

Unholy Gestures Chapter 14

Jace had dropped me off at the park fifteen minutes earlier, telling me that at any time I decided I didn't want to be there his car would be just around the corner. Waiting for me. But I knew I had to stay. I had to get this over with. Just one more time before I can go on with my life. Living it without him.

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I pace back and forth beside the bench, pausing every now and then to stare out over the lake in front of me. It was such a beautiful place, the Carlton Gardens. A little stone bridge leading to a small island in the lake. The water, while not clear was stunning and reflected the cloudy sky.

Flowers fought the sky for my attention. While they may be beginning to disappear for the night, the colours were vibrant and the smell overpowering.

Last time we were here we stayed on the island. Had a picnic while we watched the sun set. It was a stunning sunset, a clear sky which was painted with vibrant colours. All happy memories of the garden. I can only think of that time as happy. Not even what happened at Greece would be able to take that away from me.

When it was just about time for Cole to arrive I sat on the bench, put my head into my hands and took deep breaths.

I can do this. I have to do this.

I can leave. Jace is waiting for me. I can leave.

I look back up at the island. I can't leave. There he was. Cole was standing on the island, pacing as I was just moments before. He ran his fingers through his hair, just as he always does when he is nervous. I took a moment to study him. The first time I can really look at him without him knowing.

He looks no better than I do. He was wearing trackies and a button-down shirt. A shirt that I can see from even this distance it isn't done up correctly. I imagined what I would have done if I was over there, before I could get a grip on myself.

I wouldn't be able to help myself, because for a second I could just see Cole as he was, someone in pain. Something I cannot stand. I'd want to help him, to make him smile and to make him feel better. But I can't do that, because I know why he is like this. And whatever he is feeling, I am also feeling.

I didn't want to walk over, I wanted to leave. I didn't want the gardens to be ruined with the memory of what is potentially about to happen. But it's not like I could ever come here again without thinking about him. This will be my closure, that's all it has to be.

I take a deep breath and begin to walk over to the bridge, knowing that once I step into his sight there is no going back.

I can do this, I have to do this.

I time my breathing to my steps, in on my left, out on my right. Attempting to slow my racing heart.

My feet make an audible noise as I cross the old wooden bridge. I look up, straight into Cole's eyes but quickly look back down.

He took a couple steps toward me before stopping. I continued walking toward him, but stopped about two metres away.

My eyes raise again and look at him, from closer I can see that he was sporting a faint beard.

"You came." I could barely hear him he spoke so quietly.

"I told you I'd come." My voice stronger than I thought it would be.

"You always did follow through with actions."

"I always do." I agree. "What did you want to talk about?" I ask, wanting to get this over with.

"You know what I want to talk about."

"Then get on with it." He winced before answering.

"I never meant to hurt you, Addi. I never intended it to go any further than talking to each other. I just hadn't seen Kat in a few years and I was surprised about seeing her. I'd honestly forgotten about her and I knew that if I told you, you would refuse to go back to the restaurant."

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"And would that have been such a bad thing? Maybe it would have changed how things ended up."

"I should have told you."

"Yeah you should have." I was barely controlling my anger, I wasn't upset anymore, I was furious. How dare he. How dare he take something that was so special, the bond we shared and ruin it like this.

"I just wanted to get to know my friend from years ago. I forgot how much more she felt. How she thought we would always go back to what we had when I was in Greece."

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"Yeah, a 'friend'. As far as I'm aware, she was never just a friend. The second you recognised her you should have told me. Maybe we would still be together. Maybe we wouldn't be here."

"If I had told you would this conversation be any different, though? Would you still be standing here in front of me saying it's the end?"

"We might have worked through it. If you had trusted me as I had trusted you, we might not be having to file for divorce."

"You can't really be thinking about divorce." He took a step back, disbelief on his face. My anger builds up, blooming like a flower, warming me in the cold of the evening.

"Why wouldn't I be thinking about divorce? You cheated on me. You broke my trust. You ruined the relationship before we even finished our honeymoon." My voice rising with each word, "we were married for a month. Together for a year. I believed that what we had was strong, that it would last. I knew that some marriages broke even when the couple had been together for years and some lasted entire lives when they were only together for a short while. I was a fool to believe it could happen to me." My voice breaking, I couldn't do this.

I wasn't upset with him. I was furious at him. I was upset with myself. For believing that this would last. For convincing myself that he was going to be the one. It was just perfect. I had found the man of my dreams, Cole Diaz. The man who listened to my fears. Who comforted me when I cried, a man who was loving and caring. Someone who didn't just care about himself but always made sure I was okay. Romantic. Someone who became my best friend within days. Boyfriend within a week. Someone who was always there for me. But not in the moments when it really mattered.

"We can work through this, Addi, please. It was a mistake." He was begging me, his dark blue eyes swirling with desperation. "I love you Addi, only you."

"You think I haven't heard this before?" I all but screech, if he thinks that I'm going to forgive him after one conversation he was deluded. "You think that I didn't trust him again? That I believed him? That he would never do it again? That he loved me? Cole, you're just like him. James broke my heart. You shattered it. I could live through James, but you? If I forgive you and you do it again I will die." I was exaggerating, I think. I don't think I could do it again, trust someone.

Turning I face the lake that was behind me. The sun beginning to set, the colours filling the garden. Beautiful. Why did I agree to this? Why here.

“Addi, don’t do this, please. I promise you I won’t ever do it. I didn’t mean to.”

“Oh, you didn’t mean to.” I scoff, “you act as though I didn’t hear you and Kat at the cliffs. You said you didn’t want me to get hurt. But then you said screw it, you initiated it Cole.” I could hear him moving behind me, I didn’t dare look back. I didn’t want to see him. Instead I kept my eyes focused on the sunset.

“I never meant to. I love you Addi, she meant nothing to me.”

“You say that now, Cole, do you really think I can believe you? After you lied to me our whole honeymoon. After you cheated on me. Maybe you never truly loved me. Maybe you just convinced yourself what you felt was love, but you really wanted something else.” I was being harsh, but I couldn’t help it. “Cole, it’s too late. You fucked up. We had something amazing.” Finally defeated, neither anger nor sadness was in me in this moment. Just defeat.

“It’s not fucked up. We can fix it.” He says stubbornly. I turn to face him, knowing that I wouldn’t cry. I was emotionally drained.

“How?”

“We can go to couples therapy.”

“How is that going to fix this? It’s not something that will be fixed with a couple sessions of therapy. Cole, I don’t trust you anymore. If you had told me what happened in Greece, early, we might have made it work. Maybe therapy would have worked. But you didn’t tell me. I had to find out on my own. I don’t trust you anymore.”

“Please, just don’t give up yet.” He was begging me, he looked just about ready to get on his knees and beg.

“As soon as I can, I’m filing for divorce. You can either join me, and sign the application together, or I can do it alone.” I say as I walk past him, twisting my shoulders so I don’t accidentally brush against him.

“Di, please, don’t leave me.” He calls out behind me, I don’t bother looking back. This needed to be done. I couldn’t live with him, I can’t spend the rest of my life with him.

It has to be done.