

Twenty-Two - Broken-Hearted

I thought I le truth or dare in middle school, but obviously not. I am pulled through to Viv's bedroom, which is sickeningly pink and has cringey inspirational posters on the rose gold walls such as 'too glam to give a damn'. The door is shut behind Rylan and Zander leaving me trapped in with a small crowd. Am I one of the popular ones now? I am pleased that neither of my brothers are in here otherwise this could get awkward.

Everyone is sat on the white fur rug in an uneven circle in various states of drunkenness. Empty bottles are littered around the room and already there is a dribble of liquid on the previously pristine rug.

"It's time for shots!" Chelsie calls out in a singsong voice as I kneel next to Rylan on the le, and lean against Viv's huge chest of draws behind us.

Most of the boys in the room are super hot ones from the football team, although the quarterback isn't here as apparently he's out with his boyfriend. Chelsie dishes out the shots whilst going on about how long it's been since she played truth or dare and how pumped she is.

"Right it's rule time!" Viv calls out energetically. "So we'll go round in a circle asking truth or dares, and the only rules are you have to drink one shot with every truth you answer, two with every dare, and five if you forfeit!"

Wow, this game has no respect for my sobriety!

The requests are normal at first, starting with Viv who asks a cocky football player who he lost his virginity to. The dares and truths continue in a similar nature like who was your first crush, how old were you when you dropped your V-badge, drink four shots etc., but then they get more intense. So far I've gotten away with just naming Jameela Jamil as my ultimate female crush, but Viv's friend Molly then turns her wicked attention to me.

"Truth or dare Nell?" She asks in a fit of giggles, and the shots in her slippery grip splashes out everywhere.

"Erm... lets go truth this time." I reply with a shrug.

I have my feet curled up underneath me and I'm leaning against Rylan. Viv and Zander are sat opposite us, and Zander keeps setting me ablaze with his scorching gaze. Viv keeps laughing wildly and falling all over him to make him grimace, but apart from that they don't really seem to be interacting. Trouble in paradise?

"Ok... hmm... let me think..." Molly giggles as if she just said the funniest thing in the world. "Ooo I got it! How far have you and Rylan been?" She asks with a suggestive wiggle of her eyebrows.

"Hmm pretty far..." I rush out with bright red cheeks, and avoid the eyes of everyone in the room.

Of course it's a lie, we haven't even kissed, but it's not like I can admit that. It's more scandalous this way.

Wolf whistles echo throughout the room and a couple of the guys congratulate Rylan with a thump on the back as if he has achieved some major feat. My eyes dart to Zander's like a frightened rabbit, and I notice that he is the only one not congratulating us. His face is turned away, eyes squeezed shut as if he is in pain and his fists clenched. He does look jealous which is a positive...

Once the raucous group has calmed down, I choose Chelsie to be the next victim, and give her an apparently 'lame' truth asking which college professor she thinks is the hottest.

"Obviously Mr-Mr G-Grayson... he's soooo hot! There isn't even a comp, competition! Anyway, m-my turn now... I choose... Zander! Make out with your girlfriend." She chuckles childishly.

Oh god... No... Anything but that! I tense and a sick feeling swirls in my stomach as I contemplate having to watch them go at it in front of me. I would rather be tortured then have to sit through this!

Zander's eyes flicker briefly to mine before snapping away, and he leans towards Viv. His lips press against hers apathetically, like more out of duty than passion, but Viv is more than happy to make up for what he lacks, attacking him with vigour and squirming her tongue out to attack his lips. I fight my desire to be sick and look down, chucking back another shot to try to numb my pain.

Rylan squeezes my hand encouragingly as they continue to exchange spit much to everyone's enjoyment as they all hoot and holler in encouragement. Finally they part, and Zander has red lipstick all over his lips, chin and nose from Viv's sloppy kiss. He sits back unsmiling with a lost look in his eyes whilst Viv bathes in the attention, reaching over to squeeze Zander's prominent bicep.

"I'll take Zander's go!" She calls out cheerfully, but he doesn't seem to even notice. "I think its Nell and Rylan's turn now! Truth or dare Ry-Ry?" She giggles.

"Dare." He chooses a er a moment. Dang it! That's dangerous!

"I dare you to play seven minutes in heaven with Nell in my closet!" She determines, and everyone agrees that it is a good idea with claps and murmurs of like-mindedness.

Zander's nostrils flare and he looks stony faced as Rylan helps me up onto shaky legs. Rolling my eyes at the lewd comments, I follow Rylan into the smallest closet, which is barely holding all of the clothes let alone two extra bodies. It feels pretty claustrophobic as we are squeezed together, and Viv shuts the door with a definite push, telling us to be safe on the way out.

"Have fun in there! Your seven minutes start now." She calls out, and I exhale frustratedly.

There are so many places I would rather be then squished in this hot cupboard standing uncomfortably close to Rylan.

"So... This is fun." He chuckles aloud.

"This is not my idea of fun." I exhale, shu ling on my feet as a hanger digs into my back.

It is so stu y in here! I might hyperventilate!

