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OFF - CAMPUS

ELLE KENNEDY



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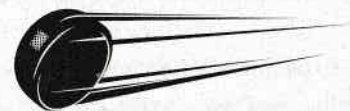


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CHAPTER 1

ALLIE

Sean: Can we talk?

Sean: Plz??

Sean: WTF, Allie. After everything we've been thru, I deserve
more than that.

Sean: You didn't mean it when you said we were done, right?

Sean: Will you plz fuckin ANSWER me?

Sean: You know what? Fuck this. You wanna keep ignoring
me? Fine. Whatever.

There are six text messages waiting for me when I check
my phone on the way out of the campus fitness center on Friday
night. They're all from Sean, my as-of-last-night ex. And although
the emotional progression from pleading to pissed off doesn't go
unnoticed, I find myself fixating on his grammatical error.

I deserve more than that.

Then, not than. And I doubt autocorrect is to blame because
Sean isn't exactly the brightest crayon in the box.

Okay, that's not entirely true. He's whip-smart about some
things. Like baseball—seriously, the guy can pull stats out of his
ass, even ones dating back to the sixties. But book smarts are not his

forte. Stellar boyfriend doesn't quite make his list of strengths either, at least not in recent days.

I never wanted to be one of those girls who breaks up and makes up with the same guy over and over again. I really thought I was stronger than that, but Sean McCall has had a hold on me since freshman year at Briar University. He sucked me in with his preppy good looks and little-boy grin. That gorgeous grin, all crooked and dimpled and full of promises.

I glance at my phone again, my wariness climbing like the ivy on the building behind me. Argh. What does he want to talk about? We said everything we needed to say last night. When I told him I was done before I stormed out of his frat house, I'd meant it.

I *am* done. This is our fourth breakup in three years. I can't keep doing this to myself, this twisted cycle of joy and heartache, especially when the person I'm supposed to be building a future with is determined to hold me back.

Even so, my heart hurts. It's hard to let go of someone who's been such a big part of your life for so long. It's even harder when that person refuses to let *you* go.

Sighing, I hurry down the steps toward the cobblestone path that winds through campus. Usually I take the time to admire the scenery—the gorgeous old buildings, the wrought-iron benches and massive shade trees—but tonight I just want to sprint back to my dorm, pull the covers over my head, and shut out the world. Luckily, I can totally do that because my roommate Hannah is away this weekend, which means she won't be around to lecture me about the emotional perils of wallowing in my misery.

She hadn't done much lecturing last night, though. Nope, what she did was step up to the plate and knock the best-friend-ever role out of the park. The moment I'd walked through the door after leaving Sean, Hannah had been waiting in our common room with a carton of ice cream, a box of Kleenex, and two bottles of red wine,

and she'd proceeded to stay up half the night passing me tissues and listening to me babble incoherently.

Breakups *suck*. I feel like such a failure. No, I feel like a quitter. The last piece of advice my mom gave me before she died was to never give up on love. Actually, she'd drilled that into me long before she'd ever gotten sick. I don't know all the details, but it was no secret around my house that my parents' marriage had been on the rocks more than once during their eighteen years together. And they'd powered through it. They'd *worked* at it.

Every time I think about walking out on Sean yesterday, my stomach grows queasy. Maybe I should have fought harder for us. I mean, I know he loves me—

If he loved you, he wouldn't have given you an ultimatum, a gruff voice assures me. *You did the right thing*.

My throat tightens as I recognize the voice in my head. It belongs to my father, who happens to be my biggest champion. In his eyes, I can do no wrong.

It's too bad Sean isn't able to see me through that lens.

My phone buzzes when I'm five minutes from Bristol House, where I share a two-bedroom suite with Hannah.

Shit. Another text from Sean.

And double shit because it says: I'm so sorry for swearing at you, bb. I didn't mean it. I'm just upset. You mean the world to me. I hope you know that.

