

THE  
**AEON**  
CHRONICLES

BOOK 2

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THE AEON CHRONICLES

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## KITTEN CALL

AVEN Grey lazily opened his eyes, hissing at the metal cuff biting into his sore wrist. He cursed under his breath, vaguely remembering the night before. Falling asleep after the act was never good. There would be no way to make a clean break now.

He glanced around his sleek and shiny modern bedroom, looking for his clothes. His pants were inside out on the hickory hardwood floor, his button-down shirt tossed over his black leather chaise lounge.

Shifting his naked body, he sat up, attempting to squeeze his hand free from the vice, but the cuff was locked tight. Hearing the whoosh of the toilet flush from his bathroom, his eyes widened. Snapping his head toward his nightstand, he set his gaze on his cell phone, laying under a pair of bright pink lacy underwear. He reached, sliding his fingers across the four empty liquor bottles and cringed as one of them slid to the edge.

Twisting under and around his hanging arm, Aven carefully picked up his phone and texted "911." The water from the faucet was running, so he still had a few seconds. He slid his phone under the sheets and pretended to be groggy as a naked woman stood at the threshold of the bathroom door.

"I wanted to let you get some rest so you could play," she said, tracing her body with slender fingers.

Aven shook his wrist, jingling the cuff against his poster bed. "Good cop, bad cop?"

"Uh huh."

"I'm guessing I'm the bad cop?"

"Oh yes. Very, very bad." The redhead sauntered to the end of the poster bed and slid her hand down the metal brace.

"Then maybe you should punish me." Aven motioned her to come to him with his finger. He had no intention of sleeping with her again, but for his plan to work, he would have to play her game.

The redhead crawled onto the bed and sat, legs straddling him. As she leaned down, her fiery curls tickled his face. Ignoring the pain in his left wrist, he wrapped

his right hand around the back of her thigh and squeezed, letting out a throaty growl.

The redhead moaned but flinched as the bedroom door flung open and slammed against the wall.

“What the hell?” a girl with blonde hair and fiery blue eyes screeched.

“Katharine!” Aven shoved the redhead off of him. “It’s not what you think!”

“Who the hell are you?” The redhead glared.

“Who the hell am I?” The blonde’s face twisted as she took a step forward. “I’m his wife, you stupid bit—”

“Whoa, whoa, whoa! Honey, just—just calm down.” Aven’s free hand was up in the air as if in surrender to her rage.

“Calm down? Calm down? Screw you and your whore!” The blonde stomped forward and seized a red stiletto on the floor. She reared back, flinging it over her head. Aven dodged the flailing object, and it smacked the black leather headboard an inch from his face.

“You’re married?” The redhead twisted to him. “When did that happen?”

“Secretly. Can’t have it in the tabloids.” Aven laughed nervously. “But we separated.”

“Separated? You lying scum!” The blonde picked up the other high heel and chucked it at Aven but missed him, knocking over the lamp on the nightstand.

Snatching up her skimpy grey leopard dress from the floor, the redhead slipped it on. She headed for the door as the blonde continued to scream, throwing Aven’s clothes.

“A year of counseling! Just wait until he hears about this! You dirtbag! You low life piece of—” She growled like a wild animal. “What about the kids?”

The redhead whipped around again. “You have kids?”

Aven simply shrugged his shoulders. “Still waiting for the DNA test to get back.”

The blonde lifted Aven’s dress shoe in the air, aiming for the redhead who held up her hands. “Ma’am calm down. I’m not his mistress.”

The blonde walked right up to the girl, white knuckling the shoe, coming inches from her face. She smiled as if daring the redhead to blink. “I think you should go unless you want me to shove this where the sun don’t shine.”

The redhead slipped out the door, and the blonde ranted on until the front door to Aven’s mansion slammed shut. As if a director had said cut, she tossed Aven’s shoe to the side and smoothed back her hair.

“Geez, Kitten. Where did that come from?”

Kitten combed through her ash blonde hair, twisting the wavy long strands up into a messy bun. “You know, Aven, I think after all these years I’m finally realizing I’m too good at acting to be some playboy’s assistant.”

“Is that what you tell your friends? You’re a playboy’s slave?”

“Slave?” Kitten let out a laugh. “Don’t flatter yourself.”

“I didn’t, you did.”

“Why didn’t you take her to a hotel?”

“I thought she was a prostitute.”

“You went looking for someone on the Vegas strip? That’s stupid. You could catch something.”

"Haven't yet. Courtesy of our brilliant scientists at InfiniCorp."

"Solace is still going through clinical trials. They can't be sure their miracle drug keeps you immune to diseases. When they say 99-percent chance that leaves a 1-percent chance." Kitten huffed. "What were you thinking?"

"I was thinking of a good night's rest, and it's the one thing I haven't tried."

"So what? You cruised the strip and just picked the one that looked the least strung out?"

"I planned to eeny, meeny, miney, mo, but when I pulled up they were fighting like rats as if I was the last stale Cheeto on Earth. I think I'll go there more often. It was way too easy."

"Aven."

"The redhead, Officer Reed, pulled out her badge halfway down the strip. I pulled over, turned on the lights. It didn't take long for her to recognize me."

"And you brought her here because . . ."

"She wanted to see my *massive* mansion."

"Why didn't you tell her no?"

"Because she-devil in the backseat insisted with icy fingers wrapped around my throat." Aven winced at the sting of his wrist and cursed under his breath. "Help me out of these cuffs will ya?"

