7 - Afterparty

Trigger Warning: Mentions of drugs, violence, verbal abuse

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"Should we drive her back to campus?"

I stirred somewhat awake, my body aching as I felt myself lurch. We were in a car, I could tell from the smell of the leather and the smoothness of the drive. My hands moved to brush over the handle, before I let it go. I did certain things naturally like leave the front door purposefully unlocked or have an extra weapon stashed away in the bathroom.

"No, we'll take her back to my apartment. It'll be easier to take care of her."

"No," I murmured. I wasn't going to risk Dean's safety again because I decided to act thoughtlessly again. That was on me and if something happened to him, I would never forgive myself.

"Shhh," Dean whispered, stroking my hair. "You're okay. You're safe."

"No," I cried out, my voice was hurting so it was only a mere whisper. "Take me back to the dorms."

"No fucking way," Dean replied from above me. My eyes unblurred and I blinked more awake, taking in my surroundings. The car was mostly empty, Alyan and Vanessa in the front seat while we were secured in the back, far away so that they couldn't hear us talk. With more awareness, I realized I was laying across the seats, my head on Dean's lap as he eagerly stroked my hair away from my face giving my raging headache a sense of relief. My stomach cramped with pain, I could see my shirt riding up so I quickly pushed it down.

"Dean," I looked up, however his eyes were already on mine. "Take me back to the dorms."

"Fuck. No." He said again. He saw the panic on my face, assuming it was because I was scared to be alone with him and clarified. "You can barely lift yourself up, Sophia. Never mind, take care of yourself right now. I'd be fucking stupid to leave you alone in this state, it wouldn't be safe."

"I can do it," I nodded slightly, voice giving out. "I've always been taking care of myself just fine."

Dean moved his hand from my hair to my face, brushing away strands so my eyes weren't blocked. His expression softened as his eyes searched mine, trying to figure out a way to say what he wanted to say. "I know you can," He whispered. "But you need to let others take care of you for a change."

I smiled weakly at him. "I'm not like you, Dean." I softly spoke. "There are no others."

"Then let me be that person, Soph. Let me be the one that you lean on when things get too rough."

"It's easier this way," I shook my head with what little energy I could muster. "You won't get hurt."

"How will I get hurt?"

"I can't...I can't be there for you the way there are. I can't do what they do. When you look at them, you see family. Permanent. When you look at me, you see temporary." I slowed off as I shut my eyes, moving my head to the side so he couldn't see my face. "I'll always be temporary."

My breathing returned back even, my mind dozing off as I thought of simpler times. Times where even though I was sleeping on the dirtiest of mattresses or the cleanest of grass, at least I was far away from harm. At least I was at peace. At least I had myself.

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"Come on, little troublemaker." I felt myself being shook awake, the small movement making me let out a groan. "It's time to get up now."

Blinking away the sleep, my eyes gazed around the car just to find it empty. I swear I heard voices the last time I was here, I was sure of it.

"Hey, hey, hey, it's okay. Take it easy," Dean soothed, helping me up. "Does your head still hurt?"

"Where did everyone go?"

"Home," He nodded to the empty roads. "Alyan dropped off Ayesha, Zayn, and Brandon along the way and since he and Vanessa came together, they left shortly after coming here."

"Oh," I frowned, looking down. "I'm sorry."

"What? Why are you sorry?"

"You didn't get to spend time with them at the party. You were too busy looking for me," I felt my chest tighten. "That was unfair to you, especially since they wanted you all to hang out."

"Hey, there's nothing to be sorry about, Sophia. Let's just get out of here, okay? It's been quite a night. Is that okay with you?"

I nodded, finally giving into him. I trusted Dean and I didn't think we were still being followed. With a hand, Dean helped me out the rest of the way. My legs felt wobbly, my stomach cramping up once more and as I took a step forward, I stopped. My head rushed with pain, a small breath of air leaving my lips at the ache.

Dean grabbed something in the car before stepping out, slamming the door closed and locking it. Turning towards me, his eyes searched mine before scanning my body, looking visibly upset.

"Here," He said, bending down to carry me.

"Wait," I paused, before letting him scoop me up. I bit my lip hard to keep in the noise of hurt.

