The Collar

By C. Jade Wyton

Tiffany has come home from church shaken. Constance found her, even after she moved. And he's sending clear, threatening messages. She has no idea what to do.

Contains mentions of stalking and threatening behaviour.

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The move into the new apartment had gone… as okay as could be expected.

Tiffany hadn't wanted it to be such a fast process— She'd wanted to ease the boys into it slowly. But… then all that drama with Constance had cropped up. And those demons —avarcian, she'd heard someone call them— had been watching her…. She'd hurried their move, on the advice of her friends and parents….

But it didn't seem to matter.

Constance had shown up at her church.

Her *church*.

During the Festival of Eggs— Havatii's day of worship!

And he'd *tried to speak to her sons!*

Tiffany thumbed at the little golden egg that Constance had told Logan to give to her, and let out a heavy sigh as she rolled onto her back to stare at her bedroom roof.

It was different. In a strange way. It wasn't that familiar pattern that she'd traced with her eyes a million times before… no. It was new, and different, and a much smoother and cleaner-looking texture than her old room.

Logan had been so stressed by the move. Asking questions. Asking *why* the plans had changed. *Why* everything had been so rushed….

And now Logan had been watching her with a new type of worry. He'd seen how stressed she was after seeing Constance, and after getting home he'd even tried to get her to tell him what was wrong. But she *couldn't*….

Could she?

Fuck.

He was too smart.

Tiffany missed the days where he couldn't tell that she was lying…. Not that she did it often; she *preferred* being honest with them. But Havatii's tits, she wished that when she *did* lie he wouldn't realise it.

Pop!

Tiffany thumbed the egg a little harder than she meant to and it opened with an audible sound that made her jolt in surprise.

'Aw, *fuck,*' she breathed as her shoulders relaxed. She was too on-edge….

A sniff, and Tiffany sat up so she could close the egg again…. But then, she paused.

The collar inside that Constance had clearly put inside to send a message….
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She pulled it out and examined it, running her thumb along the strip of fabric.

It was obviously expensive. Some fancy brand that she wouldn't know by name because it was *that* exclusive.

It was fucked up.

But also….

If this was implying what Tiffany thought it was implying —some sort of ownership over her— maybe that meant….

She swallowed, flopping back over and rolling to her side so she could continue examining the golden collar.

Maybe it meant that Constance saw some sort of value in her. Maybe it meant he wanted to keep her around.

And maybe it meant that he wouldn't try to take her boys away from her like Creedence had said he would. Or at least… maybe he wouldn't *leave her behind* if he decided he wanted them.

Slowly, Tiffany brought the collar to her neck and *clicked* it in place.

If was the perfect size.

She rolled to face the roof again, staring up blankly at the white-painted plaster.

The collar was soft on her gills; it sat just right so that it didn't rub against or irritate them. A rare find…. Something that she would have coveted before she had her boys.

It was just a shame that the man who had given it to her was fucking *batshit crazy*.

Tiffany pressed the empty egg shut again and let go of it; abandoning it to the mercy of her tangled-up bedsheets.

After seeing what happened to Creedence she just couldn't bare to imagine what Constance would do to her boys.

If he hurt them she'd—

She'd—

Tiffany took a deep breath, feeling it tremble in her chest as she pressed her hands against her eyes and let out a long, mournful whine.

She was too weak to do anything.

She was too fucking *weak* to protect her boys!

And Constance was slowly backing her into a corner. She could feel that.

He'd made it clear she couldn't run. That he'd find her wherever she went.

And she knew she couldn't fight him….

What the hell was she supposed to do?

Well… she could *try* to fight him, she supposed. Put her everything into it and hope and pray that she could beat him….

But he was so much bigger than her. And definitely stronger. And he had an entire mob of avarcians behind him….

And if she lost, then…. That'd be it, wouldn't it?

He'd win.

And he'd take her boys away.

And there'd be nothing she could do about it….

So, maybe….

Maybe it would be best to try and appease him?

—END—

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