A second text pops up: Coming over after class. We'll talk.

I halt in my tracks, a jolt of panic spiraling through me. I'm not afraid of Sean, at least not in the physical sense. I know he would never lay a hand on me or fly into a manic rage. But I'm afraid of his ability to sweet-talk me. He's *so* good at it. All he has to do is call me *baby* and flash that adorable smile, and I'm a goner.

Anger, dread, and annoyance war for my attention as I reread his messages. He's bluffing. He wouldn't come over uninvited, would he?

Fuckity *fuck*.

With shaky fingers, I pull up Hannah's number. Two rings later and my best friend's reassuring voice echoes on the line. "Hey, what's up? You okay?"

I can hear soft chatter in the background. A female voice—it's Grace Ivers, Logan's girlfriend. That means that Hannah and her boyfriend, Garrett, have already left for their weekend in Boston. She invited me to go with them, but I turned her down because I hadn't wanted to be the fifth wheel. Two madly in love couples and me? No thank you.

Now I wish I'd accepted the invitation, because I'll be all alone this weekend and Sean wants to *talk*.

"Sean's coming over tonight," I blurt out.

Hannah gasps. "What? *No!* Why would you agree to—"

"I didn't agree to anything! He didn't even ask if it was cool. He just messaged saying he's coming by."

"What the hell?" She sounds as displeased as I feel.

"I know, right?" My panic spills over. "I can't see him, Han. I'm still too raw about this breakup. If he comes over, I might end up taking him back."

"Allie—"

"Do you think if I turn off all the lights and lock the door, he'll assume I'm not home and leave?"

"Knowing Sean? He'll wait outside the door all night." Hannah curses. "You know what? I shouldn't have agreed to go to this Bruins game. I should be home with you. Hold on, I'm telling Garrett to turn the car around—"

"No way," I interrupt. "You are *not* canceling your trip for me. This is your last chance to do something fun."

Hannah's boyfriend is the captain of the Briar hockey team, which means his practice and game schedule will be jam-packed now that the season has started. Which means Hannah won't get to see him as much. I refuse to be the one who ruins a rare weekend of freedom for them.

"I just want advice." I swallow hard. "So please, tell me what to do. Should I ask Tracy if I can crash in her room?"

"No, you don't want to be in Bristol if Sean's wandering the halls. Maybe Megan— No, wait, her new boyfriend is in town this weekend. They'll probably want to be alone." Hannah sounds thoughtful. "What about Stella?"

"She and Justin just moved in together last week. They're not going to want a last-minute houseguest."

"Hold on a sec." There's another long pause. I hear Garrett's muffled voice, but I can't make out what he's saying. Then Hannah is back. "Garrett says you can stay at his place this weekend. Dean and Tuck will both be there, so if Sean figures out where you went and drops by, they'll kick him to the curb." The murmur of voices fills the background again. "You can sleep in Garrett's room," she adds.

Indecision flashes through me. I mean, this is ridiculous. I can't believe I'm considering letting Sean drive me out of my own dorm. But my mind is flooded with images of him pounding on my door. Or worse, pulling a *Say Anything* and standing outside my window with a boombox. Ugh, what if he plays the Peter Gabriel song? I *hate* that song.

"Are you sure it's okay?" I ask.

"Yup. Totally fine. Logan's texting Dean and Tucker right now to let them know. You can head over any time."

Relief trickles through me, along with a pang of guilt. "Put me on speakerphone? I want to talk to Garrett."

"Sure. One sec."

A moment later, Garrett Graham's deep voice comes on the line. "Clean sheets are in the linen closet, and you might want to bring your own pillow. Wellsy thinks mine are too soft."

"They *are* too soft," Hannah protests. "It's like sleeping on a soggy marshmallow."

"It's like sleeping on a fluffy cloud," Garrett corrects. "Trust me,

Allie, my pillows rock. But you should still bring your own, just in case."

