lip with his finger.

"So I'll see you later then, for our poker game tonight? I told the boys and Arat not to go too fuckin' hard on you on your first session with us..." Negan began cheerfully, but trailed off, as Blake pursed her lips, wincing. "What? You already got plans or somethin', Doll-face?"

His scoffed his words playfully, as Blake pouted.

"Well, actually...I do...." she uttered, staring up at him now, as a small frown knitting its way between his brows. "Frankie and Amber asked if I wanted to come by later...have some drink with them and the others."

Negan blinked at her for a short moment, as Blake felt both Laura and Danny look up at her, from behind Negan, simultaneously.
But it wasn't a second later, that a small grin danced its way over Negan's lips.

"You seriously blowin' me off again, Darlin'? For what? A goddamn girls night?" he asked, running his tongue over his line of white teeth.

But Blake just smiled coyly.

"Maybe I am..." she said shrugging, cocking her head to the side, and tugging on her lip. "We're just gonna have some wine, listen to some music-

"...Talk about boys, braid you hair, have a fuckin pillow fight...practice making out with each other?" Negan interrupted in a wholly teasing voice.

But Blake on this occasion didn't roll her eyes, she merely gave a nod.

"Mmmhmmm, yeah, of course," she said brightly. "Oh, but first thing on our agenda is all getting together to talk about the size of your dick..."

Negan almost at once narrowed his eyes and pointed his finger at her, shooting her a mock-warning look, as he turned on his heel, arching his back as he did so.

"Hmmm, that fuckin' so?" he uttered in an irritated voice. "Well when you get bored of talking shit with your girlfriends, Darlin', you're more than welcome to join us for poker night. You might even turn out to be my good luck fuckin' charm. You and my Lucille of course..."

And at this, Blake DID roll her eyes, tutting and folding her arms over her chest once again.

"Goodbye," Negan," she said firmly before he could say another word.

And with that, shooting Blake one last look, Negan, grinning from ear to ear, strolled easily away, raising Lucille in his hand in a wave over his shoulder.

"Bye, Peaches..."

And with that he disappeared off inside, followed closely by Laura and Danny, who pulled the metal door to the inside, shut behind them, with a loud, metal clang....

....leaving Blake shaking her head and smiling to herself, as she turned and headed finally back to work.
Pants and Little Black Dresses

It was just after seven by the time Blake, having changed out of her gardening clothes, instead now wearing a plaid button down shirt and a pair of clean black jeans, stopped outside the large looming doors to the wives quarters, up on the third floor.

It had been a long time since she had been up here, not since Mia had been around, so it wasn't surprising that memories of the small child being in this room with her, made her feel a little nervous about being here.

Despite how happy she was right now, there was certainly a loss linger ing at her mind. An empty space where she felt there needed to be….well, just something.

She was certain that the alcohol that the wives had promised her would help.

But Blake steadied herself now, giving a sigh and wiping down her hands on the sides of her jeans, before she promptly knocked on the wood-panelled door with a gentle 'rat-a-tat-tat'.

From behind the panel she heard a brief shuffle of footsteps, before the door was suddenly tugged open by the dark-haired Tanya (dressed of course, in a knee-length black lbd) who gave a bright smile as she spotted the caramel-blonde woman instantly.

"Blake!" she said her face brightening, as she called back over her shoulder, opening the door wide for Blake to step through. "Everyone, Blake's here!"

At once Blake gazed around the large push room, to see all four of the other wives milling about, all turning to her and smiling.

"Yay, now we can start our fun," said Michelle, who had the smoothest-looking black skin and long hair flowing down her back, padding over toward the large makeshift bar in the far corner of the room, where six dusty old wine glasses already sat.

They had obviously been awaiting her arrival.

Blake rubbed her lips together, sliding her hands down into the back pockets of her jeans, feeling more than a little self-conscious now, as all eyes came to rest on her.

"It's really good to see you," said Tanya, shutting the door gently closed and hurrying over to Blake's side, her hand finding the crook of Blake's elbow. "We were saying how much we missed you….so thanks for coming."

From their seats on the couch, Layla, Frankie and Amber all nodded in unison.

"Yeah, I mean, being made to chill out with Eugene is ok….but that's about the extent of the people who actually want to hang out with us," said Frankie wrinkling her nose slightly as she spoke, her tone matter-of-fact, just as Layla cut-in, rolling her eyes.

"And I'm pretty sure that it's only because he likes to get a good look at our tits.." she murmured, as Frankie nodded, raising her eyebrows in agreement.

Blake softened at this.

She hadn't thought of perhaps how few people would want to actually get involved with the
wives….hang out with them on a daily basis.

They were of course, off-limits to all the men, so the male contingency here would probably rather steer well clear, rather than face Negan's wrath. And the women….well….it would, of course, be easy for other women to judge these girls for their choices.

But before Blake could dwell on this sorry fact much longer, Michelle suddenly spoke from across the room, plucking down several bottles from a shelf.

"Right, I have four bottles of red wine, some tequila…." 

At this, Frankie made a face.

"….some vodka…but it looks a bit cloudy….and two beers…” Michelle listed, as she read the peeling labels on each bottle, placing the down on the bar.

"Oooh ooh, beer for me!" Layla, shouted with enthusiasm, lifting her arm, still seated as Michelle promptly passed her one of the green bottles. "Oooh, European! Nice."

"Blake, what do you want?” asked Tanya, pulling her over towards the bar.

Blake glanced at the bottles a little unsurely.

God, why did she feel just as nervous now as when she had first come here?

"Wine is fine for me," she murmured easily, as Michelle nodded and began wrestling with uncorking the three bottles.

"Ugh, god, I miss screw-tops," murmured the black woman in dismay, as Layla scoffed.

"And I miss my vibrator," she said in a simpering voice. "But you don't see me complaining about it."

But Frankie rolled her eyes getting to her feet and going to help Michelle with the cork. "Lay, you complain about it every single day!"

From the couch, Amber gave a laugh, staring at her friends. The blonde woman was sat now, hugging at a cushion, looking as meek and as timid as she always did.

Blake wondered what had happened to make her this way….so quiet and so sad. Was it Negan? Or something or somebody else?

But she caught Blake's eye suddenly, patting the sofa cushion beside her for Blake to take a seat.

Blake immediately complied, as Tanya leant in towards them.

"Shall I put some music on?" she said making finger guns with her hands, looking slightly dorky, as Blake smiled warmly.

"What do you have?" she asked, as Tanya bounced over towards a pile of CD's sat next to a battered-old boom-box on a large side-table just a few feet away from them.

"Um, well, we've got 'Driving hits of the 90s', Styx, Aerosmith.." she read, flipping through the CDs one by one. "Ooh!"

She suddenly held one up to show them.
Frankie nodded, as Layla 'whooped' sarcastically, passing a glass of wine each over to Blake and Amber as she took a swig of her own beer.

Tanya hurriedly stuck the cd into the player and started the music, as Michelle and Frankie took a seat on one side of Blake, holding their wine glasses up towards her.

"Cheers, girls…" Michelle uttered. "And cheers to Blake for coming here to see us."

"Yeah we don't get to do this very often….you think we would…but every day just blends in the next cooped up in here, y'know?" said Frankie explaining to Blake.

Blake nodded at this.

"When was the last time you all went outside the fences?" she asked in a quiet voice.

But all the women looked to Amber, as Tanya took a seat beside Layla, picking up her own glass of red wine.

"I was the last one who came here," uttered the meek blonde girl, not making eye contact with anyone. "…w-with my boyfriend…..my…uh…..well, he's my ex now….Mark…a-and my Mom. That was probably just over a year ago now…"

Blake nodded, her own eyes falling to the floor.

"And so… after you've arrived here….what? None of you have been out there since?" she asked, looking a little confused. But it was Frankie who spoke up next.

"Why would we? We're not like you Blake, we don't know anyone else outside these walls….and we've all been out there, you've seen what it's like, its horrible," she said shaking her head.

Blake understood, of course she did. For this world was a bleak and terrible place.

But here these women were safe.

She took a long sip of her wine, as Beyonce sprung into a cheery chorus from the boom-box behind her.

"So what are your people like? Where you came from? You knew Daryl too right?" asked Layla titling her head to the side and letting her long brown hair fall over her tanned shoulders.

Blake had forgotten that these women had met Daryl after his stint here at the Sanctuary.

"I…uhh…" she began trying to search for the appropriate words. "They're fine…"

But it stung Bale to even think of the people she had left behind now, after what had happened back there at Alexandria.

"Rick, the leader there…" she continued, shaking her head. "He's kinda different to Negan, but it's not better there….well, it wasn't for me anyway."

Blake's eyes dropped to her lap, remembering her days and nights spent hiding from David, from his fists and his constant hurtful words.

"I'm sorry," said Layla, shaking her head. "I forgot about your fiancé…like we said before, it's a
good thing he's gone. No one deserves to treated like that."

The women all gave a murmur of agreement around Blake now.

But the caramel-blonde woman just gave a short sigh.

"I know Negan is far from perfect…" she said toying with the stem of her wine glass now. "But when you compare him to David…"

She let a difficult gulp trail down her throat now…as painful memories flooded her mind.

"I felt like I couldn't breathe when he was around me…like any moment he was going to hurt me, or say something that crushed me just that little bit more. B-But Negan…from the first day I got here, he just…he helped me become my old self again…the way I was before the world went to shit…"

She looked up, her eyes meeting with the women surrounding her.

"Look, I know it must sound crazy," she said tilting her head gently to the side. "But this place….with Negan…it feels like more of a home that any place I've ever been before."

And that was the truth, Blake knew that now.

At her side Frankie placed her hand to Blake's, giving it a small squeeze.

"When you came here, we all thought you'd hate us. Because, hey, everyone else does around here…." she said bluntly, drawing Blake's green eyes up to hers. "But you didn't. And we knew it was because you'd been through the same crap that we had, and so you weren't judging us for it, like everyone else was. So whatever you chose to do here. Whoever you choose to be with. We're not going to judge you either."

And Blake looked around to see all of the women around her nodding back earnestly.

She felt like she could cry, almost overwhelmed by the support of the wives.

For friendship…true friendship and loyalty, well, it was a rare thing in this world.

"Thanks," she said in a mere whisper, her voice breaking slightly as she spoke, truly grateful to them.

But Frankie gave her hand another squeeze.

"Like Amber said earlier, when you're here, things aren't as bad for us," uttered the red-head smiling gently.

On the couch across from Blake, Tanya gave a nod in agreement.

"Oh, god you have no idea, what it was like when you weren't around…when you left….like, his mood swings were crazy!" she said looking slightly distraught at just the memory.

"Yeah, I have no idea what you do to him, but you know he's pretty much infatuated with you, right?" Layla chipped in, taking a sip of her beer. "I mean he's like some big puppy-dog when he's with you."

"A-And when he thought you and Steve were together," continued Tanya hurriedly, but trailed off, suddenly looking slightly guilty.

Blake remembered then how Negan had called Tanya up to his quarters to see him, the memory
"We didn't do anything," said Tanya suddenly, reading her thoughts, her eyes sad and honest and full of worry, staring at Bake almost pleadingly now. "I swear. He just made me sit there and read a magazine. He was just trying to make you jealous."

But Blake nodded, her eyes dropping now to her wine glass.

"Yeah, I figured," she lied, but still unable to stop that bitter feeling of utter jealousy coursing through her veins.

This was harder than she thought. Sitting here knowing that each one of these women had been with Negan intimately on many, many occasions.

But the wives sitting around Blake obviously picked up on the fact that this was all upsetting her, exchanging solemn glances with one another.

"Blake, seriously," said Layla, leaning forward, her eyes wide and truthful. "Since you came on the scene, he's not been with any of us. He worships you. That's obvious for anyone to see."

Michelle nodded too.

"Yeah, this place has changed since you've been here, Blake," she said smiling gently. "You've made this place better and you've made him better. And that's good."

Blake worried at her lips for a short moment before nodding.

"Thanks," she murmured in soft voice, feeling slightly better now at their words.

"But actually…while we're on the subject of that asshole," Tanya said, almost immediately wincing at her own words. "Sorry…"

But Blake merely smirked and gave a wave of her hand, gesturing for Tanya to carry on as she took a small sip of wine.

"…well there was kinda something we wanted to ask you…" continued the dark-haired woman.

"Tan, not now…." Frankie said a little scoldingly, but Blake gazed between the women curiously.

"What is it?" she asked with interest.

But Tanya looked a little embarrassed, smoothing down the front of her black dress.

"Well," she said giving a nervous gulp. "We were kind of wondering…and you don't have to, of course…."

The wives all shook their heads, all of them inching forward in their seats eagerly.

"We were wondering whether you might be able to talk to Negan," said Tanya, taking a shallow breath in. "A-And maybe ask him if….well, if he might let us…..wear pants."

Blake blinked.

Huh?

"W-Wear pants?" she asked, sounding a little confused, as Frankie, to her right, nodded hurriedly.
"Yeah, well we're kinda stuck wearing these all day..." she said tugging at her dress, obviously being careful with her words. "A-And it's Fall now...and this place can get kinda drafty in winter."

"Of course!" said Blake almost instantly, frowning slightly, unable to believe that something she took for granted in her day-to-day life was such an important issue for these women. "I'll get Simon to bring some up to you tomorrow or something...there are loads down in the marketplace. Or I probably have some in my closet that'll fit you. And sweaters and t-shirts too."

"Oh, really?" said Frankie, sounding ecstatic at something as simple as jeans. "Are you serious? Because that would be amazing!"

And before Blake could say another word, Amber at her side gave her a huge squeeze around the middle, causing Blake herself to redden slightly at this grand gesture.

Right now, whether Negan agreed or not, she was determined to get these woman into proper clothes, and not some stupid old dresses.

And if he had problem with that he could blame her for it.

"I mean, if you want to, we can go to my room right and now and try some stuff on...." she offered, giving the woman a smile. "Like I said, I've got a closet full of stuff...all new...some of it doesn't really suit me anyway...."

That was the truth. On being given her room here at the Sanctuary, Negan had provide her with an entire wardrobe full of brand new clothes, most of them with the tags still on. And Blake, having survived with almost nothing for all those many months out on the road, didn't want for anything much these days.

Just a few simple items would do her just fine. And anything else she wanted she would just get from the marketplace anyway.

"Really?" asked Tanya, raising an eyebrow at Blake. "Because that would be so good!"

The women all around nodded, once more, in agreement, as Blake gave a fiendish grin.

"Then let's go..." she said draining her glass and getting to her feet, pulling Frankie up with her.

Michelle gave an exited squeal.

"Ok, but I'm bringing the wine bottles!" she cried, tottering over to the makeshift bar and grabbing the three uncorked bottles and handing them out amongst the women, Blake taking one and taking a long sip, before passing it to Frankie, who slipped her hand into Blake's.

God, was this what it was like to have friends? It had been long that Blake had almost forgotten!

The red-head took a long swig, before coughing and wiping at her mouth, making a face.

"Ugh, red wine is NOT my favourite," she said making a face, as Blake laughed and the pair headed over towards the door to the wives quarters, followed closely by Amber.

It was quiet out in the long dark hallway now, but the corridor was soon filled with life, as the women, with Tanya kicking off her heels just outside their door and Layla threading her arm around Michelle's shoulders, screeched loudly as they walked, arm in arm, chatting loudly with excitement filling the air.
It was of course, obvious to anyone, that these women, including Blake herself were not big drinkers….and they definitely weren't privy to being out this late unescorted.

And they had barely made it to the stairs leading down to the second floor, when Layla and Michelle turned back to Blake, brandishing their bottle of wine between them.

"Blake!" Michelle cried loudly, her voice echoing through the hallways. "Come on, you can help us escape! We can run away...like right now!"

"What? In three-inch heels?!" said Frankie dismissively, giving a laugh and taking another long sip from the bottle of wine in her hand.

But Michelle waved her hand at Frankie before staggering over to Blake and grabbing her free hand pulling her forward.

"Yes, Blake'll take care of us, she knows her shit!" Michelle shrieked, as the rest of the girls began to descend the metal staircase precariously.

"Yes, but I'm not killing any of those dead things," Amber cut in sounding a little worried, giving a shudder.

But this only caused Michelle to give an enormous roll of her eyes, grasping hold of the handrail and heading off down the steps behind the young blonde girl.

"Hmmm, I don't think I'd survive out there very long anymore either...even WITH Blake's help," Layla uttered matter-of-factly. "I've been cooped up in here wearing this crap for too long."

And with that she tugged at the hem of her short black dress.

But Blake just cocked her head to the side, as she followed the women down the stairs, Frankie still holding tightly onto her other hand.

"Well don't worry," she said, her cheeks feeling a little flushed and her words ever so slightly slurred. "I have soooo many outfits you girls can help yourself to."

At this, Frankie, at Blake's side, gave her hand a tight squeeze, pressing herself close to her.

"Can you just move in with us, please?" she asked in a slightly pleading voice, as a murmur of agreement came from the surrounding women.

"Jeez, Frank, don't make us sound too needy or anything!" Layla said in sarcastic voice, that made Blake smirk.

"Well, I'm just saying..." Frankie whined, taking another sip from the wine bottle before offering it to Blake. "Maybe if she was in charge of this place instead of Negan then it would be so good for all of us..."

But Amber turned, shooting the red-head a worried sort-of-look.

"Shush, Frank!" she warned. "If someone hears you talking like that.....well, you know what they did to Mark....a-and Dwight too! They'll do the same to us y'know!"

Blake paled suddenly, glancing up at the blonde girl.

So had Amber boyfriend suffered the same fate as Dwight had?
Had Negan done that?

In Blake's slightly inebriated state, that idea was indeed a little hard to swallow…

To think that Negan could have done that to anyone…

Of course, she knew how brutish and cruel he could be…but hearing that, so stark, was an odd thing to take in.

A hard lump appeared in her throat, and so, taking Amber's lead, she changed the subject hurriedly, thinking it was probably for the best.

"Y'know, I could've been living up with you girls this whole time, if I'd accepted Negan's offer of becoming one of his wives," she said, lowering her own eyes to the ground, before taking another long drink of wine, before wiping at her mouth delicately, as the group of them reached the very bottom of the staircase, coming out onto Blake's floor.

But Tanya turned her head to look at the caramel-blond woman.

"I'm glad that you didn't though," she said shaking her head. "Look at you now. You've practically got the run of this place. And Negan likes you too much to do anything to stop that now."

Blake felt the top of her cheeks turning slightly pink, knowing that what Tanya said was true.

She stumbled slightly, taking another sip of wine, feeling the room-temperature red alcohol slide easily down her throat, before pulling the bottle from her lips, brandishing it aloft a little tipsily.

"He calls me a queen, you know that?" she said lifting her chin and giving a slightly-arrogant smirk.

And Frankie, bumping Blake with her hip, gave a goading 'ooooOOoooho' in unison with a couple of the others, causing Blake to burst into laughter.

"Well it's better than some of the things that David used to call me anyway," she murmured quietly, shaking her head in bemused honesty as they reached the door to her room.

Michelle at once bounced on the balls of her feet, clapping her hands together, as the girls all swayed on the spot, all seeming more than a little dunk right now.

And it was Blake that stepped forwards, giving her door a brief shove open and beckoning for all the girls to follow her.

"Come on," she said with a grin, pulling Frankie along behind her, as the women all squealed in excitement and headed inside.

Thirty long minutes later and all six of them were currently squeezed into Blake's bigger than average room, all in varying stages of undress, screaming and yelling with laughers and giggles….red wine spilling all over Blake's brown carpeted floor.

Not that she cared of course. Blake hadn't had this much fun in a long time, all of this reminding her of drunken nights out she had spent with her girlfriends in college and the short time after that…getting far too drunk on cheap alcohol at home, before heading out to bars, teetering on high heels, wearing dressed that barely reached their asses and hugging each other after getting emotional in club bathrooms over a lost tube of lipstick.

Blake had been through enough shit lately, to know that she deserved a night like this….where she
could let her hair down…without any consequences…and without the dark-haired Saviour here either.

Not that she wasn't forward to seeing him of course…her tipsy thoughts drifting to him and all the bad, bad things he could do to her tonight.

The caramel-blond woman, who wasn't even in her own clothes anymore, instead was currently shucking the silky black dress she had worn for Negan last night, back onto her shoulder's tying it up at the waist and flaunting it for the surrounding women, who all sat and stood draped over Blake's bed and chairs.

"What do you think?" she purred, wrinkling her nose, trying to look seductive as she twirled around on the spot, gaining a few admiring 'whoooop' s from the wives. "I wore it last night."

"Oh yeah?" said Layla, arching an eyebrow poignantly, grinning. "And I'm guessing Negan liked it? Because, Blake, I know that we're friends and everything, but in that dress, even I'd fuck you."

Frankie and Tanya screeched at Layla's words, as the dark haired, bi woman just shrugged drunkenly and stared back at them. "What? I would!"

Blake gave a giggle, picking up the wine bottle from the table and giving it a shake, hearing just a few last drops of alcohol sloshing around in the bottom, before pulling a face.

"We're out too," said Amber who was reclining on her side on Blake's bed, lifting up her own empty bottle.

"There's some down in the stores downstairs…the men's private stash…" said Layla after a second or two, gazing around at everyone smirking devilishly.

"Let's go then," said Blake, slurring her words slightly, as she padded towards the door, almost toppling over on the way, as Frankie laughed behind her getting to her feet.

Maybe it was the alcohol talking…making her feel almost invincible tonight…or maybe it was the fact that both she and the wives had been right. Negan had elevated her to this status here in the Sanctuary. So it would be stupid of her not to take advantage of that….right?

"What? Now?" Frankie asked with a grin, smoothing down the light blue jeans that Blake had given to her to wear, but almost bowling into Blake as she did so.

But the caramel-blond woman just wrinkled her nose, smiling as she caught a hold of Frankie before the two of them toppled over.

"Yep….now," said Blake bit down on her lip and beckoning for the wives to all follow her. "Come on."

And with that, the five women all let out delighted, excited, tipsy shrieks ,before getting properly dressed and following Blake swiftly out of the door….

….on the hunt to find more alcohol before the night was out.

"Fuck, I fold," said Negan, lifting his glass of whisky to his lips as he threw down his cards onto the table before him, giving a grinning sigh.

But Simon, who was sat in a chair opposite him around the table, beside Arat, Dwight and a couple of Negan's other men, more than half way through a couple of solid hours of poker, shot the dark-
haired Saviour a bemused look, raising an eyebrow in his direction.

"Now, excuse me for talkin' out of turn here, Boss," said Simon in a goading voice, his voice polite, but full of sarcasm - a trait which Negan very much appreciated in his right-hand man. "But you've lost every single game tonight, and yet somehow you're still in a good fucking mood!"

Negan drained his glass, his fifth of the night, before setting it down onto the table and refilling it from the bottle of Jack that sat just to his right, smirking now.

But Simon eyed him carefully, before dropping his eye to the set of cards in his hand.

"Wouldn't have something to do with the gal I caught you in bed with last night, would it, Boss?" Simon murmured fiendishly as Negan filled his glass with a quart of whisky, before bringing it to his lips once again.

A grin slipped over his long, tanned and bearded features, as he gave a satisfied hiss, before setting down his glass once again.

"May-fuckin'-be, Si," he said giving a nod, and toying with his abandoned playing cards. "Although I really don' fuckin see what it's got to do with any of you boys."

A couple of men almost immediately looked away, avoiding Negan's eye at once, but Simon, who know Negan too well, merely smiled back, giving a shrug.

"It's just good ta' see you happy, Boss," he said, and from the look on his face, of course expecting the reaction he finally got from Negan. The dark-haired Saviour almost immediately raising both his eyebrows and rolling his chocolate eyes at his friend.

"Careful, Si," he said in a mock-voice of warning. "Don't want you goin' soft on me…"

And his right-hand man could only laugh back, pushing a couple of high-quality cigars towards the ever growing pile in the centre of the table.

"Right, I call-" he uttered.

But before he could say even another word….there came a sudden loud shrieking from the corridor…followed by peals of laughter and the sound of several pairs of hurried footsteps clack-clack-claking along the long hallway outside the door to the dimly lit rec room.

At once, Simon and Arat, being the good soldiers they were, snatched up their hand-guns, gazing up towards the source of the noise.

But the sound soon dissipated, as Negan gave a frown, sucking at his teeth and scraping back his chair with a harsh growl, getting slowly to his feet.

And it was only when standing, did the dark-haired Saviour realise just how inebriated he fucking was….having had more to drink tonight, that he had in a good while, probably having had more than half a bottle of whisky to himself in fact.

He narrowed his eyes, languidly grasping up Lucille who was propped up against his chair.

If there was trouble, Negan would see to it. With fucking glee too!

But just at that very moment, another loud laugh came from just outside the door.

"Ahhaha…wait!" came a sudden voice, a very fucking familiar voice. "I can't carry three bottles!"
There was sudden sound of heels echoing through the hallway, as another voice joined the first.

"Here, come on."

And with that, after another tipsy-sounding bout of giggles, the sound of hurried footsteps disappeared once again off down the corridor.

But Negan had recognised that voice…

Fuck….she really knew how to drive him fucking crazy, didn't she?

He gave a sigh now, lifting a hand to his face and dragging his long fingers down his chin, as he gazed up towards the ceiling, shaking his head.

"Sir?" questioned Arat, sliding back her own chair and gazing at him questioningly.

But Negan waved his free hand at her, before grinning down at the ground, giving a long whining laugh, as he strode toward the door eagerly.

"Don't worry," he said grinning widely and showing off his line of straight white teeth. "I'll fuckin' take care of this one…"
Broken glass, cut feet, and giggling fits during sex

Blake raced down the hallway on bare feet, as Frankie and the others ran ahead, all of them laughing wildly in their drunken state, as they clutched stolen bottles of wine to their chests.

"Oh my god, if anyone finds out about this!" Tanya, with an elated laugh, as she span around at the far end of the hallway, the six of them swiftly ducking down a darkened corridor unfrequented by many Saviours, and used mostly for carting inside scavenged items brought in from the back of the trucks.

Blake, feeling very tipsy and out of breath, due to a combination of the running, the adrenaline pumping through her veins, and her constant uncontrollable giggles, ran as fast as her legs would carry her. Which was difficult, of course, on bare feet, hearing the sound of the wives' clack-clack-clacking of high heels ahead of her as she went.

She was still in her black dress (the only one of the women to be wearing one now, in fact, after their change of clothes back in Blake's room), her long caramel-hair flying behind her as she went.

"Hey!" she cried tipsily, trying hard to keep up with Frankie, giggling hard, as the others as they beckoned her to hurry. "Wait for me!"

She gave a squeal of drunken laughter rounding the corridor, grasping the two bottles of dusty red wine tightly to her chest.

…and something suddenly felt wrong….

And her squeal suddenly became a cry of agony, as she stopped suddenly in her running, limping now, as her eyes fell to her foot…

Oh, what the fuck?!

She stared down, squinting with slightly blurred and inebriated vision, to see that she had left a bloody footprint behind her…

…and another and another…

Blake wobbling slightly, tried to lift her foot, catching the tiniest of glimpse of something that resembled a small shard of glass sticking out of the bottom of her sole….

…but she was too unsteady for this, and without any warning, and, trying as hard as she could to save the two bottles of wine in her arms, Blake fell suddenly backwards, landing on her ass on the cold concrete floor of the corridor, with a loud bump.

"Fuck…owwww, that hurt!" she cried out, hearing the wives up ahead suddenly skid to a halt..

"Blake, what are you doing on the floor, come on, we have to go!" said Michelle with a cackle, as both she and Tanya ran back over to her.

But Blake fade a face and gave a small pout of her lips, giving a whimper.

"Ouch…my foot kinda hurts," she said pointing to the cut foot, with one of the bottles of wine, before staring up at the two women and the three other girls who suddenly appeared behind them.

But the wives were no longer paying any attention to her…
...instead, their eyes were now wide, the smiles gone from their faces...all of them staring up at something just over Blake's shoulder.

And all of a sudden, the sound of a long, carrying whistle carried through the corridor.

And Blake glanced around now, only to see a looming, shadowy figure strolling towards them....a familiar looking barbed wire-covered baseball-bat propped up against his shoulder.

She rolled her eyes giving the smallest of groans and hanging her head in drunken annoyance...knowing exactly what Negan's reaction would be to all this.

But the wives on the other hand, all looked terrified, gulps trailing down their throats, clutching the evidence of stolen bottles of alcohol in their hands.

There was of course nowhere to hide here in the darkened hallway...nowhere to run to...

And so they all just stood there, just a foot of two from Blake, as the sound of heavy footsteps echoed throughout the enclosed and dimly-lit space, before they came to a sudden stop just a foot or two away from the caramel-blond woman herself.

She closed her eyes for a moment....waiting...

...knowing exactly what was coming...

"Now as fuckin' awesome it is to see you ladies out and about alone...and wearin'...well, whatever it is you're fuckin' wearin'," uttered Negan in a gruff voice, pointing at all the wives with Lucille in one big sweeping gesture, and leaning as far back on his heels as he could possible go. " Does one of you want to tell me what the FUCK you're all doin'?"

But Blake gave a small frown, narrowing her eyes up at him.

Was it her drunkenness playing tricks on her or did he sound different tonight?

But dropping one of the bottles of wine down onto the floor with a clunk, she lifted a finger, pointing at up at him a little unsteadily.

"Uh, now that is none of your business," she said in an airy voice.

But Negan merely cocked an eyebrow up at her incredulously, and pointed swiftly down at her with the end of the barbed-wire covered baseball bat in his gloved hand.

"Oh, I will get to you later, Peaches," he growled matter-of-factly. "But for now-"

And with that, he stared up once again at the women stood all around looking sheepish.

"I want all that goddamn shit returned to the stores, and you ladies are gonna go to go back your room and change back in what I asked you to wear. We clear?"

The wives all immediately nodded, their eyes now on the floor.

But Blake wasn't standing for this.

She was drunk and feeling about as confident now as she was ever going to fucking get.

"No, they're not....and y'know what? Fuck you, Mr 'I carry a baseball bat and wear a leather jacket to try and make myself look cool'," she said pursing her lip together and trying as hard as she could
to get him to swim into focus. "I've told them they can wear what they like and if you've got a problem with that then it's me you're going to have to deal with."

Ok, her words sounded slightly slurred, granted, but she was happy with how she had handled that. Although the caramel-blonde woman could only watch now, as both of Negan's eyebrows shot up into his hairline.

Yeah yeah, she had heard it all before…and she knew she could handle any stupid cocky remarks that came out from his mouth now.

But just as he looked like he was about to retort, his gaze soon travelled down to her foot. "Jeeeesus Christ, Darlin', can I not leave you for two fuckin' minutes without you getting' yourself hurt or stagin' a fuckin' coup?!" he finally uttered, letting out a hard sigh, and running a hand down his bearded face exhaustedly. "Jeez, Y'know what, fine. Ladies, just scram, ok…go back to your fuckin' room and we'll talk about this tomorrow."

The wives all nodded, obviously relieved that Negan had decided to leave it at that, all of them shooting worried glances Blake's way as they went.

Suddenly Blake felt a wave of guilt suddenly wash over her. She hadn't meant to get any of them into trouble…watching as the five woman disappeared off around the corner. But it struck her as a sort of victory that all of them still clutched their bottles of stolen alcohol tightly to them as they went.

It was only a second later that she heard a door to the end of the corridor swing shut leaving just her and Negan alone now.

She raised her eyes insolently and accusingly at him, offering him nothing but a pouting frown as she folded her arms across her chest huffily.

"Happy now?" she snapped. "God, I can't even have one night of fun…"

Negan arched his back, blinking his eyes a couple of time in disbelief at what he was hearing.

"What? You think stealin' my shit and screamin' the goddamn place down is fuckin' fun, Sweetheart?" Negan asked swaying slightly as he spoke.

But Blake just gave a wave of her hand dismissively, tutting at him.

"I was just having a good night with my friends…just because they answer to you, doesn't mean I do," she said breezily, smacking her lips in a tispy manner and placing down both bottles of wine carefully. "You don't own me, Negan"

But Negan, pointed once again at her with the end of Lucille.

"No, but I fuckin' own that drink you've been pourin' down your throat all night," he said in a loud accusatory voice. "An' I might not own you, Peaches, but that don' mean I'm not fuckin' prepared to throw you over my goddamn knee."

But Blake was no longer listening, instead she was poking at her foot, jutting out her bottom lip.

"Ouch…y'know my foot kinda hurts…" she said with a slight whine.

At this Negan gave a huge roll of his eyes.
But it didn't take him a moment to let out another gruff sigh, before coming to crouch down beside her, his frowning eyes roving across her injured foot.

"That fuckin' glass?" he said, his hand drifting down to her bare ankle. "Christ, Darlin', you gotta be more fuckin' careful around this place. And don' fuckin' poke at it."

With that he shoved her hand away, much to Blake's utter annoyance.

"Come on, I'm takin' you to Carson," Negan finished, grasping at her hand gentler than Blake had expected him to.

She stared up into his face.

"You know, if I didn't know any better, I'd think you had a soft-spot for me," she said blinking up at the dark-haired man with wide green eyes, her mouth twitching up into a small smile.

With that, a grin slowly swept its way across Negan's face as he crouched there beside her, gazing at her now as though she was the strangest thing to him.

There was a lengthy pause, as he ran his tongue over his lips, giving the smallest of chuckles.

"Since the first moment I fuckin' met you, Sweetheart," he murmured curtly, as he eased himself slowly to his feet with a heavy groan, tugging her upright with him as he went.

Blake stood now, feeling slightly wobbly, as she put weight onto her foot for the first time.

"Oww," she uttered sharply, wincing, as she limped forwards, clutching hurriedly at Negan's sleeve.

But she almost immediately heard him let out a sigh.

"Here, hold this," he said suddenly shoving the smooth handle of Lucille into her hands.

And before she could even say another word, she felt his fingers slide suddenly under her thighs, and her entire body being swept from the ground.

"Wait, what're you doing?" she began, as she looped one of her arms automatically around Negan's neck, the other clutching tightly onto his pet baseball bat.

"What does it fuckin' look like I'm doin', Doll-face," he said in a huffy, growling voice. But Blake frowned down at him as he staggered slightly, readjusting his grip on her. "Christ, I am too fuckin' wasted for this shit tonight."

The caramel-blonde woman in his arms, cocked an unsteady eye at him.

"What? Wait a minute?...Wasted?!" she said blinking a couple of times. "Wait, you're drunk too?"

But Negan found his pace now, strolling easily down the long corridor, leaving the two bottles of red wine alone in the hallway behind them.

"That a fuckin' crime?" Negan uttered, repeating Blake's words from earlier, back to her, goadingly.

At this, Blake pursed her lips. "Well, no-" she began. But he quickly cut across her.

"Glad to fuckin' hear it. There I was, having a few drinks with the boys…playin' a little fuckin' poker and what do I fuckin' hear but you gals screaming the goddamn place down outside the fuckin' door," he said in a loud, carrying voice. "Now despite bein' half a bottle of Jack down, I'm the
fuckin' one takin' care of you, after I catch you incitin' a fuckin' riot and stealin' from my goddamn stores too! You know if you were anyone else I'd've already had Dwighty-boy getting' the iron hot and ready for ya."

"But I'm not anyone else," Blake uttered matter-of-factly, before looking sadly down at the floor for a second, feeling more than a little sorry for herself.

"It was only a few bottles y'know…" she said quietly, perhaps regretting her actions a little. "I just wanted to drink wine and look pretty tonight…is that such a crime?"

She plucked at her silk dress, before smoothing it down over her exposed thighs as neatly as she possibly could at this angle, held up in Negan's arms.

It was the truth. After the last few months, all she had really wanted to do was to let her hair down and look nice, forgetting all for her troubles and losses. Was that really too much to ask in this world?

But the dark-haired Saviour just chuckled.

"It ain't a crime," he replied. "But stealin' from me. That is….and you know I gotta be seen to be punishin' you for this."

But Blake just scowled at him now, her sadness dissipating as quickly as it had come. And with that she had lifted a finger, jabbing him in the chest with it.

"You punish me and I'll never have sex with you again, Negan…" she said warningly, as he moved in and out of focus.

At this Negan licked at his lips.

"Oh, Doll-face," he said in a slick and cocky tone. "I highly fuckin' doubt you could hold out on me for even a day."

But Blake gave a loud scoff, as the pair of them turned the corner.

"Oh, yeah try me," she uttered icily, narrowing her eyes as she finally focused on Negan's face, close to hers now. "But I think I can hold out on you, longer than you can hold out on me, Negan. I know how much you want me…"

He glanced her way, smirking now.

"That so?" he murmured in a light tone, causing Blake to give a devilish and drunken nod, leaning her lips into his ear.

She was way too drunk to be flirting, she knew that, but even so, the caramel-blonde woman couldn't help herself.

"Yhhmmm," she said in a deliciously breathy voice. "I know you like the way I get on my knees and suck your dick like a good little girl, Daddy."

Blake pulled back and at once saw Negan's eyes blacken with lust, as he ran his tongue over his lips, coming to a sudden halt and blinking slowly down at her.

The corridor was silent now, save for both of their heavy breaths coming harsh and ragged in their throats.

And it was only a second later that he spoke, growling out harshly in his half-inebriated state.
"Fuck. When were done with the Doc," he grunted out. "I am gonna bend you over his fuckin' trolley and screw your goddamn brains out, Princess. We clear?"

But Blake merely smiled naughtily.

"I told you you'd give in first," she said wrinkling her nose, as the dark-haired man looked back at her, giving a disapproving tut, backing up into a large set of doors and easing them both through.

He gave a growl. "Don't think I wasn't serious about throwin' you over my knee, Darlin'," he said, his low voice full of irritation.

But Blake was past caring now, glancing down at the barbed-wire covered bat in her hand.

"Uh, well I think Lucille might have something to say about that," Blake purred. "I think she likes me, y'know."

But this only caused Negan to grin, letting out the smallest of chuckles.

"Oh I think she probably fuckin' does by now, Peaches," he murmured, as they came to stop outside of a green door with peeling paint. "You wanna do the honours, Doll-face?"

Blake eyed him, she knew of course what he wanted her to do, but she refrained, instead lifting her hand and knocking a couple of times on the wood.

She tapped Negan's chest with her free hand as they patiently waited, gesturing for him to let her down, which he did, of course, dropping her gently to the floor.

"Ouch," murmured Blake, hopping slightly on her injured foot.

Ugh, from a standing position, she felt far more tipsy than she had just a moment ago, her head spinning slightly and making her feel ever so slightly giddy.

But to her side, Negan looked no better, and from this angle, Blake noticed him swaying slightly on his heels, his chocolate eyes barely focusing on her or anything else now, even as he took Lucille back from her grasp, watching as the door before them was tugged swiftly open.

Doctor Carson stood there now, looking ever so slightly harassed at this late hour, dressed in sweatpants and a t-shirt, his hair messy.

"Can I help you?" he asked in an insolent voice, his eyes reaching Negan, who just made a noise in the back of his throat, staring down at the doctor.

"I'm sure you fuckin' can, Doc" said Negan, grasping Blake's hand tightly in his own as she pulled her forwards gently, striding past the ruffled Carson and shoving past him and cockily stepping into the room. "Peaches here, has been in the fuckin' wars tonight."

Blake had been in here a few times since her arrival at the Sanctuary all those long weeks ago. The long room, where on one side, curtained off, was Carson's living quarters. And on the right-hand side, was a large makeshift hospital room, full of stocks of medicine and varying medical utensils, as well as a couple of long gurneys fitted with clean, white sheets.

Negan stopped half way inside the room, a Blake limped along behind him, giving small whimper now, as Carson rounded on her, pulling her swiftly away from the dark-haired Saviour, leading her instead carefully over to one of the beds.
"That's right just hop up on here," the doctor said easing her up onto the gurney, before giving a frown as she wobbled unsteadily.

His brown eyes roved across her face now, pulling up a tall chair and grasping up her leg gently, bringing her hurt and, now bloodied foot, up onto his lap.

"You been drinking?" he asked, glancing up at her once more, as he picked up a set of large metal tweezers from the tray beside him, as Blake watched him a little unsteadily.

She gave a nod, feeling a little like a scolded child in the principal's office right now.

But Negan who strolled over towards her, coming to perch, himself, on the bed beside her, his eyes following the doctor's every move, spoke instead.

"Oh she might look fuckin' sweet and innocent, Doc," scoffed Negan, pointing at the Blake with the end of Lucille, his voice far too loud in his drunken state for the small room. "But Peaches has caused no amount of goddamn trouble tonight. And I don' think the drink had anything to do with any of that either."

But Blake merely shot him a look, rolling her eyes, as Carson got to work.

God, he was never going to let her live this down, was he?

Fifteen minutes later, and after a lot of whining from Blake about how much it hurt, Carson had removed the small shard of glass from her foot and given her a bright pink band aid for her trouble, telling her that it didn't need stitches.

"Y'know I think the pink kinda goes with my dress," she said as she hopped down from the gurney, smoothing down the black silk dress in question.

She swayed slightly on her feet giving a loud giggle, as she clutched onto the grinning Negan beside her...who right now seemed about as inebriated as she did.

"Yeah sorry, it's the only ones we have left," Carson murmured, as she dried off his hands on a towel, offering them a both a reproachful look. "Now if you'll excuse me, I need to go to bed."

But Blake just smiled, ignoring the doctors' words, her eyes now instead fixed to one person, and one person only, as she headed eagerly out of the hospital room.

And the man in question was of course gazing back at her, biting down hard upon his lip, offering her a suggestive look in return.

"Yeah, yeah, we'll leave you in peace, Doc," Negan muttered as he followed Blake swiftly from the room, hot on her heels, as he pulled the door swiftly shut behind the pair of them, leaving them both very much alone.

And it didn't take the two of them long, out in the empty hallway, blood pumping through their veins, before the pair of them pounced upon one another.

Negan, as tall and looming as he was, gripped Blake's waist with his free hand, pinning her to the wall behind her, as their lips lapped against the others feverishly.

Oh god, Blake wanted him…

So, so much.
She wasn't sure whether it was the alcohol talking, but right now she didn't care, his fingers curling around the fabric of Negan's t-shirt, as she pulled him as close to her as possible.

But a moment or two later, Blake pulled her lips from his, her fuzzy brain, straining to work right now under the cloud of alcohol.

"Bedroom, now," she purred eventually, as Negan grinned widely, staring down at her nodding and showing off his wide set of straight, white teeth in a wolf-like manner.

God, she could see from his eyes right now that he really was as drunk as she was…

But that wasn't important, as she grabbed at his wrist and tugged him along down the long hallway.

God, why the FUCK were there so many hallways in this place!

Blake gritted her teeth now, as Negan barrelled into her from behind, his hands slipping around her waist possessively as they walked, weaving this way and that, both of them completely off-balance now.

But even so, it took Blake and Negan about three minutes to finally reach her room up, on the second floor, which to her embarrassment, she realised, she and the wives had left the door to, wide open with the light still on.

The place was a complete mess, with red wine stains on the carpet and empty bottles lying on the table and across the floor, beside masses of clothing….some of it which belonged to Blake, some of it, her friends the wives…strewn all over the a floor and draped across chairs.

At once Negan cocked an eye at her, leaning back on his heels, before catching his footing just before he stumbled.

"Jeez, Sweetheart," he said tutting and shaking his head. "That must have been some fuckin' party you girls decide to have in here. Fuck me, I really have created a fuckin' monster haven't I?"

But Blake merely licked at her lips, turning to him now and undoing her dress at the waist, before shrugging lightly.

"A monster you want to fuck though, right?" she asked, knowing exactly what his reply was likely to be, as she dropped the dress to the ground, revealing a matching set of maroon underwear beneath.

And Negan, as predicted, capturing his bottom lip between his teeth and tossing Lucille down onto her flowery couch, gave a small shake of his head, gazing down at her approvingly.

"Oh hell- fuckin'-yeah I do," he growled devilishly, stepping in towards her and curling it around the small section of material at the front of her bra and tugging her suddenly into him.

Blake gave a laugh and a playful squeal into Negan's mouth as he captured her lips once again, before manoeuvring her around in the direction of the bed.

And it wasn't a second later that Negan had gripped the caramel-blond woman by her ass and lifted her back onto the mattress, before threading his fingers through hers and pinning her back down against the bed.

Blake smiled to herself now, as he pulled his mouth from hers momentarily, instead, attacking her neck with slow languid kisses.....
...but that smile of hers, soon turned into a small giggle...

...and another...

...and another...

And it wasn't long before Negan suddenly lifted his face from her collarbone, scowling darkly, as Blake couldn't control herself any longer.

"You mind puttin' me off a bit more, Doll-face?" he uttered in an irritated tone.

But Blake, pulling her hand from his, held the back of her palm against her mouth now, as she gazed over to her left, trying to stop herself from laughing but failing miserably, another fit of giggles leaving her throat.

Oh god, what was wrong with her...tickled by something...at completely the wrong moment.

She shook her head, as tears streamed down her cheeks, her chest heaving as throaty laugh and after laugh left her mouth...uncontrollably...

"Jeez, what the fuck is so funny?" Negan asked, pulling himself off of her slightly, pressing his tongue to his back molars, looking mightily-pissed off.

But Blake just shook her head again.

I mean, she had had the giggles before in life....but this...this was something else...

She gave him a small shove away from her now, inching herself up the bed away from him, laughing again and again and again...

"I'm sorry...I just...." she tried to breathe in between giggles. "I just....phew..."

She tried to catch her breath, before collapsing back down onto the bed, in just her underwear, her head hitting the fluffy pillows behind her.

"I think I'm' just too drunk for sex right now..." she finished, pouting a little, knowing just how annoyed Negan was likely to be right now.

But to her utter surprise, despite giving small sigh and dragging his hand down his long and bearded face tiredly, Negan gave a nod of his own, before bending down and removing his black boots one by one.

"Hmmm, fine," he murmured, before he pointed at her over his shoulder a little unsteadily. "But you fuckin' owe me a blow job, Darlin'. We clear?"

Blake smiled knowingly, but didn't answer, merely staring up at the ceiling, giving a sleepy yawn, and listening as Negan removed his jacket and shucked his t-shirt over his head, tossing the two down onto the floor beside them.

A second later she felt him at her side, shifting up the bed and coming to lie beside her in silence.

And that silence lasted for a lengthy couple of minutes before either of them spoke again, with Blake still catching her breath, sighing contentedly.

Although those minutes were not at all uncomfortable....
In fact, Blake had never felt such warmth and comfort from anyone else in her entire life, quite like this…wanting to spend forever with the dark-haired man at her side.

Fuck, he really was truly her everything. And Blake so wished she could just tell him how she felt about him.

But no way was that going to happen now, not when the two of them were this drunk!

"Y'know if it's any consolation, some of those women look waaaay hotter in pants y'know…" she finally murmured gently, turning her head to look at Negan now.

But the leader the Saviours merely clicked his tongue, giving a long growling sigh, before lifting up his arm and placing it around Blake's shoulders, tugging her swiftly into him.

"Hmmm," he merely murmured out shortly, Blake feeling the sound reverberate inside his hair-smattered chest.

But the caramel-blonde woman blinked, feeling his fingers begin to trace circles over the smooth skin of her shoulder.

"I like them…." she suddenly uttered out honestly, in a quiet voice. "A lot. And I just wanted to make them feel good about themselves. I just wanted to make them feel happy…"

Blake wasn't sure why exactly she was explaining herself to Negan now, but she just wanted him to know why she had done it all.

"...And you can still screw them wearing something other than an LBD, y'know…” she said starkly, before she could stop herself.

Fuck.

Those words hurt her now, more than she could ever say, and she closed her eyes, sucking in a breath now before releasing it, trying to steady her breathing.

Why she had come out with it she didn't know...

She might have blamed it on the alcohol but deep down Blake knew this was something she had indeed been bottling up for so long now…. the worry rising to the surface painfully.

But now she waited as the seconds ticked by…..

…but there came only silence from Negan…

And Blake, at that moment could have cried.

...that was until-

"Peaches, I swear on, yours, mine and everyone else's, life in this sorry fuckin' world…me and those girls…hell, I haven't gone near them since you showed up here," Negan said in slow voice, sounding more sober now than he had all evening. "I haven't fuckin' wanted anyone else. Hell, I haven't needed anyone else…only you. An' I promise you that's the fuckin' truth, Sweetheart."

Blake gave a sad sort-of frown now, as she nodded, hearing the truth in his voice, as Negan, grasped for her hand, suddenly pulling it to his lips and pressing a gentle kiss to her smooth knuckles.

"You're my fuckin' queen, Peaches," he murmured.
And in that moment, Blake took in sharp breath, wiling him so so much to just say it…

Please just say it…

The three words she had needed him to utter for so long...

But there was only silence now…the moment gone…

And Blake felt her eyes drift up once again at the ceiling, parting her lips…her stomach churning…

All of this it had nothing to with alcohol…or how drunk either of them were…this was just a moment of peace, together without interruptions. Something that both of them oh-so desperately need now.

Blake slowly let a gulp trail its way down her slender throat, her chest rising and falling gently.

"I miss her…." she suddenly uttered. "More than anything."

And with that, within an instant, Blake felt Negan suddenly press a kiss to the top of her head….letting out a short-

"I know, Peaches. I know."

And it wasn't long after that, that with hearts both aching, with loss and unspoken words, and with a drunken slumber washing over the pair of them...

...both Negan and Blake passed out on cool sheets, both tangled up with one another, safe and warm, for the night…

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"Please, kid," uttered Tara, exhausted and pleading now. "Please go to sleep."

It was very late now and way past the tiny toddlers bedtime, but even so, the still-nameless girl was wriggling under the bedcovers of her queen sized bed, very much awake.

"Noh," said the teeny baby girl insolently. "I don' wan' go scheep."

And with that, she slipped out of the bed away from Tara's reach, making her way over, on tiny chubby legs, to a little table and chairs that had been set up on the far side of the ample bedroom for her, current strewn with masses of paper and crayons.

"I wan Bwake!" she cried, as Tara gave chase.

"Yeah, me too kid," Tara murmured under her breath. "A break sounds awesome right about now."

"Noh! I wan Bwake!" cried the girl in utter exasperation, bent down, showing her pyjama-covered butt to Tara, searching in in amongst all the drawings she had done earlier today. "Bwake!"

But just before she could pick up the picture in she wanted, one she had drawn only this morning, of three pink stick figures…

…one tiny, one with a yellow strip of long hair and pink lips, and one figure, the tallest of the three, holding a short brown stick in his hand….

…Tara had snatched the little girl up and carried her back to bed.
"Come on," she huffed, as the girl made desperate grabby hand towards the abandoned picture, giving a sharp wail.

"I neyd Bwake an' Eggy…" she cried out loudly giving a humongous sob, as Tara, at her wits end, gave a shake of her head, presuming of course the girl was talking gobbledygook as children her age often did.

"Well I need a lobotomy, kid," said Tara with a roll of her eyes as she tucked the teeny toddler tightly into bed once more. "But we can't always get what we want now can we?"

And the dark haired woman merely slumped down into her chair defeatedly with her chin in her hand, watching as the toddler, slowly cried herself to sleep…
Blake gave a groan as a sharp pain sliced through her temples.

"Ughhh," she moaned out gently, blinking her eyes open, only to scrunch them tightly shut again, at the dull morning light, that was currently shining in through the large window at the far end of her room.

She shifted down under the covers, turning over and instantly feeling a warm body beside her, stirring slowly beneath the sheets.

"Holy fuckin' hell," came Negan's sudden grizzled voice, Blake hearing him drag a hand down his scratchy, bearded face. "I feel like shit."

But the caramel-blond woman, giving another moan out, merely ignored him and nuzzled her face into her pillow.

She was in her room, she knew that much, but the events of the previous evening were still pretty fuzzy in her head….something about a cut up foot and stolen wine.

Blake couldn't even remember getting back to her room. But despite this, she was still happy that Negan had spent the night here with her.

She gave a huge stretch now, before letting out a difficult sigh and opening her bleary eyes.

It looked like early morning, but even so, the bright grey light was enough to make her pounding head feel about a million times worse.

And by the looks of the dark-haired man in bed beside her, he was fairing no better with his own hangover.

"Shit, I mean, I know I have said this a thousand fuckin' times," he groaned out. "But I am never fuckin' drinkin' again…"

Blake pursed her lip. If she had had the energy, she would have rolled her eyes, not believing for one second that Negan would ever give up drinking as long as he lived.

"I don't even remember going to sleep," she soon murmured, giving a small yawn now, as she glanced beneath the sheets at her half-naked from, clothed now, in just her lacy underwear. "Did we have sex last night?"

But Negan gave a gruff huff, smacking his bearded lips together and raising an eyebrow.

"Nope," he said matter-of-factly, tugging at the covers a little. "You had a goddamn gigglin' fit, an' in all honesty we were both probably too fuckin' wasted to have carried on with that shit anyway."

Blake gave a hum of almost-recognition, a bleary memory of uncontrollable laughter appearing in her clouded mind.

"Hmmmm…" she murmured out, musing, just as Negan gave a loud growl of annoyance.

"Jesus, Sweetheart," he said in a loud, carrying voice, that caused Blake to wince in annoyance. "You wanna steal the goddamn covers a bit more?!!"
But Blake tutted, relenting a little of the white sheet she was currently clutching over her body.

"Well, sooooOOooorry!" she snapped back in a huffy voice. "It's not my fault you take up most of
the bed."

But Negan's dark brows shot immediately up into his hairline as he offered Blake an incredulous
look of utter disbelief at what she was saying.

"Me?!" she retorted. "I ain't the one who likes to spread out like a goddamn starfish when I sleep,
Darlin!'"

Blake smirked a little but turned her head away trying to hide it from the dark-haired leader of the
Saviours, not wanting him to know he had a good point, instead reaching up and grabbing an old
bottle of water from her nightstand.

Was it wrong for there to be butterflies in her stomach right now?

Probably.

But even so, just the way that she and Negan knew one another and their habits so well now, made
her happy.

She knew very well, that sound Negan made in the back of his throat when Blake did oh-so many
dirty things to him….

….she knew his scent….musky and heady, like a burning wood fire and dark whisky…

….and she knew that look he got in his eye sometimes when he thought she wasn't looking….that
look that told her that she would always be his, and he would always be hers.

But Blake shook herself a little now, unscrewing the cap off of her bottle and pulling it to her lips.

They were just friends…

Ok, friends who have sex and sleep in each other's beds….  

Friends who care oh-so completely about the other…

But all the same…just friends…

For that's all it could be in this world.

Blake loved those women downstairs too much to ask him to give them up now. They needed his
protection, and as long as they held their titles of wife-to-Negan, they would always be safe….their
families would always be looked after…

But it was because of that fact that Blake could never become one of them. She didn't need Negan's
protection. She could fend for herself….  

And she knew that no matter how much she wanted it to be true. She would never be the only
woman in his life.

He was probably too proud and had too much of a reputation to uphold to allow her to be that.

And so they would stay like this for as long as Blake could bare. That was her decision now.
Because in reality, this life of theirs wouldn't last long.

Both of them could be dead tomorrow….

….barely remembered in ten years' time…

So they would have fun today….to ties…not even to each other….

….no family…no children…

…because that was the way of the world. Cruel and hard.

And Blake had to just deal with that…

…. instead, enjoying these small moments, where she would pretend, for just a second, that they were together, for real, living in a big house in the suburbs with a couple of kids and a dog downstairs….happy.

She took a long sip of water before wiping her mouth with the back of her hand, as Negan took the bottle from her grasp swigging down a few long gulps of his own, before passing it swiftly back to her…

...just as their came a hard knock upon the door.

Blake gave a groan.

God, that was the downside of sleeping with Negan…having him be constantly in demand. For she knew that it was very doubtful that that knock would be for her.

But even so, she gave a small sigh now, making to lift the sheet slightly and shift over to the edge of the bed and hop out.

But before she could do so, she felt a sudden growl in her ear and a warm hand tug swiftly at her waist, pulling her backwards.

And Blake, giving the smallest squeal of laughter, felt Negan' pull her back down against the mattress once more, taut against his own body, as his lips found her ear through her mountain of caramel-hair.

"Let me fuckin' get up, Doll-face," he murmured in a low, gentlemanly voice, making Blake feel warm inside and completely and utterly protected, as he pressed a weary, yet gentle, kiss to her shoulder, before heaving himself up off of the bed.

He gave a groan at this, grasping up his abandoned t-shirt from the floor, before tugging it over his head and snatching up Lucille from the couch as he went.

Blake propped herself up onto her elbows to watch him admiringly, his face set into a deep scowl at this most recent disturbance of their alone time, as he soon tugged open the door to Blake's room.

From her position on the bed, Blake could just about make out the blonde figure of Dwight, stood on the other side, looking a little sheepish, but even so, his head was held high and defiant.

"Negan," he said firmly. "Sorry to disturb you-"

Blake smiled to herself now, loving the fact that of course, Negan's men had known where to find him. God, were she and him really that predictable?
But Negan, his jaw clenched tightly, suddenly bashed the spiky end of his baseball bat against the open doorframe, causing Blake to wrinkle her nose at the harsh sound and shuffle back down under the covers once more.

"D," he said simply. "Whatever it is, I have got a hell of fuckin' hangover, and a super-hot girl in bed behind me. So unless it's life or fuckin' death right now, Dwight, it can goddamn wait."

But Dwight merely stayed standing where he was.

"Sir, we've got an orange situation…" uttered the blonde man bluntly. "Tony's gone. With his wife and kid, and they've taken six guns between them. Word from one of the outposts is, that they've been seen heading towards the Hilltop."

Even from the bed, at Dwight's words, Blake heard Negan give a dark growl under his breath.

"An' what? No one at the fuckin' outpost thought to fuckin' stop them?" barked the dark-haired Saviour angrily, suddenly bashing Lucille against the doorframe once more, causing the entire room to shudder. "Jesus fuckin' Christ! The shit I have to put up with sometimes, D."

Blake blinked a couple of times, watching as Negan dragged a hand over his chin, his mind obviously whirring away quickly.

He was very smart man, Blake had realised that from the first moment she had met him. He was calculating and unpredictable and that always put him one step ahead of everyone else. Always.

So it was strange to see him undermined and set on edge, by someone other than herself for once.

"Fine," he finally murmurred out, running his hand over his dark hair until it landed on the back of his neck, as he closed his eyes, his pounding headache obvious for anyone to see now. "Normally I'd say that this was fuckin' grunt work, but this ain't the first time Tony has fucked up, and here's hopin' that a little fuckin' fresh air might clear this goddamn hangover of mine. So I'll come with. Lucille could do with a lil' run out anyway…"

Dwight shifted his weight from foot-to-foot.

"You want me to load up the trucks and get them ready to move out, Boss?" Dwight asked curtly.

But Negan gave dismissive nod, waving his hand easily.

"Yeah, load them up ready for move out in ten," he murmured, as Dwight almost instantly nodded back, turning promptly on his heel and heading off, without even another word.

Closing the door with a gentle snap again, Negan gave a long and carrying huff, as Blake looked his way, sitting up properly now and bringing her knees up to her chest beneath the white sheet.

"Trouble?" she asked in a warm voice, wanting nothing more right now, than for Negan to get back into bed with her now and spend the rest of the morning sleeping off their hangover together… perhaps enjoying a little of what they had missed out on last night to ease their sore heads.

But Negan, merely pressed his tongue to his back molars, before crossing the room, and to Blake's dismay, making for his abandoned boots and leather jacket.

"Mmmhmmm," he replied, a frown hovering between his brows now. "That asshole Tony's done this before, but what I don' want is ol' Gregory up at the Hilltop, or worse, your old-buddy Rick the fuckin' Prick, gettin' a hold of those guns. So fuck it, if I can't trust my men to sort this shit out for
me, I'm gonna have to do it my fuckin' self now aren't I?"

But Blake gave a lick of her lips, as she stared up at the dark-haired man before her, eagerly, opening her mouth slowly to speak…

But before she could do so, Negan shot her an apologetic look, pointing Lucille in her direction playfully.

"Sorry, Sweetheart," he murmured. "Looks like that blow-job you owe me is gonna have to wait."

At this, Blake frowned slightly, a vague recollection of that promise coming back to her hazily.

But she quickly brushed his comment aside.

"Can I come with you?" she asked suddenly, blinking couple of times up at Negan, who stopped in his tracks, one arm already threaded through the sleeve of his jacket, as he stared her way.

She hadn't been out of the Sanctuary in almost two weeks now and perhaps Negan was right. Maybe a little fresh air would clear her hangover. Besides, it would be good to do something other than gardening for just one day.

But Negan pursed his lips now, looking a little stern.

"Hmmm, I ain't so sure, Darlin'," he uttered, eyeing her as he shrugged the rest of his jacket slowly onto his shoulders. "This ain't gonna be no field trip to the fuckin' Smithsonian. An' I don't want you in the line of fire on this one."

But Blake tilted her head to the side, her green eyes meeting with his chocolate ones, as butterflies swarmed inside her stomach.

It was obvious how much he cared for her…but even so, she bit down onto her lip and gave the smallest of sighs.

"Negan….we've been over this," she said in a gentle voice, knowing that this was what their argument back in the woods had been about. "You can't keep me cooped up here forever. And I can hold my own out there….you know I can."

But Negan gave a loud huff, frowning darkly.

She could tell he didn't want her going as she had told him, she wasn't one of his wives. and he couldn't just keep her here like a prize. That wasn't who she was. She had spent enough time out there, surviving...staying alive….she could handle this. Definitely.

"Peaches, this ain't up for fuckin' discussion..." said Negan warningly, but Blake just cut across him, slipping swiftly from the bed in just her underwear and padding across the room toward him now, bringing herself up to her full height and coming to step just in front of the dark-haired Saviour, jabbing him in the chest with her finger.

"No, Negan," she began firmly, shaking her head, her caramel-blonde hair trickling over her bare shoulders. "...it's not. Because I'm coming with you and that's final."

And with that, before he could retort, Blake had marched over to her open closet, tugging out a clean pair of black jeans and a tight black sweater before flinging them onto the bed.

She was coming with him and that was that.
She wasn't his wife and as 'friends', he really had no right to argue with her. She knew that. And by his silence, Negan did too.

But she paused, glancing over her shoulder now, hearing him strut towards her, Lucille now up on his shoulder and that frown still sat between his dark brows.

"Alright," he growled, raising his eyebrows and pointing down at her now, sternly. "But you ain't leavin' my goddamn sight, Sweetheart. We clear?"

And at this, Blake just smiled to herself, turning back around to fish out some clean underwear, knowing that she had won.

"We're clear," she murmured back, ignoring his unimpressed features on purpose, airily. "See you out at the trucks in ten then."

And she didn't have to turn around, hearing Negan give an irritable huff of annoyance, before he marched swiftly out of the door, slamming it loudly shut behind him…

..with Blake giving a smirk to herself. Her hangover feeling better already…
A formidable pair

It was grey cloudy morning, and despite the sunny weather yesterday, it really was no surprise to see a few scattered raindrops falling gently down onto the asphalt. Especially at this time of the year.

Negan was stood out by the trucks, Lucille cocked up across his left shoulder, jaw clenched, and watching, as his men filed past him efficiently.

Three battered old vehicles were there ready and waiting to move out at Negan's order, but here he was, waiting for one person, who he wasn't sure he wanted coming anyway.

Because, after all, this wasn't going to be a fun jaunt out.

This was a hunt. Tracking down Tony and his family and the guns they had stolen from Negan.

And Negan didn't want to be thinking of Blake and how he was going to protect her while doing so.

Besides…he was a ruthless fucking guy and wasn't quite sure how Blake would react to that out there…

Although what the dark-haired Saviour could not forget, was how little mercy she actually managed to show David….or the Wolves….or Steve…in the short period of time he had known her.

Each of their demises more brutal that the last…

Perhaps she and him were actually more similar that he once had thought.

Negan pondered this for a moment, before the sudden sound of footsteps behind him on the gravel, broke him from his thoughts

He swung around, leaning back on his heels as he did so, as his dark eyes came to settle on the tall, blonde figure of Blake strutting across the yard towards him.

Fuck, she was gorgeous. Dressed today in a pair of tight jeans, lace up black boots, with a fleece lined black jacket slung over her shoulders, and her hair up in a long sleek ponytail.

Negan could help but give a smile now, showing off his set of wide white teeth, as he stood there admiring her.

"So," she said coming to stand just a foot or so away from him and cocking her head to the side promptly. "Do I get a gun?"

Negan licked at his lips.

Fuck, she had some balls.

"Only as long as you ain't gonna shoot me while I got my back turned, Princess…" he retorted goadingly. "Cause' I know how un-fuckin' predicable you Alexandrians can get out there…"

He of course was remembering back to both Daryl's punch, and when that damn woman that had put a bullet in Lucille.

But Blake just rolled her eyes dramatically, scoffing loudly.
"Well I mean, I can always switch teams if you'd prefer the challenge," she said in a voice dripping in sarcasm, suddenly lifting her hand to her face and pretending to admire her nails dismissively.

But this game of their only caused Negan's grin to widen, as he ran his tongue, once again, over his lips.

He gave shallow, utterly fake sigh, before reaching beneath his jacket and tugging out a small black handgun that he had shoved down the front of his pants.

He had always planned to give her a gun, of course. Trusting her now, probably more than anyone else on his team.

Him and her…well, they had been through so much fucking crap together these past few months.

Negan had seen her at her lowest, and she had been witness to his depths too…and both of them had come out stronger from all that.

Alright, fuck, maybe they were 'just friends', but deep down Negan knew how he truly fucking felt about her.

And hell, if anything happened to her on this trip, he wouldn't fucking rest until the person responsible paid.

He handed the gun to her now as she eyed him, a small smile passing over her face.

"You still trying to think of a way to NOT have me come along?" she asked in a teasing voice, taking the gun from his grasp.

But fuck, she really could fucking read him like a book, couldn't she?

"Is it really that fuckin' obvious, Peaches?" Negan sighed wearily, pressing his tongue into the side of his cheek. "I mean I know that you are a badass. But out there, there's a lot of fuckin' shit that can go wrong."

But Blake, shoving the gun down the back of her jeans, merely strutted forwards, biting down on her lip and bumping her hip with his.

"Trust me," she purred gently. "I can handle this. I promise."

With that, Negan pressed his lips together wanting to argue, but relenting at the last moment.

He knew for a fact that she was far too fucking stubborn to back down now anyway. And refusing to let her go would only result in yet another fight between the pair of them.

"Al-fuckin'-right, I'll take your word for it," he said in a huffy voice, lowering Lucille from his shoulder and pointing the sharp end at Blake as she strutted over towards the nearest awaiting truck. "But I fuckin' swear, Darlin', any fuckin' sign of trouble and I am hauling your goddamn ass outta' there."

But the caramel-blond woman merely grinned at him over her shoulder, wrinkling her nose as she did so, and flashing him a smoky-eyed look, that made Negan's chest constrict slightly as he stared at her.

"Deal…" she murmured back happily, as Negan blinked a couple of times, seemingly unable to take his eyes off her now.
God, the things she fucking did to him.

Negan had been fine until she had come along….

…he had had his wives, so that his need for sex was sated…

….his men had been loyal, so that he didn't yearn for company all the time…

But Negan hadn't quite known just how lonely he had been for these past few years…living in this godforsaken world. Ok, he had been the big fuckin' boss around here, but as much as he was revered, he really had had no-one he felt as happy with, as he did now, with Blake…

She was fucking everything to him these days.

A goddamn queen, and there was no way in hell he was gonna let anything happen to her.

Negan felt his entire body swell now, feeling possessive over her.

He had been right back in those woods all those weeks ago. She was indeed his weakness.

But now Negan realised, that if anyone did try and come for her and use her as leverage against him, he was willing to go to the depths of hell to protect her, at whatever the cost.

Although from the look of her today, it really didn't look like she needed his protection.

Hell, she WAS a fucking badass, strutting over towards one of the trucks eagerly now, the outline of the handgun, just about visible beneath her jacket.

He grinned after her, suddenly giving a sharp whistle now, gaining her attention once more.

He nodded over to the first truck in the line-up as she glanced his way.

"You're up front with me, Princess," he said flashing her is white set of teeth, as she smirked back over at him, slowly strolling his way again.

The journey along the bumpy roads on this dull and drizzly morning, truly did nothing for Blake's hangover. Although she had to say, that an entire bottle of water later, she was indeed feeling a hell of a lot better than she had done back in her room at the Sanctuary.

She had been cosied up in the front of a medium sized truck, with Danny in the driving seat, Arat next to him, and Blake squashed in between the curly-haired woman and Negan, who, of course, took this opportunity to paw possessively at her thigh for the duration of the journey.

Not that that mattered to Blake any more. Even just a few short days ago, she might have been embarrassed about the attention Negan had given her, but now, all of his higher-up generals now what he was like around her.

They even knew where to find him when he wasn't in his room for god's sake, predictably cosied up to Blake in her room instead, as they had been just this morning.

God, were they really that predictable?

But now, almost an hour later, after a long journey by their standards, Blake could just about see in the distance, the looming settlement of the Hilltop up ahead.

She had never been here before (barely having been at Alexandria for long before David had had her
taken, against her will, to the Sanctuary) but she recognised it, of course, from the descriptions she had been given of the place.

She had no idea who lived here anymore….for even when she had been back at Alexandria all those weeks ago, Rick and Tara and the others told her nothing, in hindsight, probably not trusting her enough to do so.

They were currently being followed closely behind by another truck carrying Dwight and about six or so other Saviours. And so, as well as the eight of them in their own vehicle, that was surely enough bodies to intimidate the people of the Hilltop, and this Tony, Negan had been talking about.

But was Blake including herself in this number?

She glanced around at Danny and Arat and of course the dark-haired leader of the Saviour's beside her, all packing weapons of varying description. Used to doing this kind of work on a regular basis.

But Blake was one of them now, and as much as she tried to believe and dream that perhaps she and Negan could live a happy and quiet life together, she knew that in this world, that could never be true.

She was part of the Sanctuary now…and any ties to Alexandria…as much as it pained her to say, had to be forgotten. For they had proved to her that night she had fled in that car, how little they truly thought of her, obviously valuing the word of David over her, after all he had done to her…tortured her….beaten her….

Far worse than Negan had ever done to her that was for sure.

Blake knew how much Negan worshipped every inch of her…and knew that despite how much of a monster other people considered him to be, he would never ever ever do the same to her, and damage her in the same way as David had.

The caramel-blonde woman chanced a glance up at him now, as the trucks slowed slightly, nearing the high fences of the Hilltop.

But the dark-haired Saviour's eyes were now fixed to the gates, blackly.

He looked like a wolf. Hungry and dark, his hackles raised, ready for a fight.

And he was the first to shove open the door almost the moment the truck rolled to a stop, stepping out on his long legs, into the damp morning air.

Blake soon joined Negan, shoving her gun back into its place down the rear waistband of her jeans, pulling her jacket over it to hide her from view.

In a second or two thirteen Saviours joined the pair of them, brandishing all sorts of frightening looking weapons, all gazing over towards her and the dark-haired man at her side now.

Blake took in a small breath, her eyes travelling over all of these men and women.

Months ago, she remembered just how scared she had been that first time she had stood in the dining hall surrounded by these people, as David had hit her across the face.

But now, as burly and as menacing as they seemed, they were still more her people now, than Rick and Michonne and those back in Alexandria were. And here they all were, right now, presenting her with as much respect as they were Negan.
But even so, Blake after a brief moment, stepped aside, turning as well, to face the tall leader of the Saviours.

"Alright, you know what to do," he merely uttered in a loud carrying voice that she knew that anyone standing inside the walls of the Hilltop would hear. "So let's see who is inside today."

And with that, Negan turned on his heel, taking a few long strides over toward the looming gates, bashing four times against the hard wood with the end of Lucille. The noise reverberated through the quiet space now.

Blake felt her chest rising and falling hard as she watched Negan, waiting.

And after a brief moment or two, he turned his head, gazing her way for the most minute of seconds, before dragging his chocolate eyes over instead staring straight at the curly-haired Arat, now stood beside Blake, her arms folded across herself.

"I guess there's no one in," Negan mused in a loud, yet sarcastic tone, giving a humungous shrug. "Well, I guess that settles it… an there really is no other option… ."

And with that, he ran his hand over his bearded chin, letting out a humongous sigh.

"Arat," he suddenly barked. "Burn the place to the ground."

At his words, Blake let a gulp suddenly slide its way down her throat, but she didn't flinch, keeping her eyes trained on Negan.

But thankfully, before Arat had even made a move to step forwards, there came a screech of a large metal bolt being pulled across, and within just a few short moments the gates were slowly opened wide.

God, he really had done this a million times before hadn't he?

Negan gave a smug grin now, lifting Lucille up onto his shoulder and striding confidently forwards.

He looked just as he had when Blake had first met him. A showman, peacocking for not only her and the Saviours, but for the people on the other side of the fence too.

But Blake, not wanting to linger behind, followed, as did Arat, who Blake presumed Negan had asked to stick with her for protection.

"Wow, well isn' this place just somethin'," Negan uttered out, leaning back and shaking his head in a false show of admiration for the place, as he gazed through the open gates now.

And Blake, as she moved around, felt her eyes land on a group of thirty or-so people, all standing in an ample yard full of huts and makeshift homes, all surrounding a large magnificent building in the centre of the camp, set up on a small hill top.

But it wasn't long that within the crowd, much to her dismay and discomfort, her green eyes almost instantly met with the faces of two people she recognised…. recognition on seeing her appearing on their faces quickly enough too.

Jesus and Enid.

Both of them she of course knew vaguely from her time at Alexandria, and yet the two of them stared now back at her now in horror. Obviously never in a million years expecting to see her
standing here with Negan and the Saviours.

But little did they know how involved in this group she really was….

"Damn. I mean, how the hell has it taken me so long to come down here and visit you fine folks in this stunning venue," said Negan enthusiastically in a loud voice, arching his back with every syllable he spoke.

The crowd of people all looked timidly up at the dark-haired Saviour and the group now standing just over Blake's own shoulder, with fear in their eyes.

But suddenly an older bearded man quickly stepped forwards from the mass of people, that Blake supposed from descriptions of him banded around Alexandria, was Gregory, the leader here.

"A-And you must be Negan," said the man, dressed in a smart shirt and beige pants, holding out his hand towards Negan politely, flashing him a forced smile.

Ugh.

Blake clenched her jaw at this.

She had met people like Gregory before….him instantly reminding her of David, with that same spineless and sneering look etched across his features.

But from the looks of it, Negan didn't take too fondly to him either.

He paused in what he was doing, his dark eyes narrowed, looking the old man up and down.

"An you must be….Greg, right?" Negan growled out.

"Gregory," corrected the old man, keeping his hand outstretched.

But Negan did not take his hand to shake, instead closing the gap between him and Gregory, raising both his eyebrows interestedly.

"Oh, I'm am terribly fuckin' sorry Gregory," Negan replied, sucking at his teeth, and lowering Lucille from his shoulder.

Silence fell now across the camp, as everyone's eyes were drawn swiftly to the barbed-wire covered baseball bat in Negan's hand.

But the dark-haired saviour merely gave a sigh.

"You see the thing is, an' it's a sad fuckin story," began Negan, with a dark nod. "But I woke up this mornin', with not only one hell of a fuckin' hangover, but to also find out that one of my men has gone AWOL overnight, with his wife an' kid, and taken a big stash of my guns with him."

Negan now took a step forwards until he was almost nose-to-nose with the leader of the Hilltop.

"Now you would mind if we took a little look around now would you….make sure he isn't hiding out here somewhere?" said Negan with an intimidating grimace. "…Greg."

Negan said Gregory's shortened name again with purpose, his eyes now beady and black like a shark….and Blake could almost feel the heat and bubbling irritation coming off of her mate now, even at this fairly far proximity to him.
But much to her amusement, Gregory looked at this moment, terrified, his hand at his side visibly trembling.

But even so he gave a shaky nod, timidly stepping aside and bowing his head for Negan to pass.

Almost at once, Negan gave a wide wolf-like grin, blinking heavily and glancing Blake's way.

Her breath caught in her throat.

She didn't smile back, but instead paced over towards him now, with her head held high, feeling a surge of confidence and power. And it wasn't until she was at his side, did Negan turn his head into her, and press his lips into her ear, out of earshot of anyone else now.

"Jeez, I mean get a load of this fuckin' guy, huh?" murmured Negan through gritted teeth, causing Blake to lick at her lips as they twitched up into the smallest of smirks.

She pulled back gently, eyeing him as he gave her a poignant sighing sort-of look in return.

God, how even in a situation like this, could he always make light of everything?

And it took Blake all her strength not to roll her eyes at him, as he barked back at their fellow Saviours.

"Al-fuckin-right then," uttered the dark-haired man, pressing his amused tongue to his upper molars and gesturing with Lucille. "Let's take a look around boys and girls, see if I can huff and puff an' find these little piggies."

And with that, all thirteen of the Saviours, with weapons held aloft intimidatingly, strode past both her and Negan making for the buildings….not wanting to leave even a single stone un-turned.

And Blake, not wishing to seem like the only one not able to handle herself, made to follow them, ignoring completely Enid and Jesus' stares as she went.

But in a moment, she felt a sudden hand clutch her wrist, stopping her in her tracks, and before she had even turned around, she knew exactly who it was…feeling his firm body press up against her side.

"Nuh-uh, Peaches," Negan growled in a deliciously dark voice, into her ear once more. "You're with me."

And with that Blake glanced his way, giving a devilish smile of her own, moving her hand slightly and entwining her fingers swiftly with his as he grinned back at her.

Fuck, they were a good match…

…both of them tall…

…good looking…

…and right now, very very intimidating…

And, with Negan taking the lead, the couple shoved past Gregory, making for the large mansion straight ahead…. …neither of the formidable pair, giving one shit about the meek and frightened crowd of people that watched them go.
"After you, Peaches" murmured Negan in a husky voice into her ear as he held open the door to the large and looming building.

Blake instantly wrinkled her nose, shooting Negan a smirk as she slid easily by him, stepping inside and gazing about at the large entrance hall.

The inside the house itself, set upon a slight mount in the centre of the Hilltop, the interior was grand and impressive. And although perhaps it was a little stuffy for Blake's taste, it was still beautiful all the same, with its winding staircase, oil paintings pinned to the panelled walls and high ceilings adorned with carvings and chandeliers.

"Wow, now this is a bit different from the Sanctuary…" she breathed, her green eyes flickering about the room.

But almost instantly, she felt Negan's tall, broad form reach her shoulder, his fingers entwining neatly with hers once more.

He gave a loud scoff.

"Pfft," he said waving his hand dismissively. "Shit like this is all well an' fuckin' good when you're tryin' to impress, Sweetheart. But heatin' a place like this must be a goddamn nightmare. An' hell, those doors ain't keeping out a horde of those dead-shits for very long."

That was indeed true. The fortified factory she and Negan lived in, was indeed far better protection in this world, than a place like this, but even so-

"I don't know…" said Blake in a goading voice, giving a hefty sigh. "I still kinda like it."

She glanced Negan's way.

"What do you think?" she purred, nudging him with her hip as they strolled forwards. "Vacation home?"

And at this Negan presented Blake with perhaps the widest grin she had ever seen, gazing at her in utter awe.

"Now that is an idea I can fuckin' get behind, Doll-face," the dark-haired Saviour growled back. "You, me, a queen size, and a hot tub out back. Phew, I can think of a million fuckin' reasons to love that."

Here they were, the two of them. An almost perfect match for one another. No one could deny that.

Both dressed in black, both tall and beautiful…and both with pasts that had shaped them into what they were today.

They had come out stronger from all the shit they had been through.

And as a pair, that strength was obvious to anyone. An utterly formidable duo.

Negan gave a lingering chuckle, digging his cheek with his tongue before he dragged his eyes finally away from hers, staring about.
The two of them automatically made a beeline for the set of double doors straight ahead, Negan giving them a shove open with the end of Lucille, just as they heard a hurried set of footsteps behind them.

Blake glanced around, as she and Negan made their way into a large ornately decorated office, and rolled her eyes.

For there was the bearded Gregory, striding across the entrance hall towards them.

"Wow," said Negan, his voice sounding slightly different now, with a sarcasm lingering there that could only be for the leader of the Hilltop. "Now you know what this room needs?"

And with that, Negan arched his back and pointed up at a blank space upon the wall dead-ahead.

"A goddamn nice paintin' of a guy ridin' a horse," he finished, pursing his lips.

And it took all of Blake's effort not to roll her eyes at this.

For she knew just what painting he was talking about. The painting now sitting in the Saviours rec room, that Simon had snatched from this very place long ago, Negan had told her that during her tour of the Sanctuary during her first week of being there.

But Gregory ignored Negan's comment, moving around the pair and coming to stand before the dark-haired man.

"Let me just say if there's anything I can do to help in your search….Negan," said the old man in a grovelling sort of tone, flashing Negan what he likely thought was a warm smile. "Anything I can do at all….I just want to prove to you how loyal both I, and my people here, are."

A frown line twitched its way between Blake's brows now.

Ugh, she hated this man already…just the way he spoke, making her skin crawl.

But she knew of course that Negan took to fools even less that she did. And she barely had to look upon at the dark-haired Saviour's face, already correctly predicting what his expression would be.

"Now that..." Negan said, taking an inch step into the Hilltop leader. "…is good to know, Greg. You know there is nothin' I like better than a guy or gal willin' to come around to my way of thinkin'. Ain't that right, Peaches?"

But Blake merely shot Negan a lingering look, but didn't smile, retracting her hand from his and folding her arms across her chest coldly, her green eyes soon drifting over to Gregory.

"Hmmm, I'm not so sure though," said Blake sucking on her teeth momentarily. "See I think Greg here once feigned his loyalty to Rick too….when he thought he could get something out of it."

Now the older man almost immediately looked her way, shooting her a scathing look.

"I'm sorry, and you are?" he bit back in an airy sort-of voice, than instantly made Blake's hackles raise.

God, he reminded her so much of David. So dismissive, so arrogant…

"Blake," she growled out now, lowering her chin darkly.

But Gregory had already turned away from her, almost the moment she had spoken.
"Right, right," he nodded, barely even waiting for her answer and gazing back at the leader of the Saviours. "Negan, I can assure you, my loyalty does not lie with those people…it lies only with you….like it always has."

But Negan's had already narrowed his eyes, a furious looking twitch, tickling away inside his clenched jaw, as he stared down at Gregory, his mouth turned down into a grimace.

"See the thing is...Greg..." Negan growled in a low intimidating voice, lifting Lucille and pressing the end of it into Gregory's chest. "I think I am more inclined to listen to Peaches here...an' I have a feelin' that you might just be one hell of a sneaky son of a bitch who will try an' double cross me first chance he fuckin' gets."

But the leader of the Hilltop shook his head quickly.

"No….please, Negan….I would never ever do that," said the old man, a gulp sliding its way down his throat. "You have to believe me. I am loyal to you. I have provided for you…and whatever, Bea here, says-"

But at this dismissive use of the wrong name, Blake gave a growl beneath her breath, her eyes blackening.

"You'd never be loyal to anyone," she suddenly hissed, taking a step forwards and pulling the gun from the back of her pants. "You're an asshole who only thinks about himself and what he can benefit from any arrangement he makes. I've known men like you. Spineless, pathetic snakes."

She pressed the barrel of the gun into Gregory's chest in the space beside Lucille, feeling a newfound confidence built from the anger swirling inside her.

"So, go," she murmured. "We'll find you when we're done taking a good look around. And then you can try and grovel a bit more, if that's what you really want to do."

With that, with his eyes flicking first from Blake and then to Negan, Gregory gave a swift nod, pulling himself away from the pair of them and hurrying off, leaving the room without even uttering another word.

Negan waited until he heard the front door slam closed, before he finally let out a long and carrying whistle of approval.

"Wow," he said, turning to Blake, biting down onto his bottom lip and shaking his head, gazing at her as though she was the most precious of jewels. "You are such a fuckin' badass. Fuck me, Daddy is hard just hearin' those bad fuckin' words come out of your mouth like that, Princess."

And with that, Negan, leaning over Blake, gave her the smallest of shoves backwards until her ass collided with the desk behind her.

The caramel-blonde woman grinned, wetting her lips gently with her tongue, and she felt herself getting warm.

She absent-mindedly placed her gun down onto the desk at her side, before her fingers reached up, curling around the grey fabric of Negan's t-shirt, and pulling him into her.

"That so?" Blake purred out in a vixen-like tone, as the dark-haired Saviour's smirking lips hovered just a breath away from hers.

Negan nodded back gently, giving a needy growl, as his hands found the back of her thighs, lifting
her up slightly and dropping her back down to the desk behind her.

"Hmmm, you want me to show you, Peaches?" he hummed darkly, settling himself between her legs now as he tugged her ass into towards him.

And with that Blake gave a smile into his mouth, feeling his hard erection pressing into her hot damp core.

"Mmmhmmm, yes, please, Daddy," she smiled, as her eyes flickered over Negan's shoulder devilishly for the briefest of moments, her free hand curling through the back of his dark hair. "But leave the door open…and that way, if Greg does decide to come back, he's going to see how bad we really are…"

And at her goading words, Negan giving a wide wolf-like grin, barely lingered for a moment, before devouring her mouth with his... Twenty hot and dirty minutes later, with papers that had once been on the desk in neat and tidy piles, now strewn haphazardly across the floor, Blake stood just a little way from the window now, tucking her tight black sweater back into her jeans.

Ok, that had been pretty hot, she had to admit…

With her back against the desk….and Negan between her legs…his stiff cock pounding into her tight wet pussy faster and faster…until she had cried out, the butt of her abandoned gun digging into her back…but right then, she hadn't particularly cared, so caught up in the moment.

It had been intense, delicious and dirtier than ever before…and Blake now couldn't help but smile over at Negan as he righted himself too, doing up his large belt buckle once more.

His chocolate eyes soon caught hers and he grinned widely, offering her a small questioning look.

"A badass and a dirty fuckin' girl, all in one mornin'?" he said cocking an impressed eyebrow in her direction. "I am lovin' this new you, Sweetheart."

But Blake, grabbing her gun and shoving it down the waistband of her pants before picking up her abandoned jacket from the floor, merely smirked, giving a small shrug.

"It was always there…." she purred out. "It's just that I had no one to keep up with me, until now…"

Negan stared, his eyes taking in every inch of her, looking absolutely besotted with the caramel-blonde woman now.

But Blake, threading her arms through her coat, merely sidled on up to him, smiling gently.

"Well, I think we've finished checking this room for starters, don't you think?" she asked biting her lip teasingly.

Negan grinned back at her now, grasping up Lucille with one hand and holding out his other arm in a gentlemanly manner.

"Oh, most fuckin' definitely," Negan beamed. "An' so fuckin' far, this is shaping up to be a pretty fuckin' good vacation home don't you think?"

And Blake, grasping hold of his leather clad arm, merely wrinkled her nose, as the pair headed out of the open double-doors and back into the hallway.
"Oh yeah, and we are definitely keeping that desk where it is," she replied, as they walked.

To her right, Negan gave a small chuckle of appreciation, just as the door ahead of them leading into the house itself, was flung wide open, and in walked Dwight followed closely by Arat, both looking out of breath and wide-eyed.

