

FALLING
Book three in the Fading Series
Publishing date: December 9, 2013
© 2013 by E.K. Blair

Prologue

Two pills. Two fuckin' blue pills. I swore I'd stop this shit, but I can't stand the pain that still radiates in the back of my head where he shattered his beer bottle the other night. I hate that I'm just like him—dependent on this shit. *Fuck it.*

Tossing them into my mouth, I pour the cheap tequila down my throat and relish the burn that sings in my chest. My body falls lifelessly back onto the bed while the muffled music pounds through the walls.

“Give me some,” Rene says. Or is it Rachel? Who the hell cares? She pulls the bottle out of my hand and takes a draw of the amber liquid.

Handing it back to me, all I see is a hazy shadow as I feel her crawl on top of me. This chick leeches herself to me when I walked into this party earlier. I knew she'd be an easy lay, and when she shoves her hand down my pants and grabs my dick, she proves me right.

I don't even try to focus as my body starts to weigh down from the effects of the pills. I love this feeling. Numb. Heavy. Warm. Hazy. It takes me over, and I don't even realize that this girl is now fucking me until I look up. Closing my eyes, I begin to drift. Drift from the hell that consumes me. It's Saturday night. The night he stays out late drinking just to come home and impale everything he hates about his life into me.

Waking up, head still heavy, vision clearer, I sit on the edge of the bed. I look over my shoulder and see some redhead, naked, sleeping. *Who is she?* I don't remember what happened, but I know we screwed because my pants are flung across the room, and I see the used condom on the floor.

My watch says it's after one in the morning, and I need to get home. Pulling on my pants, I stumble slightly as I make my way through the house filled with people I barely know, drinking, dancing, making out.

When I start my car, I know I shouldn't be driving, but I also know that I need to go because my dad normally drags his drunk-ass in around this time. I hate knowing that my mom will be there alone with him.

Pulling up to the dark grey, two-story house I have always lived in, I can't help but think about how the impeccably manicured structure is simply a mask for the madness that lives within. My stomach clenches when I see his truck in the driveway. I shut the car off and rush inside, but I know I'm too late when I hear my mother crying. Bolting through the house and into the kitchen, I get there just in time to see my dad swinging his arm around and smashing a coffee mug into the side of her head. Turning to face me, her face is void as she falls to the floor, blood everywhere.

"What are you looking at, you piece of shit?" he spits at me, and I fuckin' lose it.

My body roils with vengeance when I charge at him, and we tumble, crashing to the floor. Rage takes over as I begin to pound my fists into his face relentlessly. Over and over. Skin splitting. Blood gushing. The sounds of my mom screaming and the grunts I force out with every blow to his face are a distant echo in my head.

He thrashes beneath me, but I don't stop. I know I'm gonna kill him, and I hope I do. My teeth snap shut when he drives his palm into my jaw, causing me to bite my tongue. He continues to fight his way out from under me, flailing his arms, and dumping shit everywhere when he yanks one of the kitchen drawers out of its tracks.

My mouth fills with blood, and just when I spit it into his face, I fall over onto the floor.

"Fuck!" I scream through gritted teeth as I grab my side. I hear the clatter of metal falling to the ground and watch my father's black boots stumbling away from me.

Cold shivers prick at my body, and my vision fades as my breathing becomes more and more shallow. My mother's warm arms scoop my shoulders onto her lap as she cries, and I let my head fall to the side. When I see the bloody butcher's knife, I lift my shaking hand that's clutched to my side and raise it in front of my face. All I see is red.

I wake up the next morning, body sore and twenty-seven stitches in my side, along my ribs, where that son of a bitch stabbed me last night. Sitting up, I flinch against the stinging flesh. My mom is still asleep. I made her stay in my bed last night in case my father came back home, which he didn't.

I quietly make my way downstairs and feel the guilt from everything that happened last night flood through my veins. If I'd never gone out, my mother probably wouldn't be sleeping in my bed with a concussion and stitches in her head.

I've been so selfish lately and getting too fucked up on ecstasy and alcohol to protect my mom. The drinking, the drugs, the rage that fired through me last night—I'm him. He's a part of me. He runs through my blood. I hate him. I don't want to be him, but I am.

Having him consume me like this makes me sick to my stomach, and I swear to God, I will do everything I can to avoid what I fear is destined to be my future. I've gotta stop the fuckin' pills. I've gotta . . .

A loud knocking on the door pulls me out of my thoughts, and when I make my way to the front of the house and open the door, two cops are standing there, staring at me with a look I can't quite make out.

Taking off his hat, one cop asks, "Is this the home of Richard Campbell?"

