

DARK CARNIVAL

A STORY OF HORROR AND RETRIBUTION

FICTION BY
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CHAPTER 6

Kelsey O'Neil

"Would you please quit stressing out, mom? You're making me nervous!" I complained as my mom dug through my boxes...again.

"I just feel like we forgot something!"

"It's fine, mom...really! I will be fine!"

"Oh, I know you will be honey, but you know how I worry." She reached to give me another hug and finally I managed to shoo her out of the door. She'd been putting this off for an hour and I needed to get unpacked and settled in tonight. Despite my plans, my parents had made me wait until the very last minute to go to school, so now I had virtually no time to get everything arranged because school started in two days.

Mom and dad had a plane to catch back home tonight, and they should have left half an hour ago. Mom had been super clingy for the past two days. They'd rented a small moving truck, hooked my car up to the back, and made the long journey with me, though I would have been fine going by myself. I didn't complain too much, though. They'd been really supportive, considering recent events.

I managed to say goodbye to my parents, once again, and they left my small apartment with regret and concern etched on their faces. I really had no room to complain...they'd been so worried about me having to live in the co-ed dorm that they'd agreed to rent me a small apartment right across from the campus. I was much happier since I wouldn't have to live with a roommate or two now.

That night was productive. I got everything unpacked and got my school stuff ready for the next day. I had an early morning orientation for new students and I wanted to make sure I was prepared.

As was my ritual before bed, I called Ben. The same sinking feeling came over me when I called his phone, and I knew what would happen next. It had been weeks since I'd

heard from him. The last time I'd talked to him, I'd told him I loved him, and I thought we would be stronger than ever, but I'd apparently scared him away. He'd called my phone later that night when I was passed out and left me a message.

He'd told me that I was the most important thing to him and that he loved me more than he'd ever loved anyone before. It was because of that love that he needed some distance to think things through and that he hoped I'd understand. He told me he loved me again and that no matter what happened, he always would.

That was it...that was all I'd heard from him since. I'd tried and tried to call, but he never answered. More often than not, his phone went straight to voicemail. I'd left a hundred messages and sent him a ton of text messages begging him to call me, but he never responded.

I promised myself that I would keep trying to call him until school started, and after that, I would forget about him. I wasn't sure what I'd done wrong, but if he didn't want to have anything to do with me, I couldn't force him.

I'd hidden my severe depression from my parents and June, though June knew something was up. She tried futilely to get it out of me, but without success. So, here I was...desperately trying him once again.

As expected, he didn't answer. After four rings, his voicemail picked up and I almost hung up without leaving a message – almost.

"Hey...it's me...again. I don't really know what else to say to you to make you understand, because I've already said it all. I've got two days until school starts, and after that I will not bother you again. You've had your time to think about whatever it was you needed to think about, and if you haven't reached any conclusions by now, you probably never will. I still love you, if that matters, but I have to move forward. If I don't hear from you by Wednesday then I'll know you don't want to see me again."

I hung up the phone feeling deflated. I just didn't understand why he was doing this to me. I shook my head and took a deep breath. No time to worry about that now. I'd made myself a promise that school would come first,

because that was the most important thing in my life now, since Ben had left me. I wanted to make the most of my college education and start from scratch here.

I checked my papers one last time to make sure I had everything in order for orientation, and then I took a shower and climbed in bed. I hated to admit it, but I felt uneasy being in a new place all by myself. I wished my mom could be here with me...though I wanted to wish for someone else to be by my side. I stopped the thought in its tracks before I started to obsess over him again. That wasn't healthy behavior at all. I closed my eyes and drifted, but sleep only brought with it horrifying images of scary clowns, dismembered teenagers, and lifeless, nude women being tortured.

* * * * *

Ben "Junior" Stokes

"Junior, you gonna answer that phone, or what?" Marco shouted at me. I didn't even know he was behind me, and he made me jump.

"Sorry, kid...didn't mean to startle you!" Marco said good-naturedly as he clapped a hand on my shoulder.

I smiled at him but made no attempt to answer the phone...I knew who was calling, because it was that time of day when she ALWAYS called. I would save her message for later, when I was ready for bed and all alone.

"It's okay, Marco," I said, turning my attention back to the equipment I was trying to pack up. "Give me a hand with this, will ya?" I asked.

Marco jumped right in and helped me. After ten minutes, we were both drenched in sweat.

"Not getting any younger, I'm afraid...not sure how much longer I'll be able to keep up with you young 'uns!" Marco laughed.

"I'm not exactly a spring chicken myself," I grumbled. The subject of age was touchy, considering that was one of the issues that I kept going back to in regards to Kelsey.

Kelsey...I wondered what she was up to right now? Was she taking a bath, or watching television, or was she already curled up in bed? Was she thinking of me all the time like I was thinking of her? I hoped so...or maybe I didn't.

I sighed and pushed her out of my head. I couldn't think of her right now. We were packing up to leave again and I had to concentrate on getting us moved on schedule.

But, something I'd been thinking about was suddenly on the tip of my tongue and I figured now would be as good a time as ever to bring it up.

"Marco...I've been meaning to talk to you about something," I said, not quite looking at him. I wasn't sure how he would react to what I was about to say.

"Sure, Junior, what is it?" he replied.

"I was thinking that maybe...one day – not now – but maybe one day in the future, I might not want to keep this business going anymore." I saw the look flash across his face – somewhere between panic and agitation. I held my hand up to stop him from saying whatever it was he was about to say.

"Now, hold on a minute and let me finish. What I was getting at is that I might not want to run the business, but I was thinking that maybe someone else could...in my place. Maybe someone like you?"

I looked at him and waited. I had no clue what he was thinking because his face showed no emotion. I waited...and waited. I was beginning to get a little nervous because he hadn't responded quite the way I'd hoped. Then, finally, he spoke.

"Well, Junior, I can't imagine why you wouldn't want to keep this place going...it's a family business and all. But I know you had a different life than the rest of us here, and I'm real honored that you would think of me. If you decide that's what you want to do, then I will support you. Anything to keep this place going and keep everyone employed."

I smiled and reached out to shake his hand, and Marco gave me a small smile back before turning and walking away. I think I'd almost made him cry, and that would have been a first.

Well, at least that was settled. I knew it would take a lot of effort to pass this whole thing off to someone else, and I wanted to be strong enough to stay here and do what was right, but I had a feeling that one day I wouldn't be strong enough to stay away from her anymore. I just wanted to be prepared for any possible scenario.

After I had done all I could do for the night, I walked slowly back to the RV. I was excited and also terrified of what the waiting voicemail might say. It was always a relief to hear her voice, but I knew one day she would stop calling.

Tonight's message was bad. She was at school now – I was relieved that she had made it safely – and was starting classes in two days. She'd promised me that she would stop calling if I didn't respond by then.

I didn't know what to do. Should I call? String her along for a while so I can at least hear her voice? Or just let her think the worst of me so she can move on?

I didn't come to any conclusions that night, or the next night. She'd called and left a short message again for me to let me know she'd try calling once more the following evening, and then she was done.

I waited all day, anxious and nervous about the call that I knew would be her last. We were in the middle of a move, as if that wasn't stressful enough, and I had two guys out with injuries who needed temporary replacement. So, I was already on edge but more so because of waiting on Kelsey's call to come in. I didn't know what to do. Would I answer it? Call her back? Send her a text? Ignore her completely?

I eventually just gave up on overthinking it and decided to wait and see what would happen when she called. I went to bed early that night so I could be alone when she called. I waited for what seemed like an eternity, but the call never came. I checked the clock often, but even when it was nearly three in the morning, I still hadn't heard from her.

Depression washed over me when I realized that she wasn't going to call again. Maybe she was tired of giving me endless chances to make things right or maybe she was already over me. I'm sure she would have met lots of people on her first day of school...younger, better guys that she

should fall in love with that weren't damaged.