Blake took in a breath. Despite her dirty words earlier, she was grateful that the pair hadn't entered ten minutes prior, the front doorway, giving a good view of the desk in the office directly behind them.

"Any fuckin' luck?" Negan barked, lifting his chin and eyeing the duo, the cheerfulness soon dropping from his features.

But Arat, pursing her lips and giving a hard sigh, shook her head ashamedly.

"We've checked all the outbuildings…and, nothing," she uttered tensely.

Negan gave a hard sniff and beneath her grasp on his arm, Blake could feel the dark-haired Saviour tensing slightly at this disappointing news.

"Well then get the boys to check the rest of the fuckin' rooms in here," he murmured back in a deep voice, gesturing up the stairs with Lucille as he spoke. "We ain't leaving without that fuckin' prick. We clear?"

Dwight nodded.

"Crystal, Boss," the blonde man uttered promptly, before heading back out the door beginning to round up the rest of their men.

Arat lingered for a brief minute, looking as though she wanted to say something, but refrained.

But Blake could of course read her like a book and she took that as her hint.

"I'm just going to wait outside," the caramel-blond woman said, swiftly dropping her arm from Negan's, and heading out of the door, not wanting to get in the way…

..because that wasn't what she was here for.

It was raining now harder than it had been earlier, Blake looking skyward as she exited the building.

She stepped aside as Dwight and six or seven or so of the Saviours all filed past her heading promptly into the house, each one of them offering her a familiar nod or grin as they went.

It was a strange feeling to actually be part of something….even back during the time she had spent at Alexandria with David…..she had never truly felt like they were HER people.

But now, with the Saviours, it was a whole different life…..and being this close to Negan obviously helped matters.

Although despite her rocky beginning, it was now obvious that Blake had garnered her own level of respect amongst the people of the Sanctuary. And that they liked her perhaps even a little more than they did Negan on occasion.

For whereas he could be a tough and harsh leader…

…Blake was kind and considerate…..but yet perhaps still as formidable on occasion.
Making her way across the grassy yard, winching a little against the falling rain, Blake gazed around, eager to take a small peek at the little fenced-off garden at the bottom of the walled-in expansive space.

But she had barely even gone a few paces, when a sudden hand grabbed her shoulder, spinning her back around.

"Blake," came a voice, but the caramel-blonde woman jumping in fright, instinctively pulled her gun from her pants, frowning hard…

…but she faltered slightly, her eyes meeting with the short, brunette, face of-

"Enid," she breathed out, lowering her weapon slightly, as the young girl stared back at Blake wide-eyed.

Blake had hoped to avoid both Enid and Jesus. But yet here they were…

She gave a small inward sigh.

"W-What are you doing here…with him?" asked the young brunette accusingly, in a hurt-sounding voice. "After what he did to Glenn…to Abraham-"

But a dark look passed over Blake's features now, as she gave the slightest of pissed-off grimaces.

"Let me stop you right there," she uttered in a cold sort-of voice. "I am truly sorry for what happened to them, I am. But things have changed."

But at Blake's words, Enid gave a scowl.

"He's still a murderer. Negan," she said bluntly, in a hollow voice, leaning forwards and pointing at Blake. "And you're here waltzing around with him…like his pet."

What?

Blake's eyes blackened almost instantly, an anger bubbling inside her.

After everything that had happened to her in her life, after dealing with David's abuse, having him treat her like something he would find on the bottom of his shoe…being called a pet, hurt more than any insult she had heard banded around about her before.

Blake gave a gulp, staring hard at Enid, feeling utterly furious and taking a threatening step toward her.

"Don't you dare ever, ever call me that," Blake breathed in a dangerous voice. "You stupid girl. You seriously have no idea what I've been through. Your friends back there in Alexandria…Rick, Tara, Rosita…they turned their back on me when I needed them and yet that man over there, Negan…"

Blake pointed back to the house, her voice growing ever more heated.

"…he saved me….and rather than pulling me down like David did, or your friends did….he was the only one who treated me like I was human and not just some sorry woman who got knocked around by her boyfriend. So don't you dare judge me, and look me up and down like you're disappointed in me. Because no matter what you think of me. or him, or the Saviours, we will always be on that top rung looking down on you…."

And with that Blake stepped forwards, so that she was just an inch away from Enid now, the young
girl, breathing hard and looking scared.

"...and before you talk to me like we're friends....or patronise me...." Blake finished. 
"...you'd better realise you're pissing off...because I am not a person you want to get on the wrong side of anymore."

That was the truth and right now both she and Enid knew it.

The teenager let out a shaky whimper as Blake backed off slightly, still holding the gun in her hand as rain fell down onto their heads harder now.

She wasn't regretful for saying those things to her. But, fuck, she was sick of people she knew, talking down to her and blaming her for joining up with Negan and his people.

This was her choice and they had all made their decision when they believed David over her…when they turned a blind eye to his actions…when they allowed her to get hurt over and over again.

So she wasn't sorry now. Not one little bit.

But the caramel-blonde woman could only roll her eyes as the long haired figure of Jesus appeared just to their right, stalking quickly over towards them.

"Enid, are you ok?" he asked gently, but his eyes were not on the young girl anyway, but on Blake instead, his face expressionless.

Blake knew exactly what he was thinking….he was a clever man. And unlike Enid he could obviously tell that Blake was more to Negan than just a pet….that she was far more of a threat than that.

But Enid didn't reply, merely turning on her heel, looking wounded, and heading off back in the direction of the large group of people, still milling around the centre of camp, waiting for the Saviours to leave.

But now it was just Blake and Jesus, standing there alone, as the rain fell all around them.

But she did not take her eyes away from his, her face set.

Blake did half expected him to snarl at her now, to tell her to go…to offer her some snide remark.

But he didn't, and after a moment or two, the long haired man spoke, in a calm and surprisingly soft sort-of voice.

"I'm sorry for what David did to you," he said suddenly, causing Blake to blink a little, a lump appearing in her throat, taken aback. Not expecting these words at all. "My old man used to beat my Mom up when I was a kid, so I know what it's like to feel scared and alone and think you don't have anywhere to turn."

Rain pitter-pattered all around...

Blake tilted her head, her chest rising and falling hard, as she felt her heart thudding way inside her chest.

Furious tears pricked at her eyes as her lips twitched….so desperate to say something back…

But for some reason she just couldn't find the words.

And it came as a relief when suddenly there was a loud cry and a yell from over to their right, as both
Blake and Jesus looked around to see a man being thrown out of the door of the large looming house, him tumbling swiftly to the floor and landing on the wet grass.

Blake raised her chin, noticing Dwight, Arat and the tall figure of Negan all striding out of the door, the dark-haired Saviour in particular, advancing on the man on the ground.

That must have been Tony, a thin and scrawny man that Blake had seen at the Sanctuary a few times.

Glancing over, Blake also noticed a crying woman and small boy both cowering in the corner, tears streaming down their faces as Danny pointed a large flat meat cleaver to the young boy's throat.

She bristled at the sight, watching as Negan stepped forwards, rubbing at his mouth with his fingers, Lucille swinging from his hand limply.

But before anything could happen or Negan could do or say anything, the oily figure of Gregory hurried forwards, his hand raised aloft.

"I swear," he said shaking his head and standing before Negan, almost pleading now, giving a shaky laugh. "I had no idea that they were here…"

But Blake gave an instant scowl at his grovelling words, talking two or three sides of her own, as she walked silently over towards Negan and the other Saviours, leaving Jesus where he stood, and watching the scene before her unfold.

Negan now made a face, arching his back easily.

"Oh I think you did fuckin' know all along," he said in a loud voice, raising both eyebrows. "An you know what? I am still deciding outta you an’ him, who's gonna face the fuckin punishment for this. I mean, on one hand we've got you….lyin' straight to my face. But on the other hand, here's Tony, putting his life above the lives of not only his wife an' kid, but all of the other fuckin people back at home....all those kids…the moms…those elderly fuckers…putting them at risk, all because you were a selfish fuck."

Negan pointed with Lucille over towards Tony, who was now on his knees whimpering, guns pointed towards him from all around.

"Which one do i choose..."

But Gregory gave another laugh…obviously presuming that Negan was joking.

"Come on," he said shifting his weight from foot-to-foot.. "How about we go inside, crack open a bottle of whiskey and talk about things man to man….and then you can do whatever you want with this fella….like I said….I had no knowledge of him being here…."

But Blake gave a growl beneath her breath, lifting her chin and strutting over towards Negan on her long, slender legs.

Negan glanced her way, a flicker of something warm in his eyes as they reached her.

"What do you say, Peaches?" he asked, as she stopped just a few feet away from him, standing at Gregory's side. "You think I should listen to ol' Greg here?"

His lips twitched slightly, but he stayed as stony-faced as ever, seemingly waiting for her answer.
Valuing her opinion just that much.

But before Blake could speak, Gregory had turned to her now, a weak smile at his mouth, insincere and vile.

"Look, Brooke, Sweetheart-" he began in a poisonous voice.

But at his words something in Blake snapped….

And before her now was not Gregory at all…

..it was David…

….and Steve…

…and the Wolves who had tried to rape her…

….it was every guy who had yelled at her on the street or tried to grope her on the dancefloor at a club or on public transport…

And in the blink of an eye, she had lifted her gun aloft, removing the safety and holding the barrel, at once, to Gregory's head.

"My name is Blake," she said in loud voice full of fury, her eyes black and deadly now. "Blake. B.L.A.K.E. And the only person who ever gets to call me anything other than that, is him."

And now she didn't have to point at Negan, for everyone to know who she was talking about. For it was obvious.

The entire yard had fallen silent now, all watching her….all listening to her…..hanging off every syllable.

And Blake knew that they would remember her name.

The leader of the Hilltop looked now as though he was about to cry, his mouth hanging open in utter gaping shock.

But even so, Blake still did not relent and in a second, she had lifted her foot and kicked Gregory hard in the stomach, sending him flying backwards and landing on his ass on the damp ground beside Tony with a loud thud.

A couple of the Saviours around now gave a tittering laugh, as did Negan, but still, none of them spoke, all of them waiting for Blake to continue.

Blake looked to Negan now, who stood there with his chin dipped low, surveying Blake's every move with a wide grin plastered over his bearded mouth...

...looking like the devil in human-form…

But Blake blinked, realising that she probably didn't look far from that either.

He was everything to her. Changing her life in so so many ways.

And what Blake had told Enid had been true…..he had saved her.

He'd made her into something incredible…
...a queen, where there once had been just a mouse.

Negan, at once, gave a silent nod, encouraging Blake to carry on. And it was only then did she return his grin...

...both looking as dark and dangerous as each other right now....

...but unlike Negan, Blake knew that this was just for here....

...just for now...

...just where it was needed.....

And so lifting her chin and bringing herself up to her full height, as rain fell all around them, Blake turned back to Gregory, pointing the gun once more at his head.

"P-Please," the older man said suddenly, getting to all fours and staring up at her. "I swear, I have and will always be loyal to you...to Negan...to the Saviours..."

But Blake knew that this was easy for him to say here and now, with a gun to his head.

"And how do we know you aren't going to betray us, huh?" said Blake in a cool and collected voice, blinking down at Gregory.

"I wont I swear, B-Blake...please..." Gregory pleaded, clasping his hands before him, as Blake pressed the gun to his temples.

It soothed her now to have him use her name like this...to have it ingrained into his skull. Burned into his mind like this bullet soon would be.

But as glad as she was, she faltered ever so slightly as she lifted her eyes just a little, to see Jesus and Enid stood there now, side-by-side in the surrounding crowd of people.

A gulp trailed its way down Blake's throat, as she parted her lips ever so slightly wavering.

She couldn't do this...

...she wanted to...

...she was angry...

...bitter...

...hurting...

...but even so, this wasn't who she was.

And without being able to help it, Blake lowered her gun, as both Tony and Gregory whimpered at her feet looking hopeful.

But Blake merely turned on her heel, stalking swiftly over to Negan...to the man, she knew, that could do what she couldn't, right now...

... to the man who could finish the job.

And so, pressing herself into Negan's side, Blake pressed her lips to his ear, her fingers curling
around his leather-clad sleeve.

"I can't choose," she murmured in a nonchalant, carrying voice, making sure everyone in the crowd could hear her now. "You decide."

And with that, she gave his arm an affectionate squeeze, as she slid her gun into his hand.

Negan grinned down at her, biting down onto his bottom lip with glee at seeing her like this, and leaning his mouth into her hair.

"Oh, Peaches, you are fuckin' somethin', you know that?" he hummed for her and only her to hear, causing a small smile to slide across her lips, as he slowly pulled back from her and walked forwards...over to Gregory.

Fuck, he looked like a god now. Frightening and imposing...

And Blake knew that she wanted him. With every fiber of her body from now, until the end of everything.

She watched with stony green eyes as the dark-haired Saviour now raised Blake's black handgun and pointed it back over towards Gregory's head.

He gave a long sigh now before speaking.

"Y'know maybe the lady's right..." Negan mused, giving a shrug of his shoulders and leaning back on his heels. "Maybe you will betray us, Greg."

"I won't...I promise I won't!" pleaded the leader of the Hilltop, begging Negan now, as both crowds of people stood around watching. Witness to his cowardice.

But Negan merely tutted intimidatingly.

"H'mmm I aint so fuckin' sure-"

And with that, before Blake could even blink, a loud carrying gunshot rang out across the yard.

There was a sudden scream and a cry and it took Blake a long few second to realise what had happened...

...as it did Gregory, who knelt there trembling, and slowly staring over to his left...to where the kneeling figure of Tony swayed on the spot, gaping...his eyes fixed dead forwards...a large red and smoking bullet hole through his heart...

And, in an instant with the cries of his wife and child carrying out behind him, Tony fell, face forwards onto the wet ground...dead.

And it was then that Blake truly realised just how unpredictable Negan was.

But even so, she waited until Gregory had looked back up at Negan and the dark-haired Saviour, dropping Lucille down onto the older man's shoulder, spoke once again, his voice full of darkness.

"You ever betray me, and your fuckin' end won't be so goddamn quick.", Negan said in a low growl, leaning down and baring his teeth. "We understand each other?"

And by the look on his face, Gregory certainly did understand as he nodded quickly, his beige pants now covered in mud and blood as it ran from Tony's lifeless body down the slight slope towards...
Negan soon stood up straight once again, seemingly happy with everything. And, lifting Lucille back up onto his leather-clad shoulder, he swiveled now on his heel, turning to Arat and Dwight.

"Clear this place out," Negan said in a cold tone to the pair. "Take anythin' you think we might want."

Almost immediately the duo nodded, getting to work as the Saviours filtered from the crowd.

Danny stepped forwards.

"Boss, the wife and kid... what do you want me to do with them?"

At Danny's words, Blake saw Negan suck on his teeth, staring over Danny's shoulder at the grieving widow and the small boy.

But it was Blake's turn to take the lead here, approaching Negan gently.

"Leave them here," she said now, gazing up into Negan's angry chocolate eyes, conveying to him now that he needed to do this. He need just to let them go.

And he did...the dark-haired leader of the Saviours giving Danny a nod...

...before he slowly turned his attention, now, to Blake.

The rain was falling heavy on their heads, both of them utterly drenched now...but that didn't seem to matter.

Negan took a small step into her, gazing at her almost awe-struck by her presence.

"Y'know you are a goddamn queen, Peaches..." he growled, reaching for her hand

But rather than entwining his fingers with hers, Negan brought it up to his lips instead, pressing a gentle kiss to her knuckles.

Blake smiled, parting her lips, staring up at the dark-haired man.

But this time, as he lowered their hands, Blake didn't let go, instead blinking hard and offering him a wicked grin.

"Oh, I know..." she purred in reply, as everyone around them stared at them both now...

...in fear and awe...

...at the two of them, standing there tall and intimidating...and utterly spectacular...

...the King and Queen of the Saviours.
Almost all of the Saviours were still soaked through to the skin even an hour later, as their trucks skimmed easily down the road that lead directly back to the looming Sanctuary.

It was only early afternoon and yet the sky was now a deep grey colour, a storm imminent on the horizon.

But feeling cold and wet and admittedly kind of exhausted after the events this morning at the Hilltop, Blake was sat up front in the cab of the first truck, her head pressed into the crook of Negan's neck.

The dark-haired Saviour upon entering the vehicle had immediately thrown his arm across her shoulders, and like this they had stayed for the duration of the journey. Close together and warm.

There were so many strong feeling bubbling up inside Blake, feelings she had tried to suppress….feelings she had tried to convince herself were not there.

Who had she been kidding when she had told Negan they were to be 'just friends'?

For all this….they were way past that now….

So desperately caught up in one another….with so many unsaid things, still to spill from their lips….

Blake's fingers curled around the chest of Negan's t-shirt, damp and clinging to his skin, as they arrived through the gates, the truck slowing just enough for her to hear the rain hammering down upon the roof of the truck and the asphalt lot around them.

Here they were safe, back at the Sanctuary.

Blake's home.

For there was no denying that this place, as sterile and draughty and it sometimes could be….well, it was her life now, and here she was happier than she had been in a long, long time. And nothing, and no one, on this earth was going to take that away from her.

The truck pulled up just outside the doors to the factory building, with Blake easing herself gently out of Negan's arms.

The dark-haired man gave a stiff groan now, arching his back against the seat, before shoving open the door to his right and hopping out, pulling his barbed-wire covered baseball bat from the foothold with him as he went.

Blake quickly followed, her green eyes gazing up at the dark sky, pulling her sopping wet jacket tightly around her, wincing at the rain as it fell down on every inch of her that had dried, soaking her to the skin once again.

She hated the rain. Rain meant that work on her garden was out of the question…and that thought alone made her bored and cranky.

"Ugh, I'm going inside," she said grimacing and strutting off towards the small doorway that led inside the Sanctuary.

But Negan was hot on her heels, giving a chuckle, and dragging a hand down his bearded chin,
before matching her pace on his long legs and throwing his arm, once again, haphazardly, around her shoulders.

"Whoa, my kitten does not like the fuckin' rain, huh?" he growled teasingly, bringing up Lucille onto his opposite shoulder cockily, as he peered down at Blake.

But the a caramel-blonde woman threw him a dark look, rolling her green eyes huffily.

"No I don't…" she said bluntly as they stepped inside. "I'm freezing."

And with the words, she gave a small involuntary shudder, which only caused Negan to grin wider, leaning in towards her.

"Well then, how 'bout I find a way of warming us both up..." he growled in a devilish voice, a hint of hunger lingering there in his twinkling eyes.

But Blake just sighed, tutting at him tiredly, before turning to face him in the small dark corridor.

"Negan," she said, peering up into his long face now. "I'm sorry…I'm just tired for some reason. Everything that happened back there at the Hilltop…"

She shook her head now, dropping her eyes and trailing off.

She did feel exhausted, cold and grumpy….and for the first time, not really in the mood for any of Negan's 'advances'.

But a mere moment later she felt Negan's gloved hand reach her chin, lifting her gaze once more to his.

His face now was sad and full of concern for her, as he parted his lips, staring meaningfully into her eyes.

"Darlin', fuck, you don' need to fuckin' apologise to me, we clear?" he murmured in response, barley taking any notice of the rest of the Saviours who were pouring through the door just over his shoulder. "Hell, I understand that this life ain't a bed of fuckin' roses….so if you have to take a time out….shit, I ain't gonna judge you for it. Like I told you, Peaches, we're a fuckin' team, an' I would give you the entire fuckin' world if I could."

And with that, with their eyes still locked together, Negan leaned forwards pressing a kiss to Blake's lips.

This was softer and far more evocative that their kisses earlier at the desk had been. This was special….their contact meaning more to her than anything, as she pressed herself into him…holding onto this moment for as long as she possibly could.

And it was just a few seconds later that the pair of them finally pulled away, Blake biting down onto her lip and peering up into Negan's grinning bearded face.

"Perhaps no sex…for right now at least…" she said in a gentle voice, running her fingers down his chest, them coming to rest neatly upon his belt buckle. "But you can join me for a nice hot shower if you like?"

She wrinkled her nose now, smirking up at him naughtily, as Negan gave a chuckle of enjoyment.

"Oh now that is an offer I can't fuckin refuse..." he hissed out now, grinning widely before suddenly
and without warning grasping at Blake's damp thighs.

And the caramel-blonde woman couldn't help but give a small laughing squeal, as Negan suddenly lifted her into his arms, her legs wrapping themselves tightly around his waist and her fingers curling up into his dark hair, holding on tightly, as he carried her past the Saviours piling in from the outside. His chocolate eyes on her and only her now.

Half an hour later, and having used up most of Negan's hot water having the longest most enjoyable shower of her life, Blake was now stood in his bedroom in nothing but a towel, drying her damp hair in front of a mirror.

The shower itself had warmed her bones entirely, making her feel cosy and oh-so content, as Negan had pressed hot kisses to her neck, his calloused hands roaming across every inch of her body.

She could tell that Negan was totally and utterly enamoured with her, that was obvious, but if Blake was being honest, she felt exactly the same…

They fit together perfectly…

Like two pieces of a jigsaw puzzle. Made for each other.

Blake barely able to believe that it wasn't that long ago that she had arrived here, locked downstairs in a cell, broken and abused by her former lover. A mere shell of the woman she was now.

But here she was, a queen of this castle.

She smiled at herself gently, as she stared at her own reflection, ruffling her damp caramel-hair with a grey towel.

By the time Blake had left the shower, Negan was already nowhere to be found, and she noted Lucille was mysteriously absent with him.

But Blake had been just about to fling off her towel and pad back into the bathroom, when suddenly the doors to Negan's room were thrown open and in stepped, not only the dark-haired Saviour himself, but Danny directly behind him, following at close proximity.

"Oh an' make sure you tell Dwight that you both need to be back ready for that son of a bitch's offerin' tomorrow…" Negan uttered darkly, in a commanding voice Blake rarely heard when she was alone with only him. "I need all the good men I can get."

Blake made a small noise at the disturbance, pulling her towel around her tightly, and staring aghast at the pair.

"Ugh, do you mind?!" she uttered with contempt in her voice.

But Negan, glancing her way, as if noticing her now for the first time, gave a smug grin.

"Jeez, sweetheart," he said starkly. "I assumed you'd be out and fuckin' dressed by now!"

But Blake merely scowled in his direction, just as Danny, manoeuvring his gaze swiftly to the floor, pressed his lips together in gentleman-like manner.

"Sorry," he said in quiet voice, his gaze averted now. "I can wait outside-"

But Blake pursing her lips, merely shook her head at the black man's apologetic tone.
"No, don't worry, Danny," she replied soothingly. "It's not your fault."

But at Blake's words, Negan gave a scoffing frown, easing himself back onto his heels and pointing to her incredulously with the sharp end of Lucille.

"You seriously blamin’ me for this, Darlin'?!" he said in a loud obnoxious voice. "I ain't the one waltzin’ around the Sanctuary in nothin' but a goddamn towel. An’ it ain't my fault that you like to spend forever in that shower of mine now is it?"

But Blake gave a roll of her eyes glaring at Negan angrily, as she ached suddenly over towards the awaiting Danny, who looked mighty keen to be anywhere but here right now, caught up in the couple's domestic.

"For the record," Blake snapped, pointing a finger back at the dark-haired Saviour. "First of all, I am not waltzing around the place. This is your room, jackass…I just thought I could get a bit of privacy for once. And second of all, some of us haven't been hogging all the hot water for the last couple of years and are appreciative when we actually get some…"

Negan's eyes followed her now, until she reached Danny, grasping hold of his arm gently and leading him back over towards the door.

"...and besides…” she purred continuing. "...my hair takes ages to wash."

But Negan gazed at her darkly now, his nose wrinkling, as he took in the contact between Blake and the youngish lieutenant.

"Well if its hair you're talkin' about," he growled in return, his chin dipped low now. "...then you know full fuckin' well I am very much a fuckin' man's-man, Peaches. An' I don't have a fuckin' problem. That shit don' need to be blow dried, y'know?"

But Blake once again rolled her eyes, ignoring his comment and instead leaning into Danny.

"Would you give us a minute, Danny?" she asked in a warm voice, as the man nodded and exited the room hastily, pulling the door shut behind him with a loud carrying snap.

It was then and only then, that Blake turned back to Negan, her arms folded across her chest in utter irritation.

"I hate you sometimes," she snarled, narrowing her green eyes in his direction.

But Negan remained with his own eyes fixed on hers….quickly closing the gap between them now, that same possessive look still fixed onto his long tanned and bearded face.

"You and Danny are kinda close, huh?" Negan uttered in a low voice.

But Blake almost immediately rolled her eyes, ignoring his comment and instead leaning into Danny.

"I barely even know him, Negan," she tutted truthfully, as the dark-haired Saviour came to stop just a mere breath away from her now.

He clenched his jaw tightly, sucking on his straight white teeth a little.

"Well it seems as though you and him are kinda fuckin' friendly, Peaches," he said in a black voice. "There somethin' I should be worried about?"

But Blake merely sighed heavily, shaking her head now and shoving past him, bumping her shoulder
"You need to learn to control your jealousy, baby," she uttered knowingly, padding over on bare feet to Negan's closet, opening the doors and peering inside.

But behind her, much to her utter delight, she heard Negan give a growl of annoyance at her airiness, turning on his heel and strolling on over to her. His boots chinking as he went.

"Well then maybe I'm gonna have to lock you back in that cell...keep you all to my fuckin' self, Darlin," the dark-haired man suddenly whispered in a husky voice into Blake's ear, which sent shivers down her spine for more reason that one.

She swivelled around now, her eyes flashing darkly, as she jabbed him in the chest with her finger.

"You put me back in that cell, Negan, I swear-" she threatened warningly.

But a wide grin swam across the Saviours bearded face now, as he bounced on his heels excitedly, giving a whining chuckle of approval.

"My oh my, this pussy-cat's got fuckin' claws!" he said running his tongue over his lips as he eyed her, tossing down Lucille onto a chair, as his free hand slid it's way over the hem of her towel, finding bare skin beneath.

But Blake growled, knowing what he was trying to do.

And to his utter surprise, she merely pressed hand to his leather-clad chest, holding the dark-haired leader of the Saviours at arm's length.

"Ah ah ah," she said in a reprimanding tone, raising both her eyebrows in his direction. "Threatening me means that you're gonna have to keep your hands to yourself."

At this Negan pressed his tongue to his teeth, looking a little peeved.

"Oh yeah? For how fuckin' long we talking here?" he growled questioningly, as Blake gave an easy shrug of her shoulders, changing her mind about borrowing any of Negan's clothes to make the long walk back to her room on the second floor and instead heading over towards the door.

The caramel-blonde woman, now, tugged open the door, before glancing over her shoulder one last time and giving Negan a wicked smirk of her pink lips.

"Hmmm, I'm not quite sure yet," she said in a devilish voice. "But don't worry, I'll decide on the way back to my room..."

And offering the dark-haired Saviour one last lingering look, Blake headed out of the door, uttering seven simple words, that she knew full-well would make Negan chocolate eyes darken furiously.

"...but don't worry.....Danny can walk me."

And with that, naughty Blake, in just her towel and a dazzling smile was gone, in a blink...

...leaving only a seething Negan standing there alone in the room behind her....

....without either Blake OR his loyal lieutenant now...

...his eyes, as predicted, darkening furiously after his bad, bad girl.
Like the start of every hot-housewife porno I've ever seen

By mid-afternoon, Blake had deemed today as an utter wright-off.

The rain was lashing hard at the windows and a whistling wind seemed to blow an icy cold draft under every door, dropping the temperature inside the gloomy factory by several degrees.

There was no way she or any of the other Saviours could work in the garden for the rest of today. So instead, the caramel-blonde woman had relegated herself to doing something else that had taken her fancy on this cold, dark and stormy day.

And so, after heading back to her room an hour ago, ditching Danny around the corner (only needing him as far as the end of Negan's corridor to try and get a rise out of the dark-haired Saviour) Blake had hurriedly gotten dressed, flinging on a pretty flowery dress that tied at the waist and a pale blue button up sweater from her closet, and had soon, with a contented sigh, headed down to the marketplace and the stores, to pick up the items she required before bringing them back up here to her room on the second floor.

And now here she was……making brownies.

Blake hadn't baked anything since waaaaay back before the start of all of this. And even then, that had been just a birthday cake for one of her colleagues at work, that David and his friends after coming home drunk one evening, had torn apart and devoured amongst themselves, before it had even reached her anyway.

Blake wasn't sure what had come over her.

Here she was…baking….like a good little wife. A sudden urge having overwhelmed her to make something sweet during this rare bit of spare time.

And so, after picking out the ingredients (perhaps a little selfishly) from the pantry, she had come up here and gotten to work.

Although Blake's intentions were not all that selfish, hoping that once she was done, she could go downstairs and share them with some of the lower-ranking Saviours, of which were mainly kids and older folk, in the dining hall later.

Her room had a small little kitchenette on one side, that Blake had not even touched since she had arrived here at the Sanctuary, the worktops gathering dust and the small powered oven never having even been switched on.

Even whilst living at Alexandria, Blake had only ever stuck to making easy dishes like pasta with sauce and eating heated canned goods where she could get it. After living out on the road and eating only basic scavenged rations and roadkill, finding even those bland foods too much for her stomach to handle.

Cooking wasn't exactly her forte, but hey, neither was gardening, and Blake had soon taken to that well enough.

But now the caramel-blonde woman was stood at her kitchen counter, mixing ingredients in a large bowl, as the window over to her right rattled a little with the carrying wind.

She pondered now what a winter in this place would be like.
The Sanctuary itself was large and built up, but certainly draughty at times, so it wasn't really a surprise to her that the wives had requested pants to wear. For really that wasn't that much to ask in this world, now was it?

Blake dwelled on the women a little now, wondering how their sore-heads had been this morning, and wondering whether Negan had been to see them as he had threatened to. She promised herself that she would make time to go see them later today and have a catch up.

But Blake, a little lost in thought, jumped now, as the door behind her was suddenly shoved open.

She hurriedly dropped her wooden spoon into the bowl with a small clatter and clutched a hand to her chest in fright, turning quickly to see Negan strutting through the door, without Lucille for once, but with a wide, arrogant, questioning grin, fixed onto his long, bearded face instead.

"Jesus, you gave me a fright," Blake breathed out, eyeing him with wide green orbs.

But Negan's own chocolate gaze flickered over her now, taking in every inch of Blake's appearance as well as the brownie ingredients spread out on the work surfaces behind her.

"Well this is where you are..." he growled, hovering in the doorway and lifting his chin as he surveyed her. "I have been searchin' high and low around this god-forsaken fuckin' place for you, and here you are all along, bakin' Daddy up some treats by the looks of it."

At his words Blake couldn't help but smirk, but even so, still rolled her eyes, turning her back on him now and picking up her spoon once again.

"These are not for you, Negan," she purred with a small sigh.

Behind her she heard the door snap shut gently, as a pair of heavy boots crossed the room towards her.

She smiled to herself, in an instant feeling a warm trickle of breath on her neck and a possessive hand slip around her waist, pulling her backward into a tall and taut body.

"Hold your fuckin' horses there, Sweetheart," the dark-haired man murmured in an incredulous voice into her ear. "Cause', hell, this look like my goddamn shit your using to make them. So I think I am more than fuckin' entitled to take what I want."

Blake gave another hard sigh, stirring her ingredients and ignoring Negan's comment.

But it wasn't even another second later, that the leader of the Saviours spoke again, coming to rest his prickly bearded chin against her shoulder, as Blake leant back against him easily.

"Y'know I never had you down for the Martha Stuart type, Peaches," he hummed in a low voice, into her ear. "An' yet here. you. are, cookin' up a goddamn storm, and lookin' like the start of every hot-housewife porno I've ever seen."

Blake's lips twitched slightly, as she pulled her face back a little and turned her head, eyeing him.

"And I'm guessing you've seen a lot of them have you?" she uttered in an amused voice.

But Negan, looking as cocky as he ever did, merely widened his grin, showing off his set of white teeth as he did so.

"Oh fuckin' plenty, Darlin'," he chuckled, as Blake pursed her lips, tutting, as she turned away from
him once more.

But from behind her, she felt Negan bounce slightly on his heels.

"But in fact, while we're on the subject of pornos," he said in giddy voice. "I have got Rick's ol' video camera upstairs that I thought we could make use of. Make a few home videos of our own if you catch my fuckin' drift...."

But at once, Blake made a face, catching his drift indeed...

"Nu-uh, no way, Negan," she scoffed, batting his hands away from her as they playfully slid further around her middle squeezing at her tightly. "My job in building this big new world, is not going to be to make pornos with you, thank you very much!"

At this she heard Negan give a low grumbling growl into her ear.

"Suit your fuckin' self, Sweetheart," he tutted, suddenly and without warning, reaching around Blake now and swiping his finger into the bowl of mixture and bringing it up to his mouth, sucking it clean.

"Hey," she reprimanded, swatting at his hand with her own paw, as the dark-haired Saviour pressed his body further into her now.

"Mmmhmmm, now that shit tastes good," he mused, as Blake smiled to herself now, rolling her eyes a little.

God, he really could be such a pain in her ass sometimes...but even so, he made her happier than anyone else had made her in a very, very long time.

Her and David had never been like this....like two teenagers, caught up with each other, having fun...

With him it had always been serious...and barely even a few months into her relationship, David had moved in with her, almost treating her like his maid at times. It all getting way too serious, too fast.

So here, now...all this with Negan...it was like she could finally be happy, even in this screwed up world.

He made her feel protected and cared for, giving her everything she could ever want.

But why?

Did he really feel the same for her as what she felt for him?

It truly felt like it now.

But after years of being used and not seeing David for what he truly was, Blake didn't want to mess this up...overthink things...get in too deep and say the wrong thing.

So she held off, giving the tiniest of gulps now, and reaching for an awaiting baking tray, and easily pouring the chocolatey mixture into it.

Blake could feel Negan's dark eyes watching her every movement quietly. But the silence between the pair of them was not an uncomfortable one.

"You remember when you gave me this room?" she murmured conversationally after a long drawn out minute had passed them both by. "I thought it was some kind of trick at first...."
Negan grinned, pulling back a little and allowing Blake to bend down and place the tray of brownies into the oven, turning the dial.

"Pfft. Well I ain't a monster, an' I wasn' about to keep you locked downstairs in that fuckin' cell forever now was I?" he said in a carrying voice, as Blake shut the oven door, wiping her hands on a dishcloth and turning to face the dark-haired man now, pressing her back up against the counter top behind her. "I could see that it was never your fuckin’ choice to come here in the first place. An' I wasn't about to stick you in a goddamn room with your asshole of a fi-an-ce."

Blake gave a small nod now, pursing her lips, remembering those less-than-fond memories.

"Well it's lucky you didn't…" she said in a quiet voice. "Because I think if David had gotten his way, I doubt I'd even be standing here right now. I'd probably be outside chained to that stupid fence with the rest of the dead."

That was the truth in her voice. Had things been different, had Negan not been here, Blake was likely be dead now by David's hand. And that alone was a scary thought.

But Negan, lowered his chin, pressing his own bearded lips together, looking slightly stern, the slightest of frowns darkening his brow as he pondered this.

"Well I'm fuckin' glad I made the right decision there…despite how much you smart-mouthed me to start with, Peaches," he said raising his eyebrows, and taking a small step into her now.

And at his words, Blake couldn't help but smile softly, parting her lips as she grazed his mouth with hers.

She kissed him gently, their lips parting and meeting again softly several times…making the most deliciously wet noises she had ever heard.

Before, giving a small sigh, Blake gently pulled away, turning back around in Negan's arms contently and making to clean up the kitchen counter top.

But Negan obviously had other plans, the caramel-blonde woman feeling him press a grin into her hair, as his hands skimmed down her thighs, before dragging them upwards once more, rumpling the hem of her dress as he went.

Blake, lifting her eyes dead-ahead of her now, gave a slow blink, knowing full-well where his hand was going to go next.

And as predicated, it wasn't a second later, that she felt Negan glide his digits down between her legs, causing her to give a small gulp of delicious agony and lean back into him a little.

"Mmmm, well, shit….cotton fuckin' panties, huh?…" Negan commented in a low, excited, humming voice into her ear now. "I have got to say, Peaches, I am loving this new you…goin' from badass to wholesome in just a couple of hours. You are keepin' me on. my. toes, Sweetheart!"

Blake's lips curved into a grin, feeling his expert fingers now glide over her the fabric that lay in between her hot, wet pussy, reaching her aching clit and causing her to jolt slightly, giving a moan of need.

But Negan merely chuckled into her ear through Blake's mass of caramel hair, as her fingers tensed around the edge of the counter top.

God, she wanted him…
"You like that, Darlin'?" he growled out now. "Hmmm? Does my fuckin' girl want me to fuck her over this goddamn counter?"

And Blake could only manage a desperate nod now, as she closed her eyes feeling Negan reach beneath her dress and pull her panties down her legs in one swift and rough movement.

Fuck…..this had all happened pretty fast.

Not that Blake was complaining.

Negan's hand reached up again now, running his fingers over the sticky cream that coated her glazed cunt, giving a grunt into her ear, as his other hand fumbled at his own belt buckle hurriedly.

Blake parted her lips wetly, her stomach convulsing as two of Negan's fingers disappeared up inside her slit just for a brief moment, pumping into her, before he pulled them out, holding his cum-covered digits to her mouth.

"Lick it all up, there's a good fucking girl," he groaned out now, easing his finger into her mouth, as the sound of his zipper being undone carried though the room now. "Cause' I've got a feelin' you taste as good as those goddamn brownies."

And Blake did as she was told, hurriedly sucking both of Negan's fingers clean, one-by-one.

She tasted herself, acidic yet sweet, like oranges and honey, and gave a small moan as Negan removed his fingers from her mouth, hitching up her dress a little from behind.

"Bend over for me, Peaches," came another whisper from the dark-haired Saviour behind her now, which caused Blake to gulp, all the breath suddenly leaning her body, as she felt Negan position his stiff cock at her hot, wet entrance.

The pair of them really were instantiable…

Both of them with equally high sex drives, and equally desperate for one another.

But Blake obeyed Negan's request, lowering herself forwards against the kitchen worktop before her and presenting her ass for him, feeling his slide his dick in and out of her folds a couple of times precariously.

Before the caramel-blond woman gave a grunting whine, frowning slightly, as she felt Negan stretch her wide and enter her fully.

His hands were on her hips now, as he wavered for a brief moment, giving an audible gulp, obviously appreciating the sensation of being buried into her up to his hilt.

But it wasn't a couple of seconds later that Negan eased himself out, before slamming himself into her once more, causing Blake to close her eyes, letting out a harsh breath of air.

"Shit," Negan uttered bluntly, his breaths already ragged in his throat before they had barely begun, but even so, he persevered, pulling out before slowly thrusting into her again….and again….and again…..

Fuck….this was heaven.

Or maybe instead, a delectable sort of hell…with Blake bent over and Negan well and truly fucking her brains out.
She gasped out as Negan thrust into her harder now, building momentum.

The room was filled with hot pants, the sound of Negan's chinking belt, and the hot, slick sound of Negan's dick coated in Blake's juices as he slid it in and out of her tight pussy.

Her hand and elbows were pressed flat to the surface of the worktop and her eyes on the faux-marble top, dusted with flour, getting her pretty, floral dress a little messy.

But right now Blake didn't care, as another moan of utter pleasure left her pink and swollen lips.

Sex with Negan was not like any sex she had had before.

This was dirty and hot, and everything Blake had ever fantasized about

And the caramel-blonde woman couldn't help the frown that twitched between her brows, opening her mouth in an o-shape of utter pleasure, feeling her orgasm building.

As much as she loved taking control, sometimes it was certainly nice for Negan to just take exactly what he wanted from her…just bending her over and fucking her, unable to help himself. Wanting her just that badly.

"Nnnngggff," he breathed out, Blake hearing the dark-haired Saviour lifting his closed eyes to the ceiling, as a gulp slid its way over his Adam's apple, obviously trying to hold off on cumming, as long as he possibly could.

But Blake couldn't.

And it wasn't even a minute later, that she whined out, her walls clenching around Negan's cock as her head fell forwards, her dragging across the floury surface beneath her.

Negan grunted at the sound she made, his grip on her hips and ass tightening, as he leaned in towards her slightly.

"Unfff, I'm gonna cum, Darlin'..." he murmured thickly, but the words had barely left his mouth, and so with Negan holding his dick firmly inside her, he soon sent stream upon stream of hot, white cum up into her cunt.

Both of them stood there for a moment, propped up by the counter now, breathing hard.

Before Negan, letting his hands slide up to Blake's shoulder, moved aside a small strand of blonde hair, pressing a kiss to her smooth shoulder.

At that feeling, Blake, still catching her breath, and trembling slightly on her feet, smiled gently.

Happy.

And it was just a second or two later, that Negan slowly eased himself out of her, as Blake stiffly pushed herself up once more, wincing a little as she did so.

They had to stop doing that, she knew it.

She was not taking any form of contraception right now and Negan cumming inside her was becoming a very regular occurrence right now. Twice in one day today, for example. And she just could not risk getting pregnant. Not after two miscarriages anyway. Not in this world.

Blake made a mental note to herself to go see Dr Carson later today or tomorrow.
She bent slightly, sliding her white cotton panties up her thighs one more, as she glanced over at Negan, who was sat now, on the edge of her bed, hand pressed to his un-stiffening cock and his eyes closed.

"Everything ok?" Blake mused, folding her arms across herself bemusedly, as she eyed him. His member still slick and glazed with her juices by the looks of it.

But Negan merely opened his chocolate eyes slowly, grinning over at her contently.

"Oh, it. is peachy fuckin' keen, Doll-face," he said reaching out his free hand and beckoning her over towards him.

Blake, smirking to herself, did as he wanted, padding over towards him on bare-feet, her front now completely covered in flour, as she came to straddle him, sitting down onto his lap, as his hands moved to her waist, sliding around her middle.

The dark-haired leader of the Saviours gazed up at her now, his bottom lip caught between his teeth. A look of utter awe passing over his long, bearded face.

No one had ever looked at Blake like Negan did, and this alone made butterflies swirl inside her.

She wanted so much to stay here forever with him now….

Just him and her.

"You really are a fuckin' queen, you know that, Darlin'?" Negan mused, his eyes taking in every inch of her face now, as Blake placed her hands gently to his leather-clad shoulders.

She licked at her lips slowly, smiling.

"I really wasn't before I met you, y'know," she answered in a quiet voice, a blush creeping up over her chest.

But Negan, reaching his hand up to Blake’s face, swiped his thumb over her cheek, brushing away a little flour that lingered there, giving a sigh.

"Oh I bet you fuckin' were, Peaches…" he murmured now, gazing into her eyes. "I just don' think anyone gave you the fuckin' opportunity to shine."

Blake felt a lump appearing in her throat now, as she dropped her gaze from Negan's for the tiniest of moments, before staring up into his eyes once again.

"Thank you," she said in a voice barely louder than whisper now…..

… realising, truly and utterly, that she was so, so desperately in love with him.

Finally admitting it to herself...after all this time.

But still not quite plucking up the courage to admit it to Negan himself yet….

…instead, smiling and kissing at Negan's bearded lips once more.

There she was, caught in heaven now…both of them so wrapped up in one another…

Kissing gently at the other's lips….
Suddenly a sharp twinge hit Blake's nose and she pulled back from Negan, her eyes widening as she realised just what she could smell and see.

"Shit!" she cried, pushing herself from the dark-haired man now, readjusting her dress and getting hurriedly to her feet.

Running over, Blake quickly grabbed a dishcloth, opening the oven and tugging the tray of brownies out, placing them down onto the counter top, her other hand wafting away the steam and smoke as she did so.

Luckily, as the smoke cleared, taking a good look at them, they didn't look too bad. Perhaps a little caught around the edges, but even so, still pretty good.

She heard Negan behind her give a stiff grunt, easing himself from the bed and doing up the zipper on his pants and rethreading his belt buckle.

"Now those smell good enough to fuckin' eat, Sweetheart," he uttered out in a low growling voice, coming up behind Blake now and reaching over her shoulder for the tray of dessert, but Blake slapped his hand away.

"I told you, Negan," she scolded in a high-pitched voice. "These aren't for you."

The tall Saviour gave a grumble now and Blake could almost feel him pouting over her shoulder like a moody teenager.

"Well that's fuckin' gratitude for you, ain't it..." he said taking a step or two away from her now, as she glanced at him over her shoulder coyly, watching as the dark-haired man leaned back against his long legs and pointed at her, raising his eyebrows aloft in a teasing manner. "I provide you with shit, an' you give me nothin' in return. That how our entire relationship is gonna be, Princess?"

There it was, their playful banter returning again…causing Blake's lips to twitch slightly.

God, he truly did make her happy in so, so many ways.

But the caramel-blond woman, brushing down the front of her dress neatly, just gave an easy shrug of her shoulders.

"Maybe," she purred out. "But you knew what you were getting into..."

And with that, she threw Negan a playful wink, before turning back to her brownies.

"Like I told you the first time we fucked, Negan.." she continued in a carrying voice, without looking around. "I like to be on top."

Behind her, at her words, she heard the leader of the Saviours let out an appreciative chuckle, dragging his hand down his stubbly bearded face and giving a heavy whining sigh.

"Oh, I know you do Darlin'," Negan murmured. "An', hell, I ain't gonna argue with that."

There was a short moment of silence where Blake heard Negan cross the room, heading over towards the door now.

"I've got a meetin'," he informed her. "But I will see. you. later, Peaches. Hopefully bouncin' up and
down on my dick…as per fuckin' usual, seein' as you like it on top."

And Blake could only smile to herself now, rolling her eyes hard as she replied.

"Bye, Negan…” she uttered back in warning return, hearing the door open and close behind her, leaving the blonde queen, alone once more.
Dream girl

It had been a cold and gloomy day at the Sanctuary, and even by the time late evening came around, the storm raging outside did not seem to be relenting.

A hard rain lashed at the high factory windows, and Saviours of all ages had huddled together in the large food-hall long after they had finished with what little dinner they had been able to earn. All of them wanting to keep warm and be with one another on a night like this.

It had been the same all afternoon too, with a strange sense of community filling the normally-bleak Sanctuary…

….also helped by Blake's presence.

The tall, blonde woman had spent the last few hours walking around, chatting and catching up with people, some she knew from the gardens, and some she only recognised in passing, all of which had been happy to stop and talk with her as she handed out inch-squares of chocolate brownie pieces to some of the children who had shyly thanked her.

Some of the younger girls and boys had even asked her to join in a game of duck-duck-goose they were playing, which she had happily obliged them for a little while as the kids ran around her shrieking, tiring her out completely.

The whole place really did feel like home to Blake these days, and even on a dark stormy evening the building felt far more of a place she could give her forever to, far more than Alexandria, or even her apartment back in the city with David, ever had.

The large canteen tonight, as the hours had ticked by, had been frequented by almost everyone…. 

….even Tanya and Frankie had come down here for a time, catching up with Blake a little, enquiring interestedly about her hurt foot and how much trouble she had gotten into after they had left her with Negan the other night…but even then, they had only lingered for a short while, Tanya eagerly taking a square of brownie, before heading upstairs once more…

She had seen almost everyone tonight…

….all apart from Negan and his higher up lieutenants that was, who seemed to be nowhere to be found this evening. Their often looming presence around the hall a grateful absence tonight, as everyone seemed a little more buzzing with excitement and spirit than they normally were.

Perhaps Blake would try and convince Negan and the others to loosen up on these people a little.

Once upon a time she would have doubted that she would have any influence on their regime at all. But now, after everything, these last couple of days, Blake well and truly felt like top of the pack.

She was liked around here by the majority of the Sanctuary residents, but she could hear in their voices a certain level of respect they seemed to hold for her…treating her like royalty.

But that definitely wasn't what she was. She was just a normal woman.

Back in reality…in her past life…. she had worked in an office doing admin work and had gone home each night to her crappy apartment in the bad side of town.
Back then she had been grey and hidden in the crowd. Nothing special. Just…no-one.

But here and now, she was more than that.

She was a golden light to Negan's pure darkness, shining through, bright and clear, for all to see.

Not that Blake would have ever have painted herself in that way. Her cheeks flushing a bright pink colour the moment anyone spoke to her with even the slightest amount of reverence in their voice.

All she wanted to do was to make this place good, and self-sufficient, so that she, and Negan, and all these people here, could live out whatever they had left of their days happy…well, happier than the last couple of years had been anyway.

It was late now, and having said goodbye to the folks downstairs in the dining hall, Blake, still in his pretty floral dress, clutching the almost empty tray of brownies to her, slowly made her way up the winding staircase.

She had already been past her room…past Negan's room too…...and yet there still was no sign of the dark-haired Saviour anywhere to be found.

There was only one other place she could think to look for him.

And so, skimming her slender fingers along the railing, Blake reached the landing to the sixth floor, shoving open the door at the top and heading down the long and gloomy corridor alone…

Just ahead of her, a shaft of warm yellow light shone out from a crack beneath one of the doors, where low muffled voices could just about be heard.

Blake gave a sigh now, as she finally paused outside the large oak panelled door, brushing down her dress once again to make sure than any flour that still might have lingered there was gone, before lifting her hand and giving a gentle knock.

A second or two seemed to pass before a loud and gruff-sounding 'come in' was heard, Blake recognising the growling voice immediately as Negan's.

God, how long did these meetings of his take? She knew of course that he was a busy guy, but even so…

But Blake did as she was told, turning the handle and opening the door slightly, peering curiously inside.

And there, within Negan's 'office', housed with a large wooden desk that she immediately spotted that the Saviour himself was sat behind, and three rickety wooden chairs facing it, which today held, Simon, Arat and another lieutenant named Gavin (that Blake had had very little to do with until now).

All four of them looked up at her as she entered, Negan himself giving her an almost award-wining smile, as he leaned back in his chair easily.

"You alright, Peaches?" he asked in a low and drawling voice, his chocolate eyes flickering over her face questioningly.

He had obviously not been expecting her, but looked far from annoyed by her presence that was for sure.
But Blake merely nodded, giving a small smile and lingering by the door.

"I'm not disturbing you am I?" she enquired gently.

But Negan merely gave a wave of his hand, beckoning her over.

"Not at-fuckin'-all, Darlin'," he uttered, lifting his bearded chin slightly, as Blake smirked in return, padding over towards the four Saviours, each of them looking more rugged and haphazardly thrown together than the last.

"Good," she murmured in reply, ignoring Negan, knowing of course that he would want nothing more for her to go over to him and sit on his knee like a good little girl in front of his loyal lieutenants. But instead, she hurriedly moved over to the desk, placing down the tray of dessert and removing the crinkly foil from the top. "Because I saved you all the last pieces. One for Arat, Simon, and lastly Gavin."

And with that, Blake glanced up at the three awaiting generals' show all sat up in their chairs a little looking excitable, but knowing full well how much of a rise her last comment would get out of Negan. But she barely acknowledged him now, teasing him on purpose as they always manged to do to each other.

Simon was the first to reach for a square.

"Wowee," he said with a wide grin, his moustachioed face lighting up. "Now these look delicious!"

Arat and Gavin each took a piece too, muttering words of appreciative glee as they did so, just as Blake chanced a glance at Negan who had his dark eyes narrowed and fixed on her bemusedly.

But before their gaze could linger upon one another for too long, Simon made a noise.

"Mmmmm, god, now that is fucking good!" he said tossing the last of the dessert into his mouth and making an appetising face. "You make these?"

And as his words, Blake just smiled, placing one hand to the rear of Simon's chair and putting her weight onto one hip.

"Mnhmm," she murmured in a drawn out voice, as Simon looked up at her, giving a small smiling nod of his own, opening his mouth to speak.

"Look, I know that you've turned him down and all," he said with a fleeting nod over at Negan. "... but y'know, if you ever wanted to become MY wife...I mean the offer is there..."

Almost immediately and without even glancing his way, Blake knew for sure that Negan's eyes were now dark, his tongue dug deep into the side of his cheek staring daggers at his right-hand man.

But Blake just gave a simple smile, wrinkling her nose. Almost delighted that she wasn't the only one here with the ability to wind the dark-haired man up.

"Y'know I think I'm gonna have to pass," she said in a sarcastic voice, pretending to wince a little as Simon gave a chuckle of approval. "But thanks anyway."

But not a moment later, before Simon had even finished with his laughter, Blake felt a strong hand suddenly wrap itself around her wrist, and with a sharp tug, the hand had pulled Blake backwards around the desk...
She knew of course who it was, the pouting leader of the Saviours letting out another giveaway growl from behind her.

God, jealousy really was not his strong point was it? First Danny this morning and now Simon…

But now Negan, who had obviously gotten to his feet to grab for her possessively, sat back down with a huff, tugging Blake backwards into his lap, with a squeak leaving her lips at the contact.

She gave a pout, turning her head towards him a little reprimandingly…of course ending up where Negan had wanted her to be all along…

…but Negan threading his leather-clad arms easily around her waist, now addressed his men, and Arat, as though Blake wasn’t even there.

"Right, so we all fuckin' know the plan for tomorrow," he barked curtly. "We get in, take what's ours, and any trouble, you bring the culprit straight to me, we clear?"

Simon, going back to looking straight-faced and obedient in the blink of an eye, gave a certain nod of understanding.

"Crys-tal, Boss," he muttered in reply, as Arat and Gavin each gave their fearsome leader a nod of their own.

Blake pursed her lips together, readjusting her position upon Negan's knee slightly as she gazed over her shoulder at him, giving a small questioning frown. But she didn't utter a word, merely a receiving a stern glance from him in return, as he lifted his gloved hand at his men, waving them away.

"Good. Then alright then were fuckin' done here. I'll see you in the mornin' bright an' early," he said with a dismissive tut in the direction of his lieutenants as they took the hint, getting to their feet and slowly filing out of the door one-by-one, before Gavin finally pulled it closed behind him with a gentle snap…

…leaving both Negan and Blake alone.

And it barely took a second for Blake to shift around on Negan's lap, shooting him a dark look.

"So what is the plan for tomorrow, hmmm?" she asked suspiciously, her hand sliding around Negan's leather-clad collar.

But the dark-haired Saviour merely pressed his lips together into a thin line, staring up at the blonde woman with a hint of something less-than-telling in his brown eyes.

What was he keeping from her?

But there was only one place that Negan was sure to try and lie about now. Only one place that he knew full-well would hurt her to talk about…

"You're going to Alexandria, aren't you?" she murmured in what was barely a whisper, her green eyes roving across Negan's bearded face now.

But the dark-haired man gave a guilty-looking nod in return, his eyes flickering down to her middle for the briefest of moments before he stared back up at her.

"Shit, Sweetheart," he confessed in a low voice. "It's the monthly offerin', and if we don't go-"

But Blake cut across him before he had the chance to say another word….
"It's ok," she murmured in a soft voice, wetting her lips gently with her tongue and staring down at him with earnest eyes, her fingers trailing up to the nape of his neck and threading themselves through his dark hair. "Really it is..."

And Blake was telling the truth.

She knew Negan had a job to do. And she had seen first-hand at the Hilltop how important it was to keep things running smoothly. That way, no-one had to get hurt.

And even now, Blake had not been able to forget what her people back in Alexandria had done... accused her of lying about David...lying about being abused...and to her that was unforgivable. Especially considering the people here in contrast had been oh-so welcoming to her. So when comparing the two groups of people, it was strange to think which of them she automatically wanted to side with these days...

Negan just gave a sigh now, his calloused fingers skimming around Blake's waist, holding her in place.

"You wanna come with? Have a bit of a blast from the past?" Negan asked her in a questioning voice, parting his lips as he took every inch of her in.

But Blake almost immediately shook her head, wrinkling her nose as she did so.

"I don't really think it's a good idea," she said, her eyes drifting away from his face now, looking a little distant. "I'd rather not see those people again if I can help it."

She gave a heavy and sorrowful couple of blinks feeling slightly bitter as she thought of those folks she once considered friends back there in Alexandria...Tara...Aaron...Eric...

"That fair enough," said Negan, taking in every hint of sadness that seemed to linger upon Blake's face now, reaching up and running his gloved thumb over her cheek and causing her to look his way once again. "But hell, if you change your mind, Darlin'...you an' me make a fuckin' good team, and you know for a fact that Rick'll be shittin' his pants if he saw you strollin' on in there, lookin' like a goddamn badass."

At his words, Blake couldn't help but smirk, rolling her eyes now as she turned her head towards the desk, spotting the tray of brownies.

She reached over and pulled them towards her yet again, easing out the very last square that remained. Of course she had saved one final piece for him.

"Hmmm, well as tempting as that sounds," Blake mused in a coy-sounding voice. "I think I'm good...for now anyway..."

And with that she held the final square of brownie to Negan's mouth, as he took it from her fingers, showing off his wide white teeth as she did so, in a grin.

Blake felt her entire body warm now, as she leaned into him, hearing him gave a groan of pleasure at the taste of the morsel of dessert she had fed him.

"Mmmhhhhmmm," Negan purred out. "You truly are my fuckin' dream girl you know that?"

Blake felt the tops of her cheeks redden slightly, as his chocolate eyes drifted over her face, gazing at her almost awe-struck by her appearance.
"Not only are you hot-as-fuck, have a tongue that gives me the best head I think I've ever fuckin' had," said Negan with a devious grin dancing its way across his bearded mouth. "But you are also a goddamn amazing cook."

Blake gave a small tutting laugh at his words now, her entire face brightening.

"Nice to know I have some great qualities that really define me as a person," Blake uttered in a voice dripping with sarcasm now, as she slapped Negan's shoulder scoldingly.

But he just grinned, jiggling his knee slightly, causing her to scowl down at him playfully, looping both arms around his neck.

There two of them fell silent for a long moment or two, merely enjoying this rare time alone together.

If Blake was honest, despite it being only a few hours that they had spent apart, she had kinda missed him.

God was she crazy for that?

But she was almost past caring now. Feeling totally and utterly, more in love than she had ever felt with anyone, ever.

This wasn't the unfulfilled, hopeless love and devotion she had felt for David.

This was something new for her. Something that tugged at the back of her stomach, causing her to ache when she awoke, finding him beside her each morning… the feeling of happiness flooding every inch of her as he pressed scratchy kisses to her cheeks….

This was love.

Dangerous and world-encompassing.

And Blake only hoped than one day, Negan might feel the same.

He of course had never told her how he felt about her… never quite managing to get the words out that Blake oh-so wanted him to say.

But it almost hurt her to think that, in this world, perhaps Negan had no time for love.

Perhaps he, like she had, had lost too much for that. To make that gesture now, after everything.

"You coming to bed?" she asked after a second or two had slipped them both by.

And Negan paused for the smallest of seconds, before letting out a long carrying breath and nodding.

"Yeah, sounds good," he replied, skimming his hands down her sides now.

He looked more tired than usual, and Blake knew that they could both do with an early-ish night after their long day.

And despite pair of them always seeming to have a great fizzling sexual tension, Blake knew that it wouldn't hurt to have a night without sex.

And so, reaching down and grasping Negan's hand in hers, getting silently to her feet, Blake pulled the dark-haired man from the chair and over towards the door, pausing momentarily to allow him to snatch up Lucille from her position near to the window.
And it didn’t take the pair of them long, hand-in-hand, laughing, flirting (as always), to make it back to Negan's room….without even a single word to each other about where they were headed, both of them just...knowing.

"…how the hell did you get by with just three pairs of shoes, Negan?" she scoffed, as they entered the room, flicking on the light-switch, as Negan almost immediately settled himself with a stiff groan down onto the edge of his bed, bending down to ease off his biker boots, as Blake chanced a bemused glance his way. "I get not having many these days, but back then….?"

But now it was Negan's turn to roll his eyes.

"Well shit, Darlin'! I had better things to be worryin' about than how many goddamn pairs of shoes I had in my fucking closet. One pair of boots for every day, one for weddings and dinner an' shit, and one pair for work. An' let me guess, you were the type of gal with one of those walk-in closet's full of 'em stacked up high."

But Blake shot a frown his way now as she padded into the bathroom.

"I wish. No," she murmured, disappearing out of sight. "But I probably had about twenty pairs of shoes. Mainly high heels for work and stuff."

Negan gave another carrying scoff, that Blake was sure to hear, hearing the faucet switch on now and the sound of running water as she clattered about inside the bathroom.

"Jeez, Peaches, I wish I'd have seen you in your fuckin' heyday, wigglin' down the street in a tight skirt and high heels, looking like a million goddamn bucks. Mmmm hmmm." But Blake reappeared after a second or two around the door, a toothbrush sticking out of her mouth, pulling a face.

"And what?! I don't look like a million buck now?!" she asked in a goading voice, her eyebrows up in her hairline, staring at Negan expectantly. "You're such a charmer, you know that?"

Negan gave a chuckle at her attitude, shrugging off his jacket, as she disappeared around the bathroom door yet again.

But a minute later she was back, in just her underwear now, crossing the room towards the dark-haired Saviour, who was now in bed, naked of course, running a hand over his tired eyes.

The caramel-blonde woman, giving a tiny yawn, flipped off the main light and moved to the bed, lifting the cool sheets and climbing up into the plush big bed beside Negan, who barely relented for a second before tangling his arms around her and pulling her close to him.

In the dim quiet of the bedroom, with the only sound filling the room now, being the rain, lashing hard against the windows, Blake felt Negan press a kiss into her hair, his fingers gliding their way over her smooth skin.

"I'll probably be gone by the time you wake up tomorrow, Peaches," he murmured in a grizzly voice.

But Blake merely let out a soft purr, as her fingers drifted up to Negan's hair-smattered chest, coming to rest there gently. Comfortable.

"Wake me to say goodbye," she said in a just whisper. "Please."

And Negan didn't even bother to reply, merely tugging her just that little bit closer to him now…
...holding onto her tightly, almost as though he never wanted to let go.
The world was stifling and dark now.

Negan knew that he was dreaming but somehow everything felt so real.

He was in the baseball cages at the school he used to work in, taking swing after swing after swing…and yet nothing was working and the blackness, the endless darkness, just kept on coming.

His chest was constricted…

….tight...

….his breathing ragged inside his throat, his eyes flickering this way and that, looking for a way out.

But the blackness soon dissipated and Negan found himself there…again….beside that hospital bed he knew so very well.

He felt those angry and pained tears slosh down his cheeks now, as she pressed his face into the bedsheets…

…Lucille’s bedsheets.

She was still there, but she felt so distant to him now….her face just a memory, fuzzy and almost forgotten.

He didn't know how long he remained there for. Seconds….minute….years.

His heart utterly aching.

And it was only when he looked up, that he found himself no longer at the hospital bed any more…

….instead, he was hanging over the steering wheel of a truck.

It was dark outside now, with rain lashing at the windscreen, as Negan eased himself up into a sitting position…

….jumping in fright just as the passenger-side door to his right was flung suddenly open.

Negan turned his head, hearing his breaths in his ears, coming hard and fast.

But a sudden warmth suddenly seemed to flood his entire body as a recognisable figure suddenly hopped up into the cab of the truck beside him, dressed in a slinky white dress that seemed to cause her to glow, pure and bright in the darkness now.

But it was not Lucille…but another person now…

….her…..

….Blake.

She turned to him now, smiling, tucking a strand of hair behind her ear.

And for the first time he noticed that she was holding a large basket full of fuzzy, ripened peaches in her lap, as she pulled the door closed behind her.
"It's raining really badly out there," she said to him in voice that sounded far away. But considering she was just in a short white dress, she looked perfectly dry now. "Can I stay in here with you tonight?"

And Negan felt himself grin now, in this dream-world, his worries and cares seeming to drift away, as she shuffled closer to him, handling him just a single peach from the basket on her knees.

"I'm not her," she said suddenly, sounding far closer now, placing the warm fruit into his hand. "But I am yours."

Negan looked down at the peach for a long second, turning it over in his hand admiring it, before he looked up at her again.

But she was gone….only blackness there now, surrounding him, as he found himself in the batting cages once more…

..his eyes once again drifting down to the peach in his hand but it wasn't there any longer..

For there he was…

….alone now….gaspig for air in the ever enclosing darkness…

….without the peach…and without her…

Negan suddenly sat bolt upright, taking a huge breath into his lungs.

His whole body was coated in a sheen of perspiration, just as he looked around, realisation dawning of him of just where he was. That it really was all just a dream…. 

He was in his room, where he had, of course, fallen asleep just a few hours ago. 

Now the rain seemed to have stopped and nothing but the sounds of his panicked pants coming from his own lungs could be heard in the large spacious room. 

The dark-haired Saviour placed a hand to the bed beside him….wanting to feel here there beside him now, to reassure him that everything was ok…

….back to how it should be…in case this really was still a dream…

..but his hand found only rumpled sheets now, as he twisted his head around, finding the space beside him in the large white bed, empty.

Negan blinked for a brief moment, before turning his head and gazing hurriedly about the room. 

"Peaches?" he called out, his voice hoarser than he had expected it to be. 

But there came no answer, only silence now in the vast darkness of the night. 

Where the fuck was she? 

This wasn't like her? To just leave him like this….

Negan quickly flung the covers off of his naked form, sliding swiftly from the bed and grabbing his pants from the floor, shucking them quickly over his legs, and tugging up the zipper. 

Panic seemed to fill his veins now, unable to shake the life-like images from his mind.
His dream had all felt so real...the feeling of her gone...just like that...

....now becoming a reality....

He knew how precious she was to him...and if anything had happened to her....

The dark-haired man paced over to the bathroom, only to find it dark and empty, running a hand down his wide-eyed face and spinning around on the spot.

Normally Negan would have been far more fucking level-headed than this, but right now, in the early hours, of what must have about 2am, his heart was hammering in his chest, desperate now to find her.

He couldn't fucking lose her. He knew that now.

His dream had told him what he knew was true all along.

She was the first person since Lucille he had truly felt anything for.

And Negan knew that he would give Blake his world if she asked for it.

She was his guiding light in this dark shadowy realm full of death, and blood, and violence.

And finding her, was the only thing that would calm him now, he knew that, as blood pumped in his ears like an oncoming train, growing ever faster, racing and hurtling towards him.

And so, grasping up a black t-shirt from the back of one of his leather couches and shucking it on, Negan grabbed his barbed-wire covered bat, heading hurriedly out on the door and into the poorly lit corridor.

It was eerily quiet out here, even for Negan's lengthy corridor he shared with no-one, usually full of the carrying sounds of the Sanctuary residents on the floors below.

But tonight, with his heart racing, Negan could only give a gulp, looking this way and that....hearing nothing....

....just as a sudden chilly breeze fluttered past his face.

The dark-haired man twisted his head suddenly in direction of the wind and the cold, looking up towards the far end of the long hallway...where he knew there was nothing more than a few empty rooms and a door that led on out to a small balcony area that overlooked the high factory fences and the lots filled with the dead below.

He narrowed his eyes a little now, still breathing hard, and clenching his jaw.

If anything had happened to her now...if she had been taken...Negan swore to fucking god, someone would pay.

And it wasn't a second later with lengthy strides on his long legs, barefoot now, Negan was half way up the corridor, peering into each of the abandoned rooms, filled with nothing but broken furniture as he passed....

....but there was still no sign of her.

He didn't dare call her name now. For if there was someone there...another Steve holding her captive....he did not want to alert them to his presence.
And so silently, Negan finally reached the door at the very end of the long hallway….the breeze feeling stronger here, as the door swung back against the frame a little, clattering slightly.

Someone was out here….

Negan's eyes darkened now, his brow furrowed deeply….his heart hammering a drumbeat in his chest, as he raised Lucille aloft, pressing the door open with one hand.

But the door swung open and it was then and only then, that he saw her, standing there, leaning against the metal railing with her back to him, wearing Negan's white t-shirt from earlier today, with her panties just about visible from beneath.

Blake.

Standing there like a goddess, staring out at the black sky beyond…

But turned around, suddenly noticing his presence out here now and looking slightly startled, before her face suddenly became warm, offering him a small smile.

"Hey," she murmured in a what was barely a whisper, tucking a strand of her long caramel-hair behind her ear, as it fluttered in the chilly breeze. "I couldn't sleep and I didn't want to wake you."

She looked a little regretful now, as she tilted her head, staring over at him questioningly.

"You ok?" she asked in a gentle voice. "You look like you've seen a ghost."

But Negan merely took in a deep shaky breath, feeling his nerves steadying at her visible presence here.

And that was when Negan realised that he couldn't let her slip through his fingers now…

He couldn't let her become another Lucille…not appreciating what he had until it was too late and she was gone.

He knew how he felt about Blake now.

What he had felt about her for a long, long fucking time.

And that feeling was only getting stronger. Growing inside him.

This wasn't a fling. This wasn't just sex or a casual thing between two friends. For who were they trying to kid…

And so, Negan, to Blake's obvious surprise, crossed the small balcony towards her now, as she turned her whole body to look at him.

Fuck, she was gorgeous….and lit up his world like a flame he never wanted to let burn out.

And with that, the dark-haired man came to stop just a mere breath away from her now, his brow still furrowed darkly, staring down into her face.

"Everything alright?" she enquired, in a voice so warm and gentle, causing every worry that Negan had ever had in his life to flutter away on the breeze that danced across his skin.

But Negan didn't answer her, instead lifting a hand to her neck, his thumb tracing along the pulse point just under her ear…feeling her heartbeat inside her…
reminding him that she was really still here…that she wasn't just a dream.

For she was real…

…she was alive…

…she was his.

"I love you," he suddenly uttered aloud.

His voice was low and sounded distant now, like it was a million miles away.

And with that, Negan's chocolate eyes travelled over her face, taking in every single inch of it. Memorizing her. Making sure that he would never, ever forget her in his dreams, as he had done with Lucille.

But the blonde woman just stared up at him now, unblinking, her pink lips parting…as though she had never expected him to come out with those words…

….not now…..

…..not in this lifetime.

Although it wasn't even a second later that she lifted a hand to his chest, her fingers curling around the fabric of his black t-shirt, staring desperately into his eyes…as though she didn't quite understand what he was saying…

"Negan, you didn't have to say it if you don't mean it..." she breathed out, her green eyes gazing up at him sadly, as she shook her head, her eyes full of hurt and honesty.

Fuck, he could see in her eyes now that she did not believe him….and it killed him to think just what that asshole of a fiancé had done to her.

He had tortured her…made it hard for her to trust anyone else…to fall in love with anyone again.

But Negan stood his ground, running his tongue over his lips, his long bearded face, wholly serious now, staring hard into her eyes.

"Darlin', hell, I've fuckin' loved you from the first moment you walked into that hall downstairs and smart-mouthed the hell out of your goddamn fi-an-ce in front of me," said Negan shaking his head, his voice low and earnest, as he tried to convey to her just what he had been bottling up for so fucking long. "I've fuckin' loved you from that time we got stranded out there on the road together. And that time you fell asleep in my bed. And, well, shit, I've loved you every fuckin' day since then. So if you think I'm fuckin' kidding around here, an' that I don' mean it? Well you're wrong. Cause, hell...life is fuckin' short, Darlin', and I've come to realise that us, pretending that, whatever this is between us, ain't real...you know as well as I do that we could both be dead tomorrow.... so I'm gonna say it now….before it's too late to fuckin' tell you. An' I mean it. I love you, Peaches. More than I can fuckin' say."

Negan gave the smallest of shakes of his head. Done now.

That was all he ever needed to say. To get off his chest how he had felt about her for so fucking long.

He lowered his gaze from hers now as the seconds of silence ticked slowly by….another…and
another…and another….  

Perhaps she didn't feel the same way.  

Perhaps for her this had always been a casual thing.  

Perhaps he just wasn't fuckin' good enough for her.  

But his eyes drifted upwards once again, as the dark-haired Saviour suddenly felt her press herself into him now, her free hand, now freezing cold, drifting up to his bearded cheek.  

And it was in that instant that her eyes met with his, awash with something oh-so open, baring her soul to him now.

"I love you too," Blake murmured out. "You saved me and you made me into something whole again when I felt just…..

The caramel-blonde woman's tear-filled eyes drifted down to the floor for a moment, flickering this way and that, as if searching for the right word now.

"….broken."

She stared back up into Negan's face.

"I can't be your wife…” she said with a voice full of warmth and love. "But I can still be yours."

And with that, Blake pushed her whole body into his, hovering her face a mere breath away from Negan's own.

And the dark-haired Saviour barely had to propel his lips forward, even a little, feeling the pulse at her neck quicken…as his mouth tenderly met with hers.

Since being with her, with Blake, Negan had realised that his life wasn't over….that he had something other to fight for other than feckless pride and a need to win.

He had her. The most important thing in his life…

…and it startled him to think that just over three months ago he wasn't even aware of her existence. The person he wanted to spend the rest of his days with.

The person who he could no longer manage his life without.

He wished that he had met her years ago….but knew that their paths back then would never have passed….

….location…

….age…

….status…

….hobbies…

….they were all things that back then would have kept them apart.  

But now in this bleak and horrible fucking world, they had found each other. Two pieces of a jigsaw
puzzle that fitted together oh-so perfectly. Despite everything.

She was the light to his utter darkness….and Negan was in love.

Totally and utterly besotted with the woman before him, kissing him now, who tasted like peaches and honey, and everything Negan had ever dreamed of…

She was his.

And he was, heart and soul, hers in return.

And nothing, nothing, would ever change that now.

For Negan would tear the very fabric of the world apart for her. And he knew that she would do the same in return for him.

Their kiss was full of need and hopeless desperation, the dark-haired Saviour feeling, what seemed like, the weight of the world, shift from his shoulders.

And it felt like an eternity by the time they finally pulled apart, Negan opening his eyes and staring down at the face of the woman before him, her face wet and streaked with tears. But to his relief she was not sad, offering him a soft smile, as he felt her hand drift down his bare, tattooed arm and grasping hold of his hand, half clenching at the baseball bat limply. She was happy. As was he.

"Come on," she urged in a quiet voice. "Let's go inside, I'm freezing."

And she truly was, her hands like ice out here in the early hours of the morning.

Negan obliged her wishes, following her back inside now, back into the warmth of the hallway.

"You couldn't sleep?" muttered the dark-haired man as they paced back towards his room, the door still open as they stepped quietly inside, closing it with a snap behind them.

But Blake looked up at him, giving him a soothing shrug, a few steps ahead of him now, as she let go of his hand.

"It's nothing…I just had a bad dream," she uttered gently, reaching for them hem of the t-shirt she was wearing and pulling it over her head, tossing it gently down over the back of Negan's couch.

But before she had a chance to make another move, Negan had closed the gap between them again, having dropped Lucille by the door, his nimble and calloused fingers sliding around her hips and his lips finding hers again in the darkness of the room.

His kiss was needy now, purposeful…and filled with an utter want, that Blake soon reciprocated, reaching her hand up, her digits tensing over his t-shirt clad shoulder, pressing into his flesh hard and meaningful.

He knew now what she wanted and it didn't take Negan even a second to press her back over towards the bed in the far corner of the room…with hot pants and desperate moans leaving their lips between kisses.

She had told him undoubtedly that she wanted him, and he had told her that too in return. And that alone made him want her even more now.

He could feel himself, already hard, his cock twitching inside his pants, at her taste…at her sleepy scent, heady and primal.
This was quick and much needed as Blake tugging him by the front of his t-shirt, sat down slightly on the edge of the bed, placing a thigh either side of his hips, pulling him into her.

Negan knew that even before they had started, as her mouth left his lips, instead feeling her tongue glide its way down his throat, leaving hot and wet kisses there, that he was not going to last long at this rate, feeling the smallest amount of pre-cum, ease from the tip of his throbbing cock.

His fingers fumbled for his zipper now, as Blake grasped for his black t-shirt, tugging it up and over his shoulders and flinging it haphazardly to the bed beside the pair of them.

She looked perfect lying there beneath him now, as he shucked his pants down his legs, kicking them off and watching as Blake hastily tugged off her bra, sliding her cotton panties down her legs.

Negan panted hard, gazing at her naked form with a lustful stare, his eyelids hooded, yearning for the feel of her skin beneath his fingertips, her taste on his tongue once again…

The two of them confessing their love for one another, the final barrier up in their relationship, now toppled, leaving only utter need and devotion for one another.

Negan let out a groan of pleasure, as he hovered over her now, capturing Blake's lips with his again and again, her hands finding his bearded face and pulling him on top of her.

She felt warm and real and everything he had ever yearned for here in one entire package.

But the dark-haired Saviour couldn't help but grin now as he felt her press a giggle into his mouth, and roll him onto his back, moving her hands down and threading her fingers through his, pinning his palms to the space either side of his torso.

She pulled back from him now, staring down at him happily, her long beautiful hair hanging down either side of her face in the darkness, a smile dancing its way across her pink and swollen lips, as she tilting her head to the side.

God, she was fucking perfection. Sitting there on top of him of him now, her breasts heaving and bobbing slightly with each breath she took.

He could feel her creamy wetness as she shifted herself slightly, her bottom lip caught between her teeth in a devilish manner, sliding her hot and slick core over his stiff and throbbing member.

Negan gave a grunt at the contact, his eyes rolling back in his head, knowing full well that Blake was grinning down at him now in that way he liked so much.

But before he could even say a word, the caramel-blonde woman had slid herself back, coming to straddle his thighs now, suddenly grasping his hand dick in her hand.

Negan let a slow gulp trial its way down his bearded throat at her firm touch, watching her carefully in the dim moonlight, as she slowly bit down onto her bottom lip, using one hand to squeeze at her own pert breast…

… and with the other, she began to slowly pump his cock up and down excruciatingly slowly.

Jesus, she was fucking made for him.

They were made for each other. And he hadn't been lying when he had told her that she was his dream fucking girl.
The dark-haired Saviour, his lustful and half-lidded dusky gaze meeting with hers half in question now, parted his lips, his chest constricting slightly at the sensation.

But Blake just stared back at him naughtily, knowing exactly what she was doing to him now, as the smallest amount of pre-cum trickled from the top of his dick and over her fingers.

She bucked her lips against his legs, almost torturing him, both of then of course knowing that all Blake had to do was move just a few inches forwards and slide herself down onto his throbbing cock, and he would be done for.

But Blake relented, teasing him as she worked his dick faster and faster.

Negan closed his eyes, the sensation alone driving him wild, his hands reaching down and sliding up her smooth thighs.

But at his touch, Blake gave a sudden moan of her own.

And Negan's eyes snapped open, only to see her free hand now dipping between her legs as she touched herself, her digits meeting with her soaked slit.

Fuck, she really was the fucking devil is disguise, wasn't she? And Negan could only give a furrowed frown, unable to take his eyes off her as she fingered herself there in front of him, all while jerking him off oh-so fucking well.

The blonde woman, naked and gorgeous as she was, left her hand there for a long few seconds, letting out small little breathy moans, mopping up the creamy wetness over her glazed cunt…

…before suddenly, she pulled her hand away, her eyes meeting with Negan's meaningfully, as she let out a small knowing smile.

But Negan wasn't able to smile back, merely staring back in utter awe now, as Blake suddenly wrapped her creamy wet fingers, dripping with her own cum, around his twitching cock.

Negan audibly groaned at this, as she touched him, lubing him up with her own juices, her hand making a slick sound as she pumped it up and down over his dick.

He threw his head back against the mattress behind him, feeling closer to the edge than ever before, closing his eyes and giving a hard gulp.

But Blake was unrelenting, upping her pace a little, obviously enjoying being in control here, causing Negan to look up at her after a time, his eyes filled with lust…

"You're gonna have to fuckin' stop this, Peaches, before Daddy fuckin' blows his load," he uttered out between raged breaths.

And at his words Negan heard Blake catch her own breath in her throat, the words obviously exciting her, but she didn't look like she was about to give up her game that easily.

And so she smirked, dipping her other hand, once again, down to the wetness between her legs, her green eyes meeting with his in the darkness.

And Negan could only watch as her eyes rolled back in her head, her fingers slipping over her throbbing clit, wholly teasing him now.

And so it wasn't a surprise that Negan, unable to take her pleasurable torture any longer, suddenly
gave a loud guttural grunt, tugging himself up into a sitting position and grasping Blake's thighs harder than he should have….flipping her over roughly onto the bed, her back hitting the mattress behind her with a 'whump'.

The hot naked caramel-haired woman beneath him, giving a brief questioning frown, but the leader of the Saviours soon answered any questions she had, as he hovered above her, letting out a needy growl.

"What did Daddy fuckin' say, Princess?" he warned in a low, husky voice, sitting up against his knees a little now and pressing her warm thighs apart.

His hand reached for his cock, sticky with both her juices and his, as he pumped at it a couple of times, suddenly moving it close to her entrance and stroking his head along her soaked slit.

At this , Blake let out a moan of utter yearning, desperate now for him to slide himself inside her and fill her up to the hilt.

But it was her turn to be tortured now, as Negan instead chuckled, licking his lips and staring down at her as he hovered just above her tight body, so so close to giving her exactly what she wanted.

"Please," she breathed out, looking utterly at his mercy now, and fulfilling every primal fantasy that Negan had ever had. Begging him to fuck her now.

But Negan's lips twitched up at the corners and he gave a goading frown, licking at his lips tauntingly.

"You want me to fill up that tight pussy of yours with Daddy's dick, Sweetheart?" he murmured out questioningly, panting hard.

But Blake beneath him could only give a desperate nod, her green eyes pleading with him now in the dim light.

"Yes please, Daddy. Please fuck me," she gasped out, her fingers clutching handfuls of sheets at the sensation of Negan's dick sliding oh-so sweetly across her sensitive clit.

And that was when Negan, unable to take anymore, gave a sharp hiss, as he pressed his tip into her hot wet folds…burying himself deep inside of her.

He leaned himself forwards now, his arms meeting with the mattress either side of her head, as he eased his whole member into her with one slick thrust.

Oh god she felt good…

And Negan desperately tried to control himself, teetering along the edge already.

God, their foreplay was a fucking killer. The dark-haired man never remembering it being this good with anyone he had ever been with before…

Blake gave a small breathy cry out, as Negan jammed his hips into her..

….once…twice…three times…

A small frown was darkening her perspiration covered brow now, as her green eyes settled on his, reaching up with one had to clutch at his cheek, a gulp sliding its way down her slender throat.

Everything was good between them now, as Negan drove himself into her, fucking her hard and yet
with such intimacy it seemed to astound both of them.

He had never felt closer to a person in his life as he did with Blake right now, as her fingers glided across his stubbly skin, her eyes searching for something within his gaze.

"I love you," she whispered out.

And for Negan it was like his entire world stopped. Hearing her say those words here and now.

And he could only dip is lips to hers, capturing them in a kiss for the briefest of seconds before pulling away.

"I fucking love you too, Peaches," he breathed, his eyes never leaving hers as the seconds and minutes of ecstasy passed them by…

…with Negan seeing her come undone beneath him, feeling her walls clench around his cock…

…it didn't take him long to get there either, unloading spurt after spurt of thick, hot cum into her, as his head fell to the crook of her neck, his lips finding her smooth skin.

He panted hard, composing himself for a long few seconds, feeling Blake's entire body trembling and shaking beneath him, as she tangled her digits in his hair, hugging him to her.

If anyone had seen them now, a tangle of naked limbs, Negan still buried inside Blake's aching cunt… no-one would have ever considered that in a past life they wouldn't have even crossed paths.

For here, in this world…..

….as Negan untangled himself from her finally, allowing them both to clamber further up the bed and snuggle down between the soft sheets…..

….no-one would have ever thought that one could be without the other.

For they were in love….

….visibly in love…

….a force to reckoned with around this place….

…..the good and the bad of the Sanctuary, keeping everything as it should be…

 ….and nothing….

 …just nothing, could change that now….  

….as the pair of them drifted off, still tangled together, into a warm and dreamless sleep….
The Escapee

The rain had stopped hours ago, yet even so, a low cloud still hung over the darkened night sky, with no sign on the moon tonight.

This eerie darkness made the sense of foreboding even worse for Rick, as, unable to sleep with worry, he had spent the last hour pacing up and down the silent walkways through Alexandria.

He was always like this before the Saviours turned up, racked with guilt and worry about what they would do next…

They were unpredictable, especially Negan, which is what made them such a threat to him and his people now.

Rick sighed, placing his hands to his hips and coming to a stop in the middle of the street, just staring forwards, at really nothing in particular.

He just needed to clear his head, then hopefully he would be able to grab a few hours of unsettled sleep before the morning came….along with the Saviours.

But the brown haired leader was just about to turn on his heel and head back down the street toward his house...

...when there came a sudden creak from a doorway just over to his left.

He turned his head suddenly now, glancing up towards, what he recognised as Tara's house, dark and unlit as it should be at this hour…just as the front door creaked open….

But to his surprise it wasn't Tara who stepped out...

..in fact, it took Rick a second or two to see her, there on her tippy-toes, waddling out of the door on chubby legs, dressed in nothing more than a pair of little pink pyjamas and carrying an oversized fluffy toy snake in her pudgy hand.

He gave a frown.

It was the kid with no name….the kid that Michonne and Aaron had found.

With a tuft of brown hair sat atop of her head and the pudgiest little cheeks he had ever seen.

But she didn't notice him now, obviously on a mission tonight, as she waddled swiftly over to the porch steps, crouching down on squatted legs before trying to ease herself down the step that was far too big for her to manage alone.

Rick jogged forwards, and just in time too, as the toddler missed her footing and was about to fall…

…but the brown haired, bearded man swiftly grabbed the tiny girl around the middle, lifting her up into his arms, as she gave a sudden wail of annoyance.

"Noh!" she cried loudly, her little bare feet kicking at Rick's middle. "I go!"

But before Rick could say a word, a wide-eyed Tara had suddenly flung the front door open wide, appearing at the top of the steps.
"Jeez, kid!" she said aloud. "You trying to give me a heart attack?!"

The dark-haired woman offered Rick an apologetic look, stepping forwards and taking the little girl from Rick's grasp and she kicked and screamed and wailed.

"She keeps trying to escape….to what, I have no idea…." Tara sighed in frustration.

But Rick merely pursed his lips sympathetically.

"You had any joy getting a name out of her yet?" he asked curiously, peering down at the mousy-haired toddler who looked furious she had been caught and detained and not for the first time by the sounds of it.

But Tara, rolling her eyes, merely paced back towards her front door as Rick watched.

"Pfft, yeah right," she scoffed. "She hasn't told me a lick. Anyone would think she was a prisoner of war!"

And, as if on cue, the tiny girl in Tara's arms gave another cry of utter anger, loud enough to wake the dead. Literally!

And Rick could only smirk now, shaking his head as she turned on his heel, heading back down the pathway that led to the wide street.

"Well, maybe she is," he replied playfully, as Tara chuckled in return, struggling with the toddler in her arms and giving Rick one last roll of her eyes, before shutting the door behind her and disappearing out of sight.

Rick lingered there for a long moment, staring up at the dark house, before giving yet another amused sigh…

...before finally heading back off towards his own home...

...to hopefully grab a couple of hours of restless sleep before tomorrow…and before the arrival of the Saviours.
A grey early morning light seemed to stream though the drapes of Negan's expansive room, as Blake opened a single sleepy eye, feeling the warm body beside her, suddenly slip from the covers, leaving her alone beneath the cool sheets.

