



# PUNISHMENT

Your life style determines your death style

'This must be it then...' Sylvia looked around the grey, dirty and dusty corridor at all of the other people screaming and crying in despair. They were all chained up to the wall so tightly; it felt as though the metal shackles were cutting off blood supply to their hands. Sylvia jumped at the sudden psychotic screams from a girl at the end of the corridor. She sounded deranged; like she was a severely mentally ill patient that escaped an asylum. She violently began hitting her head off of the concrete wall, chipping it and causing blood to gush out of her skull onto someone else's face, although they didn't seem to care. Four more guards dressed in thick leather robes began restraining her, finally throwing her into a portal. The portal closed and she was gone. We were definitely never going to see her again.

The corridor where everyone was chained up was a punishment area for immortals who had committed a serious crime, be it murder, arson, you name it. It was like a purgatory of sorts. Your punishment was usually based on a skill you had, for example a swimmer would be drowned, or a stunt driver got decapitated in a car crash, the list went on. Sylvia could feel her heart picking up pace and coming up through her throat as the portal in front of her activated. She was going to be drowned, it was obvious. She had spent her entire life swimming or in water, she had mastered the sport. She would win all races and/or any tournaments. Until one day of course, someone challenged her to swim all around the globe and Sylvia blinded by her biggest flaw, her own narcissism, was certain she would win, but she was wrong. Her opponent won and out of pure disgust, competitiveness and anger she violently smashed her opponent's head into the ground, knocking them out and eventually killing them. That's what landed her here in this 'Entrance mat to hell' as she called it.

Many young immortals are told terrifying things about this place and Sylvia always thought that it was only to scare them not to commit crimes, but of course that was proven wrong when she first arrived here. Not even the actual punishment you receive, but the waiting in the hallway beforehand is also scarring. Just a few minutes in here listening to screaming and crying

would make someone uneasy and possibly paranoid for the rest of their life (albeit a few minutes) and the smallest whiff of dust and putrid rotting corpses from those who couldn't stand the thought of the punishment they'll receive would make a person gag. The guards didn't even bother removing the bodies. The corridor itself was just... dull. Grey darkness was everywhere and the ceiling was missing in some places, enabling you to see into the red and orange sky. It wasn't the red and orange sky like a beautiful sunset on a summer's day mind you; rather the atmosphere was consumed by this bloody shade, staying so forever.

Sylvia was snapped out of her daydream by the strong grip of one of the guards. 'Who would even willingly work here?' she thought to herself, as the chains on her wrists became undone and three more guards grabbed her by the arms, firmly placing her in front of the portal. Sylvia didn't even bother to struggle to get free. She didn't know where this corridor even was and how to escape it, or even get back home for that matter. If she did somehow manage to make it home, she'd just be sent straight back here, with a possibly worse punishment. She slowly looked up wearing a dull and empty expression on her face trying her best to keep cool. She could feel a drop of sweat trickle down her forehead, her breathing increasing rapidly and her heart pounding even more than before. She thought to herself, 'This is it...' The guards started counting down from three... two... one... The guards violently threw Sylvia into the portal.

All Sylvia could hear was silence. Pure, unnerving silence. She couldn't open her eyes and she felt some kind of softness at her fingertips, like all her senses had been switched off. She could still feel her own presence and body, nothing else. After a few seconds, Sylvia got startled as she finally regained control over herself. She crashed down to the floor, her face and body violently hitting the ground. She cringed at the impact and got up slowly, still aching from it. She rubbed her face slowly, making sure she didn't bleed out, and sure enough she didn't. She got to her feet and looked around. She seemed to be inside a big maze. 'Fantastic' she thought. Reluctantly, she heaved herself around the maze, hitting dead ends and

finding herself back where she had been. She scoffed and thought ‘What kind of a punishment is this supposed to be?’ Sylvia was definitely not patient in the slightest and was not willing to go on much longer.

As much as she hated to admit, this maze seemed somewhat uncanny to her. She felt as if she wasn’t along there, or that something was supposed to happen. All she could see was whiteness everywhere. It was a nice change to the disgusting, dirty grey corridor she was in earlier and she did really appreciate the fact that she could no longer hear those absolutely horrifying screams from earlier. All she could hear now was her own breathing and echoed footsteps. The maze smelled like chlorine, the kind you would smell at a pool. The walls felt smooth, nearly flawless, like polished marble.

As she was wandering around the maze, she got to another room. It was much different than the rest of the maze. The walls were tiled in different shades of blue and the smell of chlorine increased significantly. The room, she estimated, was approximately the size of a football stadium. Suddenly, the corridor she came through loudly slammed shut. At that moment Sylvia knew that she had reached the centre of the maze. It was obvious she was supposed to end up here. She could feel the adrenaline pumping through her bloodstream again. All she was waiting for was her certain death. *Plop.* ‘Huh?’

She looked down at her feet and noticed a small drop of water fall to the ground. She also noticed a tiny hole in the ceiling. It was made on purpose, there’s no way a hole could be so perfectly round. Sylvia paced around the room aimlessly, all while more drops of water started falling from the ceiling. She noticed a piece of paper on the floor, picked it up and started reading it. It was quite difficult to make out what was written because of the handwriting, but she did what she could.

*How to torture immortals. Method #23, drowning. This method makes use of not only water, but also an individual’s patience.*

Sylvia trembled. 'Why would they want me to know how I'm going to be tortured?' She repressed that thought and continued reading.

*Trap them in a large room, with a silo above it. Cut out a small hole on the ceiling of the bottom room. A single drop of water will fall through that hole exactly every minute. The silo will be filled after the subject enters the room. The set up will weakly resemble an hourglass.*

Sylvia looked up at the hole in the ceiling and then the few drops that have accumulated on the floor. Yep. This was meant for her.

*They'll be forced to wait a long time for the room to fill up. They might enjoy swimming for a short while, but will eventually get sick of it. Once the time passes and the room fills up, the water will corrupt their lungs and all they're going to feel is the pain of drowning. Forever.*

Sylvia's eyes widened and her heart (or whatever remained) sank through her chest as she took another look at the ceiling and the slowly expanding puddle.

'This is my end'