I laugh. "Thanks for the heads-up. But are you sure it's cool? I don't want to impose."

"S'all good, sweetheart. Just bat those big blue eyes at Tuck and he'll cook you up a nice dinner. Oh, and Logan's ordering Dean not to hit on you, so you don't have to worry about him perving you out."

Yeah, right. Dean Heyward-Di Laurentis is the biggest flirt on the planet. Every time I see him he's trying to get in my pants. And I can't even feel special about it, because he tries to get in *everyone's* pants.

I'm not worried, though. I know how to handle Dean, and Tucker will serve as a good buffer between me and his horndog roommate.

"I really appreciate this," I tell Garrett. "Seriously. I owe you one."
"Nah."

Hannah speaks up. "Text me when you get there, 'kay? And then turn off your phone so Sean can't harass you."

Did I mention how much I love my bestie?

I hang up feeling immensely better. Maybe it's smart to get out of the dorms for the weekend. I can view it as a nice little retreat, a few days to clear my head and regroup. And as long as Tucker and Dean are around, I won't be tempted to call Sean. We need a clean break this time. No contact whatsoever, at least for a few weeks. Or months. Or years.

Truthfully, I don't know if I'll survive this breakup. I've loved this guy for years. And Sean does have his sweet moments. Like all the times he showed up at my door with soup when I was sick. And when he—

Backslide alert!

Alarm bells wail in my head, alerting me to my stupidity. Nope. Not letting myself backslide. It doesn't matter that he was capable of being sweet—because he was also capable of *not* being sweet, as last night proved.

I square my shoulders and walk faster, determined to stick to

the game plan. Sean and I are over. I can't see him or text him or do anything that places myself in his path right now.

Day one of my Sean-free existence has officially commenced.

DEAN

IT'S FRIDAY NIGHT AND I'M SPRAWLED ON MY LIVING ROOM COUCH, sipping a beer while two blonds—two very hot, very naked blonds—suck each other's tongues in front of me. My life is awesome.

"Best night ever," I drawl. My gaze is glued to the trajectory of Kelly's hands as they glide toward Michelle's perky tits. Kelly squeezes, and I groan. "Would be even better if you ladies brought the party over here."

They break apart breathlessly, laughing as they glance my way. "Give us a reason to," Kelly teases.

I arch a brow, then reach down to grip my rock-hard dick. I give it a slow pump. "This ain't reason enough?"

Michelle is the first to sashay toward me, her tits jiggling and ass swaying as she climbs into my lap and presses her mouth to mine. A second later, Kelly is nestled at my side, her warm, soft lips latching onto my neck. Je-sus. I'm so hard it hurts, but these two goddesses are determined to make me beg for it. They torture me with kisses. Long, drugging kisses and wet, wicked tongues, strategic licks and gentle bites designed to drive me wild.

I'd like to say that this dirty little threesome of ours is a new experience for me, or that the man-whore label my hockey teammates have slapped me with has been an exaggeration. But it's not, and the label is spot-on. I like to fuck. I fuck a lot. So sue me.

I grunt when Kelly's fingers circle my shaft. "Christ. How did I get so lucky?"

"You haven't gotten lucky yet," Michelle says, tossing her long hair over her shoulder. "You don't come until we do, remember?"

She's right—I'd made a promise, and I intend to keep it. Contrary

to what my asshole friends believe about me, sex is all about the woman for me. Or in this case, the *women*. Two beautiful, bisexual women who are not only into me, but each other.

Hey, heaven? Dean Di Laurentis here. Thanks for letting me visit.

"Well. I guess I should get started, then," I announce, and then I lower Michelle onto the cushion and bring my mouth to her breasts.

I capture a nipple and suck hard, and her hips buck off the couch as she moans. A shadow crosses the corner of my eye. Kelly bends over beside me and licks Michelle's other nipple. Oh sweet Jesus. I groan loud enough to wake the dead.

