**Seizure 18.12**

I had to give them credit, they had a good plan, driving in an unmarked white van into the city. I’m sure it was unintentional, but, doing so, I couldn’t pick them out with Power Sight, the glass and metal shielding them from my ability. They were also careful, driving around every fenced off section with care, but with a hesitancy that told me they hadn’t known they were there.

The problem came from the fact that they were the *only* car moving in that part of the city.

There was movement, the repetitive motions of some of the Anomalies, but, this being the Green Zone, it was nothing that large. Enough to catch the eye if you weren’t used to them, yes, but I’d *personally* cleared at close to half of this area, and I was used to them.

Flying high above them, out of the sight lines of the van, I checked the perimeter fence around the outside edge of the city, Brix’s power letting me zero in on the feeling of *wrongness* that was their entrance point. Sure enough, they’d transformed a section of the crimson oak latticework to dust, unblocking the street, and, from the tire tracks in the grey pile, driven right in. The fact that they hadn’t *put it back* annoyed me, but I’d ringed off the outer edge of the city, not because I was that worried about threats from the Green Zone leaving, but as a last bit of insurance just in case.

Tracking them back, they definitely knew their destination, that being the large hemisphere of steel that encompassed the warehouse from which the Stasis Crystals grew, being before we’d perfected the Crimson Oak I’d started using afterwards. Nick was nearby, inside the building across the street from their likely arrival point, calmly waiting.

We hadn’t talked much, only that I was going to stop them, and if it seemed like they’d run, or fight, he was to jump in and make sure they *didn’t get away*.

He was nice, almost gregarious, but there was a hint of hardness to him that made me just that little bit uneasy.

Regardless, I followed them at a distance, tracking them through the city, until, right on time, they pulled up to the edge of the dome. The doors of the van opened, and all four got out, giving me a look at their powers.

Riding shotgun was a woman in silver spandex, had **Shield Creation**, and was almost certainly ‘Shieldwall’. Looking at her, it wasn’t some special Tinker-material, or even subtly armored, the woman just was wearing a spandex body-stocking, fashionably sturdy boots, a utility-belt, and little else. She even had a tiny little domino mask, half-hidden by her black hair. An *actual* domino mask.

As I Saw her power, I supposed she assumed she might need more, the report Quinn had given me of her power was correct, able to create metallic shields within fifty feet of herself. The general material, shape, and size was unfortunately hard-coded, but she could tweak it a *little,* and, more than that, she could make a *lot* of them, and control them when she did. As soon as she got out, she set up a barrier wall lacrosse both ends of the street, though she did need to walk a little away from the truck.

*Line of sight,* I realized, not able to pick out the particulars like that just from glancing, the Flames of her power just a deluge of unsorted information, only the very core standing out clearly.

The driver was a woman in red and yellow, wearing not only a utility belt, but cargo pants and a flak jacket that was covered with pockets, the girl almost clicking as she jumped out of the car and looked around, calling, “Res, you’re up.”

The woman’s **Ignition Touch** was, again, exactly what it sounded like. She could ‘charge’ anything she touched and, at her will, cause its temperature to spike. Looking deeper into it, there didn’t seem to be a range limit, and she could *shape* the energy, causing it to heat up in specific powers. Not only could she likely create ersatz frag grenades via temperature differentials, but it was yet another power that could have tremendous earning potential, allowing her to spot-weld at will and cut through anything by melting it, in whatever way she wanted to.

*And she was using it to rob me.*

The back doors had already opened, and a large man, again in Spandex, this set blue with a yellow ripple pattern, got out, carrying a crate. He was decently muscled, by no means as well as Herb or I, but easily handled the metal crates which had been sitting inside the Van. “I know, I know,” he grumbled good naturedly, as I saw the Flames of **Fracture Touch** burn around him. His power was similar to the drivers, *very* similar to the driver’s, in a way that made me frown a little.

Whereas the fire girl, whose name I couldn’t remember, made something melt, this man could make it *break,* with an almost identical mechanic that used sound instead of heat, though with a shorter time-limit of only an hour or so, as opposed to Ignition’s twenty-four hour-ish limit. He also had a pretty strong standard Brute package on top of it, though, looking at **Ignition Touch**, she had one as well, at a lesser level. It was only when the side door operated, and the armored form of their last member clambered out, that I started to understand.