"I can walk by myself, you know." My words slurred, the pain was making it hard to breathe. "I don't need you to carry me."

"Oh, I know a lot of things you're capable of doing," He sighed. "Didn't you say you were a princess? Princesses get carried."

I grinned weakly, letting him take me in his arms as one of my hands weakly held onto his neck while the other stayed in my lap. The sway of Dean's body as he walked caused me to tighten my hold, my stomach not feeling so good.

"Was that a sex joke?" I wondered, closing my eyes hoping it would numb the torment. I leaned my head against his chest, breathing in his familiar pretty scent.

"Keep your eyes on me, Soph." Dean slightly shook my body, making me open them a bit. "And no, it wasn't a sex joke. It was a 'I'm so fucking mad at you but I can't yell at you yet' joke."

"Please don't yell at me," I muttered weakly. "I hate when people yell at me." Tears were sliding down my cheeks, the ache unbearable now but I wasn't desperate enough to tell Dean. I could handle this. I've been handling this.

"Hey, no, don't cry, Sophia." Dean's voice sounded like he was the one in pain. "I won't yell, I promise. I'm sorry, I shouldn't have brought you there when I knew you hated parties. I should've brought you straight home and finished that show we were watching together."

"It's not your fault," I whispered. "I'm the one that wanted to go, okay? My head just hurts terribly...Dean, can I sleep now?"

"You can sleep, Sweetheart. Just promise me you'll wake up."

I pressed my lips closed on that, my eyes getting heavy as I fell back into slumber.

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"You always fucking do this to me!"

I watched in horror. My clothes were strewn everywhere, my phone was smashed on the floor and the television he bought only for display purposes was toppled over.

"Stop!" I cried out, once he reached my favourite necklace.

"Oh, now you want me to stop? You didn't stop before when you were booking that flight!"

"Please! Please just let me the fuck go! Just do this one thing for me, please." I was on my knees now, begging even though my body ached. My knees dug into broken glass on the floor but if bloody knees meant freedom, I'd take it.

He grinned wickedly, stalking towards me sending a swift kick to my side. Once I fell over, he bent down, gripping me hard by my hair. "You wanna leave so bad?" He hissed.

When I didn't answer he shook me by my hair. "Answer me bitch!"

"Yes..." Tears leaked from the corner of my eyes. I was meek, pathetic. I've tried this before and it ended up with me coming straight back here. He had taken over every aspect of my life, I wasn't even my own person anymore. I was just his. His girlfriend, his fiance, his soon-to-be wife.

"I'll show you how the fuck you leave, then." He used my hair to drag me out the door, laughing as I pleaded for him to let me go. My eyes blurred, head pounding as I resisted the urge to puke. I was aching everywhere and nowhere at the same time, the overstimulation causing me to be overwhelmed.

"I gave you this life babe, and I'll sure as fuck take it back. Take you back to those slumps you called a home. You ungrateful fucking bitch."

"Stop, Stop! Please, I'm sorry! I won't leave, I'll stay. I'll be good, I promise." I sobbed into my hands, scared to death that he was gonna kill me."I'll marry you, I'll be with you, I'll quit university just please stop!"

"Shut the fuck up, Sophia!"

"Sophia!" I heard someone whisper, making me flinch as I tried to wiggle out of their hold. I was hurting all over and I wasn't going to let him get me anymore. I was stronger now, I knew how to fight.

"No, no! Get off me!" I sobbed. "Get the fuck off!"

"Sophia, Sweetheart, it's me," They gently shook me awake. Their hands caressed my hair making me want to jump out of their grasp once again. He always used the same tactics when we were together. Hurt me enough that I couldn't move and then take care of me to show me how much he could love me if I could only "behave".

"I-I can't do this anymore," I hiccuped, wrapping my hands around my body. It was all I could do at this point, drown in my own self-comfort as he ruined me inside out.

"Sophia..." They sounded upset, their hands moving from my hair to my face, brushing over my cheeks before holding them in their hands. His thumbs wiped the tears under my eyes, however I kept them shut, not having the energy to face him again.

My eyes were heavy once more and they were now gathering me into their arms. I snuggled up to them, knowing they would never bring me comfort. Their scent caught on and I delved into the familiarity, my erratic heart soothing and my mind at ease once I knew I was safe.

