

FATALE™

Number
Eighteen



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Chapter Four



THIS WAS TOO MUCH, DARCY THOUGHT. IT WAS FUCKING CRAZY... EVEN FOR THIS PLACE.

SHE WAS GOING TO SCREAM ANY SECOND... SHE JUST KNEW IT...

IT'S OKAY... IT'S GOING TO BE ALRIGHT...

HOW COULD THIS BE HAPPENING?

...CAON... GET HIS ANKLES...

FIRST JON AND LANCE COME HOME AND FIND JANE TOTALLY FREAKING OUT...

I'M SORRY, I'M SORRY... I'M SO SORRY...

TAKE IT EASY... WHAT HAPPENED? TALK TO ME...

I DIDN'T MEAN TO DO IT... I DON'T EVEN...

I DON'T KNOW WHAT I DID...

JANE, WHAT HAPPENED?!

HE... SKIP... HE TRIED TO RAPE ME...

WHAT?!

...AND NOW HE'S DEAD.

WHAT?

AND THEN EVEN AFTER THEY SAW WHAT SHE'D DONE TO POOR SKIP...

HOLY FUCKING SHIT...

...THEY ACTUALLY TOOK HER SIDE. ALL OF THEM DID.

THAT SICK SON OF A BITCH...

...WHAT THE HELL WAS HE THINKING...?

AND IT JUST KEPT GETTING WORSE AFTER THAT...

I'M CALLING THE POLICE.

NO! PUT THAT DOWN.

WHAT?

NO COPS.

THE LAST THING WE NEED RIGHT NOW IS A BUNCH OF COPS FOKING AROUND...

SKIP IS FUCKING DEAD, LANCE!

THIS IS WHAT YOU DO WHEN SOMEONE IS DEAD! YOU CALL 911!



NEXT THING SHE KNEW, THEY WERE DECIDING WHAT TO DO WITH THE BODY...

...I MEAN, HE **DROWNED**, RIGHT? SO WHY NOT DUMP HIM OFF CHET'S BOAT?

NO... WE'VE GOT THE SHOOT TOMORROW.

THEY FIND SKIP WASHED UP SOMEWHERE, THEY'RE GONNA BE ALL OVER US...

HOW LONG 'TIL THEY START WONDERING HOW WE PAID FOR THAT VIDEO?

THEN HE NEEDS TO JUST **DISAPPEAR**... SOMEHOW.

SHE'S **RIGHT**.

HELL, HIS MOM HASN'T CALLED SINCE THE LAST TIME HE WENT TO **REHAB**...

BE A LONG TIME BEFORE ANYONE EVEN **NOTICES** HE'S MISSING.

YEAH, JANE'S **RIGHT**...

SO THEY WRAPPED THEIR OWN DRUMMER IN PLASTIC AND DRAGGED HIM TO THE BASEMENT...

...UNTIL THEY COULD FIGURE OUT HOW TO DISPOSE OF HIM PROPERLY.

IT WAS LIKE THEY WEREN'T EVEN HUMAN ANYMORE. SHE JUST COULDN'T TAKE IT...

STOP!

THIS IS *CRAZY*. YOU CAN'T JUST DO THIS -- THAT'S OUR FRIEND!

DARCY, CHILL OUT... WE ALL WENT OVER THIS ALREADY...

NO! YOU CAN'T JUST LET HER GET AWAY WITH THIS!

SKIP WAS A FUCKING RAPIST. SO JUST SHUT THE FUCK UP AND STAY OUT OF IT.

BUT -

ENOUGH!

HAACK

THERE. I JUST *MUTILATED* THE BODY...

...YOU WANNA CALL THE COPS NOW AND EXPLAIN HOW WE AREN'T ALL ACCESSORIES?



AFTER THAT, IT WAS LIKE THE GUYS FINALLY REALIZED WHAT THEY'D ALL DONE...



LIKE IT SUDDENLY HIT THEM HOW GRIM THIS BUSINESS WAS...



THEY MUST'VE SAT THERE FOR HOURS, BEFORE TOM BROKE THE SILENCE...

Y'KNOW WHAT? FUCK THIS NOISE...



YOU GUYS WANT TO HEAR OUR NEW SONG?



JESUS, TOM, NOW ISN'T -


NO...



LET'S HEAR IT... PLEASE.

YEAH, SERIOUSLY... ANYTHING TO CHANGE THIS MOOD...






IT'S JUST A DEMO, OBVIOUSLY, AND IT'LL SOUND BETTER WHEN LANCE SINGS IT, BUT...



...HERE GOES.

