

13 - Care

It was two am when I woke up in the middle of the night to a phone call, my eyes crusted heavy with sleep as my hand waved around the nightstand, finally locating my phone and picking it up. With one eye closed, I touched the green icon, moving the phone over to my ear to see who was calling so late at night.

"Hello?" I croaked out.

"I see you."

I sat up, eyes wide as I took in the voice. It was familiar in the worst way, my heart starting to pound as my hands gripped the sheets below, terrified.

"Devon?" I breathed out.

"You got it, babe. How could you do that to me? A er everything we've been through? Do you not love me anymore, is that it?" He sounded so sincere and so hurt that I almost fell for it, but I set my mind back on track.

"Fuck o."

This made him angry, his manipulative genuine voice turning into rage. It was almost impressive how easily he could turn on and on the charm, the sudden realization that he knew where I had gone was making me grow frantic. It only confirmed my fears from the beginning; that he had hired someone to follow me and was making up on his promise to keep me trapped with him forever.

"I don't think your boy toy would like seeing those pretty marks on my body, huh? You're mine, Sophia. Don't fucking forget it. And once this temporary restraining order is finished with, you'll be very sorry." He hissed.

"I—" He hung up the phone, making me hurt in frustration. I slammed my phone down on my nightstand, pulling up my knees as I laid my head in between them.

With heavy breaths, I tried following the several calming breathing exercises Dean had found for me the other day, however when that didn't work and the food in my stomach turned to steel, I kicked on my sheets, heart in my throat as I rushed over to the bathroom. With my stomach empty and my chest tight, I walked my exhausted body over towards the sink and rinsed my mouth clean, needing to wash away the acidic taste that always seemed to resonate with Devon. Why the fuck can't I get a break?

I started laughing, it soon rolling into hysterics and then sobs. I bent over the counter, pressing a hand to my mouth as I tried to muffle my cries.

I felt crazy, insane. I felt like I've been fucked over in more ways than one.

He's already taken my entire life, and now he wants more? I had nothing left, absolutely nothing besides the tattered body he left me with. I dunked my face in water, removing any evidence of my breakdown and proceeded to walk back into the guest room to try and get a few more hours of sleep in. Of course he had to call me in the middle of the night, and of course he had to do it right before a test. He probably had my schedule taped to his wall like a psychopath, needing to know my every move.

Minutes upon hours passed by with my gaze stuck on the ceiling, and as tired as I was my body refused to sleep still in survival mode. Thoughts of not wanting to bother Dean filtered through my mind. He already had so much to deal with, I didn't want to wake him up in the middle of the night because I wasn't capable of getting my shit together. It was unfair to him, it was unfair to me.

Though, the more time passed the more I became fidgety, my eyes glancing to the door and window of my room, scared that Devon could come in any second. Fuck, I was actually doing this, I thought, sitting up in my bed. If I didn't sleep I would be severely deprived and I knew I couldn't do my test working with half a brain operating.

With that in mind I willed myself to get up, walking over to Dean's room and hesitated, still not quite sure if I should wake him up.

You need to let others take care of you for a change. His voice rang in my head.

I didn't want him to be upset at me that I had woken him up, bruises on my body were evidence enough when I had last done that. Though it was his voice that once again shot through my head, I'm not like him, Sophia.

I closed my eyes, taking in a few deep breaths. You trust him. This is Dean we're talking about.

"Okay," I said shakily to myself, turning the knob to let myself in. Dean's room was pitch black as I patted my way to his side, he was sprawled across the bed with what little light I could see.

My hand shook as I tapped him lightly, quickly retreating. I felt myself lose my ability to breathe, not knowing if I should touch him again.

"Dean?" I whispered, moving my hand on his shoulder once more. I decided to shake him, now terrified of my actions.

Since my eyes were adjusted to the night, I could see him more clearly. Dean let out a small noise to let me know he was awake, blinking as he tried to make out who I was. I held my arms tighter against my body, immediately regretting my decision.

"I'm sorry." I said in a whisper. "I-I'll go," I turned, chanting the word idiot to myself as my heart started to pound against my chest. I could hear it in my ears, and all that was going through my mind was how stupid I was. I should have left him alone, should have let him sleep. He looked so peaceful, his chest rising and falling and his hair was a mussed up yet attractive mess on his head.

"Wait," I heard Dean call out but I was already out of his room, running towards the guest room. I quickly locked the door, falling to the ground as I tried to gasp in handfuls of air.

A soft knock sounded at the door and I stilled, terrified.

"Sophia?" Dean's low voice came through the door.

"Y-yes?" I called out, cursing myself for stuttering. I tried clearing my throat to swallow the lump but it ended up growing larger.

"Can you please unlock the door, Sweetheart?"