I tried to tell myself that this was a good thing – that the whole reason I'd distanced myself from her was because I wanted her to move on and forget about me, and now she had. However, I hadn't expected to feel so empty because of it.

In a moment of stupidity, I dialed her number. I didn't know what I was doing, but I didn't care at that particular moment. I just needed to hear her voice.

The phone rang three times and I was frantically trying to think of what to say when her voicemail picked up, but then I was speechless when she actually answered.

"Hey...I was beginning to think that you weren't going to ever call me again." Her voice was comforting to me, though there was an edge to it. She was staying distant and detached from me. I couldn't say that I blamed her.

"I wasn't sure that I would call again, to be honest."

"So...have you figured anything out, or are you calling to make me feel worse than I already do?" Kelsey was trying to be strong, but I knew better. I felt like an ass for calling. She was right...I was only going to make her feel worse.

"No, I haven't figured anything out. You have to believe that I only want the best for you, and I wouldn't do anything to hurt you."

"Well, if this is you not trying to hurt me, you're doing a poor job, Ben."

"I know, and I'm sorry. I don't know what else to say. I just want what's best for you but I don't know what that is right now. I know you don't understand this, Kelsey, but I'm not right for you. And I'm not talking about the age difference or any of that. I'm just...not a good guy. I'm not good enough for you, and you can do much, much better. I'm hoping you will realize that and forget about me." The words burned as I spoke them. I wanted to take them back but it was too late.

"Who are you to decide, huh? Why are you the one who gets to make the choice for both of us? Maybe it's too late, you asshole, because I already told you I love you, and I didn't say that lightly. But if that's not enough to prove it to you, then I don't know what will. I can't change your mind

and I sure as hell am not going to force myself on you. I got it, okay? You don't need to bother with me anymore. I understand. I will not call you or see you again. You get your wish, Ben, so I hope that's what you really wanted. If you ever cared for me at all, then please, just leave me alone. I can't take this anymore, and I have to do what's best for me now." By the time she was done, she was crying, and I wanted to shoot myself for doing this to her.

I tried to think of something to say that would comfort her but nothing came out. I sat there like a damn idiot, listening to her cry and doing nothing about it.

"Well, I guess we have nothing left to say, so I'm going to go now. I hope you have a good life, Ben. I really do. You deserve to be happy...and I hope you can figure out what you want. I...I love you," she said haltingly before hanging up.

Still, I sat there, and nothing came out. I wanted to say so many things to her, but I'd screwed up what was probably my last chance. I'd accomplished what I'd set out to do, though. She hated me now, and maybe she could get over me. I thought about calling her back and begging for her forgiveness but I forced myself to fling the cell phone across the room before I could make things worse.

I flopped down onto my bed and allowed the anger and frustration I'd felt for the past few weeks consume me. I wasn't sure how I would survive without her, but, for her sake, I had to try.

One thing at a time...that's what I told myself. Right now, I needed to sleep because we had to start setting up again in the morning and I needed to find some replacement staff. I refused to allow myself to think about Kelsey, and I finally passed out.

The next few months were pure hell...agonizing hell. I'd thought that the many months I'd lived through after Davina fucked me over would be the worst in my life, but I was wrong. I was in agony. True to her word, Kelsey hadn't so much as texted me since our last conversation. No phone calls, no messages...nothing. I didn't know how she was or

what she was up to. I thought of her often and found myself obsessing over her again. When I realized what I was doing, I would make myself stop. She was better off without me.

We'd moved all over the place from town to town and it all felt mechanical at this point. How was I going to keep this up? How was I going to keep this business going when all I really wanted to do was set fire to the whole damn thing and put a bullet in my brain to stop the pain?

I only kept going because of my employees...guys like Marco that had been my family growing up. They depended on me because this life was all they knew and it would be devastating if they had to give it up now.

Sure, I could turn it all over to Marco and go my own way, but I didn't know what in the hell I would do to keep myself busy. At least here the work was constant and kept me busy, so I stayed.

It was almost time for Christmas, and we were off for a month or so before we were due in our next town down south. I hated every moment of my life, especially now, because I was alone and didn't have anything to occupy my time. This was also the first Christmas without my dad, and that was harder to live through than I would have thought.

The guys did their best to keep my spirits up, and it did help, but they could only do so much. Mostly, I drank. I found that alcohol helped when nothing else would. I hated myself for getting caught up in that again when I'd promised myself that I would stay sober, but at this point in my life, I just didn't care.

Everyone seemed to think I was nicer when I was toasted, so I stayed that way most of the time...I told myself it was so I could be a better boss, but I wasn't fooling anyone.

On the first day of the New Year, I stumbled out of bed and went to hunt down a bottle of whiskey. I was going to get a head start on my drinking today. I found a new bottle in my cabinet and took it to the bed. I reached into my pants that were crumpled on the floor beside the bed and pulled out a pack of cigarettes and a lighter. I hated that I'd become a chain smoker, but bad habits seemed to make me feel better.

I lit up a cigarette and took a long drag while I unscrewed the lid on my whiskey bottle. I took a burning sip and looked around my RV without really seeing anything. I scratched at my beard – I hadn't shaved in weeks – and took another sip.

I was about to head outside to see what I could do to occupy my time when my cell started ringing. I figured it was probably Marco or one of the guys calling about something stupid.

I stumbled over to the small table beside my bed and snatched the phone up.

"What?" I snarled into the phone, not wanting to be bothered yet.

"Ben?"

I dropped the nearly-full bottle of whiskey and it splattered all over the floor of my RV, but I didn't care. I stumbled backwards and fell down on my bed. I thought for a moment that perhaps I was still asleep and this was all a dream.

"Ben? Are you there?"

"Kelsey?" I whispered. I didn't want to believe that it was really her. It had been so long since I'd heard her voice that I almost didn't recognize it.

On a particularly bad night a couple of months ago right when I'd started drinking, I'd been playing Kelsey's voicemail messages over and over again just to hear her voice. I'd made sure to save them for that specific reason. When I'd become so upset after listening to them for hours, I hastily deleted them so that I couldn't torture myself anymore. I had regretted that decision immensely the next morning when I'd sobered up and realized what I'd done.

"Yes, it's me. I hope I didn't wake you, but I just wanted to hear your voice," she said, sounding sad.

"No, you didn't wake me. I'm...really glad you called." I was still in shock and didn't know what else to say.

"I know this is probably a bad idea, but God I miss you. Don't you miss me at all?" she said, choking back a sob.

"Yes, of course I do...more than you know, Kelsey."

"Then why are you doing this, dammit? Why are you making both of us so miserable? I can tell you're not doing well, Ben. You sound like shit! Are you hungover? Or are

you drunk? It's hard to tell!" she practically shouted at me.

"I'm doing this so that you can have a better life than any I could give you!" I yelled back at her. She thought I was doing this for fun or something? I was dying here, and it was only keeping her safe from me that kept me away from her.

"I'm sorry. I shouldn't have called. I knew it would be a huge mistake," she whispered after a few tense moments of silence. "I just had to talk to you...I couldn't hold off one more day. Don't you see what you're doing to me? I love you, and forcing me to stay away won't change that. It doesn't matter how much distance or time you put between us...it won't change how I feel. I've been waiting for you all these months...just waiting for you to come to your senses!"

I tried to get the words out of my mouth this time. She didn't know what she was asking for.

"Kelsey, please...you have to move on. For my sake, for your sake...you have to stop this."

"Fine. Why should you be any different? I should have never had anything to do with you! You're just as bad as the rest of them!" she yelled and then the line went dead.

