

ACCESS GRANTED

Hi there!

I'm so glad you grabbed your exclusive content today.

Inside these pages, you'll find an exclusive character interview where I sit down with one of my star characters in an effort to learn more about her.

You'll also find special to-do-list pages you can use in your life right now. Simply print them and use them to keep track of tasks.

Turn the page to get started!

All the best,

Jody Calkins

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Turn the page for an exclusive interview with Kallis, the main female character in my latest novel *Sabotage* (The Hexon Code, Book 7).

CHARACTER INTERVIEW

Date: 1/17/2022

Character: Kallis

Book Series: The Hexon Code

Relevant Books: *Sabotage* (#7) and the upcoming book, *Outrage* (#8)

Relevant Genres: Post-Apocalyptic, Dystopian, Thriller, Adventure/Survival Stories, Drama

I sat down with Kallis to ask her some questions about her life. What was it like back before the meteor disaster, after the disaster, and up until the gangs took over the city of Detroit. I wanted to find out her fondest childhood memories, and how she had seen the world around her back then. See if I could tap into her character before her life was changed. She was reluctant to talk to me. But she finally agreed.

As I approached the front door, I took note of the scraggly yellowed grass, sprinkled with green, the broken concrete of the walkway, and the overgrowth of weeds. In an earlier time, the lawn would have been mown, the weeds would have been pulled, and the walkway would have been smooth. Those days were long gone. When the meteor disaster occurred in the late 80s, and the survivors had been rounded up by guards, everything had been left behind to rot. The group I had encountered, Eric's group, made a living outside the cities. He and his eldest brothers had evaded the guards and continued to do so despite the cities' recovery missions.

I was unclear how they managed to evade the guards. But given the expanse of the wilderness now, where nature had begun to reclaim its land, and the increasing populations in each of the cities, I had to imagine the guards were occupied. Too busy to conduct thorough searches. It was also possible that each of the cities' governments were less interested in finding survivors now. There couldn't have been many survivors anyway. And what good could a few extra people do for the city? It probably wasn't worth the effort.

When I reached my hand out to knock on the door, it opened and Eric appeared. I sucked in a shallow breath at the sight of him standing before me. He was just as I had imagined him: shaved head and trimmed beard, like he had used the same length setting on a set of hair clippers for both. He wore faded denim jeans and a black long-sleeved shirt that stretched tight across wide shoulders.

"Welcome," he said with a warm smile as he held the door and stepped aside to let me in.

I returned the smile. "Thank you." I stepped across the threshold and welcomed the warmth from the large fire burning in the living room's stone fireplace.

Kallis was in the kitchen, standing at the island and pouring steaming water into two mugs. Her long brown hair concealed her face from view. But when she turned her head and looked up, her hair swept aside. The way her gaze shifted from me to Eric almost instantly, she seemed uncertain,

like she didn't know if she could trust me. When I said, 'hi', her expression brightened the slightest bit.

"Hi," she said, her voice so quiet I could barely hear it. She cleared her throat as she turned her head to watch Eric move past her and open the pantry door. Then she asked, her voice a notch higher, "Tea?"

"Anything warm is fine," I replied, rubbing my hands together as I sat down on the nearest bar stool. "It's frigid out there."

Her slight smile widened some more. "You're lucky this isn't Michigan."

I chuckled. "That's true. I can't handle the northern cold as well as I used to."

She tilted her head. "Are you from there?"

Before I could reply, Eric touched her arm gently and said, "I'll be outside if you need me."

She looked up at him and gave him a small smile. "Okay."

"You'll be fine here?"

She nodded.

He eyed her for a moment.

"I'll be okay," she said quietly. "It'll be fine."

It was curious watching their exchange. He seemed to be taking his role as stand-in protector seriously. But did he want more from her? Or was he okay with their level of interaction? I made a mental note to inquire with him later.

"If you need anything, I'm here."