The woman, in a skintight suit of armor, boob-plate and all, was *not* a Tinker. Instead, she burned with the Flames of **Transmutation Touch**, which let her shift one material to another, with some control of what she shifted, as long as it remained within ten feet of her. She, too, got a Brute package on the same level as Ignition, though, Seeing her power more deeply, there was also a bit of added thermal resistance, a resistance that Fracture shared, while Ignition was outright immune to heat. Also, just like the other two, she could delay the changes, though.

Looking at their powers, while Shield was unique, the other three seemed like three friends, all given the same assignment, had done the *exact same thing* only to tweak their individual projects at the very last minute so they were ‘technically’ different. In their outward, phenotypic expression they were very different, but, looking under the hood, their ‘genotype’ was almost identical.

*Is this. . a Cluster Trigger?* I wondered, having heard of them, but never having come across any, at least not with time to study them. However, “Their Tinker isn’t a Tinker,” I quietly spoke into the comms. “She’s a Striker, pretending to be a Tinker.”

I could respect the tactic, having done a variant of it myself, if on a larger scale. If she pretended she could only use her power with the use of tech, then if someone tried to jump her, or captured her, they’d think her disarmed if they took her gear.

*“Got it,”* Nick replied. “How much are we going to let them take before we go?”

Looking back down, Transmutation had walked up to the dome and placed her hands on it, the ‘lights’ on her gauntlets flashing as I watched her transmute them to do so, before, after several seconds, she stepped back and clapped her hands together, the Flames of her power reaching out to the embers left in the metal, causing a doorway-shipped section to turn to dust.

“Once they’d grabbed a few,” I replied, dropping down to a rooftop that none of the four were looking towards, and grabbing a handful of insects to move into position as my eyes.

Inside, the warehouse sat in what *should’ve* been darkness, but the cyan glow of the crystals from within the building looking like something from a horror game, as if to tell any who looked upon it ‘Arcane/Spiritual nastiness, do not enter!’

So, after understandably pausing, the four entered. Part of me wanted to seal them in, mummy’s tomb style, but not only did they have the powers to break right out, what they hadn’t done wasn’t *that* bad. If they fought me, their lives were forfeit, but they were *ostensibly* ‘heroes’, though this world’s standards were insulting for that title.

Instead, as all four entered, I flew over and picked up their truck, depositing it several streets away, as I soundlessly took my seat on a platform of air over the dome and waited, pulling in the free-standing swarms from every direction.

“Are you sure about this?” Shield said, carrying the crates they’d unloaded on floating platforms made from her power, looking around nervously.

Transmutation scoffed, “Come on, you saw the reports. This area’s safe, and you just need to be careful handling them. We do this, we’re set for *years*.”

“I-I know,” Shield quickly agreed, “it’s just. . .nevermind.”

The group walked further in, Ignition pulling out a thin metal rod which started to glow yellow-white with heat in her hand, serving as a torch. Reaching the metal door loading-bay doors, which I’d locked with a loop of metal, Fracture squatted down, Hmm’d, and tapped the permenant lock.

Listening in, I repressed the urge to shut down his power by negating it with Acoustokinesis, letting the tight packet of sound go off, shattering the metal into two halves. I had to admire the skill it took, as there was no shrapnel whatsoever, though that might’ve just been the Shard’s handiwork.

Regardless, they opened it, lifting up the loading doors, and revealing the Stasis Crystals proper.

*“Holy Fuck,*” the man swore, while Ignition started to cackle in joy.

“H-how much were we being paid?” Shield asked.

The formation had grown, though not by much, only about ten percent in the month or so since I’d sealed it, but it was still an impressive sight, and one absolutely *deadly* if anyone got too close.

“Two grand per *ounce*,” Transmutation answered. “And *this* won’t get the feds on us, since *they’re the ones buying it*.”

Fracture shook his head. “Still can’t believe you thought turning things to gold was a good idea, Kate.”

