

Broken | 6: Steaks

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LILY

“There’s no way you can eat all of that,” Mason says to me, looking at the two giant steaks that have just been placed in front of us.

“I know. But I want to try,” I say, picking up my knife and fork.

“I bet you I can finish mine,” he smirks, no traces of what happened at the waterfall left on his face.

“I’ll believe it when I see it,” I laugh.

Turns out after all the exercise—and the crying—we’ve done today, we’re starving.

We tear into the steaks like a couple of wolves.

Twenty minutes later, we’re both almost finished.

Mason has one bite left, and I have maybe three.

“I’m so full,” I groan, leaning back in my seat and patting my bloated belly. “I’m going to explode.”

“You’re so close. You can do it, princess,” Mason says, glaring at his last bite.

I push down my next two bites, leaving the last piece on my fork.

Mason grins, tapping his chunk of steak against mine before we both chew and swallow the last of it.

“We actually did it!” I exclaim happily.

“Holy shit,” the waiter gasps, looking at our empty plates. “I mean, good job.” He corrects himself, shaking his head.

He laughs, lifting up a camera. “Say cheese!”

He snaps a photo of us for the wall, adding it to the lineup of other black-and-white photos of people smiling in front of their empty plates.

“I can’t move,” I groan, holding my stomach. “You have to carry me to the car.”

It's obviously a joke, but before I know it, Mason pulls me out of my seat and actually lifts me up in his arms.

"What are you doing?" I squeak.

"Your chariot awaits, princess," he chuckles, carrying me out to the car just like I asked.

I laugh and pretend to put up a fight the whole way, but secretly, I don't want to be anywhere else but in Mason's strong arms.

I already miss them when he sets me down in the passenger's seat.

Mason starts the car, and we drive in silence for a few minutes, some pop song on the radio.

I glance over at him. The soft glow from the dashboard lights up his face. He looks sad.

"You okay?" I ask.

"No," he says. "I don't want this night to end."

"Me neither! End of the night means the end of the summer, means..."

He finishes my thought. "End of us."

I nod sadly.

He grips the wheel tightly with both hands.

I take one of his hands, pull it to me, hold it in my lap. I feel him relax.

He breaks the silence, speaking softly. "What if the end of the night didn't have to mean the end of us? What if we tried?"

"To be together?"

"Yeah," he says, "I mean if you want to."

"The gossip and the hate would be non-stop," I say.

"Who cares what they think? It's our relationship, not theirs."

"Between school and your football practice we'll never see each other," I say.

"Nights, weekends, six a.m. runs, we'll find the time."

"You're going to keep making me wake up at six a.m. to run even after school starts?" I poke him in the ribs playfully.

He laughs. "Oh my god," I squeal, "What about football games? Would I have to cheer for you?"

"Of course!"

"But you'll be trying to crush my school!" I tease.

"Fine, you can cheer for your dumb school," he says, "but after the game you have to give me a rub down."

"I could live with that," I say, eyeing his biceps under his tight T-shirt.

At a red light, he turns and looks at me, waiting for an answer.

"You really think we can make this work?" I ask.

"I know we can," he says. "We just have to want it enough."

"I don't know," I say. "It all feels so complicated, so hard. I know I shouldn't care about what other people think, but I'm scared."

He pulls his hand back and grips the wheel again.

"It's not that I don't want to, it's just that... I mean, I just got hurt. I don't know if I could go through that again."

"I'd never hurt you," he says with a look of determination. "I'm not like him."

"I know you're not like him. You're so much... more. But people would get between us, gossip, pick fights. It could get ugly."

He stares at me for a beat, then turns away as anger flickers on his face.

"Okay, yeah. I get it. It's not worth it."

"Mason, it's not about being wor..."

"It's fine. Really," he says sharply to cut me off.

It feels like a punch to the gut.

He floors it when the light turns green, stares at the road ahead, trying to hide his anger.

I want to take his hand again.

Why didn't I just say yes? Hasn't this been the best few weeks of my life? Isn't Mason worth whatever will happen?

I wish I was brave enough to go after what I want.

He pulls up in front of my house and forces a smile. "It's been fun, princess."

I say yeah and give him a hug.

I feel his muscular body under his shirt and smell his body.

He tries to let go, but I won't let him.

The kiss starts soft, but it doesn't stay that way for long.

His hand moves to my cheek, tilting my face toward him, and I reach out, gripping his shirt as I lean into him.

His hands move to my waist and I don't even realize I've climbed onto his lap until his arms are around me, holding me tightly.

The kiss deepens and we grind against each other.

His lips, his touch, his smell, I can't get enough of it.

But then he pulls back suddenly, resting his forehead against mine as we both catch our breath.

His hands stay on my waist, his fingers gripping me like he doesn't want to let go.

"We should stop," he says, his voice low and rough. "It'll just make this harder."

I nod, even though no part of me actually wants to stop. "Yeah. You're right."

We settle back into our seats, catch our breath.

I should get out now, walk inside my house.

Instead I say, "Can I stay with you tonight?"

"You sure?" he asks.

I'm not sure. I don't know what I want.

But before my brain can finish processing, my mouth says, “Yes.”

Mason holds my hand tightly as we walk into his home and upstairs to his bedroom.

The whole time I’m holding on as tightly as I can, wishing he’d never let go.

We sit down on his bed, stare at each other.

“Did you mean what you said that night?” I ask, deciding I need to know and I don’t care if he thinks I’m an idiot for bringing it up weeks later.

“That if I was your girlfriend, you’d kiss me whenever you got the chance? That you would—”

Mason’s lips press roughly into mine, cutting me off.

I kiss him back just as roughly, wrapping my arms around his head and pulling him closer.

“You have no idea what I’d do for you, Lily,” he says against my lips before kissing me again.

“Tell me,” I whisper, closing my eyes as his lips start kissing down my neck.

He groans into my neck. “Whatever you wanted, I’d do it for you.

I’d kiss you in front of everyone so they know I’m yours.” His hands push my shirt up and splay over my stomach, thumbs brushing beneath the waistband of my denim shorts.

“I’d make you feel so good, you’d forget anyone else has ever touched you.”

“Mason,” I gasp, clinging to him desperately, needing more.

His green eyes darken with lust as he pulls me down onto his bed.

“Anything you want, princess. It’s yours,” he promises, settling me in his lap and running his hands up my thighs.

“All you have to do is ask.”

“I want...” I break off panting as he rolls his hips up into mine.

I’ve always known what I want. “I want you, Mason.”

Next Chapter

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