It was too early for Blake to be awake, especially given the pair's lack of sleep, but even so, she didn't want to be in bed alone this morning.

She gave a small huffy purr, nuzzling her head down into the soft pillow beneath her cheek, seeing the tall, silhouetted figure of Negan, get to his feet and grasp up his abandoned pants from the floor.

Butterflies swarmed in her stomach now as she thought upon the words uttered last night, when everyone else was dead asleep.

The moment belonging to the two of them, alone.

"Come back to bed," Blake grumbled out in grizzled voice, causing the dark-haired man to turn his head towards her, shooting her a grin, obviously only just realising that he had woken her too with his stirring.

He swung around and eyed her bemusedly, naked beneath the white sheets.

"Oh, as much as I would fuckin' love to right now, Peaches," Negan said in a warm voice. "I've shit to be doin' today. Like remindin' Rick the Prick just who's in charge around here."

If Blake hadn't have been so tired right now, she would have rolled her eyes at his words, but instead, she mustered what little energy she had and lifted the sheet beside her invitingly.

"Just five more minutes," she murmured back goadingly.

And Negan, at her words gave a humungous sigh and hovered for a moment, before swiftly dropping his pants once again to the floor with a 'whump'…

…and before Blake could even utter another word, the dark-haired leader of the Saviours had playfully made a leap for her, causing her to give a loud squeal and laugh out loud with sheer delight and Negan joined her once more beneath the covers.

"You really wanna temp me, Doll-face?" he enquired in a taunting voce. "Cause' there are a lot of fuckin' things we could be doing with five fuckin' minutes."

At once his calloused hands made for her bare skin, tugging her close to him, as he attacked her throat with open-mouthed kisses.

Blake gave a giggle of happiness, caught somewhere in utter pleasurable ecstasy right now, as Negan rolled himself on top of her, reaching up and entwining his fingers with hers as he pinned her to the space either side of her caramel-blonde head.

God, Blake adored him.

Everything about him.

He was a perfect match for her. Exciting. Funny. And so so fucking hot.
It was a long and very enjoyable few seconds before Negan finally tugged his lips from her smooth skin, lifting his head slightly and staring down into her face.

At this Blake's stomach immediately lurched, as his chocolate eyes met with hers in the pale morning light.

God, she really was in love with him. Her words last night had not been a lie.

She truly did love him.

This crazy asshole….

...who had managed to give her more than David ever had in the years they were together.

He had made her into something special and made what was a shitty world feel complete, and worth living in again.

"You sure you don' wanna come with us this mornin', Sweetheart?" Negan asked carefully, rolling himself off of her now and coming to rest onto his side, facing her and propping his head up against his elbow.

But Blake merely smiled back at him, biting down on her lip softly and shaking her head.

As much as she appreciated his offer. The last thing Blake wanted right now was to see was yet more of the people she once called her friends, especially when her life truly felt like it couldn't get any better right now. Spoiling all that, was not really something she was interested in doing today...

"No, I think I'm good," she uttered lifting a hand to Negan's stubbly cheek and staring up at him, with a warmth in her eyes. "But thank you though. Another time maybe."

But the bearded man, narrowing his eyes teasingly back at the caramel-woman lying before him, raised a single dark eyebrow her way.

"So this how its gonna fuckin' be from now on, Darlin'?" Negan scoffed. "Me out there doing all the hard work, while you just lie here lookin' pretty?"

But almost immediately at his words, an expected frown soon passed over Blake's brow.

"Uh, can I just remind you am I am not one of your wives, babe," she reprimanded loudly, poking him in his hair-smattered chest. "I pull my weight around here, probably more than you do! And besides...I don't need to lie here to look pretty, I can manage to still do that outside, thank you very much."

Her words were playful in return but it wasn't even a second later than Negan, offering her a wholly impressed look, gave a growl of his own.

"Oh now I can't fuckin' argue with that, Sweetheart..." he murmured, his closing the gap between them and pressing his lips to hers, pinning Blake once more down onto the mattress below her, with another squeal coming from her otherwise occupied lips.

And Blake for the first time in a long time felt truly happy.

After months of suffering at David's hand, him making the stupid decision to come here had actually saved her life in more ways than one. She had found Negan. And he had rescued her from hell and brought her here to heaven…to a place that she never wanted to leave.
But after several long drawn-out minutes passed, the two of them kissing, naked, beneath soft cotton sheets, Negan finally pulled his lips from hers, giving a tired groan.

"Now as much as I would fuckin' love to stay here all day, Princess," he uttered, nudging her nose with his. "Daddy has gotta go out and get shit done."

He looked almost gleeful now at his own words, which only caused Blake to roll her eyes dramatically, giving a smirk as he eased himself from her and from the bed entirely, getting to his feet with another stiff groan.

The caramel-blonde woman let out a carrying sigh now, pulling the sheet tightly around her chest, as she sat up a little, messing with her ruffled long caramel hair, watching the dark-haired Saviour tug on his pants, his boots, before finally shrugging on a white t-shirt.

It was strange to think that just a few short months ago, the pair of them hadn't even known each other, and now here Blake was lying in his bed here at the Sanctuary, at the place she now called her home, saying goodbye to him, not wanting him to leave.

It was just a few seconds later that Negan, having shucked on his familiar old battered leather jacket and snatched up Lucille, tossing her back and forth between his hands, turned back to Blake, currently lying there in bed taking in his every move.

God, she was infatuated with him…

Feeling like a teenage girl with her first crush.

Perhaps this was the drowsiness talking, but either way, she couldn't help but smile into Negan's mouth as he leant in towards her one more time, his bearded lips brushing hers deliciously.

But their kiss only lasted a second or two before Negan pulled away, standing up straight once more, his chocolate eyes gazing her way, as if taking every inch of her in.

"I will see you later, Peaches, alright? Keep that bed warm for me," he murmured in a growling tone.

But Blake, with certainly no intention of staying in bed all day to wait for Negan to come back, wrinkled her nose smiling at him, as she sucked in her bottom lip, savouring his taste on her mouth.

"Just make sure you bring me back something nice ok?" she asked teasingly.

And Negan, offering her one final wink and lingering look, merely grinned that devilish grin of his, making for the door and tugging it swiftly open.

"Oh I promise, Sweetheart," he uttered wickedly, before disappearing out of the door and pulling it shut behind him with a gentle snap.

And Blake, who merely smirked to herself for a long drawn out moment, finally, throwing a hand over her face, collapsed back down against the pillows behind her head…

….very much intent on getting at least a few hours more rest, before the morning sun even reared its head…
Well would you look at that...

Granted it was not even 9am yet, but even so, Negan was having a good fucking day so far.

Not only was he less than a mile away from Rick the prick's place at Alexandria, sitting up in the cab of his truck, as his right-hand man Simon, over to his left, drove.

But he had just left the woman he was head-over-heels about, back in his bed, looking like a goddamn wet dream, the two of them totally and utterly besotted with each other right now.

Negan had not felt this way about anyone since Lucille...that stomach-churning, desperate, devoted kind of love.

For that what it was.

Love.

The two of them finally getting the gall to confess it to one another, after all this fucking time.

Negan grinned to himself, smacking some scavenged gum between his teeth, as the truck approached the looming familiar gates to Alexandria. He peered up, as Simon slowed the vehicle to a halt, looking now, towards Negan for guidance.

"Well, we're here," the mustachioed man uttered, switching off the engine, but even so, leaving the keys in the ignition.

And at his words Negan gave a wicked smile.

"Yes we are, Si," said the dark-haired man with glee, snatching up Lucille from the seat beside him and shoving open the door beside him and hopping out.

It was hot and humid out today, a low thick sort of cloud clinging to the sky, the ground still sodden with last night's rain.

It was the type of weather that immediately made you feel sticky, and if Negan hadn't been so arrogantly going for the 'intimidating badass' kind-of look, he'd have taken his battered old leather jacket off straight away.

But he, like every other Saviour here with him today (of which there were at least twenty of them) knew that a little persuasion and intimidation went a long way. Especially when it came to Rick and his people here, of which Negan had had nothing but trouble from, since they had first darkened his door.

Negan stepped easily out into the close air, leaning back against his heels slightly and gazing around, surveying the area, as his men and women joined him.

He knew every one of them were loyal as shit, and he trusted the majority of them with his life. And so, with a twinkle in his eyes, he barely had to shoot even half of them a loo, as he stalked past them, knowing that they could handle whatever was to come at them from behind those tall gates.

"Oh, Riiiiiiiick," Negan called out now in a loud carrying voice, as he strolled casually towards said-gates, his trusty barbed-wire covered baseball bat slung up over his shoulder. "Daddy's home!"

There was brief pause, as a carrying silence drifted a across the open space.
But Negan let out a low satisfied chuckle as after a brief few second there was a screeching sound, as the fence covering the gates were hastily tugged open by a black guy in a dog-collar, and of course, the man of the moment, himself...

"Rick!" said Negan with glee, bouncing on the balls of his feet as he spotted the bearded man he had come to adore to wind-up, stood today in a pale blue shirt. "I knew you wouldn't leave us waitin' out here in the cold for too long."

And with that Negan waved a hand easily up at the, anything-but-cold, air around him.

But Rick, who already had a sheen of perspiration across his darkened brow, cocked an eye in Negan's direction, tugging back the heavy iron gates with a huff.

"You can come in, take your stuff and then go," he replied in a drawling voice, sounding tired and worn-out. "We don't want any trouble here today."

Fuck had Negan actually done it? Had he ground Rick down that much?

But the dark-haired Saviour merely grinned, taking a long-legged step forwards, eyeing the leader of Alexandria as he did so.

Several people stood around now, just inside the walls of the community. Some of which Negan recognised, some he didn't, but all glaring at him with those same old insolent stares they usually carried.

Jeez, now he knew why Blake hadn't wanted to come back here…

With that, Negan's dark eyes lingered momentarily on the brown haired woman who had once fired a bullet into Lucille, staring daggers at him right now.

Not that he gave two shits about that of course.

"Now why would there be any fuckin' trouble, Rick?" Negan said in a loud innocent tone, smirking at the man, and placing his free hand to his heart dramatically. "We're good people. An' hell, we're not the ones pullin' guns on people when their backs are turned."

Negan's eyes suddenly flitted back over to the woman, his face a picture of gleeful wickedness, as she turned on her heel and stormed away, shoving past people as she went.

But this only served to add to Negan's happiness today, as he swung back around to face Rick, who was just an inch or two shorter than him, but stood there, head bowed a little, with hands on his hips, looking slightly stressed.

"Look, your stuff's over there, everything we could get, all ready for you to load up," he said unhappily pointing at a large pile or crates and boxes sat in the centre of the paved street. "Like I said. We don't want any trouble."

Negan's eyes lingered on the bounty of what looked like boxes of fresh tinned gods, vegetables, a couple of large battery packs, and a small box of weapons of various sizes.

Negan leaned back on his heels, marvelling at the pile, before turning back to Rick and clapping him hard on the back.

"Now that's what I like to see, Rick!" said Negan leaning into the brown-haired man and wrinkling his nose. "You and these fine people here finally realising your place in this great new world of
mine."

But Rick stayed silent, keeping his eyes trained on the ground, his shoulders slumped dejectedly.

"Although," continued Negan, the grin on his face soon slipping just a little, as he closed the gap between himself and the Alexandrian leader a little intimidatingly. "I was doubting your fucking loyalty the last time we met. I mean, jeez, the way Peaches came screamin' outta' this place in that car. Almost getting' herself fuckin' killed…." "…and shit, even today she still won't tell me what happened that night….what you fuckin' said to make her so upset that she would fuckin' tear off like that," Negan carried on. "So don't think you and your people are off the fuckin' hook here, Rick. My Lucille is still real fuckin' thirsty and she doesn't like it when I'm pissed off."

Negan watched as a gulp trailed its way down the Alexandrian's throat. But to his surprise Rick, with his eyes narrowed, gazed up at the dark-haired Saviour defiantly.

"She's with you? You found her?" he asked in a scratchy voice. "Blake?"

Just at the mention of her name from Rick's mouth, Negan felt his lip curl and his jaw tense protectively.

He had no idea what had gone on between Blake and these people, but it was only on coming here now and seeing them for the first time since it had happened, did Negan feel far more possessive over his girl than he had felt over anything else in his entire life.

They had upset her…so much so, that Negan might have lost her for good. And it was thoughts like that, that made a dark fury bubble up inside him now.

"She's with me…" Negan answered, his voice low and black and fearsome, just loud enough for both Rick and everyone else standing around watching, to hear.

He wanted them to know now that Blake was his.

And that there was nothing he wouldn't do to protect her. Absolutely nothing.

Rick held Negan's gaze for less than a second, before tearing his eyes away again, his hair sticking to the sheen of sweat that now lingered across his forehead.

"Simon, Dwight," Negan suddenly barked, never taking his eyes off the leader of Alexandria. "Go take a look at what ol' Rick has kindly fuckin' scavenged for us and get it loaded up onto the truck. I think I need to stretch my legs. See what else this bountiful fuckin' place has to offer. I seem to remember a pool table that might do very fuckin' well in my rec room."

Simon and Dwight immediately got to work, along with a few of the other Saviours, shoving past a couple of meek-looking Alexandrians as they did so.

But Negan shot a meaningful glance at Arat who was stood just a few feet away from him now, face fixed and gun held tightly in her hand and dutiful as ever.

"Arat," Negan shot her way. "Come take a walk with me an' Rick here."
Negan knew he wanted one of his trust-worthy lieutenants close today….not trusting Rick or his people as far he could throw them.

Somehow they had manage to raise his hackles more than usual today, and Negan had a feeling that definitely had something to with how they had treated Blake.

Arat stepped forwards obediently, keeping her chin and her gun held aloft, as Negan turned on his booted heel grinning and bumping his shoulder hard against Rick's as he began to stroll easily down the paved street, swinging Lucille from his hand as he went.

He could of course see why these people liked it here…it being a far cry from the Sanctuary, that was for sure. And a part of him almost felt guilty for keeping someone like Blake in such a fenced-in industrial place like that.

He knew of course that the looming factory building was almost impenetrable, but even so, it wasn't the most homely of places.

So perhaps Negan could keep his promise to her after all and bring her back something nice like she had asked him to. Perhaps something from the house she used to live in here. A nice rug or some of her old clothes maybe. Although none of those ideas struck him as being particularly inspiring.

"Look, we've given you all we can spare," Rick uttered, suddenly appearing at Negan's shoulder as they walked.

But Negan, coming to a sudden stop half way down the expansive street, turned to Rick now, pointing the barbed end of Lucille at his chest.

"No, Rick, you haven't," uttered the dark-haired Saviour, saying the bearded man's name with contempt in his voice. "Now I am a fucking reasonable guy ,but I can see that you have plenty of shit to spare around here…..in fact, you're lucky I don't burn these houses to the ground to teach you a fuckin' lesson, Rick! Make you start over. Make you fuckin' realise how much you and your people actually fuckin' have at this very moment in time."

Rick blinked several times, his entire body flinching at each syllable Negan came out with.

But the dark-haired Saviour kept on staring, a smirk twitching at his lips now, glad that he had put Rick in his place yet again.

He let out a chuckle, easing himself back onto his heels, before lifting his free hand and running it down his face tiredly.

"Come on," he uttered, beckoning Rick to join him now, as he paced away, further around the wide bed of the street, lined with large white houses all prim and proper and filled with folks standing on their porches watching him, each one of them looking like they'd never killed one of those dead pricks in their life.

But he paid no attention to any of them, instead waving a hand in Rick's direction, gaining his responsiveness once more, as they walked.

"So, Rick," he said in a low goading voice. "You got any nice liquor stashed away here I don't know about? Or a nice bottle of champagne something? Cause' I know a gal who like to get wasted on shit like that all the live-long. An' I have a feelin' that fuckin' vixen is gonna get super fuckin' naughty with some expensive goddamn bubbles inside of her..."

Negan made a face, leaning in to Rick and nudging him in the ribs teasingly.
"Not that she isn't naughty enough already," he murmured to the brown haired man in a carryng voice, full of utter gleeful excitement, before pulling back and eyeing the man at his side.

Rick of course looked thoroughly fed up right now, but this was what Negan liked about coming here. He loved having the ability to get to these people so bad

And so, with one last lingering smug look, Negan gave a long carrying whistle, before standing up straight once again and heading off down the street on his long legs, barely paying any attention to the two figures sitting up on a looming porch just over to his left, with their heads both turned his way.

And it was only a second later, that the dark-haired man, lifting his barbed-wire covered baseball bat, up onto his leather-clad shoulder a little arrogantly, heard something he had never ever expected to hear again as long as he lived…

"Hai, Eggy!"

He came to a sudden stop.

There had only been one person to ever call him that.

One person who had come into both his and Blake's life and turned it completely on its head in just a matter of days.

One person who they both had thought was dead.

Because she just couldn't be alive. Not now. Not after everything….surely….

Negan froze, a frown coming to settle between his dark brows.

But it wasn't a moment later, as the entire street filled with a carrying silence, that Negan, almost in a bemused sort-of disbelief at what he had heard, arched his back and swivelled around on his heel…

… his chocolate eyes narrowing, as his gaze slowly landed on the two figures sat up on the porch….just a little way away from him.

One of which was a woman he vaguely recognised from one of his last visits to this godforsaken fucking village community. With dark-hair and worried eyes.

But the second, a tiny figure….who was sat on her little pyjama-covered butt, brandishing a limp apple slice clutched tightly between her pudgy fingers happily, was a face Negan had never, ever thought he would see again.

Not in a million years.

Mia.

The dark-haired man parted his bearded lips now, marvelling up at the small girl in total disbelief, his heart almost swelling.

Shit, out of all the people who had made it….Negan was sure fucking glad this kid had. Surviving with the best of them. Hell, he was goddamn proud of her for that…

…this tiny mousy-haired toddler, who was currently waving a teeny paw in his direction, looking as cool as anything as she sat there, eating her breakfast in the early morning humidity.
"Eggy, it you," she said again, smiling wide at him and clambering up onto on the seat of chair with great difficulty and standing up on pudgy legs, as the woman beside her stared aghast. "Wher Bwake?"

But Rick of course, at Negan's side, was doing exactly the same as the woman was, gazing back and for the between the leader of the Saviours and the baby girl in confusion.

"Wait..." he uttered out his eyes now wide and staring. "You know her?"

But Negan merely ignored him, taking a couple of long strides over towards the bottom of the porch steps, approaching the large house.

"Well, fuck. me. Hey there beansprout," he said in a warm voice, a wide grin sliding its way over his salt-and-pepper bearded mouth as his eyes fixed to the child, taking in her every move….still in utter disbelief that she was really here.

His thoughts immediately flickered to Blake and how truly happy she was going to be when he strolled back into the Sanctuary with the kid in his arms looking like a goddamn hero riding in on a white horse. God he was gonna get some great fucking head for that!

But grinning to himself, feeling smugly satisfied at this thought, Negan shot Mia a wide smile.

"So this is where you've been hidin' out, huh?" he commented contentedly. "Well shit kid, you really are somethin', ain't ya? You can ride up front with me on our way back to base-"

But before he could say another word to her, the dark-haired woman sitting beside Mia, suddenly got to her feet, grabbing the little girl swiftly under the arms and hauling her hurriedly up.

At once, Mia gave an ear-piercing cry, dropping her piece of apple to the floor.

"Nohhh, I tawkin to Eggy!" she whined out, but the woman merely balanced a struggling Mia on her hip and rocked her back and forth soothingly, just as Rick suddenly stepped in front of Negan, shaking his damp head.

"She's not going anywhere with you," Rick suddenly said, his voice low and steady, and much more confident that before. Sounding like a true leader for the first time since Negan had broken him, back at the line-up.

But Negan gave a small growl now, not really used to being told what to do and not in front of his own men either. He chanced a glance now over at Arat, who had her lips pursed tightly together in a thin line waiting for an order, before staring back at Rick.

"Oh you are gonna give her to me, Rick," the dark-haired man suddenly bit, taking a small step into Rick now and leering over him intimidatingly. "I hope we're clear that this is not up for discussion right now."

Rick merely flickered for a brief moment, but still stood him ground firmly, his fists clenched at his side.

But Negan gave a small growl now, not really used to being told what to do and not in front of his own men either. He chanced a glance now over at Arat, who had her lips pursed tightly together in a thin line waiting for an order, before staring back at Rick.

"You've done a lot of things to us," you've killed some of us….you've taken some of our people…" said Rick gritting his teeth. "But takin' a kid. A baby girl. This is where I draw the line. An' I don't care how angry you get or which one of us you're goin' to punish for it-"
But Negan's eyes blackened at this response, hissing out sharply and raising his eyebrows...knowing that this was not good, on so many levels.

And if Blake found out what they were doing...what they were denying her of...there would definitely be hell to pay.

"Oh, Rick," said Negan in a lowered incredulous tone, shaking his head just once. "It's not me you have to worry about here."

Rick looked up at Negan a little questioningly, as just behind the two men, Mia gave a wailing scream, starting to cry.

Negan knew of course that he could take her now and no one would be able to do a thing about it. But something tugged at his stomach...not particularly wanting a showdown right here and cause the kid more upset.

And besides, any chance of gunfire, putting her in harm's way yet again would only anger Blake even further. And jeez, if anything happened to the tiny child now, on his watch, he knew deep down that she would never ever forgive him.

And that was something Negan just could not risk happening.

And so, seeing just from the look on his sweaty face that Rick was not likely to back down any time soon, the leader of the Saviours gave a loud huff, lifting his hand and dragging it over his stubbly chin.

"You know what Rick, have it your way, But phew..." Negan murmured giving a whistle. ".when she fuckin' finds out..."

Negan glanced at Arat who gave him a meaningful look, the curly-haired woman agreeing full-well how mad Blake was likely to be at this.

She was fucking formidable force around the Sanctuary these days and having her being pissed off, was almost as bad as Negan being in foul mood...

"W-When who finds out?" asked Rick in a questioning voice but Negan, at this, merely gave a chuckling whine of tired laughter, dragging his hand down his face once more.

And with that, without answering the brown-haired man, Negan merely swung around on his heel throwing one final look up towards a red-faced Mia, who was sobbing loudly and trying hard as she could to push the woman holding her away.

"Noh, I wann Eggy!" she cried, tossing her head back and wailing to the heavens, as Negan pressed his lips together, a growl emitting from throat.

"Oh I'll fuckin' be back to to get her, Rick, don't you worry," threatened Negan as he turned on his heel, beckoning for Arat to follow him and making his way back towards the gates, and the Saviours' awaiting trucks.

Perhaps he wasn't going to be the one to take her back to the Sanctuary. But he knew a person who Rick was not going to argue with...especially not when he had seen her as Negan and the other Saviours had seen her. Wild-eyed and unrelenting.

A hurricane.
And so, with a wide grin to himself, Negan sloped off with Arat hot at his heels...

...intent on heading straight back to the Sanctuary...

...as a worried looking Rick and Tara exchanged nervous glances between each other, behind him...

...as Mia carried on wailing. Watching through watery eyes, as Negan disappeared off around the corner and out of sight.
Today felt like a good day- a rare thing in this world that was for sure!

After having what had felt like the longest lay-in Blake had had in years, feeling oh-so snuggly and sleepy under Negan's sheets, that smelt of his deliciously heady, musky scent, Blake had dragged herself dozily into his shower.

The water had been hot and much needed and had felt so good, burning its way across her smooth skin.

She knew that, right now, life for her was good.

She was lucky to have found herself in such a good position in her life. Here, with a man she loved, and who loved her back.

She had gone for years being on the bottom rung…with David…living out there on the road… sleeping in horrible places surrounded by walking corpses and fearing for your life every time you ventured out to use the bathroom. So despite having everything she would ever want, right here with Negan, Blake knew she couldn't take any of it for granted. Wanting to give the rest of the people here, exactly what she had. Making a better life for all of them.

That was why, after languishing in the shower for a while before heading down to her room to get a fresh change of clothes, Blake had headed out to garden, toiling here for a couple of hours….happy and content with spending time here and pulling her weight as and when she could.

But it was obvious that her love for the people here, was indeed, very much reciprocated. They cared for her, as much as she cared for them, none of them fearing her like they feared Negan, and treating her as one of their own.

And this made her happier than ever.

It was a nice feeling. To be here amongst people who actually gave a shit about here, unlike the people back at Alexandria, who had proven that they would rather have sided with an abusive man over her…just because of her alliance with Negan.

Sure, the dark-haired Saviour certainly had his flaws there was no doubt of that. But he loved her and he had shown Blake just how much he cared for her each and every day, tenfold over the way David had treated her.

Negan had made her feel happy and safe, and that, in this world, meant so, so much.

It had been almost lunchtime by the time Blake, having taken a short break to use the bathroom and freshen up a little after weeding non-stop for almost two hours, was stood in her room humming to herself, as she prepared herself a small cheese and tomato sandwich.

She was dressed today in something far less pretty than yesterday's floral dress. Instead, wearing just a pair of tight indigo jeans, a white t-shirt and pair of brown boots. Her long caramel-hair swept over one shoulder.

Blake had been desperate for the taste of tomatoes for a few days now and was delighted when she had noticed that John (one of the older Saviours that helped out in the gardens sometimes) had already picked an entire basketful straight from the vine by the time Blake had made it outside this
morning.

Now Blake carefully cut the single tomatoe she had gratefully taken into thin slices and placed them on top of the synthetic cheese slice she had gladly accepted from a stall at the marketplace, before squishing down the top of her bread roll onto the filling, and lifting it to her mouth to take a huge bite.

God it felt good to taste something as fresh as this, Blake's mouth watering as she savoured the taste of tomato.

She smiled to herself almost instantly….almost shaking her head.

She really did realise how lucky she truly was right now.

Here she was, with fresh fruit and veg on her plate almost every day, in her own room, at a well-protected place like the Sanctuary, with people all around who cared about her….eating a sandwich.

Something she could have only dreamed of doing just a year ago, as she had cowered inside an abandoned barn eating roadkill and cold dog-food, straight from a can.

It had been tough for her at times out there….but she had made it through. She had survived all of that. Survived the threat of walkers…David's beatings….and she had survived herself.

At times, Blake had wanted to give up on everything, but she had pushed through, with the help of Negan, and become everything that she was today. Strong and bold, and as Negan oh-so aptly put it - 'a bit of a badass'.

But she smiled to herself again now, thinking on this, as she carefully wiped her mouth, placing down the rest of her sandwich to save for later, as her eyes lingered for just a moment on the abandoned mixing bowl she had failed to wash up from making brownies yesterday.

Blake's mind, at this, drifting back to that amazing moment where Negan had fucked her up against this very counter yesterday…the thought alone driving her wild as she remembered how it had felt to have him want her just that bad, and the way she had wanted him just as much in return.

But Blake's smile and her hazy memory soon faltered a little, as she remembered just what had followed this good sex….

Fuck…

She had promised herself not even twenty-four hours ago that she would go see Doctor Carson today.

She and Negan had been having a lot of sex as of late….and of course, they were as irresponsible as each other, and Blake knew what could happen if they weren't careful….and falling pregnant in this world was not something Blake could risk happening…

She had miscarried twice already in her life….and it didn't bare thinking about what would happen if the same thing happened to her here with only one doctor and not enough medical equipment to see her through.

And besides, no one truly knew what would happen to a deceased foetus in the womb in this world.

Blake let a gulp trail it's way difficultly down her throat as she tried to shake horrible thoughts like these from her mind now…sliding the sandwich across the work surface away from her in disgust, as
she turned on her heel, marching across the room and hauling open the door.

Carson would help…he would surely have the morning-after plan b pill for her…and hopefully some form of birth control contraceptive to take in the future.

But Blake, so on a mission now…. with her hair flying wildly behind her as she stalked hurriedly down the lengthy Sanctuary corridor….that she barley even had time to stop herself as she barrelled straight into a tall, looming, and very recognisable figure, as she hurriedly rounded the corner.

"Oof…ouch…" she uttered out, stumbling backwards and blinking few times as she stared up into a face she had certainly not been expecting to see so soon today.

"Negan?" she said in a quiet voice, looking a little confused, as she stared up into the eyes of the dark-haired Saviour, standing there before her now with his shoulders slightly slumped, Lucille held loosely in his hand, and a dark, worried looking frown plastered across his brow.

What the hell was he doing here?

But Blake shot him a bemused look in return, glancing over his shoulder as Arat appeared there, looking solemn.

"I thought you'd gone to Alexandria?" the caramel-blonde woman asked questioningly.

It was at least a good two hour drive to Alexandria from here and there was no way the Saviours could have made it all the way there and back again with enough time for Negan to bother the hell out of Rick.

But Negan didn't answer her now, merely staring at her with a look of frustration lingering over his long and bearded features.

"What is it?" Blake murmured, her smile dissipating little. "What's wrong? H-Has something happened?"

Blake looked now to Arat, but the curly-haired woman gave her nothing, her hazel eyes merely reaching the floor at her feet.

What the hell was going on? What was Negan keeping from her?

Blake felt her heart begin to beat a little faster now as she attempted a smile. Perhaps this was some sort of joke.

But Negan was never ever this quiet.

"W-Where's everyone else?", she asked slowly, her green eyes searching his face.

But it was only then that Negan spoke, low and growling, his chocolate eyes fixed on hers.

"Doll…there's somethin' I need you to see…" he muttered imploringly. "Come on, we need to load up an' go back there…now."

At his words Blake narrowed her eyes at him a little questioningly.

Go back there?

What? To Alexandria?
"What the hell are you talking about, Negan?" she said in a slightly defensive tone, as she folded her arms over her chest, her voice wavering slightly as she spoke.

She had no idea what was going on, was this some sort of joke?

"Fuck…jeez, Sweetheart" Negan breathed, running a hand over his face tiredly, looking far more exhausted now than he had done upon leaving just a few hours ago. "You just need to come back there with us, like I said, there's somethin' you need to see…"

But Blake just tutted, shaking her head and making to shove past Negan.

She had no idea what game he was playing today, but Blake, her good mood now utterly gone, felt pissed-off and not in the mood for any of this right now.

"There is no way I'm going back there, Negan," she said, lifting her chin and making to head off down the corridor back to the gardens. "I told you earlier I didn't want to see those people…so whatever this is…whatever you're trying to do, I'm not interested."

But before she could go very far, a sudden gloved hand reached for her forearm, stopping her in her tracks.

"Peaches, jeez, will you just wait a fuckin' second…"

But Blake, scowling darkly, spun around, pointing her finger threateningly at Negan.

"I'm not going back there," she said staring up at the dark-haired leader of the Saviours now, her face deadly serious and her eyebrows up in her hairline. "Look, baby, I don't know what game you're trying to play with them…or with me…but I don't want to get involved-"

And with that, Blake tugged her arm from Negan's grasp, turning back around once more.

God, how the hell could one man possible infuriate her so much?

Just a few short hours ago, there she had been, with him, in a stare of undress….the pair of them utterly in love. And yet now, Blake was thoroughly pissed with the bearded Saviour.

She had told him point blank this morning, and yesterday for that matter, that she hadn't wanted to go to Alexandria and now here he was, obviously on some sort of glory trip, wanting her to return there with him…and for what?

To show her off?

To gloat?

But Blake had barely made it even two or three steps down the gloomy hallway, when Negan suddenly spoke, his voice loud and clear…

"Darlin', she's there…"

Blake suddenly stopped dead…

..her lips parting and her eyes fixed on a spot dead ahead of her….

What had he just said?

..she blinked once….
...twice....
..three times...

...before slowly turning back around on the spot, her heart hammering a drumbeat in her chest.

She stared up into Negan's eyes now...as her breath caught in her throat....seeing in his gaze, a sad sort-of look that only caused to make tears prick at Blake's green orbs...

The caramel-blonde woman looked at him...desperate for him to say it again...

But he didn't need to....

For Blake could see it now in his dark eyes...the truth...

And she didn't even need to ask who he was referring to.

For there was only one person to make him look at her in this way...the dark-haired Saviour's face full of hurt and anguish and wordless meaning.

"Mia?" Blake managed to whisper out.

And it took a long second for Negan to finally nod, taking a step towards her, a line between his eyebrows and his jaw clenched tightly.

"She's there.....an' I'm takin' you to fuckin get her, Peaches...."

Tara paced across her living room floor, her fingers drawn up to her mouth, biting down on her nails.

Shit. This wasn't good.

"He's comin' back for her..." said Rick shaking his head, as he stood there beside Michonne, arms folded over himself. "...my guess is that he'll be back within the hour..."

"Well what are we going to do?" Michonne murmured, staring up at her partner and shaking her head. "We can't just hand her over to him!"

But Rick gave a shrug of his tired shoulders.

"I don' think we have a choice right now..." he said in a low voice.

But Tara, as much as the kid frustrated the hell out of her sometimes, was not about to just give her up without a fight. Not to him.

"I won't let him just take her..." she said continuing in her pacing. "If he wants her, he's going to have to go through me."

After Negan had disappeared, Tara had taken the tiny girl up to her room and tried to distract her as best she could with some crayons and a colouring book, before shutting her in. Hoping that would give her and Rick and Michonne enough time to come up with a solution to their problem.

"When he comes back, he's not just going to be on his own. That's what he said..." murmured Rick, causing Michonne to frown darkly.

"So what? He's bringing more Saviours?" she asked staring at him wildly.
But Rick shook his head, grimacing, and offering the two women a dark look.

"No…” he said in a worried voice. "Someone else…”

But Tara, at Rick's words, merely gave a huff and continued the chewing of her nails…

…waiting…..

But if one of them had only chosen to look out into the hallway at that very moment….surely one of them would have noticed a tiny toddler, in pink pyjamas, carrying a large fluffy toy snake, make her way down the stairs on pudgy legs, alone and unheard…

…and in the blink of an eye…

…without so much as a backward look…

….she was gone….

….leaving the front door creaking wide open behind her…..
It had turned out to be a hot and humid day, and Blake could not help the sheen of perspiration that beaded at her collarbone at this very moment in time.

She had been sat in the front of the truck for the past hour, beside Negan in the driver's seat and Arat who was leant up against the far right passenger side window, keeping herself to herself.

All of them silent…all of them seemingly holding their breath, as the vehicle raced down the empty and eerie road.

Blake, even now, could not quite believe any of this was happening.

They were going to see Mia.

She was alive.

After all this time of Blake thinking otherwise...desperately wishing they could turn back the clock..

And yet she was there...Blake having questioned Negan over and over again asking whether it was definitely her...so frightened that they would get there and Negan had just been mistaken and her dreams and hopes would come crashing down once more.

But Negan had reassured her, pressing his lips into her hair that it was certainly her, retelling the story of how she had called out to him at least three times before Blake would believe it was true, finally looking to Arat for confirmation. And the curly-haired woman had nodded kindly, and looked away, sparing Blake's embarrassment, as she had burst into tears right there and then back in that hallway, with Negan tugging her into his arms gently.

For it was all almost too much for her to compute.

After weeks of agony….of thinking that Mia was dead….

Blake was factually going to get to see her again…

The blonde woman chanced a glance up towards Negan now beside her, who almost at once felt her gaze on his face, his chocolate eyes flickering immediately over to her.

"So did she seem ok…Mia?" asked Blake a little tentatively now, giving a small gulp. They had been over and over this same conversation now for the past hour, and yet Blake still needed to hear the words confirmed to her yet again. "How did she look?"

But Negan gave a sighing smile, keeping his eyes trained on the road ahead.

"She seemed as fuckin' cool as anythin', Peaches," he scoffed. "Hell, she didn' even have a fuckin' scratch on her."

But Blake chewed on her bottom lip, a frown appearing between her brows.

"And Rick just refused to let you take her?" she enquired.

She didn't want to annoy Negan with this line of questioning yet again, but she was still utterly confused as to why Negan, as cock-sure as he normally was, didn't just stroll on out of there with Mia under his leather-clad arm.
But the dark-haired Saviour shot Blake a serious look.

"Shit, Doll-face, I might be a fuckin' bad guy, but I ain't a monster, an' I wasn't about to fuckin' snatch her outta their arms while she was cryin' her goddamn heart out," the leader of the Saviours said tiredly "Look, me they can fuckin; argue with…but hell, I know that when that kid sees you, there won't be any force in the fuckin' world that will keep the two of you apart. So that's why I needed to come an' get you."

Blake licked at her lips peering over at the man sitting beside her. This man that some considered malevolent and cruel….but here he was, not only thinking of Blake, but Mia too.

Her heart swelled now, as she tilted her head to the side, surveying him.

He truly was everything to her.

And she hoped that with Mia with them Blake could finally have the chance of creating a real family back there at the Sanctuary…a life for themselves, that didn't involve bloodshed and tears.

"Thank you," she managed to whisper out, causing Negan's eyes to flicker her way warmly once more.

God she wanted to kiss him, desperate to press herself close to him, as he stared back at her. To just feel his warmth and the feeling of being safe in his arms right now.

But she relented, more for Arat's sake than anything else, just as Negan spoke.

"Well don't fuckin' thank me until she's in this van on the way back to the Sanctuary with us…." he murmured poignantly. "I wouldn't put it past Rick the fuckin' Prick to try somethin'. An' havin' you in the line of fire ain't somethin' I want happenin' today. So if I give the fuckin word, you get yourself an' the kid back to the trucks. We fuckin' clear on that one, Princess?"

But Blake pursed her lips together, not answering him now, as her fingers drifted down to the gun at her belt.

She didn't want to make that promise, for she knew just what lengths she wold go to for Mia…and for Negan.

This was the very same gun she had had on her at the Hilltop, and the one she was willing to use today, on anyone who got in her way.

She had no alliances with those people now…only the Saviours, and if any of them tried to stop her taking what was hers…she wouldn't think twice about putting a bullet in anyone…even those who had once been her closest friends.

And so Blake, feeling stronger and more confident than ever before, kept her green eyes fixed on a point on the road just ahead of her as the truck sped down the empty dirt track towards Alexandria.

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Wowee, what a day Mia had had so far!

First, she had got to have an apple for breakfast (Apples were her favourite!).

And then she had gotten to see Eggy!

She liked Eggy, he was funny and she remembered how the scratchy fluff on his face tickled her
cheeks when he got near her.

And best of all, Mia knew that if Eggy was here, then that meant that Blake wasn't too far away!

And she was the nicest of all. Nicer than the brown-haired lady who took care of her now. Nicer than Amy and Bry-yan who had tried to get all bitey with her too!

Blake smelled nice and had pretty hair, and Mia missed her. Every day.

And so because Blake hadn't come to see her yet…Mia would go and find Blake...

Yes, that was what she would do.

So, dragging her favourite toy snake behind her, the teeny girl waddled on sock-covered feet, ambling carefully down the huuuge staircase, easing herself down one step at a time….not paying any attention to the shouty voices coming from the front room.

All she cared about was seeing Blake again, as she reached the bottom and made for the door, standing on her tippy toes to turn the big gold handle…

She had done this before and so knew of course where she wanted to go…stumbling back a little on pudgy legs, as the door swung wide open…

…before toddling off outside…

…too small and insignificant to be noticed by anyone, in the confusion of people moving back and forth on the big street, yelling at each other…

…the tiny girl heading off in the direction of the looming front gates…

….going off to find Blake and Eggy…
The Countdown

On some days in this part of the country, the humidity was often so unbearable that it was a good thing when a storm finally crashed its way across the sky, breaking up the low-lying cloud and threatening a heavy downpour at any second.

But not today.

Today Blake wanted the closeness of the air….to feel the thick heat against her perspiration-covered skin as she stood in front of the tall, looming gates to the place she had once called home, watching them roll slowly open.

"You alright, Peaches?" came the familiar low hum of Negan who was stood close at her side now, his chin lifted firmly and his eyes fixed on a point straight ahead of him.

But Blake merely raised her own chin now, mirroring his intimidating stance.

She was alright.

Being back here, only serving to remind her of the hell she had been through living here with David...and how alien it had felt to return here afterwards….how these people had made her feel like an outsider…locked her in her house like she was some sort of prisoner.

But no more.

For even since then….just a few short weeks ago, Blake had changed for the better.

She was stronger now and through Negan and the rest of the Saviour's assurances, she knew that she didn't have to put up with people treating her like shit anymore.

She was more than just David's fiancée now.

She was a queen. Headstrong and willing to fight for, not only herself, but her people too.

For that was what they were now, the Saviours. Far more so than the people here at Alexandria had ever been at least…

"I'm good," Blake murmured back, reassuring the man she loved now that they were on the same page.

Both of them knew how wily the people here could be. And one wrong move…if either of them seemed like they were in any sort of danger, both Blake and Negan knew that they would take the shot or the swing and bring that person, whoever it was, down. No exceptions.

Blake had Negan's back, just as he had hers, each one of the formidable pair standing tall and intimidating, side-by-side as the gates opened fully before them.

But Blake tensed as she caught sight of what was on the others side, a small almost invisible gulp trailing its way down her slender throat. But even so, she kept her head held high as both she and Negan, followed close behind by Arat, strolled through the open entranceway.

"Well hello there, Rick," said Negan, a small smirk inching its way over his bearded lips. But Blake's eyes were not trained on him now, but instead the sight dead-ahead of her.
For there was Rick and Michonne, stood just in front of a large group of Alexandrians, all of which Blake recognised, all of whom were currently staring at her with a look of utter shock and disbelief plastered across their faces.

But Blake, like she had done at the Hilltop, no longer cared about what these people thought of her, as Rick hovering there, with narrowed beady eyes, gazed at her and only her, tilting his head questioningly and opening his mouth to speak.

But Blake did not give him time to say anything.

"Where is she?" she murmured in a threatening voice, low and dark.

But there followed only silence…

From Rick…

From Michonne…

From everyone…

And Blake could feel her blood begin to boil now.

She had come all this way…back to this hellish place…to get Mia back.

And that was what she was going to do, even if it was the last thing she ever did.

But Negan at her side, obviously sensing her frustration, readjusted his grip on Lucille intimidatingly.

"You heard the fuckin' lady…” he growled, gesturing at the air with his free hand. "Where's the kid?"

For that at the end of the day was all Blake was here for. Whatever agenda Negan had, taking their monthly offering, she didn't care. That was just business and she trusted Negan enough to not ask questions these days. But this…this was hers to handle, her hand drifting to the gun currently tucked into the waistband of her pants.

But to her dismay and revulsion, the residents of Alexandria merely stared back at her, afraid and aghast at the sight of woman many of them had lived right across the street from, standing there before them now, tall and menacing, and undoubtedly a Saviour.

For Blake exuded a confidence now that she hadn't had before.

And that was all down to the man at her side, who now took a long-legged stride forward, coming to stand nose-to-nose with Rick, leering down at him with darkened eyes…just as a large group of Saviours including Simon and Dwight surrounded the crowd of Alexandrians, guns gripped tightly in their hands.

"You really gonna keep us fuckin' waiting, Rick?" Negan murmured in what was barely a whisper now. But the message was there all the same, Blake watching as the brown-haired man's eyes drift quickly away, falling down to the floor.

Rick these days looked utterly lost and far from the leader Blake had once seen him as.

And it angered her now to think that he was keeping Mia here now…like a prisoner.

Just like Blake had been.
But a sudden voice, said her name loud and clear breaking her from these thoughts and causing her thumb that was angling for the safety on her gun to retract just a little.

"Blake…you don't have to this," came the voice of Michonne, as the black woman stepped forwards, lifting her hand up to sate Blake a little, her eyes soft and sad now. "The little girl is safe… look, whatever he wants you to do-

But Blake knew of course who she was referring to and bristled at Michonne's words almost instantly, a scowl shifting its way between her brows now, clenching her free fist at her side.

"You really have no fucking clue do you?" Blake snapped suddenly, a sharp silence falling over everyone as a rumble of thunder was heard in the distance.

But Michonne merely stared back at Blake taking a tiny step back now, as Blake grimaced, her green eyes blackening.

"That little girl is mine," she growled. "And if you don't tell me where the fuck she is in the next five seconds, I'll have each one of our people search and loot every single house here and then burn them to the ground one by one until we find her. You take her from me and will I will take everything from you. Are we clear on that?"

Rick and Michonne looked at one another now, a little panicked, as to her left, Blake saw Negan look her way, licking at his lips and give an appreciative whine of glee.

But Blake wasn't feeling so amused, her eyes drifting to Simon and then to Dwight who were staring back at her now, just waiting on her orders….just as they usually did with Negan.

And that was when Blake finally realised who she was. Where she truly belonged.

"Five…" she began to count aloud.

At her side she saw Negan clap his hands together excitedly.

"Oh Peaches…" she heard him murmured out in appreciation. "You are a fuckin' goddess right now!"

"Four…" she called out again, her gaze and her breathing steady.

But a voice cut through the oppressive silence suddenly.

"Pfft. We are not about to give up that kid just because you and that asshole want to play happy families," came the aggressive voice of Rosita, standing there, khaki green baseball cat pulled down over her eyes, and her mouth set into an poisonous grimace, as she stepped out from the small gathered crowd, her arms folded across herself.

God, Blake hated her. She had been the one whispering poisonous words into everyone 's words on Blake's return here last time. And that was something the caramel-blonde woman had not forgotten.

But it was Negan's turn to address these people now, as he stepped a little closer to Blake's side protectively, eyeing the brown-haired woman and pointing at her with the end of his barbed-wire covered baseball bat.

"Oh, looky. Who do we have here?" said Negan in a sarcastic voice, leaning back against his heels as he spoke. "Oh yeah, if it ain't the goddamn woman who tried to put a bullet in me. Oho, Lucille is still fuckin' reeeeeelin' from that. An' you know what, actually….so. am. I…."
Blake glanced Negan's way for brief moment now, watching as he gave a heavy blink, his face becoming far more serious that it had been just a second or two ago.

"So you know what? For that fuckin' outburst," he continued, nudging Blake gently in the side with his elbow. "I say we skip 'three' altogether, Peaches."

And at his words, Blake couldn't hep her lips twitch up into a wickedly dark smile. "Oh I agree…" she said in a dangerous voice, staring back towards the crowd and Rosita once more. "Two…"

It was obvious to anyone now, the Alexandrians, and the Saviours alike, that Blake and Negan were a powerful duo not to be messed with….as Rosita retreated back into the crowd and Rick took a step forwards, both of his hands raised aloft.

"Look we can talk about this…Blake…" he murmured out in a dry-sounding drawl. "Please…"

But Blake took a sudden step towards the bearded man now, pulling her gun from the back of her pants and pointing it just four or five feet away from Rick's skull.

"Well I don't particularly want to talk to you, Rick….or any of you for that matter," said Blake in an icy voice, feeling bruised by the memories of this place and these people, as her eyes found Aaron and Eric in the crowd. Her old friends who had soon shown their true colours, siding with Rosita who had accused Blake of lying about David. "And guess what?"

The caramel-blond woman looked Negan's way now, watching as the dark-haired Saviour grinned back at her knowingly, giving a nod of support for what she was about to do, before she turned back to face her ex-village mates.

"…times up…" she managed to utter out simply, removing the safety from her gun now, as a worried sounding murmur swooped over the crowd.

And Blake could only watch as a bead of sweat ran its way down Rick's temples, as he stared down the barrel of Blake's gun.

"Simon, Arat," Balked said loudly, never once taking her green eyes off Rick. "Search and burn every house."

And Simon, returning Blake's look with an obedient nod, smirked slightly, as he turned to his men.

"Well, you heard the lady," he barked, as the worried murmur from the crowd grew louder, a woman's sharp woman's wail being heard, as well as the sight of people of all ages running back off towards their houses in panic.

Blake wasn't happy about this. Of course she wasn't. But all Rick had needed to do was give up Mia.

But instead, as always, he was being as cowardly as ever. Going against her for the sake of it, rather it just being the sensible thing to do…

But before the Saviours could move and get far, a sudden voice stopped everyone in their tracks, including Blake herself-

"SHE'S WITH ME! She's here..."

And with that, Blake looked up and over the heads of the large crowd, to see Tara, standing there at the top of her porch steps on the house nearest to the front gates, her voice a picture of hurt and distress.
And Blake, at seeing her old friend, gave a pained gulp and lowered her gun slightly.

Tara had always had here back, here at Alexandria.

The pair of them had been close…and over the months of abuse, Blake had been close to telling Tara everything about David on several occasions, but in the end had always been too frightened to do so.

And yet the last time Blake had been here on that fateful night when people had seen both Blake and Negan together, finding out the truth, Tara had turned her back on Blake and not stood up or defended her when Rosita had attacked her.

No….there was certainly no love lost between the blonde-haired Blake and the dark-haired Tara, that was obvious, as the women stood here now, eyes locked and jaws set.

But everyone here stood still now…

Watching and waiting…even Negan, who looked to Blake, leaning in towards her now.

"You want me to come with you, Darlin'?" he murmured in a voice that was full of warmth, sounding low and protective.

But Blake was silent for a long drawn out second, still staring back at Tara, before finally shaking her head.

"No, I'll be fine..." she muttered, taking a long and shaky inwards breath….

..before striding forwards parting the crowds, her chin lowered darkly.....

....making her way over to Tara's place, alone....

.... her gun still gripped tightly within her hand, as thunder rumbled overhead...
Frustrations and old friends

Tara had long since disappeared off back inside by the time Blake had finally reached the bottom of the porch steps.

Taking a deep breath in as she climbed the small staircase slowly, her eyes remained fixed on the open front door ahead.

Blake hadn't wanted to come here today.

She hadn't wanted to see Tara….or Eric or Aaron…or any of these people she had once considered her friends.

Blake had moved on now, feeling freer and happier than she had ever done before, with the Saviours and with Negan…where she belonged..

But yet here she was again, back here, in this same old place, where the memories of David's fists, of his temper, of being a kept a prisoner here, returned to her as clear as anything, like a movie playing out in front of her eyes.

It hurt.

All of it. Those horrid memories of a time long since passed.

And so Blake could only take another shallow and steadying breath, as she took a wide step through the front door, entering the large hallway.

Blake had been here many times. The last time she specifically remembered was the night before she had been taken to the Sanctuary….before she had been knocked out by David and taken there…

That night, her, Rosita, Tara and David had enjoyed a meal here, catching up, laughing and joking as friends did, like there was nothing wrong, as though everything was fine. But it wasn't.

By then green and yellow bruises had already littered almost the entirety of Blake's skin, covered by clothes even in the sweltering heat of summer, and unbeknownst to Blake, David already had plans underway to get the two of them to the Sanctuary to make a deal with Negan.

She could still smell that night on the air in the lemony fragrance of Tara's house, fresh and homely…the memory filling Blake's nostrils, and causing her stomach to lurch.

But she tried as had as she could to not let this upset show on her face now, as she moved around the corner, stepping into Tara's familiar living room.

Here the dark-haired woman was currently stood in front of the window, thumb-nail between her teeth, her eyes flickering up towards Blake as she entered the room.

Blake instantly stared about, it was quiet and tidy in here, save for the two or three small toys that littered the polished hardwood floor.

Were these Mia's?

Just the idea of her being nearby making Blake's heat beat ever faster.

A long moment of silence fell between the two women now, as everything else, the rest of the world,
the Saviours, Rick, Michonne, even Negan, was forgotten.

But it was Blake that finally spoke, her voice quieter than it had been outside. A tension filling up the room instead in its audible absence.

"Where is she?" the caramel-blonde woman asked, holding her gun tensely at her side, although the safety was now firmly back on.

She would not risk bullets here with Mia close by.

But Tara just gave a sad shake of her head.

"I thought you were dead, Blake…" she murmured out. "W-We found Rick's car burned-out at the side of the road…"

But Blake just kept staring dead ahead.

"Just take me to her, Tara, please…" Blake whispered out after a second or two, causing Tara to run her hand over her forehead and give a bemused and heavy sigh.

"Why are you even here, Blake?" she said staring up into the blonde woman's eyes. "What? Life with the Savours not going as planned and you need something to distract you? Is that it? Jesus, haven't they got better things to do, like taking our stuff from us, rather than caring about what happens to some kid?"

At her words Blake wavered a little.

"She's not just some kid," she replied through gritted teeth, emotion welling up inside her.

But Tara merely narrowed her eyes back at Blake …confusion and hurt etched upon her every feature.

"You know, I thought we were friends," breathed Tara now, her voiced filed with sadness. "I thought you and me…I thought we were cool…..and then I see you with him. With Negan."

The dark haired woman gave a gulp, pointing at Blake, looking wounded.

"After what they did to Denise….to Glenn, to Abraham, to Spencer…..how the hell could you, Blake?" she carried on, her face a picture of sorrow. "And, what? Now you're just one of them?"

But Blake lowered her eyes for a brief second.

She was more than just one of them now.

She was Negan's, and he was hers.

She was a queen there, at the Sanctuary, but right now that was not something she was about to share with Tara.

"Where is she?" she repeated in a mere whisper, gazing back up at her old friend, tears welling inside her eyes now.

But Tara shook her head, closing the gap between herself and Blake hurriedly and placing a hand to the blonde woman's arm gently.

"You don't have to leave with them again, Blake," she said in a desperate voice. "Stay here with
And for a brief moment, Blake, allowing a single tear to slip down her cheek, actually believed she could do it. Like she could fit in here again with Tara…with Rick….with Rosita…

But then a blink or two took her back to reality, as the teardrop fell from her cheek and shattered onto the floor below them.

"No," she said suddenly, pulling back from the her dark-haired friend, and taking a step away from her now, shaking her blonde head and readjusting the grip on her gun. "I'm not one of you anymore."

But Tara gave a frown.

"Then what the hell are you Blake?" she said, her voice heated, and her eyes wide and staring. "Because I saw you standing out there...with him...are you gonna turn around now and say 'I'm Negan'….just like the rest of them?"

Blake felt her blood begin to boil at little at Tara's outburst, as the blonde woman gave snarl of her own.

She was not going to just let this rest. Things had to be said now.

"Don't you dare judge us…." Blake snapped suddenly. "Don't you dare fucking stand there, Tara, judging me…when everyone around here has treated Rick exactly the same as my people treat Negan. Rick has killed plenty of people and yet there he is, top of the fucking pile as always…deciding who can live and who can die. At least there are rules where Negan's concerned. At least he's loyal to those he trusts and cares for. Unlike Rick."

Tara opened her mouth to speak, but Blake soon cut across her angrily.

"Come on, Tara. We've all heard the stories about Rick Killing his best friend Shane. Hell, you were around when he killed Pete in front of his wife and kids for fuck's sake! And yet you think Negan is a monster here?"

Blake backed off a little now, taking in a breath and giving a heavy blink.

"David beat me and abused me in that house right across the street there," she finally said in a weary yet angry voice, continuing and pointing out of the wide bay window beside her, toward the white houses visible opposite. "And none of you noticed. And yet Negan stands right by my side...makes sure I'm ok, reassures me, protects me….and yet you people don't notice that either! I love him...and he loves me. And right now all I've come here for is to get Mia back…but if you want a fucking war, Tara, then that's what you're going to get…do you understand?"

Blake right now was full of fire, full of a confidence she hadn't had a minute ago, breathing hard, her fist balled at her side.

"Mia?" whispered out Tara, relenting a little, as she gazed up at Blake with wide dark eyes. "S-She never told us her name….."

And at Tara's words, Blake, her heart breaking a little for the tiny girl, gave a small chuckle before she could stop herself.

It was, of course, so like the bossy and confident little toddler to be so stubborn, so far as to fail to reveal to the people here something as important as her own name.
Blake nodded.

"She was with us….for a while," she mused lowering her green eyes to the floor once again. "…but we found her people and they took her back with them. We thought she'd be safe…"

The memory alone hurting Blake to think about now.

"Michonne and Aaron found her locked in a car with a female walker outside," Tara explained suddenly, causing Blake to quickly look up. "Perhaps she put her in there to save her."

Blake could have cried now, tears welling at her eyes once again.

"I-I thought she was dead," she murmured painfully, just as Tara gave Blake what she considered the warmest smile she could manage.

And it was then that a long moment of silence fell over the pair…

So many things had been done and said. But at the end of the day Blake truly cared for Mia...and that was obvious to anyone now. Especially Tara.

But Blake still blinked up at Tara with wide thankful eyes, when the dark-haired woman finally spoke. Her voice softer than before.

"I'll go fetch her," she murmured, in a slow voice. "She's just playing upstairs."

And with that Blake felt her heart almost swell, partly for the way Tara was staring at her right now, and partly because she knew that, at any second, she was going see Mia again….after all this time.

And so, Tara turned on her heel, making for the door and the staircase beyond.

But the dark-haired girl was barely a few steps gone when Blake, lifting her chin, opened her mouth.

"Thank you," she said in a stark voice. So many things having been said here in the last few minutes, but none of the seeming to matter anymore, as Tara gave Blake one last look over her shoulder and disappeared off upstairs.

Blake gave a shaky sigh, now, hanging her head slightly and letting her long caramel hair fall down past her shoulders.

Just a few hours ago she had been happy and content working away in her garden without a care in the world, and yet now, well, here she was, doing as Negan did day in and day out.

Intimidation…

Threatening people…

And as much as Blake knew that it need to be done, it certainly didn't come natural to her.

So she would be glad when Mia was back in her arms and she could return to the Sanctuary and put all this behind her.

The blonde woman glanced up now, staring through the blinds and out onto the wide street and the gate beyond, where Negan was stood nose-to-nose with Rick talking to him intimidatingly. And it took most of Blake's strength now not to roll her eyes, just imagining what the dark-haired Saviour could be saying the Alexandrian leader.
Negan was indeed a force to be reckoned with, but Blake now knew him better than most and could tell that most of the things he did were for his own enjoyment. Especially winding up Rick.

But Blake dragged her eyes hurriedly away from the window now, as she heard footsteps coming down the stairs.

This was it, a lump appearing inside her throat.

She was going to see Mia again…

Blake spun around, her lips parting, as she glanced over her shoulder, her heart almost leaping in her chest, as Tara appeared back around the corner entering the living room once more.

But Blake's face immediately fell in disappointment when she saw that there was no Mia…and instead Tara was empty handed, with no toddler in sight.

Blake froze, her entire body turning instantly cold.

Fuck.

Had this been just one big ploy to get Blake alone?

Was this it? Was Tara going to pull a gun from nowhere and kill right here and now?

But instead of a gun, Tara pressed her palms together, taking a couple of stumbling steps towards the blonde woman now, shaking her head, her eyes widening.

"S-She's gone," she suddenly uttered aloud. "I-I don't…..s-she was upstairs playing…..I-I've searched the bedrooms…"

But the dark-haired woman gave a another terrified and tearful shake of her head.

"…I can't find her anywhere….M-Mia…

…she's just….gone."
"What do you mean she's gone?" uttered Blake in a deadly voice, her green eyes searching Tara's face.

It was as if the entire world had fallen silent, the only sound Blake being able to hear now being the rushing of her heartbeat inside her eardrums.

But the dark-haired woman before her merely shook her head, staring around wildly.

"I-I left her upstairs, she was playing…." she said wringing her hands in panic. "I don't know how she could have gotten out-"

But Blake gave a sudden growl at this, taking a step into Tara suddenly.

Was this really some sort of stupid game to all of them? Did they really think that she would be that naive?

"I do," Blake suddenly snarled in response. "You've hidden her. You're trying to keep her from us, is that it? Fuck, Tara, I know Rick was stupid, but this is just something else!"

But Tara gave another panicked-looking shake of her head.

"N-No, B-Blake…I'm telling you the truth-"

But Blake merely shoved past her friend abruptly, her teeth clenched together, striding out of the wide living room and into the hallway beyond.

She could feel her blood boiling in her veins now, even more than before. Incited by Tara's lies.

Why the fuck would she believe anything that came from these people's mouths?

If she let her guard down for even a second they would try to take advantage. But, hell, if they thought they were going to use Mia as leverage, then they certainly had another thing coming!

The caramel-blonde woman stormed through the hallway and began to climb the carpeted staircase up to the first floor, taking the steps two at a time, as she heard Tara rush to follow her, stopping at the bottom with one hand on the railing.

"Blake-" Tara attempted, but Blake was no longer listening, reaching the small landing and heading into the bedroom on the far right.

She knew that this was Tara's spare room, but even so, Blake came to an abrupt halt as she took a step inside, her lips parting slightly.

For in here, Tara's disused spare room was now decked out with toys and games and even a little table and chairs just big enough for a toddler that was currently littered with crayons and paper.

This was Mia's bedroom.

There was no lie in that now.

Blake could almost smell her, as weird as that was. That gorgeous baby scent that Blake had wanted to breathe in forever on that last afternoon they had been together.
But it wasn’t just this, that was a tell-tale sign…as Blake took a tentative step or two into the room, her eyes now fixed on the drawings at the teeny table.

A tear slid down her cheeks as she bent down to pick up the picture closest to her, the one she has noticed almost immediately, crying out to her from across the room.

It was of a man and woman, crudely drawn in crayon. The woman with long blonde hair and pink lips drawn into a smile, and the man, with black hair and a black jacket, carrying a large orange stick in his hand.

Blake couldn’t help herself now, clutching hand over her mouth, as she whimpered out.

There was no doubt now that Mia had been here...and that she missed them as much as they missed her.

And that thought alone broke her heart.

Blake spun around suddenly, as she heard a creak from behind her, spotting Tara stood in doorway with sad and worried eyes, staring back at her.

But Blake, with angry tears sloshing down both her cheeks, brandished the drawing out towards her dark-haired friend.

"Look…look at this…" she bit. "I-I love her ,Tara…and I can't tell you how it feels to be this close…."  

But Blake dropped her arm, her head falling slightly as a sob suddenly escaped her mouth,

And it wasn't a moment later that she felt Tara reach out and pull her into a hug.

"I'm so sorry, Blake," Tara said, her own voice wavering slightly as she spoke. "I'm so sorry…"

And Blake could only cry into Tara's shoulder, her chest heaving, racked with painful sobs.

This was all too much to bear.

Mia had been here. Blake had been this close to getting her little girl back…and now…that was yet again snatched away from her.

A long moment or two seemed to drift by and eventually Blake was aware of vaguely hearing footsteps on the staircase just outside the room.

And a brief second later she pulled her face away from the dark-haired woman, staring up, to see the tall and looming figure of Negan stood in the doorway watching the pair of them with dark chocolate eyes, with Rick at his shoulder.

But Blake wiped at her cheeks, as her gaze suddenly met with his, communicating with him wordlessly as they often did these days, so in tune with one another.

"Tara left her here," Blake finally whispered, her voice breaking as she did so. "B-But she's gone….she can't have gone far, Negan."

Negan was silent for a long minute….

…as Blake held her breath, waiting…. 
Watching as he tilted his bearded face….

… as he blinked a couple of times...the cogs visible turning inside his brain.

Right now, he looked as upset as she was….perhaps not first-hand for Mia…but certainly for Blake. Wanting so badly for her to be happy. And that was why she loved him. Why she truly and utterly loved him.

Nobody had ever put Blake first in her entire life.

Nobody.

And yet here he was. In this world where there was very little to give away anyway, giving her his everything..

Negan at once lifted his chin slightly, beckoning her towards him and holding out his free hand.

And Blake didn't delay, wanting so desperately to be close to him now, as she moved to the bearded Saviour, dropping the crayon drawing to the floor.

Quietly, and despite the presence of the two Alexandrians' watching them, Blake slipped her hand into his, feeling Negan immediately entwine his fingers with hers, as if that's where they were always supposed to be.

The pair of them made a good team, formidable and strong. And yet it was moments like these that proved just how much they truly cared for one another.

Negan was indeed a ruthless dictator….and had been since all this began. And yet, Blake's presence in his life had changed him. Made him stronger in ways that no one had thought imaginable.

And so, with that, Negan turned on his heel, shoving past Rick abruptly, pulling Blake from the room.

And it wasn't until the pair had headed back down the stairs and back outside, did Negan finally speak, addressing an awaiting Simon and Arat who were waiting for him at the bottom of the porch steps.

"The kid's missin'," he said in a loud and hard voice, but despite this, Blake still felt his calloused thumb rubbing soothing circles against hers. "So I want you to gather everyone together an' search every last inch of this fuckin' place until we find her. Hell, she's a goddamn baby, she can't have gone fuckin' far."

Simon and Arat immediately nodded, moving swiftly away to address the rest of the Saviours and put them to work.

Just as Rick appeared, once again, at Negan's shoulder, moving around him, his eyes on the ground.

"We can help..." he said in a gravelly tone, letting a gulp trail down his scrubby throat.

But Negan, at Rick's words, looked furious, far more than he had before, and turned to Rick suddenly, pressing the spikey end of Lucille into Rick's chest.

"Oh you fuckin' will help, Rick…" Negan growled, his eyes black and dangerous. "Because if we don' find her. You don' want to see what I'm fuckin' capable of, because fuck me, you haven't seen nothin' yet."
Right now Negan looked perhaps almost more angry than Blake had ever seen him. The only other occasion he had even got close, was the time with the Wolves when he had seen Blake tied to that tree.

Currently Negan looked like a force no one would ever want to reckon with.

So it wasn't a surprise that Rick bowed his head low, twitching slightly as he gave an obedient nod, shuffling away, just as Tara emerged from the house, coming to stand in the doorway, arms clutched over herself looking just about as tearful as Blake looked right now.

But Blake tugged her eyes away from her now, feeling Negan lean his lips into towards her ear.

"We'll fuckin' find her, Peaches," he uttered in a low voice. "I fuckin' promise you."

And with that, with no shame in his affection for her, Negan pressed a kiss into the side of her caramel-hair.

Blake gave a sniff and a nod of her own now, as she turned her head, staring up towards the dark-haired bearded Saviour.

So full of utter love and devotion for his strength and ability to help her right now.

But before her damp green eyes could linger on him for very long, her gaze suddenly flickered across to a looming object directly behind the bearded Saviour…

An obvious object…

As frightening in its closeness than anything else….

An object that was barely even thirty feet from Tara's house, causing Blake's heart to crash to a sudden stop….

The gates.

Wide and ominous now, as Blake stared at them, currently being manned by Gabriel, and half shrouded with vehicles in the confusion of the arrival of the Saviours.

Fuck.

Tara's home was the closest building to them.

How easy would it have been for Mia to disappear through them unnoticed, with two of the Alexandrian's cars parked near to the entrance and with the gate half open?

Had they been open at all this afternoon during the commotion?

And so Blake, without another word, and her eyes fixed on the gates themselves, abruptly pulled her hand from Negan's, stalking across the paved road and over to the tall gates to Alexandria, as he watched her go, his mouth opening questioningly.

But Blake gave a gulp as she strode up towards Gabriel who backed up a little as he saw her stalking towards him, with one fist clenched, and the other she used to pull the gun from her pants once more.

"How long have you had these gates open for today?" she barked at him, long-forgotten tears strewn across her face.
But right now this was no time for crying. This was life and death.

Gabriel mouthed at the air like a fish for the longest of moments shaking his head.

"I-I don't know…" he stuttered out, holding his hands aloft.

But Blake did not appreciate his idiocy or his incompetence at all, and in the blink of an eye had lifted the barrel of her gun to the space underneath Gabriel's chin.

"Long enough for fucking child to walk out of there, huh?!” she yelled now into his face, as he winced, blubbering out.

"Yes-Y-Yes…m-maybe…I-I don't know…I'm not sure!" he wailed, as beads of sweat trickled down from his brow, dripping off the end of his nose.

And that was when Blake realised how quiet the area around her had gotten, with everyone, including Negan, and Rick, and Tara, the Alexandrians, and all of the Saviours, merely staring at her. No one wanting to get in her way now…seeing the fury and rage flying from her.

This was the closet she had ever felt to being a mother.

And this mother was going to protect what was hers. There was no questions of that.

And so, pressing the barrel of her gun harder into the priest's throat, Blake leaned into him, growling out her words.

"Open the gates," she uttered in a commanding voice, and almost at once, Gabriel carefully backed away from her, and immediately began to wheel open the large iron gates.

And Blake, then, without more than a care for either herself or anyone stood behind her, and without even a glance back behind her at the watching crowd, or even Negan himself, stepped right through…

…past the gates…

….out towards the awaiting Saviours trucks, and far past them…

….stalking swiftly into the tree line…

….alone and trembling with fear and guilt and utter uncontrollable fury…

….like a hurricane…

….intensifying by the minute and ready to devastate anything in its path…

….determined to get her little girl back.
An ever nearing storm

A crash of thunder rumbled overhead, as the first few spot of rain fell down beneath the canopy of trees, just as Blake stomped her way through the undergrowth, her gun raised aloft and her eyes trained on the gloom ahead.

Blake was no tracker, that was for sure, but she knew the areas outside of Alexandria pretty well, and knew that if there was anywhere Mia was bound to have gone it was in this direction, following the least shrouded route out of the small village.

Her blood was boiling in her veins and her heart going at a hundred miles a second, hammering away inside her ribcage…with every fibre of her, desperately hoping that Mia was in fact still holed up in one of those houses back there…never having left the safe quiet of Alexandria.

But this world was never like that, and Blake could only think the worst now, making to head as deep into the undergrowth as she could.

If Mia had gone this way, this was the way she would have gone, out through this small grassy clearing and now down the mucky dirt path that led out of the village. People always tended to veer off this way. The route looking far more inviting than any other, reminding Blake somewhat of a small woodland glade…

...for the first forty foot or so at least! But after that, the path grew treacherous and many an Alexandrian had been caught out here, by walker or just an upturned root here and there. It was perilous and more than one person had taken this route, never to return home again.

But this would not be Mia's fate, not today….

For it would truly kill Blake to be this close to her now and lose her, yet again.

For good this time.

It truly scared her to think that around one of these trees her eyes might fall upon the sight that terrified her to think about. Or even the idea of never finding anything. Of never really knowing what fate had befallen Mia….the constant doubt and false hope that somewhere she might still be out there, sticking with Blake for the rest of her days.

Her hands were shaking now, but even so, her eyes were narrowed and the gun in her hand clutched tightly between her fingers, poised and ready.

But she had barely even gone more than ten feet into the shrouded trees, when all of a sudden a rustle was heard behind her, a little louder than the pitter-patter of rainfall…

…causing Blake to swing around, her gun held aloft and her eyes blown wide…

….but she breathed a sigh of utter relief to see that it was only Negan there now, her utter annoyance at his presence obvious on her face as she lowered her gun, watching as he approached her now, Lucille hanging limply from his hand, his chin lowered darkly.

"What are you doing here?" Blake bit defensively at him before she could stop herself, angry tears pricking at her eyes.

Why she was snapping at Negan, she wasn't sure. But something about his presence seemed to raise
her hackles just a little bit.

But Negan merely stared at her now, his gaze roving across her tearful face, as the rain fell ever harder and louder all around them.

"What am I fuckin' doin' here?" he replied in an incredulous voice, his eyebrows disappearing up into his hairline as he spoke. "I'm trying to stop you from waltzin' off into the goddamn forest an' getting yourself fuckin' killed, Sweetheart. That's what I'm doin' here!"

His voice was ever so slightly heated now, staring at her with an expression resembling utter disbelief.

But this tone with her, only served to cause an anger to bubble up inside Blake.

"I need to find her Negan!" she said in an angry voice, furious that they obviously were not on the same page right now.

But Negan came to stop just in front of her, shaking his dark head.

"I know you fuckin' do, Peaches," he uttered. "But stompin' off on your own ain't gonna help anyone. Now let's go back into that fuckin' goddamn Village of the fuckin' damned and discuss this. We'll send out my men, they can scout the entire area for us, an' they can fuckin find her."

And with that, Negan reached out and tried to make a grab for Blake's free hand to take it within his.

But before he could do so, Blake snatched her digits away from him, and backed up, tears sloshing down her already dampened cheeks.

"No!" she said in a sharp voice. "I'm not here to just sit around and hope that Simon or Dwight or Gavin is gonna find her, Negan! I love her and if you loved me, you'd let me do this."

Blake stared up into Negan's' eyes now, trying so hard to convey to him just how desperate she was …how utterly devoted she was to getting Mia back by any means necessary.

Negan was silent for a long moment, his tongue pressed to his back molars, his chest rising and falling hard, looking mad, as though he desperately wanted to argue with her now.

But Blake held her breath, waiting, half expecting him to snap at any second.

But, to Blake's relief, the dark-haired Saviour, after a long moment, finally let out a shuddering sigh, lifting his free hand up and dragging it down his face tiredly.

"Fine," he finally uttered in a dark tone, pointing at her suddenly. "But there is no fuckin' way I'm letting you go out here lookin' for her by yourself. I'll come with, 'case you get any dead pricks on your tail."

But Blake breathed again, pursing her lips together at his words and shaking her head.

"No," she replied in a firm tone, raising her chin aloft, and staring directly into Negan's eyes. "You are gonna go back to the camp. You're gonna give the rest of the Saviours the orders that they're to thoroughly search every house and vehicle…and then you're gonna go off in that direction…"

And with that, Blake pointed at the treeline just about visible just across the dirt road that led in the opposite direction.

"…and you're gonna search those trees for any sign of her. We'll cover more ground separately."
But at her words, Negan immediately gave a growling shake of his head.

"Nope, nu-uh," he said abruptly "That ain't fuckin' happenin' Doll-face-"

But Blake took a step into Negan now, jabbing him in the chest with her finger.

"Negan, please, baby….I know these woods. I'll be fine. I've got my gun…and if I get into any trouble I'll just yell."

The tension between them was deadly for a long, long moment.

The dark-haired Saviour's brow was now littered with a dark and seething frown, but Blake could only watch as he relented a little taking a step back and blinking at her heavily, letting out another sigh of utter frustration.

"Fuck, you are lucky I have a soft-spot for you, Darlin'," Negan said in a heated tone, looking away off into the trees in the direction she wanted him to go in, for a moment, before turning back to her. "But let's get things straight, any sign of you even breaking a goddamn nail, Sweetheart, I am haulin' your ass back through those fuckin gates, no arguments. We clear?"

And with that Blake gave a firm nod, lifting her hand for a moment and running her fingers down Negan's damp t-shirt-covered chest, before pulling swiftly away from him and turning on her heel and heading back towards the rain-soaked and ever-deepening wooded canopy.

She knew that if she didn't go now, it was likely Negan would change his mind.

She was right about all this of course. They would be able to cover much more ground and waste less time this way, if she kept going.

Besides she was strong and far more capable than many people often gave her credit for being.

She could handle this.

Blake didn't even dare to look back now, as she heard Negan let out another harsh sigh behind her, before the tall man swivelled around on his own booted heel, trudging back in the direction of gated community.

The caramel-blond woman let out a varying breath of her own, tensing her shoulders a little, as another crackle of thunder sounded overhead, shrouded by the canopy of trees above, as the rain hissed down onto her head.

It was obvious now that what little light they had left today would be gone soon, especially with the storm above growing ever stronger. And so Blake upped her pace just a little, driving her way into the undergrowth, caring very little as branches and brambles scratched at her arms and legs.

All she cared about was getting Mia back.

So she would carry on searching. For hours if she had to….hoping of course that the tiny girl was hidden in one of the safe white houses back there at Alexandria. But for some reason, Blake's instinct was telling her to go this way…to take this path…

…that this was the way that Mia had gone.

But why?

Had she been trying get away from Tara or Rick or any of the others there? Surely not.
Then why had she run? Why had she left the safe proximity of those gates and ventured out here?!

Another rumble of thunder echoed overhead, louder than before, causing Blake to jump slightly.

Between that and the sound of the rain hissing down upon the canopy around her, it would be hard to hear any walkers out here. So Blake knew she had to keep her wits about her, raising her gun aloft in front of her and wholly regretting not bringing some kind of knife.

She had four bullets left in her barrel, but she hoped she would not have to use any of them, her green eyes flickering this way and that, hoping, no, praying for even just a sign of Mia.

He minutes inches by, as Blake walked and walked, the trees growing ever closer with every step she took, all sense of time disappearing from her now.

All she knew was that she was far from Alexandria, all sign of the road over to her right now gone, and the wooded area she was walking through growing ever more treacherous with every step she took, with unturned branches, long abandoned snares, and muddy verges.

The sky had darkened quite a deal and Blake, her teeth chattering slightly, fended her way through the undergrowth her wet clothes stuck to her already freezing-cold skin.

But still she persevered….

…carried on walking, unsure of whether Mia would have gotten this far or whether Blake was, in fact, walking around and around in circles. But either way, she would keep looking…each and every second of every day that followed if she had to….not resting until the teeny girl was safe back in her arms.

She had lost two children of her own during pregnancy, and now that she was this close, she wasn't about to lose another too.

Blake tucked strand of her damp caramel-hair behind her ear now, staring suddenly skyward as a fork of lightning appeared through the canopy above, and barely a second after that another loud crash of thunder came from the sky over her head.

The storm was over her now, the area around her growing dark and quiet, save for the pouring of raindrops….

….and a sudden rustling from somewhere just over her shoulder.

Blake stopped in her tracks, shaking herself, her brain finally grinding into gear.

Fuck.

She span quickly around, gun raised, just in time, to see a walker spring out from behind a tree, launching itself at her, its bared teeth snapping hungrily and its decomposing green hands making a desperate grab for her arm.

Blake gave a short sharp cry out, surprised by its sudden appearance here after nothing for at least the past half hour.

She took a step back…

….and another…

….and another…
Her rain-soaked fingers fumbling hurriedly with the gun in her hand, the safety still on.

Fuck, fuck, fuck.

Blake staggered backwards, as the walker propelled itself towards her, its horrible digits curling around her forearm, its broken teeth getting close to her face.

Blake's thumb desperately tried to grab for the safety, but, distracted by the rotter's ever-nearing jaws, she flinched away, attempting as best she could to hold the creature at arm's length, feeling it's wet limbs sliding from her grasp in the rain.

Shit!

She stumbled backwards….

…..but, beneath her feet the mud was soft….

….and Blake wasn't able to take time to watch her footing…

..feeling the ground sink behind her…

….her eyes widened, her feet all of a sudden, scrabbling at nothing….

….and Blake could only let out a small cry, as she tumbled backwards...

….into nothingness, giving a sharp and frightened yelp….

….dragging the hungry walker down on top of her as she went….
A gunshot rang out through the clearing, barely drowned out by the now-torrential rain, and causing what few birds that had remained in the trees above to take flight, squawking as they went.

Blake gave a groan, as she felt the sudden limp form of the rotter slump down on top of her, heavy and reeking of death.

The ground beneath her was soggy and wet, and Blake blinked about now, to see that she had fallen about ten foot-or-so down into a muddy pit, about twenty feet wide, and filled at the bottom with a muddy pool of rain water, that Blake was now unfortunately sat in, with the walker piled on top of her.

She had, landed on her back, just about managing to release the safety on her gun to fire it, causing the walker to tumble down top of her, its jaws, and green and broken teeth, snapping wildly at her shoulder.

Why the fuck hadn't she only brought a gun out here and no knife?

But Blake, giving a heavy groan, shoved these fruitless regrets from her mind.

What good were they to her now?

She had three bullets left and Blake knew that that gunshot was loud enough to draw more walkers to her position. She had to be more careful. Her goal was to find Mia, and not get herself killed out here!

And so, getting this rotter off of her, and getting out of this pit, was the first step in doing that.

Blake gave yet another pained groan, shoving the weight of the dead freak off of her, it landing in the puddle of rain water beside her with a small splosh, as the blonde woman caught her breath, tugging herself up into a sitting position.

She was filthy, soaked to the skin, her back half absolutely coated in wet mud, but even so, she wiped her hands together and pushed herself to her feet, as rain poured down all around her in sheets, making her wince, staring up at the top of the pit, several feet above her now.

She could already felt her feet sinking into the muddy dirt beneath her feet, but, frowning a little, and placing her gun back into the waistband of her jeans, Blake propelled herself forwards, making to climb out of the wide sloped hole.

But her fingers scrambled uselessly at the muddy sides, as her booted feet did the same, finding no traction against the ground in the ever falling rain.

Fuck.

She tried again.

The other side of the pit this time, using the body of the walker as a stepping stone to launch herself forwards and attempt to leap for the sides.

But try as she might, Blake just slid back down, the mud-covered sides of the hole giving way beneath her feet, widening, creating a cavernous indent in the sides of the pit.
And the more she tried, as the seconds ticked by, letting out one roar of exhausted frustration after another, the worse the situation got, with the dirt beneath her hands and feet almost giving way beneath her like sand, in its water-clogged state.

Finally after what felt like an age, letting out a pained moan of defeat, Blake staggered backwards, her front now plastered in thick black mud, coating her legs, shoes and arms, with flecks of dirt covering her face too.

She knew whistling to signal the Saviours was pointless with the rain as loud as it was.

Had it been another day, Blake might have laughed to herself at the situated she was in, trapped here, in a state, filthy….

But not today, the caramel-blond woman hanging her head in agony and utter anguish.

Lost.

A tear fell from her eyes as she stared down at her muddied feet…feeling her entire body let out a ragged breath of defeat.

And before Blake could help herself, she had let out a loud, carrying sob….

…and another…

…and another…

…and another…

…unable to stop the tears from falling now.

And fall they did.

God, what was the point in all this?

Mia was likely long gone. As much as she had tried to hope, to pray that that wasn't so, she knew the likelihood of a tiny toddler surviving out here alone for even an hour.

She was probably, by now dead. Eaten by walkers.

The baby girl she had loved so dearly, the closest Blake had gotten to becoming a Mom, snatched away from her at the touchline.

What had she done so wrong to deserve all this?

What had anyone of them done so wrong?

To be living in this world?

For surely being dead was a better fate?

But Blake shook herself now, lifting her face skyward and closing her eyes, taking deep breath in, as the rain soaked her face almost instantly.

No.

Death was not better.

She was alive.
She was here.
She had made it through everything.
An apocalypse…David…and to give up now….
Blake shook her head, a single tear falling down her cheek, masked by raindrops.
…..she was better than that.
She was a survivor.
They all were.
Blake took in a deep breath, just about to open her eyes and try again. To attempt at climbing the sides again.
For staying here and waiting for death was just not an option now.
But before she could do so, a sudden voice came from somewhere above her.
"What Bwakey doin' in dere?"
Everything became distant….slowed down….
Quiet.
And Blake, froze for a moment….
But only for a moment…her eyes snapping suddenly open…
This had to be a dream…
It had to be…
But Blake could only let out a sob, clutching a trembling hand to her mouth as she drew her face slowly down, her eyes finally landing on a teeny figure she had only dreamed of seeing again, for so so long….
…a little girl standing on chubby legs at the very edge of the pit, staring down at Blake, with round blue eyes and her fingers brought up to her mouth thoughtfully….
"Mia?" Blake whispered out, her voice breaking as she said the word.
She blinked her eyes closed.
But still when she opened her eyes once more, Mia remained, soaked through to the skin, in little pink leggings and a top, her mousy brown hair sticking to her head, with one of her socks now gone and the one that remained now dirty and almost brown in colour. In her hand she clutched a filthy green fluffy toy snake, now covered in brambles and coated in leaves at the end now dragging along the ground.
"I wen' lukin for you a' Eggy…." she said again in a boastful little voice, sounding utterly proud of herself. "An' naw I fawnd you. Wat you doin in dere?"
Blake blinked tears from her eyes, letting out a sob before she could help herself.
It was her! It was really her, after all this time.

Blake, her heart doing backflips, so overcome with emotion, wanting nothing more right now than to take Mia in her arms and hold her tight gave another loud sob.

"Don' cwy, Bwake, I halp you get owt," said Mia tilting her little head to the side and peering down into the pit, before sticking her little sock-covered foot out and attempting to clamber down into it, her tongue poking out between her lips as she concentrated hard.

But Blake's eyes widened as she swiped away her tears, taking a step forward and raising her arms aloft.

"No, baby don't," she uttered aloud, drawing the tiny girl's attention once more back up to her, stopping in what she was doing and standing up straight again. "Be careful, ok?"

But Mia just peered at Blake, making a pouty face, as rain pitter-pattered down onto her tiny head.

"Ca' we go 'ome naw?" she said after a drawn out second or two, causing Blake to give a gulp, a warmth spreading through her.

Mia wanted to come back with them, her baby girl, that thought alone making Blake's heart jolt with happiness.

"Yes, yes, you can come home with us, Sweetie," said Blake shaking her blonde head and staring up at the toddler she loved so so dearly and always had.

They could be a family.

They could be together…all three of them now.

But Blake had to get out of this stupid pit first…needing so much to hold Mia to her, to feel her heartbeat…..to make sure this wasn't just a dream.

The caramel-blonde woman gritted her teeth together now, determined. She could do this…for Mia.

And so again, Blake, using the dead walker as a foothold launched herself at the side of the pit, trying to grab hold of something…..anything.

But her feet scrabbled at the slippery mud, losing her footing yet again and fruitlessly sliding back down, landing hands first into the water-clogged bottom of the ever-deepening hole.

"Fuck…" she muttered under breath, aching and bruised.

But she had to keep trying.

But before she could do so, Mia suddenly glanced over her tiny shoulder looking around at something.

"Look, der' man ! 'E comin'," she said loudly, just as Blake heard a sudden shuffling coming from somewhere behind Mia….somewhere just out of sight.

Was it Negan?

Or one of the Saviours perhaps?

Blake took a step backwards, standing up onto her tiptoes to see better.
Was this her chance at rescue?

"Hello?" she called out tentatively, holding her breath.

But suddenly, her blood run utterly cold, listening in horror, hearing not only footsteps now, but an awful dragging sound, accompanied by a familiar rasping noise coming from the persons throat.

Shit.

For Blake could tell that this was no living person now.

It was a walker.

"Mia get away from him!" Blake said suddenly in panic, as Mia's face suddenly crumpled in upset, looking at once to the figure, just about staggering into Blake's view, before looking back at the blonde woman uneasily.

"I noh like…" said Mia, with a tiny whine, as Blake saw the horrendous creature stagger into view, lurching towards Mia and making a grab for her.

But Blake, quick as a flash, before the monster could even touch a hair on Mia's head, had snatched the gun from the back of her pants and fired it towards the walker.

But to her dismay, the first bullet impaled itself into its shoulder, casing the creature to turn its attention from Mia, and snarl down towards Blake, staring at her with hollow, sunken eyes.

"Mia, get away from it!" she yelled again, but Mia all of a sudden, began to bawl, triggering the walker to once again turn back the teeny girl.

No! No, no no!

Blake fired her gun again, steadying her hands this time, but still the bullet merely darted through the rotter's cheek, sending blackened blood and foul smelling viscera spurting out to its left, but it barely flinched, reaching out with decaying hands for Mia.

Blake had one bullet left now, holding her breath as her heart pounded away inside her chest, loud enough for a thousand walkers to hear it, she was sure.

And in a blink, Blake had closed one eye, clutching the gun with both hands, and fired the last remained bullet.

The world seeming to slow down….

…and Blake could only watch as the bullet sank into the walker's jaw, flying out of the top of its soft skull, casing the monster to almost immediately collapse to the ground, missing baby Mia by mere inches, as it fell the edge of the pit with a 'whump', landing on the rainy ground below.

Blake breathed hard, her hands trembling, this of course having nothing to do with the cold rain falling onto her in sheets now, as the sky all around them darkened severely.

She had done it.

Thank god.

But its wasn't over yet…a crackle of lightening somewhere nearby, tolling Blake's fate like a bell.
She knew what was to happen now. What had to happen…. the only option they had left.

