

Scarlet Tears and Ebony Flowers

My cheek stings from her slap, and my chest is scarred by her tangled, vicious whips of words. Melanie St. Giles. The giant who makes herself tall with stilts of crushed girls. Crimson stains mar the midnight of her heart. Poppy-red tears spill down my cheeks; the storm tower grounds me.

Storm towers were always meant for those at sea, a landmark for lost sailors and a refuge for stormswept sailors. But as I walk along the cliff, I seem to be the only one who needs it now. I reach the Storm Tower and lay my bag on the floor. I take my coat off and fold it neatly next to my bag. I added a photo and a letter for her, the monster who made my life into a scarlet inferno.

I leave the tower; I walk the tightrope.

Sea and land.

Death and life.

The sun bleeds softly into the ocean; red and gold stain my sight and tint my thoughts with gemstones and blood. I stare out at the sea. My skin is salt-stung, and my heart is a trainwreck that persists in beating in time with the waves.

The poison plant of rage within me has withered. I am purposeless in a world where purpose is everything. I don't know who I am anymore. This twisted, crippled spirit inside my body isn't me, and I am not her.

I step out.

I see a splintered piano, a smashed mirror, a swirl of crushed lilies and a cracked compass. I drift down through the water, untethered, untangled, free.

Then the lights in my mother's eyes go out, and it all goes
ebony.