

Chapter 8

Theo POV

With a smile on my face, I showered and changed, thinking of Bethany and how gorgeous she was, not just in her body, but to me, she seemed to be a genuine person and had a heart of gold. If I was not careful, I could see myself falling for her fast. I grabbed some juice from the fridge, feeling guilty for having Beth cook for me again. Although she did not seem to mind, I felt I was taking advantage of her hospitality, and bringing something to the table would make me feel a little better.

Taking the first few steps into her home, I heard her phone ring and decided to give her some privacy, and a chance to learn a little more about her. I stopped near the kitchen, staying out of sight, but what I heard shocked me. Some couples were trying to take advantage of her kindness. I was familiar with being used for my money, and it seems Beth has a similar problem. My heart felt for her, and a few more walls came tumbling down. I did not know whether to walk into the kitchen now, or sneak back out of the place and make a noisy entrance. It was a sticky moment of indecision until my heart for damsels in distress took over when I heard what happened next.

I heard her start to cry, my indecision died, and I rushed into the kitchen. She was standing by the stove, her hands on either side of the hot stove and for a moment I was concerned if she moved her hand she would burn it on the hot stove, her head was down, and her body shaking as sobs racked her body. I rushed to her side and pulled her to me, she turned to me without any hesitation, grabbed my shirt, rested her head on my chest, and cried. My arms automatically wrapped around her and pulled her closer to me. I rubbed her back in small circles hoping it was giving her some comfort.

How long did we stand there in the kitchen? No idea. I would stand there and hold her for as long as she needed me to be there holding her, my shirt was soaking wet, and her tears had stopped, but she still clung to me like her life depended on it.

What happened to her?

She was so sad and hurt and broken.

Who were those people?

I have lots of questions, but know it is not my place to ask. I am here if she decides to share. This reminded me of a day when I was holding my little sister in my arms and her boyfriend broke her heart. Is that what this is about? Her boyfriend broke her heart. Was he the one who just got married and expected her to pay for his honeymoon? This all sounded crazy and mixed up, I needed to stop thinking and just be there for her.

Beth pulled back and walked over to a tissue box, grabbed a handful of tissues, blew her nose in an unladylike way, and you should call me crazy, but it sounded honest, stupid yeah? But that is how I felt, that I was seeing a very raw lady before me, not hiding her hurt from me and trying to get hold of herself again.

'Thank you for the shoulder to cry on, I needed that, our breakfast is now burnt. Would you like to get out of here and have breakfast at that nice café down the street?' I heard her need to get out of the house, get fresh air in her lungs, and push herself through this pain. I understood it because that is what I would have wanted to do.

'Yeah, that sounds good, you want to walk there?' I could get my car if she felt she could not walk.

'No, I think walking will do me some good.' She grabbed her purse, and we walked out. The ride down the elevator was quiet. I did not think Beth wanted to talk at the moment, she had a lot to process and my small talk at the moment might not be appreciated. So, I walked beside her, opened the door of the building, and, together exited, my hand on her lower back, I felt the need to keep contact with her, guiding her to our destination, if it was me, I would not be even paying attention to where I was walking, so my touching and guiding her softly felt right. How she was holding it together is beyond me. Most women would still be in pieces in the kitchen, yet this woman was a ghter, her feelings were being put away behind a large wall, and creating tougher skin. I worried that she would put up some hard walls and block me out, when all I wanted to do was help x her and comfort her, more than any woman I had before. This was crazy. I hardly know this woman, yet I want to.

My Mum would never forgive me if I did not support this woman. Mum was a strong woman and I think she would like Beth and would want to help her through this. She is an advocate for helping women, and she works as a volunteer at an abused woman's clinic, for women who are both physically and emotionally damaged women. Some from childhood trauma, all sorts of reasons women go there, and Mum loves to help. She is a retired nurse and can identify a damaged woman a mile off. Dad is still an active doctor, and he helps out at the clinic when he can.

Should I mention the clinic to Beth? Would she take it the way I intend it to be, or would she take offense? Guess I will have to play by ear and see how today pans out. She might not need Mum's help, I just don't know enough to make a correct decision. We arrived at the café and I opened the door and guided her in, moving to a table at the end of the café, away from the door. I sat her down, so she did not need to look at the people entering the café, or out the window.

The waitress arrived, and she checked me out, as most ladies do, but I ignored the irtly looks.

'What can I get ya?' she said. The waitress had gum in her mouth and was chewing it as she waited for my reply.

'Two black coffees, two bacon and eggs, with hash browns and toast. Please.' I belatedly added. Trying to be polite to the waitress, but her whole stance and chewing seemed to annoy me for some reason.

'Coffee now? Or with the meal?'

'Now please.' I was watching Bethany, not giving the time of day to the waitress, as far as I was concerned, our order was given, and I wanted to get back to my worry about Beth.

'Coming right up.' The woman almost skipped away from us. I glanced over at her as she left, shaking my head. Why do women need to irt all the time? Does she think I will give her a bigger tip for it?

Beth did not look up once during the interaction, she was looking at the table, a blank look on her face.

'Beth?' I softly tapped her hand that was on the table, drawing the pattern on the tablecloth. She looked up at me and blinked as if she had forgotten where she was. Beth looked around the café that she could see, and back at me.

'Thank you.' She gave me a weak smile, her eyes still sparkling from the tears she had shed before. I took her hand in mine and squeezed it, doing all the things I did when my sister's heart broke. I was used to comforting hurt women. Mum would often come home heartbroken for some woman in a shelter, and I have three sisters, and being the only boy, made me the shoulder they cried on. Dad, being a doctor, was often not home when the tears were rolling. Did I just sister zone Bethany?