Although despite Blake's immediate relief, Mia wasn't too happy to say the least, letting out a sudden wail, and throwing her head back to the sky and beginning to sob.

"Shhhh, shhhh, its ok baby," said Blake soothingly, taking a step forwards and lowering her now-useless gun.

Blake now had no bullets left and knew that Mia could not stay here any longer like this, both her crying and those fired shots, drawing the attention of every walker in the vicinity.

Mia's survival was Blake's priority now.

And she knew what she had to do.

"Mia," said the caramel blonde woman, trying as hard as she could to regain the little girl's attention. "Now Blakey loves you every much, you know that don't you?"

And with that Mia, subsided in her crying for a moment, rubbing at her red eyes with scrunched up fists. She jutted out her bottom lip, giving a small nod.

"Good," said Blake in a soft voice. "Now I'm going to need you to do something very brave for me, baby, and I'm going to need you to run."

It was the only way. That way Mia would be safe. She couldn't stay here with Blake.

The a rumble of thunder crashed above them.

The outlook for Blake did not look good right now….but Mia had to survive. She just had to.

"I'm going to need you to run that way," said Blake with a half-smile, pointing back in the direction she supposed she had come, back towards Alexandria. "And I'm going to need you to keep running and don't stop until you see someone you know….like Negan or Tara one of the other people from the place you just came from, ok?"

But Mia gave a tiny, worried frown.

"Bwakey come wif me?" she asked in a small voice, but Blake, letting a tear run down her cheek, just shook her head, forcing another warm and encouraging smile in Mia's direction.

"No, baby, I can't," Blake said in a wavering tone, her heart breaking, knowing that this may be the last time she might see Mia…..the last time she might see anyone in fact…living that was.

But Mia suddenly looked over to her right, her lips quivering slightly as she pointed her chubby arm up at something Blake couldn't see.

"Monshter's are comin'…" she said in a quiet voice, looking frightened.

And Blake felt herself trembling now.

"It's just like a game baby, ok?" Blake said in a loud voice. "You don't let them catch you, ok….you just keep on running. Now go, Mia…..go."

And with that Mia, shooting Blake one last look, ran off suddenly as she had been told to do, heading off, out of sight, her little arms and legs flailing after her as she went.
Blake staggered backwards, as a sharp sob escaped her lips, her entire body trembling now.

Fuck.

This was it.

She could hear now, the sounds of at least a couple of walkers moving about in the area just above the pit, obviously having seen Mia running off, and attempting to follow in her direction.

But Blake was not going to let them get Mia.

Not her baby girl.

And so, taking a deep breath, Blake, with tears pouring down her cheeks now, steadied herself just enough to stand up straight and begin to yell as loud as she could at the top of her lungs.

"Hey! Hey! Come and get me assholes, I'm in here!" she shouted, jumping up and down and waving her arms, trying as hard as she could to garner the attention of the rotters. Desperate for them to forget about Mia….

…and focus their attention on her instead.

She had to do that. She loved Mia with all her heart, and all she cared about now, was seeing her survive.

Even if Blake herself didn't.

She gave a gulp now….submitting herself to her fate….

…and she gave another sob, hearing the creatures growing nearer and nearer.

But yet Blake kept on yelling.

"I'm in here…yeah…here!" she shouted again, in a shaky voice, half-sobbing now. "Come and get me!"

She kept on yelling, in fact, until she saw the two ugly heads of the lurkers appear suddenly over the edge of the pit as they peered down, lurching forwards to make a grab for her, arms stretched out wide, lurching towards her.

But the creatures, as ever, had no co-ordination, and in the blink of an eye had staggered, bumping into each other, their footing sliding across the muddy ground at the top of the small crevice…

…and before Blake could do a thing to stop them, both horrible rotting walkers had tumbled down into the pit with her….

…snapping and snarling as they went….

…leaving Blake with no bullets…

...no weapons…..

…and absolutely no way out.
Flashes before your eyes

It had started to rain heavily, the sound of raindrops crashing down onto the leafy undergrowth beneath Negan's feet, almost deafening out here in the bleak fall afternoon.

Visibility was poor out here and it hadn't taken long for the dark-haired Saviour to figure out that leaving Blake on her own, was not a good idea.

Fine, he of course knew that she would be pissed-as-hell for him turning back on himself and not doing as she requested. But at this moment in time, Blake's safety was his priority, whether she fucking liked it or not.

Negan did not trust Rick or his people one tiny bit, and despite ordering half of his men to stand guard at the gates and half of his men to search, not only the houses, but the space immediately outside the small gated community, he had made sure his higher up lieutenants knew to keep an eye out for any signs that this entire fucking thing might be some big trap.

For he wouldn't put it past them to try something like that.

But nevertheless, the kid was still missing and he seen that determined look in Blake's eye that told him she was not about to back down on this one. So Negan had let her do her shit. Let her go off on her own. All because she goddamn loved that kid.

All this panic, all this risk….all in search of one tiny girl.

But at the end of the day Negan knew as well as Blake had, that this wasn't just some kid. For despite only being with them for a few days, Mia had turned Negan and Blake's entire lives on its head.

Although Negan, of course, knew of someone who had done that to him as well, not so long ago…

A blonde woman with long legs and a smart fucking mouth…..who had strolled into his life like a goddamn hurricane, and since then nothing had been the same again for him.

For Negan would do anything for her. Anything.

But despite her request for him to search the far side of the road…Negan had been barking orders to Dwight when he had heard it…

….the gunshot….

And he had almost instantly felt himself go white as a sheet, clenching his jaw tightly together, before lowering his chin darkly and stalking back off in the direction he had come in…..

…going to find her.

For hell, if he fucking lost her….Negan wasn't quite sure what he would be capable of.

For even he didn't want to think about it.

Sheer anger bubbling inside him remembering what had happened when he had thought he had lost her for good once before, when she had been taken by the Wolves…tied up…almost raped and cut open….
….he had felt like a wolf that night…ready to tear the throat out of anyone who hurt even a single hair on her head.

He loved her with very fibre of his body now, barley caring, as he stalked back through the dense trees, trying to spot the route she had taken, that he was soaked through to the skin.

For all Negan was concerned with now ,was finding her and making sure she was safe.

But he had barely gone even forty feet when he heard them again. Gunshots coming from a little way away from him now.

He counted three in quick succession.

Shit.

This was not good, a lump appearing inside his throat and his blood running utterly cold.

He picked up his pace, heading of in the direction of the carrying noise, becoming a little disoriented with the rain and the crashing of the thunderstorm above his head.

How many bullets had she been left with?

That was Negan's biggest concern now.

Had either of them even bothered to reload since their trip to the Hilltop? Negan doubted it, and that meant she was already two down.

Was that it?

Was she out?

Negan knew now he had to get to her and fast, wishing that he fucking been more sensible here and brought a few of his men along too.

But the dark-haired man was determined now, his mouth set into a thin grimace, his eyes black and furious.

Furious at himself for leaving her.

Why had he been so fucking stupid?

If he had his way, Peaches would be back that the fucking Sanctuary right now. Safe.

But instead she was here, in fucking danger, and all of this, at the end of the day, was on Negan's fucking head.

Branches and brables scratched at his arms, legs and face now as he pushed through the undergrowth, his breathing sounding loud inside his ears. Almost deafening him now.

But still he kept on walking…..hoping for a sign of her…

Something….

 Fucking anything…..

Suddenly there came a rustling a little way ahead of him.
Fuck.

Was there something fucking there?

Negan slowed down a little, clutching Lucille between both his hands now, readjusting his grip… once… then again… then again…

…..narrowing his dark eyes and peering dead-ahead of him.

Was it a walker?

The rustling came again.

But still Negan could see nothing.

He stalked swiftly forwards, his jaw set, and his heart thudding away inside his chest, raising Lucille high above him.

Whatever it fucking was, it wouldn't be here to fuck with either him or Blake for very long, that was for sure.

But Negan stopped suddenly, staggering backwards a little on his long legs as a sudden figure, that Negan had certainly not been expecting, came hurtling out of the large bush ahead of him, colliding with his bottom half.

"What the f-" the dark-haired Savior began before he trailed off…..just a pair of round blue watery eyes peered up at him from low to the ground.

His heart swelled.

It was the kid.

The fucking kid.

Mia.

But she looked, dare he admit it, far more of a state now, than she had when he had seen her earlier today. Her face was red and sticky with tears, and he could see that she was soaked through to the skin, with only one sock on, now half hanging off her tiny foot.

"Eggy," he said suddenly, lifting her pudgy arms and making grabby hands for him, as she pouted. "I lost mai snaik."

Negan gave a frown, obliging her almost instantly, bending down, tucking one of his tanned and calloused hands under the kid's butt, and lifting her up into his arms, readjusting his grip on Lucille as he did so.

She looked completely out of breath like she had been running as fast as her legs could carry her and placed a pudgy hand to his damp leather-clad shoulder.

But what had she been running from? That was the question….

"Where have you just come from, beansprout, huh?" Negan asked in a serious voice, his dark eyes roving across the tiny baby girl's face at this close proximity.

But Mia's bottom lip quivered for a brief moment before she spoke.
"I wos wif Bwake, an' den' da monshers com'," she uttered in an important sounding voice. "An' Bwake tol'd me I gow. So I gowed."

At Mia's words, a gulp suddenly slid its way down Negan's tanned throat, just as somewhere nearby, Negan heard a sudden distant shouting…

…coming from a voice he recognised very well indeed.

Shit. Shit shit shit.

The dark-haired leader of the Saviour's suddenly furrowed his dark brow, his pupils turning black.

And without a second thought, Negan had begun to stride, Mia still in his arms, held tightly to him, as he crashed through the undergrowth, determined to get to Blake in time…even if it was the last thing he ever fucking did.

Blake scrabbled backwards as the rain poured down all around her in heavy sheets, watching in horror, as the two walkers peeled themselves from one another, their decomposing heads both turning in her direction with an audible growl.

Her eyes widened now, her lips parting, pressing her back against the muddy slope of the pit, breathing hard.

She could hear her heart hammering inside her ribcage, the gun in her hand now rendered utterly useless.

She was fucked.

Absolutely screwed with no chance of escape here.

This was it.

The end for her…watching as the two dead figures snarled and snapped their jaws at her, clambering up and drawing nearer to her, reaching out for her with rotting limbs outstretched and clawing.

She had nothing to defend herself with. Nothing to use against them. Standing there now, soaked through, panting, tears slipping silently down her cheeks…

But it was in that moment, it was as though Blake's entire life flashed before eyes.

But this was no past life…no horrors of seeing David again…

For these memories were her life over the past six months…Negan…Mia…the little moments she had loved….lying in bed cuddled up together….talking about nothing and everything….and even to just yesterday baking brownies in her tiny kitchenette….

But none of this….this happiness would have been possible without one person in her life.

And now…at the end of everything, Blake truly was happy to have known him. Even if it had been a fleeting moment in time. She had never felt true love and utter joyous happiness like it in her life.

And she regretted nothing.

Really she didn’t….as the caramel-blonde woman gave a tearful laugh before she could help herself, letting out a hard puff of air, an staring directly at the two advancing walkers….
...she was ready now...
...ready to die...
...this was just her time.

And all she could hope for now was that Mia found her way back to Negan...
...back to someone who could love her like Blake had loved her...

And with that Blake squeezed her eyes tightly shut....

..waiting for death to take her...waiting to feel the tearing of jaws against her flesh.....

...the end....

...but.......it never came.

Instead two loud gunshots suddenly rang out loud and clear in the small pit, causing Blake to wince, losing her balance and toppling back against the muddy sides behind her, her ears ringing as she peeled open her eyes against the falling rain...

..but all she saw was the sight of the two walkers hitting the muddy puddle of water inside of the large ditch, with a loud splosh, landing in a crumpled heap with their skulls burst open.

And with that Blake slowly peered up through the falling rain, her eyes landing upon two figures she had truly never expected to see again.

She tilted her head to the side, a harsh sob escaping her lips before she could help herself, staring up at Negan standing there, gun in one hand, and Lucille in the other.

But most importantly, nestled in the crook of his elbow was the teeny figure of Mia, staring down at Blake with great interest.

"I get Eggy!" she cried in an excitable voice obviously feeling proud of herself right now.

And so she should be.

Blake felt her entire body flood with an overwhelming pride an happiness at her two favourite people in her life.

The two people standing before her.

Blake's tired green eyes met with Negan's now....letting a hard breath of air escape her lips, as she looked upon him.

He was everything to her. And she honestly did love him now, with every inch of her.

"You alright, Peaches?" he asked, his brow furrowed, but right now he looked anything but angry, his entire face filled with concern.

But Blake nodded.

"Yhmmm," she murmured in reply, wanting so much to burst into tears at this second, but she refrained, holding back for Mia's sake, not wanting to upset the tiny girl further.
But Negan could see that she was just 'alright', and easing Mia carefully to the ground, before tucking his gun down his pants, he held out his hand towards Blake.

And that sight.....well, there was nothing the caramel-blond woman had been more relieved to see in her entire life.

She glanced down, as the rain continued to fall all around them, carefully stepping over the ever-growing pile of, now-still, walkers and reaching up to take Negan's hand.

Feeling utter relief wash over her, as she felt his warm digits settle around hers firmly, as he helped her up the steep, muddy slope.

Blake's feet scrambled a few times at the wet mud beneath her boots, but Negan, retaining his grip on her, managed to pull her out, letting go of her when she was firmly up and out, and helping her to her feet, with one calloused hand under her elbow.

His eyes were, of course, on her face now, roving across her mud-splattered features and taking in every imperfection that littered her brow and cheeks.

But it didn't even take him a moment, to lean his long, tanned and bearded face in…

…and press his lips to hers.

And with this gesture Blake felt every worry she had ever had, wash away with the rain that was soaking them through to their skin.

Never wanting to leave him again.

She was strong and independent, but even so, that didn't mean she couldn't feel protected by him… and warm and safe in his arms, as he tugged her forwards with one hand to her back, as their lips parted and met again and again.

But suddenly, a tiny voice was heard and Blake and Negan broke from their kiss, feeling a tiny pair of hands push their legs apart.

"Noh Eggy, it mai turn to kissh Bwayne naw!" said Mia in a bossy little voice.

And Blake, giving a small tucked sniff and a bright smile, turned, bending down and sweeping Mia instantly up into her arms, and beginning to press kiss after kiss to the toddler's chubby face.

But after second Mia made a face, pressing her tiny paw to Blake's cheek and pushing her playfully away.

"Noh, Bwayne getting' me durty!" she squealed giving a tiny giggle, but even so Blake still didn't relent, absolutely besotted with the tiny girl she had longed to get back for so long.

Blake held Mia close to her never wanting to let go, as she finally pulled away, gazing at her in awe.

But like her, the teeny toddler was soaked through and Blake knew that they should really get back to Alexandria and back to the trucks before it got dark.

"We should go," she murmured out, chancing a glance back up towards Negan.

But Negan was staring at the two of them now with a curious look upon his face, a grin plastered across his mouth, but his eyes full of a happiness Blake had ever thought she would see from the dark-haired Saviour in a million years.
And so reaching down, Blake's hand found his, her fingers entwining with his tanned ones.

"Come on," she uttered in what was barely a whisper, her eyes meeting his chocolate ones.

And in a second, Negan had given a blink and let out a small sighing nod.

"Yeah we should get back," he muttered arching his back slightly as he took a step ahead of her now, his fingers curling around hers. "Cause' I am fuckin' soaked through, an', hell, well I know underneath it all you are hot as fuck, but you are a sight for sore fuckin' eyes right now, Sweetheart, covered in that shit."

But Blake just raised a single eyebrow, glancing down at herself, not actually able to see a single part of her not coated in thick black mud right now.

Ok, maybe he had a point.

"Shut up, asshole," Blake bit back teasingly, smirking slightly as Negan gave a wide grinning smile, as he took the lead now, striding on back through the undergrowth in the direction of Alexandria, pulling her with him by the hand.

And it was only a moment later, that Mia nuzzling her head into the crook of Blake's neck, gave a sleepy yawn, smacking her lips.

"Yea, shut ap, ash-howl..." she murmured sleepily, causing both the adults to give a small laugh.

All of them truly and utterly happy to be reunited once more.
Not just me anymore

It didn't take the pair long to reach the gates of Alexandria once again, the rain still pouring down all around them as they walked, with Mia nestled snugly in Blake's arms, and Negan, with one hand pressed to the small of the blonde woman's back possessively. Both of them speaking very little on the way back, partly not wanting to disturb the sleepy child in Blake's arms, but also due to the fact that both adults knew that there were some things that words just weren't capable of expressing.

For both of them were fully aware of how close they had been to losing something important to them today, and the pair of them were equally prepared to ensure that that never ever happened again.

Blake was so grateful to Negan for everything he had done for her….utterly in love with him now. And by the look of devotion on his face, Negan felt exactly the same, as the pair of them strolled past the army of Saviours waiting near to the trucks for them to return….all looking like the most obedient of soldiers….drenched but standing tall and firm awaiting orders like always.

But Negan and Blake were barely through the looming gates to Alexandria, when Rick strolled hurriedly up to them, followed close by, by an irate-looking Simon.

"Where was she?" asked the brown-haired leader, wide eyed and looking almost out of breath. His gaze travelling over Blake's muddy face and clothes, giving her a confused and questioning look.

But Blake gritted her teeth together, frowning darkly in his direction, her relieved demeanour bristling slightly.

"Out there, in the fucking woods…alone…." the caramel-blond woman snarled before even Negan had the chance to reply. "But she's safe now. No thanks to you."

"Blake-" tried Rick, offering her an almost sorry look. But his words were not good enough now. Not good enough at all.

And it was barely another second that Negan spoke, moving around Blake and Mia, like a wolf protecting his pack, and coming to stand nose-to-nose with Rick, as the rain hammered down onto his sloped, leather-clad shoulders.

"Now Rick….I gotta fuckin' say, you are a goddamn expert in findin' new and unique ways of pissin' me off," said Negan in a raised voice. "And today is no fuckin' exception. But, see, the thing is…this time, well shit, you've fucked things up. Puttin' people I actually care for in danger. An', well, Rick, that is somethin' I do not fuckin' stand for."

And with that, Negan pressed the sharp end of Lucille to the bottom of Rick's bearded chin, causing him to wince against the barbed wire as it pressed into his skin.

A crowd had gathered around them now, of both Saviours and Alexandrians alike, just as it had earlier today, but now everyone was staring at Negan and Blake expectantly….

..obviously aware of the storm that was coming….and not the one currently hanging overhead sending rain barrelling down onto their heads in sheets.

Blake's blood was boiling now, as was, very obviously, Negan's too. Both of them seething for the same reason.

Lives could have been lost today, that was on the heads of Rick and everyone else here.
And that was something Blake would never ever be able to forgive them for.

For a brief moment she had perhaps thought she could have come back here, to have slotted back in with these people. Resumed her life here without looking back.

But today's events had made her realise that that could never ever happen. She felt bitter and angry at how sloppily things were run here, and how Mia's life had been put in danger. And why? Because all of them were far too corned with Negan's appearance in the small community today, than with their own issues. With keeping people safe.

Rick and these people lived such sanctimonious lives. Kidding themselves that were saints in all this, while the Saviours were mere monsters. But in fact, there were certainly not blameless in everything that had happened to them.

Hell, Olivia dying had been on Rosita's head for firing that bullet at Negan a long, long time ago now. And today all this was barely any different to that.

It was their own fault for the fury and discipline that Negan and the Saviours constantly needed to lay down on them.

Blake could see that now.

It all appearing before her green eyes as clear as crystal.

The tiny toddler wriggled slightly in Blake's arms now calming her a little and brining her pulse back down to a steady beat.

But Mia was safe.

She was alive.

But she still couldn't pretend that today hadn't happened. Forget the fact that Blake could have lost her again before she was even found.

The blonde woman stared down at the teeny girl now, brushing back her wet hair from her forehead as Mia peered up at her with wide blue eyes.

"Ca we go 'ome naw. Bwakey. I sleepy," she murmured, her pudgy little fingers curling around a strand of Blake's caramel blonde hair.

And Blake stared down at her warmly, just as Negan too chanced a glance their way, faltering slightly in his anger at Mia's words..

"Yeah, we can go home, baby," Blake muttered in reply, her eyes gazing up and meeting with Negan's chocolate ones.

The pair of them managing, as they always did, to communicate wordlessly with one another, Blake feeling, right now, as tired and exhausted as Mia…

…but nevertheless, first punishment had to be given.

For this was not something that could just be forgiven…swept under the carpet….

And Blake stared about just I time to see Tara come jogging over towards them, staring at Blake with red and puffy eyes full of regret and relief and anguish.
But even despite seeing the look on her old friends' face….even remembering the good times they had shared…..

…Blake still leaned into Negan slightly, pressing a hand to the crook of his leather-clad elbow, drawing his attention her way once more.

"From now on we up the amount of supplies they give us by three hundred percent," said Blake in a cold carrying voice, as a sudden worried murmur filled the small watching group of Alexandrians.

But Michonne, who had been looking on through the rain, stepped forwards, speaking suddenly.

"That's triple what we're giving you now!" said began. "T-That's' impossible-"

But Negan relented in his pressing of Lucille into Rick's flesh, instead swinging the weapon around and pointing the end of the barbed-wire covered baseball bat at the dreadlocked black woman instead.

"Wow, well fuck me, some of you can actually do math!" he uttered in a loud carrying, sarcastic voice, leaning back of his heels with every syllable he spoke. "Wellfuckin' done to you!"

But beside them both, Rick shook his head, eyeballing at them both wide-eyed.

"We're struggling to survive as it is-" he began in a hoarse voice, but this time Blake cut across him, clutching Mia tightly to her chest, but staring darkly at the brown haired leader of this village with an icy gaze. And if looks could kill, Rick would be long dead by now, that was for sure.

"Then don't…” she said coldly, raising her chin and staring around once more, addressing the crowd. "Because if you don't give us triple what you scavenged for us this time…then we'll go with my original plan…and burn this place to the ground."

The caramel-blonde woman gave a slow blink, seeing a grinning Negan now staring her way out of the corner of her eye.

"Because you fucked up, Rick…all of you are responsible for this," she uttered in a weary voice. "You couldn't even look after a baby! You couldn't even keep her safe."

Blake's eyes drifted past Tara now, who had tears silently falling down her cheeks. But still the blonde woman didn't relent, needing to tell them why.

"You messed with my family," she continued, repeating the words Negan had just used back to them once again, sounding very much like the queen she was supposed to be. "And that something I do not fucking stand for. That WE do not fucking stand for."

And with that, without a second glance at these people….the same people who she used to call her friends….of whom she now utterly despised with every fibre of her body, Blake turned on her heel and headed out of the gates once more….caring very little for the state she was in right now, filthy, her clothes coated in mud…but heading all the same, back in the direction of the trucks with Mia nestled safely in her arms.

And not even a second later, Negan offering Rick one last shake of his head, staring down at him with amused disproval, leaned his face into him once more.

"Oh Rick," Negan whispered. "I did warn you it wasn't just me you had to worry about these fuckin' days. 'Cause shi, if she gives the word, I will bring down a fiery fucking hell on all y'all. She's a damn queen. And no one fuckin' disrespects her. An' I hope for your fuckin' sake you are as clear on
that one as I am."

And with that, the dark-haired Saviour let out a hearty chuckle, running his free hand across his bearded face tiredly, before following after Blake. Giving a beckoning whistle to his men and women as he went, causing them to follow obediently….shoving their way through the crowd and heading back to the loaded up trucks.

All of them more than ready and willing to ship back off to the Sanctuary and get out of the rain…

...but as Rick and Michonne and Tara watched the Saviours go, there was one person who had been watching everything unfold with a furious look fixed to her face…beneath her green baseball cap pulled down low over her almond eyes….

….a person who was already thinking of way to make, not only Negan pay for what he had done…

…but now, Blake too…..
Hot showers and bruises

Mia had spent the long journey back to the Sanctuary snuggled into Blake's chest sleeping soundly, as both them and Negan had crammed into the front of the truck they had come here in, driving home in silence, neither of the adults wanting to disturb the tiny toddler.

But words were really not needed between Negan and Blake these days. Both of them fucking knew that.

It was as though they were two halves of the same whole. As though they were always meant to be.

And it felt crazy to both of them that it had taken a goddamn apocalypse to give them that.

Negan chanced a glance over at Blake, who was staring out of the window to her right, up at the ever darkening sky, as rain lashed against the glass.

She really was fucking everything to him and seeing her with that kid only made his heart swell with pride and love.

Things he had not felt in years. Not since the early days of him and his first wife. Since Lucille.

For Blake had mended his heart…put him back together when he was broken…just as he had done to her.

And now Mia was on the scene, perhaps the three of them could be happy….with the last part of Blake's heart finally slotted back in place.

Negan could see how much she loved her, and hell, even though he wasn't about to admit it out loud just yet, the dark-haired Saviour was mighty fucking keen on that kid. And hell, without her, Blake might not have been here sitting beside him right now.

So whatever Mia wanted from now on, Negan would provide for her. Because, as Blake had said, she was their goddamn family now. The three of them together for good….they were her girls. And well, fuck, Negan knew right now that he would go to the ends of the earth to protect them.

It wasn't long before the truck rolled smoothly into the safety of the looming Sanctuary fences, and, switching off the engine, Negan shoved open his door, hopping out and moving around to the passenger side of the grubby, white vehicle, bracing himself at the rain trickling down the nape of his neck.

He gave Blake's door a tug open, stepping aside and allowing the blonde woman room to turn and hop out, just as Mia grizzled a little, smacking her lips and opening her bleary eyes.

"It wainy," she said in a pouting little tone, still sounding half-asleep, as Blake cooed, soothing her a little as she hitched her further up in her arms.

"Yeah it is baby," she replied. "You hungry?"

But Mia merely dropped her head down to Blake's collarbone once again, closing her eyes and giving a tiny yawn.

"Noh, me tired. I wan' go bed," said the tiny girl letting out a tiny huff of air, as Blake caught Negan's eye.
"I'm going to have to get her out of these clothes first at least," she said matter-of-factly. "She'll get a cold otherwise. We got any more baby clothes around?"

But Negan gave a loud sigh now, eyeing her and running a hand down his long bearded features. They had given the last of the kid's supplies over to her guardians the last time she left, so he doubted they would really have anything appropriate to hand until the next run. But Negan rightly guessed that wasn't what Blake was asking.

"Hell I don' have a fuckin' clue," he murmured, as they began to walk towards the shelter of the inside buildings. "But fuck it… I suppose she can just sleep in one of my t-shirts tonight…I'm presumin' that's what you're fuckin' anglin' after, right Peaches?"

But Blake just offered him a coy, smirking look, biting down onto her bottom lip and nudging him gently with her hip as she went.

"Aww, how did you guess," she murmured in sarcastic voice, just as Negan gave a carrying chuckle, leaning into her.

"Oh I can read you like a fuckin' book, Darlin', don't you fuckin' worry…" he uttered out smartly, causing Blake to half roll her eyes as she and Mia headed inside, just ahead of Negan, who lingered behind for a moment to bark orders at Simon and Dwight who were currently emerging from the truck that had come into park just behind them.

"Alright unload all of this shit and then take the night off, boys," he shouted, nodding at his men with a satisfied look crossing his features. Feeling more happy than he had in a long, long time right at this very moment. "Hell, you've earned it."

His two loyal men nodded back in reciprocated, his moustachioed right-hand man giving him a grinning, rather knowing look, as Negan turned on his heel and headed off after his two favourite women.

Though when he reached inside they were nowhere to be found now, the corridor empty and dark as the door swung shut behind him.

But there was, of course, one place where he knew that Blake would go upon arrival back here.

A place that Negan felt he hadn't seen in a lifetime…feeling more tired back here in the dim light and the quiet, than he had in outside or on the drive home.

It hit him now, as he headed down the lengthy hallway, how good life really was here for him now….compared to a few months ago….before he had even known Blake had existed. Mia either.

And yet somehow these two women had appeared in his life, changing it for the fucking better.

After Lucille, Negan had always presumed he would be on his own. Sure, he had had his wives, and his loyal lieutenants to keep him company….but their friendship and 'love' was hollow and empty….but then came Blake, who had stepped into this cold, dark world of his, and filled it with light and warmth…everything that Negan had been craving for so, so long.

He let out a stiff sigh now, turning the corner and heading on up the metal grated staircase, Lucille swinging from his hand as she went, barely even paying any attention to a couple of elderly workers, who stopped, bending their knees reverently as he passed by.

It was strange to think how Negan's path had led him here….not just to being the leader of this place,
but to finding Balke…to giving her the chance to be free of David…free of the abuse she had dealt with for such a long time.

It still fucking wholly angered Negan to think of how she had been treated for so long…killing him inside to think of the bruises and marks inflicted upon her perfect fucking skin.

She had suffered at David's hand…and Negan wished more than anything that he had met her sooner and saved her from those traumatic moments…..from that pain.

But neither of their pasts could be changed, and the dark-haired Saviour of course knew that even if they were, things now might have been different. Perhaps all the things that had happened to them, had in fact, led them here, to this very moment.

Perhaps this was what both of them deserved now.

True and utter happiness at last.

Negan strode easily down the long corridor, seeing now a light shining from the only occupied room in this hallway.

She had left the door open for him now….knowing of course that he would tail her as he always did, like a puppy dog.

But Negan didn't mind her presumption these days.

For it was true.

All of it was always true.

The dark-haired man reached his doorway and peered inside, his boots echoing loudly as he strolled on inside, seeing a sleepy Mia being corralled into one of Negan's black t-shirts, as her eyes blinked themselves closed and her head drooped tiredly.

"Come on, Sweetie," he heard Blake murmur in a soothing voice. "Thaaats it."

And with that, the blonde woman, her entire form still coated in streaks of black mud, half-run off with the rain, lifted Mia from beneath her arms and plopped her back down just in front of Negan's pillows.

Blake tucked her neatly underneath the covers, her eyes catching sight of Negan for the first time, as Mia' snuggled under the warm sheets and settled down, falling almost instantly to sleep.

"Never thought I'd see that fuckin' sight again," commented the leader of the Saviours now as he placed Lucille down onto a sideboard just to the left of the doorway, before pressing the wooden door behind him closed with a snap and turning the lock…..creating a safe and secure haven for the three of them for the night.

Blake now gave him a gentle smile, still looking as fucking gorgeous as she ever did, even with flecked of dirt-strewn across her smooth skin.

But she didn't say a word, merely standing up straight and pacing over towards him now.

God, Negan was glad she was safe, watching as she chanced one last glance back at the soundly sleeping Mia behind her before gazing up into the dark-haired Saviour’s face once more.

"I'm going to take a shower," she said in a low and hushed tone. Looking like the entire world had
been on her shoulders today. And in a way it had been, but even so, she managed a small smirk in his direction now. "But I really think you should join me…get you out of those wet clothes…"

And with that, she strolled by him, rendering Negan utterly speechless as his eyes followed her across the room, watching as she peeled her sodden jacket from her shoulders and carried it into the bathroom with her…Negan instantly hearing the sound of the garment being tossed into the wash basket behind the door.

And the dark-haired man, with one last glance of his own towards the sleeping toddler in his bed, followed Blake inside the bathroom, shucking off his own lack jacket as he went and peeling it from his cold skin and throwing it down onto the back of his lather couch as he disappeared through the bathroom door.

Blake was in her underwear now, on the other side of the room as he entered, leaning in to switch on the shower with one hand, as her other hand unhooked the clasp on the back of her bra.

And by the time Negan had shucked his t-shirt over his head, unbuckled his belt and kicked off his wet and clinging shoes and pants, he could see the figure of the caramel-blond woman behind the glass running her hands over her hair and body as the sound of running water filled the room, along with a warm humid mist that entered Negan's nostrils.

But at that scent and that sight, he felt like a wolf….a heady and primal sort of feeling passing over him now.

He could have lost her today.

Fuck.

That though alone darkening his tanned brow and causing him to dip his chin low, stalking over towards the wide shower door now like an animal hunting its prey.

He wanted her.

Right now, more than anything else in the world.

His lengthy cock twitched, stiffening quickly, as his eyes found her through the steam that filled the room, the dark-haired Saviour sliding the glass door closed behind him trapping her in with him now.

Blake turned to face him, her blonde hair wet and clean, as was her skin, as goddamn perfect as ever, as she dropped her hands down revealing her bare breasts to him…. catching sight of the look that had obviously passed its way over his features.

At once she gazed at him almost questioningly…but after half a second, her eyes filled with the same look that filled his…like a vixen….lustful and dark….

…both of them wanting one thing and one thing alone right now….

…each other.

And in a second Negan had attacked, pinning Blake against the tiled wall behind her, as his lips captured hers in a hard and needy kiss, almost growling into her mouth as he did so.

She tasted good…fresh like water and sweet, like honey….and Negan was barely able to help where his hands roved as they slid across her wet skin….gliding over every curve….wanting so badly to feel her….to taste her….
…to remind himself that she was still here….alive...

…that she was still his.

Their mouths met again and again and again….both of them gasping for breath, both so obviously turned on by the other right now.

Blake's hand's reached Negan's shoulders, her fingernails dragging across his tanned skin….not that Negan cared right now, as hip lips slipped from hers, finding instead the soft wet skin beneath her earlobe, as he left a trail of hot-open mouthed kisses leading all the way down to her collarbone, as Blake let out a moan at this contact which caused Negan's dick to harden even more, pulsating with a need to be buried inside her….

"Fuck…” he heard Blake gasp out, as one of his calloused hands slid down to the space between her legs.

And it wasn't long before his long digits slid across her slick hot cunt, finding her sensitive nub.

But Negan needed more now….

He needed to give her something more than his hands…and from the look in her darkened eyes now as he pulled his lips away from her neck, gazing down at her….Blake wanted more too.

And Negan could barely help himself now…not having any time for foreplay tonight. For tonight he needed to get out every primal urge than currently was coursing through his body….feeling like an animal….about to devour the thing he had been yeaming for since the second he had found her alive earlier.

For that moment when Negan realised he could have lost her, had hit him hard…

…and both of them right at this second, had so many feelings and bubbling unspent emotions from that, which both of them knew could only be ousted in one way…and one way alone.

And in the blink of an eye, with hot water burning its way across their skin, Negan dropped his hand to the back of Blake's thighs suddenly, lifting her and shoving her back hard against the wall with a hard grunt escaping both of their lips at the impact.

Blake tangled both her legs and her arms around his waist and neck now, as Negan stared up into her eyes, breathing hard as he felt his cock slide it way across her hot entrance.

But the pair of them barely hovered in this precarious position very long, both unable to control themselves much longer…

…and with a harsh grunt escaping his lips, Negan had buried his dick inside her with one slow and groaning thrust.

Fuck she felt good…

…and the sensation was well needed, feeling her tight walls enveloping his member, and causing his eyes to roll back in head a little, bending his knees slightly, as he held her in place, thrusting up into her again and causing her to whine out, her back hitting the tiles behind her hard with every single grinding movement between them.

Not that it looked like she cared, with her mouth now open and a needy frown sitting between her
brows, as she stared down into his eyes.

Both of them were lost in the other now, as Negan, making sure he didn’t lose his footing on the slippery floor, attacked her neck with kisses, his teeth biting at her skin, as Blake's nails dragged across his shoulders.

This was rougher than their average fuck. Animalistic... Primal....

They were both sure to leave marks on the other, but unlike the marks that David had once inflicted on Blake, these were a symbol now of the utter pleasure and devotion they felt for each other.

Blake let out another cry now, Negan pulling back, to see her eyelashes fluttering close, as their pace slowly built, reaching its crescendo finally, as the hot shower water drenched them just like the rain had earlier.

And not even five minutes after they had begun, Blake had cried out his name in ecstasy, Negan feeling that tell-tell sign of her walls clenching hard around his cock, as she tossed her head back against the shower wall behind her, gripping onto him hard.

And Negan, at hearing those illicit sounds and words escaping her lips, found himself pressing his face into the space between Blake's neck and shoulder, his lips becoming static against her skin, as he let out a long harsh groan, as he let allowed him to finally come undone, unloading his hot cum inside her.

And it was a short moment before the blonde woman finally spoke….saying the words he had so longed to hear escape her lips once more.

"I love you," she uttered out, his fingers gripping his face gently.

Her expression was desperate and full of an utter devotion that Negan felt for her in equal measure right now, as he allowed a single gulp to trail down his bearded throat, allowing him enough room for him to repeat the words back to her, his voice low and earnest.

"I love you too, Peaches…" he murmured, his lips finding hers once again, feeling her smile into his mouth.

And it was not even a second later, that the dark-haired Saviour returned the gesture, smiling back smugly, as his fingers relented their grip on Blake's thighs and he eased his cock slowly out of her.

But the moment Blake's feet seemed to find the ground, all support the pair of them had in the slippery shower seemed to disappear.

And before either of them could say a word, with Blake letting out a shriek, the caramel-blonde woman had slipped, losing her footing in a spectacular way and falling on her ass, pulling Negan half-down on top of her.

She gave a groan, wincing slightly and making a face, as Negan burst into peals of laughter, standing up properly himself and gazing at her, all gorgeous limbs and damp hair, with a scowl plastered across her features.

"Right, that's it!" she said in a pissed-sounding voice, tutting sharply. "We are never fucking in this
stupid shower again!"

But this only caused Negan to let out another loud laugh, holding out his hand to lift Blake to his feet, just like he had done earlier in tugging her out of that fucking pit.

But now the caramel-blonde woman only offered him a frown in return, using the wall instead to clamber to her feet.

"Don't blame the shower, Sweetheart," muttered Negan in a goading voice, knowing exactly what kind of rise he was about to get out of her from this. "Aint it's fault you're as clumsy as hell."

But Blake, as expected, almost instantly shot him a dark look, stepping under the stream of water beneath the shower head again.

She pointed over at the leader of the Saviours now, raising her eyebrows.

"Actually let's change that to 'We are never fucking again.' Period," she replied in a simpering voice, every word of hers dripping with a teasing sarcasm that Negan absolutely loved to hear from those lips of hers. Every damn time.

"Oh, Peaches," he said, suddenly stepping close to her, as she turned around facing away from him. "You see, we've tried this fuckin' game before, of you sayin' you're gonna hold out on me. An' well fuck, I seem to remember you didn't last very long."

And with that, Negan leant forward, pushing back a strand of hair from Blake's shoulder before pressing his lips to the smooth skin there.

But Blake suddenly spun around, pulling away from him now, her eyebrows up in her hairline.

"Me?" she said in an amused incredulous voice, rubbing at her bruised ass. "God you can be so annoying sometimes, you know that?"

And she didn't linger long enough to wait for a response, merely shoving the dark-haired aside, swaying past him and shoving open the shower door and exiting into the mist-filled bathroom.

Negan grinned to himself, stepping under the water for a brief moment and allowing the hot burning water to graze down his tanned skin, lifting his face toward the shower head and closing his eyes.

Fuck it was good to be back here at last. Today had felt like the fucking longest day and as much as Negan usually enjoyed going to that creepy-ass community and winding up Rick, he was glad to be back here.

In his sanctuary...

With her…

The leader of the Saviours wiped the water from his face with his hand before switching off the faucet and heading out of the shower behind Blake, who by the looks of it, had long since left the confines of the large bathroom, with the door to his living quarters now wide open.

Negan grabbed a towel, running it over his dark head for a second or two, before drying at his wet body, a grin plastering itself across his face, bemused by their shower escapades.

But heading over to the doorway, Negan stopped in his tracks, lingering for a short moment in the entrance way to his large living area and catching sight of her there….
…grinning widely as he watched the woman who meant so much to him, shuck one of his clean white t-shirts over her blonde head.

But she soon caught sight of the leader of the Saviours, frowning in that gorgeously angry way of hers, as she lifted both arms, twisting her hair up into a knot and tying it in a loose bun at the top of her head.

And with that gesture alone, Negan could blatantly see that she was devoid of any sort of underwear beneath the garment in question. With him letting out a hushed whistle of appreciation.

"Oh, now you Peaches…" he said strolling slowly over towards her, dragging the towel across his chest one last time before tossing it over towards the couches to join his jacket. "…are a naughty fuckin' girl, you know that?"

And with that, he had grabbed the tall pouting woman roughly by her waist, causing her to give a small squeal of laughter, shooting a sudden glance over at the sleeping Mia snuggled up in the big bed.

"Stop it," she scolded, but even so, she stood up a little on her bare feet, snatching a brief kiss from Negan's lips, before pulling away and poking him in the chest. "I'm still pissed at you, y'know. My ass is gonna bruise up so badly after that."

But Negan shot her an amused look, as she sauntered over to the bed, peeling back the covers and sliding in-between the cool sheets, moving over to the middle of the bed beside the sleeping toddler and making sure she was all tucked in soundly.

Negan stared at the pair of them for a long moment, content and happy right now…

More than he had been in years… before Blake finally glanced up at him, arching an expressive eyebrow in his direction.

"You gonna stand there all night, lover-boy? Or are you coming to bed?" she finally murmured, patting the free half of the large bed to her left and shooting him a wide smile.

And with that Negan, licking at his lips and grinning back in return, flipped off the light and soon satisfied her request… slipping into bed beside Blake and tangling his arm around her.

All of them safe…

All of them happy…

And all of them back together….at last.
Dawn had barely broken by the time Blake jolted awake, her eyes snapping open as she heard the tiniest of voices cry into her ear.

"Waik up, Bwakey, I on mai own!"

The caramel-blonde woman, not so used to early mornings, took a long few seconds to realise just why she was awake before the weak fall sun was even properly up.

"I…uhhh…what…?" she manged to mumble, blinking a couple of times and turning her head to see the teeny form of Mia through the gloom of Negan's bedroom, squatted down on her chubby bare legs, holding up a long strand of Blake's hair to get better access to her ear.

"Bwake, wake up naw, I need potty…," came the bossy little voice of the toddler again, as she waddled forwards to gaze over Blake's t-shirt clad form at the man who was sleeping on Blake's other side.

"Eggy schleepin'?" she asked, all of a sudden very interested in the snoozing Saviour, who so far, had not even slightly stirred at the noise. "Me wake Eggy up."

And with that, Mia made to reach across Blake, her pudgy little hands making for Negan's bearded face.

But before she could do so, Blake had grabbed the tiny girl around the middle, hauling her up into her arms with a groan.

"Ah, ah, ah," the blonde woman smiled gently. "We don't want to that. Eggy is super-duper grumpy in the mornings, so maybe waking him up isn't such a good idea."

Blake chanced a glance at the sleeping Saviour now, waiting for a response.

But he didn't even move, his chest rising and falling carefully as he lay there.

After their day yesterday, Negan certainly needed the rest. She knew that sometimes he often ran on little to no sleep for days at a time. But that was no life. Especially now…when everything seemed calm and settled finally.

They had Mia back, Rick and the Alexandrians knew their place, and apart from that trouble at the Hilltop, the outposts seemed relatively quiet too.

So this was perfect timing for Negan to take a little break and relax a little.

Even though Blake couldn't right now, wrestling now with a wriggling toddler who obviously thought that 5am was playtime.

Mia gave a loud squealing giggle as Blake scooped her up and pulled herself reluctantly from the bed with the little girl in her arms.

"Come on, let's take you to the bathroom," she said with a mutter into Mia's ear causing the baby girl too laugh some more…

…and Blake's heart swell with utter delight.
Thirty minutes later, and Blake and Mia emerged from Negan's humid bathroom, both wrapped in large white towels having enjoyed a nice shallow and bubbly bath together (where Mia had proceed to ask Blake some very, very personal questions about her boobs and ahem other areas!) to find Negan finally stirring inside the large four poster bed.

"Looks like someone needed his beauty sleep, huh Mia?" said Blake in a mocking tone, as the dark-haired man, with a stiff groan, pulled himself up into a sitting position, leaning back against his propped up pillows.

He blinked at them both through lidded eyes giving an amused smirk, as his gaze travelled over the pair of them, damp and glowing in the early morning sunlight.

"Hell, it ain't even fuckin' 6am yet, Darlin', so I'll thank you to quit with the shitty fuckin' remarks," he bit back at her, with a grumbling voice. "An' while we're at it, you wanna remind me if I actually gave either of you permission to use up all my hot water?"

His tone was of course teasing, but even so, Blake's eyebrows disappeared up into her hairline as she pointed at him.

"Uh, excuse me…" she said in a simpering voice. "I wasn't the one that made our shower last night ten times longer than it needed to be."

But at her words Negan's grin widened.

"I didn't hear you complainin' when I was fuckin' you up against those damn tiles, Doll-face," he said shooting her a goading look. "In fact, I seem to remember it was you that invited me in there in the first place."

But Blake gave a scowl. "Yeah, and look what that got me."

And with that, she turned, lifting up her towel a little to reveal a large purple bruise blossoming on the rear of her smooth and tanned hip.

But Negan bit down on his lips hard, shaking her head and offering a faux-look of pity, which Blake did not appreciate one tiny bit…

…suddenly with a huff, bending down to grasp up Mia, who had been quietly fiddling with her oversized towel with her tiny paws.

"I know, Mia….to save grumpy-old Negan having another shower this morning…." she said padding over to the bed with the small damp and excitable toddler. "How about you go give him a big cuddle instead? Get him nice and wet."

With this naughty idea, Mia seemed delighted…

….and before Negan could open his gruff mouth to protest, Blake had plopped the teeny girl down onto his sheet-covered body, the kid letting out a squeal as she did so.

"Oh….goddamn it, kid," Negan murmured, as Mia clambered over him getting him damp.

He made a face, as the baby girl, losing her towel almost at once, bounced up and down on her chubby bent legs, slippery and completely butt-naked, as Negan manhandled her away from him as best she could, being careful to avoid any collisions between the toddler's knees and his groin area.

At it finally took him a frustrating few seconds to grasp a squealing Mia around the middle hauling
her up into her arms and holding her above his head in a swopping motion, as she dripped water all over him.

"Egy, noh!" she cried out between giggles. "Put me dawwn."

Blake looked on as the little girl gave a happy shriek, watching as Negan gave a grin of his own, before dropping the little girl back down onto the bouncy mattress at his feet with a loud 'plop'.

"You liked that huh? Jeez, now that is my babysittin' duties done for the fuckin' day, beansprout, how 'bout you go bother, Peaches over there instead," he said in a low voice, as Blake pursed her lips and have a huge roll of her eyes.

"Why Bwake peachiz?" asked Mia, getting to her feet a little clumsily on the wobbly surface, and placing one of her fingers to her mouth, curiously staring between the two adults now.

But Negan looking tired, ran a hand down his exhausted-looking face giving a sigh.

"Why is she called Peaches?" he repeated cocking an eyebrow. "I don' know…probably because she got that perfect fuckin' skin….and a goddamn juicy and round ass I just wanna bite the hell out of-"

"Ugh, don't listen to him Mia…" said Blake instantly cutting across him, wrapping Mia in a towel once more and tickling at her sides. "…he's being an idiot."

Negan gave an immediate chuckle, eyeing the pair of them as the toddler gave a shriek of laughter, allowing Blake to pick her up once again, making their way towards the door to Negan's room.

"An' where the fuck do you think your both goin'?" Negan hummed, leaning forwards and giving a small frown in their direction.

But Blake, making sure that both her and Mia's towels were secured tightly around them, made for the door handle, giving a small nonchalant shrug of her slender shoulders.

"Back to my room to get dressed…." she mused lightly, gazing at the little girl in her rams. "Aren't we Mia?"

At her words the toddler nodded, pressing a hand to Blake's boobs, as the tall blonde woman winced slightly easing the baby girls' paws from her gently, which caused Negan to chuckle, running a hand through his dark hair.

"I still don' know why you haven't just moved all your shit in here already, Sweetheart?" he said blinking his chocolate eyes slowly over to Blake, as she stared his way.

But the caramel-blond woman let her eyes fall to the floor for a long moment giving a slow nod.

"Hmmm, I guess because no one has asked me…." she purred knowingly, letting out a long hearty and very suggestive sigh, before exiting the room without another word….

..leaving the dark haired Saviour staring after her, long after she had left the room.
Everyone had been excited to see Mia back at the Sanctuary.

Everywhere Negan seemed to fucking turn that day, there they were, the dining hall, down at the marketplace, the goddamn hallways, workers and lieutenants alike, cooing at the kid and talking to Blake like she was their everything.

It was fucking obvious to him now that Peaches was revered in this place. Not in the way he was. When his men and women spoke to him, it was with fear and respect in their voices.

But to Peaches….they showed utter love and devotion. Even workers he had never even seen before, came crawling out of the woodwork the moment they caught sight of her, coming to say hello.

Negan had kept his distance at first, observing the way these people laughed and joked with her, touching her arm warmly as she chatted back to them completely lighting up every room she was in.

And the kid didn't do too badly either, acting as shy as she had been when she had first arrived at this fucking place to begin with, before realising that these people, unlike those dead pricks outside, were not here to do her any harm.

Negan had even caught the baby girl standing up on the benches in the dining hall at lunchtime, pointing at food she liked on peoples trays so fucking charmingly in-fact, that the poor-fuckin' sons of bitches were pushovers enough that they would quickly laugh and offer Mia whatever she wanted.

Negan admired that in her immensely, as he had left the room wordlessly, chuckling to himself as he had ran a hand over his bearded chin, swinging Lucille up onto his leather-clad shoulder as he went.

But as great as Blake and the kid being popular was, Negan had found himself getting kinda ansty and bored by mid-afternoon at the lack of attention he himself was getting from his favourite girl.

Usually he would have found Blake at least once today, placed her in a compromising position or two, the two of them barely able to keep their hands off of each other for long, and screwed her brains out already.

But with the kid now a permanent feature here in their lives, this enjoyable task was proving a little harder than Negan first had realised.

Even speaking to Blake today had proved to be tough enough, just about getting the chance to exchange a few teasing words with the blonde woman, before Mia had complained that she needed to go to the bathroom for the hundredth time.

And, waving his hands of all responsibility in that area, Negan had sloped off in a huff, as Blake and Mia had skipped away to do what ladies normally fuckin' did in bathrooms.

HIS fuckin' bathroom again no doubt!

And so it was late afternoon by the time the unusually cheerful and buzzing atmosphere of the Sanctuary had died down to a mere simmer, and Negan, pacing the long quiet hallways in search of the two women, had finally heard their voices, floating low and quiet down the echoing corridors of the drafty factory building.
Negan gave a wide grin to himself as he approached the door ahead of him now, swinging Lucille from his hand a little and bowing his head as he listened.

"And do you know what animal that is?" came the voice of Blake gently, in a tone contrasting the teasing one she usually reserved for speaking to him with.

There was small pause before the voice of Mia was heard.

"Tha..tha..I know tha is…” she said excitedly, sounding like she was wriggling about a little. "Tha donk! Tha donk!"

Negan heard Blake let out a small laugh.

"Yeah that's right, that's a donke-"

But Blake wasn't able to get through her entire sentence before Mia cut across her loudly.

"What tha won? I laik tha won!" she said as Negan took a couple of silent steps forward and peered around the doorway, his chocolate eyes finally settling on the pair of them.

The two ladies were sat in the library, both huddled together on the dusty floor with a large book propped open on Blake's lap, as Mia leaned over her, pointing with chubby little digits at whatever was in the large white book.

"That's a penguin," said Blake quietly, neither of the pair noticing Negan's presence in the doorway yet, as Mia fawned over the image in the book splayed out in front of her. "They like to live where it's very, very cold."

Mia gave a delighted squeal at this, peering at the page with great interest.

"Ca' we go see pengwen?" she asked placing her pudgy little hand to Blake's shoulder before clambering onto her lap.

But it was at this, that he saw Blake's eyes wash with a sort of sadness, that broke his heart to see.

Negan of course knew that it would be likely that Mia would never get to see a penguin in her lifetime.

Not only was travel near to impossible these days but the zoos were all but ruined, and the likelihood that there were even any penguins left on this continent was near unmanageable.

"Perhaps…someday…” Blake murmured in a quiet voice, as Mia gave a sudden yawn, rubbing at her tired eyes with her little fists.

It had obviously been a long day for her…for both of them in fact, judging by the way Blake's eyes blinked slowly as she let out a small puff of air.

But it was then that Negan, leaning in, caused a floorboard to creak beneath his boots, drawing both of the women's eyes to look his way, finally noticing his presence.

Blake offered him a warm smile, that made him feel like he truly belonged here, warm and happy with her right beside him.

"Hey stranger," she purred out gently, wrinkling her nose as Mia scrambled to her bandy little legs, running towards him suddenly on small sock-covered feet.
"It Eggy!" she said in a slurred little voice, making grabby hands at him with her sticky hands. "Eggy, we gon' shee pengwen!"

Negan readjusting his grip on Lucille and rolling his eyes a little, obliged the toddler almost immediately, bending down and lifting her up into his arms with a stiff groan.

"That so?" the dark-haired man commented. "You plannin' on takin' a trip on those goddamn tiny legs of yours, beansprout? You bustin' outta this place? Huh?"

And with that, Negan made a grab for her tiny sock-covered foot, making the teeny girl squeal with delight.

"Noh Eggy, don' do tha!" she giggled, pawing at his leather-clad chest, her chubby fingers grasping hold of his zipper.

But Negan didn't relent, chuckling as he pressed his face close to hers, grazing his stubbly chin across her pudgy cheek.

"Noh Eggy tha tickuls!" she cried out, wriggling from his grasp and prising herself from him once more. until Negan was forced to set her down, watching as the laughing baby girl ran back toward Blake, who had gotten to her feet, large picture book tucked under her arm.

But the caramel-blonde woman looked a little strained now, giving a frown as she placed a hand to her head, wincing slightly and closing her eyes for the briefest of moments.

"You alright, Peaches?" Negan asked her almost instantly, standing up straight and staring over at the woman he loved, a dark and concerned look passing over his long features.

But she blinked a couple of times, offering him a flash of a smile.

"Yeah…I'm fine…just feeling a bit light headed is all…" she muttered.

Negan's gaze lingered on her for a long moment, hearing the lie in her voice, but he played it cool, clenching his jaw tightly, but carrying on as though nothing had happened.

"Well perhaps you're runnin' on empty, Darlin'," he growled, as Mia clutched Blake's hand with her tiny paw, before peering up at the dark-haired man. "It's a good fuckin' job I've arranged for some dinner to be brought up to my room then isn't it?"

At his words, Blake's stared up into his face, smiling at him warmly.

Fuck, it was good to be back with her here again….knowing that yesterday he could have lost her for good.

He was enamoured by her, this hurricane, who had appeared in his life, changing it for the better.

He was different man around her. Softer, more sympathetic….to them at least!

And Negan couldn't help but grin goofily as she and Mia slid past him hand in hand, heading out the door.

"Hmmm, it's about time we got room service, isn't it Mia?" the blonde woman uttered in a sarcastic tone, her eyes sparkling gleefully as she teased him. "You gonna serve it up on a silver platter too?"

But Negan gave a chuckle as he ran his tongue over his lips, eyeing her with awe.
And before Blake could let out another smart-mouthed comment, Negan's hand had clamped around Blake's jean-clad ass, giving it a hard and needy squeeze.

The blonde woman instantly stopped in her tracks abruptly, giving a sudden squeak and causing Mia to stare up at the pair in fright, as Negan leaned his lips in towards Blake's ear.

"Now baby, you have gotta stop with that damn attitude of yours…." he growled in a wolf-like manner, giving another low and throaty chuckle. "Because you're gonna make Daddy wanna eat something' else completely, Peaches…"

But he almost immediately caught Blake narrow her green eyes toward him, as she slowly looked his way.

She had obviously not been expecting this possessive act from him. But the dark-haired Saviour should have known better than to presume Blake would just let something like that slide that easily.

"Well maybe, if Daddy delivers like he promised on dinner…" she purred in a delicious voice, taking this opportunity to press her cheek to his stubbly one, her lips finding his ear now, causing Negan's mouth to curve up into a wide grin. "Then maybe he can get what he wants for dessert."

But what Negan didn't notice was Blake's hand snake around his waist.

And it wasn't until Negan felt the short sharp slap of the large, hard-bound picture book colliding with his ass, did he raise both his dark eyebrows to the heavens in utter surprise, gazing at Blake as she smirked, pulling away from him.

"But I guess we'll have to see…." she murmured airily, strutting away and heading out into the hallway ahead of Negan, as Mia still clutching onto her hand tightly, peering up at Blake with great interest, wondering what she was missing.

And Negan was, for the first time in a long, long time, rendered utterly speechless….

…..shaking his head in wonderment, and letting his chin drop to his collarbone as he let out a small laugh….

…before swinging Lucille back up onto his shoulder once more, and following his two favourite girls out of the door, and back up towards his room.

More in love with the blonde woman now, than he had ever been before.
The afternoon slowly slipped into evening and Blake and Negan were currently reclining on the dark-haired Saviour's large four poster bed, as the tiny and 'not at all tired' Mia bounced around on the springy mattress near to their legs.

The three of them having eaten dinner over on Negan's leather couches, consisting of three large and delicious sandwiches, had, after an hour or so of Mia boring Negan with the need to show him every single animal she had learned the name of in her picture book, moved over to his enormous king sized bed. The caramel-blonde woman stripping out of her pants and lying there in just a black sweater, bra and panties.

Blake was sat up against the headboard with Negan lying with his head resting against her torso, one of his knees cocked up, eyeing Mia as she babbled away to him about nothing and everything all at the same time.

"An' wen I growd up I wil av' pwetty hair liak Bwake," she said bouncing up and down on her chubby legs, with one chubby hand resting on his knee. "A-An' av' bwoobies laik Bwakey!"

And with that, the teeny girl pointed towards the two mounds upon Blake's chest, resting just above Negan's head.

The dark-haired man gave a sudden chuckle, cocking an eyebrow at the toddler.

"Well if you are anythin' like Peaches here," Negan said in a bemused tone. "I guess I'm gonna have to start beating those boys away with Lucille, ain't I, Beansprout?"

With his words, Blake gave a smile, running her fingers over his temples and back through his dark hair.

"Is Daddy getting all protective?" she asked with a purr, which caused Negan to run his own hand now down the smooth skin of Blake's inner thigh.

"Well shit, I ain't exactly gonna stand by and watch some spotty fuckin' teenager ask her to prom for a chance to put his hand up her blouse now am I?" Negan commented in a loud voice, his eyes on Mia. "I'm gonna be lookin' out for my girls for as long as I'm alive and fuckin' kickin', Darlin'."

Blake's smile widened, as she stifled a small yawn. Both of them knowing of course the likelihood of any of them being alive in ten years' time was slim…but they could still dream...

"Eggy noht mai Daddy," said Mia suddenly, placing her other tiny fist to her mouth. "I don' av' Mommy an' Daddy. I jus' me."

But Blake felt her heart break at this. Feeling such sorrow for the tiny girl who had probably never known her parents, and had lost the other guardians in her life at such a young age.

And as much as Blake and Negan had been through, this little girl had never seen a time where there weren't walkers around, where she wasn't hiding in vents and running through woods in the rain, alone and scared.

It was a different world that Blake wished she could protect the tiny girl from…hold her tight and never let go of her again.
"You've got us, sweetie," Blake said in a kindly voice, desperately wanting to tell the small girl how much she would love to be her mommy. But the caramel-blonde woman knew that these things could not be rushed…

…that Mia would see them both as she wanted to see them…

Maybe they would forever just be 'Eggy' and 'Bwake' to her…. 

…or perhaps one day they would both mean a little more to her than that? 

But either way, Blake knew that she loved the tiny girl with every fibre of her body. 

But Mia, so easily distracted, had already moved onto the next subject. 

"I schtay ere' for long time naw? Yea?" she asked in a quiet little voice. "Will I av' to go away 'gain?"

But it was Negan who answered this one, as Blake ran her fingers through his coarse locks lovingly, her eyelids feeling very heavy now in the relaxed atmosphere of the bedroom.

"You can stay here as long as you fuckin' like, beansprout," he said with a chuckle. "This place is your goddamn home now, you understand that?"

And Mia, with her mouth hanging open gave a slow nod, neither adult actually knowing whether she did understand or not, but as far as Blake was concerned the gesture was still there…

…finding herself glancing down at the dark-haired man resting on her, feeling her heart pound just that little bit faster.

For the first time in a long time Blake felt like she was whole. Having people around her she truly loved and who she could sense loved her back wholly, gave her an almost whooshing sense of utter elation she had never felt before.

Although this feeling was shrouded for a moment, as she gave another yawn.

Blake had been feeling tired and a little light-headed all day, finding taking care of Mia an utterly exhausting task.

Not that she minded at all…but the blonde woman smiled to herself knowing that early starts ,and lengthy conversations and questions about penguins whilst sitting on the toilet waiting for Mia to go potty in a freezing cold cubicle, was something Blake would certainly need to get used to.

The couple watched now in silence, Blake still running her fingers over Negan's' brow absentmindedly, as Mia turned around at Negan's feet, bouncing up and down on her little legs on the mattress, babbling on about something utterly incoherent.

But it only took a split second, and before Blake could even cry out, the tiny girl obviously bouncing too close to the bed's edge, lost her footing, tripping unsteadily…. 

…falling backwards off the edge of the large bed.

Blake's heart stopped, letting out sharp gasp of horror.

But before she could react, Negan had reached out, grabbing hold of Mia's sock-covered foot before she could hit the floor.
"Shit, Beansprout!" Negan uttered suddenly letting out a hard puff of air and sitting up, hauling the teeny toddler up as she squealed in utter delight, obviously not realising just how much of a perilous situation she had been in. "Why can't you manage to go one fuckin' day, without keepin' me an' Peaches on our damned toes, huh?"

But Mia just giggled as he scooped her up, and tugged her teeny body close to his.

Blake felt her heart slowly begin to resume it's normal pace again as Mia gave a tiny yawn, her mouth forming into a perfect o-shape.

"Aww I think someone needs to go to sleep…" said Blake smiling and stifling yet another yawn of her own at the sight.

And at this, Mia did not protest, giving a nod and crawling from Negan's' grasp and over to Blake, coming around to her free arm and tucking herself under it and slipping underneath the warm white sheets, kicking out her pudgy legs as she did so and causing the dark-haired man to grumble a little at the movement just over his shoulder, pulling himself from the bed and to his feet with a stiff groan.

Blake watched him head over toward the bathroom, shrugging his leather jacket off of his lean shoulders and running a hand through his dark, messed up hair as he went.

She gave a smile to herself, shifting over a little as Mia got herself settled against her, the toddlers tiny paw moving up to curl around the fabric of Blake's sweater, obviously wanting to feel her close, even as her eyes dropped shut and she smacked her lips a few times before finally stilling.

And Blake, feeling oh-so safe and warm and comfortable right now, knew she would have to move eventually…of course she would...

...but for some reason, shut her eyes….just for a brief moment…

...feeling sleep wash over her exhausted body too.

Negan chuckled to himself doing up his pants zipper, flushing the toilet before rethreading his belt.

Hopefully by now, the kid would be asleep and the dark-haired Saviour would be able to enjoy a well needed catch up with Blake. Something he had been angling for all day.

Just having her beside him was temptation enough. With those pert fuckin' tits of hers, those hips that made him want to bury himself inside her, and that damn mouth. That smart-fuckin' mouth that made him forget all his worries and cares. His attention instead focusing on the best way to get her to spread her legs of hers for him.

Yeah, he was fucking besotted.

She was his queen.

And tonight his queen was gonna get down on her knees for her king…. if he was lucky that was.

Grinning to himself now, Negan gave a sigh, moving over and rinsing his hands under the faucet as he stared up at himself in front of the mirror, the happiness that seemed to dance across his long, tanned features startling him a little.

He genuinely could not remember a time had felt this happy. Not since shit had hit the fan and the world had become a mess, anyway.
But here he was, almost a fucking family man, with a girl he was goddamn crazy about and a kid that kinda made his heart swell too.

And there was nothing...NOTHING...that Negan wouldn't do to protect them now.

He dried his hands on his pants, leaning in towards the mirror and running his fingers down his long chin, gazing at his reflection scrutinizingly.

Fuck he needed to shave...but that could wait. For now he had bigger and better things on his mind of things he wanted to do tonight....

And so, running his tongue over his line of perfect white teeth, Negan gave a hiss, pushing himself away from the bathroom counter before strolling back into the bedroom quietly, not wanting to wake the kid up and ruin his and Blake's night....

…but the dark-haired leader of the Saviours stopped in his tracks just a few feet into the room...

...finding Blake flat out asleep, with Mia tucked up into her.

Negan almost immediately rolled his eyes, but even so, let out a low and rumbling chuckle as she stared over at his two favourite girls, shaking his head as she did so.

Yeah he was fucking smitten alright.

Stone cold fucking gone.

And despite his irritation of not being able to fuck the caramel blonde woman right now, Negan knew that there was indeed nowhere else he wanted to be tonight, but tucked up beside the pair of them....

...as he slowly made his way over to the bed, pulling his t-shirt over his head as he went.
Nightmares and revenge

It was late, maybe 2am, and all was quiet at the Sanctuary, everyone, but a few Saviours standing guard, was asleep, tucked up safely in bed, barely making a sound, save from a few snuffles and peaceful snores.

But one person had been tossing and turning for the past half hour, growling incoherent ramblings under their breath….a slick sheen coating their body…and a tormented frown between their brows...

He would have looked to anyone watching, like he was battling invisible demons….but this time he had no Lucille to help him, looking anguished and pained, as a gulp trailed down his bearded throat.

But it was barely a second later, that Negan suddenly shot straight up in bed, his brow covered in sweat, breathing hard.

He took a huge gulp of air, sucking it into his lungs as though he had been starved of oxygen for years.

The dark-haired man looked hurriedly down to his right, eyes searching for the two of them in the darkness of his room, his chocolate eyes finally finding both Blake and Mia sleeping peacefully beside him.

Where they were supposed to be...

It was just a nightmare.
Just a fucking nightmare, he consoled himself with thinking.

But yet again, for the second night now, it had felt so real.

He had the same dream two nights in a row now, since getting back from Alexandria.

And both times it had been the same…

….exactly the same...

For instead of finding Mia in those woods...alive, soaking wet, missing a sock, in this anxiety-inducing dream, Negan had found her stumbling out of those bushes growling and snarling at him….a living dead creature….

With grey eyes staring blankly at him….

And Negan had been forced to do it with one foul swing of Lucille….

Sending the child who had once been Mia collapsing to the ground with a thud.

But that had not been the end of Negan's nightmare…

The next part filling him with anguish even to think about now in these waking seconds.

For it was Negan's turn then…to stumble across that muddy pit…..

……and being too late to save her….
Blake…

For all he could see were walkers…..tearing at her flesh, the only thing distinguishable being her bloodied caramel-blonde hair, and her screams...

...those screams that turned his blood cold and caused his heart to break and shatter.

But Negan always woke up before the end. Before he could put the walkers down.

And so for the second night, Negan had awoken in a fearful a panic, his heart still hammering inside his chest.…. 

...slowly slowing now, as he let out a deep breath before putting his arms around his girls and pulling them closer to him, spooning Blake.

At the movement, the blonde woman stirred slightly.

"What is it?" she murmured in a warm voice, perhaps sensing that there was something wrong...or perhaps just wondering what he wanted in the darkness of this late hour.

But Negan pressed a kiss to the space between her neck and shoulder now comfortingly.

"Nothin', go back to sleep," he growled out gently, not wanting to wake the kid too.

But Blake seemed satisfied with his reassuring lie, placing her hand to his and pulling his strong arm tighter around her. "Mmmmm, ok, I love you," she breathed out, sounding as though she had already fallen back to sleep.

But Negan answered her gesture of adoration anyway.

"Love you too, Peaches," he hummed, pressing a kiss into her tangled hair, before closing his eyes and drifting back off to sleep…. 

…but not before making sure his hand was still locked tightly around the pair of them…

…..never fucking wanting to let them go again.

It was a dark and still night, and over at Alexandria, only one house had its lights still on…. 

…..even Aaron noticed this as he surveyed the small community behind him as he paced the perimeter walls on his shift, rubbing his hand together for warmth.

But he didn’t dwell long on why exactly Rosita would be up this late...merely turning back to the road ahead of him and letting out a puff of air that turned into mist right before his eyes…. 

Rosita was on her third glass of whiskey, or was it her fourth, she had already lost count, pulling the glass from her lips and wiping at her mouth with the back of her hand, spilling a little of the brown alcohol onto her beige living-room carpet as she did so.

She was angry….full of hatred...burning up inside still, at the thought of what had happened yesterday.

The way that bitch Blake and that prick Negan had just strolled in here and Rick had rolled over for them like a puppy wanting his belly rubbed.

Well she was done with pussy-footing around now.
Done with their games.

She had tried to send Steve out to infiltrate them, but that had been weeks ago….and so any hope of him actually returning was now lost.

She had waited in the woods the day before yesterday in the place they had planned, but Steve had not turned up.

So Rosita could only assume the worst, after there had been no sight of him amongst the other Saviour men who had arrived here yesterday.

Not that it was a great loss to her now.

Rosita had lost Abraham….Spencer…..and now Steve was just one in a long list of people she was determined to get revenge for.

For there had always been one person responsible for all this…. 
...one person who Rosita was determined to see pay for what he had done.

But after that screw up with the bullet….seeing Eugene torn away from them like that…well, Rosita was not going to make that mistake again…

She wouldn't miss twice.

She knew that now, as she brought the whiskey glass up to her lips once more, draining it, before bending down and feeling underneath her smart white couch for the object she had hidden there…

...the object she had found whilst out scavenging miles and miles outside these walls…

...the object she had not yet told anyone about…. 

….pulling the long thin item in question out, taking a seat and pulling it onto her lap.

It was a large black rifle with a periscope attached to the top.

A thing of beauty…

Helped of course by the fact that it still had a full magazine of bullets still attached.

And so this time, Rosita was almost positive she would not be able to miss…. 

...for now, there wasn't just Negan she could choose to aim for…. 

….for now, she had Blake too…. 

And either way, both of their hearts would stop that day….one way or another….
The next few days passed in a hurry, and before Blake had realised it, Mia had already been with them at the Sanctuary for a week.

The little girl was as popular as ever with the Sanctuary residents, and even some of the more hardy lieutenants could be found backhanding the toddler candy and pieces of fruit when no one was looking, which she always took gratefully with a shy and grateful 'Fanks'.

But for Blake, taking care of such a small child, was turning out to be far more exhausting that she had expected.

And although Mia was not exactly a demanding little girl, she did require constant attention and care, from taking at least three urgent bathroom breaks every hour, to wanting to play all the time, to her endless stream of questions.

"Why dat dere?"

"Who dey?"

"Wen will I get bwoobies laik Bwakey?"

But Blake utterly adored her, there was no doubt about that.

Having Mia around made everything feel worthwhile...like it all had a purpose now.

She was happy. They both were.

However the same could not be said about Negan, who had been in a bit of grumpy and put-out mood for the last few days.

But Blake could of course see why…

Having Mia around was extremely time consuming, which meant that Blake had been unable to devote as much time to the dark-haired Saviour as she usually did.

And during the times that Negan did come to see them both, Mia had either talked his ear off non-stop, or complained to Blake that she needed to go potty or that she was cold, or hungry... dragging the blonde woman away, much to Negan's annoyance.

And although Blake did think that it was probably good for Negan to not be able to get his own way all of the time, she did miss his touch...his kisses...and oh so much more...

But the pair of them getting any time alone together had proved to be impossible over the last few days.

For Blake feeling utterly tired by the Mia's bedtime came around, had crashed out three nights in a row by 7pm!

Over the last two days however, Negan had been out on a run with Dwight, Simon and a few of his other loyal men to one of the outposts.

He was due to be back later today, but not having his presence around her, the blonde woman found herself getting antsy.
She wasn't particularly worried about him, knowing that Negan had a job to do…but she felt strained, yearning for him, missing him last night as a heat passed over her.

He was her mate and it was easy to forget when Mia was around, just how much she needed him.

It was a primal urge….desperate and urgent….and although Blake often feigned teasing uninterest, it was true that she wanted the dark-haired Saviour just as much as he wanted her.

Although Negan had indeed seemed a little distant of late, Blake felt that had nothing to do with Mia or his lack of sex with the caramel-blonde woman.

Ever since they had returned from Alexandria, Negan had been restless at night. Blake had heard him stirring on more than one occasion, and just two evenings ago, she had woken to find him in the midst of what seemed like a nightmare, coated in perspiration and mumbling out incoherent words. And every morning Blake had woken to find Negan already awake by the time she had gotten up, either in the bathroom, or the room already absent of him completely, the dark-haired man already up and dressed and out to make sure Sanctuary life was ticking over for the day.

Today Blake had no idea when Negan or the others would be back, but with Mia balanced on her hip this mild afternoon, the blonde woman wandered down an empty hallway that led to the outside, as the tiny toddler (today dressed in a red dress, white leggings, with her hair tied up in a tuft on top of her head) blabbered away into Blake's ear.

"Ca' I growd stuff laik Bwakey?" said Mia, her sticky fingers grasping a long strand of Blake's hair.

The pair had been talking about Blake's garden for the past ten minutes or so.

Blake had been absent from it for over a week now, and if she was honest she missed it. A lot!

It wasn't just the work she missed but it had been nice to give something back to the people. To provide them with a stable source of food that did not rely on tributes from other sites.

But unfortunately the work was indeed something Blake just could not do with Mia in tow.

"Yeah, of course you can grow stuff in the garden," said Blake with a smile to the baby girl. The blonde woman was today dressed in a white t-shirt and tight navy jeans, held up at the waist by a belt with a large brass buckle.

She soon gave the door just ahead of her, a shove open with her free hand, revealing the walled garden beyond.

Today there were several workers dotted around here and there, weeding, tending to the vegetables and much more.

But Mia, never having ventured out into this part of the factory before, stared around with wide eyes at the plants and greenhouses that had been erected around the large space.

But after a second or two she gave a small pout.

"Wher' tha flawers?" she asked sounding affronted.

At this Blake stifled a small laugh.

"Oh no, it's not really that kind of garden, Sweetie," said Blake in a kind voice. "We grow vegetables here. And fruit too. All sorts of nice things you can eat."
But this obviously was not what Mia had been imagining the garden to be like.

"I wan' flawers," she said in a bossy little tone, which caused Blake to 'shhhhh' her soothingly, pressing a kiss to the side of the girl's tuft of hair, as they walked through the bean poles.

"Lots of vegetables have flowers," tried Blake with another smile.

But Mia gave a shake of her head, pressing her chubby hand to Blake's shoulder. "Noh. I wan flawer for Bwake."

With that, the caramel blonde woman tilted her head to the side, eyeing the tiny girl warmly.

She really was the sweetest thing….

...but all of a sudden Blake came across all woozy, Mia's tiny face swimming before her eyes.

What the-?

She blinked a moment, taking an unsteady step back, before righting herself.

God, what was wrong with her this week?

She had been feeling tired for days now, but had choiced that down to having Mia around. But these spells of lightheadedness were getting to be more and more of a regular occurrence these past few days.

Perhaps she was just a little under the weather….she hadn't been eating as much as she normally did, barely finding the time to and rarely having much of an appetite.

But Blake stared around knowing one thing that might encourage that appetite of hers.

Blake had had such a hankering for tomatoes this past week, and hugging Mia close to her now, the caramel blonde woman marched over to the large greenhouse that she knew housed three large potted tomato plants.

Inside she found John, one of the older workers that helped tend the garden, who offered her a large smile as she entered the narrow glass house with Mia in tow.

"Well hi there cherub," the grey-haired man wearing a checked shirt uttered, his bright eyes twinkling at Mia as the little girl smiled shyly, burying her face into Blake's shoulder.

Blake beamed softly back at John.

"You got any ripe tomatoes I can have?" Blake asked interestedly, as the man, stiffly stood up straight, staring at the tall blonde woman from the corner of his eye.

"You know you asked me that same thing last week," he commented, narrowing his smiling eyes at her for a moment.

"You know you asked me that same thing last week," he commented, narrowing his smiling eyes at her for a moment.

But Blake merely stared around, admiring the swift-growing plants.

"I guess I've just got a thing for tomatoes at the moment," she said breezily, watching as the old man examined the plants and plucked a couple of the large ripened fruit, passing them over to her.

"A craving for tomatoes, huh?" John said again, the corners of his lips twitching up into a grin.
But Blake, who was far too preoccupied with handing the large fruit over to Mia, barely noticed this.

"I guess so," she replied, stroking her thumb down Mia's cheeks. "How's it been around here anyway?"

At her words John gave a mild shrug. "Fine, not been the same without you 'round here though. Joyce misses you and those pumpkins will need tending to in the next week or so," said the man pointing vaguely to a small pumpkin patch at the far end of the garden.

Blake let out a small sigh, jiggling Mia on her hip as the teeny girl examined the tomatoes in her hand.

Blake oh-so desperately wanted to come out here again. The nights were drawing in now and Fall really did feel in full force. In a month or so, winter would well and truly be upon them, making it near to impossible for Blake to spend much time out here anyway.

But Mia demanded so much time these days, and although this was what Blake had always wanted, a baby girl of her own, she still yearned for warm sunshine and the satisfying feeling of growing something out here.

But before Blake could comment back to John about how much she missed this place too, a tiny voice whispered into her ear.

"Bwaky, I hungwy" said Mia in a shy voice into Blake's ear.

The blonde woman blinked her eyes closed for a happy second.

"Well then I guess we'd better you get you something to eat, baby."

And at that Blake couldn't help but smile, hitching Mia further up her hip, and offering the old man before her an apologetic look.

"I'll see you around," she said gently, exiting the greenhouse and heading inside, as Mia snuggled herself warmly into her.

It was barely an hour later, having taken Mia to get some lunch (the toddler having an apple and crackers and Blake helping herself to some lettuce and tomato sandwich) that they had heard through the usual Sanctuary whisperings that the trucks were back.

And that only meant one thing to Blake.

That Negan, of course, was here.

God, she had missed him. Like crazy…

But by the time both she and Mia had made it down to the large marketplace at the centre of the Sanctuary, hand-in-hand, with Blake feeling even more tired than usual, a few rays of warm afternoon sun could be seen glinting down onto the busy room below through the high stained glass window panels, illuminating the hundreds of figures that were packed down here.

It was often like this after a big run out…people wanting first dibs on the new items they could use their points for.

They were barely inside the room, when a couple of Saviours Blake recognised stopped to talk to them for a brief moment, but it was obvious that Blake was of course not listening, even as they
offered their goodbyes, her eyes drifting about the busy room, searching for one person.

Blake could see Dwight and Simon….so that must mean…..

Then she saw it...

...a sight that made Blake smile.

Negan.

...strolling into the room, Lucille cocked up onto his broad leather-clad shoulder, running his other free hand down his chin.

But his chocolate eyes were darting lazily about….as though searching for something himself in the crowd…

...until he found what he was looking for, his gaze reaching Blake's, a wide grin dancing it's way across his long and tanned features.

Her heart jolted, as it always did, as a warmth washed over her….

A love...and at the same time, a need, a yearning.

But Blake's attention was suddenly dragged away by a tiny hand tugging at her own.

"Bwakey, I need potty," came the quiet voice of Mia.

Blake at once pulled her eyes away from Negan and instead glancing down at the baby girl at her side.

"Can it wait a second, Sweetie?" asked Blake in a kind voice,desperately just wanting to spend a second with Negan who was currently battling his way through the crowds towards them, across the wide room.

But Mia gave a sad-looking pout and shook her head, hopping up and down a little on the spot.

"I need potty naw, Bwakey..." she said, her lips quivering slightly as she spoke, and Blake knew that there really was no holding on.

She gave a small disappointed sigh, lifting her head again and looking Negan's way, but this time his grin diminished a little, seeing the apologetic expression on her face, as she mouthed an earnest 'sorry' in his direction, turning on her heel and heading swiftly out of the room.

There was a bathroom at the very end of the winding hallway, that Blake hoped they would get to on time, as Mia gave a whine, urging them forward clutching onto Blake's hand tightly.

But a couple of seconds later, a sudden voice called out to them.

"You got somewhere to fuckin' be, Peaches?"

Blake pulled Mia to a gentle halt and turned around to see that Negan had followed them out into the dimly lit corridor, a confused frown fixed between his eyebrows.

"Mia needs to use the bathroom," Blake explained, but Negan, a strained expression upon his face, let out a small frustrated huff.
"I don' get to see you for two fuckin' days, an' now you're runnin' the fuck out on me already?"
Negan said in a loud, exasperated-sounded voice.

But Blake pursed her lips together.

"Give me like five minutes," Blake said shaking her head, but she knew that it would likely to of course be more than that.

It was always more than that.

Even if it was five minutes, even if they did get time together, Mia would be bored in a while, wanting to play...to be entertained...but Blake, feeling as tired as she was, just did not have the energy to do that.

Right now she felt like crying....feeling as frustrated as Negan looked.

But Negan, digging his tongue into his cheek, dropped his eyes to the floor momentarily.

"S'alright," he said sounding as though everything was anything but alright between the pair of them right now. "You both do what you gotta do. Hell I'm gonna shoot some pool with the guys or somethin'."

Along with Mia, the Saviours had also managed to bring back a humongous pool table from Alexandria....that now sat down in the lieutenants rec room on the South side of the building.

Blake wanted to say something....but she was soon interrupted.

"I need to go potty, Bwakey," said Mia, in an almost tearful voice, tugging at her hand now.

And Blake could tell that this was urgent, the tiny girl not even acknowledging Negan's presence today, as she usually would have done.

And so, with great reluctance, and knowing she had very little other choice...

...Blake, giving Negan one last hopeless look and sighing, turned away, heading back down the winding corridor again...in the direction of the bathrooms....

...leaving Negan standing there alone....

The dark-haired Saviour lingered there for a long moment staring after them....

This fucking run out had been a fucking shit show and throughout all that had kept Negan going was the thought of seeing her.

Seeing Blake.

Last night's dreams had come to him the same once again...him stumbling across that pit and it being too late....again he had been too late to save her..hearing her screams as she was brutally ripped apart.

And so coming back here Negan had hoped for some time with her.

He had been starved of sex and love and even contact for days now...not since that night in the shower....

...and the dark-haired Saviour felt almost delirious with need for her.
But he was being a selfish fuck and he knew it.

He could see that Blake had bigger things than him to worry about these days... but having the kid around full time 24/7 was not only taking its toll on their sex life... but on Blake too...

Negan had, of course, noticed that she had seemed tired and drawn this past week.

But hell, he wasn't about to argue with her about taking care of the fucking kid.

Peaches was strong enough to know what she wanted.

But Negan only hoped that at least sometime soon, she might have a goddamn minute to fucking spare him.

And so gazing after the two girls with a sad sort of looked etched across his dark features, Negan lifted his gloved hand and dragged it down his face in utter frustration, before bowing his head in defeat and turning on heel....marching away without even a backwards glance.
"Wai Eggy gon?" Mia asked in a curious voice, her big eyes searching the hallway, as she and Blake exited into the hallway not five minutes later.

At her words, Blake's stomach lurched.

She had seen the look in Negan's eyes after she had left him standing there like that. That disappointment, that frustration...

But Negan had to realise that having Mia around did change things...Although that didn't mean Blake loved him or cared for him any less. There wasn't another guy involved here, and Blake certainly hadn't lost interest in the dark-haired Saviour. But Negan would have to realise that other priorities would sometimes have to come before him. Mia certainly being one of them.

But before Blake could answer the tiny girl, who was clutching onto her hand with her little paw, the blonde woman stopped, blinking a couple of times as the colour drained from her face and a spell of dizziness washed over her.

Pressing a hand to the wall beside her, she steadied herself, bowing her head slightly and closing her eyes.

Was this tiredness? Exhaustion after taking care of a toddler full time?

Or something else completely?

Blake remained still for a long few seconds as Mia blinked up at her.

"You 'kay, Bwakey?" she asked in a worried sounding voice.

But Blake gave a small gulp, shaking herself, and opening her eyes once more….the feeling disappearing as quickly as it had come.

She glanced down at Mia, taking in a sharp breath and feigning a mild smile.

"It's nothing , Sweetie," she said, lifting her hand from the wall and tucking a strand of long caramel-hair behind her ear. "I'm fine...just a little tired is all."

Blake knew she would have to see Dr Carson about this…

..but suddenly a faint recollection of going to see the Sanctuary's doctor for another reason drifted across the forefront of her mind…

….but this memory soon clouded over her thoughts once again, as two sudden figures apperared at the far end of the hallway giving a loud squeal as they clapped eyes on the two girls standing hand in hand.

"Ahhh, there she is..." came the voice of the dark-haired Tanya, who tottered down the hallway towards Blake and Mia, followed at her side by the blonde and meek-looking Amber, who today had a huge smile across her features akin to Tanya's.

But what made Blake tilt her head, her mouth twitching up into a happy grin, was the sight of the wives, today not wearing their usual grab of tight fitting black dresses, but instead, Tanya was dressed in jeans and a cosy sweater and Amber in a short denim skirt, a t-shirt and sneakers.
The caramel-blonde woman marvelled at the pair of them, as they approached her, catching her eye, almost reading her mind.

"Yeah Negan said we could give up the dresses on a trial period," Tanya announced victoriously, as she reached Blake. "That's all down to you y'know…"

Mia at Blake's side held back a little warily for a moment, before watching as Amber came to crouch before her, holding out her arms in a warm gesture.

"Oh aren't you the cutest thing!" the young blonde woman squealed, giving a laugh, as Mia shyly moved forwards and snuggled herself into Amber's arms as she stood once again, cuddling the toddler to her chest.

"Aww you've grown so much since we saw you last," Tanya said, grabbing hold of Mia's sock covered foot and giving it a gentle jiggle that caused the teeny girl to giggle out in delight.

But the noise made Blake's ears ring a little, feeling herself space out once more…..the room before her, tilting on its axis.

She blinked her eyes several times, hearing her breathing loud and slow in her ears now….everything else feeling very far away…

"Blake…"

She vaguely heard her name being called, but it was like everything was going in slow motion…dust particles in the air being the only thing she was able to focus on…

"Blake," came the voice of Tanya again, louder now, bringing Blake back to the here and now.

She gazed hurriedly up to where the two women and Mia were staring at her concernedly.

"Are you ok?" asked the dark-haired wife, cocking her head to the side. "You look as white as a sheet."

But Blake offered them the small fixed and frozen smile, just as she had given Mia just a few moments ago.

"Y-Yeah I'm fine…” she murmured breezily. "I just don't think I've been eating properly…"

This was of course true

"...and I guess I'm just exhausted," she continued pressing her palm flat to her forehead with worry. "... I don't think I realised how much taking care of a two year old would tire me out…..I'm feeling just….stretched….a-and I feel like I haven't had any time to spend with Negan in days…"

She trailed off, feeling a little forlorn.

Perhaps all this was a lot for her all at once. For it was only just over a week ago that Blake had presumed that Mia was dead, and now here Blake was, the equivalent to a full time Mom too the toddler. It was flat out and tiring and the blonde had not really given herself a break at all since she had returned from Alexandria…

"Well, how about we take Mia tonight?" Amber asked, with a smile, jiggling Mia on her hip, as the little girl gave a giggle of delight. "How would you like that, hmmm? Shall we have a slumber party?"
The toddler, goggling at Amber and Tanya, placed a finger to her mouth, smiling widely.