That was awful. The loaded gun under my mattress was starting to look better and better. I got up and started mopping up the mess on the floor, but I got bored with it before I could get it all cleaned up. Instead, I picked up the whiskey bottle that still had a good bit inside and downed it as quickly as I could. I pulled on some clean pants and hunted for my keys. I was going to need some more alcohol if I had any chance of making it through this day.

* * * * *

Kelsey O'Neil

"He's just an asshole...you can't change that! All men are, to some degree. He just seems to be worse than the rest." My neighbor and new best friend tried to comfort me, but I was inconsolable. I sat on her small sofa and tried to get my hysterical crying under control, but I wasn't able to stop.

Jenna and I had met the day of orientation. I saw her

parents leaving that morning – mine had left the night before – and I stopped to say hi. That was the beginning of our friendship. We did virtually everything together. We had two classes together, walked to school with one another, and often studied together. We ate breakfast, lunch, and dinner with each other and any time we had a free time, we found something fun to do that wasn't school-related.

I was so relieved to have a friendly face on the first day of school. While she was a great friend, she was still no replacement for June. I tried to keep in touch with her daily, but she didn't answer when I'd just tried to call her. Unfortunately for Jenna, I ended up bringing my mess to her. She seemed to understand all about the heartache that men could cause, because she'd been through more guys last semester than I could count.

I, stupidly, had been saving myself for Ben, hoping that he would show up one day apologizing for being a damn moron and begging me for forgiveness. This morning I'd called him with the hope that he'd finally gotten lonely enough to take me back, but the conversation didn't go as I had planned.

"I just don't get it! Why tell someone you love them if you don't mean it? And what the fuck does he mean when he says he's doing all this for me? God, I could just strangle him right now!" I yelled, venting my frustration. Jenna handed me another tissue and gave me a sympathetic look.

"Look, I know you don't like talking about him. Hell, this is the most you've said about him since I met you, but it's obvious that this guy is only going to keep making you feel like shit, Kelsey. You gotta stop hoping that he'll come back to you one day. If you don't, you're just going to keep being miserable."

Jenna was totally right. It was time that I made an effort to put Ben behind me and forget about him. I nodded my head at her in agreement and she smiled.

"Good...I'm glad you agree. I have an idea! We have a little over a week before the new semester starts, and I just happen to know of a really awesome party that is taking place this weekend. YOU are coming with me, and we are going to find you a date...someone to take your mind off of

Ben. It will be fun, I promise! Makeovers and everything!” Jenna said happily.

I didn’t want to quash her enthusiasm, but I wasn’t really keen on the idea of getting set up with a stranger again. The last time I’d allowed that, I’d been raped and had gotten pregnant, which then resulted in a painful miscarriage. I wasn’t so sure I was ready for some kind of blind date. Jenna, however, had no idea about my past, so she didn’t know that I wouldn’t like her idea.

I tried to put a smile on my face and go along with her plans, but I was still apprehensive. However, one thought of Ben was enough to convince me that this was what I needed. Anything to get over him! I would do anything at this point to forget about him and all of the pain he had caused me.

I spent all of my time with Jenna over the next couple of days. We went shopping for just the right outfit to wear this weekend, and I allowed her to drag me to a salon and get my hair cut and styled. I hated to admit that I actually liked what they had done. I’d let my hair grow out long over the summer and the fall, so I wouldn’t let them cut it all off. Instead, my stylist layered it and gave me long bangs and put just a touch of highlights in.

Jenna, of course, looked amazing when she was done. Her long, straight, jet-black hair was trimmed to perfection and her long bangs framed her beautiful face. Jenna was part Hispanic – from her mother’s side – and part Caucasian – from her father’s side – and the blend of the two made her more than beautiful – she was interesting and unique. She had the most beautiful tone of skin...not quite olive in complexion, but not pale like I was. Her complexion reminded me a lot of Ben’s. Her eyes – deep, dark brown – were accented by extremely long lashes that people always assumed were fake, and she had the whitest smile I’d ever seen. She was taller than I was by a couple of inches, and she was slender. She had the build of an athlete, but she wasn’t overly muscular. She also had huge boobs, which is why she often had plenty of guys hanging around.

Jenna wasn’t the type of person I would have thought

could be friends with someone like me, but I found out rather quickly that she was extremely shy and quiet. That is, until she got to know you...then you couldn't get her to shut up.

I smiled at my friend as we walked back to our apartment building. I was actually starting to look forward to this weekend. Maybe a party was what I needed. I also wanted to show off my new dress that we'd bought. Somehow, between all of the walking and all of the classes keeping me busy, I'd lost a bit of weight and I was happier with my new body. I was nowhere near Jenna's size, but I wasn't quite as plump as I had been.

Unfortunately, I was still self-conscious and ridiculously shy around guys my age, so I hoped that I wouldn't be miserable this weekend. I had Jenna with me, and she said she knew quite a few of the people going, so I would just stick with her.

I headed into my apartment to put my new things away, and Jenna and I made plans to meet up for dinner later. As was habit, I checked my phone and wasn't surprised to see that I didn't have any missed calls or text messages. Somehow, I was still stupidly clinging to the hope that Ben would change his mind.

"Wow, Kelsey...you look great!" Jenna said as I stumbled into the room. I was blushing from head to toe. I didn't remember this dress being quite so...revealing. I felt silly in it, but Jenna assured me that I looked perfect. Fortunately, it was still chilly outside, so I was able to throw on my coat and cover myself up.

We took my car to the party, which was clear across town, and arrived after the place was packed. We had to park on the next block and walk back. On the way, Jenna ran into a girl from her English class and they started talking animatedly about the party. Jenna introduced us and we kept walking. We ended up meeting three more girls along the way – two from Jenna's class, and one from my Sociology class.

I felt a lot better walking into the party with a group of people, and it turned out that it wasn't as bad as I had

feared. I actually recognized a lot of people from campus, and I was able to talk to most of them. Jenna seemed pleased that I was being so talkative.

However, Jenna made me a bit nervous when she introduced me to Gavin from her Statistics class. I recognized him and thought we probably had a class together, though I hadn't ever spoken to him before. I said hello and we started talking. Gavin and I had quite a bit in common. He was also an only child that came from a small, crappy town that he couldn't wait to get out of, and the fall semester had been his first. He also lived in the same apartment complex with a roommate in another building that had two-bedroom layouts.

We talked about our classes, our majors, the upcoming semester, our finals, our grades...it was actually nice to talk to someone so normal and so much like me. He offered me a drink, but I declined. I didn't care for drinking much anymore, considering the trouble it had gotten me into last time. However, Jenna came up behind me at one point and practically thrust a cup in my hand, forcing me to take a drink. I hesitantly took a sip to appease her...it was something strong and it made my throat burn.

Jenna grinned at me and stayed by my side as Gavin excused himself to get another beer.

"So, what do you think?" she asked pointedly.

"About Gavin?" I replied. Jenna nodded her head enthusiastically.

"He's asked about you before. He knows we're neighbors and he's seen us walking back and forth to the campus together. I think he's interested in you! I was hoping he'd be here tonight. He's actually really nice. I had to work with him on a group assignment and I got to know a lot about him."

"Yeah, he seems great," I agreed. Jenna pushed the cup towards me again and I obediently took another sip. I wasn't too concerned that she might have drugged me.

"Are you having fun?" she asked, concentrating on my reaction.

"Actually, yes...I'm surprised. I'm having a good time, Jenna. You're brilliant...you knew just what I needed!" I said,

giving her a hug. I took another sip of my drink and let the liquid burn me all the way down. I saw Gavin making his way back to me and I studied his features. I tried hard not to think of Ben and make comparisons between the two. The whole point of this night was to forget about Ben and have a good time.

Gavin was taller than me, but still short for a guy. He had dirty-blond hair that was short but somehow still a bit shaggy. He was sporting a goatee and he had a stud in his left ear. His smile was bright and friendly, and he was dressed casually in faded jeans that were ripped at the bottom and a university sweatshirt. He also had beautiful, piercing blue eyes. They were unique...like Ben's green eyes.

