

His heartbeat slowed down at the touch of her finger on his chest, as if the mere connection of their skin calmed down every nerve in his body. Sam knew this. She knew the power she held over James. She knew that she could make goosebumps spread over his skin just by a glance in his direction. She knew that flirtatious touches made his heartbeat faster than ever before. Most importantly though, she knew that laying her head on his chest would calm him down and within seconds his heart could be back at a normal pace, like she wasn't even there.

James thought that Sam was the most beautiful human to ever exist, she was the perfect combination of all things good. Often, he joked about how she wasn't meant for him, as if he was only getting a taste of the good life before everything came tumbling down and she left him for something better. Quickly into the relationship he nicknamed her Sample, because nobody like him could ever deserve her. She was a taster, a free sample of the richest, most elegant thing in the world and he was simply a poor beggar searching for a glimpse of the good life.

The sun pierced through the crack in the curtains, disturbing the peace. Sam lifted her head and observed her sleeping spouse, every inch of his flawless skin being kissed by the golden rays shining through the room. He was gorgeous, she never noticed this before. She never tried to. He was an endeavour for her, a mission she had to complete in order to understand herself more.

After a few minutes of ensuring he was in a deep enough sleep, she made sure his body lay flat against the bed and gathered extra bedsheets from the linen closet. Three deep red sheets lay there waiting for her just as she had set them out to be. Sighing in relief as if she had expected them to run away from the guilt of what those sheets were soon to be an accomplice to.

Sam's mind started reeling with unwanted thoughts while she was unfolding the sheets. She felt something she hadn't felt since she was a child; guilt. Sam's mum had abused that feeling from her, yelled and hit her until there was no feeling left to piece together. Until the small child was left numb and avoidant. Soon enough Sam noticed that just because she struggled to feel, she could still make others feel things. Naturally, she started with joy, seeing how happy she could make people was almost contagious for the young girl. It became addictive, quickly. And just like all addicts, Sam moved onto something stronger.

Pain is powerful, a potent form of emotion drenched in hatred and loathing. Despite that, pain is the greatest feeling a human can express. It comes out in the most unique forms; tears, screaming, arguing, and the most important of them all – violence. There's no passion quite like pain, nothing will ever compare to being driven to murder because someone couldn't care for you how they should have. Sam can't care for others because she was never shown how. She was shown how to hurt others, so she does that instead. It's not her fault... is it?

James has not moved or made a sound in the past ten minutes. Sam must do it now, no going back. With a face like stone, she picks up the bed cushions that had been hurriedly thrown to the ground and walks towards his side of the bed. Clutching the cushion like a lifeline, Sam can't find it in her to press the pillow to his face. No matter how hard she tries, the moment she gets close enough she retracts herself. Then she remembers how others hurt her when she was younger. Nobody felt remorse for her, why should she feel it for them?

With full force she shoves the cushion onto his face, leaving him with no room to breathe. Suffocating the beauty from his body. She quickly heats up from the strength she's using. Soon she feels as though she is the one suffocating, everything in her body shutting down as her mind closes in on her. Nothing running through her mind. Except his voice, as though she could hear him talking to her.

*“Free Sample, wake up. Free Sample.”*

With one heavy gasp Sam shoots up, eyes wide open like a petrified cat. And there he is; James in the flesh, healthy and alive. Confusion washes over Sam, drowning her with insanity.

“I killed you,” she states as if it’s the most obvious thing in the world.

“I can assure you did not,” James chuckles. “I have fresh new sheets for you. I managed to bribe nurse Jane for a free sample of her new cakes since you’ve been on your best behaviour recently.”

That’s when she noticed the clothing he was wearing – scrubs. Sam finally looked around the room, uncertainty streaming through her veins. Red sheets lay beneath her, the same ones she was going to use to hide his body. The room was lit dimly by blocks of light in the ceiling and smelt of old medicine and dried urine.

“Where am I?” she finally asked, the question burning her tongue as it slid from her lips. James sat down beside her as if he had done this a million times before.

“You are in the hospital, where you live, being treated for mental illness. I am your Nurse, James.”

That’s when it clicks. She had made it all up, everything she had done was in her head. She hadn’t killed him; he wasn’t even her boyfriend. She should be relieved. But she isn’t. Sam liked the idea of a life with James, but to him she was some ill girl he looked after. That singular thought sent her spiralling into a world of darkness.

Sam hadn’t killed James. Not yet.