Blake stared up at the two women.

"A-Are you sure? Y-You don't have to.." she began.

But Tanya placed a comforting hand to Blake's forearm.

"Blake, we'd love to have her stay with us tonight. You have no idea how boring it is for us being holed up there all by ourselves. And besides, this way you can spend some alone time with Negan...stop him being such a grouch to everyone."

Amber gave a nod in agreement, not making eye contact with Blake.

"Yeah, you have no idea what he's like when he's pissed…" she said timidly.

But Blake did indeed know what the dark-haired Saviour could get like when he was in a bad mood, taking it out anyone and everyone who dared to even breathe loudly in his vicinity.

The caramel-blonde woman stared at the toddler who was giggling happily in Amber's arms as the young girl made silly faces at her, feeling a sudden wave of guilt wash over her.

With how woozy and of course exhausted she had been feeling, Blake had been a little rubbish these past few days when it had come to playtimes. While Mia had stomped around, blowing off her boundless stream of energy, Blake had just sat there, watching her almost falling asleep several times.

It wasn't neglectful, but Blake knew that Mia would probably have far more fun with the wives tonight, than she would with the tired and frustrated Blake.

"Are you ok with that, Sweetie?" asked Blake stroking back the tuft of soft brown hair on Mia's head. "Will you be alright to stay with Tanya and Amber tonight?"

But Mia gave a happy little nod.

"I stay der' tonight', yea?" she asked quirking her head as she spoke, before turning back to Amber and watching as the blonde woman blew a raspberry, bursting into another fit of giggles.

Blake smiled, withdrawing her hand and looking between the two women.

"Are you sure you don't mind-" she started as Tanya gave a smirk.

"Yes, we're sure!" uttered the dark-haired woman laughing.

But Blake pursed her lips together, letting out a small sigh.

"Ok, well her bedtime is normally at seven," she began. "A-And she-"

But Tanya, placing a sudden hand to Blake's shoulder, maneuvered her around on the spot.

"She'll be fine, Blake," Tanya muttered with another laugh. "Now go take some me time...ok?"

And Blake, with a smile and a huge roll of her eyes, obeyed, throwing one last slight look of concern towards Mia and the wives, before walking away towards her own bedroom.

Blake padded across her room, a fluffy white towel wrapped around her middle, her long blonde hair pinned up loosely, as she hummed an old and almost forgotten pop song to herself absentmindedly.
Almost an hour had passed since the wives had taken Mia from her hands, and, two cups of coffee and a long cool shower later to recuperate, Blake found herself feeling much perkier than she had done earlier this afternoon.

She still had the drapes open, but the sun was already going down now, early evening creeping in….as Blake opened her closet to pick out some underwear, immediately admiring her reflection in the full length mirror hanging on the back of the door.

The colour had seemed to flood back into her face now, and after at least half an hour of pampering, Blake even having time to paint her fingernails and toenails too, something she hadn't done in years, the blonde woman honestly felt better than she had in a long time.

She looked good and felt good too, practically glowing in the last of the few rays of evening sunlight.

She had planned to perhaps have an early night, maybe read a little…

But allowing the towel to slip from her body, pooling to the floor with a gentle whump, Blake stared at her naked figure in the mirror, tilting her head back and forth.

God, her boobs looked good today. Had they always been this perky and full?

She turned to the side running her hands over them before siding her fingers down to her hips admiring their curve.

But feeling this good, made Blake feel reluctant about being alone tonight…..a certain person of course swimming to the forefront of her mind…

She grinned at her reflection, biting down onto her lip, before turning her attention to the contents of her closet, feeling butterflies dance inside her.

Was this another bout of dizziness, or was this sheer excitement now at the prospect of spending some time alone with Negan?

Blake rifled through her underwear drawer finding nothing exciting but pair after pair of black and white cotton garments, that were not exactly the seduction-worthy items she had been hoping for.

But then her hands stopped, instead trailing over to a familiar item hung up just to the left of her drawers….an item that made her grin widen as she plucked it from its hanger.

There it was...the dress she had found at the marketplace a few weeks back and seduced Negan with at least once or twice, and here it was freshly cleaned and pressed, having been put back where it belonged.

The dress was black and made of a silky material that tied at the front, and hugged at Blake's body perfectly.

And so, pausing for a short moment, Blake laughed to herself before closing the closet door with a short, sharp snap….making up her mind there and then...

It, of course, hadn't taken her long to work out where he was.

Walking down the lengthy Sanctuary hallways, she had bumped into Simon just a few moments ago who had confirmed it, grinning to himself, his eyes looking her up and down and offering her a knowing look, as she thanked him with a nudge with her elbow, tutting as he made a comment about
Negan being a 'lucky guy tonight.'

And now Blake, with a short sigh to herself, feeling hopped up on coffee and freedom for the night, pushed her long, slightly tousled caramel hair over her shoulder, before peering around the already ajar door to the rec room on the first floor.

The room was dimly lit and smelled faintly of cigar smoke.

But Blake gave a naughty smile as she stepped into the room, causing the only current occupant to look up at her with interest at her presence.

It was of course Negan, who was bent over the pool table on the far side of the room facing her, pool cue in his hand, leather jacket long having been shrugged off his shoulders.

He stood now in his grey pants and white tshirt, giving Blake a flash of faded tattoos on his biceps, that Blake was indeed very familiar with now.

But the bearded Saviour let out a puff of air, a grin washing itself over his face, as he eased himself up off of the table and stood up straight, pulling the pool cue with him and eyeing her as though she was a rare diamond.

"So this is where you've been hiding, huh?" commented Blake gazing around at the old storage room that housed a table in the corner for poker games and the like, a foosball table and now this large and imposing pool table which took up a large proportion of the space these days.

She turned back to look at Negan watching as he cocked his head to the side, his gaze drifting just past her legs before he stared up at her once more.

"You comin' here to break the news that you lost the kid already, Peaches?" asked Negan in a mocking tone, which caused Blake to roll her eyes at him. She was glad the tension that had been there between them earlier was now gone, leaving that same old playful repertoire they always shared.

"Ha, Ha," Blake said tutting, moving around to the pool table and placing her hand onto the blue felt surface."If you must know, the girls are taking care of her for the night….

Blake had picked her words there wisely. Neither of them had broached the subject of Negan's 'wives' in a while now. Both of them avoiding the subject completely.

But regardless, Negan quirked an interested eyebrow in her direction, as Blake padded around the length of the table towards him, her slender fingers skimming over the table's smooth surface as she did so, her green eyes glancing up and over at him.

"This mean I'm gonna get lucky?" he asked in a low voice, licking at his lips as he eyed her, inching around towards him.

And with that, Blake gave a nod, biting down hard onto her lip as she came to stop just a few feet away from the dark-haired Saviour now, giving him a moment to appreciate the effort she had made for him tonight.

She felt better than she had in days, with her hair fluttering down past her shoulders, her face flushed with colour, her nails painted, standing here in this gorgeous dress….

All for him...and only him.
So of course he was going to get lucky tonight. Did he honestly need her to answer that for him?

But she did anyway, smiling gently as she did so.

"Yhhmmmm," she murmured, as Negan advanced on her slowly, dropping his pool cue down onto the table, and strolling slowly over to her, his chocolate eyes taking in every inch of her appearance, looking like he was about to devour her at any second.

The bearded Saviour stopped a mere inch away from her now, his musky scent drifting over her, causing the flower between Blake's legs to drench with a creamy and dripping wetness before he had even touched her.

Fuck…

"So..." Negan said, in a what was a low and dark voice, full of want. "You wanna head on up to my room, Doll-face? Might be a little more private up there..."

But before Negan had even finished his sentence, Blake had wrinkled her nose at him in teasing manner, letting out a brief 'hmmmmm....' as though she was thinking about it.

But with that, she gave a small shake of her head, her fingers grasping the tiniest handful of Negan's white shirt as she tugged him towards her, standing up on her tiptoes, her lips grazing against his ear.

"...I don't think I want to do it bed tonight, Daddy," she purred out, her hot breath trickling over his neck, as she darted out her tongue swirling it around her earlobe momentarily.

Negan almost at once, let out a hungry grunt, as Blake pulled back at little, her green eyes finally meeting with his.

Negan's smile was gone now, replaced by a wolf-like expression, his dark eyes glinting at her meaningfully.

And it was a second later that he parted his lips audibly, and spoke.

"Then where do you want to do it, Darlin'?" he goaded, sounded like he needed to hear the answer from her now...

But Blake gave a wicked smile, pulling back, and in a second she had untied her dress letting it fall to the floor, revealing her complete and utter nakedness beneath...

...and in a blink of an eye, before the dark-haired man could utter a single word in response to this, the caramel-blond woman had confidently hopped up the edge of the pool table, spreading her legs wide for him in a tempting fashion...

"I want you to fuck me right here, Daddy..." she purred.

Negan was silent for a long long moment staring at her, before suddenly a wide devilish grin spread across his face, as he dipped his chin low, sucking his bottom lip into his mouth, making a delectably wet noise, before speaking with a growl emitting from his throat.

"Oh you are a bad, bad fucking girl," he said, undoing his belt buckle, never taking his eyes off her for even a moment. This action alone, fulfilling every fantasy Blake had even had.

Fuck, she wanted him, biting down hard on her own lip as he closed the gap between them once more.
But in an instant Negan had attacked her mouth with his own, kissing at her as though he had been starved of her for months, although in reality it had only been a week.

But for the pair of them, that felt like a lifetime now, as the sound of Negan unthreading his bett and pulling down his zipper filled the quiet room amidst the sounds of their wet and well-needed kisses.

Blake didn't particularly care if anyone walked in right now, a few weeks ago perhaps she would certainly have cared. But now?

She was, as Negan so put it, a queen around here. And the dark-haired Saviour the King.

Blake knew of course what Negan would say to anyone who walked in...probably asking them to stay and enjoy the show.

But Blake on the other hand, so wrapped up into the moment right now, knew that she would certainly be likely to let any intrusion slide. For there was no way she was giving up and second of this to bother to bar the door.

Blake's hands scrabbled at Negan's tshirt covered chest, urging him to hurry now….so desperate for him to fuck her.

There was no time for foreplay now...just as there had been in the shower a week ago.

They would get to that another time….

But now, all Blake wanted was his dick buried deep within her soaked pussy.

Right now she could feel her own creamy wetness running down her throbbing lips and onto her thigh, but she didn't care, pulling her mouth from Negan's just long enough to glance down and see that he had his length in his hand, his other he used to pull her hips forwards a little on the table, perfecting the angle between them.

And in an a moment, with Blake threading her arm around his neck, she had let out a whine of pleasure as Negan had forced his stiff cock into her tight, wet cunt.

Negan had groaned as he pushed himself inside her, the sensation of that alone, driving them both crazy.

Blake had never felt pleasure like it.

Over this last week she had felt starved. Not only of sex, but of him too.

They fit so well together, metaphorically AND literally….as Negan filled her up to the hilt, his fingers grabbing at her hips a little roughly.

He leaned himself into her now, his mouth to her ear.

"You like the feeling of Daddy's dick inside you, Peaches?" he grunted.

But Blake could only managed a fevered nod, moaning out as he pulled his hips back, before jamming them into her again with one wet thrust.

God he felt good, as he began to quicken his pace now, her fingernails scrabbling at his shoulders, panting for breath as her eyes rolled closed, his hips grinding against hers.

But Blake soon felt one of Negan's hands move from her waist up to the back of her neck, pulling
her gaze back to him.

They stared into each other's eyes now, before lips found the others', desperation rising within them.

They were like animals, creatures hungry and alone that had found each other, as they pulled away, Blake's mouth falling open as she stared down to the space between them, watching as Negan's long member slid in and out of her.

God, that sight was an incredible one, seeing his dick glazed in her cream, slipping its way in and out of her.

In that moment, all this felt like a forbidden act. Like they were two people so opposite one another, it should not have been possible or two of them to come together, to be fucking like this. And yet here they were….continuing with this illicit act nonetheless.

Blake gave a moan out, arching her spine a little as a small wave of pleasure shot through her.

The rhythmic motion between them was helping, powerful and strong as it was.

Negan was good at this….

Knowing exactly what she wanted...how she wanted it…

He was a perfect match for her in every way.

And Blake couldn't help another moan escaping her lips, louder this time…

But the noise was drowned out by a harsh grunt emitting from Negan's own lips, much to Blake's surprise. Her eyes drifting open, finding his face to be a picture of pleasure, his bearded mouth hanging open slightly, as he grunted again, his dick pounding into her hot and fast.

Blake panting out through her own open lips dipped her chin, smirking slightly.

"Do I feel good Daddy?" she breathed, in what was merely a whisper, but enough to make Negan frown, wrinkling his nose, like a man possessed.

Almost instantly Blake gave a moan as he thrust into her harder this time, gritting his teeth, his brow darkening slightly at her words.

It delighted Blake to think that that expression was put there by her. That she was the one that made him look like a wolf, a guttural groan escaping his lips, as his dick roughly pounded into her hot pink slit.

His cock was coated now, wet noises and the sound of Negan's chinking belt buckle filling the room oh-so deliciously.

Blake let out a moan, closing her eyes for the briefest of moments as a wave of ecstasy washed over her.

God she was close now, savouring and stretching out the moment, never wanting it to arrive, but needing it so badly all at the same time.

"Fuck, Negan, I'm gonna cum..." she breathed out, her fingers tensing around his shoulder with one hand, while the other tangled its way into his dark hair.

But Negan was unrelenting now, her words only spurring him on, as he thrust into her again and
again and again, breathing hard.
"Cum for me, Princess," he managed to huff out. "Cum on Daddy's cock."

And, as if on cue, Blake couldn't help herself, already teething over the edge, she dropped her head back, closing her eyes and crying out, as her walls convulsed….and her thighs began to shake.

But seeing her in that state of pure orasmic agony, Negan's mouth dropped open, as he came inside her, his cum easing out of his twitching dick and up into her clenching pussy.

The pair of them hovered for a long moment, breathing loudly, Blake's legs trembling, as Negan grazed the smooth skin of her hips with his short neat fingernails.

"Fuck…." he groaned out, closing his eyes for brief moment, before hanging his head onto her shoulder and pressing his lips to her skin there. "I think I need a lie down after all that fuckin' work, Baby-girl."

And the caramel-blonde woman let out a smile and a panting, bemused sort of laugh, as she skimmed her palms down his tshirt-clad sides.

"Work?" she asked, tutting slightly between breaths. "Well thanks very much!"

Her voice was tainted with a happy sarcasm, that caused Negan to pull back from her grinning a satisfied grin, as he eased himself from her and righted himself, doing up his zipper and rethreading his belt.

"I mean it's a tough fuckin' job when a hot blonde comes to seduce ya', but I guess someone's gotta do it," he said licking his lips.

She could already tell by the look on his face he was in a teasing mood, but nevertheless he earned the slap Blake' gave him across his shoulder, as she raised her eyebrows and gave a small chuckle at his words.

"You're an asshole," she uttered promptly as she hopped down from the pool, table and made to pick up her dress to put it on over her naked body.

But Negan got in there before her, snatching up the silky garment and holding it at arms reach away from her tauntingly, his eyebrows up in his hairline in a playful getsure. His other hand he placed to his ear, cupping his hand around it.

"What the fuck you just call me, Princess?" he said arching his back as he spoke and eyeing her standing there in front of him, curves in all the right places, completely in the nude. "Cause' I would have no fuckin' problem with takin' this dress outta here an' makin' you walk back up to my room naked, Sweetheart?"

But Blake, still smirking, narrowed her eyes at him now, folding her arms across her bare breasts.

"Oh really?" she said in a simpering tone, running her tongue over her lips before shrugging lightly.

Oh, two could definitely play at this game!

"Oh well in that case, I was going to see if Danny needed any help down into the warehouse tonight…"

"She said in an airy voice, turning on her heel now and making for the door, swaying her hips as she went.
But, as if on cue and very much as predicted, from behind her, Blake heard Negan let out a low guttural growl, and a second later she felt a hand on her arm, tugging her back around on the spot, as she smiled wickedly.

"Oh, if Danny even gets a flash of those perfect fuckin' titties of yours Darlin, Daddy is gonna be kinda pissed off..." Negan muttered now, scowling, his face deadly serious. "An' poor ol' Danny might find himself double datin' with you, me an' Lucille next time."

But Blake barely got the chance to let out a laugh, as Negan captured her lips in a brief kiss, as she felt him press the dress back into her hands reluctantly.

Blake laughed again as he pulled away, rolling her eyes as she slipped the dress back over her shoulders, trying it up once more at the waist, before turning back to face him fully.

And with that, the blonde woman reached up, gently grabbing his stubbly cheeks between her fingers, as she pulled at her bottom lip in a seductive manner.

"Oh Daddy's gotta realize that he can't always get his own way you know..." she murmured back in a vixen-like voice, before letting go and turning around once again, making for the door.

But she was stopped in her tracks for the second time tonight, letting out a sudden small whimper, as she felt a sudden body press up against hers from behind and a calloused hand dip down beneath her skirt, finding the hot space between her legs once again, his fingers disappearing between her folds.

"Mmmmm, I think you've got to remember who you fuckin' belong to, Princess," Blake heard Negan murmur into her ear now, as she gave a wide smile, leaning back into him slightly as he removed his hand, letting out a chuckle against her hair.

Blake glanced up at him now over her shoulder, as she rolled her eyes for the nth time tonight, before reaching down and grabbing his hand with her own.

"Come on, Daddy," she said uttering the last word with a playful contempt in her voice. "I think we both deserve a well-earned rest tonight..."

And with that Blake had given his hand a tug and pulled Negan in the direction of the door as he followed willingly behind her, a wide, smug grin plastered across his face....

....leaving the pool table abandoned, and the game unfinished....

...as Negan and Blake's giggles filled the Sanctuary hallways...

....and carried on through the night.
"I don't have a problem with moving in here with you, Negan," Blake said in a cool voice, giving an easy shrug as she padded across the hardwood floor on bare feet, forty minutes later. "It's just that you've never officially asked me."

Negan, who was currently stretched across his large king-sized bed, his arms propped up behind his head, his boots still on, was watching the blonde woman move over towards him with narrowed eyes.

The pair had come up here since their tiring, but highly enjoyable session down in the rec room, Blake having helped herself to a shower whilst Negan relaxed.

But now, having dried off, the blonde woman now had shucked on one of Negan's fresh black t-shirts, which fell to her upper thighs barely covering her ass, and a pair of her own abandoned panties she had found, tucking her long hair behind her ear as she came to join him on the large bed.

"Well here I am fuckin' askin' you now, Peaches," said the dark-haired man with a slight hint of tenderness to his voice, catching Blake's green eyes with his own chocolate gaze.

She immediately felt butterflies in her stomach, blinking slowly at him with a smirk upon her features, as she came to sit on her knees on the mattress beside him.

Negan, with a stiff sigh turned on his side to face her, propping his head up with his elbow, his other free hand reaching out to slide its way up Blake's bare thigh, causing the hem of her shirt to ride up slightly.

"So….you wanna move your shit in here with me?" he asked, his voice now serious, dipping his chin low as he stared up at her.

Blake instantly gave a smile, raising her eyes to the four-poster canopy above their heads.

"Wow, you're such a charmer, you know that?" she commented in an amused tone riddled with sarcasm, looking his way once more.

But Negan paused, a frown twitching his way between his dark brows.

"That a fuckin' yes?" he asked poignantly, his eyes searching her face in a questioning manner.

Right now the normally arrogant Saviour looked like a frustrated and lost little puppy. And that warmed the blonde woman through, to think that he wanted her in his room, and in his life, just that much...

Blake finally gave a small laugh, nodding.

"Yes," she said with a gentle, elated voice, crawling suddenly forwards and coming to straddle his lap, as a satisfied smirk slid its way over Negan's lips, his big calloused hands instantly moving to her curved hips.

To be honest, Blake had already pretty much moved in here with him, Negan barely batting an eyelid when she used his bathroom, or his hot water, or when she tucked Mia into bed with them at the end of each night. The bearded Saviour having definitely grown very accustomed to having her around, but it truly showed what he felt for her now, with him directly asking her to move her stuff
into his room. Such a small gesture in the grand scheme of things, but in this world, a little meant so much to Blake.

Giving a grin, and lifting both her hands to toy with her tangled mass of blonde hair, Blake chanced a glance over her shoulder at the large wooden wardrobe in the corner of Negan's room.

"You sure you've got enough closet space for me though?" she asked wrinkling her nose slightly as she spoke in a teasing gesture.

But at her words, the dark-haired Saviour, pulling himself up into a sitting position, with Blake still sitting on his lap, gave a low chuckle, his hands finding her waist as he tugged her into him a bit more.

"Oh I can make room, don' you fuckin' worry about that, Doll-face," he uttered smoothly, his lips reaching hers.

Blake smiled into his mouth, falling into his kiss as his strong hands slid down her spine, reaching her ass and giving it a needy squeeze.

Blake let out a small squealing giggle, but Negan refused to let her pull away from him, holding her in place as his lips attacked hers.

God, it felt good to spend some time with him.

After the week she had had, this brief moment of quiet and happiness was indeed well needed.

Eventually she managed to prise her lips from his, both of them catching their breath as Blake pressed her forehead to Negan's.

"I love you," she whispered, almost kicking herself at how cheesy that sounded coming from her mouth in this intimate moment,

But Negan with a smile of his own, barely blinked, his mouth, instead, moving to her jawline, as he left a trail of open mouth kisses against her warm skin.

"Mmmhmm, love you too, Darlin'," he hummed into the pulsepoint below her ear, causing Blake's eyes to close in a blissful moment of pure happiness.

This felt like heaven. Or as close as Blake could get to it at least, her hands threading through Negan's thick dark hair as he kissed at her, making the most deliciously wet noises Blake had ever heard.

She let out a soft moan, and a second later she felt Negan press a grin into her neck, nuzzling his stubby cheek against hers.

"So now you're movin' in with me," the leader of the Saviours mused. "That mean we're officially datin', Sweetheart?"

Blake immediately made a face, opening her eyes and giving a bemused giggle.

"Pfft," she scoffed. "In your dreams lover boy."

Her words were teasing, but Blake couldn't help but grin, as she pulled back slightly, pressing both her hands to his bearded cheeks and staring down into his dark eyes.

Of course the pair of them knew full well that they had been 'dating' for a long time...from that first
kiss…..from that first time she had shared his bed...from the first time Negan had spent the night alone without his wives....from that first time he laid eyes on her…

The caramel-blonde woman traced her thumb along the scar on Negan's upper left cheek, as his eyes searched her face and he pulled at his bottom lip with his teeth.

There was a long moments silence, whilst the pair of them just gazed at each other in the silence of their bedroom....undisturbed by Mia....or Simon....or Dwight..or any other fucker who thought it was ok to barge in on them....

This felt good, and right, and needed, and Blake felt a jolt in her stomach, realising that she had never felt happier in her life that she did right now at this very second.

Everything was perfect.....and right.....

And even with the state of the world as it was, Blake knew that she would rather be here right now, with Negan...than back in her old life....in that city...in the apartment above the coffee shop with David...working nine-to-five, without walkers roaming the streets.or with the man she had convinced herself that she loved and that she needed, for so long.

For now, Blake knew what it felt to truly be in love and to have someone as devoted to her as she was to him.

Since getting to the Sanctuary, since she had woken up in that cell, Negan had shown her every level of affection and protection and adoration as a man should show a woman.

He had treated her as a person, and not just his possession...or a pawn in his game like her ex-fiance had.

And as frustrated as Negan had been with her on occasion...or angry with her even....not once had he hit her, or spoken to her with revulsion in his voice.

He had never made her feel scared, or like she wasn't worthy. And it had indeed taken Blake a long time to raise that it was unlikely he ever would.

And although Negan was painted like a monster by most, in reality, it had been David who had been the monster. David who had ground her down and abused her and made her feel like she was worthless, and feel like that she always deserved to be treated that way by men.

For Negan had made Blake into a queen. Kissed her bruises and her scars, and healed her...in ways that were not even visible on the surface, but instead resonated much deeper down.

He was her Saviour...

In more ways than she could ever describe....

It was Blake's turn to bite down on her own lip now, narrowing her green eyes, as she tilted her head gently, sending her long caramel hair cascading over her shoulder.

"You hungry?" she asked, offering the bearded man below her a gently questioning look, as his hands drifted up and down her sides, causing her black tshirt to ride up slightly around her smooth thighs.

Negan let out a small chuckle, leaning his lips into her neck once again.
"That you askin' me to eat you out, Peaches?" he queried, as Blake gave yet another laugh. "...'cause hell, you know I am always up for that."

But she prised him from her yet again with a scolding tut.

"Actually I was talking about going to go get a midnight snack or something," she said in a gentle voice, tucking a strand of hair back behind her ear. "If that's allowed on the points system of course, Mr Negan, sir?"

Her tone was taunting, but Negan's eyes twinkled at her now in the low warm lamplight.

It was late and although there would unlikely be many people around, Blake still knew that anyone else would get punished for taking more than their fair share around here. Although in Blake's defence, she hadn't had much of an appetite this week.

But since their tryst downstairs, Blake had felt a new wave of hunger wash over her, feeling a lot better than she had just a few hours ago.

She could finally now relaxm knowing that Mia was safe and happy with the wives downstairs for tonight, and that Negan was here, with her, where he was supposed to be.

The dark-haired Saviour sucked on his teeth thoughtfully, before finally answering.

"Well I guess you'll have to find a way of makin' up those points, Princess," he growled into her mouth, snatching another kiss from her, before giving her ass a gentle smack, earning another squeal into his mouth from the blonde's lips. "C'mon."

Blake pulled back, offering him a light scowl, before peeling herself from Negan's lap and clambering from the bed.

"Well thank you, Daddy," she said in a baby-voiced, simpering tone, which gained a loud laugh from Negan's lips as he pushed himself off of the bed.

Blake threw him a smirking look over her shoulder, but in a moment or two, the pair of them were already out of the door, heading down the long corridor towards the stairwell.

It was quiet now and everything was silent, and Blake, threading her fingers through Negan's as she strolled down the hallway in nothing but an oversized t-shirt and a pair of panties, couldn't help but feel like a naughty schoolkid sneaking out of class to make out with her boyfriend behind the bleachers.

"Jeez, Peaches," said Negan in a slightly exasperated voice after a moment or two, as they heard the door to their room swing closed behind them. "Do you ever wear fuckin' shoes around this place?!"

Negan was of course referring to just over a week ago when Blake had found herself running down the ground floor hallways drunk and had had trodden on broken glass. And with the lack of her belongings up in Negan's quarters, here she was again, barefoot. And also, on this occasion, very bare-legged.

But Blake rolled her eyes, shooting him a reproachful look.

"Uhh….well I thought you'd have more a of a problem with me walking around the Sanctuary with my butt on show. But y'know, whatever," she said airly, as Negan leaned back on his heels, his eyes travelling down to the place where the hem of his borrowed black shirt skimmed over Blake's peachy rear.
And before she could say another word, Negan had let out a loud, stiff cough and maneuvered himself around her, his arms threading themselves around her waist from behind, the entire weight of him coming to press against Blake's back.

The blonde gave a squeal, as he almost knocked her off balance, propelling her forwards a few steps, his hands gripping her middle hard.

"Stop it, asshole," she laughed, slapping his arm lightly, as Negan pulled himself from her with a growl, grasping her hand in his once more.

The pair of them soon settling back to walking hand-in-hand side-by-side, their bodies leaning into one another slightly as they went, looking like a pair of young lovers heading out on a date.

Both of them happy…

Both of them content...

Both of them looking utterly head over heels for the other…

…..as they headed down the long hallway and through the set of swing double doors at the very end that led out into the stairwell…. 

...disappearing out of sight.
A midnight snack

The hallways of the Sanctuary were almost always quiet at this time of night. With lack of much entertainment and long working hours for most, the moment it got dark, the majority of the Saviours tucked themselves into bed, filling the hallways with an emptiness...a stark contrast from the usual day-time hustle and bustle of the place.

And tonight, apart from a few patrols on the outer walkways, and a couple of Saviours finishing up in the laundry room...everyone else, including the wives upstairs and Mia tucked up neatly with them, was asleep...a hush falling over the old and dusty factory building.

But two people were certainly not asleep in the lateness of the night, their laughter and lewd conversation floating down the hallways that led towards the kitchens.

These two were nowhere near the dreamworld that the other Sanctuary residents were in right now. But in a strange way both of them were closer to that world, than anyone else....

For Blake at least, she felt more refreshed than she had in a long while. A new lease of life flowing through her, as she walked side-by side down the long hallway beside the tall and tanned Saviour, the pair of them teasing and bantering with each other to the point of almost an argument breaking out between them.

It was as though the pair of them now were finally getting the time to flirt and hang out as any 'normal' couple would back in the real world. Finding comfort and warmth with one another, something which neither of them had experienced for a long long time.

"Nu-uh, I do NOT have a thing for older men," remarked Blake wrinkling her nose, as she shot Negan a laughing look, as they walked. Blake on her bare feet, Negan in his thick black biker boots that seemed to clink with every step he took.

Showing off his line of perfectly straight white teeth in fiendish grin, Negan gave a shrug of his slumped shoulders, as he shoved open the large set of swing doors ahead of them, that led to the basement floor of the Sanctuary.

This was not particularly somewhere that either of them frequented often. The last time Blake had been here, was when she and the wives had stolen several bottles of wine and alcohol from the storerooms (the bottles of which were still not accounted for on the inventory list even today, forcing Negan to begrudgingly wave it).

"Well damn, you could have fucking fooled me, Peaches," Negan scoffed.

He was tonight without Lucille, Blake already noting the knife he had threaded through his belt on exiting their room, although his hands remained shoved into his grey pants pockets, as his eyes turned to look at her, lifting his chin in delight at the look that passed over her face.

For Blake's eyebrows had disappeared up into her hairline at his words.

"Uh, excuse me!" she uttered sounding scandalised, as she pressed a hand to her tshirt clad chest. "I have never been with a guy more than five years older than me, thank you very much..."

But Negan gave a laugh at this.

"Pfft, liar. I've got more almost a couple of fuckin' decades on you, Sweetheart, an' I don' think I
fuckin' dreamt screwin' your brains out these last couple of months!" he retorted give an arrogant chuckle, which caused Blake to scowl and shot him a deadly look.

"I'm just saying," she said waving a hand in his direction dismissively. "I have a thing for you, but not necessarily for older men in general."

"Nope. You've got a kink, Doll-face. Don' bother denying it..." he smiled teasingly.

But Blake rolled her eyes, before a second later, letting a heavy sigh leave her lips.

"Hmmm, well maybe you're right," she mused, shrugging. "And, now you mention it...I have started getting all hot and bothered when I see John down in the gardens."

John, who was well into his early seventies, with grey hair and a wide smiley face, reminded Blake of a kindly old uncle rather than anything else.

But even so, Blake would, of course, play along if that's what Negan wanted.

The blonde woman gave a wiggle now, acting as though she had a tingling between her legs brought on by thoughts of old John.

"Mmmmmmm," she said in a simpering tone, pacing a few steps ahead of Negan and closing her eyes momentarily in a look of euphoria. "You know he really turns me on when he pulls out that handkerchief of his, to wipe his sweaty brow-"

But before she could say another word, Blake gave a squeal as she felt hands at her sides grabbing her hard.

The blond let out a carrying laugh that filled the hallway, as Negan maneuvered her around, backing her up against the wall behind her possessively, his handsome bearded face fixed into a wolf-like grin.

Blake felt her spine hit the cold corridor wall behind her, as she glanced up, the light above them flickering slightly, plunging them into a blinking darkness every other second.

"You sure about all that, Peaches?" Negan growled, leaning his face into hers, his fingers reaching up and threading themselves through her own digits, pinning her hands to the space either side of her shoulders. "'Cause, hey, if you really think ol-Johnny is the man for you, hell, I ain't the one about to break up love's young fucking dream."

Blake smiled back at him vixen-like and happy, as she ignored his words, instead, moving her head forwards slightly trying to catch Negan's lips with her own.

But Negan raising his eyebrows, pulled back slightly, cocking his long face to the side.

"Ah, ah, ah," he reprimanded her. "You've made your fuckin' choice. Now you're gonna have to live with it."

Blake, dipped her chin, giving a pout, but even so, managed to raise her bare leg, trailing it up Negan's inner thigh gently.

"You sure 'bout that, Daddy?" she purred out, leaning her head back against the wall, looking seductive, as she felt her heart begin to race.

The silence of the hallway was deadly, and Negan's closeness to her only served to make her chest
flush beneath the confines of his oversized tshirt.

The tall Savior, pulled at his bottom lip excruciatingly slowly with his line of teeth, grinning down at her… but despite the intimacy between them right now, Negan still held off…

...not quite giving Blake what she wanted.

She pouted again, looking like a scolded schoolgirl, pinned to the wall in just a tshirt and panties.

But even so, the dark-haired leader of the Saviours gave a chuckle, letting go of one of her hands but still holding onto the other….before he turned on his booted heel…..pulling her from the wall and heading back along the corridor and through the large steel door that housed the kitchens, without another word.

Blake gave a whine, but followed along obediently anyway, as they entered the large room, Negan flipping on the light as they did so.

The bright harsh, cold lights above them flickered on, illuminating the sterile room filled with metal worktops and work surfaces of varying heights.

Various food items were dotted around in tubs and jars and bowls. And utensils of every kind filled every counter.

There were a whole mass of people who worked down her, toiling hard to make sure everyone was fed for whatever little rations they had.

Although lately rations and supplies certainly had not been a problem for the Saviours. Their store cupboards had been full to the brim of late, and the having the garden with an almost constant supply of fruit and vegetables coming in, only helped matters.

Blake even in the short time she had been here had never seen, even the lowly workers, more plump and happy, with even the minimum of points gaining you a good portion of vegetables at the very least.

The caramel-blonde woman detached her hand from Negan's, now heading eagerly over to where a small bowl of cherry tomatoes was sat on the counter nearest to her, popping one into her mouth and giving a moan of pleasure as she bit down, chewing the perfectly ripened fruit.

Negan stared at her, leaning back on his long legs.

"Oh yeah," he said waving a hand sarcastically in her direction. "Go ahaed an' help your fuckin' self to my fuckin' shit why don't ya..."

But Blake turning to look at him over her shoulder made a face, picking another tomato and popping it into her mouth.

"Uh, for your information," she said in a heated tone, with her mouth full. "I actually helped grow these. And, while we're at it, I don't see you out there helping our cause lately."

Her tone was teasing, but Negan gave a wide taunting grin of his own, marveling at her attitude towards him.

"Jeesh, I practically built this place from the ground up, Darlin!'" he said, slowly strolling over and closing the gap between them. "An' for the record, Daddy's been a little fuckin' busy making sure his girls don't get their asses into too much fuckin' trouble, as they so often like to do."
Blake smirked, her hand dipping down as she reached for another tomato from the bowl. But before she could lift it to her mouth, Negan had grabbed her wrist, leant forwards and taken to fruit from her fingers, tossing it into his own mouth instead.

The blonde gave another playful pout at this, causing Negan to reach up, cupping his hand over her chin and running his thumb over her bottom lip.

"Oh, Peaches," he murmured in a gravelly voice, his long features leaning in close to hers. "You know when you make faces like that, it makes Daddy wanna do bad, bad fuckin' things to that mouth of yours."

But Blake, although she felt a dampness from in her panties, wrinkled her nose, and before Negan could lean in to snatch a kiss from her plump and inviting lips….she had reached up, pressing yet another cherry tomato to his mouth instead.…

Blake hastily peeled herself from his grasp with a small laugh, as Negan growled in response chewing the small red fruit, before the blonde headed across the room to where an enormous dual-refrigerator stood, tugging open both doors with a soft grunt.

She peered inside interestedly, as from across the room, spinning around on his booted heel, Negan marvelled at her admiringly.

"You seriously ditchin' my fuckin' advances, Darlin'?!" he queried, arching a dark eyebrow in her direction. "For dinner?!!"

But Blake only offered him a warm yet simpering smile in return, as she pulled out a jar from the fridge, unscrewing the lid.

"For chocolate spread I am…" she replied, turning away from the dark-haired man once more and turning her attention instead to the jar in her hands, closing the refrigerator doors and padding back over the the counter in the centre of the large kitchen on bare feet.

When she reached it, she leaned her elbows against the cold surface of the metal counter, dipping her finger into the jar and lifting her chocolate coated finger to her mouth, sucking it clean.

Negan's eyes suddenly became very dark and husky as he watched her. Although Blake was far too preoccupied by the taste of the chocolate spread to notice, closing her eyes as she sucked another finger-full of chocolate into her mouth once more, savouring the sweet taste.

The blonde, like most others, definitely had a penchant for chocolate. But for some reason today it tasted better than ever….with Blake almost wanting to moan out as she licked at her sticky fingers.

But she had barely noticed Negan hastily closing the gap between them, and she blinked her eyes open to find the bearded man suddenly at her side, leaning his tall form over her, as he dipped one of his own long fingers into the jar….

Blake almost instantly gave a playful pout, holding it away from his reach.

"Hey!" she scolded.

But Negan merely grinned.

And to Blake's utter delight, he held his chocolate coated forefinger up to her lips.

The woman hovered for a brief moment, her green eyes flickering up to his dark ones that were now
full of want and need...as they had seemed to have been a lot tonight.

And so, with a gentle smile, Blake had gently run her tongue over Negan's lengthy digit, sucking it clean.

Negan, right now, looked almost enthralled with her....his other hand slipping to her tshirt-covered waist as he pressed himself against her and slowly turned them both so that Blake's ass was flush with the countertop.

Blake felt her breath hitching in her throat now, as she held the jar between them, her eyes never leaving Negan's, even when he, without a word, hauled her by the thighs up onto the counter behind her.

Her ass hit the cold surface with a bump, making her squeak, but even so, she smiled wickedly, gazing at the man before her, as he glanced down into the jar that Blake clutched tightly between both her hands.

Neither of them said anything, but both of them felt the heat between them.....that desirous fire that burned hot and strong and primal…

Negan reached down, swiping two of his fingers into the chocolate, but when he pulled them out he did not bring them to Blake's lips, or even to his own....

.....instead, with his hand trailing down, he smeared the brown sticky substance across the soft flesh of Blake's inner thigh…

The caramel-blonde woman breathed hard, her green gaze drifting down to her legs, watching as Negan, almost obediently dropped down onto one knee, his hands reaching up and pressing her legs apart.

And Blake bit down hard onto her lip, as Negan pressed an open mouthed kiss to the space where the chocolate was, licking at her thigh excruciatingly slowly.

Blake's fingers tangled into his dark hair, her eyes rolling back in her head, and she didn't even notice, Negan's gaze travelling up to her from his waist height position.....admiring the look of sheer pleasure that was etched across her face, as his lips worked their way across his skin.

"Negan..." she managed to moan out, as he moved his attention to her other thigh, pressing wet kiss after kiss to her sensitive skin.

The intimacy between the pair of them right now was astounding...with Blake's fingers threading themselves through Negan's dark locks...almost whimpering out at her need for him to move his kisses inwards to the damp heat between her legs.

But suddenly Blake paled....

....a cold feeling washing over her....as everything began to feel extremely distant.

Even the feeling of Negan lips on her skin, felt like a million miles away....

Blake felt dizzy and spaced out....

....like her body didn't quite belong to her anymore.....

....feeling like she was drifting...hearing her heavy breaths coming loud and echoey in her ears as
she blinked her green eyes open...but found herself focusing on nothing.

Just nothing.

Not even Negan who had paused in his work, his eyes finding her face now.

And Blake barely even noticed him slide himself to his feet once more...just as the jar in her hand fell from her grasp...

...falling to the floor with a loud smash, sending the chocolate substance everywhere along with shards of broken glass.

But at the sudden noise, Blake blinked once more, the sound ringing in her ears, but enough to snap her out of her woozy state.

But she could only look up to see Negan's fixed face staring back to her, his jaw clenched and his eyes a picture of worry.

"Sorry," she murmured, her eyes falling to the mess she's made on the floor, but she almost instantly heard Negan give a growl as he rounded on her possessively.

"Right, you want to tell me what the fuck's been goin' on with you lately, Sweetheart?" he demanded in a low, hoarse, yet urgent sounding voice, as he lifted a hand to her cheek, brushing his thumb gently over her skin.

Blake stared at him. Her stomach lurching uncomfortably.

"N-Nothing, I'm fine I-I'm just tired," she shrugged, her eyes not quite meeting his.

But the frown that twitched its way between Negan's dark brows showed her almost instantly that he did NOT believe her words, dropping his hand from her face.

"Don' give me that shit, Peaches," he uttered, his voice slightly raised now, as his orbs searched hers. "Hell I ain't fuckin blind. I can see those damn bags under your eyes that tell me you ain't sleepin' right...you look tired, an' you're out of sorts....an' the fact you ain't eatin' as much as you usually do-
"

"What? So you're checking up on me now?" snapped Blake suddenly, feeling immediately defensive at his words.

All this was down to tiredness....of having her hands full with Mia...of course it was....

But Negan lowered his chin darkly, his brown eyes narrowing.

"Don' I have a fuckin' right to?!!" he said in a loud, exasperated voice. "Jesus, Darlin', sometimes you act like it's crazy that I would actually care about you!"

Blake just stared at him now... giving a dry gulp, a hollow feeling washing through her...pulling at her stomach, causing a sudden wave of fear, and pain, and hurt, to flow through her body. She felt tears prick at her eyes, but she willed them not to come.

"I mean goddamn it, Peaches," Negan said jerking his head back as he eyed her incredulously. "I get that your ex-fuckin' fi-an-ce didnt give a crap about you, but that don' mean I'm the same fuckin' guy! So don' act all high an' mighty just because I'm concerned about your goddamn welfare."

Blake blinked up at him a couple of times at these words. Hurt that Negan would bring up David like
that. Using her abusive ex as a reason for her behaviour.

For was that all he thought of her?

Was she really just this scarred and abused little thing to him?...Unable to think and feel for herself without it harking back to David and how he had treated her?

But without the energy to argue with Negan right now, Blake gave him a sharp shove away from her, tearing her emerald eyes away from his, as she pushed herself from the countertop, dropping to the floor on her bare feet.

Her eyes avoided his now, as she shoved past him, being careful to avoid treading on the chocolate and broken glass strewn across the floor, making for the door.

"I'll clear this mess up in the morning," she said.....giving no more explanation of where she was going, to Negan, as she exited the room...not even looking back at him once….

...and leaving him standing there alone in the stark brightness of the kitchens.
By the time Negan had returned to his room later that night, he had found it be to be void of any trace of Blake, and the following morning, despite waking early by his standards, Negan had gone to the blonde's room down on the second floor, to find it empty, despite the bed having looked like it had been slept in.

Today, on this gloomy grey and misty morning, dressed in his usual leather jacket, black boots and grey pants, with a belt slung around his hips, Negan, with Lucille swinging from his hand as he went, had entered into the large dining hall. Only to see Blake sitting on a bench at the far end of the chaotic and busy room, with Mia sat up next to her, stuffing a piece of toast into her tiny, yet already full, mouth.

Negan dragged a hand down his bearded chin almost instantly, his heart dropping into his stomach. He fucking hated arguing with Blake like this, and almost immediately after the blonde woman had walked out of the kitchens last night, Negan had regretted his words. Although he certainly did not think he was in the wrong here.

Like he had told her. He wasn't fucking blind, and he could see that she hadn't been herself lately.

And as gorgeous as she was, heavy bags lay under her eyes and her normally sparking orbs looked duller that normal.

But it wasn't just that.

To Negan, she seemed like she was holding herself differently. Looking like a porcelain doll, that if knocked over, would shatter into a million pieces.

He watched her now run a hand through her long tousled blonde hair, her elbow on the table as she smiled down at Mia who was, as always, babbling away at a million miles a second about nothing and everything all at the same time.

Fuck, he loved her. Blake.

But perhaps him showing his concern for her in that way last night was the wrong way to go about things.

But this needed to be addressed, one way or another. He needed her to be well….to be safe...

Because he knew that, after losing Lucille, he would not be able to take another loss in his life like that.

For after years of feeling like a man, broken, full of anger and hurt.....

...Blake had fixed him, healed his heart and made it whole again.

"You enjoy your lie-in, boss?" came a sudden voice just over his shoulder, causing him to blink, swinging his shoulders around to cock an eye at the questioner.

Simon was stood there now, blue shirt on and thumbs threaded through his belt loops, coming to stand at Negan's shoulder, surveying the room with him.

But Negan gave a scoff.
"Now what the fuck makes you think I have time for shit like that?" said Negan in a very unamused voice.

But his right-hand man paid no mind to Negan's tone, giving a sniff and nodding over towards the table at the far end of the room where Blake was sat.

"Just thought you were takin' it easy this mornin' seein' as your gals were up and out without you," the mustachioed man said in an easy voice. "Seven-foot Pete said she was up with the larks, cleaning up the kitchen floor before dawn. Said he got down there, to find her finishin' up. Said somethin' about makin' a mess last night."

Simon gave a grin, side-eying Negan.

"You two have some fun down there after hours, boss?" he said waggling his eyebrows.

But Negan gave a growl, suddenly rounding on his friend and lifting Lucille to Simon's chin intimidatingly.

"Did I ask you to stick your nose where it doesn't belong, Si?" he snarled.

Usually dealings with Simon never ended in the threats that Negan presented to his other lieutenant on occasion. But this morning the dark-haired Saviour was NOT in the mood.

But Simon, barely flinching and keeping his chin raised, shook his head.

"Apologies," he said in a clear voice.

Negan lingered for a long moment, before he backed off once more, letting out a long and tired huff.

He hadn't slept well at all last night.

The nightmares had only become worse. Blake's endless screams continuing on and on for what seemed like hours...with Negan waking in a sweat at least two or three time throughout the duration of the night.

And so taking a deep breath and knowing that something needed to be done about all this, the dark-haired Saviour, with Lucille hanging limply from his hand, paced slowly over towards the long table where Blake and Mia were sat. Leaving Simon where he was stood without another word.

The blonde woman quickly looked up upon seeing Negan approach, but to his dismay, she did not smile at him, Negan seeing a gulp trail it's way down her slender throat.

Shit, was she still pissed at him?

But Negan didn't have time to dwell on this now as he came to stop just in front of their table, his lips pressed into a firm line.

"Hai Eggy," said Mia sudden breaking through the awkward moments-silence. "I eatin' towst."

With that, the teeny girl, with unkempt messy hair today, sitting there in little pink smock and spotty leggings, brandished a floppy and half-chewed piece of toast up towards him.

Negan couldn't help but give a smile at this, his eyes twinkling at the toddler.

"I can fuckin' see that, Beansprout," he replied, his eyes drifting over the mass of crumbs that covered the table before her.
But Blake, turning herself slightly in her seat to face away from him, focused her attention on Mia instead, lifting the little girl from beneath her arms and pulling her onto her lap.

The caramel blonde woman was today in a pair of black jeans and a cozy-looking flannel shirt with her hair half up and half down. But she seemed to look at strained as ever, with hollow dark circles beneath her eyes.

"Come on, Sweetie," Blake said in gentle voice, ignoring Negan completely. "Eat you toast, then we'll go."

But as Negan gave a frustrated frown at her words, and as Blake stood, hauling Mia with her, the toddler gave a loud, crying wail.

"Noh, I noht reddy!" she squealed, kicking her legs out wildly, as Blake looked utterly forlorn, dropping the teeny girl back down onto the bench before her hurriedly.

Normally Mia acted like an angel around Blake, but today perhaps the little girl was having an off day.

And from the looks of it, the same could be said about Blake too….

...as in the blink of an eye, as though in reaction to Mia's outburst, Blake had shaken her head, placing both hands to her face, dropping back down onto the bench beside Mia with a plop, and given a small sob.

Negan, his face filling with concern, moved hurriedly around the table to her, as several nearby Saviours looked their way, obviously curious what all the fuss was about.

Blake's head was now bowed low and her shoulders hunched, with both hands drawn down into her lap, her beautiful face awash with tears, as Negan came to crouch before her on his long legs, a frown lingering between his brows.

He took her hand gently, and to his relief she did not flinch away.

"Peaches, c'mon," he urged her in a low voice, of course knowing that his gentle affection for her had indeed gained the attention of most of the Saviours in the gigantic dining hall right now, with the room falling almost completely silent.

But Negan did not really care.

His focus now on one person, and one person alone.

He rubbed Blake's soft fingers with his own, as her tear-filled eyes finally met with his.

Right now she looked utterly lost and far from the Blake he knew and loved.

"Wot 'rong, Bwakey?" came a sudden voice from their right, Negan looking up to see Mia, clmering swiftly over Blake's legs, placing her tiny hand to the woman's shoulder. "I sowwy. I didn' mean ta make yew cry!"

And with that, Mia placed a sloppy kiss to Blake's tear-strewn cheek, causing the woman to give a small sniff and pull Mia close, cuddling her in a one armed hug, resting her head against the toddler's comfortingly.

"Darlin'," Negan uttered once more, drawing the blonde's attention back to him finally. "Go an' see
fuckin' Carson...hell, I'll get him to come to you if you want."

Negan's chocolate eyes searched her face for an answer.

But Blake merely chewed on her lip, pondering his words for what felt like the longest moment.

It was obvious she knew that there was something wrong….and no excuses about her being tired would cover this one.

But even so, she tried to push his help away yet again.

"I've got to take care of Mia-" she murmured, shaking her head once more.

But Negan cut across her quickly, sucking on his teeth in frustration and need.

"I'LL take beansprout for the mornin'" he pressed in a firm tone and lifting his chin in seriousness.
"And you're gonna go see Carson."

Blake opened her mouth hurriedly as if to speak, but Negan stopped her before she could do so.

"I ain't arguing' with you again, Sweetheart, we clear?" the dark-haired Saviour said with a frowning growl, digging his cheek with his tongue and looking from side to side, before he gazed back to her once more. "Look I fuckin' love you, Peaches. But I'm not against throwin' you over my damn shoulder and haulin' your ass over to the doc myself. So go."

With that Negan reached out, hauling Mia carefully into his arms, before getting stiffly to his feet.

"Beansprout an' I will be fine," he continued as Mia pressed her chubby little hand to Negan's bearded face with great interest.

And Blake, staring up at the pair of them, finally, to Negan's relief, gave a solemn nod, as though she was committing herself to a dreadful fate by agreeing.

But nevertheless, she stood too, looking as fragile as Negan had ever seen her.

But it made the tall saviour happy that she was finally agreeing at least. Which after their argument last night was something Negan never thought he would manage to corale Blake into.

But there was something different about her today. A resignation of sorts. As though she knew what was coming…

Like she knew what fate was likely to behold her behind Carson's door….

But Negan's eyes were still on hers now, as, jostling with Lucille and Mia in his leather-clad arms he managed to lift his free hand to Blake's face, still sticky with tears.

"I can come with ya-" he offered.

But Blake, cupping his hand with her own, shook her head.

"N-No, I'll go….." she said before pulling away from him gently, giving Mia's leg a gentle squeeze as she went, before leaving the room…

...Negan and Mia watching her as she went.

And it was only when her tall, leggy form had disappeared around the door on the far side of the
room, did Negan stare about, realising now that almost everyone in the room was staring at him….

….as he stood there, with a concerned look upon his face, and Mia on his hip.

But Negan, cocking an eyebrow up towards the lot of them, leaning back on bended knees and surveying the room, suddenly spoke.

"Can I fuckin' help you all?" he said in a loud, carrying, sarcastic tone, as people suddenly began scurrying to and fro, getting back to what they had been doing before.

It took all of Negan's effort now, not to roll his eyes, as he hitched Mia a little further up onto his bony, belted hip and turned to her.

The pair were of course a huge contrast to one another, the teeny girl in her pink dress with chubby cheeks, still clutching onto her soggy piece of toast for dear life. And Negan, tall, dark haired and intimidating, a picture in black.

"Wher Bwavey gonn?" enquired Mia after a brief moment had passed, and after Negan had let out a short huff.

He mused for a second before answering. "Well Peaches, has got an urgent appointment with the Doc-"

"Peechiz…" repeated Mia in a whisper, gazing at Negan's mouth as though mesmerized by his words.

But the bearded man gave a chuckle at this.

"That's right," he said watching the toddler carefully. "So I guess it's just you an' me for a lil' bit, huh?"

Mia, her fingers fumbling with the collar of Negan's leather jacket gave a nod.

Shit, the kid was sweet, and even in the short time she had been here had taken on plenty of Blake's gestures and habits, staring at him doe-eyed, causing his heart to contract slightly.

"Well, good." he nodded, gazing about the room for brief second, before looking back to her finally.

"So, Beansprout, you wanna come with me an' make sure my empire is in tip top fuckin' shape?" he questioned, raising an wicked eyebrow in the toddler's direction. "Crack a few fuckin' skulls?"

And at this, Mia gave an excitable nod, obviously enthused at the prospect of spending the rest of the morning with Negan.

"Yesh. Bat wat cwakin skwuls meen?" she asked in curious voice, her mouth hanging open in a small o-shape.

But Negan gave another chuckle at this, knowing that Blake would kill him for teaching the kid shit like this, and so he didn't quite have the heart, or the balls to answer THAT question

So instead, reaching up with his free hand, he grabbed Mia's hand that had been holding the toast, lifting it to his mouth and taking a large bite.

Mia, at once, gave a squeal of laughter, causing many of the surrounding Saviours to look his way once more.
But Negan just ignored them.

"C'mon," he muttered with a mouth full of toast, finally turning on his heel and heading out of the room with a bemused grin plastered across his scrubby face.

But across the Sanctuary, far less happy was Blake, who stood in the long gloomy hallway, with one hand pressed flat up against the door in front of her, and her head hung low, staring at her shoes.

For she knew what this was…

What all of this was.

And inside, she had always known.

For days she had tried to fool herself that she must be wrong…praying that it was something else.

But Blake had had these symptoms before…

Twice before now, in fact….

And as much as she had tried to pretend that this was tiredness…exhaustion…lack of an appetite….

She knew almost for certain what it was. What she had feared would happen to her in this brave new fucking world….

And so, resigning herself to her fate, Blake lifted her head, letting out a long steadying exhale, before knocking on the door with a firm- RAT-TAT-TAT.

Swiping the newly-fallen tears from her cheeks as she waited…
"Wat tha?" asked Mia for the fourth time in less that a minute, as Negan strolled across the sunny parking lot with her in tow.

Despite it only being mid-morning, it was already turning out to be a mild and sunny day for this time of year... the perfect day for checking up on the fenced off lots that surrounded the large looming factory building.

Negan gave a long sigh as they walked over to where six of the dead were strung up against the chain-link fence.

The dark-haired Saviour looked over to where Mia was pointing.

"That's a tire," he said in a heavy voice, angling an eyebrow at the large tractor tire laying on it's side just a few feet away from them.

"Wha it doin' ther?" the little girl immediately asked, causing Negan to huff loudly, pursing his lips in her direction.

"Jesus kid, you ever put a sock in it?" he asked.

But Mia, staring up at him, did not understand the question, merely wavering for brief second, before pointing at her own sock-covered foot helpfully.

Negan shook his head, strolling off a little way up the lot, reaching a section that was far busier, and full of people going about their business.

Most of them fell to their knees or nodded reverently as he passed them by, but he noticed that their eyes did seem to linger a little longer upon him this morning.

But this really was no surprise due to the sight that befell them.

For the tall Saviour, right now, had Lucille swinging loosely from one hand, but his other hand he had clasped around Mia's butt, as he held the child to his bony hip.

It truly was sight to behold

And despite this fact that there was no way any of the Saviours could indeed say that Negan was going soft, by the way he growled at almost everyone as he passed, looking like a killer if ever anyone had ever seen him. At the same time, there was certainly something far more human and pleasant about the sight of this rough-around the edges leader of theirs, holding this little girl tightly in his arms. A huge contrast to the weapon he clutched tightly in the other.

But it wasn't even a second later, at the sight of a new part of the Sanctuary Mia had never been before, the toddler gave a small, whining wriggle within Negan's grasp.

"I wan down," she said in a tiny voice, pushing at his leather clad arm that was holding her securely in place.

Negan gave a small frown, but glad to be rid of the small girl's weight, he slowly lowered her to the grown with a "Fine…but mind you don' walk on that damn gravel."

For like Blake, Mia had a tendency to walk around this place with no shoes on. Not that that was her
decision of course. For as much as they had searched, no one had yet come across a pair of Mia sized shoes on any of their runs.

He noticed the toddler crouch down for a moment, testing the ground with her pudgy fingers before walking across the asphalt a few paces, on bendy little legs.

Negan grinned, before he too stood up straight once more and strutted forward.

But he only only gone a few feet when he noticed the kid wasn't at his side anymore.

The dark-haired man turned back to look at her, in annoyance.

But Mia was just stood there with an indignant look etched upon her tiny face.

"What the fuck is it now, Buttercup?" Negan sighed.

But at his words, Mia gave a pout, raising her chin and staring at him directly in the eyes, just like Blake did.

"Eggy hav to howld mai hand," she said in a bossy little voice, suddenly stretching her tiny paw up towards him.

That had been the hand that just a second ago had been clutching a soggy piece of toast which she had dropped somewhere within the gloomy Sanctuary corridor. She had course then proceeded to whine almost non stop about how she had lost it, until Negan had given a tired huff, reassuring he'd get her another piece later just to shut her the hell up.

"Jesus, Darlin'," Negan uttered in frustration, running a hand down his long bearded face.

But Mia gave another little scowling pout at his tone of sheer uncooperation.

"Eggy hav to howld mai hand," she scolded. "Bwakey say."

Negan suddenly shifted his jaw from side-to-side, knowing he would not have a leg to stand on if Peaches ever found out he had defied her wishes when it came to the kid.

And so, grimacing and giving a loud, carrying huff, Negan marched back over to Mia, his gloved hand curling quickly around the toddler's sticky one.

At once Mia looked happy, as Negan clicked his tongue in irritation.

Jeez, here he was, the leader of this fucking place, being given orders by a damn kid!

But he knew that despite his annoyance, all this was for Blake. He would have done anything for her, and in turn, the kid too…

...his mind almost immediately drifting to the caramel-blonde woman, hoping that she had listened to him and gone to see the doc as promised.

Hell, there was a lot of things that could be wrong with someone in this world. So all Negan could hope was that Carson could figure out what was causing these episodes she was having. Hell, he had seen for himself the way her eyes had drifted out of focus, the way her breathing had become shallow, the way all of the colour had drained from her face.

She had been struggling, and surely it wasn't just the impact of Mia in her life that was causing all that?
The tall, dark-haired man let out another huff now as he began to walk slowly with the little girl waddling along beside him, her tiny fingers clutching onto his gloved ones tightly.

It looked like a busy morning in the lot, with a few dirty-clothed workers wrangling the dead behind the fence, and a nearby truck that had obviously just come back from one of the nearby sites laden with supplies, being unloaded by several of the burly lieutenants.

Negan liked his regime running on time and in good shape….with everyone knowing their place and pulling their weight. And this example proved to be no exception to that.

"Who dey?" asked Mia as they walked past the neary fence, with her peering around Negan's knees curiously to get a better look at the dead rotters chained and welded to the iron and chain-link railings.

Negan tutted.

"Well," he said in a calculated voice, lifting the hand that was holding Lucille and scratching at his stubby cheek with his finger, picking his words carefully. "Those sorry fucks are bad fuckin' men…well, they used to be at least."

Mia, her little mouth forming into a perfect o-shape peered up at the nearest one who was snarling and snapping its filthy jaws in her direction.

"They scawy," she said in a very quiet voice, causing Negan to follow her line of sight.

Hell, he really did fucking feel for the kid….growing up in this damn world and not knowing anything different.

But Negan gave her tiny paw the smallest of squeezes, causing her to look at him, her eyes big and round.

"You don' worry about those fuckers, we clear?" he said leaning back on his legs and offering her a reassuring smirk. "You see all my men out here?"

He gestured to the lot full of lieutenants and workers with the spiky end of Lucille.

"Well they're here to protect you, you understand that, beansprout? Me an' Peaches too," he said in low voice, warmer than it normally sounded, as Mia stared up at him. "And….Lucille here also knows a thing or two about keepin' people safe."

He held up his barbed wire covered baseball bat, the metal wire glinting in the morning sunlight.

"So if you ever run into any trouble," he said nodding his head and grinning. "She'll come runnin'. You understand?"

Mia gave a nod, although Negan wasn't quite sure if she did understand.

But nevertheless the kid seemed satisfied, her attention moving onto the next thing all too quickly.

She bobbed along on chubby little legs pulling him with after her, before stopping and pointing with great interest at a large black, familiar object, on the floor just over to their left.

"Wha tha?" she asked excitedly. Forgetting completely about the snarling and frightening walkers over to her right….

…..as Negan gave a heavy sigh and a hard roll of his eyes.
"That's a fuckin' tire," he replied, once more.
The morning flitted by fairly quickly with Mia keeping Negan busy with question after question, and whine after whine after whine.

And eventually, after hearing the kid complain for the third time in ten minutes that she was hungry and realising he really wasn’t going to get much fucking done this morning with her in tow, he had given a huff of irritation before hauling her up and taking her into the busy dining hall.

But it wasn't until he had reached the spacious room, full of Sanctuary residents enjoying a well-earned (and well paid for) lunch, did he finally realise just how long he had spent outside.

And just how long Blake had been gone for...

Surely a trip to the docs couldn't take that fucking long, could it?

She had probably been gone at least a couple of hours by now….and Negan would have presumed she'd have at least come to find them.

Unless…

Well, she hadn't looked that fucking great this morning. And if it WAS something more serious...

Negan felt his blood run cold at the prospect.

And so, sucking at his teeth, he hauled Mia, who was currently sat eating some goldfish crackers and a couple of sticky strawberries, back up into his arms.

The little girl gave an instant whine of annoyance at this disturbance.

"Noh Eggy, I is eatin'!" she wailed, but Negan, with a grunt, scooped up the remaining box of crackers, hastily shoving them in her tiny hands.

"Come on Beansprout," he said in a gruff voice. "I ain't fuckin' arguin' with you."

He heard Mia give the tiniest of grumbles, before pouting and dipping her hand into the box of goldfish one more….glaring at him woefully.

But Negan wasn't too fussed about how much the toddler despised him right now. All he cared about was that she as safe and well, along with Blake.

It took him only a couple of minutes on long legs to reach Carson's door on the far side of the dark factory building.

It was quiet here, with most of the Saviours at lunch. And the only sound Negan could hear in this drafty hallway, was the near-constant munch-munch-munch of Mia devouring crackers in his ear.

Negan lifted Lucille a little awkwardly, bashing her against the door in front of them a couple of times, before glancing over at the toddler in his arms, who seemed to be shoving goldfish into her mouth at quite a rate, causing her to splutter and cough.

Shit, he couldn't cope with the kid choking right now.

But a split second later she seemed fine, although Negan wasn't really in the mood to be taking risks
right now, as he snatched the crackers away from her.

"I think you've had more than fuckin' enough," he said prising the box from her grasp, like a bottle of whisky from a drunk.

But unsurprisingly, Mia who was tired and cranky, looking like she thoroughly needed a post-lunchtime nap, gave a sudden sniff, her tiny face crumpling and turning red.

And before Negan could do a thing to stop her, she had thrown her head back and began to cry.

The dark-haired Saviour winced at the sound.

Fuck, looking after a kid really was fucking hard work!

So it was no wonder Blake had been so tired this week. Negan hoping that that was all it was, as the door before them was suddenly pulled open.

Negan for a moment, half-hoping it would have been Blake, pursed his lips into a firm line, seeing that it was only Carson standing there in a green shirt with a stethoscope flung around his neck.

The strawberry-blonde doctor always seemed to look a little harassed, which was no surprise really, due to the circumstances he had been brought here.

But nevertheless, the need for a doctor was great in this world, but that did not mean that Carson was not highly compensated for his work.

Negan had given him one of the nicer rooms. The doctor unlike most other workers here, was not on the points system, and in turn could take anything he wanted from the marketplace. Be it medical supplies or whatever else he so wished for.

But the doctor, with one hand on the door, let out a long breath of air, the smallest of irritated frowns lingering between his brows as he eyed Negan.

But he didn't speak, obviously waiting to be addressed by the Saviour himself.

"So..." Negan said, in between Mia's lengthy wails. "She here?"

The dark-haired Saviour almost instantly gazed into the empty room behind Carson, but to Negan's annoyance, he looked alone, the bed and chair at the far end of the medical room empty.

He of course knew who Negan was referring to. For who else would he be enquiring about these days?

For the dark haired Saviour know that no one here could deny their relationship now...it being obvious since the first day Blake had had returned from Alexandria. Things obviously having changed between them. And these days there was no time or room to hide these feelings.

But Carson was silent for what felt like the longest of moment, Negan certain he saw something flicker across the doctor's pale eyes, before he finally answered.

"No," the doctor eventually uttered in a quiet voice, his gaze flickering first to Negan, then to a crying Mia. "She left a couple of hours ago."

Negan's brow darkened suddenly.

But he wavered for a long moment, trying to hold in his rage and frustration at the man standing
before him.

If Mia hadn't have been here with him right now, there was no doubt in Negan's mind that he would've have shoved Carson against a wall and threatened him with Lucille by now.

But with the crying toddler, clutching onto his jacket sleeve, her tears sloshing all across the tarnished black leather, he knew he wasn't gonna risk upsetting the kid any fucking further.

And so, he let out a long puff of air, composing himself and his words very carefully.

"An' she's alright?" he enquired in a low rumbling voice. "Peaches? 'Cause she didn't seem to fuckin' great this mornin', Doc?"

Negan uttered the last word with a large amount of contempt in his voice.

It wasn't as though he didn't trust the doctor's opinion…. But when it came to Blake, Negan knew he wasn't up for taking risks.

But Carson seemed to blink for a moment, lifting his free hand up and running it through his already messed-up hair.

"I think it's best that you talk to her," he said slowly, dipping his chin, but still staring up at Negan, looking rather solemn.

But this look alone, caused Negan's entire body to turn icy cold.

"An' what the fuck does that mean?" Negan growled in a wolf-like manner, tightening his grip on Lucille suddenly. "You wanna tell me what the fuck is goin' on here, Doc?"

He wasn't particularly in the mood to be fucked around here.

But Carson, stood his ground, despite Negan's obvious anger, as Mia continued to sob.

"Like I said, you need to talk to her," the doctor murmured. "It's best it comes from her."

And with that, Carson backed off a little, pushing the door shut once again, in Negan's face.

This was probably the first and only time anyone had done that to Negan in at least the last couple of years.

And if it had been any other circumstance, Negan would have kicked down the said-door, barged in there, and made sure Cason never disrespected him like that again.

But Carson's words rung as clear and as loud in Negan's ear as Mia's crying did right at this very second.

What the hell was going on?

Why was it so fucking important Blake talk to him. Why did it need to be Blake who told him what was wrong.

A million things flitted through Negan's mind, at that very moment.

Perhaps it was stress…

PMS…
The flu...

Or perhaps being here was doing this to her?

Perhaps he would find her in her room packing a bag saying she needed to leave….

To go back to Alexandria. To be somewhere better, cleaner, safer, away from him….

Or maybe Negan was just overreacting.

But all he could do now was talk to her. Ask her what was wrong, instead of speculating and driving himself crazy in the process.

Negan let out a huff, turning his attention back to the toddler in his arms. The noise of her cries working away at him like a tick.

"You wanna fuckin' quit it already, kid?" he snapped loudly.

And for a second, Mia gave a suddenly whimper, blinking a couple of times at Negan's outburst.

But in the blink of an eye, and before Negan could say another word, she gave another squealing wail, looking traumatised, causing Negan to frown deeply, hitching the kid further up onto his bony hip.

Fuck, he was shit at this. With too many concerns and thoughts swirling around in his mind. He utterly felt for Blake having had to deal with whatever was wrong with her, combined with taking care of Mia full-time.

And right at that second, Negan's heart suddenly fell to the pit of his stomach, as he remembered another woman in his life at her wits end, unable to cope with a career, and Negan's endless cheating, while the blackness and disease had grown inside her….

He remembered back to that day… getting a call to say that Lucille had collapsed at a set of traffic lights one day and had been rushed into hospital, the doctors initially saying it was exhaustion.

But it was only after a couple of tests had been done, had they found out what it really was. Negan breaking down there and at the news.

So to think that this with Blake might be history repeating itself again, chilled him to his very core, making him feel more truly frightened than he had been in years.

Negan suddenly let out a sigh, taking a couple of steps down the long corridor before stopping.

"Hey look, beansprout," Negan murmured, as Mia suddenly faltered a second and stared at him with big round eyes that were awash with tears. "I'm fuckin' sorry ok. I'm goddamn useless at this kinda shit. But you'd be doin' me a big, BIG fuckin' favour if you stopped crying and helped me find Peaches. What you think about that, huh? You gonna help ol' Papa Negan out? Hmm?"

Mia sniffled for a second, peering up at him, before giving a tiny nod, her wails diminishing as quickly as they had come.

And Negan offered her a glad smile for her troubles.

"I appreciate it, kid," he said lightly, before he continued on his path down the long dank hallway, and up towards the staircase that led upstairs to the other floors.
He decided to check Blake's 'old' room first, that being the nearest place he would think to check this side of the Sanctuary.

But when they arrived there, there was no sign of her.

And so, the logical next place Negan would presume she would go, was his room, up on the third floor. Their room now.

For that was what they had agreed on yesterday before any silly fucking arguments had come about.

Jeez, Negan was ready to share fucking everything with her. Every little thing he had worked so hard to get in this terrible fucking world….he would give it all to her in a heartbeat, no questions asked.

But shoving open the door to his room, Negan gazed about to find it completely empty. He even marched into the large bathroom, just in case she had been in there, but that too, was absent of anyone.

Negan let out yet another huff of frustration, suddenly marching over to his low coffee table nestled between his two leather sofas, and snatching up a black walkie talkie and holding it to his mouth.

"Anyone is this godforsaken fuckin' hellhole seen Peaches around in last half-hour?" he promptly sighed into the radio, as Mia reaching out with her tiny paws made a playful grab for the walkie At this, Negan giving a frowning huff, holding it tiredly at arms reach away from her.

There was a buzz of static before Simon's voice came clear and loud over the line.

"Not down in the marketplace, boss."

A second later Eugene's voice could be heard, as low and drawling as it was always was.

"Gardens are clear, over."

Negan clenched his jaw, just as a third and final voice was heard. This time Arat's.

"No sign of her anywhere out in the lots."

Negan gave a gulp. Although this place was pretty big, there were really very few hiding places around the dark and looming factory. Especially during the day time.

So how the fuck could Peaches go missing just like that?

Negan lifted the walkie to his mouth once more, as Mia attempted to paw at it again, before giggling and resting her head against leather clad shoulder, obviously having cheered up since her meltdown ten minutes ago.

"Arat," Negan said loudly, addressing his loyal lieutenant. "You seen anyone come an' go in the last fuckin' hour?"

He doubted Balke would leave, but there was always a chance that he had been right and that she had left him….and this place….

There was a lengthy pause before Arat's voice was heard once more.

"Uh, no. No one's gone in and out at all since first light."
Negan stopped still, digging his cheek with his tongue, and feeling a wave of fear wash over him as he slowly dropped the radio back down onto the table once more.

Was that the answer he had been hoping for? Of course it was.

That told him she was likely still here. But arms bells suddenly started ringing.

If she was still here, then where was she? And why did she obviously not want to be found?

"Wher' Bwakey?" came Mia's voice suddenly as her tiny fingers curled around his leather collar, sounding a little concerned, likely from the look that had that now plastered its across Negan's own scruffy features.

But he sucked at his teeth now at her words.

What the fuck was he supposed to say to that?

That he didn't have a fucking clue where she was?

And that as far as he was concerned, she could have collapsed down some dingy dark hallway at the far end of the Sanctuary….

And so he wavered for a brief second, his brown eyes flickering over the baby girl's round face, before answering…. 

"Well," he said gruffly. "Right now, your guess is as good as mine, kid."

And so, lifting his free hand and running it down his bearded chin, he let out a long huff, as he headed out of the room once again...

His long and tanned face, a hardened picture of concern….
It was early afternoon by the time Negan made it down to the large parlour at the far end of the third floor hallway, to find the doors as always, wide open.

The wives were currently sat around their large open-plan lounge area, talking animatedly with one another, by the time Negan strolled through the doorway, with Mia still balanced on his hip.

It was of course usual for these women to fix him with resentful stares the moment he walked into the room, but today all of them stopped in their conversation and gazed up at him, blinking slightly.

They were all today out of their usual garb of the short black dresses Negan had chosen them to wear a long, long time ago. And even he had to admit, it was good to see these women in pants and shirts, looking, well…..fucking comfortable.

He knew that all this was Blake's doing, and he had faux-begrudgingly agreed that they would remain like this for the time being.

Because, fuck, it wasn't as though he still needed the wives. But Negan still felt like he owed these gals something. For as a promise of them being with him, Negan had agreed to provide them with protection and a life not on the points system like the rest of the workers here. And so by removing them from this life, he was taking away all he had promised them all those many years ago. And Negan was a man of his word.

"Ladies," he said addressing them in a low and firm voice. "You seen Peaches?"

He had hoped that they'd have at least seen her in passing.

But Frankie, who was sat on the couch nearest to him, twisted herself around, and shook her head.

"Not since first thing this morning when she came to collect Mia…" the redhead said sounding concerned. "Is something wrong?"

But Negan gave a huff, his dark eyes flickering down to the toddler who was waving her hand shyly toward the group of women, her other drool covered paw stuck into her mouth.

"You gals alright to watch the kid for a while?" the leader of the Saviours muttered promptly, before he stared back over towards the gaggle of women, some of which were waving back at Mia happily.

Frankie instantly stood, making her way over to Negan.

He could tell how cold she was towards him. How cold all these women had always been if truth be told….

But as the red-haired woman reached up, easing the tiny little girl into her arms, he saw a warmth and a happiness, the likes of which had never seen in her, flood over Frankie.

"Of course we can take her," she said in a silly, baby voice, pulling Mia to her chest, as the toddler squealed in delight at being addressed in such a way. "You want to come play with us for a while, angel?"

The baby girl nodded, just as Frankie's face become serious again, and Tanya joined her at her side.

"Is there something the matter? With Blake?" the dark-haired woman asked, tilting her head to the
side, her large brown eyes looking slightly concerned. "She didn't seem too great this morning, or yesterday when we saw her..."

But Negan's eyes darkened suddenly, as he lifted Lucille up onto his shoulder, running his fingers over his bearded mouth.

"Just take care of the kid, alright," he huffed, before turning on his heel and heading out of the room once more.

But out in the hallway, Negan let the smallest of gulps trail down his dry throat.

Shit.

Everything was supposed to be fucking good between them, him and Blake.

Yet now....

After the nightmares he had been suffering with for the past few nights, Negan didn't think he could handle much more of a strain.

What the fuck did he do now? Lock down the entire fucking place?

Put a call out to everyone? Send out a search party?

There had been very few times in his life where Negan had felt as lost as he did right now....

That was the reason he had gotten where he was today, normally so headstrong and calculating.

But right now....unable to find hide nor hair of the woman he fucking loved, Negan felt completely disoriented....lost.....not knowing what to do next.

Blake was like his fucking rock these days....always there to calm him down,...to brighten his fucking day. And yet now she wasn't there....

The last time Negan had felt like this was when Blake had returned to Alexandria....and he had gone from her being in his life every day....to not seeing her at all for weeks on end. Those long, lonely days filling with darkness, as they had been before he had met her.

And yet again, Negan felt himself already falling into that pit....that anger...that pain....that rage, returning.

Negan's sloped off now, a dark frown line lingering between his heavy brows as he went....heading back down the hallway, making his way back to his room to fetch his radio.

Without the burden of Mia clinging to him he would be able to bellow down that fucking thing to his heart's content, until he, or someone else, finally found her. Blake.

But as he reached the wood-panelled door to his room, his stopped suddenly in the hallway....something catching his attention....

A breeze....

...drifting its way down the long hallway.

A breeze he had felt here before....late at night when he had awoken to find Blake missing then too....
Negan blinked for a moment, turning his head to where at the far end of the long and gloomy hallway there stood a door.…

...now, as it had been that night too, slightly ajar.…

Negan licked slowly at his lips, before pacing suddenly towards it.…

...his heart thud, thud, thudding as he went.

And it took him only a moment to reach the end of the hallway, the breeze feeling far stronger here, the dark-haired man taking in a large breath of air through his nose...steadying himself, as he reached up with his free hand.…

...giving the rickety door a smooth shove open…

He had been out here once before, upon this small balcony, that overlooked the fenced-off lots below. On the night he had confessed to Blake what she truly meant to him after months of holding it in, being too fucking cowardly to tell her.

She had been standing here in one of his shirts looking like perfection on that night.…

And now, the small rooftop, littered with a few brown and golden fallen leaves looked entirely the same…

.....including the same figure, standing there, leaning against the railing…

...just as she had been that night.

"Peaches?" Negan uttered, his mouth feeling drier than he had expected it to.

But she didn't look the same as she had done then, and there was no smile for him now, as she turned to face him.

Instead, Blake's head was bowed, her shoulders hunched over, gazing at something in her hands.

He could see now that she had been crying, long blonde strands of hair clinging to her tear strewn cheeks, as her green eyes finally found his.

"I-I can't-" she began in a wavering voice, before trailing off, shaking her head, as another couple of glinting tears slid their way down her cheeks.

What the heck was wrong?

Was this all to do with the conversation she had with Carson? With her spells of dizziness?

For right now, Blake looked lost….worried….frightened…

Negan almost immediately closed the gap between the pair of them, lifting his free hand to her face, his thumb swiping away those starry tears before they could fall any further.

"Darlin', what the fuck's going' on?" he said, his voice heavier than he had meant it to be as his dark eyes searched hers.

His heart was thudding in his chest.

Shit.
Was this Lucille all over again? Fucking cancer?

But Blake gave another shake of her head, looking completely and utterly lost right now, as a gulp slid its way down her slender and exposed throat.

"I t-think I've known for a while now…" she said in a quiet voice. "I t-tried to pretend it wasn't real..that it wasn't happening…but…"

Her sentence trailed off again, as her gaze flickered from his, her emerald eyes darting over to her right worriedly.

What the fuck was going on here? Was she sick? Dying? Bit?

But Negan didn't have a chance to vocalise any of this, as Blake's suddenly glanced back at him looking despondent and scared.

"I've felt like this before….t-twice before…." she said licking slowly at her lips, as she tilted her head to the side, more tears falling from her green eyes. "...I-I should have known, but I just…..I-I just….

She bowed her head for the brief moment before letting a steadying puff of air ease from her lips.

"...I-I just….I don't know if I can do this….n-not now….not here…" she continued, Negan hearing the tears in her voice now. Hearing how frightened she obviously was...

But Negan started at her, a frown upon his temples, searching Blake for any clues as to what the fuck was going on, as he dropped his hand.

"Peaches…." he uttered out harshly, sick of this shit. If it was bad fucking news he wanted to hear it now. "What the hell are you fuckin' talkin' about?"

But Blake lifted her head, staring up into Negan's face, as she gave a long and slow blink….

"I'm pregnant…"

All of sudden, in that moment, it was as though the entire world had gone deadly quiet.

Negan blinked a couple of times, the frown upon his brow darkening slightly as he stared at her in utter disbelief.

"What did you just say?..." he just about managed to growl out.

But Blake lifted the object she had been holding between her hands, taking a small step back from him.

And it was then that he saw it, the small white stick in her hand that told him he he had not just been hearing things…

Negan reached up taking it from her, examining carefully the small blue cross that sat in the middle of the small indented rectangle.

"...Carson said I'm just over a month gone…." Blake said in a quiet voice, as Negan traced his thumb over the cross...parting his lips. "...m-my birthday, I guess….

He gazed up into the blonde's face.

Of course Negan remembered Blake's birthday….once in the bathtub that morning….and then later
on the bed in the RV....

"...we've not been very careful...." Blake carried on....before hanging her head once more, and giving a sob, clutching her free hand to her mouth. "I just...I c-can't do this, Negan...."

The dark-haired Saviour stared up at her, breathing hard, watching as she shook her head, her chest heaving, wracked with heavy and fearful sobs.

All this....

It was as though Negan's mind couldn't quite catch up....as he stood there almost shell-shocked.

"Y-You're pregnant?" he finally said in a croaky voice.

Fuck.

He and Lucille had tried for fucking years for a kid, but the docs had told her that that just wasn't a possibility for her.

And so that had been the beginning of the end for them.

They'd grown apart....Lucille pushing him away and becoming distant and Negan, at a time when his wife had probably needed him most, had been a fucking coward, turning to drink and other women for solace.

But it was only a moment later, that staring up into his eyes, Blake gave another small sob.

"I'm so sorry...." she said, another tear slipping its way down her cheek, trailing an unsteady line past her nose and around the tiny almost invisible laughter lines around her mouth, that made his heart beat faster when he stared at her.

But who was he kidding?

Everything about her made his heart beat faster....her eyes.....her smile......the way she wrinkled her nose at him, when she was annoyed......or the way her skin felt against his early in the morning....

She was his fucking everything, and there was really nothing in this world she needed to be sorry for. Not now. Not ever.

Negan, lifted his hand to her cheek once more, trying to wordlessly communicate with her just what she meant to him right now.

"Peaches, why the fuck are you sayin' sorry to me...." he said shaking his head in frustration. "You cheat on me?"

She looked at him suddenly.

"No!" answered Blake quickly, mirroring him and giving her own small shake of her head as she frowned sharply, tears still glinting in her eyes.

"Then what the fuck are you sorry for, hmmm?" he said, swiping his thumb over another tear as it fell. "You're having my kid."

There. He'd said it. She was having his kid.

HIS damn kid.
Negan had been an uncle. Hell, he'd taught elementary and middle school kids all his fucking life. But never, ever had he thought that this day would come…

That he would get this fucking chance.

Negan stared at her now, as her eyes fell to the floor once more.

But he wasn't having this from her.

"You think I don't want this?" he said suddenly, narrowing his eyes in her direction.

But Blake merely gave a silent sob, her lip quivering as she stood there, unable to look at him now.

Shit. That was what she thought, wasn't it?

"This just wasn't the way it was supposed to happen…." she said finally, tears sloshing their way down her face freely now. "...I've been pregnant before and I......I-I couldn't-"

But she stopped, unable to say any more.

And that was when Negan truly saw what this was all about….why she had come up here instead of coming straight back to him.

Why he could hear fear and worry in her voice…..

Why he could see it in her face, and in those tears that covered her cheeks...

For Blake had told him about her other two pregnancies…..and how those had ended….

And not even the Saviour, as shut off and as cold to the world as he was, couldn't begin to imagine what that must have felt like.

To feel something growing inside you…. and then just….

The tall, bearded man gave a gulp now, the corners of his mouth twitching downwards.

But he couldn't let her feel like this, and in an instant, Negan had moved his hand to her chin, drawing her tear-filled eyes up to his, once more.

"Darlin', we're havin' a fuckin' kid," he said, his voice low and earnest, as he gazed at her like she was the most precious thing to right now she fucking was. "What's happened before…..it happened an' nothin' can change that." He shook his head. "But hell, you've survived in this fuckin' world. You're stronger now than you've ever fuckin' been. You're a damn queen, Peaches."

He saw Blake open her mouth to argue, but Negan spoke first, shutting down every worry that he knew was about to spill from her lips.

"I fuckin' love you. To the ends of the goddamn earth, I love you, Darlin’…"

And with that, Negan glanced down, pulling his hand from her face and instead running it over her flat abdomen.

Blake's eyes too dropped to the space between them momentarily, before their eyes met once more….

"I love you too," she said in what was barely a whisper…
...and in that moment, her face broke into a sad sort of smile as the caramel-blonde woman gave a
sniff, blinking tears from her eyes.

Negan felt his heart soar a little, and with a widening grin of his own, and a mumbled "C'mere", he
tugged her into him, enveloping her within his strong leather-clad arms.

Blake's hands moved to clutch at his forearms, as he heard her give a small, but happy sort of laugh
into his neck, tears seemingly still slipping from her eyes.

And it felt like an eternity later that the pair of them finally pulled apart, and Blake let out a steadying
puff of air, glancing down once again at the stick in her hands.

"You really think we can actually do this?" she eventually murmured, her green eyes catching his
brown ones a little worriedly.

But Negan gave a wide smile, licking at his lips and showing off his line of perfect white teeth.

"Peaches," he said raising a single eyebrow. "That's my kid your carryin' in there. Damn thing is
gonna force us to fuckin' do this. Kids gonna be fuckin' royalty."

The blonde, at once, rolled her eyes, swiping away the stray tears that now still lingered on her
gorgeous cheeks.

But nevertheless she wrinkled her nose smiling up at Negan now, before standing up tall and
pressing her lips to his ear.

"Just like their Daddy…." she said with a glad purr, which warmed his body and his heart.

But Negan, giving a wolf-like grin and pulling back, allowed his lips to hover over hers...

"Just like their damn Momma too….." he uttered, before kissing the blonde woman gently…..

...feeling, right at this moment, happier than he ever had done in his entire fucking life.
Twenty minutes later and Blake was laid across the bed she now shared with Negan, the man in question stretched out beside her, facing her, with his head propped up against his elbow.

Her tears had now long since dried, but she still couldn't seem to help the feeling of apprehension that filled her veins, as she stared up at the bearded man beside her.

Negan however, looked like a completely different guy right now, almost unable to shake the smile that had not left his face since the rooftop, as he drew a hand lazily over Blake's flat abdomen, causing her black vest to ride up a little.

He was obviously excited. As was Blake. Of course she was.

But after what had happened to her in the past with her other two pregnancies, it was hard not to feel nervous and frightened about what this meant for her now.

What if something went wrong?

It had been a risky thing even back before the world had gone to hell. But now, without hospitals and teams of doctors on hand, having or losing a baby, was a frightening prospect.

But Blake pushed these thoughts hurriedly from her mind, gazing up into Negan's elated face.

"Fuck…" he grunted out. "I'm gonna be a fuckin' daddy...a REAL fuckin' daddy."

Blake smiled at this.

This had never really been her plan. And had someone told her just a few short months ago that she would be lying here with Negan's baby growing inside her, she'd have told them they were insane.

But this life….everything moved fast here…so many people had died in such a short space of time….it was a rare thing to be able to hold onto someone, or something, for so long.

Blake had never presumed she'd feel this way about anyone, ever.

In her mind, David had always been the man she would have settled down with….started a family with….and yet look how that had turned out.

David had changed, and although there was no guarantee that Negan wouldn't change either, Blake's already felt a thousand times more protected and safe and loved, than she had ever done with her poisonous and abusive ex.

Blake lifted her hand, gently cupping Negan's' cheek.

"Mhhmmm," she agreed lightly, as Negan's chocolate eyes caught hers, a small frown flitting between his eyebrows.

"So that was the reason you were feelin' shitty?" he asked.

Blake, pursing her lips together, gave a nod.

