

DAUGHTER OF BELIAL by Jennifer Juvenelle

EXCERPT

After removing his weapons, the men bind Wyatt's hands behind his back using a zip tie before gagging him. They've barely glanced in my direction, so focused are they on subduing Wyatt. Subtly, I attempt to take a few steps away from the group when, of course, Mr. Leader Guy decides to switch his attention to me.

"Where do ya think you're going, little lady?" he asks.

I freeze but don't respond. Seems like a rhetorical question, anyway. I look to Wyatt for support. He's backed into the wall of the tunnel with the other two men guarding his flanks. Slipping Wyatt's gun into the back of his waistband, the asshole in charge approaches me.

His breath, a sickly sweet halitosis, poorly masked with hints of spearmint, wafts into my nostrils when he speaks. "Don't worry, sweetheart," he says, coming closer, "the big, bad man can't hurt you anymore."

"Who are you?"

"Dante Pierce," he says, holding out a gloved hand for me to shake, "pleased to meet ya."

I refrain from taking his hand. This miffs him. Rolling his eyes, he addresses his men, "Seems to me our fair maiden isn't feeling too appreciative about being rescued." His men laugh awkwardly, exchanging nervous glances.

Dante Pierce doesn't seem to notice. Returning his attention to me, he slowly removes his helmet and gloves. Never breaking eye contact, he drops them to his feet along with his rifle, and steps so close to me our noses practically touch. My bones rattle in their sockets as he looks me up and down in a predatory manner. By the time he completes his visual perusal of my body, I could take a hundred showers and it still wouldn't be enough to wash off the scum from his gaze.