

Dorian and Cat had built their little world with very few citizens. Cat especially missed one citizen. After her editing class, Cat waited for Tony by the door.

“Lunch?” she asked.

“You sure you got time for your old friend?” Tony asked.

“Yes. I know I’ve been MIA, but I want to make it up to you with lunch. On me.”

“Goody! Okay, you’re forgiven.”

“All right, catch me up. What have I missed?” Cat asked, as they headed off campus.

“Well, while you were off living the life of a Rockefeller...”

“Everybody is a comedian.”

“It is a little funny. Anyhooo, Truman and I broke up.”

“Why?”

“Because the asshole was cheating on me. Can you believe that? All of this and he cheats.” Tony struck a model pose.

“He was a jerk, Tony. I always said that.”

“Yes, you did, sweetie. I should’ve listened.”

“Let’s be serious. How are you?”

“Seriously, I’m fine. He was not the love of my life.”

“Do you know who he cheated with?”

“Yeah. This guy at his job. I should have known something was going on. But, you know what? I wish him the best. I am not about to waste my energy on negativity.”

“Good for you. How’s the family?”

“Everyone is great! Mom is fabulous, as always. Oh, and my sister is pregnant.”

“Danielle is pregnant? How far along?”

“Two months.”

“You have to let me know what she’s having. I want to send her a gift.”

“Don’t worry. I’ll keep you posted.”

Cat and Tony decided to eat at Casey’s, a fast food restaurant right off campus. They spent almost the entire afternoon catching up on each other’s lives and gossip.

“I haven’t laughed this hard in a long time,” Cat said.

“Me either. Don’t let it be this long again.”

“I promise, I won’t,” she said, as they hugged before splitting up.

As Tony went back to campus, Cat headed to her apartment to get her car. Grocery shopping was a must.

Dorian stood across the street from Casey’s and watched Cat have lunch with some guy he didn’t know. He watched as they arrived at the restaurant with her arm looped through his. He even saw her take hold of his hand. Dorian was enraged.

He watched as they left Casey’s. It took every bit of his willpower to keep from confronting them when he saw them hug.

They split up, and Dorian knew Cat was going home. He would deal with her later, but first things first. Dorian followed Tony back to campus. By the time they made it to the student parking lot, Dorian had a plan.

“Hey. Hold up a sec.”

Tony turned to see one of the most handsome men he'd ever seen, heading his way. The smile he was wearing dropped a little once he saw who it was.

"Dorian Wallace," Tony said.

Even though they'd never met, Tony knew who he was.

"You know who I am, but I have no clue who you are. Seeing that you had lunch with my woman, I think we should get to know each other." Dorian smiled.

To Tony, the friendly smile looked sinister.

"I'm Tony Wilson. What you saw were two friends having lunch. How did you know...are you following her?"

"I watch out for all my investments."

"Investments? Look, you got it all wrong. I'm..."

"No, you got it wrong. Do you really think I'm going to let you take what's mine?"

"Dorian, Cat and I are just friends."

"Friends? She never told me about your friendship."

"I thought Cat's father died years ago. Cat is a grown woman, and she does not need you following her around like some psycho. You best believe I will tell her about this."

Before Tony knew it, Dorian hit him. Of course, his first reaction was to fight back, but Dorian already had the upper hand. His first blow was to Tony's face, which knocked him to the ground. The combined kicks and punches were coming so fast that Tony had no way of blocking them.

Before passing out, Tony heard Dorian say, "If I have to come back again, I won't be so nice."

Dorian left Tony between two cars. He calmly walked away. The more he thought about Cat cheating on him, the angrier he got. He'd practically run the whole way to her apartment.

"Cat?"

"Hey, I'm in the kitchen," she said.

"How was your day?"

"The same as usual. Classes. What about you?"

"Normal. What else did you do today?"

"Nothing. Oh, yeah, I took a friend out to lunch. We hadn't hung out in a while."

"What's this friend's name?"

"Tony. Why?"

"Just asking. Male or female?"

"What? What kind of question is that?"

"Male or female?"

"Male. Why does it matter?"

"So you had a date?"

"No, I had lunch with a friend. Why are we playing twenty questions?"

"Cause I want to know who the hell I saw you with today!"

"First off, who the hell are you yelling at? Second, what do you mean saw? You were following me?"

"Don't change the subject, Catherine."

