

KILLER CONSCIENCE (SAMPLE)

by
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INT. O'QUIN HOME - BEDROOM - DAY

Deirdre sits at her oak computer desk with one leg tucked under her, furiously doing calculations in a spreadsheet. She pauses, frowns at a line of numbers.

There's a KNOCK at the door that jolts her a few inches out of her chair.

MALCOLM O'QUIN, thirty, opens the door and strides in. Handsome in the way of an assassin, his fastidious dress seems designed to restrain his fervor.

MALCOLM
Deirdre, I need that transaction
report.

Deirdre shifts uncomfortably in her chair and casts a wary look at her brother.

DEIRDRE
Almost done.

Malcolm approaches, puts his hands on her shoulders.

Deirdre stiffens, hits a few more keys until the printer HUMS into action.

Malcolm smooths her hair while peering at her computer screen. Then he points to one of the entries and scowls.

MALCOLM
Is that his entire haul for the
month?

Deirdre nods. She stands and twists out of his grasp, takes the printout in hand.

Malcolm closes the distance between them to a few inches as he slides the report from between her fingertips. His eyes linger on her face a moment, then drop to the paper.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)
I don't like this.

Deirdre shrugs and moves to the window, holding the curtain aside and looking out like a caged bird.

DEIRDRE
I don't know what to tell you,
Malcolm. But maybe you should ask
him about it before you do
something drastic.

Malcolm lays the report on the desk and ambles to where Deirdre's standing.

MALCOLM

You think I'm being drastic, when all I want is to see our family succeed at the highest levels?

He positions himself too close to her, with her back against his chest, following her gaze out the window.

DEIRDRE

I think you've taken things too far.

Malcolm runs his fingertips along her forearm.

MALCOLM

And I think I haven't taken them nearly far enough.

Malcolm reaches up and brushes his knuckles against her jawline. Deirdre withers beneath his touch.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

Little one, you have always been too accommodating. To everyone but me.

Deirdre releases the curtain and starts to move away, but Malcolm grips her upper arms, keeping her close.

DEIRDRE

Let me go.

MALCOLM

I've done all of this for you.

DEIRDRE

That's not true. Ya do it for you.

Malcolm pulls her back in place against him and rubs his scrupulously shaven face against hers.

MALCOLM

But I need you. You have to see how right--

Deirdre writhes ...

DEIRDRE

It's not right!

... unable to escape his embrace.

MALCOLM

You're the only one I love. We're
all we have.

Deirdre at last wrenches her arms free and stumbles out of reach. She turns to face him, eyes wide with defiance.

DEIRDRE

Papa would've killed you for this.
He would never have let you--

MALCOLM

Papa's dead!

Malcolm smooths back his hair and narrows his eyes, advancing slowly as he speaks.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

I am in charge now, of this family
and this business.

Deirdre backs up until they're dangerously close to the bed. Her eyes dart about wildly, then she catches sight of a large knife, displayed in a maroon-lined case on the night stand.

Malcolm follows her gaze there, smiles.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

I want us to be more than tinkers
making pretty blades.

Malcolm steps closer. There's nowhere for Deirdre to go.

DEIRDRE

Don't make me--

MALCOLM

What? Don't make you what?

Malcolm grabs her by throat and hair.

Deirdre grasps his wrists and CRIES OUT as the backs of her legs brush the comforter.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

Wanna play 'who's scarier,'
Deirdre?

Malcolm leans forward, forcing Deirdre -- eyes bulging and breathless -- down on the bed.

Deirdre lets go of one of his wrists and desperately takes a swing, connecting awkwardly with Malcolm's nose.

Malcolm's recoils like a shark as the blow to his nose stuns him momentarily.

For an instant, their eyes lock: hers wide with fear and hatred, his hard as steel and glassy with passion.

Malcolm, PANTING, lets go of her throat and struggles for leverage as she writhes and GROANS through clenched teeth.

Malcolm covers Deirdre's body with his, smothering her legs and pelvis. He gains control of her wrists, flattens her against the bed.

A trickle of blood runs from one nostril to Malcolm's upper lip. He licks it and puts his mouth to Deirdre's ear.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

My blood runs in your veins.
Doesn't that mean anything to you
anymore?

Deirdre squeezes her eyes shut, lips trembling, and a tear runs down her temple into her hairline. Her desperate voice is barely above a whisper.

DEIRDRE

Malcolm, please stop.

A KNOCK at the door rips Malcolm's eyes away from Deirdre's face. Then he looks back down at his sister, her eyes full of the promise that she'll scream.

From outside the door, Danny's voice penetrates.

DANNY (O.S.)

Deirdre, is Malcolm with you?

Malcolm releases her and stands up stiffly. Then he grabs one of her wrists and jerks Deirdre into a sitting position. He shoves a finger into her chest.

MALCOLM

Get up and shut up.

Deirdre stands on wobbly legs and smooths her hair, her clothing. Her voice is thready and weak.

DEIRDRE

Yeah, Danny. Come on in.

Danny opens the door and squirms in. He surveys the scene, then stands like a soldier at attention, averting his eyes.

Deirdre takes a few shaky steps away from the bed and turns her back to both men.

Malcolm struggles to slow his breathing, places his hands on his hips and paces around the bed, closer to the door.

MALCOLM

What is it?

The blood from his nose tickles Malcolm's upper lip. He swipes at it, looks at his fingers to see how much there is. It's only a drop.

DANNY

The Congressman's here.

Danny meets Malcolm's challenging gaze for a moment, then looks down at the floor.

Malcolm takes a handkerchief from his pocket and wipes his nose. He casts a menacing look at Deirdre, who stands with her back to him, arms wrapped around her and hugging herself.

MALCOLM

I'll be right down.

Danny nods and exits, the CLICK of the door closing making Deirdre jump. Malcolm straightens his shirt and checks his cuff links.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

Do I look okay?

Deirdre stares down at the knife that seems to be staring back at her from its lovely bed on the night stand.

DEIRDRE

You're a sick fuck, Malcolm.

Malcolm rolls his eyes and heads to the door, adjusting his collar.

MALCOLM

I've about had enough of your shit.

Deirdre grabs the knife and stands poised to advance on Malcolm, but he turns too soon.

She freezes, chest heaving, ready to rush forward.

Malcolm tosses his head back and LAUGHS as he takes a few steps toward her.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

You're gonna turn on me? Is that it, little one?

He moves to within arm's reach of Deirdre, then halts and captures her in a cold stare -- all traces of laughter now vaporized.

Deirdre turns the knife over and over in her palm, stares back unflinchingly, mustering the power to act.

Malcolm covers his heart with both hands.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

Do you know how hard it is to trust you when you do such things? My own sister.

He shakes his head, puts his hands together in a prayer position, then slithers to the door. He swings it open wide and turns back to Deirdre with an eerie calm.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

Remember that grand opening tomorrow night. Go shopping. I don't want you to embarrass me.

He disappears. Deirdre stands alone, still poised to act, gripping the knife handle with fingers as white as her face.