"Okay."

We both watched him until he disappeared down the hallway. When the front door closed, she said, "He's been great."

I nodded. "Good," I said. "I'm glad he's been here for you."

"So, where are you from? Michigan?"

I shook my head. "Minnesota."

She looked thoughtful. "I've never been there."

"I moved away when I was seventeen."

"Where did you go after that?"

"Colorado. Traveled around a bit and ended up in Virginia. But enough about me. Do you like it here?"

She shrugged. "The winters are still cold."

"Would you like to move farther south?"

She shrugged again. "By myself?"

"You could," I replied. "If that's what you want."

She sighed. "I don't know."

She seemed more troubled than undecided, like she knew what she wanted, but was afraid to go after it.

"What is it that you want, Kallis?" I asked quietly.

She bit her lip as her brows knitted. She blinked her eyes quickly as she shook her head. "It's too late. He's gone." Her voice sounded strained.

"Who is gone?" I wanted to make sure we were on the same page. After all, she could have been referring to an earlier time. She could have been referring to her father.

"He's not coming back, is he?" she asked.

"Henry?" When she nodded, I sighed. "He is."

"When?"

"I'm not sure."

"Why did he leave?"

"It was better for you."

She chewed on her bottom lip. "How is this better?"

"I didn't think you loved him."

"Does that matter?"

"I don't know. I guess not."

She looked away and stared out the window.

"He's done some terrible things, Kallis," I said. "You deserve better."

She blinked back tears.

"Nothing says you have to stay with him. When he does come back."

She bowed her head.

"Just because he knows all the details doesn't mean you can't be with someone else. It doesn't have to be him."

She let out a ragged breath.

"Why do you think he's all you deserve?"

"He's not all that bad."

I studied her thoughtfully.

"He's not perfect. But no one is."

I couldn't quite figure out her thought process. Maybe it was age and lack of experience. Lack of self-respect and confidence. Or maybe she was comparing Henry to all the other guys. Carl had been much worse. For a woman in Detroit, life would be much different. Things were done differently there. In ways I didn't fully understand.

"Is that what you wanted to talk about?" she asked. "What I deserve?"

I swallowed hard. "Not really."

"Then why?"

"I wanted to get to know you. Learn about your life before the gangs took over Detroit."

She bit down hard on her lip. No doubt trapped in the scene of her father's death.

"Tell me about the meteor disaster," I said, trying to change the subject. "How old were you then?"

"I was six." She took a moment to sip her tea. "I don't remember much. My father was a guard with the city, so we stayed underground for a while. A week or two."

“Waiting for the air to clear of the poisonous gas?”

“Yeah.”

I nodded slightly as I made mental notes. “Did you return to your home afterwards?”

“We never went back there. We stayed in an apartment building. I think it had been closed for renovations, so it was empty at the time. I remember people from the underground bunker moving into nearby apartments, too.”

“How many people were inside the bunker?”

It took her a few seconds to reply. Finally, she shook her head. “I don’t know.”

That part of the story, nearly everything that had happened during and right after the meteor disaster was still a mystery to me. Those events I had yet to explore. Interviews with Donovan and Vincent were in order.

The one part I did know was that at least more than half of the population had died. So much death. Bodies sprawled in the streets or decaying in vehicles, families huddled together in their homes. Those who breathed in the poisonous air didn’t have a chance. They either died within minutes or suffered from side effects later on.

“Did you ever move out of that apartment?”

“No. We never left the city. There was no reason to. Everyone was dead, right?”

I nodded. “I believe so. Guards across the United States rounded up the survivors and forced them to live inside the cities.”

Her expression hardened as she stared into her mug. “Did other cities sterilize their population?”

I wanted to reach out and give her hand a gentle squeeze, but I didn’t really know how she would react. Instead, I said, “I’m not sure. I haven’t heard of any others.”

“Henry had said the gangs were failing to keep the city going. We were running out of food.”