"I think that is the subject, Dorian."

"I have a right to know where you are at all times!"

"Are you serious? Last time I checked I was grown."

“Is he the reason you’re holding back? What am I, the placeholder until he comes around?”

“No. What are you talking about?”

“Are you fucking him?”

Cat couldn’t believe what he’d just said.

“Get out!” she said and pushed passed him.

Dorian quickly grabbed her arm and pulled her back to him.

“You better let me go,” she said, giving him the fiercest look she could muster.

Cat was more afraid than angry, but she was not about to show it.

“I told you. You belong to me. You better damn well get used to it,” Dorian said. He moved closer to her face.

“The only thing I’m going to get used to is being single. Get your hands off me, and get the hell out of my house! Leave your key!”

Dorian stared at Cat. She thought he was going to hit her. Instead, he slammed the keys down on the counter and walked out. On the way downstairs, Dorian kept taking deep breaths. He had to regain his self-control. When he made it outside, he sat on the front steps and took out his phone. He pressed 1 on his phone. Cat didn’t answer.

“Baby, I am so, so sorry. I don’t know what got into me. I made it all the way down here before I realized how stupid I was. Please, baby, answer the phone.”

He hung up and waited to see if she would call back. When she didn’t, he hit redial. He left another message. He called back several times and left several messages. After a couple of hours of waiting, Dorian finally gave up and took the long way back to the frat house.

He walked through the door of the house to find a small party going on in the front room where the pool table was. Three girls were dancing on the table in various stages of undress.

“Dorian, Dorian, Dorian. How about...”

Dorian walked past the girl without acknowledging her. Whatever her name was, she needed to find another lap to bury her face in. He went up to his room, closed and locked his door and lay on his bed. He stared into the darkness, trying to figure out how to get Cat back. They couldn’t end like this. She was the one, and he’d do anything to get her back. After all, she didn’t have a choice in the matter.

Cat knew it was Dorian calling back to back. She let every call go to the answering machine. Not in the right mindset to study, Cat moped around the house. Around seven o’clock she decided to call it a night. Unfortunately, sleep was not in her future.

At first she was angry. Then she glimpsed his shirt hanging on the back of her closet door. Before Cat knew it, she changed into his shirt and climbed back into bed. She already missed lying next to him.

The next morning was the worst. Cat looked like hell. Her eyes were red and puffy, and her hair was a mess.

Even though Cat wanted to stay balled up under the cover, she made herself get out of bed. She did her hair and put cucumbers on her eyes for about an hour. By eleven, she was ready for her first class.

Before leaving, Cat checked her messages. They were all from Dorian—a total of six. They all said pretty much the same thing. She listened to them a couple of times and then deleted them.

“Get it together, Cat. It’s over,” she said to herself, as she walked out the door.

The class was a blur. She didn’t hear anything the professor said. She would have to double up on her reading. As she left class, she ran into Elise.

“Hey, girl. I called you last night. I figured Dorian had you tied up.” Elise laughed.

“Nope. I didn’t feel like talking.”

“You okay?”

“Dorian and I had a fight. We... We broke up.”

“A fight about what?”

“It’s too much to get into right now.”

“Tonight, then? Me and Simone will bring over some takeout. About six?”

“Yeah. See you later.”

Cat finished the day out with only one run-in with Dorian. He tried to talk to her during and after their class. She walked around him without a word. He wouldn’t have dared grabbed her in front of everyone; however, she had to admit that he looked as bad as she felt. Cat figured he got about as much sleep as she did.

Cat arrived home to find two dozen red tulips in front of her door. Tulips were her favorite. She couldn’t help but smile. A flash back of the previous day’s episode and she immediately dropped the smile. Cat took the vases in and placed them on her coffee table. She sat on the couch and stared at the flowers. She noticed a card stuck in one of the bouquets.

Please forgive me. I will never hurt you again. I love you, Catherine.

Cat lay on the couch and reread the card.

“What am I going to do?” she said to an empty room.

Cat dozed off, and was awakened by the doorbell.

“You were asleep?” Simone asked when Cat opened the door.

“Yep,” she said.

“We have our usual from Rasika and a light drink from the store. You look like you could use it,” Elise said, handing her a strawberry cooler.

“Thanks, but I doubt this will help.”

“Tell us what happened,” Simone said, smelling the flowers.