"Harlan said my iron levels were low, apparently it's quite common in these early stages," she said matter-of-factly. "He just gave me a bunch of prenatal vitamins to take."
She cocked her head up to where three small tubes of pills sat on the nightstand just to her right.

She saw Negan's dark eyes flit there for a moment, before he nodded.

But Blake stared about.

"So where's Mia?" she asked curiously. For the last time she had seen Negan, he had agreed to take care of the teeny toddler while she visited the doctor. "You really palm her off on someone else that quickly?"

But Negan shot Blake a look, raising both eyebrows skyward.

"Uhhh, ex-fuckin'-cuse me, Sweetheart," he said in a sarcastic tone. "But I was busy searchin' this place high an' fuckin' low for you. And that was kinda fuckin' hard with a kid on my damn hip, askin' me all the questions under the fuckin' sun."

Blake gave a smile at this, but nevertheless made a face.

"You know that it's only going to get worse with two..." she said, her eyes flickering momentarily down to her stomach.

But Negan lifted his hand, giving her a dismissive wave.

"Well maybe by then, someone will've started up a damn nannyin' service in this place," he muttered.

But Blake rolled her eyes.

"Nu-uh, you are not getting out of diaper changing duty that easy" she said pointing a finger up towards him sharply, causing Negan to grin.

But Blake had barely let the words leave her mouth before she faltered slightly.

Was this too soon? To be laughing....joking...making light of the situation?

She had been through all this before....making plans.....and then to have it all, well.....just turn to nothing.

Perhaps now it was too early to be talking about thinkings like this....

But she had to admit it was hard not to.

Blake was excited.

This was what she had always wanted. A child of her very own. With the man she loved with all her heart.

And now, they would get the chance to be a real family...her, Negan, Mia and the new baby.

It was all so real...so perfect and maybe, just maybe, this time it would all go right.

She stared up at the man she loved, as his eyes fell once again to her stomach, his fingers drifting under her shirt, and exposing her bare skin.

There was a baby in there. Their baby. And Blake, as much as she tried to stem her feelings, was probably just as elated right now as Negan was.
"I was thinkin' though," he said, speaking suddenly, breaking Blake from her thoughts. "With this...and beansprout bein' a fuckin' handful...maybe we should ask the girls to look after her full time. What d'ya think? Can't have you fuckin' collapsin' on us or shit like that..."

Blake blinked slightly.

She appreciated Negan not calling those woman 'his wives' now. Despite that being something that really did need to be addressed between the two of them sooner or later.

Was it right? For them to still be known to everyone as his wives? To have that status here?

Blake would never want to deny those women, her friends, anything, but she had to admit that it did hurt for the workers and lieutenants here to still refer to them as Negan's wives, his property, like that.

But taking in breath, Blake gave a nod.

"Yeah that sounds like a great idea…" she agreed.

And it was.

Blake had already found herself struggling looking after Mia alone for just a week.

And perhaps, when she was feeling a little better and her supplements had kicked in a little, she could take Mia on again full time. But for now, it was definitely good to have some help.

And besides, Mia seemed enamoured with the women. And even when Blake had gone up to the girls' room this morning to pick the toddler up, Mia had yacked her ear off about the fun she had had with them the previous evening.

Blake loved Mia with all her heart. She always be her sweet baby girl and the little miracle who she had found again, against all odds.

But Mia needed company and someone who could provide her with the constant attention she deserved. And until Blake was feeling one hundred percent again that was just not something she could provide.

So this really did seem like the best solution.

Negan's chocolate eyes were on her flat tummy again as he let out a stiff sigh, before he lifted his gaze to meet hers.

"So what are we thinkin'? A he or a she?" he growled, leaning forwards, coming to hover over Blake, pressing his palms to the mattress either side of Blake's curved hips.

But Blake offered him a look.

"Negan-" she said in a gentle, warning voice. But she trailed off as the dark-haired man dipped his head, pressing a kiss to the space just above her navel.

Blake let her eyes fall closed for a brief moment, as he continued to press small scratchy kisses all the way down to her hip bone, his long calloused fingers trailed their way along the smooth skin of her abdomen too.

She lifted her hand for a moment, running her fingers through Negan's dark hair, massaging his scalp lovingly.
"I'm thinkin' it's a boy, givin' his damn Momma the run around already-" Negan murmured into her skin.

But Blake gave a sigh, loud enough for Negan to lift his eyes and stare at her.

"Negan," she pressed, giving a small shake of her head. "Don't you think it's too early to be thinking about stuff like that...?"

But the bearded Saviour gave a small frown, hovering there in just his white tshirt and grey pants, his tattoos just about visible upon his tanned upper arms, as he shifted up the bed a little, coming to lean over her, his hands pressing to the space either side of her shoulders.

"Not really," Negan said blinking heavily, gazing down at her, his face a picture of seriousness. "Look I know you're fuckin' worried, Darlin', but-"

But Blake didn't let him finish, instead giving him a small shove off of her, shimming up the bed a little and lifting herself into a sitting position.

"Yeah, for good reason," uttered the blonde in a slightly strained tone of voice, frowning at the man she loved as he sat back upon his haunches, hands upon his thighs. "We don't know how any of this is going to turn out.....a-and I just don't want us to get ahead of ourselves..."

Negan stared at her for a long moment before giving a nodding huff.

She could tell that he knew that she was right here.

They still had a long eight months to go, and a lot could happen in that time.

Each and every day there were risks that existed in this world that weren't around in their old lives. The dead, other communities, other leaders wanting to take a piece of what Negan needed to be careful.

But Negan, as if reading her mind spoke suddenly.

"Well that bein' said," he began, cocking his head to the side and lifting his chin slightly, pointing a finger at her. "You realise you aint leavin' my sight from now until that kid pops out of you, we clear?"

But at his words, relaxing a little, Blake at once wrinkled her nose, making a face.

"Wow, did I ever tell you you really do have a way with words sometimes?" she tutted, rolling her eyes.

But she knew what he meant. And if Blake had thought he had been possessive before, she really had no idea what he would be like knowing his own flesh and blood was currently growing side of her.

"I try," he muttered in sarcastic tone, a wicked grin fixing itself to his face, as he leaned forwards once again, his hands threading themselves through Blake's as he pinned her back against the bed.

His lips instantly found hers, kissing her gently, until the only sound in the room was the sound of their lips gently lapping against one another, eager tongues fighting for dominance.

And Blake felt herself smile as his hands left hers, skimming down the sides of her body, as his lips parted from hers, instead latching onto her neck and biting gently against the skin there, causing her
to moan out with a mixture of burning pain, and utter delicious pleasure.

But Negan was unrelenting, shifting his lean body down hers, until his lips reached her stomach once more, his kisses slowing as he tended to every inch of skin there.

Blake smiled now, throwing the back of one of her hands over her eyes, as she felt her heart flutter.

She had never known Negan like this before. So caring and attentive, like a man utterly possessed.

It took Blake a moment to realise that he had stopped in his kissing, only noticing when she felt his nimble fingers popping open the button on her jeans, and as he began to slowly tug the tight garment down her thighs.

Blake felt her cheeks burning slightly as she pulled her hand from her face, watching as the bearded man, his eyes dark and full of lust, pulled the pants from her legs before tossing them to the floor with ease.

He then pressed her legs part, his lips finding the smooth skin of her inner thigh, as his digits wrapped around her hips, giving her short sharp tug toward him, dragging her body down the bed a little, causing Blake to let out a squeak.

But Negan, at this, merely cocked a devilish eye at her, grinning up at her from his vantage point between her thighs, and showing off his line of perfect white teeth as he did so.

"You got a problem there, Doll-face?" he angled in a simpering voice. "You want me to fuckin' stop?"

But Blake merely smirked down at him, tracing an imaginary zip over her mouth with her fingers, as Negan grinned up at her.

"Thought as fuckin' much," he growled, turning his attention now to the hot space between her legs, covered now by a pair of blue lace panties that Blake had found in her closet this morning. "Now be a good fuckin' girl, an' let Daddy get on with his damn work."

Blake made to protest at his cocky attitude, but faltered as she felt Negan's mouth inch closer to her damp mound, pressing kisses to the very inside of her thighs.

She could feel herself tensing up now, like a spring coiled and ready to be set loose.

Today had felt like a whirlwind for her…confirming her worst fears and her dearest dreams all at once….and in turn, turning her entire world on its head.

But now, for the first time all day, Blake felt like she was floating in the clouds….high above the world below, happy, lying here with the man she loved, who she knew was about to give her all she ever wanted….

...as though he hadn't already given her enough.

Blake smiled again, biting down onto her bottom lip, as she felt Negan press a single kiss to her panties covering her sensitive slit.

….before suddenly, he pushed her panties to the side.

Blake parted her lips suddenly, feeling like a naughty schoolgirl getting to third base in the back of her boyfriends car, as she glanced down to see Negan staring up at her, with a shit-eating-grin
plastered over his long and bearded features.

It looked like he had been waiting to see the look on her face before continuing.

And continue he did.

And with his fingers hooked around her panties, tugged to the side, he dipped his dark head, licking a long strip up her soaked pussy with his flat tongue.

At once, Blake let out a groan of pleasure, both her hands reaching down and tangling themselves into his hair, urging him on a little, as he carried on..

...his mouth tending to her clit, as the blonde's eyes fluttered closed at the contact.

God, he was fucking good. And it did not take Negan long to bring Blake teetering over the edge….as she squeezed her thighs together around his head, cumming hard, moaning out in pleasure.

"Yes, yes...oh god, fuckkk..." she purred in a mere ache of a voice, her back arching against the bedsheets, her chest heaving.

And Negan made sure she was fully spent, licking up every drop of cream from her pussy, before coming to lean over her, licking at his lips as though his thirst had been quenched for a lifetime.

Blake smiled, her cheeks turning a pink color again, as he leaned in to kiss her.

She pressed her hands to both his warm and stubbly cheeks as she tasted herself on his tongue, sweet and acidic like oranges.

He gave a satisfied groan, as Blake quirked an eye at him questioningly.

But Negan answered her question for her, before she had even asked it.

"Gotta keep, Momma-bear fuckin' sweet, don' I?" he growled out fiendishly, rolling off of her and resuming his position at her side once again, propping his dark head up against his leather-clad elbow.

But Blake gave a gentle and happy sigh of her own, wrinkling her nose as she gazed up at him, in awe of this guy.

This man that others feared and revered so fucking much.

And yet here he was, staring at her with those chocolate eyes of his, as though she were a precious jewel. His face full of awe and love, the likes of which Blake had never seen on anyone before.

"So," Negan said after what felt like an age had passed them by, as his fingers resumed their tracing of them skin over her tummy. "We tellin' beansprout?"

Blake smiled, her eyes drifting away from his for a brief moment, down to her stomach

"I don't know....maybe we should wait before telling....well....anyone...." she mused, before her gaze flickered up to his once more.

Negan gave a solemn nod in agreement.

"I guess I can keep my mouth shut for now," Negan grinned back, grasping a hold of her hand, before pressing a kiss to her smooth knuckles.
And Blake smiled, pulling her hand away gently, before lifting it to his scruffy cheek once more.

"For now…” she uttered in agreement.
Three hours

Three hours.

Three fucking hours.

That was all Negan actually managed to keep his mouth shut for... although Blake thought that where he was concerned, that that was probably some sort of record.

For, by sundown, with Negan being dragged away via a radio call, which he had, of course, immediately huffed at, snatching up Lucille and stalking furiously from the room, angry at being disturbed, Blake had helped herself to a warm bath, relaxing in the tub for at least an hour before lounging about in the Saviour's ample living quarters.

But quickly getting bored of being alone, her belly starting to rumble, the blonde had made her way down to the large dining hall, shucking her black pants and tshirt back on over her curves.

But the she had barely even made it down to the second floor, before one of the higher up lieutenants, Gavin, had swished past her, offering her a wide grin.

"Congratulations," he had leant into her and murmured as he passed, causing Blake to falter slightly, stopping completely still, her green eyes following after him as he went.

Her initial reaction was that he must have just been confused, because surely there was no way, after what they had agreed, that Negan could have told anyone.

But yet just a moment later, two elderly workers both with white hair and friendly smiles, both offered her beaming looked as they passed her by.

Fuck.

At this, Blake had merely frowned deeply, pausing with one hand on the railing, before she had descended the final few steps and turned the corner heading down the long hallway towards the large dining room...and almost bumping headlong into Arat as she went.

"S-Sorry," murmured Blake distractedly, glancing up at the curly haired woman, shaking herself.

But the normally stoic Arat, much to Blake's surprise, offered the blonde a gentle smile in return, stopping in her tracks and shifting her weight from foot to foot, one hand pressed to the gun at her belt.

"Congrats," she said suddenly. "I'm happy for you. Both of you-" she began earnestly, before Blake suddenly cut across her sharply..

"Wait a second," she said making a face and lifting a finger, pointing it at the woman before her. "H-Has he told you?"

She offered a confused looking Arat an incredulous look, as the woman glanced over her shoulder, wavering for short second.

"A-About the baby…?" Arat said in a slow voice.

But at once, Blake let out a loud and frustrated groan of annoyance clenching her fists together and staring suddenly skyward.
"That fucking asshole!" the blonde woman huffed. "So much for not telling anyone!"

Arat pressed her lips together and raised her eyebrows, looking more than slightly awkward at this very moment.

But Blake didn't linger, merely stalking past the brown haired woman and heading swiftly into the dining hall on her long legs, giving the large swing doors a hard shove open as she did so.

And it was then that she saw him, leaning back on his long legs on the far side of the room, leather jacket shrugged back onto his curved shoulders, as he spoke loudly to Simon, Dwight and a couple of other men Blake recognised a little, looking as smug and as cock sure as ever.

Asshole.

At once Blake scowled, as a couple of Saviours that often frequented the garden with her passed her by, touching her arm and giving it a gentle squeeze as they went.

For fucks' sake.

Had he really told the entire Sanctuary that quickly?!

Jesus. They had agreed only a few hours ago that they would keep their news under wraps. And yet here he was, unable to keep his big old mouth shut.

She could see him now, Negan, with Lucille swung up onto his shoulder and a wide grin plastered over his bearded mouth, as Simon clapped him on the shoulder in a congratulatory gesture.

Fucking asshole!

But if he thought he was going to get away with any of this, he really did have another thing coming.

And so, a pretty hormonal, tired and pissed-off Blake, strutted across the large open-plan room, as heads turned her way, the owners of which, all presenting her with identical, pleased-looking smiles.

But Blake, on this occasion, ignored them all, her narrowed green eyes focused on one person and one person only.

And it was only a second later, when she was just a few feet away from him, did Negan's chocolate eyes finally catch sight of her stalking towards him. And Blake was sure she saw his smug grin falter a little at the expression fixed onto her face.

Dwight, Simon and the other two lieutenants turned to look in her direction as she approached, all grinning goofily at her.

But Blake tuned them out, instead staring daggers at Negan and keeping her steely gaze fixed on the tall leader of the Saviours, as she waved a gentle hand in their direction

"Would you guys mind just giving us a second?" she asked in a low voice, dipping her chin, and folding her arms over her t-shirt-clad chest huffily.

And within a second, all four men had given a nod, obviously sensing the tension, before easing away and leaving both Blake and Negan alone.

"You enjoy your soak, Peache-"

But Blake did not let him finish, rounding on the dark-haired man and jabbing him in the chest with
an angry growl.

"Don't you, Peaches me!" she snarled at him viciously through gritted teeth. "What the hell are you doing, Negan? We were supposed to be keeping this..."

At the word, Blake gestured to her stomach covertly.

"...a secret!"

But Negan merely smirked, leaning back against his long legs, letting out a hiss, and running a calloused hand down his long face.

"Look I know that was the fuckin' plan, but..." he began in an easy voice, but again, Blake cut across him, digging her finger once again into his taut chest, more ferociously this time.

"Negan, I'm being serious here, we talked about this," she said shaking her head and looking at him in frustration. "It's too early...and now you've gone around blabbing to everyone. I mean, is there anyone who doesn't know?!"

But Negan gave a long huff, digging his inner cheek with his tongue.

"Look, can't a guy be fuckin' excited about the fact that he's gonna be a damn daddy, Darlin'?"

His tone was serious, as he lifted his hand, his fingers pulling hers from his chest at her great reluctance and curling around her warm digits.

"Hell, I know it's fuckin' early, an' I know I've probably been kind of an asshole about this...."

Blake raised both eyebrows skyward, scoffing loudly. "To put it lightly..." she murmured scathingly.

"But fuck, Sweetheart," Negan said ignoring her, his dark eyes boring into hers. "There ain't much in this goddamn world to cheer about. So I'm taking this as a fuckin' victory."

Blake softened a little, pursing her lips, remaining silent for a long moment as she stared at him. Perhaps he was right. Life was short and maybe Blake should celebrate while she could. For who knew, tomorrow there could be another outbreak that wiped them all out. So maybe she needed to stop worrying and live while she was still around to do so.

She retracted her hand from his, re-folding her arms across her chest, before letting out a long huff.

"Ok, fine," she said in a stubborn voice, sulking a little. "But no telling Mia, I want to let her know in my own time. We clear on that?"

Negan smiled widely.

"Crystal," he promptly uttered with a nod, as Blake rounded on him again, frowning.

"Oh, and if she even hears any sort of rumour from anyone else about the baby," Blake said in a sudden low and dangerous voice, baring her teeth at Negan angrily. "Then this is going to be the last child you're ever going to be able to have!"

Blake was sure that she saw the tiniest sliver of a gulp slide its way down Negan's throat at her threat, but he soon righted himself, smirking down at her smugly.
"Fuck me, Darlin'," he said in a carrying voice, leaning back a little and marvelling at her. "I don' know whether to be quakin' in my goddamn boots or gettin' a boner at that. But just so you know, at the moment, it's both!"

He waggled his eyebrows, poking his tongue out between his white teeth, as Blake rolled her eyes huffily.

She pulled her gaze swiftly from his and stared about the room, where at least forty or so Saviours were sat and stood around, chatting excitedly, a happy sort of buzz filling the hall.

But wait?

Was this because of their news?

Surely it couldn't be…

And yet every other second, Blake was met with the glances of workers and lieutenants alike, all staring her way and smiling over towards the tall pair.

Were people seriously this happy for them?

People had babies all the time….right?

But did they….really?

For in this world seeing a pregnant woman was a rarity, and seeing a baby even rarer…

So maybe this was special. Maybe this was good.

Blake felt her heart flutter a little, a swell of pride and joy and serenity flowing through her.

Her lips attempted to twitch up into a small smile, but she quickly extinguished it as best she could, turning back towards Negan, her eyes glinting naughtily behind her faux-stony expression.

"So am I fuckin' forgiven?" he asked, pursing his bearded lips together as he gazed down at her. "Jeez, I thought that after keepin' you sweet earlier, I'd be in your fuckin' good books for tonight at least!"

But Blake's eyes flitted over his long face, and, wrinkling her nose lightly, she took a small step into him, lifting her hand, curling her fingers around the fabric of his rumpled t-shirt.

"Well you're definitely not forgiven, asshole," she said in a smooth tone, leaning up towards him, her lips hovering close to his. "But….."

She paused, pulling at her bottom lip with her teeth, her eyes flickering downwards as she left him waiting.

She could hear Negan's breath now, shallow in his throat as she glanced up at him finally, her eyes meeting with his once more.

And with just a flash of a knowing smirk, reaching down and grasping his free hand in hers, she turned on her heel.

"Come on…" she purred, tucking a strand of long caramel hair behind her ear and tugging him swiftly from the room.
And if Blake had have turned around, she'd have seen the look of utter confusion that crossed Negan's handsome features right at that moment. Obviously pondering or not whether he was still in trouble here…

But without another word, Blake led him from the room, watched by almost all of the surrounding Saviours.

Not that she cared right now, licking gently at her lips as they headed out of the large dining hall.

But rather that head towards the staircase that led to the upper floors and their subsequent bedrooms, Blake took a sharp left out in the hallway, angling her head into each of the rooms adjacent, as they passed through the long corridor.

Most here, on the ground floor of the Sanctuary, were occupied by workers going about their business, folding laundry, tidying the stores. But these were of no use to Balke right now...

"You wanna tell me where the fuck we're goin' Sweetheart?" Negan said in a bemused sort of voice, but Blake didn't answer him, finally peering around a door at the far end of the long dingy hallway and finding the room inside vacant.

It seemed to be some sort of meeting room, housing a large rectangular table that stretched the expanse of the room, along with a few upturned chairs here and there.

And so hurriedly she pulled Negan inside.

The window at the far end had its blinds drawn, but even if it hadn't have been dark outside, and the curtains drawn, the room would still have been shrouded in a gloom all of its own.

"Peaches...what the-?" Negan began suddenly in a questioning tone, as Blake let go of his hand, promptly shutting the door behind them.

But she simply turned back to him and smiled, coming to stand before him...

..and within a second…

..before Negan could even say another word…

...Blake had promptly dropped to her knees.

Negan, at once, offered her a look of utter awe, his lips parting into a wide wolf-like grin, as he watched her lick at her lips and begin to unthread his belt.

"Oh now you, Darlin'," he said marvelling at her from his position a few feet above. "...are always full of fuckin' surprises…"

But Blake merely grinned up at him now, settling herself gently against her thighs before pulling down Negan's zipper torturously slowly.

And she didn't even given him the chance to place down the baseball bat in his hand, before pulling his stiffening length from his pants, and wetting her lips audibly, as Negan let out a groan at the sight of her.

"Y'know, I'm not fuckin' sure that a pregnant lady should be kneelin' on a cold floor like that…” he uttered with a growl, the tone of his voice almost sounding a little flustered now.

But Blake, glancing up at him, raised a single eyebrow in his direction, as she grasped his shaft
between her fingers, her lips hovering close to his swollen and throbbing tip.

"You're probably right..." Blake murmured in a teasing voice, letting a breathy moan escape her lips, as Negan gave another groan at the feeling of her hot breath against his cock. "Maybe I should stop..."

But before Negan could speak or protest in any way, Blake had suddenly licked a strip up the base of his length all the way up to the tip.

Almost instantly, Negan let a groaned "Fuck..." stumble from his lips at the contact between them.

Blake chanced a glance up at him, to see him facing the ceiling now, eyes closed, a deep frown lingering between his dark brows.

And so she smiled gently, before slowly taking him fully into her mouth, her hand at the base of his shaft, pumping in time with her sucking.

"Unnfff, Peaches...." Negan moaned out again, lifting his free hand, his fingers tangling themselves into her hair. "...shit...."

But Blake didn't stop at his mumbled words, the illicit sounds merely spurring her on, as her tongue swirled its way over his head before her lips tugged around him once more, taking the entire length of him into her mouth.

She gagged slightly at the contact with his dick and the back of her throat, but the sounds emitting from Negan's lips now, were too tempting to make her stop.

"Holy...fuckkkkkk..." said the dark-haired man above her, rocking back on his heels slightly as he gave a thrust, forcing his hard cock into her mouth greedily.

But Blake didn't stop at his mumbled words, the illicit sounds merely spurring her on, as her tongue swirled its way over his head before her lips tugged around him once more, taking the entire length of him into her mouth.

And Blake obliged him, leaning forwards and licking at his tip like a lollipop.

Causing Negan to immediately give a wanting groan.

But Blake did it again and again, before sliding her lips around his cock again sucking hard, as her now-sticky hand helped, pumping his shaft, as she heard him bite down onto his lip letting out another grunt.

Blake pulled her mouth away again, staring up at him.

"Does Daddy want to cum in my mouth?" she purred in a vixen like tone, using this moment to catch her breath slightly, lips swollen and plump, and with chest heaving.

And at her words Negan's frown only seemed to deepen, as he fist her hair a little tighter, pressing her face close to his dick once more.

"Yhmmm, keep suckin', there's a good fuckin' girl, cause Daddy don' want to make a goddamn mess..." he growled, as Blake sucked at his length again and again, her head bobbing backwards and forwards, as her hand did half the work.

And it didn't take long, maybe a minute or two more, for Negan's grunts to get heavier.

And with his hand in her hair urging her on, Blake only needed to open her mouth and present her
tongue to him, for the bearded man's knees to buckled slightly as he coated her flattened tongue and throat in his hot, sticky cum.

Blake held herself there, making sure he was spent, before swallowing thickly, and staring up, feeling his hand moved down to her chin, lifting her face to look at him.

"Fuck me, Darlin'," he mused. "You are a goddamn queen, you know that?"

But Blake just smiled, wrinkling her nose lightly as she did so.

"But a queen still has to kneel for her king from time to time. Right, Daddy?" she replied, giving him a vixen-like grin, which Negan promptly returned, letting out a chuckle….

...holding out his hand for her to take, as he pulled up his zipper and rethreaded his belt.

And take it Blake did, with a wide smile, allowing Negan to pull her to her feet once again, as he threw his leather-clad arm around her shoulder possessively, tugging her into him gently.

"C'mon," he murmured, pressing his lips to her long blonde hair. "I think this king and queen need to go get some fuckin' dinner…"

And with that, the pair of them left the room, both smiling…

….and both of them, somehow, in far better mood than they had been fifteen minutes ago.

And although it might have been too late on this occasion….at least Blake was now very aware of how to keep Negan's mouth shut in future….

And all it really required, was ten minutes and a very empty room.
Amber's outburst

An hour had passed in the Sanctuary's large dining hall, with Negan and Blake, having gained much on an appetite after the afternoon's escapades, enjoying a meal of green beans, carrots-fresh from the gardens, and freshly caught rabbit. The rabbit, the blonde woman, at first, had wrinkled her nose at upon seeing placed onto her plate, but had soon wolfed it down with the speed of a hungry hyena, much to Negan's mild amusement.

The dark-haired man had been in a great mood since their earlier tryst in the room just down the hallway, and had sat next to Blake on one of the long benches, his leather-clad arm tossed around her, his body turned into hers, paying barely any mind to his own plate, but leaning his bearded lips into her ear for the past half hour and whispering oh-so-many inappropriate things to her, while Blake had purred back to him, giving him a gentle shove away from her at times, but really, enjoying the love and affection she was receiving from him.

Negan hadn't even snapped or snarled as a few of the lesser known lieutenants had approached him, on the pretence of letting him know of some completely unnecessary information about the run earlier this afternoon, when really, they were only doing it to gain some attention from the bearded Saviour. But Negan, who would have normally growled at this angrily and told them to 'f**k off' or worse, had barely flickered, merely giving a nod and waving a hand lazily in their direction, turning his wolf-like attention back to Blake and the pulse point he was currently murmuring dirty things into, causing Blake to blush profusely.

To anyone at the Sanctuary right at that moment, it would have been obvious that the pair were utterly besotted with one another.

It had been rare for anyone to see Negan so open with his affection towards anyone, ever. Even the wives Negan had barely batted an eyelid at in public before Blake had arrived here, keeping them to their quarters where they would be sent to Negan's room on rota.

So for the leader of the Saviour's to be sitting here, Lucille abandoned on the bench behind him, his arm snaked around Blake and his eyes on nothing but her, was certainly a sight.

But although it was a strange thing to see, it indeed felt like the Sanctuary was happier than it had ever been.

As though everyone here was happy for them…

Their king and queen…

Blake had long since set down her fork, her knee brushing Negan's as he pressed his bearded lips close to her neck for the third time in a minute.

"I wasn' sayin' we had to call the kid that," he muttered in a low and husky voice, kissing at her soft skin gently, before baring his set of white teeth in a wide grin. "I'm jus' suggestin' that if we have to think of a name-"

But Blake rolled her eyes, shaking her head, as she prised the fingers that were currently snaking their way beneath the hem of her shirt, away.

"We are not calling the baby Negan Jr…" she scolded lightly, glancing up at him and smiling.

"Well you have any better suggestions, Peaches?" he asked raising a dark eyebrow, his face a mere
breath away from hers now, as his palm slid smoothly over her denim-clad thigh.

But at this Blake gave a quiet laugh. "Yes, thousands," she tutted. "But we can think of that when he or she's born."

Negan, at once, pulled back a little from her, his tongue reaching his bottom molars, as he stared down into Blake's face.

"You really wanna put that shit off that long, Sweetheart?" he asked curiously.

But Blake merely shrugged lightly, pushing her empty plate further away from the edge of the table absent-mindedly with her finger.

"I just want to make sure we don't make any rash decisions," she said with a sigh, thinking for a moment. "I mean, I don't want to call the baby Negan jr when he's more of a Eugene jr, now do I?"

Negan dipped his chin, raising both eyebrows all of a sudden and staring down at Blake interestedly.

"Eugene, ey?" he commented slowly, licking gently at his lips. "There been somethin' goin' on between you an' Dr Smarty Pants I don' know about, huh? You two been sneakin' off for some afternoon delight behind my back?"

But Blake laughed, peeling his hands slowly from her, as she pushed herself to her feet.

"Oh yeah," he said in a teasing voice. "I mean that mullet is just so super hot to me. And you would not believe the kind of dirty talk he comes up with...all quantum mechanics this, and let me slip my battery-powered device in that..."

She wrinkled her nose a little, clambering over the bench, as Negan marvelled at her, letting out a chuckle, as his hand automatically slipped into hers, making sure she kept her balance while she climbed over.

"I'm gonna go up and see the girls," Blake said matter-of-factly, standing close to Negan as he let go of her, her hand sliding up into his dark hair. "See if Mia's still awake. I feel like I've barely gotten to see her today."

Negan gave a nod. "Wan' me to come with, Darlin'?" he asked.

But Blake just shook her head.

"No, I'm good," she replied. "I'll see you back upstairs in a while."

Negan raised a bemused eyebrow once more. "This mean I'm sharing with two tonight?" he mused in a goading voice.

But Blake retracted her fingers from his hair.

"I mean, you can always sleep on the couch if you'd prefer," she said raising one of her own eyebrows in return.

But Negan just gave another laugh, as Blake walked away from him.

It didn't take Blake long to reach the wives quarters at the far end of the Sanctuary. It was a big place, but after months of being here, Blake had gotten her barings pretty well and there were very few hallways and rooms that eluded her.
She remembered, of course, the first time she had been invited up here by the wives. Blake had not really known what to expect back then. But these days she knew that she loved these woman with all her heart.

It was good to have friends, girlfriends, in a world where everything was so dark and terrible. And despite the circumstances they had found each other in, Blake knew she would support these woman no matter what. She had seen the pain and the anguish and the worry they had been through here. And she hoped that her presence around Negan had made their lives a little better.

Blake arrived at the room to find the door shut to, and so she gave a gentle knock as she pushed it open with a small shove.

But she smiled widely at the sight that met her eyes.

For the normally neat and decadent room looked as though a bomb had hit it, with toys (looking like they had come from down in the marketplace) littering the floor along with a widely spread pile of paper covered in glitter that seemed to sparkle across almost every surface, including Frankie and Amber, who were sat on the floor beside a tiny figure.

The three of them (as well as Layla and Michelle who were stood on the far side of the room placing cushions back on the sofas nearest to the wall) all looked up as Blake entered the room, scratching at her arm a little awkwardly.

"Hi, everyone," she said in a kindly voice. "What on earth happened here?"

But before anyone could answer, there was a shuffle of papers and the teeny form of Mia scrambled to her chubby legs and bumbled across the room towards her.

"Bwaekey," said the little girl in delight, holding up a crumpled piece of paper in her hand. "I made thas for you. I mished you. Wher you bey'n?"

And Blake, at once, bent down to scoop the toddler up into her arms with a groan, pressing a kiss to her glittery cheek, before admiring the paper in Mia's hand.

"Wow," she said gently. "This is for me?"

The crude drawing Mia had down was in the vague shape of a large purple butterfly covered in glitter glue and several teenage mutant ninja turtle stickers.

"I di' tha, an I played hide a' see," Mai informed her. "An I had chikin faw mai dinna."

Blake lifted her eyes to Frankie's, who had gotten to her feet, and was currently swiping the glitter off her pants.

"We had fun didn't we, Sweetie?" said Frankie moving over to Mia and stroking back her messy hair. "We even got grumpy old Layla in on a game of hide and seek."

From across the room, Layla raised her eyebrows and pointed a finger in protest.

"Uh for the record, I bossed that last game," the dark-haired woman commented in jest, looking Blake's way and giving a wide grin. "So, Negan finally find you? He looked pretty stressed earlier today?"

But Blake parted her lips, his eyes flitting to the ground for a moment before she gave a slow nod.
"Yeah, he found me…." she uttered in reply.

But Frankie standing close to Blake, searched her face. "Are you ok?" she asked quietly after a moment, as the room fell to a stony silence.

The wives had all seen Blake feeling woozy and and distracted. So it was no wonder they were concerned.

But Blake gave an inwards sigh to herself.

Well, if there rest of the Sanctuary knew, there was no point in keeping it from her own friends any longer...

Blake's green eyes darted up once more.

"Well I guess I'd better tell you as Negan's telling everyone himself already…." she said giving a small sigh, out loud now. "I'm p-r-e-g-n-a-n-t."

She spelled the word, now wanting Mia to catch on. She would tell her in her own time.

At this the women were all silent for a long moment. Longer perhaps than Blake would have liked.

Before Frankie's face finally broke into a wide smile and she rubbed at Blake's shoulder.

"Oh, I'm so happy for you," she said giving her an awkward one-armed hug, causing Mia to giggle and squeal.

To her right Layla and Michelle approached both smiling, but each with a hint of concern etched upon their faces.

"Yeah, us too," Michelle said in a soft voice, her deep brown eyes roving across Blake's tired face. "You cool with it?"

Blake stopped momentarily.

No one had asked if this was something she wanted, and Blake could imagine how few people actually wanted to get pregnant in this world.

Was she crazy if she said yes, that she was cool with this? Telling them that this is what she had always wanted?

She had never told the wives about her previous miscarriages years ago. And right now she didn't particularly want to tell them….to tarnish this moment.

Because this time would be different. Right?

It had to be.

Blake gave a smile, batting her eyelashes a few times.

"Yeah, I'm cool with it," she said biting down onto her lip, a feeling of happiness suddenly washing over her.

Everything was good.

She had Negan.
She had Mia.

She had the wives, her friends.

There was even Carson downstairs. A doctor, in this world.

Everything was as perfect as it possibly could be.

"I want this," Blake reiterated, as Layla, moving over, cupping the back of Blake's head lovingly and giving her a small squeeze, being careful to avoid crushing Mia as she did so.

"We're pleased for you," said the dark-haired woman. "If there's anything you need, you know were here."

Blake smiled sweetly, overwhelmed by the women's warmth and love.

"Thank you," Blake said softly, just as Frankie gave a small squeal clapping her hands together and bouncing up and down on the balls of her feet.

"Oooh I can't wait to tell Tanya," she said in an excited voice. "She's just gone down to take a shower."

But suddenly, before the redhead could say another word, there came a sudden loud squeak from behind her, causing Blake and the others all to look around to see Amber standing there, her large, round eyes awash with tears.

"Y-You can't…..t-this is wrong…." mumbled the young blonde woman.

But Michelle gave her a sudden stern look. "Amber-" she began, but the blonde woman stepped forward, visibly shaking, her hands fisted at her sides.

"No…..d-don't you see how much of a monster he is?" Amber said in tearful voice. "W-What he did to Mark…"

Blake stared at the young girl.

Frankie gave a sudden hiss.

"Amber stop it," she scolded in a cold voice, moving over to the young girl and attempting to pull her away. But Amber snatched her arm away, side-stepping the red-head and moving over to Blake, her eyes big and pleading.

"...he kept us here, manipulated us into becoming his wives," she continued. "He's killed people, Blake! H-He's a monster. Y-You just can't have a baby with him. You can't!"

She shook her head, clutching suddenly at Blake's free arm.

And for a long moment, Blake just stood there…..unable to speak, a hard gulp trailing its way down her slender throat as a silence filled the entire room.

No one dared to speak…all of them looking to Blake's now.. worried that she might burst into tears or worse.

But to their surprise, a second later the tall, caramel-blonde woman blinked and lifted her chin, holding Mia close to her now as she stared down at Amber with nothing but coldness in here eyes.
"Well I am having a baby with him," Blake said in aggrieved voice, choosing her words carefully.
"And whatever Negan's done-"

But Amber cut across her.

"Sherry thought she was pregnant? H-He ever tell you that?" blurted out Amber loudly, before any other the others could do anything to stop her.

Blake froze at the words.

What?

No.

Her stomach gave a horrible lurch and her mouth went suddenly very dry.

The women all looked from Amber to Blake, looks of concern passing over their faces.

But no one said a word.

The only sound that actually filled the room now was Ambers continued whimpers, and the sound of Mia patting her hand on Blake's shoulder, vying for attention.

But the caramel-blonde woman merely stood there staring at Amber. Unable to move.

Frankie swiftly stepped forwards, shoving Amber aside

"It was a long time ago..." she said in a reassuring voice, looking at once to Layla and Michelle for help. "A-And it turned about to be nothing anyway. Just a false alarm."

But Blake felt the entire world spin now, as she took in this information.

Blake had never met Sherry, but if there was anyone Blake would have felt jealous over it would have been her. She had heard the way Negan had spoken about her, 'his favourite', with a glimmer in his chocolate eyes, as if thinking upon a fond memory.

Blake had never been sure whether it was just the idea of him getting one over on Dwight and keeping him in his place that had sparked Negan's attention so much, or the fact that she had most likely been a very attractive young woman.

But either way it still hurt to hear all this. Now. From Amber like this.

"Listen, Blake, honey," said Michelle, placing her hand to Blake's cheek and drawing her attention back to the beautiful black skinned woman before her. "Amber is just talking shit. Negan fucking loves you. That's obvious. And whatever Amber thinks went on with him and Sherry it wasn't anything like what the two of you have now."

From beside her, Layla and Frankie nodded in agreement.

"Michelle's right," said Layla, tilting her head to the side. "He loves you."

But it took a few long and drawn out moments for Blake to finally nod, righting herself a little, hitching Mia further up onto her hip and lifting her chin confidently again.

"Oh I know," she uttered out firmly, turning away from where Amber now stood, hands cupped between her, not really wanting to look upon the young girl any longer. "And I love him back."
And she did.

Blake truly did.

But as much as she held her head high right now, waving the issue aside, it was still there, eating at Blake's stomach from the inside, causing it to churn and jolt like a rollercoaster.

"Right, I'd better get this one to bed," said Blake firmly, changing the sunjet airily. "Mind If I bring her back up to you girls tomorrow? I've been meaning to get back into the garden."

And at once, looking utterly relieved, Frankie, Layla and Michelle all smiled.

"Yes of course," Frankie said grasping ahold of Mia's chubby paw gently. "We'd love to play with little Mia-bear again."

Mia gave a giggle before snuggling her head underneath Blake's chin shyly. And Blake took that as her well-needed cue.

"Well, see you tomorrow then," finished Blake offering the women one last small smile, before turning on her heel and leaving the room.

On the outside she looked completely fine. Like she had taken the news of Sherry's scare very well. Any of the girls would have said that right at that very moment.

But in reality, Blake was dying on the inside. Not quite knowing whether she wanted to scream or burst into tears. Or both.
Blake’s head swam with worries and questions that continued to run through her busy mind, as she returned to her and Negan's room, with Mia in tow, not even five minutes later.

It was, to her stomach churning relief, vacant of the dark-haired man. So she silently flipped on the light, heading straight into the bathroom, as Mia’s fingers curled into her long caramel-blond hair.

It was getting late now, and Blake, running on automatic, bent over, plugging the tub, before beginning to run a nice warm and shallow bath for Mia.

But she felt light headed, perching hurriedly on the side of the tub, while she stripped Mia out of her clothes, neatly folding them onto the countertop near to them.

What was wrong with her?

Was it really any surprise that the man with six wives, over two long years, would have gotten one of them pregnant?! Or thought he had at least...

But perhaps, to Blake, it wasn't the idea of that, that hurt her the most. It was the idea that Negan perhaps had once been excited about having a baby with Sherry, just as he was now with Blake.

Had he been as elated, as proud, as loving with her? Or had it never even gotten that far?

If Sherry had had the baby, would he be with her now?

Would he even have looked at Blake’ twice?

Would it have been her he had been cuddled up to at dinner tonight while Blake had sat there bruised and battered across the dining hall with David...still the broken woman she had come here as?

"Wai Bwakey look sad?"

Blake blinked, Mai's words breaking her suddenly from her thoughts.

"Im not sad, sweetie," lied Blake, offering the tiny girl and warm and caring smile. "Come on, let's get you into this bath, shall we."

Mia gave a giggle as Blake carefully lowered the little girl into the water, observing the way the toddler, splashed about, giving a small squeal as she did so, obviously enjoying herself.

Gosh, Blake loved her. With all her heart.

She placed a hand to her stomach.

And Blake also knew that, boy or girl, she would love the baby growing inside her right now, just as much.

But this, well it was a hard bout of news to get given...now......after everything.

Why had Negan never told her? Did he not think it was important?

Or perhaps she was not important. Blake.
Perhaps she was just one in a long line of women…

But of course, Blake already knew that she was. She was not the first. And perhaps she wasn't the last either.

But she shook herself again huffily.

God, she just needed to snap out of it. What was wrong with her?

Negan loved her, she knew that.

Then why was she unable to shake these horrible feelings of doubt from her mind.

Right now she should have been elated...happy that she was having a baby with the man she loved and adored.

But this had just come from nowhere, blowing Blake out of the water, at a time where her hormones and her health was already all over the place.

Mia's bath didn't take long, and within ten minutes, Blake was stood at the edge of the large four poster bed in the room she shared with Negan, drying off the wriggly toddler who squirmed about in a large white fluffy towel.

"Come on," sighed Blake smiling gently down at the little girl, whose brown hair was currently sticking up at all angles around her head, like a little lion. "Let's’ get your jammies on."

Blake had already grabbed a pair of pink pony-covered pyjamas from a small pile that had been left on the arm of one of Negan's couches, blatantly full of stuff pulled either from the marketplace, or from runs on Negan's orders.

Some of the clothes were either way too small for her, or way too big, but some things, like these cute little pjs for instance, fitted just right. And Blake knew that Negan would be grateful for not having share his tshirts with the little girl any longer.

She smiled to herself now, as she lifted Mia up from under her arms, hauling her a little way up the bed before plopping her gently down upon the soft white pillows.

The teeny girl gave a humongous yawn, shuffling herself down under the covers without much protest as Blake tucked her in.

And before Blake had even paced across the room to find a picture book that Mia enjoyed to read before bed, she turned, hearing a small sniffly sigh, to see Mia fast aslepp, the time spent with the wives this afternoon obviously having worn her out.

Blake stopped staring at the sweet little girl for a long, long moment, unable to take her eyes off her.

This should have been a perfect moment.

But Blake could help that it was tarnished now by Amber's revelation.

Perhaps the young blonde girl had only been looking out for Blake…

Perhaps she had seen Sherry hurt in the past and didn't want to see it happen again….

Blake was under no illusion that Negan was a saint. But with him Blake had found herself feeling safer and more loved than she had ever felt before in her entire life.
So it was still hard for her to deal with this information.

She lingered for a moment on her feet, before moving over to the nearby leather couch, and, sinking down onto the seat besides the pile of toddler clothes, she slowly drew the laundry onto her lap and began to re-fold each item neatly.

But her eyes stared blankly at her lap...her mind whizzing and whirring at 100 miles a minute.

And it wasn't long until Blake flinched at the familiar sound of Negan's boots approaching, and a second later the sound of the door to the room being shoved open.

But Blake didn't look up, merely staring down at the far-too-small white snuggly all-in-one sleepsuit in her hands, running her fingers over the soft material.

Negan stopped in his tracks just a foot or two into the room, gazing over at a sleeping Mia tucked away in their bed, before slowly closing door behind him with a small snap.

"Beansprout, crashed already, huh?" he asked giving a low chuckle and placing Lucille down onto the sideboard near to the door.

But Blake didn't answer him now, the smallest of hard gulps sliding its way down her slender throat.

Fuck, fuck, fuck...

She could feel her face burning hot, her heart thudding away inside her chest, feeling like she wanted to be sick.

But she didn't.

Instead Blake just sat there, staring down at the sleepsuit, as Negan's eyes flickered over to her.

"Y'alright, Peaches?" he asked, taking a step towards her as she sat there, almost unmoving in the lamplight.

Should she scream at him?

Burst into tears?

Right now, Blake didn't want to do either. In fact she just wanted to run away. To do the opposite of confront Negan about this?

Did that make her a coward? An idiot? Or just someone who was so sick of being hurt?

After years of abuse...

...of pain...

...of bruises...

...of miscarriages....

...of losing people she loved....

Blake wasn't quite sure how much more she could cope with.

She ran her slender digits over the fleecy lining of the baby outfit in her hands. Wondering how her
own baby would look all cuddled up in this...

...how Sherry and Negan's baby would have looked in the same thing...

And it was then that Blake spoke, her voice cold and quiet.

"Why didn't you tell me about Sherry? About how she thought she might have been pregnant…"

At her words Negan was silent for a very long moment, causing Blake's pleading eyes to rise and meet with his chocolate gaze.

And it took what felt like an age for him to give a short huff, dragging his hand down his long and lined face tiredly.

"Peaches, I-" he began in a low voice, his eyes darkened with a sorryness Blake had never seen from him before.

But Blake shook her head.

"Did you love her?" she whispered out sharply, her heart aching with a sadness she had hoped to never feel again.

But Negan took a step towards her now, a frown appearing between his eyebrows.

"All that. That shit with Sherry… well it was a long fuckin' time ago, Darlin'-' Negan began again, but once more Blake spoke over him, her voice becoming hoarse as she held back tears of frustration.

"That's not the point, Negan," she said with a dry gulp. "Did you love her? Y-You tried to get her pregnant, so you must have felt something for her?"

From the bed, Mia stirred a little in her sleep at the sound of Blake's slightly raised voice.

The blonde woman stared over at the toddler for a second, before turning her attention back to Negan, whose frown had already deepened.

"I didn't try to get her pregnant, Doll-face-" he started, but Blake got to her feet suddenly, pointing at him.

"You had fucking unprotected sex with her Negan, what the fuck did you think was going to happen?!" Blake exclaimed, trying as hard as she could to keep her voice down.

So much anger and frustration at everything seemed to be pouring out of her now. So many unsaid things drifting to the surface…

But Negan looked troubled, not saying a word, his tongue reaching his back molars, as he clenched his jaw hard, staring at her.

"Did you love her?" Blake asked again starkly, sounding hurt.

But Negan just tilted his long face to the side, never taking his eyes off hers.

"You really think I fucking loved her, Darlin'?" he asked in strained and questioning voice.

But Blake just shifted her weight from foot-to-foot.
"Well you got her pregnant…" Blake said in a tearfully exasperated voice, turning away from him now and holding her arms over herself.

Tears began to fall freely from her cheeks for the second time today, but now, for a completely different reason than before…

"Carson did a fuckin' test, Sweetheart," Negan said in a carrying voice, causing Mia to shuffle about in the bed again. "It came back goddamn negative. Sherry wasn' even pregnant. Damn woman just thought she might have been is all."

"And that makes it ok?!!" snapped Blake, spinning around on the spot and glaring at Negan. "So what am I? Just one in a long list of girls you've tried to get pregnant? Is that it? And bingo," Blake uttered loudly in a simpering voice, gesturing to her stomach. "You finally did it. I mean it took a lot of perseverance, but-

Negan's eyes darkened at her tone.

"You wanna quit talkin' so much shit, Darlin'?" he said imploringly, pointing a warning finger at her suddenly.

"Or what?" said Blake, tears skimming down her cheeks. "You gonna put me in my place like you did to Sherry or the rest of the wives?"

But Negan didn't let her say another word, his face like thunder.

"Jesus fucking Christ, Peaches!" he cried angrily, closing the gap between the pair of them. "Have I ever given you any fucking reason to think that I don't care about you? Hell, we've all got pasts, Darlin', you should know that as well as I do. An' I've done a lot of fuckin' things in my life, hell, in the past couple of years, I ain't proud of. But don't fuckin' tell me you don't know how much you fuckin' mean to me. You, beanspout, an' our kid you've got growin' inside ya."

He stared down at her now, as Blake gazed up at him, giving him a sad sort-of look, her face awash with tears.

She paused for a lengthy second or two, before opening her mouth to speak again.

"Would you have still been with her...Sherry, if she'd had your baby?" she asked.

Negan blinked and dragged a hand over his bearded mouth, giving another carrying huff.

"What the fuck do you want me to say to that?" he replied slowly. "Hell, I ain't a monster and I aint about to walk out on a pregnant gal. But don't for a fuckin' moment think that I fuckin' loved her, Peacehes."

His eyes were full of honesty now, as he stood there mere inches away from her without their bodies touching.

Blake stared up at him, helplessly, as he finally lifted a hand to her forearm, everything in the room becoming suddenly quiet and still.

"Sit," he asked her gently, his voice soothing now in the lamplight, as Blake did as he said, sitting down onto the couch behind her, her eyes fixed on his, as tears ran down her cheeks to her slender neck.

Negan joined her, but perched on the edge of the couch cushion, hands clasped between his spread
knees, his gaze drifting to the floor.

"There's only two people in this world I've ever fuckin' loved," he began slowly. "My first wife….hell, we met when we I was a senior and she was a sophomore, on the cheerleadin' squad, while I played on the football team. She was my every-fuckin'-thing. But we tried for a family. For kids, but she couldn't…"

Negan trailed off, mouthing at the air for a moment, before letting a harsh gulp trail up, and then back down, his bearded throat.

"So we argued, I drank, left her fuckin' home alone night after damn night. I screwed around on her. An' then one day I was lyin' there in bed, with some gal I can't even remember the damn name of, an I get a call that my wife fuckin' collapsed on the street outside the grocery store. I was supposed to have been the one pickin' up dinner that night', but I'd forgotten' the hell about it. An' by the time I'd made it over to the hospital almost three hours after she'd been brought in, the docs, well they'd already ran all their goddamn tests, an' told her she had terminal fucking cancer. Fucking cancer. She'd known the whole time I'd been cheatin' on her, an she didn't care. It was too late to fuckin' care. But it still tore me apart that she'd known."

Blake stared at him, breathing hard.

Blake had heard bits and pieces of this story before. But Negan had never elaborated. And yet here he was now, baring his soul to her.

His head was bowed low, his shoulders hunched, looking like a broken man. But he gave a deep sniff before continuing.

"And so I stayed with her….until the end…." he said, pausing for a moment, before staring straight up at Blake. "An' I could hear those goddamn sirens outside, the copters', but I just sat there holdin' her damn hand, even after she passed… I couldn't even fuckin' move….an' when the time came, when she came back as one of those sorry fucks, I couldn't even do it….I couldn't put her down. I acted like a cowardly piece of shit. An' I have done ever fuckin' since. I mean, I know I look an' act like a smartass-asshole most of the fuckin' time. But that was only because that day, I gave up givin' a shit about anyone but myself. An eventually I found myself some gals who needed me. An' I gave them what they wanted, protection, a shot at an easy fucking life, but they were just an easy screw an' it looked good. Me standin' there with six wives...king of the fucking castle. With my goddamn empire beneath me. But I was fuckin' empty inside. I could fucking feel it. Like a goddamn cancer of my own."

Negan gave a frown, lowering his chin and staring at a tearful Blake, with earnest chocolate eyes.

"An' then you showed up," said Negan, his hand moving suddenly to Blake's cheek, as he sat up straight, cocking his tanned face to the side, gazing at her in a look that almost resembled awe, his eyes roving across her features. "An you dragged me the fuck away from that emptiness like a goddamn hurricane, Peaches."

Blake gulped,as another tear slid its way down her cheek, but Negan quickly swiped it aside with his coarse thumb.

"So like I said, there's only ever been two fuckin' people in this world I've ever fuckin' loved. Her.....an' you. There ain't ever been nobody else. An' there never fuckin' will be. We clear on that? Look, Sherry's gone. An' there never was no kid with her. There never has been before now. With anyone."
Negan's hand suddenly dropped from Blake's chin, finding her waist, his fingers tracing over her flat abdomen.

"I was never out to become a fuckin' Daddy," he muttered. "An' I ain't gonna lie that it don't scare the livin' shit outta me. But havin' a kid with you. I could die tomorrow and still feel the happiest I've ever felt in my goddamn life."

Blake gave a breathy laugh at this. "Please dont," she said gently, as Negan blinked, a soft smile curving his bearded lips upwards.

"C'mere, Darlin'," he said, snaking his leather-clad arm around her and pulling her to him.

Blake compiled gratefully, feeling two more tears slide down her cheeks.

God, she had been so stupid. But she had just needed to hear it from him. That this was what he wanted.

He smelled like musk, and burning wood fire, and gasoline, and Blake loved him with every inch of her, including the bay girl or boy currently growing inside her.

After a long few moments had passed she finally pulled away, staring down at her lap and swiping tears from her eyes feeling, very stupid all of a sudden.

"I'm sorry," she said gently.

But Negan shook his head, his hand upon her chin again, lifting her gaze to his long face once more.

"Dont fuckin' be, Dralin'," he said imploringly. "All of this shit my fuckin' fault anyway."

He let out a puff of air, digging his tongue into his inner cheek before speaking again.

"Tomorrow…. I'm callin' a meetin' an' making it clear that those gals...well they're free to do whatever they want from now on."

Blake looked at him, with gentle eyes. "Y-You don't have to do that Negan-" she began, but this time it was Negan's turn to cut across her.

"They can stay in that room if they like, hell, they can become Beansprout' full time babysitters club if that's what they want, but that wife shit. I'm done with that damn stuff now."

And with that, before Blake could say another word, Negan had grabbed her, sat back and pulled her onto his lap, as she threaded her legs, either side of his thighs.

"Cause I've got myself a queen instead," he said lifting his chin upwards until his grinning lips brushed against hers.

And Blake couldn't help but smile into his mouth, as she kissed him gently, a warmth spreading through her.

But for once this wasn't a sexual warmth, this was a warmth, that Blake wasn't aware she had ever felt before in her entire life.

Their lives were open books now and Blake was under no illusions about what she meant to him, her Saviour.

For she was the queen to his king.
She had been through shit in her life...been a broken woman….but also a phoenix rising from the ashes of her former life. With Negan at her side.

They were a powerful and formidable team.

And no bullshit stirring from Amber or anyone else was going to fuck that up for them.

Blake had had her doubts, but she had come out stronger, with a reassurance….with a love, that Blake knew he had only ever given to one other.

And no matter what had happened between him and Sherry, that was done. It was all done.

And now the four of them together, her Negan, Mia and the baby could move on….

...leaving the past in the past.

And that meant more to Blake now, than she could ever, ever say.
The sky above her head had already grown dark by the time Rosita had almost thought to give up for the night.

She had been out here three or four days in a row now, on the pretence of looking for supplies to give to the Saviours for their monthly offering, when really, she had other more pressing things she needed to do.

After Rick and their group's last run in with Negan, Blake and the Saviours, almost two weeks ago, fear and hysteria had somewhat heightened within their small community.

Blake had told Rick that they would now need to treble their offering, something which just a few weeks in, they were already struggling to do.

And so gas and working vehicles were now a commodity that Rick was rationing to the Nth degree. And Rosita knew that she needed both to be able to go through with her plan. To hit Negan where it hurt. Just as he had done with them time and time again.

And if she was the only one brave enough to go through with it then so be it.

Too many time she had watched Rick and Michonne roll over to the Saviours, fall to their knees and bow to his will.

Well, Rosita wasn't about to do that anymore.

And earlier this evening, finally coming across seven or eight cars piled up along the side of the highway, she had foolishly presumed she had hit the motherlode.

Rosita had been searching for a while now for something suitable, but time after time her plans to get to the Saviours compound had been scuppered by one thing or another over the past few weeks.

First it had been on Rick's orders. Then Tara had asked for help on a five day run a little way south of Alexandria. But now was her chance. She had her gun, all ready to go. A cache of bullets too. And now all she needed was something to take her there.

She knew she couldn't use one their usual cars or everyone would become too suspicious. Perhaps try and stop her. So now she just needed something, anything she could use to make the long and perhaps her last drive to the Sanctuary in.

Although here she was, finally out here with a purpose, trying to find the last piece of the puzzle, and yet frustratingly every car she had tried tonight and the nights gone by had refused to even tick over, either busted or just out of gas.

The dark haired woman paused for a moment, as a walker emerged from the undergrowth just ahead, snapping and snarling as it dragged its decomposing body towards her.

But Rosita barely flinched, tugging out her large knife, before plunging it right through the rotter's soft skull.

She quickly sheathed her knife once more as the figure slumped to the ground, before turning her attention back to the last car on the road.
This was it, her final shot of the night. She would need to get back soon. It would take her at least an hour on foot to get back to Alexandria, and she was beginning to grow cold, weary and hungry.

She hastily pulled open the door to a sleek silver Corolla, before ducking her head inside. And, seeing a key still in the ignition, she gave it a turn.

She waited….

And waited….

Hearing the engine rev and rev, but refuse to turn over.

And so Rosita, about to give up, gave a humongous sigh, just as, to her utter surprise...WHAM! The engine burst into life.

"Aha!" she exclaimed, slapping the steering wheel, elation bursting through her.

And even though after a moment or two the engine died again, the gas gauge reading empty, Rosita knew that this was it. She was one step closer to seeking revenge.

For Abraham, for Glenn, for Olivia and Denise….

All she needed now was to find herself a siphonable amount of gas to get her to the Sanctuary. But that could wait until tomorrow to go out on the search again..

Rosita smiled to herself now on that dark road.

Oh yes, Negan would pay for what he had done.

And if people like that bitch Blake were stupid enough to get involved in him, then that was too bad. Because Rosita was going to let nothing, and she meant nothing, stand in her way…
As the weeks drift by

The warm and humid Fall days began to pass slowly by. And at the Sanctuary, for the first time in a long time, things felt like they were progressing well.

The workers were happier than they had been probably since they had arrived here. The lieutenants spent their days feeling much less harassed and pressured than they had been before.

And all of this was likely down to two people.

Negan had been in a much improved mood these past few weeks. Barely seen barking orders at his higher-up generals or threatening anyone with Lucille as everyone was so used to seeing him doing.

Not that he wasn't still just as intimidating as before. But nowadays, the dark-haired man's attention was fully turned upon a pregnant Blake….who seemed these days to be on a cloud-nine of her own.

But it wasn't just these things that had changed the general atmosphere of the normally gloomy and subdued community.

In the day that followed Negan's revelation to Blake about his long deceased wife, the bearded leader had gathered everyone, including the wives, together for a meeting, and there he had told everyone that the women in question were free to go and do as they pleased from that point onwards. A quiet muttering had soon filled the large hall, but Negan from high up on the walkway above, had just lazily waved his hand, grinned, and informed everyone that there was a new queen in town. And then if anyone had any issue with that, they could come and tell him directly. And that they were under no circumstances going to bother said-queen who was currently approaching her second month of her pregnancy.

Blake of course had only heard about this meeting from varying sources, Negan wanting to keep her out of it, although upon his return to their room later that morning, Blake had thanked him for the gesture in her own very special way….

This act from Negan, freed up Amber to leave the wives quarters, return to Mark and take up a position down in the laundry room. As did Layla who, confident by herself, had taken up residence downstairs with the rest of the workers too. Whereas the other three women, Tanya, Frankie and Michelle, obviously feeling a little nervous about what was ahead of them from now on, went to Balke for a advice a little later that day, who had nudged them and reassured the three women that they were free to stay upstairs and that Mia, upon Negan's suggestion, did still need childminders.

And so the three of them had stayed, retaining little of their status of wives and earning their keep along with everyone else in this place. And strangely that made these women as happy as everyone else. To be free at last. Yet still here, under the protection and care of not only Negan now, but Blake too.

It was no secret that Blake was truly loved here.

She had come as a well-needed contrast to Negan. And, without realising, had ended his harsh regime and made the place a better one for everyone living in it.

Mainly due to that soft-spot Negan had had, and still had for her.

Over the long couple of weeks that followed since Negan's announcement about Blake's pregnancy, the caramel blonde woman had received no end of well-wishes, hugs and even gifts from the
Feeling utterly hormonal, only yesterday for example, Blake had burst into happy tears down in the large cavernous dining hall at breakfast as one of the older workers had given her a beautiful white baby blanket, hand-embroidered with tiny flowers all along the edges.

It had been strange to Blake to feel these first stages of pregnancy all over again, after so many years.

But as much as she wanted to say she was having it easy, it had been early one morning that she had felt the first wave of nausea hit her.

Flinging off the covers, as Negan had grizzled and shifted under the warm sheets beside her, Blake had quickly hopped out of bed and run to the bathroom, just about managing to reach the toilet before retching hard.

But this first little bout of morning sickness hadn't lasted by the time Negan had even made it to the bathroom door, Blake had already been at the sink brushing her teeth and offering him a moody look.

"You realise this is all your fault," she had scolded him, rubbing at her tender belly.

But Negan had just chuckled, leaning his tall and completely naked frame up against the bedroom door.

"I ain't apologisin', Sweetheart," he said smugly. "An' it ain't exactly the first time you've hurled in my bathroom now is it?"

And so every morning that followed, Blake had woken up early with the same feeling of nausea hitting her.

But at least those early starts had meant that she had been able to get out into the garden early as planned.

Despite Negan's protest, Blake had been working hard out in the gardens, not doing anything too strenuous of course, but still helping with getting in the last of the seasons harvest, before winter set in.

And having first pickings of the ripest tomatoes, was also a bonus too.

But apart from a little morning sickness, and slightly tender boobs, Blake was very much coming around to the idea of being pregnant again.

It felt good to have a little life growing inside her, and every morning since she had found out, Blake had stood in front of the floor length mirror that hung inside Negan's closet door and turned to the side, running a hand over her flat abdomen, picturing what she would look like in a few months time with a humongous bump.

Negan had caught her doing this a couple of times, coming up behind her and threading his leather clad arms around her, leaning his stubbly chin onto her shoulder.

Blake had indeed never felt more loved as she did at this very moment in time.

Negan was obviously head over heels for her, making no bones to anyone about how in love with her he was.
He had made it perfectly clear that she was his absolutely fucking everything, stalking around the Sanctuary after her and Mia, like a wolf protecting his pack.

Life seemed good…

Great, even…

For everyone at the Sanctuary, not just Negan and Blake.

It had reached the middle of October by the time the residents had awoken to find that the first of the season's frost had settled over the gardens and the lots surrounding the large, looming factory.

And Blake, up early as always with both morning sickness and Mia, who was suffering from a bit of a snuffle and was acting up, pouting and whining whenever she got the opportunity, was currently pulling an oversized wooly black sweater over a tshirt and a pair of skinny black jeans, as she chatted away to Negan, who was perched on the end of their bed, pulling on his boots.

"I dont know, Negan," the blonde woman grumbled. "What if something happens to her?"

Negan, feeling a little irritable from being kept awake much of the night, by Mia's moaning and snuffling, had just suggested that the room next door to this one, currently uninhabited, be turned into a bedroom for the little toddler.

"The kid'll be fuckin' fine, Darlin'," Negan huffed, his dark eyes darting over to where Mia was sat on the large leather sofa across the room pouting and attempting to pull of her teeny socks. "I think we both could do with a fuckin' good night's sleep, an' hell, Beansprout can't be sharin' a bed with us forever."

Blake knew he was right. Mia was only getting bigger and at the rate Blake's stomach would be expanding, there soon would certainly not be room for all three of them in that king size of theirs.

But Blake smirked, raising an eyebrow in Negan's direction.

"Well you're always free to sleep on the couch, Daddy…" she purred fiendishly, causing Negan to offer her a glowering look, giving another huff and he pulled himself to his feet, strutting over towards her slowly.

This morning, he already had his black leather jacket slung on over a grey t-shirt and grey jeans, and fixed a playful sort of frown between his brows as he came to stop just in front of her.

"That fuckin' so?" he growled in return, staring down at Blake with a look of bemused disbelief crossing his long and tanned features. "Jeez, you wanna remind me again when the hell you became leader of my damn empire, Peaches?"

But Blake smiled, lifting her hand up and toying with his jacket zipper.

"Probably when you got me knocked up," she said in a simpering voice, giving his zipper one hard tug with the final couple of words. "And, hey, it's not my fault people like me more than they like you, Papa-bear."

With that, she turned away from him, throwing him one last teasing look, as she moved over to the couches, where Mia giving a sharp wail suddenly threw one of her tiny white socks onto the floor huffily.

"Hey, hey," Blake said suddenly in a warm yet slightly scolding voice. "What wrong, Sweetie?"
But Mia merely scowled, folding both her arms over her tiny body, blatantly imitating Blake with that particular pose.

"I don’t want weird swocks!" she cried shrilly, as Blake moved around the sofa and came to perch on the edge of the seat, facing the unhappy little toddler.

From across the room, Negan's eyebrows were already in his hairline as he leaned back on his long legs, eyeing Mia incredulously.

"Wow, someone’s already gettin' fuckin' mood swings, huh?" the bearded Saviour said loudly. "She’ll be paintin' her damn nails an' sneakin' out of this place to meet boys soon."

But Blake just rolled her eyes and ignored him, turning her full attention to Mia instead, lifting her hand to brush back the tufty strands of brown hair from her face.

"Well you don't have to wear socks if you don't want to baby," Blake said gently.

But before her hand could reach Mia's hair, the little girl had jerked herself out of Blake's reach and slid from the couch, running across the room hurriedly.

Blake gaped a little, feeling a little hurt all of a sudden, and glancing up to see Mia disappearing in through the open bathroom door.

Balke chanced a glance at Negan before getting quickly to her feet and following Mia into the large, tiled bathroom.

But Blake had barely poked her head around the door, to suddenly see Mia, with one leg up on the edge of the bathtub, leaning over and turning on both taps, before she hopped back down again.

"Mia-" began Blake, giving a confused frown, marching over to the tub to turn off the hot and cold running taps.

But Mia merely scooted around the tub at this, poking at her tongue angrily at Blake.

"I don’t liak Bwakey!" Mia suddenly cried.

But Negan, who had appeared around the bathroom door right at that second, raised his eyebrows once more, not looking very impressed by the tone of the toddler's voice.

"You'd better watch that attitude, Beansprout, or someone's goin' on the damn naughty step," he said in a slightly aggravated tone, pointing at her. "An’ by naughty step, I mean you'll be sleepin' outside with the damn chickens tonight."

But Mia, obviously never having heard Negan speak like this to her before, suddenly stopped at the far end of the bathroom, and stared at him, giving a grotesque little sniffle….

Then another….

Then another….

And before Blake or Negan could do anything to stop her, the teeny girl had thrown her head back, given a wail and begun to cry loudly.

Blake from the bathtub, stood up straight, chancing another glance at Negan before cocking her head to the side and moving slowly over to Mia, crouching down in front of her.
By now, Mia's face was red and blotchy and her face was completely wet with a mixture of tears and snot.

She looked terrible, and Blake lifted a hand to her tiny forehead to find it scalding hot.

"She's burning up," said Blake, glancing at Negan over her shoulder.

He looked stony-faced but still rather more sympathetic than he had done a mere moment before.

It really was no surprise that Mia would be acting like this, especially if she was feeling out of sorts. Things like this were very common for kids Mia's age.

Blake pulled the tiny girl into her arms and shushed her.

"Come here, baby," the blonde woman uttered soothingly.

"Let's get you back into bed shall we?" she asked in a gentle voice, but Mia, still sobbing her little heart out shook her head. "Noh, I 'ot. Ca' I av' baff, pwease?"

Blake offered Mia a sorry look. "Aww, of course you can, Sweetie," she replied, before looking to Negan poignantly, who stared back at her for lengthy moment, before giving a humongous roll of his eyes.

"Jesus fuckin' Christ," he huffed, sounding about irritable as Mia had been. "You wanna wear my damn balls around your neck while your at it, Sweetheart?!"

But Blake just shot Negan a teasing look.

"You wanna try running the bath instead of your mouth there, Errand-boy?" she uttered with a smirk.

But this only caused Negan to huff again, marching over to the tub and turning on the taps, filling the bath with a small amount of lukewarm water.

Blake at once, scooped a, still sobbing and snotty, Mia up into her arms with a small groan, carrying her across the room, as Negan eyed her.

"You sure you should be carryin' her in your condition, Peaches?" he said in a low voice, as she came to stand beside him, near to the tub, but Blake chanced a glance his way giving a small frown.

"Yeah, I'm fine," she said blinking a little and feeling slightly defensive at his tone. She sighed. "You can't wrap me up in cotton wool, Negan……we've talked about this…"

But the dark-haired man just raised both his hands aloft in a look of defeat.

"Fine, fine," he said tutting, and spinning around on his heel, heading back towards the bedroom.

"But I ain't takin' no for an answer in gettin' her her own room. Damn kid's gonna wear you out an this fuckin' rate."

And Blake knew he was probably right.

She had been feeling much better since Carson had prescribed her some pre-natal vitamins to take, and had had much more energy and gusto of late than before.

But even so, she knew that it wouldn't be long until the second and third trimesters of pregnancy would begin to take their toll. And despite how much Tanya, Frankie and Michelle helped out with
her, Balke would need to start taking it easy when it came to Mia.

But for now, the teeny, sniffly little girl was still her top priority.

"Ok, fine," she sighed, resigning herself to the idea of Mia getting her own room next door. "But she needs a bed, and a dresser, and-"

But Negan cut across her with a grin.

"Consider it done, Darlin," he said confidently, offering her one last lingering look. "I will see you later, Momma-bear."

And with that, he shot her a smug wink, that caused Blake to smirk and roll her eyes before, leaving the room. And a moment later, the blonde hearing the door to their bedroom closing too, knew that Negan was gone.

But turning her full attention back to Mia, Blake gave a warm smile.

"Come on, let's get you into the bath," she said gently. "See if we can't wash away this silly old fever, hey?"

And Mia, with a pout, pressing her chubby fingers to her mouth, gave a nod, as Blake began to remove her top and leggings.

"I dwo luvv Bwakey wrealle," said the toddler suddenly in a quiet voice, giving a small sniffle and looking very sorry.

And Blake just smiled, cupping the tiny baby's cheek gently.

"I know," she replied in a soothing voice. "I love you too, Sweetie."

And Blake knew that she truly, truly did.
Over the couple of days that followed, Mia's cold did not seemed to relent, with the tiny toddler clunging to Blake and bursting into wet and snotty tears every time the blonde woman left her sight.

She was indeed feeling sorry for herself, and it seemed that cuddles from Blake were the only thing that made her feel even slightly better.

Negan had grumbled at first, trying to prise Mia away, vocalising his worries about Blake catching the flu in her condition. But Blake had merely pawed him away, and told him not to worry so much.

But it was obvious to Blake that Negan was feeling irritable himself after night after night of Mia waking up every hour, snuffling and whining. And so, had soon got work started on clearing out the room next door to his and Blake's, to set Mia up with her own space. Or rather, he barked orders at people to do the work for him.

And soon enough, the room was livable, bright and airy, with pale walls and a small twin bed tucked into one corner, but as Blake had stood there in the doorway, fingers brought up to her mouth, she knew that something about it, just didn't feel quite right.

By the third day, Negan, after being kicked out of bed to go get Mia some juice at 5am as the toddler with a high fever wailed to the heavens, had come back upstairs declaring that he was off out on a run with Simon for the day and wouldn't be back until late.

It was obvious that he needed a break. And Blake was not ever going to deny him that.

And so he had kissed her gently, glared at Mia, but ruffled her brown locks warmly nonetheless, before stalking from the room.

Blake couldn't say she was a huge fan of Negan being away for too long, but at least that gave her a chance to do what she wanted to do today.

And so, roping in Tanya and Franke to help out, Blake had set to work.

"Are you sure this is a good idea?" asked Tanya as she and Blake climbed the stairs with arms laden, not even thirty minutes later.

The two women had left Frankie keeping an eye on a snoozing Mia and had headed down to the marketplace to look for an entire list of things Blake had had her eye on, to decorate Mia's room with.

It was certainly safe to say that Blake was in a nesting mood. And there was no way that Mia was going to be holed up in some dingy little room without so much as a rug across the unpolished floorboards.

But rather than be put-out by Blake taking what she wanted from the expansive marketplace down on the ground floor of the looming factory, as she had been slightly worried about, the Sanctuary residents had been more than happy to advise and offer things that weren't on show to the expectant mother, showering her in love and kindness as they so often did these days.

"Oh I've got the cutest little throw rug Mia might like, let me just go fetch it."

"Tommy used to be a carpenter, how about he makes you a little painter's easel for her? My
grandaughter used to love playing on hers."

And so it was safe to say that Blake had been overwhelmed by the response she had gotten from the Saviours.

She was liked. Certainly more than Negan was.

People didn't kneel for her these days, granted, but they still seemed to worship her, treating her like she was family.

And perhaps in a way, she was.

This woman who had brought everyone together. Made them feel safer under Negan's reign.

And all of that made Blake happy.

But now, as she ascended the stairs up to the third floor and the hallways that led to her, Negan and Mia's rooms, Blake let out a small sigh.

"It's a great idea," she said reassuringly over her shoulder to the dark-haired woman following her up the staircase. "I just want Mia's room to be cute. Like any normal kid's room, y'know?"

And it was true. Mia had grown up in this horrible world and had been through so, so much for someone so young. So she certainly deserved something nice.

But that obviously was not what Tanya had been meaning.

"No, I meant carrying all that stuff," said the woman in worried voice. "I can carry something else you know..."

But this only caused Blake to roll her dark green eyes in frustration.

"Ugh, you just sound like Negan," she tutted. "I'm pregnant, Tan, not at death's door. I can still carry a couple of boxes up some stairs."

"I just don't want you pushing yourself too hard," the dark-haired woman mused in a quiet voice. "This is your first pregnancy, you've got to take it easy."

Blake pursed her lips together, her heart dropping a little.

In fact, it was her third pregnancy. Not that Tanya or anyone but Negan was to know that, and it still hurt to think of the things that could have been back then.

But Blake took a deep breath now.

This was a fresh start. She was pregnant with a child by the man she loved and she couldn't be happier.

Despite the circumstances she found herself in, this is what she had always wanted. A family and happiness.

And it was crazy to think that only a few short months ago, she didn't have any of this. She didn't have Negan, or Mia...or the baby growing inside her right now.

Blake smiled to herself, reaching the top of the stars as she lingered to wait for Tanya.
The dark-haired woman soon caught up with her and the pair of them made their way back to Mia's new room where they deposited the boxes and armfuls of stuff down onto the small bed.

"I'm just going to go check in on Frankie-" Blake began, before Tanya gave a gentle smile, preempting Blake's words with a hand to her forearm.

"I'll make a start here," she said in a sweet voice.

Blake really was so happy she had found these women. Her friends. And in this world finding people you could call genuine friends really was a rarity.

Her mind suddenly thought back to those people she had left behind in Alexandria….

Tara...Aaron...Eric….

The people she had always considered close, but when push came to shove had turned their back on her...after everything, all because of her alliance with Negan.

Wasn't she still the same person?

Hadn't they all been through the same shit, at the end of the day?

Of course Blake understood their issues with Negan, and knew it was too much to ask them to forgive him for the things he had done.

But for the briefest of moments during her last visit to Alexandria, Blake had thought that maybe her and Tara couldn't have put everything behind them, started over…..

….but Rick's attitude, as well as other's, like Michonne's, and Rosita's, had changed all that. They had caused Blake's hackles to rise, and when Mia had been in danger, Blake had felt like a wild animal, willing to go to any lengths to protect her.

And perhaps in that moment she hadn't been too different to Negan, issuing threats and ultimatums.

But that was because, in her eyes, those people she had once called her friends and community, deserved nothing more now.

Blake gave a small gulp, shoving open the door to her and Negan's room to see Frankie stood over beside the far window, staring out, arms clutched around herself.

She turned upon hearing Blake enter, blinking her eyes and offering her a soft smile.


Blake glanced over to where Mia was tucked up beneath the covers of her and Negan's large bed.

She really did look so tiny now, lying there with sheets tangled around her.

Blake looked back up to Frankie.

"Want to come next-door to help, Tan and I set things up?" she asked, as Frankie gave a delighted nod and followed Blake from the room once more.

Three hours later, and after a short break in which Mia had started wailing from the bedroom next door and Blake had given her a little lukewarm chamomile tea and comforted her until she had fallen soundly back to sleep, Blake and the other two woeman were just putting the final touches to Mia's
In Blake's opinion it looked pretty close to perfect, with a large poster of an alphabet of animals on
one side, a rug and plenty of soft furnishings covering the small space giving it a cozy look, and a
sweet little lampshade covered in birds hanging in the centre of the room.

There was just one thing missing.

"Right, I'm just gonna put up the finishing touches…” Blake murmured, more to herself than the two
women, suddenly grabbing a chair and climbing up onto it.

"Blake, I really don't think you should-" Frankie said sounding concerned.

But with a string of fairy lights in one hand, Blake waved her aside airily from her vantage point high
up on the rickety chair, her back to the two women who were now standing by the door.

God, why the hell was everyone treating her like she was made of glass. She was pregnant, not
dying!

"Stop fussing," she scolded, standing up on her tiptoes to loop the string of lights over the curtain
rail. "God. You both sound just like Negan…"

But before Blake could say another word she suddenly felt a strong hand grab her around the middle
and tug her from the chair with one foul swoop.

"NOPE!" came a sudden loud and very recognisable voice, as she felt herself being pulled
backwards into a firm, taut body.

"What the hell-?" Blake protested, jerking her head around to see Negan standing behind her, as he
dropped her gently to the ground once more.

Blake swung around, scowling, but at this moment Negan's face was like thunder too, as he removed
his hand from her, and pointed a long tanned finger at her instead.

"Nope, nope, fucking, nope," he said again in a warning voice, prodding her gently in the
collarbone. "Hell, I hope my eyes were fuckin' deceivein' me, 'cause there's no way you had better've
been' standin' up on that damn piece of crap chair, Peaches!"

Behind him Tanya and Frankie were standing awkwardly, clutching at their arms, keeping their eyes
firmly from Blake's.

But the blonde woman continued to frown, incited by Negan's attitude towards her right now.

"I was just putting up some fairy lights, Negan," she said an incredulous voice, shaking her head and
shrugging. "I wasn't riding a fucking rollercoaster."

What the hell was his problem? What the hell was everyone's problem?

She wasn't a moron. She knew how to take care of herself.

But Negan grimaced, taking a step step back and raising both eyebrows goadingly.

"Jesus fuckin' Christ, Darlin'," he said blinking own at her. "You're fuckin' pregnant. An' hell, I don'
want you liftin' a dam finger, let alone standin' that oh-so-fuckin' fine ass of yours up on a goddamn
chair! I mean, shit, Sweetheart. I really gotta keep an eye on your twenty four fuckin' seven, for the
next seven and half fuckin' months?!!"
A rage suddenly bubbled up inside Blake at his words.

"Ughhhhh. All of you are as bad as the other!" she said suddenly tossing down the fairy lights onto the floor in anger. "Telling me what I can and can't do."

She shoved Negan's hand away from her now angrily.

"For fucks sake, I'm a grown woman, I'm not an idiot!"

Blake glared at the three people standing before her.

She knew what she was doing.

"Well right now, it ain't just yourself your puttin' at fuckin' risk, Sweetheart," said Negan loudly. "It's our damn kid too!"

Blake suddenly stopped, gaping.

Did he really think that she would care that little about the welfare of her unborn baby?

"You know what, Negan, you can be such a fucking asshole sometimes..." she uttered, sounding hurt.

And with that, she shoved past him and the two women, stalking hurriedly from the room, long blonde hair flying behind her.

Negan gaped as he watched Blake leave the room, slamming the door behind her causing the entire room to rattle.

Was he so fucking wrong for trying to make sure that the woman he loved and his unborn baby were safe and well?

Why the fuck was she being so damn defensive here?

He chanced a glance at the two girls standing near to the door, both looking anywhere but at the dark-haired man right now.

"We tried to tell her-" Tanya said eventually in a sorry voice, her eyes finally meeting his, but Negan waved a hand at her before she could finish.

"S'not your damn fault she's so fuckin' stubborn," he said in a weary voice, lifting his hand and dragging it over his tired and lined face.

Negan let out a carrying huff, suddenly noticing the room.

It did look, by Negan's own admittance, fucking great. Like the kind of room a kid should have. And Blake had done all this.

It was warm, homely and looked far better than Negan could ever have made it.

And that really was Blake all over, wasn't it?

The way she had come into Negan's cold, dark life, and made it better, made it warm and full of light.

Fuck. Perhaps he had acted like an ass.
But it was all just because Negan had never been through this before.

He had always wanted kids of his own, but had never be in the position to give a shit about a woman carrying his kid before now.

He looked once again at Tanya and Frankie, his ex-wives, who stood there, hands clasped before them, looking slightly concerned.

"Look, thanks for your fuckin' help girls," he said in a level voice, offering the pair of them a nod. "Make sure you take what you fuckin' want from the marketplace tomorrow, no questions fuckin' asked, alright?"

Since Negan had announced to the Sanctuary his abandonment of the wives, all of the women had been put on the points system. But these two, as well as Michelle, had thankfully been given a very generous 'wage' of points after taking on looking after Mia almost full-time.

But the two women took the hint, leaving the room without another word.

It was obvious that they detested him, but all his 'exes' still seemed wholly devoted to Blake. Although to him, that really was no surprise.

It was as though she cast a spell over everyone she met. With her kind nature and no-nonsense attitude.

To him she was perfection. It seeped from her every pore.

And she seemed to make everything she touched into something good and bright and clean. Even in this dark and horrible world.

She had certainly done that to the Sanctuary anyway.

Even Negan couldn't deny that everyone here seemed far happier these days under their shared rule, rather than his alone.

For that was what this was now….

Negan was no longer alone anymore. Everything he had, was hers too. Even his people…

The dark-haired man took another long look around the room, before sighing to himself, hanging his head and heading out the door.

He stopped out in the corridor, swinging Lucille limply from his gloved hand, and pacing a little, composing himself for a moment.

Negan considered himself a pretty tough guy. He didn't take shit from anyone.

And yet here he was, gearing himself up for a fucking apology.

And so, taking a deep breath, he pressed his lips together and gave the door to his room a shove open, heading inside.

She was there, of course, scowling at him over her shoulder from her position perched on the edge of their king sized bed, stroking Mia's sleeping face.

"You're an asshole," she repeated again, in a pouting tone.
And Negan, lifting his free hand, scratched the back of his neck, hissing a little at her words.

"Yeah I fuckin' know," he mused in a low voice, dropping Lucille down onto the table nearest the door.

"And I'm still mad at you," Blake uttered, looking him up and down.

"Yup, I know that too, Peaches…" Negan sighed.

Her green eyes lingered on his for a long moment, before she opened her mouth to speak again.

"I thought you were out on a run anyway," she said, the smallest of frown-lines twitching between her brows, but her voice was a little softer now.

Negan lifted his free hand, scratching awkwardly at his stubbly cheek with one finger. "Well when I said goin' out on a run, I should've probably fuckin' said parkin' up a couple of blocks from here and catchin' up on some shut eye."

He watched as Blake gaped.

"You went out….to sleep?!" she said sounding confused.

Negan of course knew that she wouldn't be fucking happy about this, but hell, he might as well apologise for everything all at once. She'd likely find out eventually anyway.

He let out a puff of air.

"A guy needs him goddamn sleep, Darlin', an' sharin' that bed with Beansprout wrigglin' about all night, ain't exactly restful."

But Blake rolled her eyes dramatically, scowling, and shifting slightly to face him from her position on the bed.

"You realise that when our baby come along you're gonna be up half the night with him or her, right? I'm not doing it all, Negan," she huffed, turning back around and stroking her slender fingers over Mia's forehead and brushing her brown tufy hair from her face.

"Hmmm, yeah, I know…" Negan offered gently, strolling slowly over and coming to stand at Blake's side, peering down at the sleeping toddler lying with her little mouth hanging open and her little fists scrunched up either side of her shoulders.

The pair of them were silent for a long moment, before Blake let out a gentle sigh and glanced up at him.

"Negan I know you care about me, but I'm not stupid and I'm not not about to do something that'll put our baby at risk," she said tilting her head to the side, causing her long caramel-hair to drift gently over her shoulder.

She reached up and took his hand, and placed it to her belly.

"I want this," she said in a soft and reassuring voice, giving him a light, sad sort of smile. "I want a healthy baby as much as you do. But you've got to let me live. I'm not gonna break into pieces by doing a few things around the Sanctuary. But I promise I'll be careful, ok?"

Negan gazed back at Blake.
He knew just what she had been through with two miscarriages in just a few years. And knew that coping with that loss and that pain must have been hell for her to go through.

Then why the fuck was he doubting her fucking abilities?

She was smarter than he gave her credit for sometimes.

It was Negan's turn now to reach for her hand, tugging her gently to her feet, as his arms slid around her waist, and hers tangled themselves around his neck.

They stared at each other for a long moment, and Negan felt himself overwhelmed by what he felt about the woman standing before him.

She had come out of nowhere and bowled him over, just like Lucille had all those many years ago. And although Blake could never replace the memories of his long-deceased wife, she was still everything to him.

She was a path that he never thought he'd go down again, but here he was, besotted with this woman carrying his damn kid.

He took in a deep breath, his chocolate eyes flickering over her face.

"You did a good job on fixin' up that room next door," he commented in a husky voice. "I mean shit, you ever think about takin' on the entire damn Sanctuary, Darlin'? God knows this place could do with a damn refresh."

But Blake just smiled up at him, wrinkling her nose a little.

"Uh, now that is too big a project, even for me!" she replied, raising both her eyebrows meaningfully.

And at her words Negan gave a chuckle, before chancing a sudden glance over at a sleeping Mia.

"Y'know," he mused after a moment or two. "Seein' as Beasprout's out for the count, you up for a little Momma an' Daddy alone time in that bathtub of mine over there?"

He gestured with his head over towards the open bathroom door, before leaning his lips in close to her.

"I can help scrub Momma's back…" he growled teasingly. "An' Momma can help get rid the knots in Daddy's shoulders."

And at once, Blake smiled that vixen-like smile of hers, before reaching down and taking his hand once more.

And in a moment, with one last look over at Mia, she had dragged him quickly over towards the bathroom door.

"Sounds good, Papa-bear…" she purred. "But I hope that's not the only part of you that's feeling kinda stiff tonight…"

And with an approving wolf-like grin, Negan leant his mouth into her ear from behind.

"Oh don't you worry, Peaches," he growled, his hands sliding down to the space between her legs suddenly. "Daddy's ready to fuckin' apologise for bein' an asshole, in the only way he knows how."
And Negan had to admit, he didn't hear a word of complaint leave Blake's lips for the rest of the night.

So it seemed like she was certainly willing to accept that apology of his, without another thing said about it.
Then next morning, Negan awoke to find the bed beside him empty of the two girls he normally shared with.

He let out a grizzled sort-of huff into his pillow before easing himself up onto elbows and staring around.

He had had a surprisingly good sleep and didn't remember being woken even once during the night, but he saw no sign of either Blake or Mia now, lifting his hand and running it down his sleepy face.

"Peaches?" he called out, wondering if maybe she was in the bathroom next-door, but there came no reply.

It was so like her to just disappear without telling him where she was going. She was a pain in his ass like that, but he still liked that about her. She was like a goddamn constant challenge to him. Keeping him on his toes, whether he liked it or not.