I shook my head. I wasn't doing a very good job forgetting about Ben...here I was, comparing Gavin to him. Gavin smiled as he reached me and we picked up right where we left off. Jenna had miraculously faded away so that Gavin and I could be alone.

Later that night, Jenna and I staggered to my car. Gavin and his roommate were getting a ride back to the apartment with us because their ride had left them and because I was too drunk to drive. Gavin had stopped at two beers, which was hours ago, and he was perfectly sober. He drove my car carefully, and we were back home in no time. He dropped his roommate off at their apartment, and then he parked my car and helped me and Jenna up the stairs to our apartments.

Jenna finally managed to get her door open and she waved goodnight to us before shutting the door. Gavin had his arm around my waist as he helped me walk to my door. He unlocked it and helped me inside. I told him to help me to my bedroom, because I wasn't sure I could walk.

I staggered to my bedroom and fell down on the bed. I accidentally pulled Gavin down with me and the shocked expression on his face when he hit the bed caused me to burst into a fit of giggles. Before I knew it, he was laughing with me.

We probably looked like two hysterical idiots, but I didn't care. It felt good to laugh for a change. Then, something else happened. I wasn't sure how, but I found myself turning towards him and my mouth was suddenly on his. He hesitated before returning my kiss, but when he did, he wasn't rough with me at all.

I was so desperate for the attention and the contact that I didn't even mind when he rolled over on top of me and gently pinned my hands down. He kissed me up and down my neck and throat...all the way to my cleavage. I shivered when he kissed me there, and he groaned a little. In a bold move, I pulled my hand from his grasp and yanked the front of my dress down along with my bra, and watched with delight as my tit popped out, taking him completely by surprise.

He looked down at me and I gave him a little nod. He plunged towards my tit and grasped it with both hands before shoving it into his mouth. He grabbed my dress and pulled it down, making my other tit pop out. He worked both of them over with his mouth. The feeling was amazing. I closed my eyes and allowed Gavin to do what he pleased with me.

He wasn't like Kevin – he didn't frighten me and he wasn't rough. In fact, he reminded me of Ben...though I doubted he would be as good as Ben had been with me. I made myself come back to the present and not think of Ben. Couldn't I go five minutes without my mind straying back to him? Jeez!

I could tell, after a few minutes, that Gavin was more than turned on by my boobs. I could feel the hard bulge in his pants grinding into me, and I knew where this was headed.

I pushed him off of me and sat up, pulling my dress over my head. I quickly unfastened my bra and dumped it on the floor, and then shuffled out of my panties. Gavin was struggling to get his pants off without falling over. When he had gotten free of them, he slipped his sweatshirt off and climbed back on top of me. This was really happening. The enormity of what I was about to do hit me then, and I nearly panicked. I caught myself before I could fling him off and run to the bathroom.

I was going to do this...I NEEDED to do this. If I wasn't able to do this, then I would likely be stuck on Ben forever. However, there was one thing that I wasn't going to budge on.

"Do you have a condom?" I asked breathlessly as Gavin buried his face in my tits again.

"Yeah...sure," he said quickly before scrambling for his pants. He produced the little square packet and yanked it open with his teeth. I watched as he slid the condom down on his well-endowed shaft and knew that there was no turning back now.

Gavin pushed my legs apart gently with his knees and before I knew it, he was pushing his huge cock inside of me. This was the first time I'd had sex since my surgery, and I was worried that it would hurt, but it didn't. It actually felt really, really good.

I groaned and wrapped my legs around Gavin's waist as he started to pick up the pace. My nails scraped up and down his back as he pounded me over and over and I allowed myself to enjoy what was happening.

Gavin's beard scraped against my chest as he sucked on my nipples, and his hands were firmly grabbing my hair by the roots. His body was heavy on top of me as he entered me again and again, and it was amazing. I relished everything that he was doing to me.

"Flip over," Gavin whispered roughly in my ear, and I did as he said.

He stood up and pulled me over to the side of the bed, making me put my face down in the mattress. My ass was hanging in the air, and I wasn't sure that I liked that, but before I could think too much on it, he slapped me hard across the ass. It felt amazing.

"You have such a nice ass," Gavin said earnestly as he rubbed my ass cheeks with both of his hands. He pushed two of his fingers inside my pussy and thrust them back and forth, making me moan again.

Then, he leaned down and buried his face in my exposed crotch and licked my clit until I thought I would explode. Before I was able to come, he stopped and stood back up.

He shoved his sheathed dick inside of me again and began pounding me once more. He was relentless. I was starting to get sore from the pounding, but I didn't want him to stop.

I felt my muscles starting to clench up, and I knew what that meant. Gavin reached down and started to massage my clit with his hand, making me gasp and clutch the sheets with my hands.

I exploded all at once, my orgasm ripping through me and setting me on fire. My muscles were so tight I thought I was going to get a leg cramp. I came as he continued to pound my tight pussy with his fat cock and when it was finally over, I nearly collapsed.

He pulled out of me and flipped me over again so that I was lying on my back. I thought for a moment that he wanted me to suck his dick, which I wasn't so excited about but probably would have done it anyway, but he had different plans. He yanked the condom off and threw it on the bed next to me as he climbed on top of me.

He straddled me and positioned his dick between my breasts before reaching with both his hands and shoving my tits together around his dick. He began to move back and forth so that his dick pumped between my tits.

It didn't take him long before he started to tense up and I knew what was coming. He gripped my tits tighter between his hands and gave one last thrust before grunting and shooting his load all over my chest and my neck. I had to admit...it was pretty hot.

Gavin reached down and rubbed his fingers through his goo that was spread across my chest.

"I like having my spooge on you," Gavin said with a wicked grin.

"Me too," I said breathlessly.

He crawled off of me and helped me up off of the bed. We both headed straight for the tiny bathroom to clean up. Once we were done, I headed straight back to bed and nearly passed out. I was lightheaded from all of the alcohol. Gavin followed me and I wasn't too disturbed when he climbed in the bed beside me. I fell asleep and for the first time in a while, I didn't dream of monsters or evil people. In fact, I

didn't dream at all.

The next morning I woke up with a blaring headache. I felt like my head was going to split in two. It took me a few minutes to try to recall what had happened last night, and when I rolled over in bed, I almost screamed out loud. I was not prepared to see Gavin sleeping next to me. I had forgotten that he was here.

Shit...had that really happened, then? I moved around in the bed, and could tell immediately that we'd had sex. I was sore in places that hadn't been touched in months.

What had I gotten myself into? This was ridiculous! I wasn't the type of girl that did this! Yet, as I thought back to my track record, it did sort of seem that way. I'd had sex with Kevin the first night I'd met him, though that was a bit against my will...and Ben was basically a stranger when I slept with him. Maybe I was just kidding myself and that was EXACTLY the type of girl that I was.

I had a naked guy in my bed to prove it. He was passed out, so I snuck out of bed and got dressed. I needed to see Jenna and I hoped that she was awake. I would also call June soon to let her know what the fuck I'd done. No doubt she would either give me a stern lecture or be extremely proud of me...or both.

I snuck out of my front door and walked the short distance to Jenna's apartment. I knocked as loudly as I dared, and was happy to hear movement inside.

Jenna's door creaked open and her head poked out. She smiled when she saw that it was me and flung her door open. She looked about as rough as I did. Her hair looked horrible and there were bags under her eyes.

"Hey there...come on in," she said suggestively, as if she already knew why I was here.

I hung my head and ducked inside of her apartment. I heard her giggle behind me and it made my face flush.

"Well, did you have a good night?" she asked as soon as I sat down on her sofa.