“He saw me and Tony together and went ballistic.”

“Tony? Why the hell is he worried? Doesn’t he know Tony is gay?”

“No. I think seeing me with another man made him crazy.”

“How didn’t he know Tony was gay? You can see that shit from the moon,” Elise said.

“Dorian didn’t see it. He was so mad,” Cat said, picking over her food.

Cat couldn’t tell them that he grabbed her. That conversation would not go over well.

“So, which one of you said it was over?” Elise asked.

“Neither. I just know it is.”

“Obviously, he doesn’t feel the same way,” Simone said, nodding at the flowers.

“Has he called?” Elise asked.

“Yeah. He tried to talk to me after class.”

“What happened, Cat?”

Cat took a deep breath. “He told me he has the right to know where I am at all times. Then he asked if I was fucking Tony.”

Simone started choking. Cat and Elise had to pat her on the back so she could swallow her food.

“I’m sorry, I wasn’t expecting that,” she said.

“Here, drink this,” Cat said, handing her a glass of water.

“What did you say to that? We know your mouth,” Elise said.

“I told him to get out and leave the key I gave him.”

“You ended it?”

“I guess I did. The messages he left last night said that he stayed downstairs for over an hour hoping I would let him come back up.”

“Look at you. Got the campus ladies’ man camped out on your steps, begging. That’s what I’m talking about,” Simone said.

“I know that the argument doesn’t seem that big of a deal. It’s just that he seems different,” Cat said.

“Different, how?” Elise asked.

“Like he can’t stand for me to be away for a second. He told me that I belong to him—heart and soul.”

“Awwww,” Elise and Simone said in unison.

“What the hell you mean, ‘awwwww’? Doesn’t that sound a little possessive?”

“No, that means he wants you and only you. He loves you, Cat,” Simone said.

“Your turn…” Cat turned to Elise.

“I agree with Simone, which I have been doing too much of lately.”

“I’m always right,” Simone said.

“However, if you have any doubts, maybe you should leave him alone. Do you have any?”

A flash of him grabbing her arm came to mind. Then more flashes of them on dates, or sitting on campus under a tree. Of course, her favorite flashes were of them making love.

“No, doubts,” Cat said, after a few moments.

“Look, Cat, all Simone and I can do is hold your hand and stand by you no matter what decision you make.”

“But we do get to veto them if we deem them stupid or dangerous,” Simone said.

“That, too. Ultimately, it’s up to you,” Elise said.

“Thanks. Okay, enough of my sob story. What’s been going on with Brooke?”

“Still talking shit.” Simone laughed.

“Really?”

“Yes, honey. She wants us to choose sides,” Elise said.

“Choose sides? What the hell is this, high school?” Cat said.

“You didn’t know?” Simone said.

“Well, I do not expect you guys to choose sides. I won’t bring her up, nor ask about her personal business. When you two have plans with her, I’ll stay home.”

“Look at you, being the better parent in a divorce.” Elise laughed.

“Yeah, yeah, yeah,” Cat said, laughing.

The next few hours flew by. Cat was feeling a lot better by the time Elise and Simone left. They’d gotten her mind off of Dorian. However, as soon as Cat locked the door behind them, all those thoughts came flooding back. To try and block them out, she put on some

Chrisette Michelle while she cleaned the kitchen. When the CD got to her favorite song, “A Couple of Forevers,” Cat put it on repeat and balled up on the couch. She had a lot of thinking to do. Did she really want to lose Dorian?

Like Simone said, “Dorian was the gold medal on campus. Chicks threw themselves at him, and as soon as they found out he was single again, they would move in for the kill – including Brooke!”

That last part bothered her the most. She would not be able to handle that. The doorbell brought Cat back to reality. She went to the door and looked through the peephole and saw Dorian. Even through the tiny hole, Cat could see he was looking good.

“Cat, I know you’re there. I can hear the music. Please open the door.”

She didn’t respond. In fact, she was prepared to let him stay out there.

“Okay, you give me no choice. I will stand out here and keep your neighbors up all night if I have to. I’ll beg you from here. You know I will.”

“Dorian, go home.”

“No. Not until you hear me out.”

“I’ve heard enough from you.”

