

1 The Meeting

Bailey POV

"Why would you even pack something like this?" Levi yells at me, clutching the bikini I packed to use in the hotel's pool in his hands. "When did you get this? Did some other guy buy it for you, because I sure as hell didn't?"

I rolled my eyes, snatching the bikini from his hands. "I bought it for you, asshole. I thought we could use the hotel's hot tub together later, but never mind."

"You thought I would want to have you aunting your body around other men like some w***e? Don't lie to me, you brought that to show off for other men."

"WHAT OTHER MEN!?" I yelled. I'm getting sick of having this same ght with him. He brought me on this trip to apologize for the way he freaked out on me at my work two weeks ago. He had just walked in to meet me for lunch when a customer helped me pick up loan papers I had dropped everywhere after accidentally tripping. He yelled at me, accusing me of cheating with the customer at the bank even though the guy's wife was there and had just stepped away to change their baby in the bathroom. I almost got red over the incident. My boss moved me back to being a teller because of what happened, and I told Levi I needed space.

This is what he does. He ips out on me, accusing me of cheating, looking at other guys, goes crazy thinking guys are looking at me, we ght, take a break, then he comes back, saying he's changed and feeds me some sob story about loving me too much. He claims he loves me too much and is scared he will lose me. I used to think it was cute 2 years ago when we rst started dating in college. I liked it when he got jealous. I thought that was how he showed he loved me. Now, I hate it. I can't stand his jealousy. I fall for his pity party every time, thinking he is being sincere and he will change, but he never does.

"Levi, I can't do this. I'm not doing this with you again. You said you would stop, and you're obviously not going to. I want to go home."

"What?" The anger leaves his face, replaced with worry and fear. "Why? No, we just got here."

"And it's already become like this. I want to go home, Levi. I'm not going to sit in a hotel room and argue with you when we do enough of that at home. I want to go."

"No," he tries to reach for me, but I step back out of his reach, making his scowl return. "Bailey babe, I was....I was just mad at the bathing suite. I wasn't mad at you. I don't want to ght."

"You just called me a w***el!"

"No, I said that wearing a bikini around other guys is something a w***e would do. I didn't mean you were a w***e. Don't put words in my mouth."

I threw my hands up in the air, done and exasperated. "If you won't take me home now, I'll nd my own way back. I'm serious, Levi. I'm done. I want to go home."

He sneers, no longer maintaining his little pity act. "No. Find your own way back then. I paid for this hotel for the night. I'm going to enjoy it since you don't appreciate the s**t I do for you."

I grit my teeth in annoyance, "Fine." I stuffed the few things I unpacked from my backpack back in it, including the bikini, then turned to leave. "Bye."

"You better not come crawling back, Bailey! I'm serious! If you leave this room, I'm going to-"

SLAM

I shut the door, cutting off the rest of his words. A loud bang indicates he just threw something at the wall. Or punched it. He punches walls a lot lately.

I sigh heavily and make my way down the hall to the lobby of the hotel before he calms down enough to follow after me. I really am done this time. I keep going back, but I don't know why. His handsome face and decent body aren't worth all this trouble. That's what attracted me to him in the rst place. I thought I was lucky to have a good-looking guy like him interested in me. I'm a bit curvier, with thick hips and a heavier bust. I used to feel self-conscious in college when all my friends were model thin, wearing skimpy outts and showing off skin without any hesitation. When you are built like me, with a heavy chest and round hips, you can't wear the same clothes without being labeled either a slut or a fatty.

I tended to dress in nothing but t-shirts, hoodies and yoga pants or jeans, wearing larger sizes to hide my assets. It wasn't until Levi started to show interest in me in my senior year that I started to feel comfortable in my skin.

Levi made me feel beautiful. He encouraged me to wear more attering clothing, taking me shopping on our dates, dressing me, aunting me around his friends with pride. I loved his attention. I loved the way I felt about myself being with him. When he would cling to me, telling his friends I was all his, then every curve and every dimple was his property, I thought those were terms of endearment. 2 years later, those words feel like chains he was trying to use to bind me to him.

