



SHATTER SHATTER / SEAN MARKEY

My real name is Cherie, but you can call me Cherry or I might just rake your face. My nails are epic weapons, like napalm or dynamite. You already know about glass hearts, but I bet you've never seen one, not even your own.

Me and my boyfriend, Chuck Masser at the time, we'd given up on graduating, so we spent most our time at the beach, each trying to get the other to show their glass heart. Chuck wouldn't.

"But I wanna see one," I said.

I don't remember whose idea it was, but we schemed a plan to do just that.

Floyd Anders tried to be careless like us, pierced ear and shaved head. All bullshit. But I knew how much he liked me; you can't hide something like that. I started sitting beside him at school, when I went, and invited him to hang out.

After I got expelled from school for beating the lipstick and eye-liner off this cocky bitch, Floyd came to my house. Chuck knew about this, but he didn't care. He knew I was his, and we would run away together to Vegas or L.A., somewhere bright and more glamorous than me. Cities can be like that, you know.

I tried to act sweet and interested in Floyd, but it made me wanna puke. He got the idea to kiss me, but I rejected him. I could almost hear his stupid heart break, and I knew he was all mine. I could use him up. I let him kiss me. It was clumsy, his tongue slipping all around, so I bit his lip until it bled and told him to leave. He left happy, and I almost felt bad for him, but instead I called Chuck and told him, "tonight."

At the pier, the waves were loud, but the wind was soft. Chuck was there too, hiding behind a fish-cleaning station. I let Floyd kiss me again,

and tried not to cringe when his hand slipped down my back. Clumsy freshman. I moaned into his mouth a little, then whispered into his ear.

“I wanna see your heart.” Softer than the wind and the dead things beneath the waves.

That stopped him. When he looked at me I touched his face all nice. He swallowed and looked around.

“Please?”

He would have jumped into the ocean, anchors first, and stayed there until his breath ran out. And still he hesitated in showing me his heart.

Finally, he turned away and lifted his shirt. When he turned around again, he held his glass heart in his wet hands, chest heaving. He almost dropped it when he saw Chuck standing beside me.

“What’s going on?” he asked.

“Put your heart on the table,” Chuck said, pointing.

Floyd knew he’d lost, holding his heart in his hands like that, so vulnerable. He walked over to the table and set it down. The heart rocked gently and sparked the moonlight through it like a diamond.

“Touch it,” Chuck said.

“No. You,” I said back.

Chuck touched it. “Hard,” he reported. “Wonder what happens if you break it.”

Floyd made a noise, a kind of whine. Chuck pulled a hammer from his pocket, and suddenly it had gone too far.

“No,” I said, but Chuck just grinned.

He brought the hammer down on Floyd’s heart, but it bounced back and flew from his hand. He cursed. Floyd almost passed out in relief.

“Enough,” I said. I’d seen what I wanted. The adventure was over. I reached out to pick up Floyd’s glass heart, to hand it back. The moment my finger grazed the smooth curve, it shattered. I shielded my face and Floyd screamed and collapsed. Oh God, I killed him, I thought.

But he wasn’t dead. Just broken. Chuck said “wegottago,” like that, but I couldn’t move.

I watched Floyd walk away that night. Empty. Contagiously empty, because I’ve never been able to not feel empty again. Just like that, and everything’s changed.

I never said goodbye to Chuck, or anyone else. I ran away to Ohio and serve coffee to tired truckers at a shitty restaurant. I don’t deserve L.A., or the happy stories where couples say “I do,” and trade glass hearts forever.

I’m not sure what’s happened to Floyd, but I’d take it back. I TAKE IT BACK. You can’t break your own glass heart, did you know? I tried. I tried I tried, but it just won’t shatter.