

Forbidden Red: Joshua Marwick

Heavy chains of silver glistened in the moonlight. Wind whispered at her through their gaps, telling her to rip them open, push the door open, fall inside. She shivered, bumps cascading down her, making her light, white sleeping gown catch on pale skin.

She wanted to, she knew she did. But everyone had told her no. Her father most of all. She ran a delicate finger across the ugly purple bruise spotting her face, remembering him. Skin blotchy red with anger. Spit flying from his mouth, spitting her face, getting in her wide, frightened eyes. She had only asked what was behind the door.

The door itself was a hard, solid wood. A layer of scarlet paint was flaking off, creating a Rorschach of red and brown, layers upon layers. In the patterns she saw first her father, his fist raised. Then she saw the fireplace of their manor, its flames crackling then roaring. Her cute rabbit, one ear flopping to the side uselessly, in its entirety smaller than her hand, torn apart and spattered across the carpet. She still remembered how hot its blood had been. She had crouched there, desperately trying to put the rabbit back together as its tiny guts slipped through her fingers. Her father's hound had watched, its teeth still dripping, head cocked, wondering what she was doing with its toy. She had almost forgotten about that memory. Almost.

In the shadow of her father's manor, she stood on the wet grass and finally extended a hand out towards the chained door. A wooden crack behind her made her flinch, but she refused to look back. She couldn't. Still, the presence behind her was stifling. Heavy with the weight of the past. Lip quivering, she kept her eyes fixed forward. Staring at the beautiful door with its heavy, silver chains. It was not allowed. It was forbidden. But everything else in her life had been black. All that was allowed was melancholy. A joyless descent to death. What was forbidden would be... pleasure. She felt a thrill as she stepped closer, her heartbeat loud in the quiet of night. Excitement flowed through her veins, an unknown warmth sinking deeper and deeper inside her. Her father had forbade her entry. But she wanted it. Needed it. And now, he could not stop her anymore. She reached forward with hands stained red and yanked at the chain.