"Yes, I did," I said, not bothering to try to lie to her. She would find out from Gavin later on if I didn't tell her. Plus, he

was still in my damn bed.

"Wow, Kelsey! You are a dirty bitch!" she said with a laugh. I had to laugh with her, because the whole situation was so absurd.

"I can't believe it! You and Gavin! I thought maybe you two would hook up at some point, but the first night? You work fast, my friend!"

"Oh, shut up! My record is practically spotless compared to yours, you know!" I retorted.

Jenna stuck her tongue out at me and skipped to her kitchen. I heard her banging around for a minute and then I smelled coffee brewing. Just what I needed to wake me up.

"So, seriously...how was last night? Did it get the job done?" she asked when she came back in the room.

"Yes, I think so. I mean, I don't know what will happen when he wakes up, but I do feel better. If nothing else, it was a great distraction."

"Good. I hope you two make it work...at least for a while. You two are both really good people and you deserve to be happy. From what I've gathered from Gavin, he was in a serious relationship back home. He's just like you though...he doesn't like to talk about it. She must have messed him up pretty bad," Jenna said thoughtfully.

I relaxed on her couch for a few minutes while she waited on the coffee to finish. When it was done, she brought me a huge mug and I took it gratefully.

"So, are you going to tell me what happened or do I have to force it out of you?" Jenna finally blurted out. She was staring at me intently.

"No, I'm not going to tell you what happened! I'm sure you can figure it out if you tried really hard," I said, trying to keep a straight face. She was just as nosy as June!

"C'mon, Kelsey! I want details! Was he big or what? I always figured he would be big...he just seems the type!"

I nearly spit my coffee out all over her couch.

"Jenna! Dammit!" I yelled as I wiped up the coffee that had spilled down the front of my shirt.

"Hahaha! Sorry, Kelsey!" she said, though I knew she wasn't really sorry. She was probably going to keep

pestering me until I gave her something.

"Fine...I'll tell you something, but you have to keep it a secret and not tell a SOUL, okay?"

"Yes, yes! I promise!" she said hastily. I smiled at her enthusiasm. She had no shame whatsoever.

"He was pretty damn big," I confirmed and watched her eyes widen in shock. "And he said he liked my ass." I saw her eyes pop open even wider. I was going to blow her away with this one. "Oh, and he fucked my tits and shot his load all over them...so I guess that's good, right?" I said, watching her face.

The expression she had was priceless. I don't know if she was shocked or stunned or impressed or horrified. Finally, she thawed out enough to respond.

"Holy fuck...quiet little Gavin is a dirty boy! You two are PERFECT for each other!" Jenna squealed.

I just rolled my eyes at her and unsuccessfully tried not to smile.

"Not a soul," I reminded her.

"I promise! Not a soul!" Jenna repeated.

I finished my coffee and was already feeling a bit better, though my headache was still there.

"Is he still at your place?" she asked.

"Yes...he was sleeping when I snuck out."

"Wow...you and Gavin...who would have thought?" she said, taking her mug into the kitchen. I followed behind her with my own mug and put it in the sink.

"Do you have any aspirins? My head is freaking killing me," I said.

"Sure...bathroom." She turned and headed for her bedroom and I followed. I sat on the edge of her bed and waiting while she dug around in the medicine cabinet in her bathroom. She came out with a glass of water and two aspirins. Something occurred to me when I was swallowing the pills.

I realized that her floor plan was opposite to mine, and that our bedroom walls were butted up against one another.

"Holy shit! You couldn't hear us could you?" I asked, suddenly embarrassed. I'd been so drunk I didn't even

realize if we'd been loud or not, and these walls weren't the most insulated.

"Well...maybe a little," Jenna said, not looking directly at me. "I wasn't sure what was happening but it kind of sounded...familiar."

I was horrified. Jenna had heard me and Gavin having sex and who knew who else might have heard. The people below us and on the other side. My face was probably blazing red at the moment.

"Don't worry about it, Kelsey! It wasn't bad...it wasn't like you two were screaming at the top of your lungs. I just heard a few things drift through the walls occasionally."

"That doesn't make me feel any better at all!"

"Oh, come on! You live in college apartments...do you think people don't know what goes on here? Stop worrying about it! Besides, it was late and if I hadn't been awake, I probably wouldn't have heard anything."

I tried to put that out of my head, but the thought of people listening in while Gavin and I had sex was mortifying.

Jenna walked over to her closet and pulled out the sweater she'd worn last night.

"Look...I got something all over it. Do you know what would get it out?" she asked, wiping her hand across a weird stain on the front of the sweater. I knew she was trying to change the subject, and I was actually glad to have something else to talk about.

"No idea...but my mom would probably know. I'll ask her when I call later. What is that anyway?" I asked, looking at the odd stain. I couldn't tell what it was.

"No clue...I don't even know when it happened. And it was brand new too! That's just great...it'll probably never come out and I'll just have to chunk it!" she grumbled.

I was about to say something to her but the sound of arguing voices from outside got my attention. At first I thought my other neighbor on the other side of my apartment was arguing with her boyfriend again. Haley was nice and all, but she was such a drama queen. I didn't know how her boyfriend put up with her...which is probably why they fought all the time.

I turned my attention back to Jenna but then I realized that the voices were two males, and they sounded close.

"Is someone arguing outside of your apartment?" I asked Jenna, who was still fussing over her sweater.

"Huh? Oh...yeah, kind of sounds like it. It's so damn early, too. Who in the hell is fighting this early?" she mumbled, throwing the sweater on the bed and heading to the front door. I followed behind her, curious to see who was fighting this time. We'd seen a LOT of fights since we'd moved in here. Usually guys fighting with their girls or guys fighting over their girls. Sometimes it was like a bad soap opera.

Jenna cracked her door open just a tad and the voices were even louder. They must be REALLY close.

"I told you, I don't KNOW where she is!" a familiar voice said.

I froze in place as I recognized Gavin's voice. Who in the hell was he talking to? Shit...I hoped my parents hadn't made another surprise visit. They'd done that twice since I'd been here and I hated it. I would be even more embarrassed if they decided, of all days, to show up now, when a guy was sleeping in my apartment. It would be kind of hard to explain that one.

I raced to the door and peeked out from under Jenna's arm and I very nearly fell over. I couldn't believe what I was seeing. I pushed Jenna out of the way and flung the door open.

"Ben?" I asked, still not believing my eyes. Ben's head snapped around at the sound of my voice and the relief was plain on his face.

"What are you doing here?" I asked, mortified, as I realized the situation he'd happened upon. Here I was, hungover, with a guy in my apartment that I'd just slept with the night before...and whom he'd obviously been talking to. Why was he here? What did he want?

And despite everything that had happened between us, despite everything that had happened between Gavin and I last night, despite the fact that I was supposed to be "over" him...I couldn't help it when I launched myself at him and wrapped my arms around his neck.

He looked great. He was as handsome as ever, and he'd cut his hair so that it was a bit shorter. His green eyes gazed down at me when I leaned back to get a look at him.

I could tell that he'd been having a rough time lately. His face looked haggard and he looked older. He'd lost some weight and apparently he'd taken up smoking, considering the smell that was coming off of his clothes.

However, none of that mattered now. He was here, and I didn't even care why. He had come back for me, and nothing else was of any concern to me. Not even the man I'd fucked last night that was standing behind me with his mouth hanging open, not my new best friend who was staring at me in shock as she got a good look at Ben, and not even the dozen or so people who had come out of their apartments in hopes of seeing some entertainment. It was only Ben.

So, I was completely surprised when Ben's face hardened and he pushed me away. He turned without another word and walked away from me, leaving me stunned and speechless, standing there like an idiot.

What just happened? I fervently hoped that I was still asleep and this was all a bad dream.