His pet name made me visibly soften, finally being able to take in a breath of air as the sound of his voice brought me lax. The night is what scared me the most. While it was a place I could easily hide in, it was also a place where my mind grew large and my emotions spiralled until I became a mess of myself.

"...I can't really move, pretty boy." I tried to joke weakly, tears started to gather while I tried my very hardest to push them back.

I heard him curse through the door before stopping, speaking again. "Sophia, I have a spare key to open the door. Is it okay if I use it?"

"Okay," I breathed out, putting my head in my hands, my fingers threading through my hair and yanking at it so I focused on something else. I was so tired. I was so unbelievably tired.

Moments later the door slowly opened, and I was immediately engulfed by Dean's scent as he crouched down next to me.

I was shaking beyond repair, my hands gripping roughly at the roots as I tried to do the counting exercise in my head but I'm nothing more than a sobbing, blubbing mess.

He simply bends down, gently removing my hands from my hair. Lifting me up and against his chest and then carrying me over to the bed. He sits down and then crawls behind me, his back against the headboard holding me against his body as he rocks me back and forth in a slow tempo.

I hear him mumble something over and over, his hand doing that stroking motion down my back and it takes me a minute to finally understand what he's saying to me. "You're okay," he murmurs. "I'm right here, Sophia. No one's going to hurt you anymore."

Dean continues to rock me back and forth, his hand coming up to stroke my hair. My body soon stops shaking, my cries come to a rest and with a quick glance to the alarm clock I realize it has been half an hour.

Time continues to pass and his rocking starts to slow down, his cold hands holding my face so tenderly it pricks tears in my eyes.

"I need to get something, Soph. I'll be right back, okay?"

I silently protest, scared of him abandoning me so I hold onto him tighter making his face soften significantly. My hands grip fistfuls of his shirt, terrified of the thought that if he leaves this room, if he leaves me, Devon will come and I'll be alone again. It's practically an impossible situation though I wasn't one to risk anything. He moves back down, wiping stray tears under my eyes.

"Here," He slips on a ring on his finger before gently taking my hand. He slips the silver ring on my thumb, knowing it was too large for my other fingers. "You hold onto this and I promise I'll be right back. Is that okay with you?"

I nod, and he tenderly shifts me so he can stand. He stretches a bit before walking out the door and returning with a glass of milk.

Moving my body back into his lap, his right hand splays against my back as his left hand brings the cup to my lips. With shaky hands, I also cup the glass.

Tilting it a bit, I let myself take a few sips before he pulls it away. The hand on my back rubs up and down, encouraging me to swallow and I do. There was something mixed in with the milk making it sweeter.

The second time he puts it to my lips, I started crying all over again. There was honey mixed in with the milk, and the fact that he had remembered that my mom had given it to me this exact way made me want to sob until my heart gave out. It was such a little thing that had my heart full, and I knew that despite my teasing Dean was one to listen to everything I said with full attention.

I never received the care and love and affection as a kid, and Dean holding me in his arms as he helped me drink this glass of milk had unravelled me all over again.

After my mom died being a single dad seemed to be a bigger burden on my dad, and so when I turned the ripe age of 18 I was kicked out of my unloving home and had to start fending for myself however this time, with bigger responsibilities such as finding a roof over my head. So this is what it felt like to be cared for, I thought. This is how it feels like when someone wants you around.

"It's okay, baby." He whispered. "You're not alone anymore, I'm here."

I let the tears continue to fall, letting him bring the milk to my lips again to drink. It was stupid, the action of him helping me down the milk. But my hands were too shaky and right now, I needed to be babied. Right now, I finally wanted to be selfish and have someone else take care of my needs.

He was patient with me throughout. And even though a normal glass of milk could be finished within a few minutes, he didn't complain or force me to drink more than a few sips at a time.

Once the glass was empty, he set it to the side before turning back towards me. I had calmed down now, and was resting my cheek against Dean's chest. His hands were back to brushing my hair, as I let my eyes flutter shut.

We don't exchange any words, our actions being enough to convey what we were trying to say.

"Are you okay to lay down now, Sophia?" He asked softly in my ear, pressing a kiss to the top of my head. I lightly nod, starting to move on to his lap and laying myself against the sheets. They were cool now, further relaxing my body. Dean had now moved as well, sitting beside me and staring down.

"Do you want me to stay with you?"

Another nod and without a blink, he's right beside me on the bed, gathering me close enough to tuck me against him. My body was on the brink of sleep, finally feeling comfortable enough to let myself fall in that place without a worry of any troubles that had gotten me in this situation in the first place.

My mind finally felt free, the worries of the call left my thoughts as I focused my energy and Dean's scent. He was so warm, and so kind. It almost brought another wave of tears to my eyes thinking about how he took the time to care for me.

The milk had given me enough energy to finally fall asleep, and I let myself be dragged back into the dark knowing that I was safe this time.

I was safe.