

The Icarian Games

Kali Blackstorm

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents either are the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, events, or locales is entirely coincidental.

Copyright © 2019 by Kali Blackstorm

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or used in any manner without permission of the copyright owner except for the use of quotations in a book review.

First ebook edition July 2019

Photographs by Alison Nanez

ISBN 978-1-7338369-4-4 (ebook)

Published by Kali Blackstorm

To Carmella,

The Cornerstone of Grand Dreams

Nels:

Smile

She twirls on the tightrope, dancing haphazardly in the pink. She might fall if she's not careful, but I want her too. I want her to bend and snap before the audience. Beneath their lights and their eyes, I want her to break like a glass doll hitting the wood floor. I want them to catch every moment of this carefully orchestrated show with their lens. And when it all falls apart—I want them to see that too.

Oh, because it will fall apart, nothing you see is real. It's a show we put on to keep you content. Isn't that nice? Through the blisterings of our feet, through the bleedings of our hands, through the screamings of our throats, we smiled and danced and clapped for the show! Oh, for the show! What a world without a show!

Where would you be without dazzling lights and prattling clowns! With smiles! Oh, the smiles! I love your smiles! Morphed and reshaped! Painted so like the clown! I love them because when you shift in the light, it's nothing but a frown!

And the show is nothing but an empty stage with sad souls illuminated under forgotten lights. But you don't notice that, because you roar your applause like beasts abandoned in our cages!

Oh, the cages! Those heavy pounds suffocating the tweeting birds! You want out, don't you?

Or do you? You enjoy the show too much to fly, flee, just like the tiger likes to chew on the iron too much to die, dead.

Because if the show truly brought us pain, what's to stop us from dying? We could all die right here and now, couldn't we? That would be true showmanship. To die for the craft, to scream no more! Not an ounce more for this travesty!

But we enjoy twisting in agony and calling it bliss! Because oh the show! The lights! The lie! That my friend is where we thrive! You and I! That is where we will always belong; selling our name for truths untold. Auctioning our souls for stories never seen. Vending our lives for tales lost to history.

So now, my beautiful acrobats! Spin! Yes, twirl, for the fools and their contraptions. Give them violent delights and blistering spectaculars. Let every moment be one to capture in their hearts and in the machinations of the masses. Because the show will go on. No blood will stop it! No hunger! No savagery! We care not for pettitory. We care only for the show!

For the world is our circus and you its freaks! And you may add all the filters you desire, cleanse it any way you want. But my dear, my silly silly dear, we're still trapped in our house of mirrors, aren't we?

And we refuse to shatter our pride for the chance at sunshine. To collapse our stratagems for moonlight. No, we foul beasts are at home reflected in the dark with nothing but our stained glass eyes to light up our mockeries. I'm content with it, aren't you?