Giving a groan, Negan pushed himself from the bed and ambled into the bathroom, running his hand through his dark, mussed-up hair as he went.

He switched on the light and moved over to the washbasin, grabbing his toothbrush from the plastic tumblr beside Blake's, getting down to brushing his teeth, gazing at his reflection in the mirror above the sink as he did so.

Negan had truly never thought he would slot back in to this kind of life again.

After Lucille he had resumed his bachelor ways, fulfilling every fantasy he had with a near endless string of woman along the way. But that had soon become tiring and even the excitement of sleeping with a different woman every night had quickly become stale and boring.

For it was a life like this he had truly yearned for a long time.

Having a fucking family.

Something real.

And Blake had given him that.

Sure it had taken them a long long time to get here, but they had. And every moment of happiness she gave to him, made all the pain and sadness of everything else, worth it.

Negan finished up at the washbasin, stripping swiftly out of his boxers before heading over towards the large tiled shower at the far end of the large bathroom.

And within ten minutes he was out again, shrugging on his leather jacket over a white t-shirt and grey pants, and grasping up Lucille.

But Negan had barely made it across the room, heading towards the door, when it was swiftly shoved open…..and in walked Blake, eating an apple.

Negan grinned at the sight, immediately cocking an eyebrow up at her. "Early bird catches the fuckin' worm, huh?" he commented, as Blake gave him a smile in return.
She looked in a far better mood than yesterday, which of course might have had something to do with the tension-relieving fun they had had in that bathtub last night.

"I don't know about a worm," she smirked. "But I got us breakfast."

And with that, she tossed him a second apple, which the dark-haired man promptly caught, grinning as he did so.

"You seem pretty fuckin' chipper this mornin', Doll-face," he growled lifting his chin a little and gazing at her. "My fingers really do that good of a job last night?"

Blake offered him a smile at his words. "Oh most definitely," she purred, walking over towards him now, her free hand reaching up and toying with the zipper on his leather jacket.

Negan narrowed his chocolate eyes at her.

Yeah granted, his performance, as always, had been pretty fucking impressive, but Blake was certainly in a better mood than she had been in a while.

"Beansprout, alright?" he asked in a bemused voice, staring down at her.

But the blonde woman just smiled.

"Yeah she seems much better today," she replied, with a small, contented sigh. "Tanya and Michelle have already collected her. They're making princess crowns. Mia's already decided."

Negan quickly chuckled at the sheer cockiness of the three year old toddler.

"That mean I get Mamma-bear all my damn self today?" he uttered nudging her nose with his.

But Blake's lips curved into a wide grin at his words, as she pulled her face away from his a little teasingly, pursing her lips together, as if thinking hard.

"You can....." she said slowly, her eyes peering up at his. "But maybe not here."

A frown twitched its way between Negan's eyebrows, but Blake spoke again before he could question her.

"Listen, we've not exactly been on the same page lately, and with everything that's happened, Mia coming back, me...well..." she reached down placing a hand to her stomach. "Well, we haven't really had much time together. Just you and me. And I thought it might be good to get away from the stress of this place. Even if it's just for the day."

Negan stared at her.

"Oh yeah?" he said, a little taken a aback. She had obviously been thinking on this for a while. "An' where exactly were you thinking?"

But Blake just smiled and shrugged, coming to rest both her arms over his shoulders, as his, still holding onto both Lucille and his apple, slid their way up her slender sides.

"I don't know. Anywhere." she murmured, wrinkling her nose lightly. "Just somewhere we can get away from everything...just for a few hours. I've been a hormonal bitch this last week or so, and I want to make it up to you."

He could hear the hint of pleading in her voice, her obviously knowing that after his actions
yesterday he was likely to say no.

Ok, Negan had been a hard-ass. But it was only because he wanted to keep the woman he loved, carrying his baby, safe.

But he understood now that she needed her own breathing space. And being cooped up her wasn’t good for either of their sanities.

The pair of them had been arguing a lot lately. Mainly about the smallest and most petty of things, and as much as Negan knew that that that type of shit was normal in any fucking relationship, it still sucked-fucking-ass. Totally and utterly.

He missed the good old days when it was just the two of them pissing the other off, with the only reason behind it being because they wanted to. And not because either of them were scared, or worried, or frustrated for any reason.

"So….what do you think?" Blake asked him hopefully, tilting her head to the side and causing her long blonde hair to trail down one shoulder. "Daddy up for taking me out on a road trip?"

Negan was silent for a lengthy moment before the corners of his bearded mouth suddenly twitched up into a wide grin.

"Oh most fuckin' definitely," he said grinning. "As long as Momma is up for givin' Daddy a damn blow job in the front of his fuckin' truck, we are good to. fuckin'. go."

He watched, chuckling, as Blake rolled her eyes.

"Hmm, well we'll have to see about that one…" she purred with a smile, giving him a sudden sharp, yet playful, shove away from her, before heading over towards their closet.

Of course half her shit was here now, outfits tangled in with his. Not that he minded that one little bit.

"Alright then, well I guess I'd better go get loadin' shit up, seein' as the damn queen's given her orders," said Negan in a goading voice, giving a faux-heavy sigh, as Blake opened the closet door and stared at him in the reflection in the full length mirror hanging inside the door.

"Just make sure you pack some tomatoes for lunch for me," she said pulling out a black sweater.

But Negan waved an easy hand at her.

"Yeah, yeah, I know," he sighed. "Can't keep Peaches from her damn cravings now can I?"

But Blake merely smirked in his direction, as Negan turned on his heel chuckling again before taking a big bite of his apple and heading swiftly out the door, shutting it closed behind him with a small snap.

"You off somewhere, Boss?"

Almost a half hour later and Negan, who had been standing outside in the drizzly lots that surrounded the Sanctuary, was loading not only Lucille, but an entire range of numerous weapons into one of the nicer pickup trucks.

Negan knew that if they were going out there, then there was no way he was letting his guard down. Not for one goddamn second. Not with Blake carrying his goddamn offspring inside of her.

And sure he wasn't stupid enough to vocalise his worry for her out loud again, not knowing how
much it irritated the hell out of her. But that didn't mean he wasn't gonna keep a close eye on any fucker, dead or alive, who tried to cross them out there.

Negan quickly swung around on his booted-heel to see Simon stroking towards him, thumbs hooked through his belt loops as he surveyed the leader of the Saviours and the shiny dark blue truck behind him.

"Peaches, wants to go grab some fresh air," he replied stiffly. "An' I, not bein' fuckin' idiotic enough to argue with a pregnant lady, have agreed to escort her outta here for the day."

Simon offered him a chuckle.

Negan knew it wasn't often that he was seen leaving his people, especially without an entire damn convoy of Saviours to back him up anyway. But he would make an exception on this occasion. And he knew the place would run smoothly without him here. For today at least.

"I'll be takin' my radio, so if shit just happens to hit the fan while I'm gone," he continued. "Make sure you call me. Do not leave me hangin', Si, you understandin' me?"

Negan stared at his tall and mustachioed right-hand man for a long moment, pursing his bearded lips together.

He and Simon had had their moments in the past, and on a few occasions Simon had tried to take the lead from Negan. Tried to be the bigger fucking badass. But he had soon learned his place was at Negan's side. Although Negan still needed to remind him of that from time to take, pushing him back into line.

But on this occasion, to Negan's relief, Simon gave a prompt nod of his head.

"Loud and clear," he said obediently. "But if I were you, Boss, I'd go west if you're taking your gal out. The outposts tell me they've seen people from the Hilltop and Rick's place, scouting as far north as Haley Ridge-"

"An' I don' wanna be runnin' into any of those cock-suckers and their goddamn fuckin' vendettas now do I?" Negan cut in, clenching his jaw.

Running into anyone else today and risking Blake and his unborn kid's life was not particularly high on his list of priorities for today, so Negan knew he should take Simon's advice and head west instead.

He clapped his second in command on the shoulder proudly, lifting his chin, just as a sudden figure appeared just behind the mustachioed man.

"So I've got bottled water, snacks, a gun-" said Blake suddenly strutting over towards them, dressed now in a navy jacket throw over a black sweater and jeans, her long blonde hair tossed over one shoulder as she looked down into the pack she carried in her hands.

But at her words Negan leant right back on his long legs, eyeing her.

"Now where'd the FUCK you get a gun from, Peaches?" he said in a loud voice, almost marvelling at her.

Fuck, she really did have the fucking run of this place didn't she?

"What? You think I don't have access to your guns cache?" she said narrowing her eyes at him. "I'm
having your baby, Negan. I own half of your shit now."

And there it was- the reason he fucking loved her.

Negan whined out a laugh, as she moved to the pickup truck, shoving her pack onto the passenger seat through the open window.

"Yeah you fuckin' do, Darlin," the dark-haired Saviour muttered. "But I guess that mean that I own half of this too-"

And with that, he suddenly grabbed her round jean-clad ass and gave it a hard squeeze, causing her to jump on the spot, shooting him a look.

Her eyes darted to Simon in embarrassment.

"Ouch….Negan…." she reprimanded with a mumble, rubbing at her sore ass cheek, as he retracted his hand with a throaty chuckle.

But at their side Simon gave a grin of his own, nodding at the pair of them.

"Have fun," he said before turning around and sauntering back over towards the large looming factory buildings just as the rain began to fall a little heavier all around them.

Negan watched as Blake looked skyward, suddenly looking disappointed.

"Oh….no…..I thought we could have a picnic or something….damn it….." She whispered.

But Negan nudged her, strolling around to the drivers side of the truck and pointing at her with a gloved finger.

"Well that's your fuckin' fault for bein' too damn optimistic, Doll-face," he said curtly. "An' I don't think any sort of fuckin' picnic out there is gonna be very relaxin' with those dead pricks on our tail the entire time."

But Blake shrugged, pulling open the passenger side door.

"You're probably right," she mumbled letting out a heavy sigh. "I was just thinking of something romantic."

But Negan's gave a huff of his own, as they both hopped into the pickup, slamming the doors closed behind them.

"Well, y'know," said Negan offering her a poignant look and turning the key in the ignition. "If its romance you're lookin' for, like I said, I am still up for you blowin' me in the front seat, Darlin'."

And with that he gave a grin gesturing to the space between his legs.

Blake, of course, gave an immediate roll of her eyes at this, leaning her elbow against the passenger side door.

"Ugh, now who's being optimistic. And I don't think getting down on my knees for you while your driving is really gonna help with my morning sickness," she said pressing a hand to her temples and rubbing away some excess rain water that lingered there.

The engine spluttered into life as Negan quirked an eye at her for the smallest of moments.
"That why you were up so early this mornin'?" he asked sounding a little concerned.

But Blake just looked back at him, smiling softly.

"Partly, but Mia was up and getting a little fussy anyway…" she said gently.

Negan's eyes searched Blake's face now, as rain began to hammer down upon the windscreen before them.

He knew how fucking tiring this must be for her and that was probably a good fucking excuse for her rattiness towards him this last couple of weeks.

But as though reading his mind, Blake looked at him with those big green eyes of hers. And for a moment Negan was transported back to that first time, out there on the road together, in the front of that van on that rainy night.

He had had a fucking soft spot for her back then, but he hadn't fucking realised that this would be the woman that would be carrying his child. His fucking kid.

She was truly fucking incredible. And he was truly in awe of how far they had fucking come.

But Blake looked at him a little sadly now, shifting in her seat.

"I'm sorry," she said suddenly her voice earnest. "For being such a pain the the ass these last few days."

Negan blinked at her now, but she continued before he could say anything.

"I think I'm just a little anxious…" she confessed, pulling at a thread on the sleeve of her jacket absentmindedly. "A-After those miscarriages and after David….well, I just didn't think I'd ever get the chance to be pregnant again. And it's all happened just so fast…"

Negan stared back at Blake now, with hard eyes, as she trailed off, her gaze falling into her lap.

"You havin' second thoughts?" he asked, lifting his chin slightly, and feeling his chest constrict.

But at once Blake shook her head, her eyes reaching his once again.

"No. Not at all," she said hurriedly. "I just…"

Rain hammered down on the roof of the truck.

"I'm happy…" she said her face suddenly full of hope. "But I guess I'm not used to feeling like this. Having you, having Mia, having a baby…I guess I'm just scared of being too happy….in case it all falls apart again. I-I can't lose you…o-or Mia again. I just can't. And I'm sorry if I've been pushing you away. I know that all you've done is care about me. But I've just not been talking to you…I've not been talking to anyone…"

Negan knew she was right.

He could see the fear in her eyes sometimes when she obviously thought no one was looking.

He had chalked it down to annoyance with him, obviously raising her hackles the moment he brought it up.

But Negan with one hand on the steering wheel, merely stared at her now.
"You ain't gonna lose us Peaches," he said with a meaningful growl. "I ain't fuckin' goin' anywhere. And all I fuckin' want is for you not to have the goddamn weight of the world on your shoulders. Look, we've got a long few fuckin' months ahead of us, an' hell, I ain't got a fuckin' clue what I'm doin', but you've gotta realise that you ain't alone. An' I am gonna be right here, day or fuckin' night."

He grinned at her, licking his lips now as he continued, cocking his dark head to the side.

"If you want a run out, I'll get you a fuckin' run out. If you want a damn foot rub at 2am, then you just wake me up, Sweetheart. An' hell, if you want fresh tomatoes from that damn garden of yours, then I will go down there an' fuckin' pick them for you."

At his words, Blake smiled, her hand moving over her abdomen lovingly.

"Thanks, baby," she said in a soft and gracious voice.

But Negan, smirking, merely reached his hand out and grabbed for hers, before pulling it to his lips and pressing a kiss to her smooth knuckles.

"Don' mention it, Peaches," he eased out in a low voice. "Although I'm gonna take back what I said about goin' into that damn garden and pickin' tomatoes for you. Hell, I've got a reputation to uphold, an' I don't want my people seeing me as a mother-fuckin' goddamn farmer."

Blake gave a small laugh, now, shaking her head.

"Oh I don't know…" she purred. "I could see you dressed in a flannel shirt and some gardening gloves, on your knees, gettin' all down and dirty."

But Negan just grinned back at her now, as he gave a single shake of his own dark head, pressing his foot onto the gas driving the truck out of the lot.

"Nu-Uh. Not in a million fuckin' years, Sweetheart."
"Is iiiiit...an animal?"

Negan grinned, but shook his head. "Nope," he replied, popping the 'p'.

They had been driving for the last hour at least, going nowhere in particular but both just happy to be out of the Sanctuary for a little while. It was good for them, giving them a chance to spend time together out of the confines of the looming and often oppressive factory building.

The pale grey sky was now barely visible though the rain that was currently lashing the windscreen with deafening raindrops. And for the last half hour of their drive, Blake had been forcing Negan to play twenty questions with her.

Blake's gaze drifted out of the passenger side window, as she drummed her fingernails against the seat beside her.

"Ok, is it a person then?" she asked, her head turning to look at the dark-haired Saviour once more. But he gave a sigh, lifting a tanned finger to scratch at his stubbly chin.

"Hmmmm, not quite..." he sighed. "Although she'd make a damn better number two than Si, that's for fucking sure."

But at his words, Blake gave a huge huff and a roll of her eyes.

"It's that stupid bat of yours again, isn't it," she nodded, sounding slightly irritated. "God, Negan, if you're not gonna play properly-"

Negan stared over at her, giving a chuckle. "Then we can give up playin'?" he tried hopefully. "Halle-fuckin'-lujah!"

But the blonde woman narrowed her green eyes in his direction, folding her arms over herself huffily.

She wasn't gonna let him get his way that easily.

"Alright, my turn," she said, much to Negan's visible dismay.

"Shit, darlin', alright...fiine," he huffed. "Vegetable?"

Blake shook her head.

"A person then. 'S'it Babe Ruth?" he said grinning as he steered their truck around a wide bend in the road.

Blake gave a tut. "It's not Babe Ruth, Negan..."

But the dark-haired Saviour, from the driver' seat, shrugged. "Hell, then I don' fuckin' know. Can't I just give up already, Sweetheart?" he asked.

Blake gave another sigh and accepted defeat finally, giving him a cross look, shifting slightly in her seat and staring moodily out of the window beside her instead.
"Ok fine," she snapped. "But it was Eugene, if you wanted to know."

Negan gave a long puff of air, smirking to himself. "An' we're back to Dr Smarty Pants again," he commented in a teasing voice. "You know I'm still not one hundred percent convinced that you an' him don' have some sorta' secret fuckin' thing goin' on, Doll-face. You positive that that kid inside you's definitely mine?"

But Blake couldn't help but give a laugh, her eyes twinkling as she looked over at the leader of the Saviours, sat beside her.

"It definitely is," she replied, before giving a light shrug of her slender shoulders. "But maybe if he's more up for playing twenty questions with me than you are, I should think about switching men."

Her tone dripped with a very obvious sarcasm now, that caused Negan to look her way, smiling widely and showing off his straight white teeth in a wolf-like grin.

"He might be more up for playin' shit like that with you, Darlin'. But you know for a fact that he ain't gonna be able to eat you out like I can..." Negan suddenly uttered arrogantly. "His tongue's too busy mumblin' out a damn thesaurus full'a long-ass words, to be tasting that sweet spot between those gorgeous thighs of yours. So I think when it comes down to it, I'd be a damn winner everyday. Twenty questions or not."

Blake pursed her lips together tightly, pausing for a moment, before suddenly letting out a stifled laugh.

"You're an asshole," she said rolling her eyes again and staring out at the rainy windshield before her, feeling Negan's dark eyes on her face.

But Negan just gave a nonchalant grimace.

"An asshole that's good in the sack though, right?" he growled smugly.

The blonde woman hovered for a long moment before closing her eyes slowly, smirking and shaking her head.

"Asshole..." she muttered under her breath, her lack of a viable argument obviously confirming his statement as true.

Negan, beside her, grinned again, but didn't say a word, the only sound being heard being the rain and the short screech of brakes as he slowed the slick truck near to the side of the road.

He lifted his gloved hand suddenly, pointing.

"You see that?" he said, a frown shifting its way between his brows suddenly.

Curious, Blake slid across the seat, moving closer to the window to take a look through the never ending rain splatters.

But sure enough, there was something up ahead, just visible through the trees.

Was it a house?

Or a shed?

It looked like a neat white building whatever it was. Painted white, with white wooden shutters on the windows.
"Yeah, I see it..." Blake murmured, peering out. "We should go take a look."

As soon as she has said it, she heard Negan make to scoff and open his mouth to refuse her request.

But Blake turned to him, scowling sharply. "No Negan, no arguments. I want to go look. It might have a some supplies or a garden," she said poignantly. "Winter will be here soon and even with tributes coming in from other camps, we've still got a lot of people to feed."

Her case was a weak one, she knew that, but she missed being outside the walls. She had lived out here for a long time, with David and her small group, surviving. And she knew that pregnant or not she could handle herself out there.

But Negan didn't look too convinced, his bearded jaw clenched tightly, a tick working its way through his cheek.

But after what felt like an eternity, Negan finally gave a humongous huff, before pointing her way with a gloved finger.

"Alright fine," he said, sounding slightly peeved. "But you keep your ass with me, we clear? None of your wandering off shit, this time."

Blake nodded seriously.

"Jesus, fuckin' Christ," he mused, dragging a hand down his chin and switching off the engine. "Here I am, pussy-whipped by a damn wolf in sheep's clothin'. I used to be a damn badass, before you came along, Peaches."

Blake wrinkled her nose smiling, but she leaned over, patting his hand comfortingly.

"I know," she said soothingly, before shifting in her seat towards the passenger side door, her hand hovering over her belt as she did so.

From behind her, she heard Negan give a sigh, giving his own door a shove open before stepping out into the rain with a "shit."

Blake followed suit quickly enough, and almost immediately agreed with Negan's outburst, wincing as the rain drenched her instantly.

She braced her shoulders, shivering a little as she flung on her jacket over her wet shirt.

"Ugh, what is with this weather?" she complained, but Negan who had strolled easily around the truck, Lucille brought up onto his shoulder, obviously wasn't listening.

Instead his chocolate eyes were darting this way and that, as he came to stop beside her, as tall and as looming as ever.

"Alright, we keep to the woods," he said in a stiff tone, pressing his free hand to her lower back and urging her forwards. "I ain't riskin' the damn road."

Blake nodded.

She knew the drill. She had done this plenty of times before.

She glanced over at the building again, much clearer from their view here.

From here she could make out that it was indeed a house, with a pretty white front door and porch
that seemed to look out onto a small overgrown garden. Around that, was a small white picket fence, with two identical pale blue planters which now homed only long-deceased flowers.

"C'mon," said Negan in a low voice, gesturing with his head over to the close-knit trees which surrounded outer perimeter of the house.

Blake knew it was unlikely there would be anything of real value to them here, but her rule while she was out there scavenging for anything she could find for those long, sorry years, had been to never leave a place unchecked.

There were very few things from the past these days that Blake considered treasures. Things that she had once coveted. Money, expensive clothes and jewellery, her cell phone... things like that, well, they were useless in this world.

Food, medicine, good, hardy walking boots...THOSE were the things she had always been on the lookout for. And the things that had soon proved to be the most elusive once the real looting had started.

Many times, Blake had searched houses, only to find piles of cash hidden in drawers or under mattresses. Diamond earrings and sapphire necklaces, worth more than Blake would have hoped to earn in her lifetime. All pointless now. Worth nothing to anyone.

She had soon learned that the smallest can of tuna or the stalest old box of crackers...now things like that, were worth more than anything.

For nights, she and David and the others she had travelled with, had gone hungry, wasting away...with their only option to keep searching...to carry on. Even when, at her most desperate, Blake on going four days without food, had collapsed from exhaustion, bursting into tears in an empty outhouse one chilly winter's day, almost two long years ago now.

She had been alone and scared. Managing to find a hidden stash of dog food which she had brought back to her group, much to David's vocalised dismay. It had been a low point in her life, amidst all of the pain and horror of this world. But she had survived it.

And here she was now. No longer skin and bones, or forced to wear the same clothes for weeks on end. She was healthy now. And happy too. She had a family, and the man she loved standing right beside her.

But her instincts were still good, despite all David had done to try and twist that out of her. And Blake knew that this place was worth checking out today. It had to be.

She walked side-by-side with Negan, trudging their way through the rain and into the heavily wooded area to their left, leaving the road behind.

The pair of them seemed like good match, both tall and fit and both headstrong enough to keep themselves safe. But despite this, Blake still kept her promise, sticking close to Negan's side, her fingers tensed at the leather holster on her hip.

She chanced a glance over at Negan now, whose faced looked fixed and his jaw tensed hard. He looked far more ruffled than normal, usually cool and cocky, although Blake was certain that had something to do with her presence with him here, as well as the presence of the baby now growing inside her.

It was no surprise that he wanted to protect them both. That was just the way he was...with them at least. Her, Mia, and now the new baby.
They trudged ahead, stopping only once to fell a biter, loping it's way slowly towards them, which Negan swiftly took care of with one foul swing of his baseball bat. And before Blake knew it, they were standing at the tree-line which surrounded the small, one story house and its once-neat little fenced garden.

Blake imagine what this place had been like before. A perfect little home for a family who wanted to get away from it all. It was like something from a storybook nestled safe, just off the road, amongst the trees. With its sweet little porch, and flowered drapes, just about visible through the dusty windows.

The garden was overgrown, a tangle of weeds now, but from this angle, just beyond the rear of the house, Blake could make out a large hardy looking tree with a tire swing hanging from it.

She blinked a little, feeling sad, wondering what had happened to the family that must have lived here, long ago. But she quickly shook these thoughts from her, having learned years ago, that things like that we're not worth dwelling on.

"Let me go ahead, check if the damn coasts clear…" Negan growled out now, his shoulders hunched and tensed.

But Blake merely swatted him with her hand.

"You're not leaving me here," she scolded with a soft whisper. "We can check together."

Negan gave a huff but didn't argue, stepping out of the safety of the tree line and approaching the house, with her at his side.

Blake removed her gun from her belt, holding it aloft, waiting for a tell-tale sound that told them that they were not alone, but as they both climbed the steps of the porch and peered in through the windows, the place did indeed look as deserted as it seemed from the outside.

Blake tentatively made her way over to the back door, trying the handle and allowing the door to swing back on its hinges, bracing herself against the nauseating smell that was likely to drift out towards her.

That had taken some used to at the start of everything. For the scent of the rotting dead in an enclosed space was something she would never get any easier to handle.

But thankfully, this house smelled of nothing but stale dust, singed from the hot sun of summer.

The blonde woman took a step inside, her foot creaking against the white painted floorboards, causing Negan to frown severely.

She felt his hand on on the small of her back once again, keeping as close to her as he could.

Blake looked about.

The place was small yet cosy, obviously having been lived in recently, with a long-abandoned sleeping bag, lying abandoned across the couch, as well as a couple of tins of opened, crusty, dried up tomatoes, lying on the coffee table beside it.

Negan soon strode across the small living area to check on the other rooms next door, whilst Blake wandered slowly over to the fireplace, where the remnants of a fire, long gone cold, spilled out onto the rug just in front of it.
It was an eerie thing to be in a place like this, such a quiet space, after the hustle of bustle of being at the Sanctuary day in-day out.

But there was a gentle sort of hum about this house, a warmth that Blake could feel resonating through her.

Silently, she bent down to pick up a rumpled photograph, hanging out of a broken picture-frame lying underneath the blue ashes at her feet, turning it over in her hands as she eased herself to standing once more.

The picture showed a faded colour photograph of a young couple standing outside in the garden of this very house, next to that old tire swing outside. A smiling young boy of about six years old, standing between them, a soccer ball underneath one arm.

The caramel-blonde woman tilted her head to one side, feeling a lone tear suddenly slide its way down her cheek, just as she heard the sound of recognisable footsteps behind her.

She glanced around as Negan's dark eyes met with hers, his face suddenly becoming a picture of utter concern as he took in the tears that were strewn across her gentle features.

"You alright, Darlin'?" he asked, searching her face, as he moved over to her.

But Blake merely offered him a soft smile, shaking her head, and replacing the photo frame on top of the mantelpiece gently.

"I'm fine," she murmured reassuringly. "Just a bit hormonal, that's all."

Negan came to stand at her side, eyeing the photo for only a second before tearing his eyes away uninterestedly.

"Place looks clear, not even any of those dead pricks inside. Looks like we got lucky," he commented, his chocolate eyes drifting to the wide window that looked out onto the rear garden beyond.

Blake glanced at him. "Well we should take a look around," she said, replacing her gun back into the holster on her belt. "See if there's anything worth taking back with us."

But Negan gave a small scoff at her words, shifting his weight from foot-to-foot, peering closer to squint out of the window.

"Pfft. I fuckin' doubt it, Sweetheart," he said in a bored tone. "Place looks pretty fuckin' looted alaredy. Sons of bitches who were here before us made one hell of goddamn mess of that kitchen."

He nodded over towards the small archway that led into the kitchen just visible beyond.

Blake crossed the room now, and peered inside herself to see the small white worktops all covered in flour and rice and other things that had been torn hastily from cupboards.

The place had obviously once belonged to people who had been very house proud, with faded fake flowers sat in a dusty vase on the windowsill, as well as a crocheted 'home sweet home' sign hanging above the dining table in the corner of the room.

Blake gave a sigh, taking a small step further into the kitchen and running a finger over the flowery fake-marble worktop, where small black bugs jumped and danced as she did so.
This was the kind of home she would have dreamed of owning when she was a little girl. It was nothing fancy but it felt just so homely and inviting, and Blake imagined now what it had been like on a warm summers' day, with the doors flung open and the smell of honeysuckle drifting in from the garden, as she sat on the porch and watched her kids play on the tire swing in the back garden.

Another small sigh drifted past her lips as the floorboards creaked behind her and Negan appeared in the doorway, propping himself up against the wall beside him easily.

"So what are we thinkin'?" he said with a small grin. "Vacation home number two?"

But Blake licked at her lips, staring around and giving a smile.

"Mmmmm, I don't know," she mused after a moment or two, wrinkling her nose lightly. "I'd say it's more like a forever home."

Negan's gaze lingered on her face for a few seconds.

"Hmmmm. You think we should move in?" he teased gently, watching now as Blake moved around the counter.

But the blonde woman just smiled.

"Maybe…” she replied coyly, pushing open the door to a small pantry to disappointedly find it empty save for a couple of packets of out of date cat food.

It was a silly dream, but one that she knew Negan or anyone else in this fucked up world would understand her wanting, especially with a baby on the way.

But the Sanctuary was safer. She knew that. And as much as she wanted this, she knew it would always be nothing but a dream.

Negan turned on his heel heading back into the living room, as Blake took one final look around the empty kitchen, letting out one last sigh and following him….

……but what neither of them were aware of, was a sudden movement, in the trees just outside the small white house...

...just outside the kitchen window….

...and perhaps, if they had paid a little more attention, one of them might have noticed, that through the rain, and the trees, and the dusty-paned windows….

……they were, indeed, being watched.
Blake followed Negan swiftly back into the living room, gazing about.

Negan was right, the place did indeed look pretty looted. With all that was left being a few items of rickety furniture and the dusty old decor of a family long since departed one way or another.

The blonde woman gave a small sigh, picking up a well-out-of date trashy magazine showing pictures of z-list celebrities Blake barely cared to remember, before flinging it back down again, making her way over to the door on the far side of the hallway, which Negan had checked just a few short minutes ago.

It looked like a bedroom, dark and gloomy with a small twin bed sat in the centre and the drapes drawn tightly.

It smelled of dried blood in here and Blake didn't care to linger on thoughts of what might have happened here long ago.

From behind her she could hear Negan still shuffling about in the living room, from the sounds of it, flicking through a stack of CDs which she had noticed had been sat on a shelf near to the fireplace.

Blake tried the next room, the large family bathroom with a pretty, if not a little dated, shell-shaped tub which filled one corner, next to a washbasin and toilet.

She checked the small mirrored medicine cabinet which hung over the sink, but found it empty, much like the rest of the house, save for a couple of pink-fairy-covered band-aids. But Blake pocketed these nonetheless, thinking of Mia, before heading into the room just across the small hallway.

The door was slightly ajar and Blake gave it a sharp shove open to see that inside was a small child's bedroom. With soccer balls painted onto the light green walls and a small twin bed squashed into the corner beside a nightstand adorned with a star-shaped nightlight.

Blake hovered here for a long moment, her digits tensed around the door handle, but she didn't venture in, giving a small gulp, before pulling the door shut-to once more.

But as she turned around she noticed a door just to her right which she hadn't noticed when she had first entered the small shadowy hallway.

Had Negan?

The door was indeed closed, unlike the other rooms that Negan had searched.

She turned her head, still hearing the sound of Negan flicking through CDs and records in the other room.

"Baby, you tried this room?" she called through to him gently.

But before he could answer she had moved tentatively over to the door, shuffling along the small windowless corridor, her fingers tensing around the brass door knob.

"What you say, Darlin'?" he said suddenly, his head appearing around the doorway that led into the living room, just as Blake tried the door handle, feeling it twist beneath her grasp.
It was obvious that Negan hadn't noticed this room either, the handle stiff beneath her grasp, like it hadn't been opened in years.

He was at her side in a flash, pulling his knife from his belt swiftly.

But as the door relented and swung open, to both of their relief, they found the room to be devoid of any walkers…

….but instead, Blake gave a small blink, staring around, her lips parting gently.

This was the reason she had been right to search this place...

...her eyes widening.

She took a step inside to see a small room painted all in white, with beautiful pink and purple vine-covered flowers hand-painted onto the walls.

And inside the very centre of the room sat a small white, empty crib.

Blake stared at it, as did Negan, both of them silent for a very, very long moment.

After a long few second had passed, Blake silently moved over to it, peering down inside to find a gorgeous hand crocheted comforter and a small brown teddy bear.

The woman who lived here, part of that family, had been pregnant…

...or perhaps she had had the baby before the world went to shit, but Blake doubted it...

The entire room looked unused and undisturbed, like a shrine to a child, unborn.

There was a closet and a changing table on the far side of the small white space, with at least two boxes of what looked like diapers and other baby supplies in baskets stored underneath.

And beneath the the large net-covered window, sat a small rocking chair made of wicker, with a fleecy blanket draped over it.

Blake felt tears welling in her green eyes, unsure of whether this was happiness or sadness now, as she stared around.

But she didn't get the chance for any tears to fall, as she felt Negan's sudden strong arms wrap around her waist from behind, angling Lucille away from her as his stubbly chin dropped down onto Blake's shoulder.

"You alaright, Peaches…" he muttered in a low and serious voice, as always, reading her like a book.

But she nodded.

"Yeah," she replied gently, moving her hand over his, as his calloused digits skimmed over her abdomen

And she was.

She was here, alive and so was Mia and the baby growing inside her.

She had a chance here that few others had. A chance to love something brand new in this dead and
decaying old world.

She felt Negan press a scratchy kiss to the place just below her ear before he pulled gently away, letting out a hot sigh against her skin.

"You think we should take some of this shit back with us?" he uttered with a hum. "Shit looks like its fresh from the store."

Blake pondered this for a lengthy few moments before nodding again.

"Yeah I think that would be good," she murmured back in reply.

It was time for her to start thinking about this sort of thing.

It had taken them long enough to get Mia's room in order, and the baby currently growing inside her belly would be here in a few months and they would indeed need things for him or her...like any other healthy baby outside of this damn apocalypse would have had.

So they might as well start somewhere.

"You think we can get all this in the truck," Blake asked, placing her hands to the side of the white painted crib.

"No fuckin' problem," said Negan pushing himself off of her with a huff and arching his spine, marvelling at the piece of furniture, before standing up once again and pointing a finger towards her. "But I'm doin' all the heavy liftin', no arguments."

Blake gave a smile, lifting her palms up to either side of her shoulders in a gesture of defeat, rolling her eyes.

"Fiiine," she said in a happy, teasing voice, making to open her mouth again to speak.

But before she could do so there came a sudden creak of floorboards behind the pair of them.

Instantaneously both Negan and Blake swung around, with Negan lifting his barbed wire-covered baseball bat, just as the click of a gun was heard.

And Blake's eyes seemed to widen in their sockets as her gaze fell on the figure of a man with long brown hair and a dirty brown beard.

Neither of them recognized him for a moment, until a stark realisation suddenly washed over Blake.

For she saw that it was the man from the photograph, now sitting on the mantelpiece above the fireplace back in that living room in there.

But he looked a lot different that he had done back then that was for sure.

Now his hair was far longer, a unkempt matted mess, his clothes were filthy and torn and coated in sweat and grime. And to Blake it looked as though he had long stopped taking care of himself. Surviving out here alone for years.

He stood there now, pointing a gun at them with one hand, holding a knife, blackened with crusty blood, in the other. But there was no sign of the rest of the family that Blake had seen in the picture. With her realising it was likely that they had died a long, long time ago. The house still left like a shrine of sorts, a tell-tale sign of that sorry fact.
"You're trespassing," the man suddenly barked, his eyes wild and staring.

He looked completely unstable at this very moment swaying back and forth on his tall, stocky legs.

Blake gave a gulp, placing a hand protectively to her stomach, as Negan took a sudden step forwards.

"Whoh now look. at. you, big guy," Negan snarled, a hint of a narrowed-eyed grin etching its way across his face, cocking his tanned head to the side. "With your big, weighty fuckin' balls steppin' up to me an' my-

But the man cut across him suddenly, before Negan could finish.

"This is my house!" the brown haired-man shouted. "Y-You come into MY house and y-you think you can touch my things...my wife's things...my kid's things....."

Blake gave a worried frown, as she saw Negan lower his chin darkly.

"We weren't-" she began in a soothing voice, but the man cut her down taking a sudden and unpredicted step forwards, staring at her with wide, blown eyes.

"You were trespassing!" shouted the man again, sounding as though he was close to tears, dragging his sleeve across his sweaty brow. "O-On my property...y-you're both gonna die for that."

At her side, she heard Negan let-out an angry growl.

"Only one fuckin' fucker is gonna die today," said the dark-haired Saviour furiously. "An' that's gonna be you, asshole."

Negan took another step forward, sliding in front of Blake and shielding her from harm's way.

But Blake had a horrible feeling in the pit of her stomach, worried not only for herself and the safety of her unborn baby, but for Negan too.

This man looked unstable and it seemed almost impossible to predict what he would do next.

The man stared to Negan suddenly, pointing his gun square between the Saviour's eyes.

Fuck.

Blake felt her blood run cold. And before she could stop herself, she took a quick step towards the man.

"Your wife and son," she said suddenly. "W-Where are they now?"

She noticed he still had his gold wedding band on one finger, as his wild eyes shot her way.

But the man faltered for a second, his gun trained on Negan.

"M-My wife and son?" he repeated, gaping at the air a moment, before blinking several times in quick succession.

He hovered for a lengthy moment, shifting his weight back and forth between his feet.

"They're...." he began, frowning slightly. "...well, they're..."
But he stopped, blinking again in confusion, before suddenly and without warning turning the gun on Blake.

"Shut up!" he yelled suddenly, his hand shaking. "Shut up!"

Beside her, Blake saw Negan tighten his grip on Lucille suddenly, his hackles raising.

"Don't you dare speak to me," shouted the man again, his finger tensing around the trigger. "Don't you dare stand in my house, touching my things, OUR things."

And it was in that second that Blake felt her heart stop, fear coursing suddenly through her, terrified now of dying and not being able to see the baby that was growing inside her. Realising just how much love she felt for the child she had never ever met yet.

Suddenly Negan let out a roar, lifting Lucille above his head and swinging it back down.

But the man was quicker than either of them thought he would be, and dodged out of the way as the bat swished through the air.

Negan staggered for a moment, teeth gritted and wild-looking himself, just as the man gave a yell of his own and made to lunge knife-first at Blake.

But the blonde woman saw red quicker than she had ever done before in her life.

There was no logic here.

No time to be sensible or think this through.

So she did what her instinct told her, tugging the gun suddenly from her belt…

…pointing…

….and shooting.

The gunshot rang through the small house, ringing through Blake's ears.

Negan gazed up as the man stared up at her too….

….blood flowing on his sweat stained shirt, as he dropped suddenly to his knees, lips mouthing pointlessly at the air.

But Blake watched and kept watching as he slumped sideways, falling to the floor, his gun and knife tumbling from each of his hands.

But Blake felt no remorse now as she watched him die.

For no one was ever going to threaten their unborn baby. Not ever.

Negan stood up straight, placing his hand to her arm and lowering it, sliding the gun gently from her fingers, his other arm wrapping around her.

"I ain't even gonna bother askin' you if you're alright, cause I know what the damn answer is gonna be, Darlin'," he said with a heavy sigh.

But Blake's eyes found his, as she frowned slightly and shook her head.
"I'm good," he said in firm voice, gazing at him reassuringly. "Really I am."

And she was.

Truly.

She was the queen to his king. And nothing, NOTHING was going to get in the way of that.

They were a family now. And the baby growing inside her only served as a reminder that the two of them would go to the ends of the earth to protect, not only each other, but the life growing inside Blake.

Their life.

Her hand slid to Negan's leather-clad sleeve, her fingers tightening around the stiff material.

"Come on," she said giving his arm a squeeze. "Let's pack this stuff up and get out of here."

And with a nod, Negan brushed his own coarse fingers gently over her cheek affectionately.

"Mhmhm," he agreed "...lets go home, Peaches."
Happy Moments

The sky outside had already grown dark by the time Negan and Blake had arrived back at the Sanctuary with their dusty truck piled high with their haul of furnishings fit for any newborn baby.

And as Negan barked orders to his obedient lieutenants to 'get this shit unloaded and set up upstairs', Blake had already made her way inside and gone to collect Mia.

Although she had been excited about leaving the Sanctuary for a while, it had indeed staved her appetite and reminded her just how lucky she was to have this place, The Sanctuary, a safe-haven away from the mad and upturned world outside.

Perhaps she had been yearning for a freedom that was never even there and Blake knew now that being here, really was the best thing for her unborn child.

Something that she wanted to protect at all costs.

Silly little runs out just for the hell of it were not worth risking all that for now.

Negan had been right to want to protect her and she had been an idiot to push back like she did. But that was just what Blake was like, and she knew she probably wouldn't be where she was today if she wasn't up for challenging Negan every once in awhile.

For that was just what a queen was supposed to do, wasn't it?

She smiled now, as she sat on one of the large scrubbed wooden benches down in the bustling dining hall, watching Mia enjoying her evening meal of steamed carrots, peas and mashed potato, all fresh from the garden.

"Are you enjoying that, Sweetie?" she asked the mousy-haired toddler, running a hand through her soft, tufty locks.

The little girl peered up at Blake, brandishing a limp-looking carrot between her pudgy fingers.

"I eated all my karits!" she said proudly through a mouthful of food.

And Blake could only give a gentle laugh, her hand moving to stoke the baby-girl's warm back lovingly.

"I can see that," she purred.

Fuck, she loved her, and all that love, only seemed to be blossoming, as the days and weeks went on.

Just a few short week ago, Blake had been so certain that Mia had been lost for good, that her heart had seemed to ache every day.

But right now, it was like a warmth and a happiness was enveloping her.

For if this was her fairytale, and she could die happy tomorrow knowing that, even just for a little while, things had been perfect.

She thought back to months long past, when she had thought her life would have been with David….taking his fury and his wrath, covering up bruises, telling herself that it wasn't his fault…
And Blake had accepted that life was what she deserved...for it was all that she had had back then.

But now, it was crazy to see how far she had come...she had grown, and held her head above water to save herself from drowning.

And here she was, loved, not only by Negan and Mia, but by the people all around her.....the Saviours.

The people she had once feared in name and reputation, who had become her family.

She was their leader these days, just as much as Negan was, but she didn't need a baseball bat wrapped in barbed wire to prove this....

Blake was kind and caring, and had stood up for those who couldn't stand up for themselves. And most importantly she had stood up to Negan when he had needed reigning in.

And as the wives and the workers told her, in anything but hushed whispers these day, she made this place better.

Everyone was smiling, and happy.

And most importantly, they had been saved.

With Blake finally doing what Negan hadn't managed to do.....and saving these people…

....without her even realising she had done so.

It didn't take long for Mia to finish her dinner, with Blake tidying up after her as much as possible, tracking down stray peas that had rolled halfway down the long table, to save the poor cleaners having to do so later.

"You ready for bed, baby?" asked Blake, watching out of the corner of her eye, as Mia gave a huge yawn, her mouth forming into a perfect o-shape.

Mia nodded, as Blake got to her feet, picking the little girl up and easing her onto her hip.

"I scheelpy," said Mia, yawning again as Blake gave a gentle smile.

"Well, me and Negan have got a surprise for you before you go to bed," she said as they left the busy room, heading into one of the dark and gloomy hallways, going in the direction of the third floor.

Mia turned her head around, placing a sticky hand to Blake's shoulder, her fingers curling into her long caramel hair.

"A shpwise?" she asked curiously, as Blake merely smiled, remaining silent as they walked up the large metal staircase, until they reached their quiet floor.

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The hallway was empty, save for a familiar tell-tale light emanating from beneath Negan and Blake's door at the far end of the corridor.

But Blake passed their room, heading instead to the room next-door and flipping on the light-switch, revealing Mia's new perfectly made-up room.

But the little girl gazed around slightly disinterestedly, before turning back to Blake again.
"I schleepy," she repeated, her little head dropping down onto Blake's shoulder, causing Blake to give a laugh of bemusement.

"Well this is your new room, baby," she said in a sweet voice. "You like it?"

At this, Mia picked her head up and looked around, staying quiet for a very long moment.

Blake paled a little. Oh gosh. What if after all their hard work Mia didn't even like it?

But after what felt like an age, the little toddler finally spoke.

"I laik burds," she said, pointing to the lampshade covered in brightly-coloured birds that hung from the ceiling just above their heads.

The blonde woman smiled gently, carrying Mia over to the teeny bed nestled in the corner of the room and dropping her down.

"I know you do," she uttered in soft tone, pulling back the covers and tucking Mia in.

But the tiny toddler stared around.

"Bwake an' Eggy shtay wif me, yea?" she asked in a worried-sounding voice, which caused Blake to purse her lips.

Mia was used to sharing Blake and Negan's king-sized bed, so there was no doubt it was obviously going to be strange to Mia to sleep alone, probably for the first time in her short life.

"Let's get you tucked in properly and read you a story, huh?" said Blake soothingly, brushing back Mia's brown hair, before settling down onto the small bed beside her, pulling a book from the stack neatly piled beside her bed.

And to her relief, Mia didn't argue, merely snuggling herself close to Blake, as Blake began to read.

It didn't take long, maybe five minutes for Blake to slow her words and lower her voice, peering down to find Mia sound asleep.

She eased herself from the bed and lifted her arm from around Mia's shoulders being careful not to disturb her.

She stood, and stared back to the tiny girl, smiling fondly.

She really was the most perfect little girl and Blake adored her with every fiber of her body.

And so, pressing a hand to her abdomen, she padded quietly across the room, pausing at the lightswitch and throwing Mia one last look.

This was different to the little boy's bedroom back at the house right?

It had to be.

For Mia was here, alive and well, and with an entire factory full of people to look out for her.

This didn't have to have the same fate.

And so, giving one last gentle sigh, Blake switched off the light, stepping out into the hallway and pulling the door shut behind her.
She lingered for a moment, before heading into the next room, to find Negan coming out of the bathroom, doing up his pants zipper.

"Beansprout asleep?" he asked, raising an eyebrow at her, but Blake was not listening.

Instead, her eyes were on the white crib sat now in on the far side of the expansive room next to their, now-shared, closet.

Negan swiftly followed her gaze, strolling across the room towards her. "Got Dwight an' Gary to set it up over there until we think of where we want it it permanently. Rest of the shit is in the bathroom." And with that, he cocked a thumb over his shoulder at the open bathroom door behind him.

But Blake didn't answer, feeling tears suddenly well at her eyes as Negan offered her a look.

"Damn hormones again?" he asked.

But Blake shook her head, glancing up at him at her side now.

"No, I'm just happy, "she murmured.

And she was. More so that she had ever been before.

Life was coming together for her, and there was a chance that this was just the start of everything.

Something good.

Something real.

Her hand was still clutched to her stomach warmly.

Blake was only a few weeks gone but it was as though she could feel this little life growing inside her day by day.

She didn't even have a bump yet, but each morning that she studied herself side-on in the mirror she could swear that she had gained a pound or two on her stomach and knew that in no time she would be swelled to the size of a beached whale.

But that didn't frighten her now.

In fact, she was excited at the prospect of what was to come. And seeing the crib here in their room like this, only made things feel more real. And more right.

"And I think it looks perfect there," she commented now, feeling Negan's hand slide down her spine..

He looked to her, before glancing back over to the piece of furniture, smiling.

"Yeah?"

And Blake gave a nod, letting a satisfied sigh leave her lips.

"Yeah," she agreed gently, giving his side a brush with her fingers before sliding away from him and padding over to the large four poster bed behind them, kicking off her shoes and easing herself back onto the soft mattress.
Today had felt like a long day.

And despite the vitamins and supplements that Carson had given her providing her with far more energy than she had had, just a few weeks ago, she still felt tired. So it was good to lie here now, head propped up against the headboard in the blissful quiet of their bedroom, now absent of the snuffling snores of the tiny toddler currently sleeping soundly in the room just next door.

Negan gave a gentle huff of his own, wandering slowly over to join her on the bed, shrugging off his jacket and tossing it down behind him onto the couch.

The mattress creaked beneath his weight as he came to sit down at the foot of the bed, turning to face her, his legs spread wide apart, as he reached down awkwardly to remove his boots one at a time.

Blake smiled warmly, watching him, as her hand drifted over her flat tummy, before she let out a small sigh.

"I'm tired," she mused, her green eyes going to her stomach now as she rubbed there, her long sleeved shirt riding up a little, revealing bare skin beneath.

Negan arched an eyebrow at her, his boots hitting the floor one at a time with a BUMP, BUMP.

"Maybe you were right," she continued now, worrying at her lips. "After what happened earlier today...at the house.....maybe I've got to start being more careful."

Negan looked at her, but didn't say anything. And Blake appreciated that right now.

She knew how normally smug he could be, so she was glad that he wasn't taking this moment to gloat.

She gave another sigh, unbuttoning her tight and rather uncomfortable jeans now before relaxing again.

And Negan, his attention caught there for moment, turned himself fully to face her now, shifting up the bed slightly, his head bowed low and his eyes on her stomach.

His tanned hand reached up, drifting over her hips and coming to stop at the small of her waist.

"Your Mama is gonna take fuckin' great care of you," he hummed, dipping his head and pressing a kiss to the space just above the waistband of her pants.

Blake gave a giggle, closing her eyes at the sensation of his stubble tickling her smooth skin, before he pulled away, his fingers skimming over the space where his mouth had just been.

The blonde woman blinked down, her hand threading through his dark hair as the leader of Saviour's remained there, spine arched over her, his dark eyes on the space where her big baby bump would be in just a few short months time.

"An' hell, your Daddy is too," he said smirking now, as his lips found her skin again, his mouth moving over her hip bone, making Blake smile, pressing the back of her free hand to her mouth, stifling a happy laugh. "Gonna make sure you've got everythin' you could fuckin' want."

Blake bit down onto her lip, her hand stilling in his hair, so in love with him right now.

With this man, who six months ago, she had never met, but in such a short space of time had turned her world on its head.
Negan glanced up at her pause, moving up the bed on all fours and coming to hover over her, pinning her in place with his hands either side of her.

"You excited to meet the little shit?" he asked in a teasing voice, grinning down at her now and earning himself a smack across his bare, tattooed arm.

"Hey," she scolded, smirking back. "Our baby is not a little shit."

But Negan gave a scoff, chuckling.

"Not right now," he with a goading grimace. "But give it a couple of years, an' him or her will be drivin' us up the fuckin' wall."

He murmured the last couple of words into her skin as he leaned in, kissing at her neck, sucking at the soft skin there.

Blake purred in response to the sensation, biting down hard onto her lip, shifting her legs against his.

She could feel his dick quickly stiffening beneath his pants, and Blake felt herself getting warm, a want suddenly rising within her.

But Negan pulled abruptly back, eyeing her with a shit-eating smile, letting a humongous sigh escape his bearded lips. "You know I don' know if we should be fuckin', with you in such a-

He hovered, before shifting away and sitting back on his knees, his hands sliding down and pulling the zipper down on her pants and shimmying them down her slender legs.

"...delicate condition." he finished, tossing her dark jeans onto the floor.

Blake smiled in return, helping him by pulling herself up a little onto her elbows and removing her shirt, followed hastily by her bra.

Negan cocked an eyebrow at her, all the while his fingers unbuckled his belt, his tongue running over his bottom lip.

Blake enjoyed these games of theirs, especially when she knew it was likely to end with her getting what she wanted…

She smirked now, sitting up as her fingers moved to the hem of Negan's tshirt, sliding it up his lean torso until he helped her remove it from him, flinging it to the the floor where it landed near to them with a small whump.

"Really?" Blake replied in a mock-whiny voice, hearing the sound of Negan's pants zipper being dragged down, as he leaned forwards again, pinning her to the bed, her blonde head hitting the pillows behind her.

"I really don't think we should, Peaches," he teased. "I mean it would be kinda weird doin' it with my kid inside there."

Blake would have laughed at this comment had Negan's lips not been keeping her fully occupied at this very moment.

A second later she heard another whump, the sound of Negan's pants hitting the floor.

Their tongues tangled together fighting for hot and wet dominance for a brief moment, making the most delicious noises Blake had ever heard, until the dark-haired Saviour finally sat up again, his
eyes tracking down her body coming to rest on the blue lace panties Blake was still wearing.

But from here Blake had her own view she was very much enjoying….

Negan's stiff cock between his legs, smattered in dark hair. The smallest amount of pre-cum twitching from his throbbing tip.

She smiled almost lazily now, as he crooked a finger around her waistband, expertly tugging her panties down her thighs.

Now it was just the two of them alone, naked, and both obviously very, very into one another right at this moment in time.

"Well look. at. you," regarded Negan angling an eye down towards Blake's pussy, as he pressed her thighs apart with a groan. "Just drippin' wet for Negan, huh?"

Blake gave a sultry nod, parting her lips, as his fingers slid down her thigh and he ran his thumb over her soaked slit.

Blake felt her stomach tug at the sensation.

"Well I don' know...," mused the wolf-like man, eyeing her, his thumb repeating the motion, causing Blake to jolt her hips slightly. "Maybe this is all you get.....hmmmm?"

He gave a chuckle, his fingers joining his thumb, getting instantly glazed in her juices. He moved his fingers spreading the wetness around a little.

"...me workin' your damn pussy...makin' you cum for Daddy...." he growled huskily, making Blake let out a barely audible groan of want.

She could feel him now, purposefully avoiding her sensitive clit, and that alone was enough to make her bat her eyelashes up at him, her finger moving up to her lips.

She sucked hard on her digit, closing her eyes and moaning out, causing Negan to let out a muffled groan of his own.

Blake snapped her eyes open to see his hand around his cock, stroking it with a firm grip.

She moaned out.

God, Blake didn't know how much of this she could take, but she didn't have to wait long.

With Negan taking her moan of utter frustration as goading, his thumb moved over her clit, rubbing there with purpose.

She arched her back, tensing immediately at the feeling.

"Fuck..." she whined out, opening her mouth and pressing her eyes closed, hearing Negan let out a groan, as he angled his fingers, easing two of them into her dripping wet cunt.

Blake was close, she could feel the knot in her stomach tensing, her insides clenching around his fingers.

But she suddenly felt a hot breath on her neck, with him caging her now, leaning in towards her, his cock pressing against her thigh, leaving a hot and sticky trail of pre-cum over her skin.
She whined out, so close now, but so desperate for something more than just his hands to get her off, bucking her hips a little to the space where she knew that his member was, so torturously close.

"You want to cum on my fingers and not my dick, Darlin'," he huffed into her ear.

His breathing was shallow, looking like he himself was about to cum, just by the way he was looking at her.

Blake stared up at him, seeing his body over hers, missionary, possessive.

But that smirk was still there, behind a look of utter need.

She sucked in a breath before answering, her eyelashes fluttering closed as he worked her.

Blake shook her head. "Please...." she begged.

But before she could allow herself any release, Negan had dragged his fingers and his thumb suddenly from her, causing to let out a desperate whine, her lustful green eyes snapping open once more.

But Negan didn't linger long. She could hear his ragged breaths now, as his eyes disappeared down between them, his hand, slick with her juices, moving down to reach for his dick.

Blake wanted him so much now and their teasing had heightened every sort of need they constantly felt for each other, tenfold.

"Well...maybe just the fuckin' tip," he groaned, as she felt him fumble, moving his stiff dick to her soaking wet entrance.

Blake moaned out slightly at his words, her hand latching around the back of his neck, pulling his lips down to hers and allowing them to crash into her in a hot, well-needed, open-mouthed kiss.

He too grunted out, bucking his hips slightly, the sensation of his dick hovering right there, being too tempting for either of them.

Negan pulled his lips away from her, staring down into Blake's eyes and letting his mouth drop open, a frown plastering itself between his brows, as his length sat there, positioned just inside her…..waiting…..

He ground his hips a little more, and Blake felt it slide a little further into her.

She panted.

"This is naughty, Daddy," she sighed out, her fingers moving up to his mouth and torturously pulling on his bottom lip.

Negan grunted darkly again.

"Oh does my baby girl not want Daddy's cock inside her?" he groaned, bucking his hips again, his brown eyes on hers. "Fillin' her up…"

And with that, he grunted out harshly, biting down hard onto his lip, before pulling his cock out slightly.

Blake felt droplets of her own sticky cum drip down onto her ass as she gave a needy whine out…
"No...p-lease...Daddy...." she purred, her hand reaching between the two of them as she found his throbbing dick and positioned it at her entrance once more, unable to take the teasing any longer. "I need you inside me..."

And with one last lingering look from the dark-haired man, Blake felt his hard cock force itself fully inside her, as she let out a gasp at the pleasurable sensation of him filling her up to the hilt.

Fuck it felt good...

It ALWAYS felt good and Blake felt her hands tense around his neck as he pulled back for a second before thrusting up into her again.

The sensation was incredible...both of Negan's palms, flat to the mattress either side of her shoulders as he repeated the motion.

"Fuuuck..." he uttered, catching his breath slightly, that frown still sitting there between his brows.

Blake let her eyes roll closed, feeling Negan's pelvic bone hit her g-spot again and again and again. She could feel him quickened his pace, thrusting into her hot wet cunt harder and harder, faster and faster.

"Yes...N-Negan," Blake managed to stumble out, arching her back from the mattress at her spine but this only caused Negan's dark eyes to drop to her bare chest, dropping his head down, his lips latching onto her nipple.

Blake mouthed at the air, feeling his teeth scrape across her sensitive flesh, before he pulled his head back up, his forehead now beaded with sweat and his jaw slack.

Blake's fingers moved to his face, her tensed digits running down his stubbly cheeks.

She could feel her walls convulse a little, pulling around his stiffness as he forced himself into her again and again and again.

He gazed at her, his own hand moving to her jawline, his calloused thumb tracing over her jutted out bottom lip, before he pressed his digit in her mouth.

Blake obendetelity sucked down onto it, giving him what he wanted, as he grunted out a hard "shit..." at the sight.

She could see him now, fighting the obvious urge to cum, as his brow darkened further and he lowered his head to her shoulder.

From here Blake could hear him grunting and cursing under his breath. And although he was trying to hold on, she however, could not, feeling herself coming apart beath him.

She gulped down a choked moan, closing her eyes and riding the sweet sensation that was washing over her.

It was intimate and intense, and it took Blake no more than ten seconds to throw her head back, melting into the feeling of her walls clenching around his twitching cock, crying out to the heavens.

And Negan, with hot breath on her neck, just about manage to groan out another "fuck" as he came too, unloading his hot sticky cum inside her with several small jerks of his hips.

Blake's pussy twitched, as she milked him dry, her thighs trembling as she unclasped them from
around his hips.

She threw her head back against the sweat-soaked pillow behind her head, bringing her hand up to her face and catching her breath.

But she smiled after a moment, feeling Negan pressing warm, satisfied kisses to the crook of her shoulder.

"Mmmmmmmmm," he hummed into her skin. "You, are a fuckin' goddess, Darlin'."

And Blake didn't argue, her hand once again travelling up and smoothing down the dark hair at the nape of Negan's neck.

"You're not so bad yourself," she purred, stroking his damp locks as he pulled back from her, grinning widely, pressing his arms taut to the space either side of her head, marvelling at her now.

He was silent for a long moment before he finally spoke, his expression soft and caring.

"You happy, Peaches.." he said as he reached up and stroked her smooth cheek with his long tanned fingers.

But Blake just nodded back, lifting her face off the pillow slightly, to hover her lips to his.

"I am…" she murmured into his mouth as she kissed him gently.

And like this they remained for the long few minutes that followed, with Blake's hand tangled in Negan's hair as they made out like teenagers, the room filled with the sound of delicious, wet kisses.

But once they were done, Blake gave Negan's ass a quick pat, urging him off of her, as he gave a groan, doing as he was told and sliding from her.

Blake smiled, slipping from the sheets, padding into the bathroom, before emerging just a minute or two later just as naked as she had been when she had gone in….her hands fussing with her long caramel hair.

But she had barely made it back to bed, when there came a sudden rattling of the door handle from the far side of the room.

And the pair of them swung around, just in time to see the door creak slowly open.

Blake gave a gasp, hurrying around the bed behind Negan, and pulling the white sheet over her naked body.

Where as Negan had a completely different reaction, pulling a knife suddenly from the nightstand.

But before either of them could make a move, a sudden, very recognisable, tiny face, appeared around the door.

"Mia?" said Blake, clutching the sheet around her breasts with one hand, the other she used to tuck a strand of hair behind her ear, peering over at the teeny toddler, who stood sheepishly by the door, her face a picture of sadness, her eyes red and her cheeks blotchy.

Negan gave a huff, dropping the knife back into the drawer beside the bed out of Mia's reach, and pulling the sheet over himself too, ensuring his member was fully covered from sight.

"Bwakey, I wos on ma own…" she said in a little voice, scuffling her sock-covered foot against the
rug, one finger brought up to her chubby pouting lips.

At this Blake softened completely, tilting her head to the side. She quickly grabbed Negan's abandoned t-shirts from the floor, pulling it over her head, before moving back around the bed towards the little girl.

But Mia stared between Negan and Blake curiously.

"Wai Eggy an' Bwake nakey?" she asked, causing Negan to scoff, grinning widely and looking to Blake.

"Is it too fuckin' early to have 'the talk'?" he asked jokingly.

But Blake merely pursed her lips in his direction, shooting him an unimpressed look, before scooping the tiny girl up into her arms.

"Don't you like sleeping in your new room, baby?" asked the blonde, balancing Mia on her hip.

But the toddler, grasping a handful of Blake's caramel hair and bringing it to her mouth sucking on it, shook her head.

"I wan be wif Bwakey a' Eggy," she said in a sweet little tone, causing Blake to smile lovingly down at her.

She adored this teeny girl. And the man lying behind her.

And soon she would have another little him or her to love too. That thought making extremely happy.

Blake walked back over to the bed as Negan shifted over, placing Mia down bedside him, before settling in between the sheets herself once again.

God, her life right now, really was perfection, wasn't it, she thought to herself, as she stared at the pair before her, her hand sliding down and rubbing over her abdomen.

Mia gave an enormous yawn, and the two adults watched as she snuggled down falling asleep between them within seconds.

Negan brushed back the toddler's hair from her face being careful not to wake her before grinning up at Blake once again.

"For the record, Peaches..." he mumbled, gazing at her, his eyes full of warmth and love and everything that no one in this world would ever expect from him besides from Blake herself. "...I'm happy too."

And with that, he reached to his other side, flipping off the warm lamp light before the pair of them settled down, and fell exhaustedly asleep...

....with Blake smiling contentedly as she did so.
Negan woke early the next morning, the warm morning sun seeping in through the partially drawn drapes on the far side of his expansive bedroom.

He gave a grizzled groan, dragging a hand down his long, stubbly face, before gazing to his side, at the two girls lying beside him.

Fuck, they were gorgeous.

With Mia on her back, turned in towards Blake, her hands balled into fists at her side. And the caramel-blonde woman beside her, still in his tshirt, looking like a picture of utter fucking perfection, one arm thrown lovingly over her stomach.

Right now, here in the pale morning light, Negan felt like the luckiest fucking guy in this entire damn world.

He had Peaches, and the kid, and soon, there would be a third person for him to pour his heart and fucking soul into.

A baby.

His fucking baby.

He gazed now down at Blake's abdomen, hidden by the baggy shirt, almost feeling like he could picture the tiny thing growing inside of her.

Negan had never in a million fucking years thought he would have all this.

After Lucille passed away, he spent years grieving and mourning her in the most stupid ways. Taking out his anger and pent up frustration on those around him.

Until SHE had come along, Blake, pulling him back from all that darkness…..his shining light.

He wondered what Lucille would have made of all this?

Him with a baby on the way.

He hoped now that she would be happy for him now...wanting him to have a future. She had told him that back in that hospital bed in those last few days, whilst he had wept and shaken his head, holding onto her hand tightly.

And Negan never thought her wishes would come true. For he always expected to be alone, even with the wives and the workers and the loyal lieutenants he had collected along the way, he had still felt it, that gaping loneliness.

But not with her. Not with Blake.

The moment she had walked into his life...smart-mouthed the hell out of him….bowled him over.

Even back then he had thought she was far too good for him. Negan had twenty years on her. He wasn't college educated, nor would have frequented the same damn places as she obviously had.

But at the same time, it was as though they were made for each other, every curve of her body fit
perfectly with his…..every word she uttered making him smile.

Like two damn broken pieces of one whole.

He smiled affectionately over at them both now, before easing himself from the mattress and padding naked over to the bathroom.

In ten minutes he was showered and heading out of the door, fully dressed, grasping up Lucille from a table near to the door.

He turned the door handle quietly, being careful not to disturb the sleeping pair behind him, before heading out into the cool hallway, closing the door behind him with a gentle snap.

It had been a while since he had done a proper check on how things were running around here, distracted by his girls. But being up so early was good and would give him a chance to get on top of things again.

And so, whistling a familiar tune, Negan propped Lucille up onto his shoulder and strolled down the corridor, free hand stuffed into the pocket of his grey jeans.

He thought back to last night, smirking to himself as he went.

He loved the little games he played with Blake. It had been like that from the start.

But it wasn’t just the great sex he had enjoyed last night, it was being there on his previously empty bed, joined by the two, soon to be three, most important people in his life.

And as much as all this, the Sanctuary, had always been for his own gain, he wanted now to make it into something real and proper for them….for their future.

Blake had already made a start on that with her damn garden. And if she could do it so could Negan.

Perhaps they could start to become self-sufficient, branch out, 'save' more communities.

For the more people they had on side the better of they were. Right?

He ran a hand over his mouth, heading down the large metal staircase pondering this.

Maybe this was just the start of everything now. A new fucking beginning.

It was early afternoon, the sun beating down hard onto Negan's leather-clad shoulders, as he stood out in the lot, several long hours later, barking orders at his men.

They had made really good progress this morning, with Negan setting plans in motion to clear this disused section of the fenced lots that surrounded the looming factory building behind him.

For too long this area had looked like a junk yard, covered in rusting heaps of scrap metal and the shells of broken down trucks the Saviours had long-since abandoned.

But no more.

And so Negan had set his men to work clearing the space and getting rid of any crap that was in the way.

He scratched at the back of his head now as he gazed around.
He didn't have a fucking clue what he was going to with it, but he had hopes to ask Peaches when she finally emerged from that pit of hers sometime today.

And it wasn't even five minutes later, that, as if on cue, whilst he was deep in conversation with Dwight, he saw the blonde man's eyes drift over his shoulder, glancing at something behind him.

The tall leader of the Saviours swung instantly around, leaning back on his long legs to see Blake, looking like goddamn vision in a while tshirt and dark blue jeans, walking towards him, holding hands with Mia, who waddled along at her side.

They both immediately smiled his way, as Blake bent down to say something to the mousy haired toddler, one hand she held over her abdomen.

Shit, he was besotted. A wide grin sliding its way over his bearded mouth as they approached him.

"Well look at my damn girls!" he said in a loud, carrying voice, causing several nearby lieutenants to glance over and smile at the pair, noticing their presence too.

He saw Blake blush a little, throwing him a scolding smirk, but she didn't say anything in response, merely glancing down at Mia who held up a limp-looking piece of toast up towards him.

"Eggy, I sayved you sum of mai towst," she said, as they came to stop before him, and Negan obediently held out his hand, taking the floppy corner of toasted bread from her grasp.

It was soggy and didn't really seem all that appealing to him, but he tossed it back into his mouth anyway, before thanking her.

"We had brunch," Blake said gently. "Didn't we, Sweetie?"

At her side Mia gave a nod.

But at Blake's words, Negan let out a loud scoff.

"Well you are about five fuckin' hours too late for breakfast, Peaches..." he murmured pretending to check the time on his non-existent watch, as Blake rolled her eyes in his direction fondly.

"Shut up," she tutted gently. "I think I deserve a lie in this morning after last night."

Her green eyes lingered on his for a moment, as she bit down onto her lip.

Negan felt his eyes twinkling in return as he stared at her, before he raised a dark eyebrow in her direction, leaning back on his heels and gesturing to her with the end of Lucille.

"Uh, well if I remember fuckin' rightly, Sweetheart," he scoffed. "You were flat on your fuckin' back for most of it."

Blake gave a mock-scowl at this, before sighing and gazing around interestedly.

"Wow," she said after a second or two, sounding slightly surprised. "They do all this in one morning?"

Negan cocked an eye too at the, now, almost clear space around them, as his men moved to and fro, across the dusty lot.

"Yup," he replied, scuffing the heel of his black boot across the ground, drawing Mia's interest. "On my damn orders."
But Blake pursed her lips, smirking a little as she looked up at him.

"Well I don't see you helping…" she purred in a goading tone. "In fact, you look like you're just standing here shouting orders and getting in everyone's way."

Negan chuckled a little at this, narrowing his brown eyes in her direction.

Fuck, she really was fucking something, wasn't she?

He leaned into her now in an intimidating manner.

"You wanna remind me why I haven't locked you down in that damn cell again, Sweetheart?" he growled teasingly. "Cause, y'know, I am startin' to change my damn mind…"

But Blake just parted her lips, pulling back and looked him up and down bemusedly.

"Oh just try it, asshole," she threatened darkly.

But at her playful words Negan gave a whine of enjoyment, arching his back and letting out a long laugh, causing Mia to look up between the pair interestedly.

"Damn, I love you, Peaches…” he said, biting down onto his lip hard and shaking his head, staring at her with a look of utter awe passing over his long, tanned features.

But Blake just smiled, as Dwight, from just over Negan's shoulder, approached him again, causing the dark-haired Saviour to swing around, lifting his chin slightly to acknowledge the blonde man.

"Negan, what do you want us to do with-"

But Dwight wasn't able to finish his sentence….

For the sudden sound of a loud gunshot ripped through the open space, causing the air around them to shatter, and a ringing silence to fall in its wake.

Negan felt it…

…..the bullet, as it zipped by him, flying past his leather sleeve.

The moment hung for what felt like an age…as if everything around him had suddenly gone quiet and still.

The birds had stopped singing, everything around them had falling utterly silent.

That was until Negan let out a furious roar of pure rage.

"SHIT," he yelled, staring up in the direction the gunshot had come from…a heavily wooded area that overlooked the Sanctuary lots.

At his cry, all his men, including Dwight standing in front of him had turned, picked up various weapons they all had at their belts or slung over their shoulders, and pointed it in the direction of the trees.

"SHIT!" Negan yelled in anger again. "Find that piece of fuckin' shit shooter, now! DAMNIT. SHIT. FUCK!"

And in an instant, his men had taken their orders, running this way and that, as yells filled the wide
Negan was furious, seething.

What the fuck was going on?!

Was someone really that fucking stupid to try and kill him? Now? Here?

Fuck. When he found out who that was, there was going to be hell to fucking pay!

"Negan…" came the voice again, causing him to blink a couple of times and remember just where he was….

….and whose voice that was, so quiet and wavering now….

Shit.

A sudden gulp travelled down his bearded throat, but it went nowhere, his mouth going instantly dry.

And with his blood running icy cold, Negan finally swung around, time standing still as he turned slowly on his booted heel….

…. to see Blake stood there, Mia's hand still held tightly in hers, but her other hand was clutched to her side…

….where he could just about make out the pool of ruby red blood, blossoming through her pristine white shirt.

She stared at him, looking slightly confused, as a small frown twitched its way between her slender brows, her lips parting.

No...

No…

"No…" Negan breathed out, moving quickly forwards, as Blake mouthed at the air, her green eyes fixed to his, forming into a look of confused horror.

Everyone in the lot seemed to still suddenly, heads turning their way, as did Mia's, as she stared up Blake and her bloody shirt, looking terrified.

"Someone fetch Carson!" Negan yelled at the top of his lungs as beside them, Mia began to sob. "NOW!"

And Dwight took no time in tugging his radio from his belt and yelling for the doctor over the static….

...as everything around the usually cool and collected leader of the Saviours seemed to fall away…

….Blake's eyes being the only thing he could see through the hazy afternoon sunlight that surrounded them.

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Rosita paled, pulling her face back from the scope fixed to the top of her rifle.
The bullet had been meant for Negan….

It had always been meant for Negan, but her heart pounded now, as far away from her, in the lot below, she saw people rush towards the blonde woman who stood there, the tiny, and now-crying, toddler's hand, still clutched tightly in her own.

Yes, this had been Rosita's aim all along, to hurt Negan in whatever way possible...

But now she was here, having missed the asshole leader of the Saviours completely and hit someone else instead, someone Rosita didn't even notice had been standing there, a stark realisation washed over her.

She had been so focused now on shooting Negan, on finishing him for good, that she hadn't checked who else was in the firing line.

Things between her and Blake had not been good of late, but now, seeing the blood blooming on the blonde's white shirt, Rosita had been hit with regret, and a pain coursing through her entire body.

No, no, no. This wasn't supposed to have happened like this. It wasn't...

Negan wasn't supposed to have swung around like that. He was supposed to have stayed standing there! He was supposed to have stayed still!

From behind her, Rosita suddenly heard yells.

The Saviours were coming, and now she knew that if anything happened to Blake and they found out who was responsible, both she and the rest of her people, were likely to feel the full, earth-shattering wrath of Negan.

Shit. Shit, shit, shit.

Rosita gathered up her things quickly, stuffing everything she carried into her large duffel bag, before standing up and flinging her rifle strap over her shoulder.

And so, throwing one last look of guilt and sorrow back over towards Blake, now, not even visible amongst the crowd of Saviours below…Rosita fled on her heel, battling back through trees, heading in the direction of her awaiting car, feeling a single tear slide its way down her scarred cheek.

What had she done?
Everything seemed to still around Negan now.

It was as though the world was moving in slow motion, swirling in colours and shapes around him. But his dark, pained eyes remained ever-fixed to Blake's green ones.

She was staring back at him, her mouth moving without any sound coming out, and Negan was only brought back to reality by her eyes tearing away from his, drifting instead down to the blood that seemed to be spreading across her otherwise pristine white t-shirt, in horror.

"We need to get her inside," came Dwight's voice, at Negan's shoulder.

But the dark haired man's attention was only on Blake, as he reached out for her, his calloused fingers moving to Blake's cheek, as his other hovered over the wound at her side.

She stared back at him again, looking wholly confused.

"Negan…I-" she began to utter, just as the sudden sound of wails filled the air.

It was Mia, who was stood there now, gazing up at Blake, with fear etched upon her face, still clinging to her hand.

"Negan, we needed to get her inside," Dwight repeated, obviously stepping up far better than Negan was right now.

The dark-haired Saviour was usually so calm, so collected, but now, it was as though everything was falling apart around him. His entire fucking world.

Negan nodded, as Blake's eyes slipped away from his, but a stroke of his thumb across her cheek brought his eyes back up to his again.

"Peaches, you fuckin' stay with me, you hear?" he breathed, his chest restricting, as he held onto her cheek roughly.

Mia gave another loud wail amidst the commotion, causing Negan to glance her way finally, wavering for a long moment, before-

"Can someone-" he began, just as Arat appeared from nowhere, scooping Mia up into her arms.

But the teeny little girl, sobbing hard now, screamed loudly as her hand was torn from Blake's.

"Noh, I wann mai Bwayne!" she cried, as she was tugged swiftly away.

Beneath his grasp Negan could feel Blake suddenly begin to shake, her face becoming a picture of sheer pain.

"I-I…" she began again, but trailed off, her mouth opening and closing like a fish.

Fuck, was this shock?

Negan frowned down at her now, his eyes roving across her face. A face that was so fucking perfect to him in every way.
"Negan," came Dwight's voice, louder now, as he felt a sudden hand clamp down onto his leather-clad shoulder. "She needs to go to Carson. Now."

But before Negan could do or say anything, Blake swayed unsteadily on the spot.

Blood was now dripping down onto the dusty ground below, creating a dark ominous pool at her feet.

Shit.

Negan knew that Dwight was right.

She needed to get inside…. indoors.

Carson could help.

He had to help right?

Negan had never felt so distant, so far away from the world around him.

Not since Lucille had he felt like this. His whole world falling away and leaving just a gaping abyss below.

And so Negan, doing the only thing he could think to do, suddenly dropped Lucille to the ground with a thud…..

Everyone around him stared now, but Negan no longer cared.

And with only one thing on his mind, he reached down, his hands sliding beneath Blake's shoulder and her jean-clad thighs, as he lifted her easily from the ground and up into his arms.

He felt her immediately paw at his arm, wincing in pain.

"Come on, baby," he murmured in a voice that was barely there, trying to sate her as best he could. "Everything's gonna be fuckin' fine."

But of that he wasn't so sure.

Beneath his chin, Blake was still gaping desperately.

"N-Negan…" she managed to breath out. "I-I…"

But Negan gave a gulp and shushed her gently.

He could feel the warm trickle of blood soaking into his own grey t shirt now as he held her close. But he didn't care, turning on his booted heel, as Saviour after Saviour, that had gathered around them in concern, stepped aside, letting him pass.

Dwight was ahead of him now, leading the way into the cool and dark Sanctuary.

"Negan, I-I'm-" Blake said again, her teeth gritted in pain.

But Negan just shook his head.

"It's alright, Darlin', its ok," he replied, cutting across her.

He'd known far bigger and stronger men than her, die from bullet wounds, and knew that she needed
to save what little energy she had left.

Dwight shoved open a wide set of doors ahead or them, as behind Negan, he heard at least three other sets of footsteps following along.

But they had barely made it down the lengthy hallway that led past the dining hall when Simon suddenly rounded the corner towards them.

He stared, stopping horrified at the sight of a bloodied Blake, before looking back to Negan.

"I heard, on the radio….what the hell happened?!" he asked, falling into step with Negan as the tall, and looming man strode on, his jaw set, and a tick working its way inside his stubbly cheek.

Oh he knew what had fucking happened.

Someone had been planning this all along. Someone out to get him.

And when he found out who, Negan would bring down this entire fucking world onto their heads.

But right now, he had far bigger concerns.

He looked down to Blake who had her eyes closed in a pained frown, gasping a little, but still conscious at least.

"I don' know," Negan murmured to Simon in reply, shaking his head, barely ale to concentrate on words right now, his focus solely on the woman in his arms.

But Simon, looked angry on Negan's behalf.

"What do you need me to do, Boss?" he asked sternly, as they turned the corner.

But Negan just gave a scowl, ignoring him.

He didn't have time for Simon's bullshit right now.

But he didn't need to reply, as Carson suddenly stepped out of the medical room at the far end of the long hallway, his face full of concern.

"What happened to her?" said the doctor, staring first at Negan, then down to Blake.

He quickly stepped aside for them to pass through into the doorway, as they barrelled in, and Negan swiftly carried the blonde woman over to the bed, where Blake gave a cry of pain as he lowered her down.

Carson was immediately at her side, shoving Negan's hands away, his eyes roving cross the wound at her side.

"She's fuckin' pregnant, Doc," growled Negan in a desperate voice, staring at the strawberry-blond man expectantly, his eyes set darkly.

But Carson merely ignored him, his full attention now on Blake, as she whimpered and writhed, her hands moving to her side in panic.

But Carson quickly swept them away.

"Heeeey, there Blake, what do we have here," the doctor breathed out quietly, before glancing over
at the blonde man, stood now on the far side of the room, thumbnail brought up between his teeth, staring over anxiously. "Dwight would you wheel that tray over please?"

Negan looked up to see Dwight obey instantly, shifting the short trolley, layed out with all sort of sterile looking utensils, over to the doctor.

Carson, who still had his eyes firmly on Blake and the bloody fabric at her side, reached for a large pair of scissors without looking. And in a second he had snipped up the side of Blake's white shirt, as she whimpered out in pain.

"I-It burns," she cried out in a panting voice. "I-I-"

Carson's eyes quickly found her face.

"That's good," he said quickly, offering her a half smile of encouragement.

"You can do somethin'?" Negan asked Carson hopefully, stepping forwards. "You can fix this, right? She's gonna be ok?"

He could hear the panic in his own voice, as he clenched his jaw tightly together, his eyes black.

But Carson shot him a scolding look.

"I can if you give me some space," he said in an irritable tone, peeling aside the bloody material and peering over Blake's wound.

Negan gazed up at the look etched across Blake's face, one of pain, as she winced.

He took a couple of steps back, reality hitting him like a tonne of bricks as he ran a hand through his dark hair.

He was going to lose her wasn't he?

Just like he had with Lucille.

He blinked tears out of his eyes now, turning around on the spot and facing away.

Fuck.

He didn't know if he could go through this again.

Not now, not after everything him and Blake had been through…..he just couldn't.

Behind him he heard Blake give a whimper, and Negan, screwing his eyes shut, opened his mouth, facing his head up towards the ceiling.

His heart thudded in his chest, anger filling him.

Someone had done this, and they were going to fucking pay.

He snapped his head to face Simon suddenly, who was stood at the door, arms folded looking worriedly over. But he noticed Negan addressing him almost immediately.

"Get every fuckin' vehicle we have, load up, an' get out an' find the damn cocksucker who did this," he said in a deadly voice, his lip curling in fury, as his loyal right-hand man gave a solemn, yet understanding, nod, turning on his booted heel and beckoning Dwight to follow him.
But Negan spoke again, causing the two men to pause at the door.

"Oh an' when you find them, bring them back to me.....I'm gonna make them fuckin' pay for what they've fuckin' done."

Simon's eyes lingered on Negan's, before he nodded again, the two men leaving and closing the door behind them.

But now that left only Negan, Carson and Blake in the room, and the bearded man turned to see Blake rubbing her lips together, frowning as Carson poured over her wound.

Shit. If Negan lost her now…

But to his surprise Carson finally spoke, but his words were no longer filled with worry and concern…. but instead another tone filled his voice.

"Well lucky for us, Blake..." said Carson suddenly. "...the bullet just caught your skin. If it had been an inch or two over…"

Negan frowned gazing at the man who seemed to be cleaning Blake's wound carefully, crouched over her, his face full of concentration.

Blake winced again making a face, but Negan blinked a couple of times, looking confused.

"W-What?" he asked bluntly.

But Carson merely flashed a small smile up in his direction. "It just grazed her, look….the blood, it's already stopping, that's a good sign."

Negan took a step forwards and gazed down at Blake's side where a deep red, almost black gash, ran from the top of her hip bone up and over her side.

Carson dabbed at the wound with a cotton pad covered in some sort of strong-smelling yellow liquid. But this caused Blake to wince sharply, propping herself up onto one of her elbows to watch Carson at work.

"I tried to tell you Negan-" she began, panting hard, grimacing a little as Cason dabbed at her side once more.

But Negan stared at her face in a look of utter confusion and awe.

"S-So she's gonna be ok?" he managed to stutter out, his eyes remaining fixed on hers, as she stared up at him too.

But Carson gave a nod, easing out a sigh. "Yeah she is, I mean, she had a lucky escape if you ask me-"

But Negan was no longer listening, instead he had gone over and pressed a firm and well-needed kiss to the top of Blake's blonde head.

"Negan-" she frowned bemusedly, pawing him away from her. "Ouch...Ow!

"Sorry," said Carson apologetically, placing the cotton pads that were covered in blood down onto the tray. "I'm gonna get this covered up straight away, best thing for it. Don't want you getting any infection in it. But you're going to need to get the dressing changed at least three times a day for the next couple of days at least."
Blake nodded.

That was it?

She was going to be ok?

Negan knew he should be relieved, of course he should be. But for some reason his chest still remained tight, his heart still thudding away.

But after a short few moments Blake spoke, asking the question currently going around and around in Negan's own head right now…

"D-Do you think the baby's ok?" she asked in a very quiet voice, looking worried.

And Negan too stared at the Doc now, a lump appearing in his throat.

Carson gave an understanding nod, turning and reaching for his stethoscope, placing the ends onto his ears and shifting what was left of Blake's tattered t-shirt aside.

Blake let out a steadying puff of air, as the two parents waited, both seemingly holding their breath. Or at least Negan was anyway.

There was a long pause as Carson hovered for a moment, readjusting the position of the stethoscope against Blake's skin, a frown littering his brow.

Negan's heart seemed to stop. Everything going quiet as they waited for what seemed like an eternity for Carson to speak.

Blake's fearful and tearful eyes flitted up to Negan's dark ones suddenly, just as Carson eventually spoke.

"There's a heartbeat," he said, causing Blake and Negan to both give an audible sigh in unison. "And a strong one at that."

Blake pressed a bloodied hand to her chest in happy relief, before letting out a sob, that caused both men to look at her.

She she swiped at her eyes quickly.

"Sorry," she said hurriedly, shaking her head. "Hormones…"

But Carson gave a smile at this.

"No, it's totally natural," he ressaured her gently. "But your body has gone through a huge stress. You need to take it easy, alright?"

Blake gave a visible gulp and a nod, before she reached her hand up to Negan.

He swiftly took it with his own tanned one, pulling it to his mouth and pressing a kiss to her smooth knuckles.

Fuck. Everything was going to be alright.

Both Blake and the baby were ok. They were fucking ok.

He felt his heart swell suddenly. But this feeling of elation was soon taken over by another feeling, a
stronger one……

……a feeling now of anger and fury that flooded every inch of him.

"I-Is Mia ok?" Blake asked conversationally, biting down onto her lip and wincing slightly as Carson swiftly got to work dressing her wound. "I must have scared her…"

But Negan was no longer listening, his eyes moving to the door, as he let go of her hand, standing up straight once more.

"Oh I am gonna make whoever did this fucking pay," he growled, his leather-clad shoulders tensing.

"Negan..." Blake started gently a flicker of a smile forming then disappearing from her face as quickly as it had come. "Please..."

Her tone was of slight pleading now, but Negan shook his head.

"What? You think I'm gonna just stand here an do fuckin' nothin'?" he growled, feeling a fury bubbling inside him.

"N-No, but there no need to do anything stupid," Blake murmured back looking strained, her forehead beaded with perspiration, long-since spent.

But Negan could feel his blood pumping through his veins, furious that the person responsible for this was still out there.

"Those pricks could've fucking killed you, Peaches-" he said incredulously.

"But they didnt, Negan," said Blake soothing him quickly. "Look I'm as angry as you are. And y'know, my bikini wearing days are certainly going to be over after this…"

And with that she pointed to her side, her skin still smeared with blood.

"... but running off and punishing people you can't prove have done anything wrong, isn't the way to do it."

"An' what the fuck is, Darlin'?" snapped Negan, his voice filled with concern. "What? We just wait around for it to happen again? What if it's the kid next time, huh?"

Blake pursed her lips together, frowning at him sadly.

"There's nothing you can do, Negan…” she said shaking her head. "They're bound to be long gone by now."

She suddenly reached out, grasping hold of his arm.

"Just don't do anything rash ok?" she asked in a quiet voice, staring up into his eyes. "Promise me."

And Negan staring back, felt himself calming a little.

Shit.

She was his fucking world. And as much as Negan knew he should listen to her words, he still wanted something to be done about the person who had done this.

To the person that could have killed her.
Like Carson had said. That bullet only needed to land an inch or two over, and that could have been it.

He gave a sigh.

"I gotta fucking do this, Peaches," he said, a frown line stuck between his brows.

And with that, he tugged his arm away, and left the room, shutting the door closed behind him with a loud snap.

Blake looked forlornly over to the door that Negan had just left through.

He knew that he was bound to do something stupid now. And all because of this.

Blake hadn't really realised what had happened straight away.

The noise had hit her first. That sharp zip of the bullet as it had shot through the air.

Then the burning.

It was like she had been branded by a hot stake, feeling it searing at her side, as she had looked down seeing the blood seeping through her white shirt.

But she had just stood there for a long moment, unable to scream, or shout, or do anything...almost bowled over by the pain.

And the fear she had felt then, hadn't been on her own behalf but on the baby growing inside her.

But now, not even twenty minutes later, Blake's fear had gone from worry about an unborn baby, to worry about a fully-grown man.