"You are so beautiful." Rylan murmurs so ly, and I snap my eyes up to find him staring soulfully at me.

"T-Thanks." I'm murmur, not sure how to respond.

He gently reaches up to tuck my hair behind my ear, the ghostly touch of his fingertips causing goose bumps to arise on my skin.

Slowly, as if he is dealing with a spooked animal, he leans forward and places gentle kisses against my neck making my heartbeat race. My breasts are unfortunately plastered against his chest and heaving out from my top provocatively, making the situation even more uncomfortable.

"W-Wait... stop." I murmur, placing my hands against his chest and pushing him back as far as he can stumble to.

To his credit, he immediately draws back from my neck and (tries) to hold his hands up in surrender. The dull base thumps in the background, and I can hear someone giggling outside, but nothing is louder than my embarrassment and awkwardness.

"Come on Nell... Zander doesn't want you but I do. Your outfit is driving me crazy!" Rylan reveals with a peach blush swarming his cheeks, and dark eyes focused on me.

"I'm sorry Rylan... You are lovely but I just don't like you like that. You are a great friend and very handsome but I don't have romantic feelings for you." I reveal with a wince. "And I have to accept now that Zander d-doesn't have r-romantic feelings for me either." I whisper as my heart throbs in my chest. "The arrangement is over... The whole point of us being together was to make Zander jealous but it is not working... He still doesn't want me. I'm sorry Rylan but I cannot do it any more. Now you're free to find the girl you're meant to be with."

"Are you sure Nell? It's his loss anyway, but if you change your mind I'd gladly take him o of yours."

"Thank you but I'm sure. It's taking over my life and ruining my relationships. I think I'm just gonna go home now." I sigh with a sad smile.

It's true... I can't carry on like this any longer. All it is doing is making me stressed, desperate and unhappy. I shouldn't need a man! I'm only eighteen! If Zander and I aren't meant to be together then I'll find my true soulmate when the universe is ready.

"Ok, I can't say I'm not disappointed Nell but I get it. You love him. Come on I'll walk you home." Rylan o ers with a kind smile, but I can sense of sadness in his eyes.

It hurts me to reject his advances and upset him, but I can't lead him on.

"Thank you, you are a great friend. You're going to make some lucky girl very happy one day." I reply a ctionately as he opens the closet.

As we step out Rylan holds my hand encouragingly helping me to keep it together for a little while longer. Everyone out whistles and a couple of the guys make rude gestures and call out obscene things making me want to gag. How immature do they have to be?

"Only five minutes? That's quick." Molly chuckles before she falls into heaps of giggles with Viv, Chelsie and some other blonde girl.

"Actually we're going to head home now." I announce.

"Someone's eager! Didn't have time to finish it o in there?" Leon from the football team wags his eyebrows.

"No I'm just... tired." I reply defensively as my cheeks heat up.

"Knock it o man." Rylan snaps.

Just at that moment my eyes dri to Zander like they always do, and he holds my gaze with pain and regret in his eyes making me want to cry. What have we done to ourselves?

"Actually before I go I need to speak to Zander privately." I declare bravely with my heart thumping in my chest, knowing I may never have the courage to do so again.

He looks unsure but nods in agreement, and I notice many of the others looking towards me quizzically - especially Viv who frowns. I turn with a sigh and make my way outside, wincing as I pull the door open and the loud music assaults my ears causing my headache to bounce around in my skull harder. Rylan presses a chaste kiss to my forehead before sauntering o further down the hallway to give us some space.

There is a couple furiously making out at the end of the hallway, and two drunk girls are stumbling over each other trying to reach the bathroom whilst giggling about how they are 'going to wet themselves'. Once Zander has shut the door behind him, he leans against it with a curious look in his emerald eyes. I take a moment to admire him in his insanely hot leather jacket (leather is my weakness) before beginning.

"I know you don't love me but I can't do this anymore. It's all fake between Rylan and me. I was just trying to make you jealous." I reveal guiltily as his eyes blow to an astronomical size. "I've always loved you, and thought you could love me back, but obviously you have a beautiful girlfriend and I'm not going to get in b-between that anymore. It's killing me inside. As you can guess this is really, really hard for me to admit, and I have to get over y-you, so this is goodbye for now." I announce firmly with a painful lump in my throat.

Zander looks shocked, as if he is trying to remember how to breathe and talk. His mouth opens and closes as I look down miserably.

"Nell..." he begins in a tortured voice, when suddenly Viv's bedroom door flies open and the lady in question hurries out with a worried smile.

"Oh... hello you two. Everything ok?" She asks a little out of breath as she leans back on to Zander possessively.

"Yes, yes. Everything is fine." I quickly explain as Zander continues to look at me in shock with his eyes wide open in disbelief. "He is all yours." I choke out before turning and near on running away from that awkwardly heart-breaking situation.

Rylan wraps his arm around my shoulders and leads me out as I focus all my energy on getting out of this awful, hot and loud place and trying not to cry. Zander and I weren't even together yet he still managed to break my heart.

Thank you to all my 4K! readers! I haven't even finished yet and we're already on 4K! Xoxo

Edited

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