“Shut up, Jake,” the ‘Tinker’ snapped. “I have a fuckin’ Midas Touch! It should’ve worked! How the fuck are the taxes and fees *more than the price of fucking gold!*”

*Ah, rookie mistake,* I thought, nodding in sympathy. There was a *reason* we sold to Criminals, after all. Power created materials had to be individually ‘studied’ to make sure they were what you said they were, and wouldn’t disappear, explode, mind-control everyone around them, etc. A large enough corporation could more than make a profit, but the fees for trying to ‘distribute’ the materials *without* being licensed were *steep.*

Really, it was another of Cauldron’s ‘stir-the-pot’, ‘status-quo-is-god’ policies, and led to the situation underneath me. If they had come to me, I’d’ve offered them a job, *almost* no questions asked. However, they *hadn’t,* nor was this a poorly-though-out display, they were thieves, messing with something they didn’t understand, and who very easily could’ve set off something *far* worse.

Ignition got her laughter under control, shaking her head. “Damn, there must be, what, a hundred pounds of that stuff here!”

“Try a hundred *thousand,*” Fracture corrected, glancing back to the entrance. “It’s too much. And it’s too easy. We should grab a couple pounds, ten at most, and leave. ”

He was right, that would’ve been the smart move. Hell, if I hadn’t been warned, and they *cleaned up after themselves,* I might not’ve even noticed. In the scheme of things, what they wanted wasn’t that much, but it was the *principle* of the thing. That and the fact that, if they talked, *and someone would,* we’d be hip-deep in bandits and thieves before we could get a solid security setup for the city proper, instead of just the reclaimed sections.

Hell, the only reason they *hadn’t* driven into the null-friction field, or the fire rings, or been jumped by the Blink-Wolves was that I’d already cleaned them out or roped off the danger zone. This wasn’t ‘finder’s keepers’, this was ‘I’d worked to kill the predators, only for idiot lumberjacks to start cutting trees’.

And, while the Green Zone was ‘pacified’, that was only for things that a few patrols could stumble across. We’d had to tweak our plans when we’d found a temporal effect that’d sped up aging in a few-hundred feet. We’d had to scrap the plans for housing, and instead AA was looking into some kind of specialty storage facility, one that wouldn’t require maintenance, and could be used to quick-age things like cheese or whiskey. We’d only come across it when someone had left their lunch on the job-site overnight, and came back to discover it’d *mummified.*

From there, it’d been remotely operated robotic workers only, and the ones that’d worked had all gotten a ‘Get Better’ shot to reverse the damages they’d suffered, and Panacea *had* found damages, with bone degradation and other odd effects. The patrols hadn’t been there long enough to notice, and I was immune to time-based powers, but it was only by stumbling across it that we found it.

While Green Zone was the *least* dangerous, it was *not* ***safe***.

“Ugh, that’s just like you, chickening out right before the end,” Transmutation chided scornfully, but the man still moved forward, motioning to Shield who sent a crate alongside him. Reaching inside it he pulled out a pair of tongs and got to work clearing out the small spheres closest to them, dropping them in the box.

Ignition joined him, grabbing the crystals with another pair of tongs, quickly filling up box, only for Shield to speak up. “U-Um, guys? I can’t move it.”

“What?” Transmutation asked, the Shaker lowering her shield, only for the box to hang there, mid-air. Actually, feeling out the area, it *was* falling, just very, *very* slowly. “Ah, shit.”

Fracture shot what I was coming to think was their leader an unamused look. “Knew it.”

“Shut up, and figure this out,” Transmutation snapped.

“Oh, oh *wow*,” Ignition said, trying to reach inside the box with her tongues, only to have the tool stopped mid-reach. “Some of ‘em are just floating in here. Gimme a sec.”

Reaching carefully, she skimmed her tongs along the edge of the field, working it deeper until she grabbed one of the topmost crystals, stopped in its drop inside, and, having to use both hands, wrenched it out, the cyan stone going flying as soon as it was out of range and landing a dozen feet away.

“Not worth it, I’ll grab another,” Fracture said, walking for the exit, where the other crates were stalked up high. I waited as he left, watching as he went to grab another, then froze, slowly turning to where his car *used* to be parked. *“Fuuuuuuuuuuck,”* he swore, turning around slowly, seeing the streets were empty before turning around again, eyes tracking up, once more going still as he spotted me.

I gave him a jaunty wave.

“*Where’s the next box?”* Transmutation called out, sounding annoyed. “*We don’t have all day!”*

“Chirality,” he called back, eyes not moving from me. “You need to get the others and come out.”

The ‘Tinker’ huffed, crossing her arms inside the dome in annoyance. “Now’s not the time for your bullsh-

“*Get the fuck out here, now!”* the man yelled, glancing away from me just for a moment, before quickly glancing back up my way, as if fearful that I was a weeping angel, that would close every time he looked away.

