

## Killing You

I wake up to voices downstairs, I wipe the sleep away from my eyes and get out of bed.

I go to the bathroom to brush my teeth and wash my face, I leave the bathroom and head out of my bedroom.

I walk downstairs to find my mom sitting on the couch with my father.

"Veronica," He stands up and comes to hug me.

"Father," I step away from him before he could hug me. "What is he doing here,"

"Well, he wanted to be here with his family for Christmas," My mom explains.

"H-how are you?" He asks.

"Oh? You mean how am I a er you just bailed on mom and I? How am I a er you completely forgot about my birthday? We needed you father! You will not believe the past few months we went through a er you le us! It was mine and mom's worst months together! And you weren't there for us!" I cry.

"Honey, it's Christmas, we don't have to talk about this today," My mom interferes.

I just glare at my father but walk over to mom and sit down with her.

Mom hands me some gi s from under the tree, and she keeps some on her lap with her name on it.

"Roni, here's your gi s, as well as your birthday gi ," My father looks at me.

I just look at him and take the gi s.

"I'm sorry I didn't call on your birthday, I was just so busy--"

"So? Call the next day, or how about send me a quick text letting me know you remembered your own daughters birthday," I spit at him.

"Veronica Marie Banks, I am still your father, do not give me that attitude," My father scolds.

"Mom are you hearing this? Father, you have not been in my life for a while now, you were not here for me when I went through the toughest time, you weren't there for the women you swore to love and cherish when you married her, you have no right to tell mewhat to do," I give him so much attitude.

I don't let him get anything else out, I just storm up to my room.

I let tears slip down my cheeks. Why did he have to just pop back up into mine and mom's life?

I wipe my face and put on my jacket and boots. I grab the present and climb out of my window and walk over to Ben's house.

I knock on the front door and wait.

"Veronica! Hi dear," Ben's mom opens the door.

"Hi Ms. Bruce," I smile, hugging her.

"Merry Christmas," She lets me in.

She walks me to the living room where Ben, his father, and sisters are sitting around the fireplace.

"Ah Veronica, what a lovely surprise," Ben's father greets me.

"Hey," I smile.

"Come join us! We're just having breakfast around the fire, would you like something?" He asks kindly.

"No thank you," I go and sit down next to Ben.

"What's up?" Ben asks.

"Nothing," I tell him.

He gives me this look but he leaves it.

I watch as Ben's family opens presents and I sit around as they have di erent conversations. I'm not in the mood for a conversation, I just wanted to see Ben, he always makes me feel a whole lot better.

I kind of just observed Ben, I watched as he laughed and smiled with his family. It's just something about being around his family and watching them get along that I feel happy about. I don't know, I can't explain it.

A er everyone finished eating and the wrapping paper mess was cleaned up, Ben took me up to his room.

I walk in and look around his room, he closes the door and looks at me.

"Now that everyone isn't around, what's actually up?" Ben asks me.

"What do you mean?" I act dumb.

"Why were you crying?" He walks up to me, hugging me.

"Is it that obvious?" I ask him.

"Not to other people, but I could tell," Ben sits us down on his bed.

"It's just my dad decided to show up," I tell him.

"For what?"

"I guess he wanted to spend Christmas with us, but he can't just pop back up into my life like that, just to spend one day with us then leave again,"

"Awh Roni, I wish I knew what to say, but just know things will play out how they're suppose to, maybe your father might not leave, and maybe he will, but whatever he chooses to do, I know you'll be strong enough to get deal with it," Ben tells me.

"Thank you Ben, you always know what to say," I hug him tight.  
"Anyway, here's your present,"

I hand him the gi , he gets up and goes into his closet, he hands me a gi bag.

I open the bag and pull some stu out. He got me some shirts and some pants, he got me a cute hat, some bath bombs, a charm for the bracelet Cindy gave me, face masks, and candy.

"Awh Ben, I love it, thank you," I peck his lips.

Ben opens his present. I got him Timberland boots, a cute shirt (cute in my opinion), a new wallet, a game for his Xbox, and some CD's that I know he likes.

"Awh baby, I love it,"

"I'm glad you do," I smile.

"So do you want to go to James' Christmas party tonight?" Ben asks.

"What time?"

"I think it's at eight, then we leave whenever we want," Ben tells me.

"Yeah, that'd be fun,"

Ben and I hang out for the rest of the day, but now I'm home getting ready for the party.

I slide the dress on my body and apply my make up on, I brush through my hair and spritz a bit of perfume on me.

I get my heels on and I'm ready. I hear my mom call my name. I sigh.

I walk downstairs and into the dining room where the voices were coming from, to find mom and my father sitting around, food on their plates, and an extra spot.

"Where are you going dressed like that?" My father asks.

"Does it matter?" I sassily speak.

"Come sit," Mom tells me.

I sit down in the empty spot and look at them.

"So, I must confess something Roni," My mom begins, "I've been talking to your father for a while now, and he's decided that he would like to come home,"

"What," I stand up. "You're letting a man come back into this house?! The same man who bailed on us when things got rough?!"

"Please Veronica sit down," My father stays calm.

I just close my mouth and sit.

"I will admit, your father and I do have some stu to deal with and fix between us, but, he is willing to try for this family again, as long as you are willing to try," Mom speaks.

"Roni, I want to be in your guys' lives again, I want to hear all about the past few months, I want to make it up to you guys, I want prove that I'm worthy for you two beautiful women," My father tells me sincerely. "And I'm not saying that it's gonna become how it was before just like that, but me coming home is a start,"

"Give me time to think," I tell them.

We hear the doorbell ring, I go and open the door to see Ben.

"Hey babe," I kiss him.

I don't want my father to meet Ben, the last thing he heard of Ben was before him and I get to know each other, when Ben was trying to get me to drink for the first time. Though I never told him that Ben was trying to get me to drink, I was just saying that Ben was annoying me and he was di erent from how I was.

"Who's at the door Veronica?" My father comes to the door.

"Um, father, this is Ben, my boyfriend," I wrap my arm around Ben's bicep.

"Hi, nice to meet you Mr. Banks," Ben holds his hand out to shake my fathers hand.

"Aren't you the one who pushed my daughter into drinking?" My father gives him a glare.

"How do you know about that?" I ask him, I did not tell him.

I look at my mom, she just looks away.

"Unbelievable," I spit. "what else did you tell him huh? How I drank and partied, how I didn't go to school, almost got expelled? Oh! How about the fact that I slept around?! Bet you couldn't wait to tell him, since you told him about Ben,"

"That's it young lady, you're not going out," My father spits.

"Whatever," I laugh at him.

I pull Ben out of the house as I slam the door.

"Well that was something," Ben says.

"Yeah, you wouldn't believe," I take a deep breath.

Does my father really think he can just come back into our lives like nothing happened? Like everything is good between us? I could feel the tension.

Hah! Does he really think he can boss me around?

I don't know how I feel about my father coming home.

Ben drives us to James' house, we could hear music playing from outside.

"Whoa," I say as I see a lot of people.

We enter the house.

"I need a drink," I tell Ben.

Ben takes my hand and guides me through the house.

We get to the alcohol table and I grab the bottle of vodka.

I look at the cups and sigh.

"Fuck it," I mumble and begin to chug the bottle.

"Whoa wait Roni, you need to slow down," Ben takes the bottle from me.

"Come on, this is my first party in a while, please let me have some fun and forget about my father for a while," I beg Ben.

"Just—Go easy on the booze, okay?" Ben gives me this look.

"Okay I will! Love you," I kiss him and take the bottle from him.

The rest of the night was a blur.