

Ruby – A Toxic Relationship

~ Then ~

~ Varna, Bulgaria, in simpler times with Jurgis ~

About 1,300 Words

Jurgis was always the bad influence, the memories Ruby used as motivation, when things looked likely to get nasty. He was dead before book one, but by book four....I felt a need to flesh him out a little, to show what made their relationship tick.

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Jurgis woke up, just in time to see Ruby wince as she pulled on her jeans. Both of them had been hurt, a lot more than just bruises. Why she and Olga had decided to try and kill each other was still a mystery. He might have let them keep their secrets, if they hadn't returned without his merchandise. At least they hadn't lost his money, or he might have given them a scar each, to remind them to be more careful next time.

"Don't rush off, we need to talk." He said.

"Not again.....I keep telling you." Said Ruby. "I don't want to talk about it."

She'd always smart mouthed him a little, sometimes in front of his men. He usually laughed and put it down to, 'the little kitten has a few claws.' He grabbed her shoulder as she tried to open their bedroom door.

"No, you owe me a proper explanation..... And our client still needs the merchandise." He said.

"Merchandise.....Drugs probably." Shouted Ruby. "Calling it merchandise doesn't make your business any cleaner."

Jurgis loved her hair, the darkness of it, the feel of it as he ran his fingers through it. He was angry though, as he grabbed her hair and pulled.

"Let go....."

No being gentle anymore, he heard some of her hair break, as he dragged her across the room.

There was an old armchair in the corner of the room, currently home to about twenty pairs of Ruby's jeans. He pushed her down, shoving her down once he'd let go of her hair.

"Now..... Sit there until I say you can go."

"Bastard."

Still that wilfulness, that defiance. It was one of the reasons why he loved her. There was a time and a place for everything though and her defiance was beginning to annoy him. Ruby was crying a little, or he might have slapped her face.

"The first time Ruby, the first fucking time I let the two of you go somewhere alone. You both come back looking as though you went five rounds with Muhammad Ali. All sorts of whispers from the people in Tallinn, about Olga trying to kill you."

He stopped mid-tirade and gently stroked her cheek.

"You missed the pickup and the merchandise wasn't drugs. It was medical supplies, very expensive and hard to obtain medical supplies. I can send someone else to collect them, and of course Olga will have to go away for a while.....I might send her to work for Tobor for a few months. If anyone can calm the bitch down, it's Tobor. What am I to do with you though Ruby, tell me that?"

"You can't send Olga away.....I won't let you!" She screamed at him.

Jurgis slapped her hard, all the strength in his right arm behind it. It happened when he was angry, he realised his gun was in his hand. No finger on the trigger, the safety catch still on. Ruby hated guns though, so he hoped it might finally make her stop giving him shit.

"Do you want me to kill you.... Is that it ?" He asked her.

He had the gun right in her face, though he had no intention of using it. She'd know that of course, that was half the problem. Her ability to look into his head meant she knew exactly how far to press his buttons.

"No more..... That's the last time you'll hit me." Said Ruby.

He hadn't meant to hit her again; she should have known that. He'd been putting his hand out to touch her cheek, it looked so red. By the next morning the whole side of her face would be swollen. He was going to apologise and promise not to do it again. He'd given her his word before though, several times.

"Fuck !" He shouted.

It was as if he'd been picked up by a small hurricane. A hot hurricane, perhaps even fiery. By the time he collided with the frame of their bed, he could smell the skin burning on parts of his chest. Jurgis cried out, as his left hip hit the solid hardwood bedframe. He had to smile at Ruby though, he was actually quite proud of her.

"It seems our little kitten has some new..... Sharper claws." He said. "Is that something you've done before, or is it new ?"

No answer, she sat looking at him, as though ready to pounce. Jurgis had dropped his gun, it was part of a collection of flotsam in front of Ruby's dressing table. The entire bedroom looked trashed. He took a chance and slowly got to his feet.

"Christ Ruby, your face.....I never meant to....."

"That's the last time.....I'm not sure what I did, but next time you might get incinerated."

He hadn't dressed, his bare chest looked as though a dozen cigarettes had been stubbed out on it.

"Never again Ruby, you have my word..... I'll never hit you again."

"You've given your word before."

He took a chance, giving her a lopsided grin.

"I know I have, but you've never threatened to incinerate me before."

"True." She replied.

It was hard work, limping back to her, as she sat on the pile of jeans in the chair. His hip hurt even more as he sat next to her in the chair, before wriggling to make a little extra room. Ruby helped by wriggling too, until they just about fitted into the old chair. He hugged her and felt relieved when she hugged him back.

"You're not going to move out or anything are you ?" He asked.

"Not if you keep your word."

He kissed her cheek, feeling the heat in his lips. Ruby let him kiss her, a proper kiss. The sort of kiss the kids called eating face. They ended up forehead against forehead.

"Olga will need to go away, but only for a while. I can't have you guys trying for a rematch." He said. "Two months with Tobor, maybe three, then she can come back. Does that meet with your approval ?"

"Alright."

"You can forget about the merchandise; I'll pick it up myself."

"No, I want to pick it up, it matters to me. Let me choose two men to go with me and I'll pick it up."

"On your own.....Again Ruby. I'm not sure....."

"I need to do it Jurgis. I need to prove to you that I'm not a total fuckup...And I need to prove it to myself."

"Fine..... Fine....Just choose who you need and get it done." He said.

Another kiss, and Ruby pushed herself against his chest.

"Careful, the burns still hurt.... What the hell did you do to me?"

"I'm not sure, it was just supposed to be a powerful wind. The fire parts just sort of happened."

"Get it right and that could be useful." He said.

"No, I'd never use it to hurt anyone."

"You hurt me."

"That's different..... You're an asshole."

She made him laugh, even if she wasn't always intending to. The wounds on his chest looked nasty and he knew they'd hurt like hell before they healed.

"You'll use it all Ruby, the wind, the fire and anything else you can do."

"No, I never will."

"I guarantee you will. If someone is threatening those you care for, you'll use it all. If you only remember one thing I tell you, remember this. Kitten's claws are meant to be used, that's why they have them. Put it in your journal or something, with today's date. Jurgis said that a kitten only has claws for one reason..... To use them."

"I'll remember Jurgis..... I promise you I'll remember."

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~ The End ~

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