* * * * *

Ben "Junior" Stokes

Anger pulsed through me and I felt like I could rip someone's throat out. I got away from that place as quickly as I could. What was I thinking? I never should have come here. What did I expect to happen? I shouldn't be mad that she'd already moved on...that's what I wanted to happen, right? So why was this so painful?

"Ben!" she yelled again, but I didn't stop. I just kept walking. People were staring...I hated when they stared. I wish I could punch them all in their faces and make them stop looking. I practically ran to my rental car and fumbled for a moment with the keys before I managed to get the car unlocked.

Unfortunately, it was enough time for Kelsey to catch up

with me. She grabbed my arm and I wrenched myself away from her. I hadn't meant to pull away so hard, but the force of it made her lose her balance and she fell down. I heard her groan in pain behind me and, despite what I tried to tell myself, I still cared about her.

My anger evaporated as I whirled around and saw her on the ground. She had scraped her elbow pretty bad and was bleeding.

"Shit," I said as I knelt down to help her up. I died a little on the inside when she cringed away from me, but I couldn't blame her.

"Baby, I'm so sorry. I didn't mean to hurt you," I said quietly as I put my arms under her and helped her up. She looked like she was on the verge of tears.

I wrapped her in my arms and held her as she started to cry, and I didn't even care that people were watching now. I didn't care about anything but her.

"Are you okay?" I asked after a minute, pushing her back so I could see her face.

She nodded but didn't look at me. That made me feel sick inside.

I helped her around to the passenger side of the car and made her get in. She seemed a little unwilling at first, but she finally climbed inside. I darted around to the driver's side and started the car up. I looked up and saw the dark-haired girl glaring at me from the edge of the parking lot – she was the girl that Kelsey had been with.

"I think your friend is mad at me," I murmured. Kelsey looked up and saw the girl, but then she gave her a reassuring wave. The girl waved back and motioned for Kelsey to call her. Kelsey gave her a thumbs up and then she reached around and buckled her seat belt.

I guess she intended to leave with me, though I was only going to sit here and talk. I hastily backed out of the parking spot and took off. I would go back to the hotel I'd stayed at last night. I didn't want to sit here and be stared at.

We rode in silence for ten minutes before I pulled into the hotel parking lot. Kelsey didn't seem surprised in the slightest, and when I parked and shut the car off, she

unbuckled and climbed out. I walked around to her side and grabbed her hand, pulling her along behind me. We went straight to my room and as soon as I had the door closed and locked behind us, I turned to face her. I wasn't sure what to expect, but what she did still shocked me.

Kelsey launched herself at me, knocking me into the wall. Before I could protest, her mouth was on mine and she was pulling me to her. I couldn't resist, and I wasn't sure that I wanted to. Her tongue forced its way inside of my mouth and I wished now that I hadn't smoked that cigarette this morning. Dammit...and I had been doing so well staying off of them.

I cupped her face in my hands and she held me even tighter.

"Oh, Ben," she moaned, breaking away from me.

The look in her eyes was enough to do me in. I knew what she wanted and what she needed, and it was the same thing that I wanted and needed. I scooped her up in my arms and whisked her over to the bed. I flung her down on top of the comforter and then I climbed on top of her.

I wanted to feel every inch of her. It had been so long since I'd touched her. She was just the same as I remembered, yet still different. Her hair was longer and cut differently, she looked more grown-up and she'd lost some weight. But, she was still the same Kelsey to me.

I ran my hands down her arms and I stopped when she winced. I pulled back and suddenly remembered her elbow was hurt.

"Shit, I'm sorry," I mumbled, jumping off the bed to get a towel from the bathroom.

When I got back, Kelsey was sitting on the edge of the bed waiting on me. I cleaned her arm off as best I could and finally got the bleeding to stop.

"It's just a surface scrape," I told her, but she looked like she couldn't care less.

"Ben, what are you doing here?" she finally asked.

"I don't know, honestly. I just couldn't stand myself after the way I was a few days ago on the phone. I didn't want to leave things like that between us," I said, trying to make

sense of everything. I really didn't know what I'd jumped on a plane yesterday and rushed out here to see her. I just hadn't been able to get her out of my mind after our last phone call.

I got down on my knees in front of her and clasped my hands together. I didn't know what I wanted or what she wanted, but for right now, I needed her. I'd been worse than a wreck the last few days.

"Please, please forgive me...I never meant to hurt you," I begged as I put my head in her lap. She put her hands on my head and stroked my hair as I continued to apologize for my behavior.

She reached down and pulled my face up so that I had to look at her.

"Stop it...please. You're here. That's all that matters now. You don't know how long I've been waiting to see you, Ben." Kelsey tugged on my hands so that I stood up and then she pulled me down on top of her again.

We picked up right where we left off a moment ago. I just hoped that I wasn't making things worse by doing this.

Kelsey kissed me passionately and held me close to her. I moaned as I ran my hands up and down her body, but at that moment, I remembered that there was a guy in her apartment this morning when I went to find her.

I broke away from her, leaving her looking confused, but I had to know the truth.

"Who was that guy in your apartment, Kelsey?"

"He's just a guy I met at a party last night. I...don't really know him that well," she admitted.

"Is he your boyfriend?" I asked tersely.

"No, not at all." She sounded like she was nervous. I knew what the answer would be to the next question, but I had to ask it anyway.

"Did you sleep with him?" I whispered finally.

I thought for a moment she wasn't going to answer me, but I waited for her to speak.

"Yes," she muttered.

I shook my head in acknowledgment but didn't say anything else. It was revolting to picture my Kelsey with someone else. How could she do that to me?

“So you were lying then?” I boomed, jumping up off of the bed. “You told me you’d been WAITING for me! Why would you LIE? How many? How many guys have you fucked since you’ve been here? Tell me the truth!” I yelled.

“No! I wasn’t lying! I swear! I’ve only been with Gavin and only once...last night! And I made him use protection! It was a mistake, but I was just trying to forget about you! Just like you wanted me to!” she cried. Her tears were pouring down her face now.

I picked her up off of the bed and shook her, hard. “Don’t lie to me, Kelsey!”

“I’m not lying, Ben! I swear it! Call Jenna! She’ll tell you! I swear to God I haven’t been with anyone else! I only ever wanted you, but you didn’t want me back! I wasn’t good enough for you! And I got tired of waiting to be good enough for you, Ben!” Kelsey was sobbing hysterically now.

I let her go and she collapsed on the bed, curling up into a ball and sobbing uncontrollably.

What had I just done? My head was spinning and I was panting...I couldn’t believe what I’d just done to her. I’d never, ever hurt Kelsey in a million years, yet today I’d already knocked her down, yelled at her until she cried, and shook her...probably hard enough to hurt her. What was wrong with me? I knew I had rage issues, but I’d never had them with her before.

I was abruptly scared to death. I didn’t want to be in the same room with her. I was afraid I would lose control and really hurt her, and I never wanted that. I felt like I might throw up.

I stared down at her in shock and confusion as she continued to cry, and I didn’t even know if I was capable of comforting her. After a few minutes, I couldn’t stand it anymore, and I had to try. I just had to get a grip on my emotions.

I picked her head up and slid my leg underneath it so that she was on my lap. She went willingly and without complaint.

I wrapped my arm around her and pulled her close, trying to be extra gentle with her.

“Kelsey...I’m so sorry. I don’t know what came over me

just now. I've just been so angry the last few months because I couldn't be with you, and my emotions are getting the better of me today. That's no excuse, of course, but it's all I've got. Please tell me you forgive me, baby. I can't stand it when you cry. Please stop...I'll do anything," I swore, trying to find the words that would make her pain go away.

"Don't leave me again," she whispered with her face still buried in my lap. "I can't handle it if you leave me again, Ben. I know you didn't mean to hurt me. You're just angry, and I get it. I'd be angry too. I regret what happened last night more than you'll ever know. But to be fair, I thought I'd never see you again."

