

Chapter 30: Take Care Of Riley

###FLASHBACK###

Over six years ago, in Sweden.

Adrian was sitting up in the hospital bed, recovering from his spinal and leg injuries. The doctors came in and gave him the news that broke his heart.

"We now have the complete evaluation of your situation, Adrian," the primary doctor said. "The surgery saved your life and your ability to make use of your upper body. However, you won't be able to walk again."

"No! That can't be!" Adrian's grandfather, Abner, reacted. "I did not pay you millions of dollars just to give me and my grandson that answer!" 1

The loud screams did not stop there. Abner King continued to berate the doctors from outside Adrian's hospital room.

"You told me my grandson had an 80% chance of recovery? What is this now? So Adrian belongs to the lower 20%?"

"You are fired!"

"Get me another doctor!"

"I want the best doctors for my grandson!"

Adrian King was not a man of weak heart, but to imagine a life

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without running, playing basketball, hiking, biking, and possibly walking next to Riley Allen in the school's hallways crushed his spirits.

So, when Brian Martin, Adrian's close friend, called to check on him one day, he told him about his status, "I don't know when I can return. I might not be able to walk again." 3

"Fuck, Adrian, don't give up just yet! Think of Riley!" Brian suggested. 1

Adrian had longed to tell Brian that he liked Riley. He had always watched out for her since the day he saved her from drowning, but how could he think of Riley now? Will Riley even want to be with a man who cannot walk?

"There is something I need to tell you, Adrian. You know how you asked me to put that Japanese chocolate on her desk?" Brian said. "Well, she -"

"Don't tell her it was me who saved her," Adrian interrupted. "In fact, don't give her any more chocolates. I don't know what the future holds for me, Brian. I don't know -"

"Are you sure? Can you let her go?" Brian asked. 1

"Could I let her go?" Adrian thought. He hadn't confessed his feelings to Riley or spent much time with her, but her beauty and unique character completely enthralled him. Adrian had always intended to pursue her, but how could he do that now?

Adrian studied himself. He could barely move or even go to the bathroom. He was attached to a urine bag and could not even clean

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his dirt. All Adrian could think was how he could not pursue the love he yearned for. 1

"I can't think right now, Brian, but do me a favor," Adrian requested.

"Anything, Bro," Brian answered.

"Please, watch Riley for me." Sucking in a deep breath, Adrian said, "I will try to fight this. I don't know how long it takes, but I will do my best."

"Just please, promise me, while I am away, take care of Riley," Adrian asked.

There was a long pause before Brian answered, "Sure, Adrian. I am... looking out for her already." 2

"Thank you, Brian," Adrian said before their call ended.

Adrian acknowledged how his recovery was a very lengthy process. The doctors who said they could not let him walk were replaced over and over again.

Thankfully, after a year of treatment and pushing himself, Adrian strengthened his lower body, even if only slightly. It wasn't enough for him to walk or stand, but it was significant progress. This improvement led him to finally decide to return to Halliport. To Adrian's dismay, however, he discovered that Brian cared for Riley more than he should.

The discovery of Brian's betrayal resulted in a fight between Brian and Adrian. Even if Adrian was in a wheelchair, he punched Brian

with all his might.

They were in the university's gymnasium when Adrian confronted his former friend. He asked, "How could you, Brian? No wonder you stopped calling! I asked you to take care of her, not take her -"

"She wasn't yours to begin with, Adrian? Have you lost your mind?" Brian shot back after feeling the swell on his face. "We fell in love, and we couldn't help it. I love her, and she loves me! Are you going to take that away from her?"

When Adrian froze in his seat, Brian said, "Yeah, I thought so. You were gone for a year, Adrian. What did you expect? The world doesn't revolve around Adrian King." 5

END OF FLASHBACK

Back to the present.

'Was it my fault?' Adrian turned to the sleeping beauty resting on his chest. He wondered, 'If I had not gotten into that accident, would I have won Riley over?' 1

'If I had not asked Brian to look after Riley, would they still end up together?' He took a deep breath and asked himself, 'If I had told Riley that I had saved her, would things turn out differently?'

"Hmmm," Riley hummed and got comfortable in his arms. It made Adrian smile, and he also moved her closer to him.

"We are nearly there, boss," Miguel announced.

Adrian stared at the approaching port. Then, he glanced at Riley's

beautiful face. She did not wear make-up on the way back, making her look very refreshing.

Riley's skin was smooth, radiant, and healthy, with a natural glow. It had an even tone and was free of blemishes or discoloration. Her nose was long and pointed, and her lips were pink.

To Adrian, Riley was perfect. Therefore, he couldn't accept that Brian had abandoned her.

"Boss?" Miguel asked. "Will I call Max for the pickup?"

"No," Adrian answered. "Go around for an hour. Just... do it slowly."

While Miguel turned around to give his boss more time with his girlfriend, Adrian continued to study Riley's sleeping frame. He said, "This time, Riley, I will stop at nothing."

An hour later, Riley finally awoke. She was shocked to see the sunset! She asked, "What time is it?"

She checked her watch and exclaimed, "It's five in the afternoon? What happened, Adrian? Why did we take so long to arrive?"

Adrian cleared his throat and said, "Miguel, he - he got lost." 3

Riley's mouth fell open while Miguel choked on his own saliva. 4

"And there was also a little traffic at the port earlier," Adrian added.

"Miguel?" Riley snapped at the boat driver. "How could you get lost in

+25 BONUS


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the sea? Haven't you made this trip over a hundred times?"

"Ah, there is always a first time, Miss Allen," Miguel answered. "Haha! I got distracted earlier. Sorry for the delay." 7

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“May 27, 2024. Chapter 2-2. The next update is tomorrow.”

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