CLIK




FROM THE FIRST NOTES, LANCE KNOWS IT'S THE BEST SONG TOM HAS EVER WRITTEN...



...BUT WHEN THE SINGING STARTS, IT GOES DEEPER.



THE LYRICS PAINT IMAGES THAT PEEL AWAY HIS WALLS, AND MEMORIES HE TRIES SO HARD TO FORGET...



...COME FLOODING BACK INTO HIS MIND.



HE FEELS EVERY
FEAR... EVERY
LOSS...



...EVERY
HEARTBREAK...



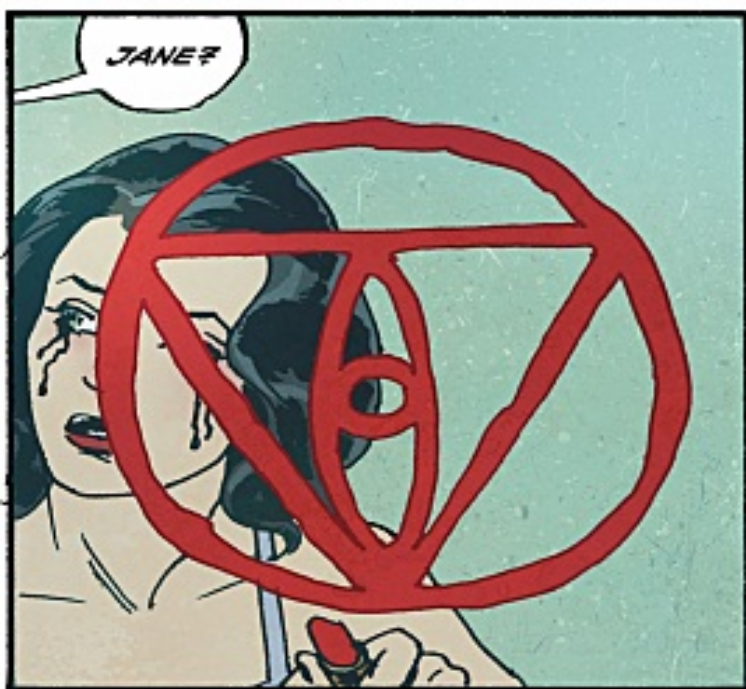
LIKE THE SONG HAS PULLED
HIM INTO A DREAM...



...AND HE'S NOT
THE ONLY ONE.







WHAT HAPPENED?

WHAT IS THAT, ON THE MIRROR?

I DON'T KNOW...

BUT...?

JUST HOLD ME, OKAY...

JUST HOLD ME.

SOMMERSET FEELS PAIN WHEN HE LOSES HER SCENT, LIKE A PIECE OF HIS MIND HAS BEEN TORN OUT.

DAMN IT. STOP THE CAR.

HE WANTS TO SCREAM, BUT HIS FEEBLE THROAT WON'T LET HIM.


SIR?

HOW CAN HE GET THIS CLOSE... ONLY FOR HER TO DISAPPEAR?

TURN AROUND... DOWNTOWN.

GO TO THE CLUB...

...I NEED FRESH BLOOD.



YOU SURE
YOU'RE UP
FOR THIS?

YES, LANCE...
PLEASE, STOP
WORRYING
ABOUT ME.

OKAY,
OKAY...

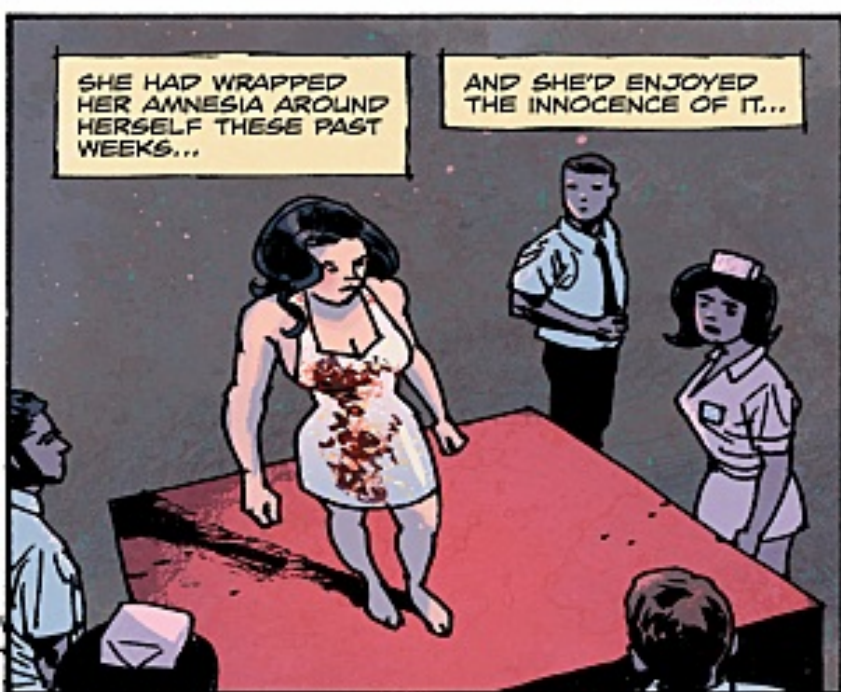
THE TRUTH
WAS, SHE WAS
ANYTHING BUT
READY...