Blake knew that Negan could handle himself. But she knew just what his temper was like and knew he would likely stop at nothing to find the person who had done this.

It certainly worried Blake a little to think that there was someone out there willing to put, not only Negan, but her and Mia in harms way. But Negan had made a lot of enemies. And at least the outcome today hadn't been a lot worse than it actually was.

Blake lay back in silence as Carson finished his word, carefully dressing her side in sticky bandages. Her wound still stung very painfully, but she had seen that, clean, it didn't look as bad as it certainly felt.

And at least most of the bleeding had stopped now.

"Al-right," eased out Carson finally, sitting back in his chair and tossing down another bloody cotton pad onto the trolley. "I'm gonna needed to redress this in a couple of hours time. You can stay here if you like. You need rest-

But Blake shook her head, pulling herself from the gurney, letting out a small whimper as she did so. "I need to go find Mia..." she said stubbornly, standing on wobbly legs. "And Negan too."

But Carson frowned up at her, watching her gape suddenly at the pain, almost staggering backwards. "Blake you need to rest," he said, getting to his feet too. "You've lost a lot of blood-"
And Blake defeatedly sat back down onto the gurney with a sigh, as Carson placed a hand gently to her shoulder easing back down against the hard bed.

"Rest, ok?" he uttered. "You're gonna do too much damage to yourself chasing after a big kid like that. And yes, I'm talking about Negan, not the little girl."

Blake gave a tiny smile at this, but still felt a worry flood through her.

Concerned about just what Negan was going to do now...

Negan strode down the hallway on leg legged strides, bursting suddenly out of the wide set of doors that led into the lot.

The sun was still burning high in the sky now, but Negan didn't care, for an icy blackness filled his world now, as he gave an intimidating growl of fury, addressing his men who were currently loading up into trucks and cars that filled the dusty lot.

Everyone seemed to stop now, faces nervously turning his way.

Negan's blood was boiling, and despite knowing that Peaches was alive and fucking well and lying up on that bed in there, that still didn't make what happened ok. Not in a million fucking years.

And by the looks on their faces, his loyal men and women knew that too.

Simon suddenly stepped forwards hands on hips, his chin lowered, staring at Negan expectantly.

"How is she?" he asked, sounding a little tentative, as though he was not sure whether he wanted to know the answer or not.

And Negan was glad of this, knowing full well that he wasn't the only person around here that cared for Blake or the kid.

For Blake was a fucking queen around this damn place. And his people treated her like one.

"She's gonna be fuckin' fine," Negan bellowed, his eyes dark. "No thanks to the soon-to-be-dead asshole who did this to her."

Simon shifted his weight from foot-to-foot, looking slightly relieved, as did everyone else, as a murmur flooded the otherwise quiet lot.

But Negan spoke again, loudly, causing everyone to fall deadly silent once more.

"I want whoever is responsible to pay. Hell, I wanna be wearin' their damn nut sacks around my neck!" he shouted angrily. "So we get out there and find the goddamn prick who did this and skin them alive. Along with anyone who was in cahoots with them."

There was a murmur of appreciative agreement almost his men, all of them grabbing ahold of their weapons, looking riled up and ready for a fight.

And to his side, Dwight approached Negan holding out a very fucking familiar weapon, that Negan vaguely remembered ditching for Blake just a little while ago.

And so, giving a dark growl, his eyes meeting viciously with Dwight's for a moment, the dark-haired Saviour felt his tanned digits tensing around the smooth handle of Lucille.
And with a dark, cruel and malevolent smile, Negan, looked back to his men.

"Y'all with me?" he asked in a low voice, suddenly leaning back on his heels and gesturing to his loyal lieutenants with the barbed end of his baseball bat.

And it didn't even take a second for them all to give a loud, carrying cry of support….

….causing Negan to lower his chin darkly, clenching his jaw together.

Of course they fucking were.

For he was Negan. And...at the end of the day…..

…..so were they.
An eye for an eye

Rosita could still feel her heart thudding in her chest as she parked her car up just a few hundred feet from the large looming gates of Alexandria.

Hurriedly switching off her engine, she took in a deep breath of air, before suddenly giving a short, sharp cry and bashing her fist against the steering wheel.

What the hell had she done?

Her stupidity was going to come around and bite her on the ass, and she could do nothing to stop it.

A sob escaped her lips as she leaned forwards against the steering wheel, wanting to kick herself for doing something so utterly idiotic.

Blake could be dead, and that made Rosita no better than Negan now.

She had been so set of revenge of any kind, that she had forgotten how close she and Blake once had been. They had been friends. They had had dinner together. Laughed and joked with one another...

And now she could be gone….dead. All because Rosita had a vendetta on her mind that she could just not leave alone.

She hung her head painfully, tears slipping from her eyes, just as there came a sudden knocking on the glass at her side causing her to almost jump out of her skin in fright.

She looked quickly around now, to see Sasha stood there staring down at her, looking bewildered.

"R-Rosita, what is it? What's happened?" she asked, giving the door handle a tug open.

But Rosita didn't move, merely staring up at Sasha with tears of frustration lingering on her cheeks.

"I've done something…." gulped Rosita, shaking her head. "...something so stupid."

And at her look, Sasha hovered for a moment before finally holding out her hand for Rosita to take.

"Come on," she said looking this way and that. "Let's get you out of here and you can tell me everything."

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Negan wrapped his fingers against the smooth handle of Lucille as his black eyes stared up at the road stretching out ahead of him.

He hadn't uttered a single word to anyone, giving his last few orders back before leaving the Sanctuary, little over an hour ago. Yet his nerves were no more calmed than they were back then...

Negan had never felt so angry.
His chest was tight, his jaw was clenched, and he could see nothing ahead of him but an oncoming darkness. A darkness he hadn't seen since he had lost Lucille.

The rest of the Saviours, piled into the truck beside him, obviously sensed this tension too, avoiding his eye as best they could.

It of course, hadn't taken his men long to radio back from doing a thorough search of the area surrounding the Sanctuary lots, letting Negan know that they had found nothing but a pair of tire tracks that led back onto the main road.

The main road that led directly to three places that Negan knew pretty well indeed….

A burning fury and malice seemed to be raging within him now, the likes of which he had never felt before.

He wanted revenge...payback for what had been done, finding it hard to concentrate on little else as the seconds and minutes ticked by.

In the back of his mind, he kept repeating the words to himself over and over...'She's fine'...'She's ok'. But not even that could stop this ever-bubbling rage from spilling over into the forefront of his thoughts.

He grinded at his teeth viciously as a large set of looming gates slowly came into view.

Simon and Gavin had been sent out on his orders to the other two camps. HIS camps…

...with only one objective now.

To make them pay.

But was this payback? Or was it dissuasion for nothing like this ever happening again.

Negan wasn't sure anymore. But he had made his choice, and now he was willing to do whatever it took to make his point clear-

That no one was to mess with his family….

…..not ever again.

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Blake winced groggily as two hours later, well into the warm sunny afternoon, she awoke from a disoriented slumber, gazing quickly about, finally remembering just where she was.

Finding herself in the dark and cool medical room, alone, with no sign of Carson now.

It was obvious he had gone to let her get some rest, after giving her a few safe pain meds to knock her out for a short time.

Now, Blake sat up a little, shaking herself from her stupor, before peering down at her side gazing at her dressing which was now spotted with blood.

It probably wouldn't be long now until her bandages would need changing, but Blake could think about that in a while.

For now, she had other things on her mind. Other more pressing matters.
It worried Blake now to find herself alone without Negan.

She had presumed he would be here, like he was supposed to be. Feeling like she wanted his presence here...his hand in hers...now more than ever.

But the lack of that, of course, meant that he wasn't back yet.

And that in turn, meant that he had failed to find the culprit...

And that was not good.

Blake had seen the look in his dark eyes.

She had seen him turn into that wolf, she had witnessed so many times, coming to life.

And she knew now, that not finding the person responsible for this straight away, meant that he would only push his anger, and his fury, further afield.

And the blonde woman had a feeling she knew where he would start first.

And so, with a groan, clutching her hand to her side, she heaved herself off the gurney, her feet dropping to the floor a little unsteadily.

Blake gazed down at herself. God she looked a state, with her white t-shirt, torn and tatty and covered in drying blood.

She quickly moved over to the far side of the room, where, with great difficulty, she peeled off her t-shirt, giving cry of pain as she did so.

God, how the fuck one tiny bullet could cause this much pain, she wasn't sure.

But as Blake caught her breath, she gazed around, looking for something to replace her t-shirt with, her eyes landing on a folded blue pair of hospital scrubs she guessed that the Saviours had collected for Carson but he had never got around to wearing.

Blake picked up the blue shirt, holding it aloft.

It looked far too big for her, but she pulled it on with a little difficulty nonetheless, covering up her bandaged side with a hiss of pain.

She padded hurriedly to the door and exited out into the dark hallway beyond where above her head a single yellow light flickered eerily.

The Sanctuary could be a strange place at times. And as much as it truly felt warm, and welcoming, and very much home these days, right now, still feeling a little woozy and disorientated from the blood loss and meds Blake felt the hairs on the back of her neck stand on end as she crept down the silent corridor.

But, with her heart pounding furiously she headed through the double doors, and out into the small hallway, where the huge staircase that led up to the upper levels stood, empty and void of anyone.

Blake gazed around, clutching her head as her vision swam a little.

She just wanted Negan right now, and Mia too, feeling more than a little unsteady on her feet as she clutched onto the wall beside her for support.
She let out a puff of air, closing her eyes just as a sudden twinge shot through her abdomen right up to her chest, causing her to double over slightly, her hand moving to her side as she gave a whimper of pain.

But the feeling, luckily, disappeared as quickly as it came.

"Blake?"

She caramel blonde snapped her eyes open hurriedly, gazing quickly around over her shoulder, to see Frankie pacing towards her.

The redhead stopped at her side, placing a hand gently to her arm, coming around to stare into Blake's eyes.

"What are you doing up?" she asked in a gentle tone full of concern. "You should be resting…"

But Blake shook her head, waving Frankie's unease away.

"I know," she said gazing up into the familiar redhead' bright green eyes. "I just need….I need Negan."

Frankie paused for a long moment, parting her lips as if to speak, but before she could do so, the pair were disturbed by a sudden familiar cry.

"It Bwakey! It Bwakey!" came the excitable voice of Mia, as Blake peered over Frankie's shoulder just as Arat and Mia came into view, walking hand-in-hand down the hallway towards them.

Blake smiled warmly as Mia detached herself from a bemused-looking Arat running straight for Blake and making grabby hands at her, obviously expecting to be picked up by her guardian.

But Frankie caught her quickly around the middle before she could barrel into Blake's legs.

"Oops, now there we go, Sweetie," said Frankie in a sweet voice, lifting Mia up onto her hip, as Mia wriggled, pouting hard, wanting to get to Blake. "Blakey's not feeling so good, so we have to be extra careful, ok?"

Blake saw Mia's big round eyes look quickly to the place where her bleeding wound had been just a few short hours ago, but seeing nothing, she looked back up to the blonde woman giving a small nod, and placing her pudgy fingers to her mouth, leaning her head onto Frankie's slender shoulder.

"Okway," she murmured out, as Blake reached over, stroking the top of her head gently, but the blonde woman bristled slightly, quickly looking to Arat as she came to stop at their side.

"Where's Negan?" she asked almost instantly.

"B, you shouldn't be-" tried Arat.

But Blake didn't have the time or the patience for this right now.

"Please, I need to know where he's gone…" Blake pleaded.

But Arat, with her lips pursed together, gave Blake a sad look, before finally answering

"He's gone to Alexandria….Simon and Gavin have gone to the Hilltop and the Kingdom too….." she said, a visible gulp sliding its way down her throat, as she lowered her eyes to the ground. "He was pretty mad..."
But Blake's heart began to thud away.

Fuck.

He was going to do something stupid and she knew it.

"What's he going to do, Arat?," Blake asked sounding worried. "Please...tell me."

And at her words, the curly-haired woman's eyes met with Blake's, offering her a sorry look.

"He's going to do what he always does, B," said Arat, shaking her head. "An eye for an eye…"
It was a warm and sunny afternoon by October's standards, and in the mild and still air, the majority of the Alexandrians were just finishing up their tasks for the day.

Rick, Carl and Michonne were busy helping a few of the others clear the area around the large wooden gazebo set up in the centre of town. And no-one, not even they noticed, as Sasha ushered a tearful and trembling Rosita into her cool and shady house at the far end of the street.

Rick only stood up straight, his ears pricking, at the sound of trucks pulling up just outside the large gateway to their small community.

He felt the hairs on the back of his neck stand on end.

For there was only one person who would come here like this, unannounced, bringing, by the sounds of it, all his manpower with him.

Rick let a gulp slide down his throat as his eyes met with Michonne's, communicating with her wordlessly what he needed from her now.

Instantly she gave a rod in response and began ushering the townsfolk inside….out of danger.

Carl too, looked to his father, squinting his eye against the warm, evening sunlight as she turned to face the gates.

"Carl, I need you to go inside," said Rick bristling at the noise of car and truck doors being slammed. This wasn't a collection day, and if Negan was here, this late in the day too, he knew it could only be bad news for all of them.

But before Rick's loyal son could argue, there came a loud yelling from the otherside of the high fences.

"Oh Riiiiick," came the intimidating and deep voice of Negan. "You really gonna leave me waitin' out here all day when we have got so. fuckin'. much to discuss?"

Rick felt a slick of moisture bead at his brow.

The usually-far too playful-man, sounded a far more angry than he usually did, and that caused Rick's stomach to lurch a little.

This was not good.

And so Rick, shooting one last glance to Carl at his side, hunched his shoulders…

...reluctantly making his way over to the gate.

Fuck.

Negan was trying his best to hold it together right now.

But the telltale signs of that being very unlikely were all there- his gloved fist balled tightly at his side, his other tensed around the smooth handle of his trusted baseball bat which was currently slung over his leather-clad shoulder.
He could feel a tick working its way at his cheek, as he stood with both booted feet firmly on the
ground, his chin lowered darkly, waiting for the familiar creaking sound of the gate being dragged
across.

And Negan didn't have to wait long, for in a matter of seconds the heavy duty fencing was pulled
back to reveal the shaggy figure of Rick standing there in a dark blue shirt and black pants squinting
in Negan's direction.

"What is it you think I have to talk to you about, Negan?" asked Rick in a tired sounding voice, as
the thin metal railings also got dragged away leaving the two men stood facing one another in the
hazy late-afternoon sun.

Normally this was where Negan would have begun his endless teasing of the brown-haired man,
ripping him to shreds for his ever-growing man-bush, or for the way his eyes could not quite meet
his…

But today Negan was in no mood for that shit, his eyes blackening at the irritable tone of Rick's
voice.

Negan took a wide step forwards, coming to stand nose-to nose with the Alexandrian leader all of a
sudden, as his men crowded behind him, all usually just as scary looking as Negan himself.

But not today. No.

For Negan was on a different level of fear-inducing intimidation today.

He brought himself up to his full, tall height, looming over Rick like a cobra about to strike at any
moment.

"Oh you'd better show me a little more fucking respect, Rick," growled Negan almost spitting the
man's name. "Because if I say we've got somethin' to discuss, then you'd better get your damn
listenin' ears on."

Negan saw Rick give a visible gulp, averting his eyes from Negan's shark-like stare.

"Fine," he said shortly. "You want to talk here or-"

But Negan gave Rick a sudden sharp shove backwards with a the barbed end of Lucille, almost
knocking Rick off of his feet.

The brown haired leader certainly didn't look like he'd been expecting that, and neither did the
people standing all around him watching either.

For here they were, Rick's people...Blake's old people...the ones that had put her through hell.

Was one of these fuckers responsible for trying to kill her?

Negan stared at them hard now, grinding at his teeth malevolently. .

Fuck, he wanted to punish every last one of them. Slowly and painfully. All sense of right or wrong,
or rules, going straight out the window.

But first, he would get any information he could out of Rick the Prick. For if anyone knew what had
happened to Blake it would be him.

He would have ordered that shit.
What, to get one up on Negan? To get revenge?

Well Negan was sure going to fucking return that revenge. Tenfold, if that's what it took. For no one messed with his family.

Not anyone.

Rick stared up at Negan, looking slightly taken aback and fearful. Just what Negan wanted.

"Nope," barked Negan loudly. "We are doin' this in the centre of town. For EVERYONE to see!"

And with that, giving a twisted grin, Negan stalked forwards, suddenly reaching up and grabbing Rick by the back of his collar.

This was obviously another unexpected move from Negan, that Rick had not been expecting. And at once, he lost his footing, stumbling against the asphalt below his feet as Negan dragged him along after him.

There had indeed been another time when this had happened to Rick. Oh-so many months ago, back at that line up, when Negan had dragged a blubbering Rick into that RV.

But that was a long time ago now, before Negan had even met the two most important people in his life.

But two people he could have lost today because of assholes like Rick here.

"Dad!" came a sudden voice from Negan's right, and he turned his head to see the lanky figure of Carl come bounding across the small square, oversized sheriff's hat and eyepatch both on as they always were.

But Carl was suddenly stopped in his tracks before he could get too far, by Dwight, who pointed a gun into his boyish face.

"Oho! The little psychopath's here to join' in the fun!" shouted Negan in a voice that was joyless and cold and far from his usual repertoire.

Negan looked to Dwight, his eyes blackening again.

"Bring the kid along too, D," he murmured darkly, as Dwight obeyed, grabbing Carl by his lapels roughly and giving him a shove after Negan.

People now began to line the streets of Alexandria, watching as their leader stumbled and crawled after the long-legged Saviour, who held onto Rick's collar tightly, every step they took, Negan becoming more and more furious as the escalated fear of what might have happened to Blake back there, flooded over him, dousing every inch of his being in dread and horror.

Negan reached a small wooden bandstand that stood just off the wide grassy area surrounded by houses. A good vantage point for any watchers that hadn't yet dared to emerge from their houses.

And with a heave, Negan shoved Rick onto the centre of the small wooden structure, sending the man tumbling to his knees, hanging his sweat-laden head low.

"Now we can talk…" Negan seethed.

Blake paced the corridor, her nails brought up to her mouth, looking worried.
She knew just what Negan was capable of doing. And she had seen the irrepressible look in his eyes. Just a few short hours ago.

He looked unstoppable and full of hatred and anger.

And she knew that one way or another, someone was going to get hurt.

But as much as Blake wanted someone to pay for what they had almost done to her...or to Mia, or to the baby growing inside her, this was not the way to go about things.

Although if the shoe was on the other foot and Negan or Mia had been the ones hurt, would Blake be so calm?

Was this war? Or vengeance? Or a stupid mistake? She wasn't really sure anymore.

All she did know, was that silly mistakes would get them killed. It would get Negan killed. And that was something she did not want to risk. Not today.

Blake was tired and hurting, and wanted nothing more than to sleep and be with the ones she loved, feeling grateful that she was even still here to do so.

Frankie hovered behind the blonde in silence, rocking Mia on her hip, just as sudden footsteps caused Blake to turn suddenly and gaze over her shoulder....

But before she could say anything to the approaching Arat who had something clutched tightly in her hand, Blake felt a sharp twinge shoot through her.

She gaped, suddenly doubling over and clutching onto the wall beside her for support.

"A-Are you ok?" asked Frankie, suddenly grabbing hold of Blake's arm.

But Blake winced and blinked a few times, before shaking her head.

"Yeah, don't worry, I'm fine," she lied, brushing Frankie's concern away, before pulling herself upright once more.

And with her green eyes turning to Arat, she held out her hand, forgetting her moment of pain.

Her thoughts now on only one, desperate thing...

It seemed like the entire community had emerged from their sneaky fucking hiding places to watch the commotion that was about to unfold. Just as it had done, a few hours ago, back at the Sanctuary when Blake had been shot.

Negan was seething, gazing around as Saviours and Alexandrians alike, all surrounding the small wooden gazebo, where he stood just behind Rick, and now Carl who were both down on their knees in front of him facing the crowd.

"Al-fuckin'-right!" yelled Negan arching his back as he paced behind them, holding Lucille aloft. 
"Now I am guessin' at least one you sorry fucks knows why I'm here."

His voice rang out across the lot, but there followed only silence.

Negan gave a growl beneath his breath.

"No-one?" he commented, raising an eyebrow. "Huh. How about that."
"Whatever you think it is we've done-" came Rick's rasping drawl suddenly from Negan's feet.

But the dark-haired Saviour immediately cut him off.

"What I think you've done?" Negan yelled, his voice furious. "Oh no, what I KNOW you've done, Prick!"

Another piercing silence fell over the hazy space, where Negan's eyes landed the faces of all sorts of people he vaguely recognised from past visits to this fucking place.

From the woman who had tried to put a bullet in Lucille, who stood there as white as a sheet, to that badass woman with the dreadlocks that seemed to always be at Ricks side.

Negan's eyes flashed dangerously, an enticing thought suddenly coming to him.

"I know," he suddenly said with a maniacal grin. "How 'bout we make this a family affair."

And with that, he gestured to the angry looking black woman with the end of Lucille.

"Bring her up here," he commented his loyal lieutenants, who of course obeyed him instantly, grabbing the woman by her arms and dragging her to the podium, forcing her down to her knees between Rick and Carl.

Negan was done with these people, well and truly.

He bared his teeth facing the obviously confused and now frightened crowd before him.

"Now I am nice fuckin' guy," shouted Negan loudly, his voice echoing through the square. "Hell, even after all the shit you guys've pulled, I still give you protection, I fuckin' save you! And all I ahve ever fuckin' asked for in return is HALF. YOUR . SHIT."

Negan gave a dark grimace as he paced, spinning around on his heels and slowly marching a path back behind Rick and the others once again.

"And yet even now, after all this fucking time, you are still causing trouble. You an' your friends at the Hilltop, an' the Kingdom, still fightin' back like the rabid dogs you are."

Negan sounded angry, bellowing the last two words.

But he scowled.

"But even rabid dogs know their fuckin' limits every once in a while. But you…." Negan let out a chilling whistle of air. "..you have been nothin' but trouble. You kill my men, you hide guns from us, your people try to shoot me with homemade bullets...all that...well, all that I could deal with. I could forgive…"

But Negan suddenly grimaced standing up straight and running a hand over his bearded mouth, before pointing out at the crowd with the end of his barbed-wire covered baseball bat.

"...but what you did.....what someone did...."

Negan bit down hard onto his lip, looking furious as he shook his head, his eyes boring into the back of Rick's skull.

"...you tried to hurt my family.... and for that...." said Negan giving a sniff. "Well, someone's gotta pay."
Rick suddenly turned around, his beady eyes looking directly at Negan.

"Hurt you family?" he said in a hushed voice. "W-We don' know anything about that-"

But at the man's words, a boiling heat erupted in Negan's chest.

And in a split second Negan had swung Lucille over his head and brought the bat down hard.

There was sudden crunch, as people in the crowd wailed, staring up to see Negan picking Lucille up from the splintered floorboards of the gazebo.

"DON'T GIVE ME THAT BULLSHIT!" Negan roared to the back of Rick's flinching head. "ONE OF YOU IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS GODDAMN SHIT, AN' ONE OF YOU IS GONNA PAY FOR IT."

Negan's heart was hammering, as adrenaline pumped through his body. His face was red and a vein throbbed in his temples.

In the crowd he could see the slightly uneasy faces all of his most loyal men and women.

But they knew why he was doing this, right?

Negan knew that they doted on Blake, cared for her like their own family.

And yet there was flicker of something in their eyes now...a nervousness of sorts that only seemed to rile Negan up further.

Alright...maybe all this was very unlike him...

Negan knew he would fly off the handle at times...and his unpredictability was what made him a goddamn leader.

But to them he was still cool, calculating, and extremely level-headed. But not today.

Certainly not fucking today.

Negan clenched his teeth together, reaching out now with his gloved hand and grabbing a fistful of Rick's hair, tugging his sweaty head up to Negan's lips.

"You almost took everything away from me today...you, that fucking thespian king, thin-dicked Gregory up at the Hilltop...." snarled Negan baring his teeth like a wolf. "You tried to put a fucking bullet in me....now....pfft, well that I coulda' dealt with. But her-"

Negan paused momentarily, his top lip curling at the thought.

"If she'd have died, Rick...." he continued loudly into Rick's ear, before trailing off again.

Suddenly the black woman spoke, gazing around at Negan looking fearful of how close Lucille was to Rick's skull.

"You're talking about Blake?" she asked suddenly.

But her words only caused Negan to huff loudly, dropping his grip on Rick's hair and standing up tall, pointing to her for a moment before beginning his pacing again.

He wavered for a second or two, his chest rising and falling hard, as he ignored her, pulling Lucille
up to his face and closing his eyes.

"Lucille, baby, give me strength," he murmured out to his trusted baseball bat.

These people were idiots. Fucking morons.

But even so, they deserve to be punished, just as someone had planned to punish him.

He would give them a show if that's what they wanted. Make this into the spectacle they had planned to give him.

He took a deep breath, spinning around on his heels and turning back to the kneeling trio and the crowd beyond them.

Looking like a king up on his tower ready to deliver the final sentence.

He was ready.

Enough of this bullshit.

Enough of these games.

Negan was angry. Wanting more than blood. He wanted revenge.

He snapped his eyes open lowering Lucille to waist height, as he took a step forward, addressing the crowd once more.

"So I think...Rick," Negan said with a poignant note to his voice. "Well...I think you should get to experience that same goddammn fear and pain that I was goin' through just a few short fuckin' hours ago. I want YOU to lose someone you love today, just how I could have done. I think that's fair, don' you?"

"We can talk about this!" pleaded Rick from Negan's feet, but Negan just shook his head.

"No we certainly cannot, Rick," he uttered in a simpering reply. "Because you almost took away the most important thing in the world to me today. And I think I should do the same to you."

Negan gave a dark grimace, readjusting the grip on Lucille as he moved, first, to the black lady on Rick's right hand side.

"So who's it gonna be, huh?" he said stiffly, knocking the back of Michonne's head with Lucille gently. "Your leadin' fuckin' lady?"

Before Negan stepped over to Carl, tugging off his oversized hat before flinging it down onto the grass before them.

"Or your firstborn?" he continued bluntly. "Your one-eyed pride and joy?"

"Please don't do this.." Rick pleaded again shaking his head. But this grovelling on made Negan angrier.

"Time's a' tickin', Rick," Negan pressed. "You gotta make. a. choice. 'Cause if you don't, I'm gonna take both of them from you."

From the crowd ahead, Negan saw a few people step suddenly forwards in outcry, soon be pushed back into the midst by Saviours pointing guns at them. One of those people was that damned woman
who had tried to shoot at him, but she was dragged backwards quickly by the tall black woman at her side, and before Negan could blink they had disappeared into the mass of people.

But they could cry and whine all they wanted. That didn't change anything.

Perhaps the old Negan would have been far more lax.

Perhaps he'd have given Rick another chance.

But now Negan had Blake….he had a family...a damn baby on the way. This was no time for second chances. This was no time for fucking about.

"I'm givin' you five seconds, Rick," Negan bellowed again. "Make your fuckin' choice, here an' now. Man the fuck up, grow some balls and decide."

"N-No…" said Rick as the crowd all around them fell utterly silent. "I-I can't….p-please...kill me instead."

But Negan merely sucked at his teeth, a bubbling rage burning inside him.

He didn't want Rick to die for this. No. He wanted him to survive and watch the people he loved die around him. To have him know what that felt like.

"Five…" Negan snarled, beginning to count, raising Lucille up high, his hands almost shaking with pure fury as he did so.

He was blinded now….seeing only red…

...blood…

...death…

"Four," he hissed out.

Everything around him going quiet as everyone held their breath, and Carl and Michonne bowed their heads low, awaiting their fate.

But Negan faltered for a moment as his eyes stopped on something….

For the black woman before him, sandwiched in between the father and son, had moved her hands to each of theirs, either side of her, clutching onto them tightly.

Negan blinked a little…

When suddenly a voice came from his right, loud and clear.

"Boss-"

"What the fuck is it?" Negan instantly bellowed, baring his teeth over his shoulder at the speaker.

But he found only D.J, one of his more loyal lieutenants, standing there, face fixed, holding a small black radio out towards him.

"I-Its her, Boss…"

And it was only a second or two as Negan just stood there seething, breathing hard, that a voice as
clear as day, drifted over the radio towards him.

"Negan?"

Fuck.

It was her…

Blake…

...the woman who was his everything.

His fucking queen.

Negan blinked, he sound of her voice bringing him back down to earth with a sudden crash.

"Negan please, if you're there, answer me," she said in a pleading voice, in a tone not too dismair to how Rick's had been just a moment or two ago.

Negan suddenly stepped forwards, snatching the device from D.J's hand and wavering for what felt like an eternity.

But finally, sucking in a breath, Negan pulled the radio to his mouth.

"Yeah, Peaches, I'm here," he said in a tone far softer than a moment ago, turning away from the faces all staring back at him and closing his eyes for a brief few seconds.

"Negan, p-please, come back….come back to the Sanctuary...I need you," she said to him, as static filled the line.

The dark-haired Saviour licked his lips, letting out a tired huff.

He couldn't come back. Not yet. Not until he'd finished the job.

But she knew him too well and read his mind before he had even said anything.

"Negan, please. Listen, I'm ok...we're ok...a-and punishing people.....well, right now, it isn't going to help. It's just going to make people want to do things like this again....." came her voice again after a moment. "Please, baby, I'm begging you...come home. You can go out tomorrow, i-if that's what you want, but today….I need you here...home...with us."

Negan breathed hard, dropping his chin to his chest and scrunching up his face momentarily.

Her words ringing through his ears.

"Please…" she repeated again, sounding distant. "Please…"

It was as thought she was pleading with him now. And were it anyone else, Negan would have tossed away the fucking radio and ignored every word.

But her…

This was different, but at the same time, very much alike another moment Negan had been through, a long, long time ago.

Suddenly he was taken back there, to that hospital, where upon hearing the news that Lucille was
terminal, with mere months left to live, he had left her, tearing his hand away from hers as she called after him.

In a blur, and barely remembering even getting there, Negan had found himself in some random bar he didn't even know the name of, on his third glass whisky as he watched his cell phone ring and ring, vibrating across the bar in front of him.

And at the end of the night, walking home in a half-drunken stupor, and finding his legs didn't want to work properly anymore, Negan had collapsed down onto a park bench and pulled out his phone, listening to his voice messages…

And one by one, there she was, Lucille, pleading with him to come home.

It had killed him to hear her, so strong, despite all that was happening to her- all because she needed to be, for him. She had left messages all night, almost every half hour, pleading with him to come back to her...to come home. And Negan had broken down with his head in his hand, right there and then, as tears had slipped down his cheeks, the guilt and the stark realisation overwhelming him.

Negan blinked several times, feeling his eyes prickle with tears he would ever let fall...not here, and not now…

But he steadied himself, staring suddenly down to where the black woman's hands were clasped desperately around Carls' and Ricks'.

Jeez.

What the fuck was he doing here?

Is this really what Lucille would have wanted him to become? What Blake wanted him to become.

No.

Right now all Blake wanted was him home with her. Where he should be.

Regret flooded over the dark-haired Saviour as he stood there now, thumb hovering over the radio call button.

He could deal with this shit another day.

There was a time for revenge. There was a time for payback.

But today Negan knew he needed to be back there. With his girls, holding their damn hands, just like the three figures below him.

Negan turned away and lifted the radio to his lips.

"Give me an hour, Peaches..." he murmured hoarsely, giving a deep sigh. "Daddy's comin' home."

And with that Negan, with his eyes black and pained, walked straight past the three kneeling figures and down the gazebo steps, parting the crowd as he went...leaving in silence…

...as his obedient men quickly followed in his wake.
Homecoming

It was dark by the time the trucks finally pulled up into the illuminated Sanctuary lots, just over an hour and a half later.

Negan, slumped against the passenger side window, not having said a word to anyone since Alexandria, gave a hard gulp as he dragged a gloved hand down his tired and lined face.

He had been lost back there, for a moment.

So sucked into the idea of revenge…

Of payback.

His walls had come up again and every little bit of anger and rage he had been holding inside since the loss of Lucille had come flooding out of him.

He hadn't always been hard. Once upon a time he had fallen in love, gotten married, done all that soppy shit. But years of bitterness, of not getting promotions, or having to watch Pete next-door get that new company car, while Negan was stuck with his beaten up old pickup, well, all that had gotten to him.

And then after years of hoping and talking about having kids…being told by the doctors that, for him and Lucille, that would never happen…that bitterness had become something more. And Negan had taken advantage of his wonderful wife's good nature, screwed around on her, stayed out late drinking, becoming an all-round asshole.

He had been far from the ideal husband. Not knowing how good he had it until everything around him crumbled.

It was then, after the loss of his wife, that Negan had put up walls, looked out for no one but himself under the pretence of 'saving people'.

That had been until Blake had showed up in his life, breaking down every barrier he had built up around himself.

She had been hurt and bruised and broken, and had survived it all. And for a moment he had seen a strength and compassion in her that he had once seen in Lucille.

It was hard to compare the two women now, but Negan knew that it was likely that if the pair of them had ever met, they would get on like a damn house on fire.

Blake was his everything these days. And Negan clung to the idea of her, even when she wasn't around him. Her warmth, her love. Something Negan hadn't experienced for a long, long time.

She had given him his heart back.

Found him, when he had been so, so lost….

...just as she had just a few hours ago...over that radio.

She had brought him back. Saved him from the blood and brutality.

Even if only for a moment.
The truck he was riding in, driven by a silent Dwight, pulled slowly to a halt, and Negan now heard the blonde man at his side switch off the engine and pause, as he waited obediently for his next orders.

But Negan wasn't in the mood to give any.

For it was likely they all could see the emotions he had gone through today, the fear, the anger, the rage...

Did they understand? Negan certainly hoped so.

"You did good today, Dwight," Negan murmured grasping up Lucille from the seat next to him with a stiff sigh. "Make sure you an' the boys take the night off, hell, you've earned it."

Dwight at once gave a grateful nod in reply, as Negan shoved open the truck door, hopping out, his boots landing on the dusty asphalt below.

He felt tired, his throat feeling hoarse as he swung Lucille up onto his shoulder, taking a few long-legged strides towards the wide metal doors that led into the cool interior of the dimly lit factory.

It was quiet in here away from the noise of engines and wheels against gravel, and as the door swung back, shutting all that out, Negan was left with a stark silence he didn't know quite what to do with.

But that silence only lasted what felt like a pinprick of a moment, when a sudden voice came out of the shadows.

"Hey."

It was soft and warm and he recognised it at once, barely even flinching as he turned to face the person who had spoken, watching as she stepped out of the shadows.

She looked smaller now that she did before, just the way she held herself, with long blonde hair thrown over one shoulder, draped in long grey button down sweater and jeans.

She was a vision to him.

So real and so fucking gorgeous.

He merely parted his lips, lowered Lucille and turned to Blake as she stepped out of the shadows towards him.

She tilted her head to the side, giving him a tiny, questioning look.

"Is everything-" she asked slowly, searching his face for the answer before he had even had the chance to speak.

But Negan took a step towards her and reached for her hand, clutching it tightly in his.

She felt warm and comforting to him, like a shot of brandy on a cold night. And Negan stared into her eyes.

"Hell, I'm fuckin' sorry, Peaches..." he said, in a voice huskier than normal in the darkness of the hallway. "I shouldn'ta."

"It's ok," Blake said quickly, lifting her other hand to his stubbly cheek. "You were angry. I understand why you would be."
She gave her head a small shake.

"I'm just glad that you're home," she finished simply, leaning forwards and pressing her lips gently to his.

She tasted like honey to him...sweet and pure and Negan felt his heart swell, clinging onto the fact that she was still here….she was still alive.

After a moment or two they pulled away, and Blake left her eyes closed for a moment, sucking down onto her bottom lip as if savouring his taste.

The pair of them remained in silence for a long long few seconds before Blake finally looked up to him once more, easing her hand away from his, before placing both her palms onto his leather-clad shoulders.

"Let's go to bed." she said gently, Negan suddenly realising he wanted nothing more than that too tonight. To hold her, to have her close. "It's late and I've had a pretty rough day."

She reached up and ruffled her blonde hair with her fingers a little tiredly, before giving a sleepy-sounding purr.

Negan slid his arm around her spine as she turned into his arms, and began to walk at her side.

But Blake quickly gave a sharp wince, prising Negan's fingers from her waist.

"Ouch, not quite healed," she muttered as Negan growled an instant apology to her.

But she brushed him off easily.

"It's fine," she said gently. "Carson changed my dressing an hour ago and said I should be good until morning. He said give it a week or so and it should start to look a lot better."

Negan cocked an eye down at her as his tanned hand hovered at the small of her back as they began to walk down the hallway, lieutenants starting to fill the corridor behind them.

"You takin' anything?" Negan asked curiously.

"For the pain?" Blake answered. "Yhhmmmm. Nothing too strong though."

She rubbed at her stomach, gesturing to the baby inside her.

"But he said the pain should die down in a day or two anyway, I might just feel a little sore for a while," she shrugged.

"Hmmmm, I should fuckin' think so. Hell, you've taken a damn bullet to the side, Darlin'," Negan murmured incredulously. "I known men bigger than you who'd be rollin' around on the damn floor at much less."

But Blake waved him away again with a laugh. "No they wouldn't Negan," she scolded, shaking her head and smirking. "It's not too bad anyway. It was just a scratch."

But both of them knew full well it was much, much more than that.

Negan stared at her, the hint of a calm smile lingering over his own bearded lips.

They turned the corner and began to head up the long metal staircase. Blake took it slow, wincing a
little and holding onto the railing as she climbed.

They two of them didn't say anything for a minute or two, Negan, however, watching her every movement carefully, as though she were made of glass.

Blake stopped halfway up to catch her breath, placing a hand to her belly.

"Ugh, god, between this thing..." she pointed to the covered-up wound at her side. "...and the bump I'm gonna get soon, its think it's going to start averaging me about twenty minutes to get up these stairs every day."

Negan gave a chuckle, rubbing his gloved hand over his mouth, before she started to climb again.

"Beansprout asleep?" the Saviour asked after a lengthy moment of silence.

He had barely even comprehended just how frightened the damn kid must have been earlier, and again, guilt crept over him as he realised just how foolish he had been to leave when he did, right when his whole family had needed him most.

"She's up with Tanya and Michelle," Blake said conversationally. "She's gonna stay there tonight. Frankie's just gone down to see if she can get any more of that kiddie flu medicine for her. She's seems like she's got her sniffle back."

Negan tutted. The kid had only just got over one bout of cold, but after the day she had had, it wasn't surprising she would seem a bit under the weather again.

The pair made it up to the long hallway that housed their room eventually.

"So..." murmured Blake looking up to him quickly as a light flickered above their heads in the gloomy corridor. "What happened?...back there...a-at Alexandria?"

It sounded like Blake had been holding this question off for a while now.

But Negan gave a short sigh, lowering his chocolate eyes to the ground.

"No one died, Peaches..." he huffed in a sorry-sounding voice.

But Blake suddenly clutched at his free hand again, giving it a tight squeeze, causing him to look up at her quickly.

"I know...I know..." she whispered gently.. "I just....."

She wavered for a short moment before letting out her own sigh, blinking hard. "What's done is done. And yeah, I want the person responsible to pay for what they did...what they could have done....but today......it isn't the right time to be punishing a entire community. We need them on our side. And some of them..."

Bake paused giving a frown.

"...some of them are good people. Assholes sometimes, but good people. And I don't think any of them were capable of doing something like that."

Negan gave his own frown at this.

He wasn't so trusting of those fucking Alexandrians, but he was too tired to argue with Blake now, watching her wince a little, clutching a hand to the space just below her breasts.
"Everythin' alright?" he asked suddenly, his eyes grazing over her pained face.

But Blake just grimaced a little, waving him away.

"Ugh, I think it's just heartburn," she said a little stiffly as Negan gave the door ahead of them a sharp shove open and they made their way into their shared living areas.

It was warm in here and the bed on the far side of the expansive room looked more than inviting now.

It had been a long day for both of them.

And so, dropping Lucille down onto a side-table near to the door, he strolled over to the bed and sat down on the end of it, feeling exhausted.

But he stared up as Blake, smiling a little and looking like a goddamn beauty queen, padded towards him, one hand pressed to her belly.

Fuck she was gorgeous, and looked almost proud of the bump that was barely there now- but would be sure to get much bigger in the coming months.

"So…." groaned Negan tiredly, placing his hands to her hips as she came to stand in between her legs, placing one hand to his shoulder. "...you had any thoughts on whether you think we're gettin' a damn mini me, or a mini you, yet?"

The blonde woman smirked and rolled her eyes. A gesture that brought a grin to Negan's own lips.

"Hmmm," she said considering the question for a moment, running her hand over her the black tshirt, that covered her abdomen, lovingly. "Well you'd better hope its a boy, because if its a girl, you're gonna be outnumbered, Daddy."

Negan let a chuckle escape his bearded lips as he looked up at her now in awe, before lowering his eyes, his gaze landing on her tummy.

Fuck.

Negan knew he needed to count himself lucky.

Today could have gone a lot differently for all of them.

Yet here he was, sat here with the woman he loved in front of him.

He let out a long contented sigh.

"Y'know, with your looks, and my damn attitude, our kid's gonna be a force to be reckoned with, Sweetheart."

And from just above him, Blake gave a sigh, moving her hand up and stroking back Negan's dark hair.

"I think you're right," she purred, as Negan smiled up at her.

She eyed him for a moment, staring down at him with a warm look in the gentle, yellow lamplight that filled the room.

"You look as tired as I feel," she said letting out a yawn and easing herself from his grasp. "I'm
gonna brush my teeth and then I think we should both get some sleep."

Negan let out another sigh, nodding his dark head, watching as she headed across the room and made her way into the bathroom, the stark light flickering on at once and pouring onto the bedroom carpet as she let the door ajar.

"I think I'm gonna take a shower before hittin' the hay," said Negan easing his leather jacket stiffly from his shoulders as he remained there, sat on the edge of their king-sized bed.

From inside the bathroom he could hear the sound of a running tap. And Blake's face appeared around the door after a second or two, a toothbrush sticking out of her mouth.

She pulled the object from her lips, brandishing it at him and wrinkling her nose.

"Yeah, I was gonna say, you don't smell all that great, baby," she teased, earning herself a grey pillow tossed in her direction, missing her by feet, which caused her to giggle, sticking the toothbrush back into her mouth, her head disappearing around the door once again.

Jesus Christ, only she could be able to bring out such a range of emotions in him in one day.

She really was his fucking everything.

The missing piece to his existence.

Negan gave a sigh, the sound of the running tap drowning out the noise of his boots hitting the floor one-by-one as he peeled them off.

He dragged a hand over his bearded face, a long puff of air easing out between his lips, as he screwed his eyes shut.

"Shit, I might just forgo the damn shower," he called into her. "Before I fall asleep standin'."

He gave a heavy yawn, awaiting her reply.

But there came none.

Negan rolled his eyes.

"I said, I might just forgo the damn shower," he repeated, a little louder this time.

But again there came nothing but the sound of the tap continuing to run.

Negan gave a frown, getting to his feet with a stiff groan and heading over towards the open bathroom door with the full intention of telling Blake off for wastin' his damn supply of clean water.

"Jeez, Peaches, I-" he began, running a hand through his hair with a frown, as he shoved open the door that was halfway open, his eyes searching the room lazily.

But the dark-haired Saviour stopped short, all colour suddenly draining from his face, as his eyes landed on the figure of Blake…

...lying there, in a crumpled heap on the floor…..

…..an ever-increasing puddle of crimson blood pooling beneath her.
Sometimes these things just happen

In the days, or months, or even years that followed, Negan wouldn't recall how he made it down the stairs that night, with an unconscious Blake held in his leather-clad arms.

He wouldn't recall the stares he received from passing workers who stood back for him to pass as he streaked down the lengthy Sanctuary corridors, finally reaching the hallway on the first floor where the medical room was.

Nor did he recall first seeing Simon stood there, hands on hips, talking to Frankie outside said room, with medicine for Mia.

He would remember none of that.

All the tall, dark-haired man would remembered was the sound of his own blood rushing in his ears. The sound of his shallow breaths and the sight of her lying there, blood soaked through her jeans, leaving him with a wet streak of red across his otherwise clean white t-shirt.

The voices of a stunned looking Simon and Frankie echoed somewhere in the distance, but Negan could barely hear them now...his dark eyes angry and hurting as Carson quickly emerged from the doorway at the commotion outside.

And Negan didn't even have to say a word, before the strawberry blonde doctor swept Blake from Negan's strong arms carrying her quickly inside and beckoning Frankie to follow him.

But when Negan tried to go inside too, he was stopped by a yell from Carson, and Frankie closing the door hastily in his face.

And as the world started to resume its normal pace again, and Negan realised what was happening, he felt Simon's thick arms begin to ease him away.

"Come on, Boss, it's for the best, Carson knows what he's doing..." he heard his loyal right-hand man mutter into his ear.

But Negan, his eyes searching the now closed door, felt a sudden rage swell within him.

He twisted around, and threw Simon's arm from his shoulder.

"Get your damn hands off me Simon!" he roared, but the mustachioed man barely flinched, just letting out a heavy sigh at Negan's outburst.

Shit.

Shit.

The leader of the Saviours gave a hard gulp, bringing his hands up to his face, his heart pounding inside his chest...

...even when he closed his eyes all he could seem to see was her...lying there....in that ever widening pool of blood....

Negan scrunched his eyes tightly shut, willing the memory of that sight to fade.

But it didn't.
He could panic rising within him now.

Shit. If something happened to her, Negan didn't know what he would do…

How could he go on?

Thoughts and fears swirled inside him.

He was tired, exhausted, strained…. 

What the fuck was he going to do?

Negan began to pace that gloomy hallway, as Simon stood there beside him obediently, unmoving...not saying a word.

Hours slid by…

One after the other.

Negan could feel the passing of time ticking away inside him as he waited and waited and waited.

And unlike the moments he would not be able to recall, this would be a memory that would stick with him...

The waiting. The not-knowing..

A few times he had fought the urge to burst inside the room.

But he had stopped himself before he had reached the door handle, his fingers trembling.

Here he was, more vulnerable that he had ever been, standing there in just a white shirt and jeans…

... no boots, no Lucille….no hope.

It must have been at least two long hours later, as Negan stood there, eyes squeezed shut, leaning against the wall behind him, his head resting against the unsmooth surface of the concrete….

...that the two men finally heard the twisting of the door handle a few feet away from them

Negan snapped open his eyes, his heart hammering inside him.

Maybe it was her….maybe she was fine...

But the door creaked open only to reveal Frankie emerging from the room, staring straight ahead, but her eyes were unfocused, staring...

The leader of the Saviours pushed himself from the wall and gazed at her desperately..

But the red-head did not look back at him….and it was then and only then did Negan take her in….

….the blood on her shirt…

...the flecks of blood on her wrists…. 

….her tear-stained cheeks….

Negan opened his mouth to question her, but she just walked right by him, purposefully avoiding his
eye.

Negan felt his lip tremble in anger.

"Frankie-" he yelled after her angrily, making to follow her, but yet again Simon stopped him in his tracks.

"Boss-" he tried.

But Negan's shoulders were tensed and his jaw clenched tightly together.

He couldn't take anymore of this shit?

Why the fuck had they been in there so long, huh?

What the fuck had happened?

But before he could give his second in command abuse for stopping him, the door behind them creaked open once more.

Negan swung around hurriedly, only to see Carson step out.

The middle-aged doctor looked frazzled and exhausted, and just like Frankie, Negan could instantly see that his front was covered in blood.

But unlike the red-head, Carson's eyes did meet with Negan's chocolate ones.

And in them, Negan knew what the doctor was about to say before he could even say it, his heart immediately shattering.....breaking in two.

"Negan…" the doctor said in a soft tone, his voice wavering a little as he spoke. 
"...Blake.....well...."

He wavered for a long moment, letting out a difficult sigh.

Relations had ever been greta between him and Negan, but right now it was if all that was forgotten.

"I'm so sorry....." Carson continued in a sorrowful voice, shaking his head and tearing his eyes away. "Blake....s-she lost the baby."  

It was then that, with a hard crash, Negan felt like his entire world had fallen apart around him.  

It was like he was floating now...miles from earth...in some distant space.

He felt numb.

Unable to feel anything, as the sorry-looking doctor spoke again.

"Blake's ok.....s-she's as comfortable as she can be....she's resting..." he explained. But to Negan, his words seemed far away. "B-But losing a child....i-it's tough on anyone and a trauma like that.....well, y-you need to give her time....."

Negan stared at Carson now, shaking his head, but despite opening his mouth he found he couldn't speak.

He felt Simon's strong hand clamp down onto his shoulder now, in a gesture resembling comfort.
But still Negan felt nothing…

...just nothing….an aching emptiness.

But one thing…one thought brought him back down to earth, brought him back to the here and now.

"She's ok though…." he finally managed to huff out in a low voice, his voice shakier that he thought it would be.

But he noticed Carson give a small gulp, running a hand over his ruffled hair.

"Like I said…..Blake's gone through a trauma...losing a baby….i-it affects people in different ways-" he began.

But Negan cut across him before he could finish.

A hurt flooding his body.

Someone was responsible for all this. Someone did this to her.

"This because of that bullet?" he growled in a dark voice, a pain stabbing at his heart.

But the doctor just shook his head.

"No," he uttered simply.. "Sometimes these things...well, they just happen. It's no ones fault. She was healthy, she didn't do anything wrong. Some women just have difficulty in carrying a baby to term:"

"She's lost two already...before now…" Negan said before he could stop himself, dropping his eyes to the floor as his gaze flitted this way and that. His hands were shaking now and he felt like crying.

Shit. Was he already crying?

He didn't even know.

Fuck. None of this was her fucking fault. Hell, perhaps they had been fucking stupid for even trying.

Carson semed to ponder Negan's stark words for a long moment.

"I wasn't aware of that…” he said quietly, but did not push any further.

The corridor filled with a thick sort of silence that overwhelmed Negan, shifting his eyes up to the door at Carson's back.

She was in there now...alone and grieving...

And Negan knew that he didn't want her to go through that alone. Not now.

But was he gonna say?

Shit. He didn't know if he could do this.

How the fuck was he supposed to be strong?

He didn't feel like a leader now? Far from it.

In fact he felt just like he had back in that hospital room at Lucille's bedside.
He didn't have the words.

He wasn't fucking man enough for this shit.

"Can I see her?" he asked, knowing that he should.

It wasn't often Negan asked permission for anything, but here, right now Negan felt just like he did with the doctors that took care of Lucille.

He was out of his depth...floundering...

But Carson's sad eyes met with his his again.

"Negan...you've got to understand that Blake...losing a baby...losing three...some people find it hard to cope with that loss..."

Negan felt his hardened jaw begin to tremble.

"...you need to give her time, ok?" finished Carson, running his hand through his unkempt hair again, before heading into the room next door without another words.....and leaving the door behind him slightly ajar.

Negan paused, trying to take everything in.

Everything Carson had just said.

He wanted to shake himself. To run away.

Perhaps this was just a nightmare.

Would he hear Blake's screams now...or see Mia emerging dead from those bushes?

As frightening as those things were, they were just bad dreams and he knew that eventually he would wake up from them.

But this? This couldn't be real.

Their baby was gone? Just like that?

This couldn't be real, it just couldn't be.

Things like this didn't just....happen.

Carson was wrong.

There had to be someone to blame for this.

Negan needed there to be.

But he felt a sudden footstep behind him, at his shoulder and Simon's sudden voice in his ear.

"Boss, whatever you need."

But Negan just shrugged his hand away, grimacing and taking a step forward, towards the door...

His mouth was dry and his hand began to tremble harder as he reached for the peeling paint of the door, giving the wooden panel a small shove open and walking inside...
The narrow medical room was dimly lit, with a small orange lamp casting a hazy glow over one side of the room. There was a metal table and three trays with various medical instruments on one side. And a small bed sat on the other side with a rickety looking chair beside it.

It smelt clinical in here with no traces of the masses of blood Negan had seen on Frankie and Carson.

But Negan's eye barely had time to take much of it in as his gaze quickly landed on Blake…. For she was lying there, on the small bed, curled up beneath a white sheet….facing away from him.

In fact she didn't move at all as he approached, despite the sound of the door swinging shut with a gentle thud behind him.

Negan sucked in a breath, blinking his eyes once, then twice and staring up at the ceiling, realising that he already had tear tracks streaked down his stubby cheeks.

How long he had been crying for he wasn't sure.

He reached up, dragging a hand down his wet face, sucking at his teeth before finally pacing over to the bed.

As he approached Blake...the woman he loved, he caught a glimpse of her face, wet with tears, her eyes open, puffy and red, and blinking slowly….staring straight ahead at the blank wall to her left.

But she still did not acknowledge him.

Jesus Christ, Negan wanted to hold her….to comfort her.....

But he gave a frown. More to himself than to her, as he settled himself down into the seat beside Blake's bed.

What the hell was he supposed to say to her?

Was he supposed to tell her what Carson had told him. That things like this, well they just happen?

That it wasn't her fault?

That it wasn't anyone's fucking fault.

Negan sat there staring at the back of Blake's blonde head, letting out a shaky puff of air and staring up at the ceiling as tears flooded freely from his normally steely eyes.

He didn't know how he was going to do this....

All this loss.

All this pain.

He had been through enough. And so had she...

But Negan kept his tears silent. Not wanting Blake to hear him….as the minutes ticked by....

Both of them mourning their loss.

Both of them hurting....
But Negan not knowing how to say anything to her now..

And so, as salty tears littered Blake's pillows and Negan's cheeks, there they stayed, in silence…

...as the night passed through and the sound of birds tolled the oncoming sunny morning.

But for the two of them, there would be no sun...no light today…

….only darkness.

And that never-ending sense of loss that came with losing a child they would never get the chance to know.
The bleak night slipped into a sunny and warm morning, as dawn broke and whispers began to flood the hazy Sanctuary.

It never took long for news to spread in a place like this, and by the time breakfast was over, it seemed that everyone knew the horrific events of the previous night. What had happened to Blake and the baby that they were all joyous to see her carrying.

And there was not a soul there, amongst the workers and even the most hardy of lieutenants, that didn't feel that stab of loss for their queen and the child she hadn't got to bare to full term.

Maybe if Negan had been privy to any of this he'd have got to cry, or yell, or shout. Telling them all to quit with their gossip, used Lucille on anyone who looked at him the wrong way or whispered behind their hand…

...but he got to do none of this.

None of his usual Negan response to the things that hurt him.

No...instead the dark-haired Saviour just sat there….in that hospital room, by that bed…..

...just as he had done all night.

He had got no sleep, and from the sounds of it neither had Blake.

All through the early hours he had heard her crying endless tears.

But all Negan could do was sit there, his eyes on the floor, slumped in that chair, fingers brought up to his cheek.

Now, hours later, she was still….he could see her curled up, still lying beneath that white sheet in his peripherals.

But his own gaze was unfocused...unseeing….

And he only stirred gruffly when what must have been at least a few hours since the sun had risen in the sky, when Carson entered the room, holding a plate full of fruit and bread roll.

Negan glanced up at him but didn't say a word, merely watching as the sorry-looking doctor, today in green shirt and jeans, gave him a nod, moving over to the other side of the bed to peer at Blake.

"Alright, Blake...how are we feeling today?" he said in a gentle voice, placing the plate of fruit down into the small makeshift nightstand by the bed.

But despite not being able to see her turned away face, Negan could sense her unresponsiveness.

Carson frowned down at her for a long moment, before his eyes met with Negan worriedly.

Was her silence what he expected from a woman who had gone through a trauma like this?

Negan, his entire body feeling stiff and strained sat up a little in his seat, blinking his eyes, as Carson dropped his gaze back down to the still blonde woman before him.
"I'm gonna need to check on that dressing on that wound of yours, ok?" Carson told her a little tentatively.

But again Blake didn't say anything.

She didn't even move as Cason pulled back the sheets carefully, just lying there on her side, hair pooling over the white pillow behind her head.

She was dressed in what looked like a lightweight blue smock, and didn't even flinch when Carson lifted up the edge of it and began to change the bandages on the wound at her bare hip.

In fact the trio just remained there wordless and silent as the strawberry-blond doctor finished his work, and eased the sheet back over Blake's small-looking form.

Normally Negan had a smart-remark for any occasion. It was his defence mechanism, always had been.

But now, it was as though all words were lost on him.

Pointless fucking words.

For what fucking use would they be at a time like this?

Fuck.

Was all this his fault? Should he blame himself now?

Maybe if he'd done something different? Not left her alone today, not run off to Rick like the asshole he was…

Guilt flooded his veins now. But that guilt was soon replaced with a hurt instead

No. He had heard what Carson had told him. Blake was healthy….she had done everything right.

These things just...happened sometimes.

Then who was to blame? Surely there had to be someone Negan could punish for this?

Because sitting here..doing nothing, saying nothing...it was killing him little by little.

"Eat, Blake," Negan heard the doctor mutter again with a lick of his lips, pointing to the plate on the nightstand as he disposed of the bloody bandages. "It'll do you some good."

He walked away from Blake's bed, before pausing at Negan's side. And for a moment it looked as though the doctor was about to pat him on the shoulder, but at the last second thought better of it. "You too," he instead uttered, before leaving the room...shutting the door gently behind him.

Morning soon shifted into afternoon, and afternoon into evening, and by the time the sun began to set in the sky, not a single word had been uttered between the silent pair still sat in that bleak medical room.

The fruit at Blake's bedside remained untouched, and in the hours they had spent in here neither of them had barely moved an inch.

Every part of Negan fucking ached. Not just his old joints, stiff from sitting in that chair for endless hours, but inside him too.
It was as though he had lost a part of him last night...a part of him that kept him going...kept him on track.

But right now the tall Saviour wasn't quite sure whether that missing piece of him was the unborn baby they had lost…. or if it was Blake. Because despite them being only just a few feet away from each other now, there felt like an entire ocean of distance between them.

And so, after hours of doing nothing...of waiting….of pain….Negan gave a frown and got to his feet.

He didn't even have shoes on, and realised just how cold the floor now felt beneath his feet as he paced across the short space between him and the small bed.

Negan wavered for a moment, his breath hitching it his throat, feeling nervous and worried...as though talking to stranger...

...before he finally peeled apart his dry and dehydrated lips and spoke for the first time in almost a day.

"Peaches…” he managed, barely recognising his croaky, defeated voice.

It was full of remorse and sorrow and Negan hoped that just that word alone was enough to have Blake turn to him and throw herself into his arms, where they could mourn together. BE together. Where they were supposed to be.

And not a world away, as they felt right now.

But Blake didn't move at all.

From here, Negan could see her green eyes open...staring.

But to his dismay, her gaze looked hollow, like she wasn't quite there anymore.

"Peaches.." Negan tried again, his voice faltering, as he stared down at her. "...I fucking need you…”

He trailed off, dropping his eyes, unable to utter any more. Hoping she would say something back to him.

Even if she blamed him for everything, yelled at him, screamed at him, it would still be better than this...than nothing.

He stared up again, but Blake remained still, her eyes fixed on that wall dead ahead…

...doing nothing...

...saying nothing...

And so, not knowing what else to do, Negan ran a hand down his exhausted face and turned away, slumping back down in his chair defeatedly…. 

...resuming their aching silence once more.
The days passed slowly by, and apart from Carson's usual check-ups and a subdued Frankie coming in to ask an unresponsive Blake how she was and escort her carefully to the bathroom several times a day, the pair, Negan and Blake, stayed where they were.

The world seeming like it was blurring around them.

Negan had left the room only to use the dank bathroom down the hallway himself, washing his face in the icy cold water beneath the faucet to keep himself awake. He had nodded off just a couple of times, going days without sleep night, just staying sat in that rickety chair beside Blake's bed.

The blonde woman he loved so dearly had barely moved an inch and even when Frankie led her back into bed, her gorgeous green eyes seemed blank, not reaching Negan's and merely remaining fixed to the floor until she lay back beneath the sheets, turning away from him once more.

And despite Negan trying again and again to talk to her, she just stayed sill. Not saying a word to the dark-haired Saviour in return.

Shit.

This was killing him. Little by little.

More than a lack of sleep or lack of appetite ever would.

To not have her even utter single word to him or anyone else in days...

Was this shock? Trauma? Or something else completely?

Carson had tried as much as he could to get her to eat something, telling her that she needed to get her strength back after the blood loss she had suffered, but Blake ignored him….her eyes staying fixed to that wall.

And it was on the third day, that a worried-looking Carson had nodded to Negan to follow him out into the hallway.

Negan had wavered at first before pulling his aching bones from the chair and following the strawberry-blonde doctor out into the gloomy corridor and pulling the door closed behind him.

And here Carson had turned to him, dragging a hand over his tired-looking eyes.

"She needs to start eating and drinking something," he said starkly, shaking his head. "It's been three days and she needs to get some fluids back into her."

He looked at Negan who merely stared back, not quite knowing how to react in his tired state.

"If she doesn't I'm afraid I'm going to have to force feed her through an IV…" he said giving a shake of his head. "A-And I don't want to do that."

Carson gazed at Negan poignantly. But Negan just gave a deep frown, shaking his own dark head at the doctor.

What the fuck did expect him to do?
"S-She won't even fuckin' look at me, Doc," he croaked out, in voice that sounded a world away from his usual deep and playful tone.

Shit, he didn't know how much longer he could cope with this.

Why the hell wasnt she talking to him? Or looking at him?

Did she blame him? Was that it?

"Y-You've got to give her time.." said Carson, but Negan cut across him suddenly, sounding frustrated.

"It's been three fuckin' days!" he said in a raised voice into the doctor's pale face before blinking and taking a step backwards, as though startled at his own anger.

He faltered, his eyes shifting away.

"She doesn't even cry anymore...she just lies there...hell, I don't know what I can fuckin' do," he said running hand down his painfully tired face. "What the fuck am I supposed to do?"

He looked up, expecting Carson to have an answer for him, but instead the strawberry blond man just looked apologetically back at him.

"Blake's been through a huge trauma, and so have you," he said, reaching out and placing his hand to Negan's upper arm, the first human contact the leader of the Saviours had felt in days. "People cope with things differently. But she needs you."

At this Negan stared hard at Carson for the longest of moments, before placing a tanned hand over his eyes and pinching the bridge of his nose.

He felt like he needed to cry. Or to kill somebody. Which, he wasn't so sure.

But without another word, Negan turned away, taking the doctors words with him and heading back into the bleak medical room.

It was mid-morning and a stark grey light was the only thing that lit the small space, a shaft of cold paleness illuminating the bed tucked into the corner of the room.

Negan sucked in a deep breath, before slowly moving around to said-bed, making towards the nightstand, where a plate of strawberries, fresh from the garden, sat, beside a glass of lukewarm juice.

From here, he could see that Blake's face looked pale and gaunt, and deep purple bags sat underneath her eyes. He could see her chest rising and falling gently, but she didn't look up at him as he approached her...not acknowledging him at all, just lying there, staring at that blank wall dead ahead of her.

Negan, clenched his jaws together, coming to stand in the space between her and the wall, but even then, her eyes didn't seem to shift from that spot.

Every few seconds he could see her blinking those big green eyes of hers….but it was like she was a ghost now. Not really there. So very far away.

"Peaches…” he tried, a lump fixing itself into the back of his throat. "You're gonna need to eat something'."
But despite his words, so close to her now, she still didn't look at him.

"Darlin'..." he attempted again, his voice almost pleading with her now.

But still nothing.

Negan shifted his jaw from side to side, a pain and a frustration suddenly shooting through him.

What the fuck was wrong with her?

The dark-haired man could feel himself getting angry and exasperated with every passing word that left his lips.

Shit. She wasn't the only one who had lost that baby.

It had been his kid too.

And Negan hadn't even had the chance to properly grieve, here alone with no-one but a silent Balke giving him nothing in return.

That frown that was still sat between his eyebrows deepened now.

He felt angry. Angry at everything.

At her, at Carson, at the person that had shot that gun.

Because, fuck, that bullet had never been fired, maybe she'd have been ok. Maybe their baby would have been ok.

All sorts of desperate thoughts filled Negan's head.

The what ifs…

The maybe's…

Shit. Someone needed to pay.

He didn't care who now. It didn't matter who.

And so, turning on his heel, Negan marched to the door on bare feet and hauled it open, face fixed, furious, leaving Blake behind.

The door itself clattered behind him loudly, swinging back on its hinges, but he didn't care.

As an anger, the likes of which he had not felt since he had torn off to Alexandria, filled is vision. And before he had realised what he was doing, or where he was really going, Negan had made it back up to his room for the first time in days.

The room was just how he had left it three nights ago, with the door still open, but he no longer cared, barging in and snatching up his jacket and boots from the foot of the bed and shoving them on.

But as Negan stood upright, sliding his arms into the sleeves of his heavy leather jacket, he caught sight of the open bathroom door, with the light still on.

He froze...a gulp trailing down his throat...knowing that just inside, on that tiled floor, would be a pool of ruby red blood...just how he had left it three nights prior.
How this had all started. How his world had crashed down around him.

Negan didn't want to see that again, grinding his teeth and huffing air from his nose.

And so, snatching his abandoned radio from his nightstand where he had left it, he pulled it to his lips. It fizzled into life almost instantly.

"Simon, Dwight, you there?" he barked, his voice sounding tense and low.

There was a long, stretched-out pause before Dwight answered. "Receiving you, Boss," came his voice over the static.

But Negan grimaced, he wanted vengeance, someone to punish now, and he didn't particularly care who that was.

He had never gotten to the bottom of who was responsible for sending that bullet Blake's fucking way. But all Negan knew now, was that he was willing to go to every single one of those fucking camps and burn them all to the ground, leaving no survivors.

If that was what it was gonna take to make him feel something again.

"I'm gonna need my best men locked and loaded and out by the goddamn trucks in ten fuckin' minutes, you got that, D?" he growled, his lips curling as he muttered into the black device.

There was another lengthy pause before Dwight spoke again.

"Understood," he replied sounding perhaps a little unsure now.

But Simon immediately answered too. "Copy that," uttered his right-hand man obediently.

Negan lowered the radio for a moment in thought, before lifting it to his mouth once more, his eyes flashing over to the bathroom.

"Oh an' send one of those fuckin' cock-suckin' workers up here to clean my fuckin' bathroom floor," he snarled. "I don't want to see any of that shit left here when I'm back, we clear?"

But Negan didn't even bother to wait for an answer, throwing the radio down onto the bed carelessly, before he moved over to the door.

A fury and anger filled his veins.

His own kid was gone because of someone.

And right now Blake might as well be gone too.

Negan felt bitter and angry.

At Blake?

At himself?

Or at someone else?

He wasn't so sure now, as he stopped by the door, his shaking hand reaching for Lucille who was sat there waiting for him like an old friend.
But his tanned digits hovered over the handle for a lengthy few seconds, his mind flitting to his deceased wife suddenly. Wondering what Lucille would think about all this? About him walking out on Blake right now?

But Negan angrily shoved these thoughts away, tugging the door open and heading once again back out into the hallway.

His mind seemed to be buzzing right now.

He was exhausted, running on nothing but fury and pain and sadness and grief…

But if that was enough to keep his legs moving and Lucille swinging, then that was good enough for him.

Then he could die happy, knowing that the person responsible for all this, was dead and gone.

That was enough, wasn't it?

Negan breathed hard and made for the staircase, taking the steps down two at a time, his hand clenching ahold of the railing at his side, feeling his legs shaking beneath him.

This was anger, right? Just anger?

Or was this something much more? The most painful kind of mourning for the baby he had never realised he had wanted so much.

Lucille had never been able to give him a child, and now Blake hadn't been able to either.

Maybe this was on him. Maybe he was the problem.

These thoughts scarred his heart now, as he made it to the bottom of the staircase, face set and eyes black, rounding the corner swiftly, making to head out to the lot through the double doors at the far end of the hallway.

But he stopped suddenly in his tracks….finding four people baring his way.

For all stood there, shoulder to shoulder, as though they had been expecting him to come this way, were Tanya, Michelle, Frankie and Layla.

His ex-wives, all of them bar Amber, stood here now, faces fixed firmly.

Had they heard his radio call?

No matter. He didn't give a shit what any of them thought now anyway.

"Move," he growled angrily, scowling at all of them.

They looked a far cry from the women he had once slept with on a regular basis. Out of their usual garb of short black dresses. Instead they stood before him now, looking like far stronger woman that they once had, in jeans and tank tops and shirts rolled up at the elbows.

But despite Negan's order, the women all stood firm. All as unmoving as Blake in that bed.

Beneath his breath Negan gave a dark hiss.

"Get the fuck out of my way, girls," he snarled.
But Tanya raised her eyebrows staring at him incredulously.

"Or what?" she replied in a vicious tone. "You gonna kill us? Beat us half to death with that thing?"

She nodded her head towards Lucille gripped tightly between Negan's fingers.

The insolence in her voice made Negan seethe with anger, visibly furious now.

But still the women stood firm, blocking his way to the lots outside.

Fucking shit, what was with these fucking girls? Why the fuck were they to try and stop him?

Could Negan kill them?

At his side he felt his grip tighten around the barbed-wire-covered baseball bat.

But he relented a little, gazing into Tanya's brown eyes.

All four women looked determined not to let him by.

But why? Why did they care if he went out and killed people? Or got killed himself?

These women obviously hated him.

Hell, they probably always had.

But suddenly Frankie stepped forwards, her eyes full of a sadness he had seen several times in her over the last few days.

"Blake needs you, Negan," she said, a sort-of pleading in her voice.

And Negan felt his mouth go dry at her words.

He blinked, his chest still rising and falling hard.

Michelle nodded, her hand gripping Frankie's gently.

"Yeah," she agreed in a quiet voice, staring into Negan's steely eyes. "You go now, and you might never get her back."

Negan stopped, relinquishing his grip on his bat a little, as a hard lump began to form in his throat.

A swirling feeling bubbled up inside his stomach making him want to vomit. But he stood tall, his chin dipped low. His eyes stilling on these four women...

These women who had meant so little to him. Who despised him. Who he had used and blackmailed. Who were doing this now not for him......but for Blake instead.

And Negan knew why.

He could see it everywhere.

Every day since she had come here.

He had seen the love that these women had for her... that the workers and the lieutenants, old and young, had for her...
She was their queen and they adored every inch of her.

And he knew that not one of them would stand by and let him hurt her. Directly or indirectly as he was doing right now.

And so, dragging his eyes from the wives, unable to take their stares any longer, Negan turned on his heel and marched away, defeated.

But instead of going back in the direction of the medical room on the north side of the Sanctuary, Negan headed upstairs once again, taking the long, trudging walk, back up to his room. Their room.

But, reaching his hallway he almost barreled into a lone worker emerging through the oak panelled doors. A grey-haired older woman in yellow dishwashing gloves, carrying a mop and bucket.

Negan opened his mouth quickly, ready to shout at them for getting in his fucking way, but he faltered a little, staring down into the woman's bright blue eyes, and then, into the soapy water now tinged pink with what he only guessed was Blake's blood.

Shit.

What was he fucking doing?

The woman looked terrified and got ready to stammer an earnest apology to the dark-haired Saviour. But Negan scrunched up his long and frowning face from a long moment, before stepping aside and allowing the lady to pass wordlessly.

He could hear his own shallow breathing in his ears as she slid gratefully by him and disappeared without a sound, leaving Negan alone once again with only the baseball bat in his hand for company.

The quietness was stark and eerie. And Negan walked into his room, noting at once, how much of Blake lingered here these days.

Her clothes littered his leather couches, her sweet scent clung to the air…

And it was then that Negan realised how much he missed her, despite her only being two floors down.

Shit, she was his entire fucking world, and it killed him to think that she was hurting as much as he was right now.

For now, as the anger dissipated from him, Negan was left with just a crushing pain that overwhelmed him.

Dropping Lucille back down to her position by the door once again, Negan closed the wooden door behind him, shutting out the world.

And with that, he began to peel the layer of days-old clothes from him, heading slowly into the bathroom.

It smelled like bleach in here, which stung his nostrils and his eyes, along with the stark white light that seemed to buzz from the spotlights above.

Had vaguely remembered that he had never gotten around to taking that shower three long nights ago, and so, unbuckling his belt and allowing his pants to drop onto the now-clean, tiled floor, Negan reached into the shower, turning on the faucet.
The water felt warm, and stripped of every single garment of clothing, the dark-haired man stepped under the stream of water, grateful of the scalding heat against his aching bones.

And it was here, drowned out by the sound of the water falling all around him, that Negan finally broke down, letting his chin drop to his collarbone, as a loud sob escaped his lips….followed by another and another.

And with his head hung beneath the water, Negan washed away the grief and the pain that he had so desperately needed to let out for days…

...allowing himself to finally begin to mourn.
Almost an hour Negan stayed in that shower, feeling his tears and his anger ebbing away with every droplet of water that got washed down the drain.

He hoped of course that his men would know by now, to stand down...that they would know that he had no intention of going anywhere. Not today at least. Not now.

He was done with acting rash. Acting like an asshole for his own ends or his own sheer anger and frustrations.

For Negan knew now that his priority needed to be to bring Blake back from wherever horrible place she was at.

Shit. He could feel her slipping further and further away from him with each moment that passed and knew that this couldn’t not go on much longer.

She wasn’t eating, he doubted she was sleeping either, falling into the clouded abyss it feared him to think she might not be able to climb out of without help.

And so, drying himself hastily with a towel, Negan had walked to his closet and tugged open its doors.

But his long and tanned figures hovered there for a moment in mid-air, drifting over the material of Blake’s shirts and pants tucked neatly in between his own clothes. Realising now, just how much of a loss there was here in his life, without her.

She was the thing that kept him from that hell, that black hole he had been falling into for the past few years since Lucille’s death.

He needed her.

And he hoped, that somewhere, she needed him too.

Pulling out a fresh t-shirt and clean pair of grey pants, Negan pulled them on over his tired bones.

He needed sleep, he knew that, but that could wait.

All he wanted now was to be back downstairs with Blake.

He had shed his tears for the baby that had never been born...and he hoped that soon, she would too.

Then they could mourn their loss together. Grieve together. Heal together.

Fuck, Negan needed her.

He ran a hand over his tired eyes and down his stubbly chin.

His beard had certainly grown in length over the last few days and he reminded himself that he would need to shave soon. But that, like his bed, could wait.

He heaved on his boots, and shrugged his black jacket back onto his shoulders before heading, once more, for the door.
But he paused once again, one gloved hand on the door handle, the other hovering over Lucille, sitting on the side-table, waiting for him. But Negan peeled his fingers back and dropped his digits to his side once more, before exiting the room, leaving the barbed wire-covered bat behind.

He traipsed down the hallway, a yellow light blinking over his head as he went, and made for the staircase, feeling a sort-of relief wash over him at the loss of his trusted weapon now.

For he knew he didn't need her. Not now. Not today. For this was not the time for anger or cracking skulls. This was a time for something else completely...

But the tall, dark-haired man, had only made it down one flight of stairs before he stopped suddenly, frowning at a familiar noise that seemed to be drifting its way down the lengthy, and otherwise silent, hallway.

Negan parted his lips, hand on the railing as he turned his head to stare down the long corridor that led only to one place.

And before he could stop himself, as if ushered by some invisible force, he took a couple of steps slowly towards the sound, heading away from the stairs...away from Blake...and walking down the gloomy corridor instead.

Negan's face was set, passing an endless stream of empty rooms as he went.

He had kept this hallway empty, always having presumed it to be too much temptation otherwise if any of his men were housed here. But now he realised that this place, the Sanctuary, had barrels of unused space. Good space that a selfish Negan had never wanted to fill.

And why? Vanity? Pride? Fear of not being revered wholeheartedly?

Probably all of those things.

But having Blake made him now see everything differently.

It was as if a blindfold had been lifted from his eyes and everything was clear.

A future they could have in this place.

Negan's long legs moved instantly towards the sound, and before he knew it, he had reached a familiar door he had once got used to seeing on a regular basis, but these days very rarely frequented.

And so, giving the ajar door ahead of him a gentle shove open, he stepped silently into the large parlour.

The wives' room.

Well, their old room at least. For now, these days, their roles were defunct. But even so he let Frankie, Tanya and Michelle stay here. It was courteous, and as Blake had pointed out to him, this was the only home they knew.

He gazed around, his eyes searching for the source of the noise, before he finally found it...

For there, sitting on one of the low red sofas was a crying Mia, red in the face, being comforted by Frankie who was trying her best to calm her down, rubbing at her tiny back gently.

She looked like she had been crying for a long time, face red and blotchy, and her fists scrunched tightly at her sides.
"Noh!" Negan caught her wailing, sobbing hard. "I wann mai Bwakey! I m-mishh mai Bwakey!"

Between each word she let out a hard, chest-wracking sob that caused a lump to appear in Negan's throat.

Tanya and Michelle, who were standing near to the duo, stared suddenly up at Negan, noticing his presence for the first time.

He suddenly felt very self-conscious.

Shit. Could they tell he had been bawling like a fucking abby?

He hoped not.

But even so, he gave a gruff sniff, walking suddenly forwards and avoiding their gazes.

It all the commotion and the heartache and the loss that he and Blake had shared over the past three days, he had forgotten totally and utterly about the tiny girl.

He had been so wrapped up in himself and Blake, and what they had lost, he hadn't quite realised what they still had.

And that alone made his heart burst, and for him to feel more grateful now for the tiny girl than ever.

"Now what's all the fuckin' commotion about, pipsqueak?" he said in a loud, carrying voice arching his back with every syllable he spoke.

And almost immediately, as the women swung around to look at him, Mia halted in her tears, giving a sniff, then another and another, calming instantly.

"It Eggy!" she croaked suddenly bouncing up and down in her seat.

And eager to get at him, pouting hard, she clambered up onto her chubby little legs, wobbling unsteadily on the couch cushions.

But the little girl was at no risk of falling today. For within a second, Negan had closed the gap between him and the small girl, grasped her beneath her armpits and hauled her up into his strong arms with a groan.

Immediately the little girl's' sticky hands clasped around the stiff collar of his leather jacket and Negan couldn't help but bump his chin against her temple gently.

The kid had always just come as part and parcel with Blake and obviously the dark-haired man had always been able to see how much she adored the toddler with all her heart. And so, Negan had put up with her, tolerated her presence, or so he had thought...

But now, at this every moment, as Negan stared into her big round and teary eyes, he realised just what he felt about this tiny little girl.

Shit, she was his kid wasn't she?

And hell, he fuckin' loved her like she was his own flesh and blood.

And so Negan, turning away from the women now staring curiously at him, pressed a firm kiss to Mia's little mousy-haired head, tears pricking at his own eyes, as he held her close.
He need her. An' fuck, she needed them.

He pressed another silent kiss to her hairline, as the teeny girl gave a pout, lifting her sticky paw and pushing his stubbly cheek away.

"Noh, Eggy, that tickuls," she whined with a small giggle, easing his face away from hers.

And for the first time in three long days Negan's bearded lips twitched up into the smallest of grins as he gazed down at the toddler, looking so small in his leather-clad arms.

"That tickles, huh?" he said nuzzling his cheek against hers and causing her to let out a happy squeal, her hands clamping around his chin.

"Noh, Eggy, don'!" she cried, totally forgetting her tears as Negan relented a little, pulling back to marvel at her.

Mia was a big part of his life these days and it was only now that Negan realised just how much she had impacted things here at the Sanctuary. Just like Blake had.

Their routines had changed because of her. They had given her an entire room to herself. They had even found themselves sharing a bed with the little girl, which was something Negan had never thought he would allow.

And yet despite his complaints and his frustrations at times, there was no longer any point in denying that he cared for this damn kid as much as he would his own.

"We've had trouble getting her to settle. She hasn't slept well without you...o-or Blake. I think she's missing you both," said Tanya, her voice breaking through the pair's intimate moment, causing Negan to turn his shoulders to face his ex-wives who all stood behind him.

But the dark-haired woman's voice was a stark contrast to the way she had spoken to him a little over an hour ago back down in that hallway.

Shit, did they feel sorry for him? Was that it? Could they see that he had been crying?

But giving a frown, Negan offered them a dark look in response before looking back down to the girl, balanced against his chest.

"You been missin' Peaches?" he asked, his dark eyes roving across her chubby face, as her lips formed into a tiny pout.

She gave a sad little nod.

"Yeah, you an' me both, kid," Negan huffed, readjusting his grip on her and tugging her just a little closer to his firm torso.

He pursed his lips together and glanced back at the women behind him, but didn't say a word.

He knew what they probably thought of him, but right now his focus was not on the sympathy of others.

"Wher' Bwakey, Eggy?" came Mia's quiet little voice, as she pouted again, giving a small sniff.

But Negan could only give a hard internal sigh, allowing a harsh gulp to trail down his bearded throat.
He knew where Blake was physically...but emotionally he hadn't sensed her with him for days.

It was as though she had departed this world, cutting herself off from everyone.

Even him.

But Negan knew he had to change that and without another word to the women all standing meekly behind him, he pressed another lingering kiss to the top of Mia's brown head, mumbling a small-"C'mon, Beansprout, lets go see if we can fuckin' find her," and heading out of the parlour once more.

Mia seemed content with this of course, placing her paw to the back of his collar, twisting herself around to look at the direction he was walking in.

She gave her eyes a little rub with her tiny fist when they reached the staircase once more.

"Wher' Bwakey?" she asked again in a worried sounding voice.

Negan was used to Mia's endless barrage of repeated questions these days. But still, he had no idea how to answer this one.

"Well," he began, pressing his tongue to his lower back molars and letting out a long sigh. "Peaches, ain't been feelin' too great-

"Peechiz..." Mia mouthed back staring at Negan's bearded lips with an entranced interest as he spoke.

"That's right," said Negan blinking at her as he carried the toddler down the stairs, sliding his gloved hand down the railing as he went. "So we gotta make sure we take good fuckin' care of her, alright?"

Negan know that if their roles were reversed this would be exactly how Blake would handle things.

This was his chance to fucking step up. Handle things like a damn man. Hell, he was stronger than that, an' deep down he knew that Blake was too.

But she needed to find a way out of that abyss that she was sinking into.

And Negan knew, that if he was going to do that, he needed help…

Mia stared at him for a long moment, before finally curling her fingers around the collar of his t-shirt and resting her tiny head just beneath his chin, as they reached the bottom of the long staircase.

Negan turned the corner, passing a couple of young girls who stood back at once, looking a little startled and bowing their heads reverently. But Negan just ignored them.

Long gone were the days of him needing people to kneel for him.

If Blake had taught him anything in the months he had been here, it was that ruling was much more than people being fucking afraid of you. It was about kindness and love and warmth and all the fucking things that she was so fucking good at.

It was as though everything Negan had been lacking in his life, he had found in her.

She was the light to his darkness. And had showed him that the world didn't have to be cold and black anymore.
He let out a long breath of air through his nostrils, as Mia spoke again.

"Eggyyyyy. Wen ca' I see Bwakey?" she asked in a quiet voice, peering up at him.

But Negan didn't answer. For just ahead of him he could make out that familiar door...a gut-wrenching feeling overwhelming him.

So much loss and hurt was coursing through him. So much pain.

But Negan knew he needed to be fucking strong. He had to be

And so, reaching for the door handle and giving it a small twist he went inside.

It was mid-afternoon now and the sky had become no-brighter outside as the day had slid on, sending nothing but a cold, grey light cascading over the small medical room.

The tall Saviour's chocolate eyes immediately shifted over to the bed in the corner of the room, so desperately wanting to see her...Blake, sitting up, maybe eating, smiling back at him.

But his stomach lurched heavily when he saw that she hadn't moved since this morning, still lying there, staring at that damn wall, her body curled up beneath that stark, white sheet.

Shit. He realised now how small she looked compared with how she usually did. For Blake was tall, with long legs and long blonde hair, and hell, when she walked into a room everyone knew about it.

But today, if you had had no idea she was here and you walked into this room, you'd certainly miss her.

It was almost as though she had sunk into that bed, disappearing completely into the shadows that filled the cold room.

And for a moment, not even Mia seemed to realise that Blake was here, her big round eyes shifting this way and that as though wondering why Negan had brought her here.

"Peaches…" Negan tried again, his voice far hoarser than it had been a minute or two ago.

But there was still no response.

It was then that Mia finally spotted Blake, giving the tiniest of frowns as though confused as to why the woman she adored wasn't paying her any attention.

"Ish Bwakey schleepin?" she asked tilting her head curiously like a puppy.

She placed a finger to her mouth, staring up at Negan.

But Negan could only gulp, strolling slowly over to the bed, where Blake lay still and unmoving.

He could barely see her face now, covered in her mass of blonde hair.

Shit, why the fuck did he constantly feel like crying?

But he cleared his throat gently, coming to stop at the foot of the bed.

"Darlin' I got someone here who wants to see you," he said in a low voice, suddenly moving his hands so that he could drop Mia down onto the mattress.
The baby girl eased her hand around Negan's forearm, clutching on tightly and testing out the surface of the bed with her teeny sock-covered foot for a second, before she let go, toddling off up the bed to Blake.

"Bwakey, waik up!" she said with urgency in her little voice, clambering over Blake's legs.

But still Blake didn't move.

"Bwakeeey" Mia tried, coming to stop at Blake's shoulder, reaching out and giving it a small poke with her pudgy digits.

But still there was nothing.

"Bwakey," came Mia's bossy voice again, bending down and carefully lifting up a strand of Blake's long caramel hair, pressing her lips to her ear. "Wai you still schlleepin'? It day naw."

Yet there came no movement from Blake, disappointment overwhelming Negan. Shit, he had thought that this might've worked.

Mia let out the smallest of moody little huffs as she pulled back from the blonde woman, taking a tiny step back….

But the edge of the bed was obviously closer than Mia had been expecting...

And before Negan could do anything...his heart skipped a beat as he saw the tiny toddler wobble, losing her footing and toppling backwards off the bed.

Shit.

The floor below their feet was pure concrete, and Negan lunged forward, reacting far too slowly, and staring wide eyed in horror as the little girl fell backwards from the mattress.

But before she could go anywhere, there was sudden movement as Blake had reached out and grabbed the tiny girl around the middle, sitting up and pulling her quickly to her chest.

Negan breathed out hard, catching his breath as he watched in amazement, as the blonde woman buried her face in Mia's shoulder, holding her tightly to her.

Negan noticed Mia give a wriggle, before hugging Blake back, patting at her hair with sticky fingers.

And it was then that the toddler said something that neither adult had ever been expecting her to say...

"Mommy wake naw, yea?"

Mia gave another wriggle but didn't look even slightly swayed by what she had just uttered.

Blake slowly pulled back after what felt like an eternity, cupping Mia's cheek lovingly, staring in shock into her eyes with her own responsive green ones that were now welling with tears.

And with that, Negan allowed his lips to part in utter awe, as Blake let out a loud carrying sob, clutching her free hand to her mouth, before nodding hard.

"Yeah, baby girl, Mommy's awake now," she said pressing a kiss to Mia's forehead before hugging her tightly to her once more and closing her eyes tightly, tears slipping down her cheeks. "Mommy's awake."
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