Kelly peeks up to smile at me. "Figured you could use some help." Then she kisses her way down Michelle's flat stomach toward the juncture of her friend's thighs.

Forget heaven. This is nirvana.

I follow the path Kelly has taken, my lips traveling over tanned skin and sweet curves until I reach the place that makes my mouth water. Kelly's already licking it. Holy hell. I'm not sure I can control myself long enough to get them both off. I'm too close to the edge already.

Ignoring the throbbing down below, I moisten my bottom lip, inch my mouth toward Michelle's pussy, and...the goddamn doorbell rings.

Fucking hell. I crane my neck toward the entertainment center. The digital clock on display reads 8:30. I try to remember if I told any of the guys they could come over tonight, but I haven't spoken to anyone but my roommates today, and they're all AWOL. Garrett and Logan left for Boston an hour ago with their girls, and Tucker's taking some chick to the movies tonight.

"Hold that thought." I lick Michelle's thigh in a teasing stroke, then rise from the couch and search for my boxers.

Once my cock is tucked away, I hurry down the hall to answer the door. When I see who's standing on the stoop, I narrow my eyes.

"Bad timing, baby doll," I tell Hannah's best friend. "Your girl's

already gone. Come back on Sunday." I move to close the door. Yup, I'm a rude SOB.

Unfortunately, the blond on the doorstep wedges one black snow boot between the door and its frame. "Don't be an ass, Dean. You know I'm spending the weekend."

My eyebrows soar up. "Um, what?" I take a closer look at her, and that's when I notice the overstuffed backpack hanging off her shoulder. And the pink carry-on suitcase by her feet.

Allie Hayes heaves a huge sigh. "Logan texted you all about it. Now let me in. I'm cold."

I tilt my head. Then I not so gently kick her foot out of the way. "Wait here. I'll be right back."

"Are you *kidding* me—"

The door closes on her outraged exclamation.

Battling annoyance, I dart back to the living room, where Michelle and Kelly don't even notice my reappearance—they're too busy making out. It takes almost a minute to find my phone, and when I finally grab it off the floor, I discover that Hannah's friend wasn't messing with me.

There are five unread messages on the screen, which is what happens when you're the meat in a hot girl sandwich. Threesomes trump checking your phone. That's a no-brainer.

Logan: Hey, bro, Wellsy's friend Allie is crashing at our place this weekend.

Logan: Keep your dick in your pants. G and I aren't in the mood to beat you senseless if you try something. Wellsy might be in the mood for violence, tho. So: dick = pants = don't bother our guest.

Hannah: Allie's staying with you guys til Sunday. She's in a vulnerable place right now. Don't take advantage of her or else I'll be unhappy. And you don't want to make me unhappy, do you?

I snicker. Hannah, diplomatic as always. I quickly scan the last two messages.

Garrett: Allie's gonna crash in my room.

Garrett: Your dick can stay in your room.

Jeez, what is everybody's fascination with my dick?

And could their timing be any worse? My rueful gaze shifts back to the couch. Kelly's fingers are exactly where I wish mine were right now.

I clear my throat and both girls glance over. Michelle's expression is hazy from the extra special attention her friend is giving her.

"I really hate to do this, but you ladies need to go," I tell them.

Two pairs of eyes widen. "Excuse me?" Kelly blurts out.

"I've got an unexpected houseguest waiting outside," I grumble.

"Which means this house just became a PG zone."

Michelle snickers. "Since when do you care if anyone sees you fucking?"

True. Usually I don't give a damn if there's anyone around. Most times I prefer it. But I can't expose my debauchery to Hannah's friend. Or to Hannah and Grace, for that matter. The boys, who cares. They know the drill. But I know Garrett and Logan wouldn't be cool with me corrupting their girlfriends. The moment they entered committed-relationship territory, my former wingmen turned into prudes. It's sad, really.

"This guest is a delicate flower," I say dryly. "She'd probably faint if she saw the three of us together."