"Just because your demon expects you to sleep with a new girl every night doesn't mean you have to."

Aven watched as Kitten shuffled to the nightstand and situated her tattered college sweatshirt hanging off her shoulder. It was from her own one-night stand years ago, one she had confessed to Aven. But unlike Aven's nightly rendezvous with strangers, Kitten's sexual encounters were few and far between.

"Says someone who's had ten hours of beauty rest without a single nightmare," Aven remarked.

"Thanks to you it was only eight hours," Kitten grumbled. She bent over and picked up the lamp, sitting it back in place. Curling a lip, she slid the lacy underwear away with an empty liquor bottle. She looked around the nightstand and behind it, shoving the empty bottles left to right before kneeling on the floor, searching around the bed. When she rose from her scavenger hunt, she wasn't holding a shiny key like Aven hoped.

"This is the only part I like about acting like your crazy ex-wife." Kitten sighed, smiling at the cherry-red stilettos.

"Ah, yes. As if you don't have enough shoes in your closet from my little escapades." Aven grinned. He thought about all the times Kitten had come to his rescue. Five years they had been doing this. He would sleep with a stranger and message her if he had fallen asleep. This accidental doze off had been the fourth time now.

"Just my size," Kitten cooed, smoothing her hand over them as if they were her precious pet.

"Key, Kitten," Aven urged, jingling the chain.

Kitten put the shoes down. "What would you ever do without me?"

Aven followed her gaze as it traveled to the sheet partially covering his bare hips and moved his hand out of reach. Kitten huffed, gripped his hand, and jerked it toward her. The lock clicked, setting him free from his steel bond.

Rubbing his raw wrist, Aven glanced up with a grin. "The better question is, what would you ever do without me?"

"Get dressed. You're late and Vincent's already asking me where you are. Should I tell him it's because of your drunken night with the newbie cop or because you had to get fitted for a new suit for the charity ball?" She asked, holding up her phone.

"New suit sounds good," Aven said, interlocking his fingers behind his head. "Add a grand to your account. Get something nice for the gala."

"Buying my forgiveness again?"

"One of the perks of the job isn't it?" Aven winked and stood, wrapping the sheet around his waist.

Kitten blocked his way to the bathroom, not budging an inch.

Aven sighed. "This isn't morning wood."

"Aven," Kitten said in a motherly tone while putting her hands on the doorframe. "I can't come running to your rescue every time you text 911. It's not fair that I have to wake up early just to run over here and act like some deranged mental patient off her meds you knocked up a year ago."

"I thought you were my wife?" Aven smirked, crossing his arms. His smile further spread as he flexed his muscles, finding Kitten staring at his bicep.

She averted her fixed stare. "No, we're separated."

Aven tilted his head, thinking, Maybe I've been a tad selfish.

Kitten had always been there for him. It didn't matter what time of the night he called her, whether it was for a ride home or whenever he got into a situation with one of his encounters. Their deal had never included that she come to his rescue, only that she work for him as his personal assistant. It was only in the past few months that these rescues had become frequent.

"You're right. It's not fair. How about we make a new code, an acronym for 'help save me from this clingy one-night stand.'"

"The old one is fine. Just be more sparing with it, okay? I have a life too."

"Is that so? I could have sworn your life revolved around mine."

Kitten slit her eyes. "Conceited much?"

"So much. May I pass, oh dear wife of mine?"

Kitten dropped her hands and stepped to the side.

"Thank you, honey," Aven said, sweetly, kissing her quickly on the cheek. He halfway closed the bathroom door, making his way to the toilet and moaning in relief.

Kitten rolled her eyes before bringing them back to her phone to check her email. "I'm picking up your new suit from the dry cleaners. I'll text you your appointments for the day. And for once in your life, try to be one time."

Aven peeked his head out the door. "Yes, sweetie."

"Don't sweetie me. I really don't like you right now."

"Don't lie. You love me."

"Oh yeah? See if I come running to your rescue next time you're—"

"In a position?"

Kitten gritted her teeth in frustration as Aven whistled a tune, turning on his double-head shower.

"Your first appointment is at ten with Delgato. Then at twelve, Vincent wants you to come by after his kendo training and then at three-thirty . . . Aven! Are you even listening?"

He wasn't listening. He sang to himself, shutting the shower door.

"You're such an ass," she said to no one.

*Typical Aven. Always shrugging off responsibilities.*

She thought about walking right in and telling him she quit, but she knew if she did that it wouldn't go well. She would stutter over her words, seeing the steam rising over his toned body. She shook her head.

*Suffer through it, Katharine. Suck it up.*

Holding up the red stilettos, she smiled. "Hello, my beautiful darlings." She glanced back at the bathroom door, biting her lip. No. She would leave him to shower alone; although, the thought of strutting in wearing only high heels had crossed her mind. She braced herself on the dresser.

"Don't be stupid," her reflection ordered, glaring back at her. She squeezed her eyes shut, drew in a deep breath, and put on the stolen stilettos. She entered the personal elevator in the hall with her head held high and glared at the mirrored reflections of herself in the steel doors.

"You're a lioness, not a kitten," she coached. She would not let Aven get to her. Not today. She pressed the ground floor button and exited Aven's home, crossing the manicured lawn like a model on the runway to her canary-yellow Porsche. She slid her sunglasses on her face, traced her mouth with blood red lipstick, and emailed Mr. Delgato that Aven Grey would be thirty minutes late.

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