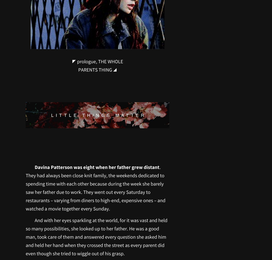
〖o. THE WHOLE PARENTS THING〗



☛ prologue, THE WHOLE PARENTS THING ☚

Davina Patterson was eight when her father grew distant. They had always been close little family, the weekends dedicated to spending time with each other because during the week she barely saw her father due to work. They went out every Saturday to restaurants - varying from diners to high-end, expensive ones - and watched a movie together every Sunday.

And with her eyes sparkling at the world, for it was vast and held so many possibilities, she looked up to her father. He was a good man, took care of them and answered every question she asked him and held her hand when they crossed the street as every parent did even though she tried to wiggle out of his grasp.

But at eight, he worked later than usual during the week and even on the weekends he was called into work more. She believed him but was saddened, especially when her dad would leave on a Sunday fair even though she had been asking him to go for weeks then, "I'm try my best, pumpkin," he smiled, "But you know how busy I am."

On that Wednesday, he was nowhere to be found. Her mother, Anna, went and supported her but it wasn't the same. Her mother was never distant, she was always there for Davina and so this...it was nothing special. The day was ruined because one man didn't show up even though she begged him to be there.

Then he continued to work more, and longer. At nights she could hear her parents fight, they were always so loud, and she is cried. She didn't like hearing them raise their voices at each other. They used to never fight, they never got angry, they only smiled at each other and loved one another. But her dad was still gone, still going, and she saw him even less throughout the year.

Davina Patterson was nine when her dad got another woman pregnant. She didn't really understand, but it made her mother so angry, so betrayed. She remembered catching the woman crying late at night and wrapping her arms around her, hearing her mother's sobs breaking her heart.

She remembered deciding in that moment that she didn't want to look up to him anymore. She didn't want to be like him anymore if he could cause this much pain to her mother. No, she didn't want to be like him at all. He yelled a lot and her mother yelled back and there was talk of them separating, it scared her.

And she was introduced to a woman who bent down and said her name was Lucy Gallinson, said that she was having her brother. Well, half brother. She didn't understand, so she welcomed the woman into her home, played dolls with her. She didn't see how it broke her own mother's heart to see this, to see her daughter getting along with the other woman.

She didn't see a lot that happened. She didn't see when her mother started drinking more or taking more smoke breaks. She didn't see how her mother wasn't sleeping anymore because she was out all night and she was home alone. All she saw was her mother in this sad state her father caused.

And her father? He was still distant. He sometimes talked to her and brought her over to Lucy's house so the two could get along, that was all he wanted from her. He sometimes tried to explain what was happening but she was too young, she was only nine. She didn't understand what was happening between them, feelings made sense, but that was okay, she supposed.

Davina Royce was ten when her parents divorced and Anna returned to her maiden name, bringing her daughter with her. It was right at a they split and her father gave them money to find somewhere else to live. Anna Royce held her head high and got a nice enough apartment, though it was nowhere close to her childhood home, and went to change her name.

She would no longer share the name with the man who wrecked her, who cheated on her. She was her own, depressed woman. And Anna decided that her daughter would have no attachments to her father, changing her last name as well. She was to be known as Davina Royce and never Davina Patterson again.

Her father tried to fight for custody, but when the judge looked at the case - even though he was more financially stable - he was the one who caused all the problems and her mother was granted full custody. Her father tried to act disappointed but she knew, deep down, that he didn't want her. He had a new family anyway.

It was also the year her step-mother, as Lucy would become in the months following her parents' divorce, gave birth to her half brother. Finn was beautiful, angelic. He looked so much like his mother and resembled nothing of their father, whom Davina shared many qualities with. And Davina loved him so much, even if he was one of the main reasons for her parents' split, Anna being the biggest.

No, how could she hate a baby? How could she hate her half-brother, who was innocent? No, she loved him. More than anything. More than her own father. But that did not mean she hated the man, she still loved him, and it hurt was nothing compared the love in her heart for her mother and half-brother.

Davina Royce was fourteen when she found out about her mother's addiction. She knew that her mother was never the best place following the shocking news of the father's a.s. But she just didn't see the full extent. No, she never saw everything. She never saw her mother moving on from cigarettes, the never did much anyway, and going to marijuana. She didn't see her mother picking up extra bottles of wine at the store, too many extra bottles.

She didn't see her mother sitting at the kitchen table at three in the morning, still crying to herself and drinking. She didn't see her mother going to bars, drinking until she couldn't feel the emptiness lie inside her. She didn't see her mother leaving from the bar with a man she didn't even know the man of, spending the night with them until early morning where she lie and came home and made breakfast all to pretend to her daughter that everything was fine and they were alright. They were.

She just saw her mother cooking breakfast and kissing her head, wishing her a good day at school. But when she was fourteen she found her mother with a needle in her arm and she screamed. Anna tried to silence her but then the sobbing started. There was a problem, there was a big problem because her mother couldn't stop.

A or that night it happened more frequently. She would sneak out to see her how her mother was holding up only to find the woman asleep at the kitchen table, bottle still in hand. She was not the mother wasn't even here sometimes. She saw the unpaid bills because her mother kept missing work. She started see everything and she saw the problems her mother had, the addiction she couldn't shake.