"I don't want to love you anymore." I whispered.

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My body hurts. The sun shone bright in the room and I moved around, opening my eyes to get used to the morning. With a sigh, I repeatedly blinked in order to get away from the blur and when that didn't work, I rubbed my eyes.

Looking down, my mind kicked in and I realised I was still wearing last night's outfit. However, I was in someone else's bed. Groaning as I started to sit up, I looked around the room again to take in my surroundings and almost fell over once I saw Dean sitting in the chair beside my bed. Hands crossed over his chest, his head was tilted to rest on the back of the chair as his chest rose and fell evenly. He looked uncomfortable.

"Dean," I called out, not being able to reach over and shake him awake.

"Dean!" I called out again. He moved a bit before returning to his sleeping position.

"Dean, wake the fuck up!" I whisper shouted, throwing a pillow at him before regretting it. I pressed my hands to my abdomen, cursing lightly.

"Sophia?" He called out, rubbing his eyes. "You're awake." He eyed me with concern. "Are you okay?"

"Yeah..." I looked down, thinking of the nightmare. "Why wouldn't I be?"

"You..." He shook his head, standing up. "I'll get you some tylenol and water. That drug is still in your system."

I smiled in appreciation, leaning back as I took in the warmth of the bed. It was the same room I slept in the first time I was at Dean's apartment, except the sheets were changed from the previous grey to a white and the curtains were drawn open to gather in some light.

Dean returned shortly, both hands clutched with something as he dropped it into my hands. I threw my head back, swallowing the pills as I gulped the water. My throat thanked me, finally quenching the thirst.

Pulling away, I used my arm to wipe away the excess water dripping from my lips when Dean's eyes narrowed in on my face.

"Who touched you last night?"

I widened my eyes, surprised. "No one." I waved off, turning to set the empty glass on the nightstand. I tried my best to keep my head lowered, knowing I probably looked atrocious enough that he thought someone had hurt me. Well they had, though, it's not like he needed to know.

"Sophia..." Dean paused, taking in a deep breath. "Please, don't lie to me."

"Did Vanessa tell you something?" I mumbled, slowly kicking off the duvet as I moved to stand. I went to stretch before pausing, knowing I couldn't risk revealing my stomach to Dean.

"What was Vanessa supposed to tell me?"

Oh shit.

Dean followed me out the door and to the bathroom, with my body facing the mirror I took out the extra toothbrush he gave me and brushed my teeth. He followed, also brushing his teeth knowing he had me cornered. I kept my gaze down, not wanting to catch him in the mirror. He was suspicious as fuck and it wasn't doing me any good.

Once we were finished, I bent down and splashed cold water on my face to wake myself up more before turning to walk out the door. With a quick glance to the mirror, I paused, catching my reflection in the mirror. My eyes widened, leaning in closer to inspect.

There were light bruises on my jaw, meaning I basically just snitched on myself. My makeup was taken off already, by the events of last night, sleeping, and now water.

"Fuck," I cursed, reaching my hands up to touch my face. It was slightly tender, but definitely looked worse than it felt. My body on the other hand...that was another story.

"What the fuck happened last night, Sophia?" Dean asked, his tone hard. I knew he wasn't trying to be harsh, but I flinched anyway.

"Nothing," I denied. "Some guy just grabbed me roughly, that's all."

His eyes narrowed, tone softening once he saw my reaction.

"And was this the same guy who supplied the molly?"

I gave him a guilty look through the mirror, turning around so my body leaned against the sink. My hands grabbed the counter on either side of me, needing some stability as I braced for his reaction.

"If you're gonna yell at me, get it over with." I shrugged, acting unbothered. Though in reality, I was pleading in my mind that he would do the courtesy and just kick me out. I wasn't ready to get into an argument at ten AM in the morning.

"I'm not going to yell at you, Soph."

"You aren't?"

"No, I'm not. But some guy clearly manhandled you enough that you have bruises on your face. And in your drugged up state..." He sighed, his right hand coming up to brush away some strands of hair like he was bracing himself to say the next few words. "Did he...did he do anything?"

I visibly softened, crossing my arms over my chest as I gauged his reaction. His jaw was clenched, clearly terrified of my answer.