. . . I kind of wanted to do that now.

Behind my back, I made a small card of metal, Marking it and carrying it on the wind out and around, low and out of sight.

Watching the others slowly make their way out, they filed out of the dome, stopping as they saw their teammate, then lifting their gaze to me. “*Oh. Shit,*” Transmutation swore under her breath, but the sound was still carried to me. “Hello!” she greeted. “We’re tracking down a villain that’s been running from us. A real piece of work. You seen a guy that can turn into a giant minotaur?”

The sheer *audacity* of the lie impressed me a bit, though not as much as it disappointed me.

*“Chir, he took the van,*” Ignition hissed.

Transmutation’s helmet hid her mouth as she replied venomously, *“I know Tinder, now shut the fuck up!*”

“What A coincidence!” I replied, landing on the dome and starting to walk down it, rotating myself slowly as I did so, to appear like I was doing so in defiance of physics, which, I guess I technically *was.* “So am I! I’ve heard of a band of thieves coming around here, looking to steal from my employer,” I informed them, pausing to tap the dome below me for emphasis. “You wouldn’t happen to have seen them, have you?”

“S-Sorry!” Shield squeaked, getting a scathing look from Transmutation, Ignition and Fracture both trying to subtle motion for her to be quiet.

“Sorry, we haven’t seen them,” Transmutation added as an ‘explanation’. “But if we see them, we’ll tell you!”

I rolled my eyes, and, between steps, appeared behind them, calling the Swarm forth. “Honesty is a heroic virtue, but one in short supply nowadays,” I mused, as they spun around. “So, how about this: you’re under the arrest for what we *both* know is grand larceny. Come quietly, and we’ll have a little talk. Hell, I might let you go. Don’t, and things will get *unpleasant.*”

“O-okay!” Shield quickly agreed, holding her hands up, the barriers on either edge of the street disappearing.

. . . *Well, that was easy,* I thought, as the other three lifted their hands as well, but while the Shaker seemed *terrified*, the other three just looked tense, almost *ready*. As I Saw them, Shield’s power was at a low ebb, almost defeated, but the other three’s were thrashing about, restrained but ready to go in an instant. Flying around in a quick circle to reach Shield first, the others tensed, and I frowned at them, a little confused as I created a pair of handcuffs from a pouch and grabbed her arms, gently but firmly securing them.

It didn’t do anything to stop her from using her power, but the effect was psychological instead of practical, a gesture of her willingness to go along with this. Approaching Ignition next, I wasn’t surprised when she lashed out, grabbing my arm as her power flared, only to slide directly off me.

I’d picked her since I could outright ignore her power, but, thinking about it, my Shields made it so that anyone that wanted to touch me couldn’t even do *that* until they were drained. I flew backwards still, and the trio dropped their hands. “Hey, you idiot,” Transmutation crowed. “Here’s how this is going to go. You’re going to bring our truck back, you’re going to help us load up those crystals, and you’re going to let us leave, and *maybe* you’ll keep the arm!”

“Um, Chir,” Ignition nervously stated, “It didn’t take.”

The armored woman’s head snapped over. “What do you mean it *didn’t take!*”

“My super strength is forcefield based,” I shrugged, *among other things.* “But nice to see that you’re not only thieves, but liars and extortionists as well. What was it Lincoln said? You want to trust the strength of a man’s spirit, give him hardship, but to test its quality, give him *power?* And you call yourselves *heroes?*”

“If it’s field-based, it can be broken,” the ‘Tinker’ snapped, trying desperately to maintain control. “Resonance, break it!”

Fracture lunged forward, but I darted mid-air around him, reaching to push him aside, my hand on his shoulder, only for his power to spike, not needing to touch me with his *hand*. However, not only did I have my shields, but it was *sound* based, and I negated it as it started to spike, sending the man sprawling, even as Transmutation charged.

However, she was limited to how fast she could run, and I could *fly,* easily backing up and going for Shield, who was frozen in decision. Grabbing her by the back of her costume, I hefted her up, wrapped in a Lift Field, and called to them, “Now I have one of yours. There’s no need for this to go worse than it has.”