“Baby, I am sorry. I had no right to act like that last night. I was wrong. I was out of line and disrespectful. I shouldn’t have said the things I said, or did what I did. I feel awful about everything. I’ve never been in love before. Never met anyone worth the time. Then I met you. I’ve been in love ever since. No one has ever made me feel this way. I’ve never had to...”

“Had to what?” Cat asked.

She couldn’t resist.

“I’ve never had a woman make me work hard to get her, and just as hard to keep her.”

“Meaning you’ve never had to beg.”

Dorian responded with silence. Cat looked through the peephole. Dorian was still standing there. He was looking both gorgeous and pitiful at the same time.

“Go home, Dorian.”

“I am home. I’m paid up for the year, remember?”

Cat smiled.

“You’re smiling,” he said.

“How would you know?”

“My heart stopped. It always does that when you smile.”

That was a good one, Cat thought.

“Cat, let me in.”

Cat’s eyes immediately went to the couch and in her mind’s eye she could see the two of them making love. Before she could stop herself, she unlocked and opened the door.

“May I come in?” he asked.

Damn, he looks good, she thought.

“Come on. My neighbors will thank me later.”

When he walked past her, Cat quickly checked herself in the mirror. She watched him as he touched the petal of a flower.

“Do you like them?” he asked.

“Yes. Thank you. I don’t want them.”

“Is there really nothing I can say to make you forgive me?”

“No.”

Dorian sat on the couch and sighed. "I meant what I said. I have never felt the way I feel about you for anyone else. You're the first thing I think about when I wake up and the last thing at night. You're all I think about. Please, baby, take me back."

Cat watched him as she leaned against the front door. They'd never argued before. She could partly understand why he would be angry. Cat would be livid if she saw him with someone else.

"Do you know Tony?" Cat asked.

"No."

"So, you didn't know that he's gay?"

"Gay?"

"Gay," she confirmed.

"Damn," he said, as he held his head in his hands.

Suddenly Dorian stood up and walked towards Cat.

"I don't know what else to say, except that I'm sorry."

"Yes, I know. You've said it a hundred times."

Cat knew she should tell him to leave, but she couldn't.

Dorian reached out and caressed her cheek.

"Cat, my Cat."

"Dorian, don't."

She tried to move away, but he put his hands on the door on each side of her so she couldn't move.

"I love you, Catherine. One night away from you was hell."

"I know."

Dorian leaned down and kissed her softly on the lips.

"Forgive me," he whispered.

His next kiss was so passionate that Cat knew she would give in. Dorian pulled Cat's tank top over her head, and buried his face between her breasts. Kissing her gently back up to her neck, he told her how much he missed her.

"Did you miss me at all?" he asked, leaning back and looking into her eyes.

"Like crazy," Cat said, as she pulled his shirt over his head.

They unbuttoned each other's jeans as fast as they could. Once they were out of their clothes, he picked Cat up and she wrapped her legs around his waist. Without hesitation, Dorian thrust inside of Cat.

"Dorian, wait..."

"No."

"Dorian."

They made it to the bedroom without separating.

"Yes, Dorian. Yes."

"I thought I would never be able to touch you again."

Dorian pulled Cat on top of him, but this time she was in control.

"Oh, shit," he said.

Hearing him moan sent Cat into a zone. Now, it was her turn to speed up the pace. He pulled Cat down to kiss her, but that did nothing to slow her down.

"My Cat," he said. Dorian slapped her left ass cheek.

"Dorian, I'm about to..."

"About to what?"

“Dorian...Dorian.”

“That’s right, baby. Get it.”

“Oh, my God! Dorian, I’m cumming!”

Switching back to his place on top, he continued to pound into her as she climaxed.

“Oooohhhh...” Cat moaned loudly.

“Uh huh. Cat...Cat.”

Cat held him close as he came. Both of them were breathing hard and sweating. But they were incredibly satisfied.

“Am I too heavy?” Dorian asked, after catching his breath.

“No.”

Dorian looked at Cat, smiled and said, “You are my first love, and we could have just made a baby.”

“What?” Cat asked, still in the fog of her afterglow.

“I wasn’t wearing protection.”

“Oh, that’s okay.”

“What?”

“Don’t worry. I’m on the pill.”

“Thank God.”

They both started laughing. Dorian lay beside Cat and pulled her close. He mumbled something before dozing off, but she didn’t catch what he’d said.

“Dorian, you’re holding me too tight.”

He didn’t hear her; he had already fallen asleep.