

DRY ICE

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NINA:

'Beautiful, she was.

With caramel skin that flinged back the light like the tip of a cliff licks the sky. With illuminous dark hair that skimmed the air like it was about to make a shiny black waterfall full of follicles. Impossible, I know but anyway, it was her singing that took the world by storm.

Fan groups were formed on a minute by minute basis, pictures of her face were torn from magazines, downloads of her live performances were obscene - numbers so high whole towns were blocked, stopped from getting Wi-Fi so they rewound and crowned her princess of their Sky Plus - trust me, it was next level.

She'd never expected it. She was just a girl from an estate in Essex who loved her mum. And happened to work nights on a pole at the same club as me cos she chose to. The tabloids had more fun than if a footballer had shagged a royal, cos not only was she a stripper, she also had a long past full of gangs and drugs and convictions for muggings and grievous bodily harm. But she swore down she was calm now. The only thing she felt crazy about was winning - and singing of course. The public voted in their millions, her winning was such a sure thing bookies stopped taking bets. She'd come into work to vacate her locker, get her shoes and make-up bag and say goodbye. We hugged and cried and sang with fags in our hand. But then her ex-man had to intervene.

He'd not been too happy about her world domination, specially seeing as he required round the clock medical attention from where he'd taken a shot in the back on a job they'd done that had gone very wrong.

Bonnie and Clyde, Beyoncé and Jay-Z - that's what she used to tell him they could be. But that was before. Now he tore his hair from his head in fits of rage about the life she was living whilst he shat in a bag and got calloused hands from the two wheels that hardly concealed his immobility.

Despite his ailments he still had a few fail-safe street soldiers from back in the day that would keep food from their own kids for him, he would always be their king. So on his orders, they kidnapped the now famous girl's mum and crossed barbed wire and borders to make sure they wouldn't be found.

The girl, my friend, was beside herself even when Cheryl Cole told her the judges' expense accounts were there for just this sort of thing (*and Cheryl were actually quite excited, almost missing the criminality of her own upbringing*).

The ransom wasn't money though, the demand was simple: she had to go. Leave the show. The world screamed out in a unanimous NO!

But she did it. She left and the mother was returned safely, but the poor girl was soon left bereft anyway as the dear mum couldn't stand the huge sacrifice her daughter had made, so her heart stirred and it started to break and one day she never woke up from the ache.

Sad, innit.

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Crazy, but last I heard she was seen wheeling him around Westfield, in the village where all the posh shops are - Louis Vuitton I think it was, so I guess in the end it didn't all go that wrong.