"I know...it's my fault. You didn't do anything wrong, baby. Don't think for one second that I blame you for anything, because I don't. I'm the idiot that fucked this all up," I said with a sigh.

"You haven't said it yet," she snapped, taking me by surprise.

"Said what?" I asked, confused, as she sat up so she could face me.

"You haven't said you wouldn't leave me again. Say it! And mean it! You know as well as I do that we'll only be miserable unless we're together!"

"I know that, but you don't understand –" I started to say before she cut me off.

"I DON'T CARE! I DON'T CARE WHAT YOU THINK IS BEST FOR ME! YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT'S BEST FOR ME! I'VE BEEN A MISERABLE WRECK FOR THE LAST FEW MONTHS AND I'M TIRED OF IT! I DON'T CARE WHAT YOU'VE GOT HIDDEN FROM ME THAT YOU THINK WOULD BE A DEAL BREAKER, BEN! I ONLY WANT YOU, DAMMIT!" she screamed at me at the top of her lungs.

She was so upset her breathing was hitching now and she couldn't speak. Seeing her like this was killing me, so I said the words that she wanted to hear.

"Okay, baby! I promise! I promise I won't ever leave you again, no matter what! I swear it. We will find some way to make it work out and we will be together!" I exclaimed in a

rush.

The difference in her face was immediately recognizable. She looked as if she'd just won the lottery, though I don't know why.

"Thank you," she said heatedly. She took my face in her hands once again and stared deep into my eyes. "I've missed your face," she whispered, making me melt on the inside. I guess I might as well enjoy it while it lasted. I knew one day it would be too much for her or she would discover something about me that made her afraid, but for now I just wanted to love her, because that was what she needed.

I took her in my arms and pushed her down on the bed, smothering her with kisses and feeling every part of her. I hadn't seen her since she'd had her surgery, and I was eager to be inside of her again. However, I was worried that I might hurt her. I hadn't even asked how she was doing.

"Hey...are you okay?" I asked, trying to gauge her reaction. "I mean, with the surgery and everything...we never really talked about that and I feel like a fucking tool now for not asking."

She smiled up at me and shook her head. "Yes, I'm fine. I healed up perfectly and made a full recovery. You don't have to be so gentle with me...I won't break, I promise."

"Good, you healed, but are you OKAY? That was a lot going on for you and I know that I didn't make that any better at all. And then with Kevin and all..." I trailed off.

I didn't want to seem like I knew too much about what happened with Kevin, but in reality I'd read every single piece of news on him that I could find once I left.

The police never suspected that there was another individual involved, and the girl, Ava, had been too out of it to really recall much. However, they had found a stash of date rape drugs in Kevin's bedroom and in his vehicle, plus they found trace amounts of it in the can that he'd given to Ava.

The police charged him and had him under round-the-clock surveillance, but it was unnecessary. Kevin never woke up again. Apparently, he sustained worse injuries in the fall than the doctors initially thought, and he had severe swelling of the brain. He was in a coma and they finally just

pulled the plug on him when they realized he wasn't going to recover. I didn't really feel bad for him, because he was an asshole that deserved to die.

Ava, however, made a full recovery and I was glad to hear that she was doing well. At least I didn't have to worry about that asshole doing that to any other woman again.

"Yes, that was a shock...I didn't really expect Kevin to die. I mean, they all thought he would wake up and be fine, but then he didn't. I don't really know how I feel about that. I'd secretly wished for him to die plenty of times, but it was different when it actually happened. I guess...I guess I'm more relieved than anything. Not happy, exactly...just glad that he can't hurt anyone else. Is that terrible?" she asked, sounding concerned.

I was relieved that her thoughts were almost the same as mine. Maybe we were more alike than I thought. Of course, I couldn't imagine her killing anyone, though. She was too good of a person for that. That's why she had me...I would always protect her and do the dirty work that needed to be done to keep her safe.

"No, baby. It's not terrible at all. That asshole raped you, knocked you up, and then you had a horrible miscarriage. It's not wrong to hate him or be glad that he can't do that to someone else. Karma has a way of getting people back."

We were quiet for a few minutes. I had a feeling she needed a minute or two to process everything, and I was busy reliving the events that night when I'd kicked that asshole down the stairs. Good times...

"Ben, why did you come? Why now?" Kelsey asked suddenly, taking me by surprise.

"I don't know. After you hung up on me the other day, I was just lost. I had been drinking – you were right – and I went downhill even worse that day. I don't think you know this, but after what happened with Davina, I kind of lost my way for a while. I did a lot of things I'm not proud of. My dad was the one who paid to put me in rehab and get me clean once and for all. I swore that I'd stay straight after I got out, but I was so miserable without you that I couldn't help myself. Then, yesterday, on a lark, I cleaned myself up and

hopped on a plane and came to see you. I got to your apartment last night after dark, but you weren't there. I stuck around for a while, but I figured you weren't coming home, so I stayed here and got up first thing this morning to try to find you. I was so nervous that I bought another pack of cigarettes on the way and smoked one. Sorry...I really have tried to give them up. They're nasty anyway. Then...when I knocked on your door...the last thing I expected was for some guy to answer. He seemed just as confused as I was. He didn't even know where you'd gone and he kept demanding to know who I was. Of course, I was asking him the same question," I explained carefully.

"What are the odds?" she asked absentmindedly. "Why today of all days? Any other day I would have been there, alone and miserable. I wish you would have caught me yesterday, before I made a terrible mistake. I don't blame you for not wanting to...be with me," she said quietly.

"What do you mean?" I asked, confused again. I was here and I'd promised I'd never leave her again. Was she talking about sex?

She didn't answer, but instead stared down at the floor. I saw the blush cover her cheeks and I knew that I was right. I would prove to her that one night with some random, unimportant guy didn't mean a thing to me.

I pulled her down once again and gazed into her eyes. "Is that what you think? Because you are wrong..."

I wasted no time ripping her clothes off and ogling her body. When she was completely naked, I stripped down myself and climbed back into the bed.

I positioned myself between her legs and watched her squirm uncomfortably beneath me. She knew what was coming.

I buried my face in her pussy and inhaled her sweet smell. I'd almost forgotten what it smelled like. My tongue explored every inch of her down there and finally stopped when it reached her plump clit that was practically vibrating with pleasure. I swirled my tongue around and around, listening to her gasp and groan and call my name as she clenched her hands in my hair.

She pushed my head down, making me lick her even harder, and I started moving my tongue even faster. I slipped several fingers inside of her wet hole and explored her insides while she writhed and wriggled.

Her legs became stiff and her words were incoherent, so I figured she was close. I pulled my fingers out of her and stopped torturing her clit.

“Ben! Don’t stop!” she moaned with frustration as she glared at me. I just smiled at her.

“Soon, baby...soon.”

I picked her ass up with my hands and angled her hips hip towards me so that it was easier to slide my dick inside. It took next to no effort for my huge cock to fill her sweet, soft, wet, hot hole. Her eyes rolled back into her head as I filled her completely. I saw her nipples get even harder and more erect, so I knew that she was turned on.

I leaned over and sucked gently on one of her nipples, then moved over to the other one. When I was done with them, I moved my hands to the sides of her head and covered her with my body. I moved in and out of her slowly, enjoying the feeling of her tight pussy around my dick. It had been so long since I’d been with her I knew it wouldn’t take long to shoot my load, so I took it slow and easy to prolong it.

“Oh, Ben!” she whispered in my ear, making my toes curl. I could hear the desire in her voice, and it made me want her that much more.

I nipped at her earlobe and called her name as I fucked her. She arched and bowed her back underneath me, and I knew that I was driving her crazy.

