

“Tough”

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[30 Days of Writing](#) – One Word Prompts
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Day 2: “Tough”

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There was a ringing in her ears, loud enough to drown out all other sounds. CJ was vaguely aware of someone shouted, but they sounded muffled. Far away. She shook her head.

Bad idea.

Pain shot through her skull, sharp enough to make her wince. She pressed one hand to her forehead while the other held onto the wall for stability. Everything swayed, then pulsed in time with the pounding in her head. Her vision clouded and the dimly lit alley darkened even more.

Godsdamn it. No! She would *not* pass out.

She had to get her bearings. Shake it off. She'd been in worse scrapes than this. She was tough. She'd be fine.

Fuck. She scented blood. It took second for her to realize that it wasn't her blood, thank the gods. It was more acidic, sharper. Something definitely not human in the slightest. Her hybrid blood had a different sort of tang to it—muted, more human than demon.

Of course she hadn't been jumped by some random, human mugger. She knew there had to be something supernatural at work here. For someone to knock her for a loop, there had to be.

The satisfaction at being right with her assumption was short-lived. She really shouldn't be surprised. Town was full of demons, and not all of them looked demonic. Some looked downright human. Scents were tricky too, but in this case, with fresh blood in the air, there was no mistaking it.

The scent of blood also meant she'd gotten a few good hits in, and that gave her more satisfaction. That too couldn't last long.

Too much time had passed. The demon could've killed her, but it must've fled, or else was in hiding, watching and waiting. CJ had been off her guard for too long. Disorientation still clung to her, a haze that made everything moved far slower than it should've. She pushed off from the wall where she leaned. She cast her gaze around her, seeking out clues to where this demon might be, but there was no sight of it.

The fog began to lift. CJ blinked a few times, her eyes already adjusted to the darkness, vision impeccable. But she saw nothing. Whatever it was, was long gone. The scent of its blood still lingered in the air. She could follow it, but she didn't know if she'd be able to track it far without any other clues.

“Yeah, probably fucking hiding,” she murmured. She pushed hair out of her eyes and continued down the alley. This time, she was more vigilant, keeping an eye out. She might've been tough, and it would probably take a lot more than a demon shoving her head first into a wall, but she wasn't going to take any chances.

Not tonight. Not ever.