"No, he didn't. I promise. Can we just forget about this? Go back to pretending we're gonna fuck each other? It is part of the plan, you know."

"Fuck the plan, Sophia."

"That's correct. The plan does involve fucking. Wanna give it a go now?"

"Be serious." He sighed, a small ghost of a smile lifting his spirits.

"Fine," I rubbed my face, feeling guilty. "I'm sorry, Dean. I just needed an escape tonight. University and all."

"I understand that, Sophia," Dean started, gesturing for me to walk out of the bathroom. "But if you need a drink, you pour one yourself or you ask me or one of the others to pour it for you. People do some fucked up shit at parties, no matter how safe they might seem. And you never fucking take drugs from someone you don't know—actually you never fucking take drugs at all. It's dangerous and addictive and...I don't wanna see you lose yourself to that."

I gave him another culpable look, following him to the kitchen. I felt even more guilty now, understanding dawning down on me. He was right, drugs were addicting. I realized there was still not a lot he knew about me.

"Now sit," He nodded to the bar stools. "I'll make you some food. You must be starving."

"Thanks, Dean. Hey, where's my phone?"

"It was dead so I put it on charge in the living room. It's on the side table near the T.V., you should see it at first glance."

"Thank you!" I called out, walking towards it. Unplugging, I turned my phone on and entered my passcode to check up on some things.

Dozens of texts and calls from Dean dinged, making me feel more ashamed. I shouldn't have turned my phone off last night, yet alone wander off because I was still being haunted by my past. A few texts from the others also popped up, along with the memory of the text I got last night.

I stood ridged, shoving my phone into my pocket as I walked back into the kitchen.

"Hey, on second thought, I'm gonna head back to my dorm. But thank you for everything Dean, truly."

It was time I finally ended this thing between us. Last night was just a glimpse into my fucked up world and I didnt want Dean to be exposed to any more of it. He deserved better...deserved someone who was permanent and reliable. I was clearly none of those and I didn't want another burden on his shoulders.

He looked at me with doubt, frowning as his hands paused near the stove. He was toasting up some bread and by the looks of it, was going to spread honey or jam over it. "Are you sure you're fine?"

"Yeah, don't worry." I laughed forcefully. "I just feel gross and need to get out of these clothes and shower. I still have unfinished homework and we both know how you feel about that."

"Sophia, wait!" Dean said, getting ready to chase after me however I was faster, waving my goodbye and storming down the stairs. I was grateful that he didn't live very high up, but still I was out of breath as soon as I reached ground level.

Pushing away my guilt, I told myself that I just needed to be alone right now. Flashes of last night were coming back in full waves and I felt like I was trapped in the middle of a tsunami. I needed to create some distance, needed to push him away long enough that he would leave and be safe once more.

Walking all the way back to campus, I let out breaths of air to combat the pain I was feeling. Every time I moved, I hurt, and I knew I needed to rest for a couple of days in order for myself to heal enough to walk normally.

"Fuck," I breathed out. "Fucking fuck."

My hand pressed against my stomach as I waddled over to my closet, tearing it open and grabbing the first aid kit. Lifting my shirt up and over my head leaving me in a sports bra, I cursed as I looked at myself in the full length mirror. I think I might've bruised a rib or two again but I wasn't sure. It sure as hell felt like I did. Reaching for numbing cream, I smeared it all over where I could reach before capping and putting everything away.

Pushing myself to go to the bathroom, I heaved out whatever was left in my stomach.

Jesus Christ, do I ever get a break?

Finishing up and rinsing my mouth clean, I brushed my teeth before closing the lights and laid back slowly on my bed, sighing in disappointment.

Even though I was hundreds of miles away I still felt suffocated. Still felt trapped despite creating an entire life for myself. Tears slid down my face and I wiped at it, angrily.

With the little energy I had left, I opened my side table drawer and slid out the bottle of oxycodone I kept for emergencies. It was difficult to open at first, the sound of pills rattling against the plastic brought back Dean's words however I pushed it all away, just wanting to feel numb. Taking it with the day old water, I shut my eyes to get a few more hours of rest.

Just a few more hours and I'd be good as new.

Just like always.

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