“Baby, please...faster,” she begged hoarsely. I increased my speed and began pumping in and out of her faster. Her cunt was like a giant suction around my dick, pulling me back in with force every time I tried to pull out of her. It was a phenomenal feeling.

“Oh, God, I’ve missed you! FUCK ME!” she screamed, making my dick harder. I increased my rhythm once again and pounded her relentlessly. I sat back on my knees and pulled her legs up around my neck, continuing to fuck her.

She seemed to like that quite a bit. I grabbed her bouncing tits with my hands and squeezed them, pinching and twisting the nipples between my fingers.

“Fuck, Kelsey!” I groaned as she tightened her pussy around me. “Tell me...tell me you love me, baby,” I begged, needing to hear her say it again.

“Fuck, Ben!” she swore as I slammed into her and nearly ramming her head into the wall. “I love you! I will always love you! Now please...fuck me and make me come!” she panted.

I pounded her harder than I ever had. If I was hurting her, she never let on. I fucked her brains out for what seemed like an eternity and she finally reached down with her hand and rubbed her clit while I was inside of her. It only took her a few seconds before she was trembling beneath me as she came. I felt a gush of hot liquid squirt over my dick as she orgasmed, and it was enough to tip me over the edge.

I grunted and groaned as I slapped my dick inside of her one last time and emptied my load. I felt the hot liquid shooting out of my dick as I buried it deep inside of her. I moaned her name as she tightened her pussy, milking my dick and getting every last drop of goo out of me. When it was over, I collapsed on the bed beside her and pulled her close to me.

“Never again,” she said firmly. “Promise me.”

“Never again. I swear it. I will never, ever leave you again, baby. I’ll be here as long as you want me.”

She nodded, apparently satisfied, and we both fell asleep, exhausted.

When we woke up later, Kelsey seemed ecstatic that I was still there.

“I thought it was a dream,” she said sadly.

“No, baby. I’m here,” I promised. This seemed to make her feel better.

“I can see that,” she said wryly with a smile on her face. I looked at what she was staring at and realized that my dick was hard again. Huh...I didn’t realize that was going on down there. Before I could say anything, Kelsey was

kneeling beside me on the bed and she put my dick in her mouth. The hot, wet feeling of her tongue on the head of my dick was like no other feeling I'd ever felt before. She stroked my shaft with her hand as she worked the head of my dick with her tongue. It was torture, but it was also incredible.

Kelsey was still naked, so I was able to enjoy watching her large tits bounce every time she bobbed up and down on my dick. I smoothed her hair out of the way and tucked it behind her ear so that I could see her lovely face as she was going down on me. It was really turning me on because she kept giving me these smoldering looks.

Kelsey cupped by balls with her free hand and gave them a gentle squeeze, causing me to moan. I tipped my head back and closed my eyes, enjoying the feeling of her mouth on me.

To be so inexperienced, she sure was good at that. I tried hard to keep from thrusting my hips when she took me completely in her mouth, but I slipped up often. I could feel my dick hitting the back of her throat when I thrust it in deep. The soft sucking noises that she was making also turned me on.

"Baby...you gotta stop...I'm gonna explode," I warned her, but she didn't slow down. Oh, she was going to really torture me.

She sucked harder and harder on my dick, making it swell and throb. She flicked her tongue across the head and it made me quiver.

"Oh, baby...don't stop...almost there," I begged quietly as I began thrusting my hips even harder, forcing my dick down her throat.

"Fuck...yes...yes, baby...oh, fuck! Almost there! Fuck! FUCK! Holy shit!" I screamed as I exploded in her mouth. I felt the warm, thick liquid shoot out of me and fill her mouth, then I felt the odd sensation of her swallowing while I was still inside of her. She licked and sucked me until I was dry. Only then did she sit up and smile down at me.

"What's gotten into you?" I teased.

"You have, sir. In case you didn't notice, I missed you. A lot. And you would be wise to remember what I just did the

next time you try to stay away from me for my own good. Because you will be sad if I don't get to do that again, won't you?" she asked smiling.

"Yes, I would be. Very sad indeed."

She leaned over and kissed me briefly on the forehead before she sauntered off to the bathroom. I heard her in there brushing her teeth...apparently using my toothbrush, not that I cared. When she came out, she got dressed and climbed back into the bed with me. She didn't seem to mind that I was still naked.

She rested her head on my chest and sighed contentedly. I was pretty laid-back at the moment, too. No matter how wrong it might have been to be with her, I couldn't help but feel happy. She deserved so much better, but she decided – for some reason – that she wanted me. That made me smile.

"I should probably call Jenna before she goes crazy," Kelsey said. "And then we should go get breakfast...because I'm hungry. How long are you here, anyway?" she asked.

"I don't know...a couple of days, I guess. Then I have to get back. Can't leave them alone too long," I said with a laugh.

"Okay...a couple of days, then. I can live with that."

* * * * *

Kelsey O'Neil

Everything was perfect now...more perfect than I could have imagined. School was back in session and this semester was even better than the last. I enjoyed my classes and I had a great set of teachers. Jenna and I were still good friends and she was completely supportive of my relationship with Ben. Gavin didn't seem upset at all when I told him I wasn't interested in a relationship, and he went out of his way to talk to me almost daily and be friendly.

Most of all, though, Ben had kept his promise to me. I was completely stressed and worried when he went home, thinking he would get weird on me again and stopped taking

my calls, but that didn't happen. It was almost the second week of February and it had been over a month since Ben had visited, and he'd called me every single day...sometimes twice a day. He never seemed to get angry with me anymore, and I wrote off the incident in the motel as a one-time thing. He was stressed, I was stressed...shit happens. I forgave him for that and put it out of my head.

He was planning another visit in April when I had spring break, and I couldn't wait. Until then, though, I would have to make due with phone calls. They were enough to sustain me. Just hearing his voice kept me content. He patiently listened about school and all that was going on with me and offered me advice on any problem I had. Sometimes I forgot that he'd actually been a college professor, so he had a lot more experience with this stuff than I did.

So...everything was perfect. Even my parents seemed to notice a difference in me when they called now. I reluctantly told them that I was back together with Ben when my mom finally beat it out of me, and much to my surprise they seemed okay with it.

Jenna, who had been a little pissed at Ben when she saw him accidentally knock me down in the parking lot, couldn't stay mad at him. He apologized profusely to her that same day when he'd brought me home, and I guess she understood that he'd just had a shock when Gavin answered my door instead of me. Besides, she thought he was incredibly handsome and mature...and I had to agree. He got anything he wanted when he unleashed the power of those marvelous green eyes.

I was a bit worried at first when I introduced Ben to Jenna because she was so much prettier than I was and she had the same unique complexion as Ben, but my worries quickly faded. For some unknown reason, Ben only had eyes for me. And to her credit, Jenna never acted remotely inappropriate with him. She seemed genuinely happy for me, and understood why I'd been so upset when Ben wouldn't have anything to do with me.

But, all that unpleasantness was in the past now. I put it all behind me and focused on my future. I didn't know what

we were going to do, but I knew that Ben and I would figure out a way to be together. This horrible separation because of his job wasn't going to last forever.

I was delighted when I got a package in the mail from Ben – it was for Valentine's Day. He was so sweet and thoughtful. He'd sent me a large stuffed bear that I could snuggle at night when I got lonely and missed him, plus a gooey, lovey-dovey card that made me blush when I'd read what he wrote. I also came home and found a large bouquet of roses that he'd sent. Jenna had been kind enough to let the delivery man in earlier. I felt loved and wanted, and couldn't believe how perfect everything was.

Of course, I knew it wouldn't last. Like all things in my life, it was going to turn to shit eventually...

TO BE CONTINUED

**THIS NOVEL IS PRESENTED IN SERIAL FORM. NEW AND
SUBSEQUENT CHAPTERS WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE AT
REGULAR INTERVALS.**