

## The Fall to Freedom: Amy Hutton

The birds flutter from the trees with a squawk, surprised by the crack that echoes across the field to the forest where they once perched. Who knew the sound of breaking bones would be that loud.

I study the crumpled body of my grandfather, his eyes glassy and vacant, as I wait to see if he moves, tangled in the rose bushes he cared for so much. So much more than for me. When blood trickles from the corner of his mouth, dripping onto the snowy white petals below him, I know it's done, and I breathe freely for the first time in my sixteen years.

I lift my face to the sky and let the sun kiss my pale skin. I'm filled with warmth from the heat of the yellow ball bright against the wide blue I've rarely seen, and the power that sizzles hungrily beneath my skin. The power I now fully understand.

Until today I had no idea I could raise my grandfather into the air as if he weighed nothing, while he shrieked at me that I'm a monster like my mother, roaring that he would lock me up forever, and that I would die in the desolate mausoleum he called a home. I had no idea I could twist his body this way and that as he bayed out my name in pained fury. I had no idea I would enjoy the taste of his panic as I taunted him before letting him drop.

I laugh. I mean, I knew I could close doors, and move pens across a table, but I didn't know I could haul a human into the air using only my mind. Not until the moment rage boiled in my blood. When my grandfather finally admitted that he had my mother locked away and that he'd do the same to me. She killed herself in that asylum he put her in just because she was different. He killed her and cursed me to live with him. The real monster.

I take one last look at his inert body, a smile twitching on my lips. He would be furious at how many blooms he crushed in his fall. His precious roses. With a flick of my finger I slam closed the heavy wooden door to the house that was once my prison, and walk away, my truth forbidden no more.

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