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Will

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The tall dresser that held all our parents' most valuable possessions looming over me swaying slowly. As he felt the gentle wind brush against my hair, he knew it was going down, and he knew what would follow would be more painful and unpleasant then the impact he was about to feel as the dresser toppled over me.

"I'm catching up." Emma wasn't prepared for what she was about to see when she turned that corner. "Will, NO." the pain in her voice made me feel even worse "WATCH OUT!" He understood the deeper meaning behind these seemingly simple words.

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Emma

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"WATCH OUT!" He shrieked knowing from experience the world of pain Will was about to go through. THUMP!

"AHHHH, MY BAC- MY WHOLE BODY" She could feel his pain as she heard that timeless sound of the clink, by now she could just tell the difference of the sound from her parents' glass bottles, and the scarier sound of her dad's belt. This one being the thwip clink of that belt. Her parents thundered down the stairs, thump, thump, thump. She could smell the

nostalgic must of the cheapest wine her parents could find at the grocery store just reeking off of their tight clothes that had been too small on them for as long as Emma could remember.

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<center>**Will**</center>

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Will's ears were ringing from all the bangs and crashes of the old china and he thinks his Grandpa's ashes as well.

"Ugh" - he audibly gags at that, thought- at least he thinks it's audible. Looking at his sister, he sees that change in her face as he smells the must of wine. Ugh again- he hates that smell. All the bad things in his life happened with that smell around. But seeing that pain in his sister's face makes him hurt as much as he imagines she feels. But then a new emotion spreads across her face, it looks like she has an idea. Thich can't be good.

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<center>**Emma**</center>

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She couldn't stand seeing Will like this. She knew she had to do something, she knew that he didn't deserve what was about to come. After mere seconds that felt like hours she thought of it. She remembered her favorite book "The Hunger Games" she remembered the best scene… in her opinion. She was going to take the blame, she was going to volunteer as tribute, save her Primrose, be Katniss. She could feel the grin carve its way slowly across her face.

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<center>**Will**</center>

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That look in her eyes and the grin meant something, he wanted to stop her from whatever she was about to do but couldn't. So he watched. He could hear now and wished he didn't.

"What the FUCK" his mom slurred "is GOING ON HERE"

"You heard your mom, SPEAK UP" his dad sounded even angrier and probably drunker than his mom. Barely making the words out. If he had the guts to, he would've told him to speak up as well.

"It was me," Emma blurted out "I pushed Will into the shelf." FUCK, that's what Emma's smile was about, she was taking the blame. She was "volunteering as tribute" of course that's what she'd do. She loved that book. His parent's opened their mouths, but before they could speak.

"Just do it, okay. I'm tired of the build up." Emma was standing up for herself now "Just fucking skip the yelling and arguing and beat me. We both know that's where this is going." He guesses his parents took Emma's words to heart because after the blink of an eye all three were gone.

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Emma

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She was used to the beating. The belt slapping across her back sending the pain across her spine, stinging and the dry aftertaste of soreness after. But this time it was different, it was worse. They just kept going and going, whip after whip, the calm of the cold touch of the belt buckle before the inevitable storm of the crack and the shockwaves traveling through her back. As it kept going and going she thought maybe she should've let Will take the blame, NO no he didn't deserve it. He's younger, he's Primrose, he's weak and not ready for what's to come, but

she was Katniss she could take it, she knew she could. By the time she finished those thoughts. It was over, without another word they left her there bleeding. The furs of the fuzzy blue carpet soft against her knees, the red spreading through, giving a dark contrast to the comfy blue. That god-awful must staying in the room with her. This was the worst one, she thought she could take it but she couldn't, maybe she wasn't Katniss. Maybe she didn't have to be- maybe she could leave. Not just maybe, she knew what to do, pushing her arms into the carpet no longer feeling so warm and fuzzy, but now cold and wet. That feeling she couldn't stand and the taste she despised even more.

<p align="center">*******</p>

<p align="center">**Will**</p>

<p align="center">*******</p>

Seeing Emma come out of that room, her shirt a different shade of, and her hair a mess, her eyes spaced out. It's like she was staring into space.

"Emma-" He didn't know what to say "Emma I'm sorry- I didn't mean to, I just I." Why'd she have to be the brave one? He can take care of myself, she didn't need to stand up for me all the time, he could've taken it. Of course he couldn't tell her that. He didn't want to make her feel bad for standing up for him.

"Emma?" He looked at her and saw nothing. She was completely out. He could smell the salty red whiff off of her and he couldn't do anything about it. She started to head towards the stairs, each step pulling that string that connected them, closer, and closer to snapping. But he couldn't do anything, so he stayed. He watched it snap as her face disappeared up the stairs, feeling a single wet streak fly down his face slowly, dropping off his chin and in the quiet he

could almost hear it drop on the hardwood floor. He wondered if Emma could be feeling the same way, that made the tears flow faster as he dropped to the ground. Helpless, and alone.

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Emma

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Emma couldn't describe how she felt past the two big words that she has felt her whole life, helpless, and alone. But that was unfair to say, Will had always been by her side, so she wasn't alone. But helpless was how she'd always felt. She sat and thought, letting her eyes wander until she noticed something, the book, "The Hunger Games" she slid her closet door open hearing the creak and scratch as her door made its way open. She stared at her rainbow of black and gray tattered t-shirts, and ripped pants. Grabbing them each with the rage and blood flowing to her head. She ran to her bathroom not able to stay in this decrepit hell hole any longer. She swiped around the bathroom then stepped out of the bathroom to look down into two glimmering blue beads staring right back at her. Fuck-

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Will

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"Emma?" He was wondering what she could be doing with those toiletries "What are you doing?"

He could tell something was going on but he didn't wanna say anything once he saw her bloodshot eyes and the wet marks on the wrinkled collar of her shirt.

"Okay" he started to say "I-I guess goodnight then?"

"Goodnight Will" Emma said, almost too cheery.

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Emma

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Emma brushed past Will to get to her room as quickly as she could as she heard the burdened moans and groans of her undoubtedly just getting up after the "nap" they took every time after they beat her or Will. She got to her room and picked up her light bag. She stumbled to her window. She reached out to open the window. The cold shock and disgusting texture of the unused window hit her like a train but she powered through, and slowly opened the door hearing each creak and squeak as if they were bombs going off in her wake. She got the window and screen open. The frigid air, while making her shiver and giving her goosebumps from her ankle to wrists felt almost like a relief. But that relief didn't last long as she remembered all the times her and Will had snuck out that window to play on the roof. She remembered all the fun they had even when it ended in one of them getting the belt. The guilt wrapped around her like a snake making it hard to breathe. She knew it was risky but she loved him too much to leave him behind knowing that he would suffer the consequences of her departure.

"Will!" she said in a volume that she'd mastered over the years, so as to let Will hear her but their parents were none the wiser.