He's like an addiction. Every time I get fed up or think I'm done, he does something to make me feel like I did back then when we rst started to date. I became addicted to that feeling of being treasured and cherished. It's like he drip feeds me that sensation now. When I'm fed up and ready to leave him, he gives me another dose of my x, making me think that he is what I need and who I deserve.

I know this isn't healthy. I know I shouldn't stay in a relationship where I'm clinging to the 5% of the time when he isn't being a possessive asshole, but he makes that 5% overshadow the 95% of the time when he's being unbearable somehow. I don't know how he does it, but he makes it hard to leave him.

It took us several hours to drive here, and I've never been to this town before. It's deep in the wilderness, a timber and gold mining town, but Levi said the town had decent views and hiking trails. I could care less about any of that now. I just want to go back home. I walk to the bus station at the center of town, checking the schedule posted outside.

Great. No buses until early in the morning. I could call a cab or maybe an uber, but it would be super expensive and I have 3 days until my next paycheck. I sighed and started walking back towards the hotel. I don't want to go back to Levi, but I also don't want to stay out here in the cold waiting for the next bus.

Walking back, I passed a bar that was just starting to get lively, the music from a live band drifting out into the cool night air.

One drink. Maybe two... If I have to go back and deal with Levi's whining and bitching, I want to do it drunk.

Entering the bar, the rst thing I noticed was the clientele was mostly bulking lumberjack-looking men, all with thick muscles and almost monstrous appearances. I didn't even know men could get this big. And handsome. I'm salivating just looking around the room. They are all intimidating, and there are very few women around the bar. The ones who are here look much like the men; beautiful and t. Is this part of the great views Levi was talking about? I'm intimidated, but I really am loving the view in here.

I'm about to turn to leave when a hand brushes my back, under my backpack and an electrical current shoots all over my skin.

"Excuse me," a deep, husky voice pulled my attention, "I, uh, haven't seen you around here before."

2 My Scene

1458 Words

The man standing behind me is the most impressive man I have ever seen. His jaw is chiseled and covered in sexy stubble. His dark blonde hair is peaking out of a Blue Jays hat and his crystal blue eyes are sparkling with some kind of emotion I can't identify. He's so handsome. So, so incredibly handsome. Not in the pretty boy way like Levi, but in a rugged, condent, capable way. Like a real man. He looks 100% like a real man. Not at all like the whining, pathetic jerk I left back at the hotel.

"Wow," I whispered under my breath without thinking, making this handsome stranger smirk at me. My face ushes in embarrassment and I try to hide my cheeks in my hands. "Sorry. Geez, mouth vomit. You're just gorgeous and I couldn't....I mean....Gosh! Stop talking, Bailey," I muttered to myself.

"Bailey?" the handsome stranger lifted an eyebrow at me. "That's a beautiful name for a beautiful girl."

And there goes any chance of my blush fading away. His panty dropping smile makes me whimper slightly. What is wrong with me? I came in here to drink before going back to the hotel where my asshole boyfriend is probably throwing a temper tantrum, waiting for me to come back. I shouldn't be stumbling over my words like some freak in this bar to a total stranger. A totally sexy stranger....

"I'm sorry. I was just heading out," I looked back up in those sparkling blue eyes, nding myself lost in their intensity. He is seriously the best looking man I have ever seen in my life. I don't know how or why this man is even standing here talking to someone like me right now. He looked like the type to date models and beauty queens full of grace and beauty. Not a girl with thunder thighs and no sense of balance.

"You just got here, though. Why don't you stay for a drink?" he asked, waving a large hand, connected to a yummy looking forearm with ropes of muscle, towards the bar, "I'll even make it on the house."

"Are you the owner?" I asked. Maybe that's why he's talking to me, trying to keep a new customer around. I imagine this town doesn't get much trac from tourists or visitors. The hotel was pretty vacant when we checked in.

"No, but I know the owner. It's always on the house for me."

"Oh," I murmured, looking between the man and the bar. I guess keeping me around so I spend my money isn't why he approached me. I want to take him up on his offer, but he's a complete stranger. My grandma always told me not to take drinks from strangers at a bar. She claimed it wasn't safe. I have never really gone to bars like this, especially since dating Levi, so I wouldn't know, but her warning still ashes through my mind. If I took the drink from behind the bar, it would be okay though, right?

