

## Dating 92

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Noah's POV

My hands trembled as I left the coffee shop. Ella's face, a whirlwind of emotions, was etched into my mind. She had listened, really listened, and I had poured my heart out in a way I never thought I could. But now, all I could do was replay the words that I had said to her. They all felt so stupid

As I walked back to my dorm, memories from the past began to flood my mind, pulling me back to when it all started. I was eight years old when my parents brought Liam home. He was seven, all wide-eyed and scared.

They told me he was going to be my new brother. I had always wanted a sibling, someone to share my adventures with, someone who would be my partner in crime.

For a while, things were good. We played sports together, had epic video game battles, and watched movies late into the night. I remember how we used to build forts out of blankets and pillows in the living room, pretending we were knights defending our castle. Those were some of the best times of my life.

But it didn't last.

It started small. Little things like my parents asking me to include Liam in everything I did. I was okay with that. But soon, it became clear that the way they treated Liam was different. Special. Whenever we went out, people fawned over him. They praised his strength, his confidence, his potential. All because he was an Alpha, and I was just a Beta.

My parents began to push me aside, their focus shifting almost entirely to Liam. Every time I wanted to do something, I had to consider Liam. It was like I had ceased to exist as an individual. My resentment grew with every passing day. Ww.nove(lWoR(m).c0(m)

Flashback

I remember one particular day vividly. We were at the park, and I was excited to show my parents my new hockey move. But as soon as we got there, they were all over Liam, talking about how amazing he was at baseball. My mom didn't even look at me when I called out to her. She was too busy watching Liam.

"Look at him go, Noah!" she had said, her eyes shining with pride.

I had turned away, my heart sinking. It was always about Liam. Always.

The final straw came when Ella moved across the street. She was different, intriguing. I had an immediate crush on her, and the thought of her liking Liam the way everyone else did terrified me.

So, I made my move. I went over to her house, started hanging out with her, being the friendly, charming guy I knew I could be, I talked badly about Liam, made him seem like the bad guy.

Ella believed me. She stayed away from Liam, and for a while, it felt like I had won.

Present

As I stood on the street, watching Ella walk away from the coffee shop, I couldn't shake the feeling of regret that had taken root in my heart. I had hurt her so badly, all because of my insecurities and jealousy. I had pushed her away,

I knew I had to make things right with Ella.

For the next few days, I replayed every moment of my relationship with Ella, every mistake I had made. The way I had treated her, shunning her in public because she was human, even though she had been nothing but good to me. The times I had lashed out because I was completely wasted.

I started to remember the good times too. The late-night conversations, the laughter, the way she had looked at me with trust and love. I had taken all of that for granted.

One night, unable to sleep, I found myself standing outside Ella's dorm. The lights were off, and the street was quiet, I watched her window, wondering if she was thinking about me.

Flashback

It was two years after Liam had joined our family when Ella moved into the neighborhood. I was ten, and Liam was nine. Ella was this bright, bubbly girl who instantly caught my attention. I remember the first time I saw her, she was playing in her front yard, her laughter ringing out like

music.

Chapter 92

"Hi, I'm Ella," she had said, offering me a shy smile.

Im Noah," I replied, trying to sound cool.

We became fast friends. I would go over to her house almost every day after school. We'd do homework together, play games, and talk about everything

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But as Liam grew older, the differences between us became more pronounced. He was stronger, faster, more confident. People gravitated towards him naturally, and I was left in the shadows. The fear of losing Ella to him consumed me.

One day, Liam asked me why Ella seemed to avoid him. "Did I do something to upset her? he had asked, his eyes filled with confusion. I lied. "I don't know, man. Maybe she's just shy."

But I knew the truth. I had poisoned her mind against him, all because I was scared. Scared that she would see what everyone else saw in him.

Present

As I stood there, staring at her window, I realized how much I had let my insecurities control my actions. I had let jealousy and fear drive a wedge between me and the people I cared about the most. Ella deserved better.

I turned away from her house, my mind made up. I couldn't undo the past, but I could work towards a better future. I would show Ella that I had changed, that I was willing to do whatever it took to earn her forgiveness and trust.

The next morning, I woke up with a renewed sense of purpose. I went for a run, pushing myself harder than I had in months. As I ran, I thought about the things I needed to do. Apologize to Liam, and most importantly, prove to Ella that I was serious about changing.

As the days passed, I started to take small steps towards redemption. I reached out to Liam, asking if we could talk. He was hesitant at first, but eventually, he agreed. We met at a park, the same park where I had felt so overshadowed by him years ago, wwW.nôve(lW.rM.c0M

"Thanks for meeting me," I said, my voice nervous.

Liam nodded, his expression guarded. "What do you want, Noah

I took a deep breath. "I want to apologize. For everything. I let my jealousy and insecurities let me hurt Ella and you. I'm sorry"

He studied me for a moment, his eyes searching mine. "It took you long enough, he finally said. My apology was a step towards healing the rift

between us.

With Liam, the process was ongoing, but it was progress. With Ella, I knew it would be even harder. But I was determined.

One evening, I found myself standing at a distance, watching Ella as she walked across campus. She looked so strong, so resilient, I couldn't help but admire her. And as I stood there, a vow formed in my heart.

I would win her back. No matter what it took, no matter how long it took, I would prove to her that I had changed. That I was worthy of her love. I would make things right. And I wouldn't let anybody, not even Liam, get in my way.

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