Ignition and Fracture hesitated, but Transmutation sneered, “Like we care!” Reaching down she grabbed a bit of destroyed asphalt, her power shifting it into something whit that she hurled at me. Flying back, what I had to assume was *C4* went off, the blastwave close enough that it would knock me out of the air.

Except a blastwave was merely a very, *very* loud sound.

Shaping it around us, I let it dissipate, along with my good mood. The girl in my arms, was shaking like a leaf, and, if I wasn’t wrong, had just pissed herself in fear. “Fine, let’s play it that way. You Strikers have fun with my Shaker effect.”

“*Shaker?”* Fracture asked, as I called forth the swarms I’d kept silent, a black tide coming from over the rooftops and through the alleys.

They tried to fight it, Fracture setting off rocks like grenades, Ignition using her *large* stockpile of iron rods as incendiaries, and Transmutation turning everything she could get her hands on into a weapon, even going so far as to start using poison gas, making her helmet into a gas-mask, and I carefully tweaked the airflow to make sure the other two, who had already fallen to the spiders and wasps, survived.

“Screw it,” I finally sighed. “I might as well deploy my giant enemy crab. Nick? You got this one?”

The nearby building’s fourth floor *exploded* out as the Replicant, in the form of an unrealisticly large crustacean, leapt forward, grabbing the last ‘hero’ in an enormous claw. She screamed, in rage, pain, or frustration I couldn’t tell, her power lashing out at him, only for the Replicant’s own Shapeshift power, copied from the tiny crab-shaped Stand on his back, to reverse it instantly.

“Okay, new plan. Give up, or he’ll fucking kill you,” I told her blandly, still holding the shivering Shield.

Transmutation still fought, and Nick increased the pressure as I pulled back the Swarm. I could’ve sworn I heard a rib-crack, before she finally, crying, stopped fighting.

Landing, I carefully deposited Shield, who collapsed to her knees, and picked up Fracture, slapping a pair of cuffs on him along with a shot of ‘Get Better’ to keep him from dying from the venom running through his system, the line between ‘enough poison to incapacitate’ and ‘enough poison to kill’ being a fine, fine line.

The man woke up, and started to pull at his bonds, pushing his power into them to break him, before he looked around, at the walls of insects buzzing around us, at Nick, then back at me. “Do it, and die,” I told him blandly, and his power pulled at the energy still in his coughs, pushing it to the side and setting it off so it only shaved off a small bit instead of freeing him.

Repeating the process with Ignition, she hadn’t started melting her cuffs before she realized she was fucked. Nick deposited Transmutation, who I calmly told, “Try anything and I’ll remove your head,” before cuffing her as well.

For better, or worse, she didn’t try anything, though I also didn’t bother to heal her.

“Alright, so, you break into private property, which this entire *city* now is, and decided breaking into a sealed area, which was done so for *good reason,* was a great idea. What the hell am I going to do with you?” I asked, more to Quinn than them.

“Let us go?” Ignition asked, and I snorted.

“Yeah, you decided you didn’t want that when you tried to burn me to death. Overwatch?” I requested.

My Vizier replied, *“Calling PRT now. Would you like to listen?”*

“Yes please, that’d be lovely,” I agreed, putting a finger to my ear to show I was talking to someone else.

After a few pleasantries, Quinn got to the point, informing them of the Parahuman thieves on our property. The PRT flunkies reply of “*I’m sorry, that is outside of our jurisdiction,*” made me growl in anger, the others all freezing as they stared at me.

“*I am sorry, I must be mistaken,*” Overwatch replied. “*The PRT’s jurisdiction is the United States and Canada, but you are claiming New Brockton Bay is not covered.*”

The other man’s smugness was palpable as he faux apologized: “*I’m sorry, that is what we have been told. If you wish to turn over the thieves, and what they were attempting to steal, so the full nature of the charge can be determined, you may deliver us to our office in-*“

“*That’s quite all right, have a good day,*” Quinn replied, hanging up on the man. “*Did you get that, Vejovis?*”

“I did,” I replied. “That’s not how this works, I assume?”

“*It is not. I assume that any ‘evidence’ we gave them would disappear as surely as they tried to disappear* ***you****,”* he informed me. “*Either way, they would receive what they want, and these four would go free.*”

“Fucking *lovely,”* I hissed. “Any suggestions?”

