

## The Luckiest Girl in the World

Akina Kato

**She lies silently**, her eyes cast down. The pale pink rosebuds on the faded floral wallpaper stare down at her like a thousand accusing eyes. Weak light seeps into the room through the broken venetian blinds. Surrounding her on the carpet is a glittering field of shattered crystal glass. She lies there, knowing that she must get up soon. That she must rearrange his home or he will be upset again. But instead, she lies unmoving. Whatever he does to her now, she knows she deserves it. He only does it because he cares. That's what he tells her. She believes him.

It isn't always like this. Sometimes he is a complete sweetheart, as charming and romantic as anything, never failing to treat her as if she is the only girl in the world. When in this spirit he can make her believe she must at least be the luckiest. Sometimes he comes to stay in absolute silence. In those times he is cold and unmoving, and pays her no notice. But no matter how long it is between times, he always eventually comes back, consumed with blinding rage. He has been changing more and more recently. It has her frightened.

She tries to lift herself from the floor but is too weak. Irritated with herself, she tries again and again, but never quite makes it further than a foot from the floor. She feels shame as tears escape the corners of her eyes, trickling down her

cheeks. As she struggles, fragments of the shattered crystal glass bowl cut into the palm of her hand. Seeing the shards, she feels sorry. She had always been fond of that bowl. It was beautiful and ornately cut with gold embossed leaf patterns. It had been a wedding gift from her mother. She makes another attempt at rising before, resigned, she sinks back to the floor, rolling over and pulling her bleeding hand to her stomach, trying not to make a mess of the carpet.

She has lost track of how long she's been there. He came home sometime last night but she doesn't remember when. He left very early in the morning without a second glance. She doesn't blame him, but instead feels guilty for the relief she felt when he finally went away. She should love him unconditionally, not be relieved by his absence.

Her eyes sweep the room methodically, analysing each and every spot that is out of place. She knows when she is finally able to get up, she must know what is to be cleaned and fixed so that they can be put in order quickly. The mess is worse than usual. Most of the porcelain figures have fallen from their shelves and are in jagged pieces on the floor. They will need to be thrown out.

A patch in the corner of the room is stained with red wine, the deep crimson liquid has sunken into the carpet; a little more is splattered on the walls. From experience she knows this will come out. It will be difficult, but with enough effort only the faintest of stains will remain. All around the room, heavy oak chairs are tipped over and a small table leans lopsidedly against the cabinet, one of its legs snapped, sharp splinters of wood exploding from the broken ends. *Nothing I can do there*, she sighs.

She knows why he becomes like this. It's because he is busy with his work. Because people don't appreciate him. Because when he finally gets home he has to deal with her being slow, neglectful and stupid. She knows this and he never

fails to remind her. She agrees with him, but sometimes in the back of her mind she wonders if she could ever run away. But she loves him too much. She also knows there'd be nowhere to run. He tells her that too. She believes him. He doesn't lie.

Panic takes over as she shifts her gaze to the clock, somehow still standing on its shelf despite the chaos of broken things around it. Her time is ticking away. She hears the faint rumble of a car engine down the street. With a jolt of adrenalin, she lifts her aching body from the floor onto her hands and knees, desperately grabbing at the shards of glass and porcelain surrounding her. She doesn't feel the pain as their jagged edges slice into her hands, only the sheer terror and the violent beating of her heart. She only becomes aware of them as droplets of blood begin to seep from the wounds, spotting the carpet and the glittering fragments. The realisation sinks in that she must remove it before it dries onto the fibres. Clinging to the venetian blinds, she wills herself onto her feet. Reluctantly letting go, she takes one shaky step after another towards the kitchen. Footsteps sound outside the door. In her panic she barely hears the metallic click of the front door opening. Her heart seems to stop cold, the sudden shock causing her to stumble. Pain shoots through her side as she hits the floor.

She lays her head back down against the rough carpet knowing there is nothing more she can do.



He looks down at his wife's vulnerable form, surrounded by glinting shards of crystal glass, bruises blossoming on her thighs and neck, her face swollen, dark circles around her eyes. Her left arm sits at an uncomfortable angle to her body, while the palm of her right hand bleeds onto her crumpled dress. He lays his hands over the bruises, aligning his fingers to each of the marks. He feels no regret. It was not he who had made

them. It was another person from another time. A person who is angry and violent. That is not him. He loves her. He leans over and places a kiss on her forehead. She knows he loves her. He knows she loves him. He knows that she will never leave him alone.



**Akina Kato** wrote this in 2012 when she was a student at Moreton Bay College in Queensland.