SHE FELT SHAKY
AND FRAGILE...

AND SHE'D
HARDLY SLEPT
LAST NIGHT.

BUT SHE HOPED DOING
THIS, *PERFORMING*,
WOULD TAKE HER MIND
SOMEWHERE ELSE.

AWAY FROM THE STRANGE
FRAGMENTED IMAGES
THAT KEEP FLASHING
ACROSS HER MIND.



ROLLING... AND
ACTION!

SOON HISTORY AND MEMORY
WOULD TURN HER BLANK SLATE
BLUE... SHE WAS SURE OF THAT.



SO FOR NOW SHE
WOULD DANCE...



SHE WOULD LOSE
HERSELF IN THIS
MOMENT...



AND LET
GO...



AND BE
PURE...



AND THAT, OF COURSE,
WAS EXACTLY THE
WRONG THING TO DO...



FOR A SECOND, JON THINKS TOM MUST HAVE SLIPPED HIM SOME ACID...



THE CROWD WAS GOING FERAL... OUT OF CONTROL...



HE CAN FEEL IT INSIDE HIM, TOO, WHATEVER THIS IS.



IT WON'T LET HIM STOP PLAYING...



HE LOOKS AT JANE... AND SHE'S SHIMMERING...

LIKE THE BRIGHTEST STAR...



AND HER VIBRATIONS
ECHO ACROSS THE
NIGHT...

HEY, TAKE
IT *EASY*,
COP...

SHUT THE
FUCK UP,
YOU --

WOLF HEARS IT
LIKE A SILENT
SCREAM DEEP
IN HIS MIND...

NNNN...

AND HE'S
OVERWHELMED
WITH FEAR AND
HATE AND LUST
ALL AT ONCE...

HE DOESN'T EVEN
REALIZE HE'S KILLING
THE HOOKER UNTIL HIS
HANDS ARE BLOODY...

BUT HE JUST KEEPS
HITTING HER ANYWAY...

...KEEPING TIME TO
THE BEAT OF SOME
DISTANT MUSIC...

AND DOWN AT CLUB ORPHEUS, IN AN ALLEY OFF PIONEER SQUARE, SOMEONE ELSE HEARS IT, TOO...



IT HITS SOMMERSET LIKE A WAVE. LIKE POWER CRASHING AGAINST HIS SOUL.



LNNHH -- !

FOR A SECOND HE CAN ALMOST SEE AGAIN, FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE 1957...



HE CAN ALMOST SEE THE OBSEQUIOUS FOOLS HE'S SPENT THE LAST DAY INFLECTING PAIN ON...

THESE TOO-WILLING SACRIFICES TO HIS GODS...



BUT THEN THE TIDE RUSHES AWAY FROM HIM... AND HE CHASES IT...

...NO...



HE REACHES THROUGH THE ETHER WITH THE DARK TENDRILS OF HIS MIND...

...NOT THIS TIME...



...UNTIL HE CAN FEEL HER.



AND IT'S HIS COLD TOUCH
THAT AWAKENS HER...



...WHAT...?

...ALMOST LIKE SHE WAS
COMING OUT OF A TRANCE...



HOW DID...
WAIT...

OR SLEEPWALKING INTO HER
OWN WORST NIGHTMARES...



...OH
GOD...

JANE?
JANE, ARE
YOU -



STOP! GET
OUT OF MY
WAY!



SHE RUNS, LIKE SHE ALWAYS
HAS FROM HER PAST...

BUT THERE'S NO
STOPPING IT...

MEMORIES CASCADE
BEFORE HER...

BROKEN
PIECES...





...FALLING INTO PLACE...



THEIR SHARP EDGES CUTTING HER DEEP INSIDE...

JANE!



...UNTIL SHE KNOWS EXACTLY WHO SHE IS...



...AND WHAT SHE'S DONE.



To Be Continued

Discover the world of Brubaker and Phillips...





FATALE Number Eighteen Ed Brubaker Sean Phillips

Rated M / Mature