I watched her swirl the pad of her thumb over the glazed ceramic. I wanted her to keep talking on her own, without any prodding, so I let her take her time.

“I think that’s why the city sterilized us. To control the population because their own efforts were failing.”

“Detroit was one of the cities that struggled the most, from what I understand.”

“It’s wrong.”

I nodded slightly as I shifted my gaze to the fireplace and listened to the crackling of the wood. Kallis sniffled. And from the corner of my eye, I saw her wiping at her face.

We sat in silence for a couple minutes as I let her work out her emotions.

She let out a heavy sigh. “I just don’t understand how they thought it was a viable option.”

“For the greater good...” I meant it for the joke that it was.

She huffed. “They could have released people instead. Let them go off on their own. Survive on their own outside of the city.”

“They could have,” I said, agreeing with her idea. I didn’t want to mention the fact that Detroit’s officials wouldn’t have had control of their people that way. Sterilizing the population had been a

faulty move. And they had lost control of the people anyway when the gangs took over and killed the officials.

I had yet to find out her fondest childhood memory and transport her to an earlier time that could bring her joy or comfort, but I felt I was overstaying my welcome. She was closed off. Stuck in the reality of her recent past. Lost, perhaps. But maybe I could end the interview on a positive note.

“What will you do when Henry comes back?” I asked.

She cocked her head, giving me a questioning look. “What do you mean?”

“Do you have any plans for when he returns? Will you stay here? Go somewhere else?”

“Um,” she said quietly as she looked away. “I think we’ll leave this place and go south. Where it’s warmer.”

I gave her a warm smile. “That sounds lovely.”

The corners of her mouth lifted slightly as she nodded.

“Thank you for talking to me today,” I said, standing up from the stool. “And thank you for the tea.”

Her smile widened some more. She walked me to the door. And before I could get outside, she wrapped her arms around me. “Thank you for bringing my story to life.”

I blinked back my own tears as I tightened my embrace. “You’re welcome.”

As I walked along the concrete path to my car, I let out a slow, ragged breath. It saddened me and brought more tears to my eyes that she was still so far from recovery. I wasn’t sure what it would take for her to overcome her past. Would she ever be able to see that she deserved so much more? That she was worth so much more? No one could tell her that. She’d never believe it. She had to learn it on her own somehow. Maybe she really did need Henry. Maybe he was the only one who could eventually push her into believing she deserved more. For her sake, I was glad Henry was coming back. I just didn’t know when.

**Stay tuned for *Outrage*, the 8th book in The Hexon Code series!
Coming soon!**

To grab all the available books in the series, go [HERE!](#)

Instructions for the following To-Do List pages

Each page is designed to print on regular 8.5" x 11" printer paper. Simply select the page numbers for the corresponding designs you would like to print, set the page sizing to "Shrink oversized pages" (or in some cases, "Fit to Page"), unselect "Print on both sides of paper" (if needed), and then hit "Print".

Be sure to check the print preview before printing to ensure each page will print properly and within your printer's margin settings.

The pages work best printed in color and on a laser printer.

That's it!

I hope you enjoy the pages! I've been using them in my monthly planner since the start of the new year to keep track of my "doable tasks".

You can hole-punch them and stick them in a three-ring binder. That's what I do for all of my planning.

All the best,
Jody Calkins

Noable Tasks List

A decorative border surrounds the central writing area. It features a dark blue background with various colorful elements: several beetles in different colors (red, green, blue, pink) and patterns (spots, stripes, plain); various types of flowers in shades of blue, pink, red, and white; and green leaves of different shapes and sizes. The central area is a light grey rectangle with a white cursive title and horizontal lines for writing.

Noable Tasks List

Noable Tasks List

Noable Tasks List

A series of horizontal lines for writing tasks, set against a background illustration of a whimsical village with a stone house, a wooden signpost, and a fence.



Neable Tasks List