I should at least get his name rst so he's not a total stranger. "Um, I didn't catch your name?"

"Axel," he smiles, "My name's Axel, Bailey."

"Axel," I smiled shyly up at him, "It's nice to meet you."

"It's so nice to nally meet you too, Bailey."

Finally? What does that mean? Is that some weird saying in this part of the country? Like, 'it was destiny meeting you here' kind of pick-up line? It's weird, but for some reason I like it. I feel like I'm nally meeting someone important to me too.

Axel leads me over to the bar, his hand brushing against my elbow, making those weird electrical currents travel up and down my arms. Maybe it's the cool night air combined with the thrill I feel being in a bar, getting a drink with a stranger. Axel. He's not a stranger anymore. He's Axel.

Levi would lose his head if he walked in right now. I'm very much doing what he is always accusing me of. I'm very much wanting another man's attention right now. Not just any other man's. Axel's. This is not like me. Levi has ingrained in me to not even look at other men so he wouldn't get jealous and start yelling at me. That's the main reason I was about to leave. If, on the off chance, Levi walked in here right now, he would ip out, causing a huge scene, and embarrassing the crap out of me.

There is something about Axel that makes all that seem insignificant. I feel drawn to Axel like I've never been drawn to anyone before. It's strange. I'm not this girl. I'm not the type of girl who can easily forget her boyfriend and start irting with a random guy at a bar.

I guess I am tonight. I want to be that girl tonight.

Levi and I should be through. I need to ocially and for real break up with him. I've tried to break it off countless times, and maybe this is the catalyst I need to nally take that rst step. Step one, irt with a stranger. Step two.....

Right when I sit at the bar on the tall barstool, my phone starts to vibrate in my pocket. Step two: block the asshole. I can't just block him, though. I know the jerk put a tracking app on my phone again. I logged it out, but he just had to log in to my online Apple account to reactivate it.

"Everything okay?" Axel asked, studying the face I was making looking down at my phone.

"Uh, yeah!" I said, a little too cheerfully, "Yeah, everything is ne." I rejected Levi's call, cringing, knowing he was going to be losing his mind once I did, then I turned off my phone completely. He can not track me if it's off. I need to stick to what I said this time, and really end things. I really need to be done with Levi.

"Well, what do you want to drink, Bailey?" Axel asked me, leaning in close, his minty breath fanning my face and making me swoon.

"Uh, um.....what?"

He chuckles deeply, "Drink? What would you like?"

"Oh, uh, how about a white claw?" I said it like it was a question. Axel smirks at my answer.

"A white claw?"

I shrug, "Um, I'm not really a drinker." I couldn't stand the taste of beer in college and always stuck to white claws when out with friends. When I started to date Levi, he wanted me to stop drinking completely. I rubbed my hands over my arms nervously, feeling his amused judgment at my choice of drink. "I don't really know what else to get."

"Hm, not a drinker? Like, ever?"

I shook my head, making him laugh in a raspy, deep tone. That laugh makes my insides tighten and tingle. He is so, so sexy. Too sexy. He is sinfully sexy, and just looking at him, being this close to him does stuff to my insides. I feel like butteries are uttering around in my stomach and the pit of my belly is throbbing with carnal needs.

"What are you doing in a bar then?"

I blushed, looking down at my hands, "I'm kind of stranded here. I was thinking about what to do to pass the time before the bus came in the morning." I don't want to tell him about Levi for some reason. I don't want to think about Levi again tonight. Step three: forget Levi.

Axel continues to stare at me for several more seconds, then reaches out for my hand. "Let's go somewhere a little more your scene then?"

"My scene?" I quirked an eyebrow at him.

"Somewhere....with more to offer than booze." His smile was sincere, and even though I normally would never dream or even consider leaving a place with a man I didn't know, I felt I could trust him. I somehow knew that I would be safe with Axel and he would never hurt me.

I hesitantly take his hand, gasping slightly when the electricity travels up my arms again. Is he wearing wool socks or something? How come he keeps shocking me every time he touches me? How come I like it?....

"Alright, Bailey. How do you feel about milkshakes?"