“*While within your legal right, I would request you not execute them,*” the man sighed, and I wondered what he thought about me would make him say that. I mean. . . okay, *yes,* the thought had crossed my mind, and it *would* make things easier, and they *had* just tried to kill me.

Okay, yes, it was an understandable request.

“Don’t worry, I’ve got something better in in mind,” I reassured him, turning to the four in front of me. “Stay here,” I commanded, taking off, but leaving the insects in place. Grabbing their van, I brought it back, dropping it on the clearest section of street. “You three,” I said, indicating the Strikers. “In the car.”

“You’re letting us go?” Fracture asked, unsure.

I nodded. “The PRT has declared they have no authority here, but they’ll take what you were stealing as *evidence*. Now get in the van.”

Fracture and Ignition got in the back, still cuffed, but Transmutation, turned her cuffs to dust and quickly started the car, trying to drive when I reached over, lifting it up. “Ah, let me help you,” I smiled, as the woman glared hatefully at me. “We’re working on a teleportation system, but we’re still working out the bugs. If you come back here again, I *will* kill you, Kate. Now, have fun in Brazil!”

Pulling on Strider’s **Area Teleportation**, and remembering the feeling of where I’d done my moonshot from, I half-Strode, teleporting it out, but leaving myself behind.

*Huh, it worked,* I smiled to myself, having expected it to be harder.

*“Brazil?*” Quinn asked, confused.

“That salt-flat area,” I replied. “The one we talked about.

My Vizier was quiet for a moment. “*You mean Bolivia?*”

I shrugged, “I said we were working out the bugs. Now, *you,*” I said, picking up Shield. “You’re going to cooperate with my people, fully and completely, and we’ll let you go. Just pick better teammates, okay?” I asked, and, fearfully, the girl nodded. Focusing on the Mark in my personal power-training room. “Stay there until someone come gets you,” I instructed, and let her go, Striding her there, turning to Nick. “Thanks for the assist!”

“You’re welcome,” the crab-man said, shifting back to normal. “Now. . . how to spin this,” he remarked, turning into a weird rocket/horseshoe crab *thing* and taking off into the sky.

Shaking my head, I moved to Stride back to my office, having enjoyed this little endeavor, only for my phone to ring. Answering it, I dismissed the Swarms, and regrew the metal of the dome for good measure. “Hey Break, what’s up?” I asked, surprised the man was calling me, when he seemed to be oddly independent about the task I’d given him.

*“Dude, I need help!”* he gasped, and I immediately started reaching out for the Mark I’d given him. It was in the Mid-West, somewhere, and seemed to be staying still, though it was hard to tell movement at these distances.

Turning and striding into a building, to get away from Satallites, I demanded, “What’s wrong?”

“*Oh, man, I fucked up. I fucked up bad! I need you to send Boardwalk!”* he gasped, panic clawing through his voice.

*Boardwalk?* I thought, *Oh, right, because* ***I*** *can’t leave the city!* It was unusually forward thinking of him, and I shifted my costume to match, shifting to Shadow and reaching out. “He’s on his way,” I promised, “Put the Mark somewhere clear.”

Hanging up, I focused on the distant Mark, getting a sense of slight movement, and waited until it stilled before making the Jump.

The world blinked out of existence, but instead of an alley, or the middle of a fight, I saw Herb, strung up on some kind of rack. It wasn’t hat his limbs were spread and secured that stood out, ot the fact that *something* techno-organic was on his head, which was shaved, nor the way his eyes were wide with terror.

No, it was the fact that his throat had been ripped open, his larync missing, the man not even to wheeze as he hyperventilated, completely unable to speak.

Bringing Light to my hands I turned, spotting a tall man in a blood-speckled white shirt and jeans, holding a bloody device to his mouth in one hand, Herb’s phone in the other.

My own body seized up, as the small blonde girl next to him, also bloodstained, worked a set of controls that were almost oversized. ***No!*** I raged, pushing through the effect as I called more and more Light, hurling Air-Blades at them as I grew metal spears from every surface to ***KILL THEM!***

“Ah, ah, ah,” Jack chided with Herb’s voice, holding the device up to his lips as another small child, a boy this time, with pale skin and dark hair, stepped out from a doorway behind the monster in human flesh, and looked me in the eye. The man smiled maliciously, “Bad boys need to. . .”

The dark-haired child commanded, *“Sleep.”*

And then everything went dark.