And she saw her mother being caught drunk driving. Saw her mother being sent to rehab. But she didn't see her mother a or that, going to live with her father instead for those months. He still held the resemblance of the man who once took her to diners every Saturday and pointed out all the stars to her, but he wasn't like that anymore. He was changed.

But he still was good at his core. He paid the bills on the apartment so that they had somewhere to stay a an her mother got back and she thanked him for that. It was the least she could do anyway.

Davina Royce was sixteen when she got her first job. It was at a diner called Apple's Eye. She worked long hours but it was okay, she was getting more to keep the money in their apartment. And that all she needed. It didn't matter if her grades slipped a little if it meant she got to support her mother. And her mother? Well, the woman still drank and shot up most days, probably every day. Davina turned a blind eye to it, it was too painful to really look at and see.

But she was good enough. She had friends, Rosie Harlan from work and Conrad Beauregard who she had been close with most of her life. Now, could she have asked for a better friend? Conrad was the best, he was a good man. Sometimes she wouldn't see the woman for days but she'd appear again without an explanation. Davina had stopped demanding one a long time ago.

She went to rehab again, many more times, but only Conrad knew and he didn't tell anyone else. And she was fine. She was good and she took care of herself, that was all she could do.

Davina Royce was seventeen when she realized she was gay. She had always known really, especially when Rosie Harlan entered her life a year before with those blonde locks and sweet smile. And she was gone for her, completely and utterly gone for the girl. But she never, truly thought about it, it scared her a bit, scared her enough to even think about it.

But she realized it when she went on a date with Conrad. They boy had asked her a week before it happened and she found herself agreeing even though she held no attraction him. And she found herself less than excited for it. They had a good time, went to the movies and held hands but his were too big, too...not what she liked.

And at the end of the date, Conrad kissed her and it was nice enough. But his hands were rough on her face and his lips were too chapped and she didn't like it, not enough. She didn't feel any fireworks and she didn't smile into the kiss or raise her foot like they do in all the romance movies she's watched. She just...didn't like it.

They didn't talk for a week following the date either. She felt as if it were her fault, but he could've made an o of and didn't, so she didn't feel all too bad about not texting him. But when they did meet up, she went to look him down gently when he blurted out, "I'm gay." And, oh, that was a relief.

He explained that he wanted to go on a date with one of his friends because that was easiest and he wanted to kiss her to make sure that he was actually gay. To see if there was any ounce of him that liked the kiss but he hadn't. And that...it was a relief to her. At the end of his explanation he asked if she was okay, tried to say that it had nothing to do with her and she smiled. She wasn't the only one. And for the first time, she came out and uttered the same words he had blurted out before.

"I'm gay."

Davina Royce was eighteen when she met Asher Brinley. She was much o. event her other friends. They were all jealous, in a sense to them, and they didn't like to spice up their lives. Conrad only took a leap to move to California for college while she stayed in town and she met Brinley - the girl hated being called by her first name - because they shared some of the same classes.

And they became close. Brinley became her best friend quickly, replacing Conrad who was still in California. Brinley showed up at her work and met Rosie, she met her parents and her younger brother. Brinley became such a huge part of her life and she didn't regret a moment of it.

Davina Royce was twenty-two when her mother went to jail. Anna had been drunk and looking for more drugs, out of her own stash and without any more money, when she hit an innocent man on the streets of New York. She had assaulted the man, continuously hitting him and calling out her ex-husband's name as if she thought this man was him.

And the man had pressed charges, rightfully, and Anna Royce had been found guilty, sentenced to five years in prison. She had watched the whole trial, she had been through everything and watched as her mother let it all go. She decided not to pay the bills on her mother's apartment anymore, the woman would be gone for five years and she barely saw her since she started college.

Brinley said Anna didn't deserve a daughter like her. Brinley said that she couldn't keep paying for an apartment that would be unused for years. Brinley said there was no use waiting. Anna never wanted her. Anna didn't care for her anymore. She didn't want to believe it, but she couldn't keep paying for the apartment, so she moved out everything and for second home.

It was also the same year she moved in with Brinley. The two got an apartment and Finn came over frequently a or school although Lucy didn't like it at all. She had gotten too many angry calls from the woman about how she could ever let her kid brother stay there and leave during the dark when it was dangerous. Finn was twelve, not really a kid anymore but a preteen.

Davina was twenty-five when her brother started selling drugs. More importantly, when he got caught selling drugs. Sitting in that courtroom sent chills down her spine as she was reminded of when this was her mother's trial and she was twenty-two. And her brother? He seemed regretful enough, but she was still so disappointed.

But he didn't know the full extent of it. He didn't know why she wouldn't look at him for a week before his trial and a week a er he was let go with probation. He didn't know about Anna Royce, not everything. He didn't know and that made it worse. He didn't know how Anna revolved. He didn't know how he became like his mother, worked her ass o to keep them in their home when Anna stopped working in favor of drinking her days away. He didn't know...

And he didn't know why she was the angriest out of all of them. Lucy forgave her son easily and their father warned him never to do it again. That he - her. So she told him, everything, and watched as he felt so disappointed in his now, for making her relive all of this. He felt so guilty and she nodded, she let him cry to her and forgave him easily a er that. But she had never been good at holding grudges.

Davina Royce was twenty-six when watched her brother be sent to juvie for the same charges as the months before. But this time, he wasn't guilty. It didn't matter, though, not to the judge of the jury. He was still going to juvie.

And still at twenty-six, Davina Royce entered a bar for the first time.

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