"I would not." Allie's annoyed voice comes from the doorway.

I'm equally annoyed. Chick just walks into the house like she owns it? Nuh-uh.

I scowl at her. "I told you to wait outside."

"And I told you I was cold," she shoots back. And she seems to have no issue with the fact that there are two naked girls ten feet away.

My guests study Allie as if she's a splotch of bacteria under their microscopes. Then they wrinkle their noses and dismiss her from their sights as if she's, well, nothing but a splotch of bacteria under their microscopes. Chicks tend to get competitive when I'm around, but obviously these ones don't view Allie as competition.

Not sure I blame them. She's wearing a puffy black jacket, boots, and mittens, and her blond hair is sticking out from the bottom of a red knit hat. It's the first week of November—there's no snow on the ground, barely a chill in the air, and nothing to warrant bundling up. Unless you're a crazy person. Which I'm starting to suspect Allie Hayes might be, because the girl brazenly waltzes into the living room and flops down in the armchair opposite the couch.

As she unzips her coat, she spares a glance at my guests, then turns back to me. "Why don't you move this little party upstairs? I'll stay down here and watch a movie or something."

"Or you can go to Garrett's room and watch a movie up there," I say pointedly. But truthfully, it doesn't matter. She's already killed the mood, and I don't feel comfortable fooling around with two chicks when it's just me and Hannah's best friend in the house.

Sighing, I turn to the girls. "Rain check?"

Neither of them puts up much of a fight. Apparently Miss Allie didn't just *kill* the mood; she scorched the fuckin' earth and covered it with salt to prevent horniness from ever growing back.

Allie barely pays attention to the girls getting dressed. She's too busy removing a thousand layers of winter clothing and draping them over the side of the armchair. When she's done, she looks substantially tinier in black leggings and an oversize striped top, and she wastes no time making herself comfortable on the big plush chair.

I walk Kelly and Michelle to the door, where each one practically chews my face off before telling me they're holding me to that rain check. By the time they're gone, my lips are swollen and my cock is hard again.

I return to the living room with a frown that refuses to quit.

"Did you enjoy that?" I demand.

"Enjoy what?"

"Cockblocking me."

Allie laughs. "Is there any reason you couldn't have taken Blond and Blonder upstairs? You didn't have to kick them out on my account."

"You really think I could screw around knowing you're sitting downstairs?"

That gets me another laugh. "You screw around in *public*. All the time. Why do you care if I'm in the house?" She looks thoughtful. "Unless going up to your room is the issue. Hannah said you always fool around in the living room. What's the deal with that? Do you have bedbugs or something?"

I grit my teeth. "No."

"Then why don't you want to do your naked stuff up there?"

"Because—" I halt, the scowl returning to my face. "It's none of your business. Why are you here, anyway? Did Bristol House catch fire?"

"I'm in hiding." She says it as if I'm supposed to understand that. Then she glances around the living room. "Where's Tucker? Garrett said he'd be here."

"He's out."

She sticks out her bottom lip. "Well, that sucks. He totally would've watched a movie with me. But I guess you'll have to do."

"You cockblock me and now you expect us to hang out?"

"Trust me, you're the last person I want to hang out with, but I'm in crisis mode right now and you're the only one here. You *have* to keep me company, Dean. Otherwise I'll do something really stupid and my whole life will be ruined."

I seem to remember Hannah telling me Allie is a drama major. Yeah. Sounds about right.

"Please?"

Her pleading expression doesn't let up. And I've always been a sucker for big blue eyes. Especially when they belong to cute blonds with great racks.

"You win," I relent. "I'll keep you company, okay?"

She lights up. "What movie should we watch?"

A groan lodges in my throat. My Friday night went from hot threesome sex to babysitting my best friend's girlfriend's best friend.

Oh, and I'm still rock hard thanks to Kelly and Michelle's goodbye kisses.

Fucking wonderful.