

Chapter Thirty



Paramedics eventually showed up. JJ had to drag me away from my brother. He held onto my waist, pulling me back against his chest as they put on a neck brace and rolled him onto a board to lift him into the ambulance.

They told us that only one person could ride to the hospital with him, and I tried to tell him that I would go. JJ stopped me, saying that if I went, the DCS would probably show up and take me away. I yelled at him, cursed at him, hit him in the chest, but I didn't cry.

Sarah went with him, promising me that she'd let me know.

JJ drove the van, dropping off Pope and Kiara at The Wreck. I leaned my head against the window as he drove, not even noticing when he pulled up to the Chateau.

"We're home, Jo."

I quietly opened the door and walked into house, not even wincing as I stepped on a stick barefoot. I heard JJ follow behind me, and I just stood in the living room, not sure what to do.

"Let's get you into some other clothes."

JJ gently took my hand and led me through the house and into my room. He handed me shirt, that I was pretty sure was his, and a pair of shorts.

"I'll wait outside."

He stepped out of the room, and I slid off the dress. I pulled off my swimsuit and grabbed a clean pair of underwear but didn't bother with a bra. I slid on the shorts and the oversized shirt before walking out into the living room.

The landline rang as I opened my bedroom door, and I heard JJ answer it and respond to whoever was on the phone. I stood in the center of the room as JJ hung up and turned to me.

"That was Sarah."

I looked up at him, preparing myself for the worst.

"He's gonna be alright. He has a broken wrist and a concussion, but he's gonna be okay. They're gonna keep him overnight and until he wakes up."

John B's gonna be okay.

Tears gather in my eyes, and JJ's concerned face became a blur as I broke down in sobs.

I felt him grab onto my arms as my knees wobbled.

"Whoa, hey. He's gonna be alright. That's good news."

"I could've lost him, JJ. I could've lost my brother." I sobbed, and JJ pulled me into his chest.

"I know, but he's okay. It's all gonna be okay."

I cried into his chest, gripping his t-shirt in my fists as I just let it all out.

I could've lost my brother and been left alone. I've lost everyone in my family, and John B was all I got left.

"I can't lose him, JJ. I just can't."

"I know, Joey. I know."

Once all my tears were cried out, I snuggled into JJ's chest.

"I'm sorry I yelled at you."

I felt him chuckle.

"I would've yelled at me, too."

"I'm sorry I told you to go fuck yourself in the ass with your surfboard."

"Yeah, that one was a little harsh."

I let out a half-hearted chuckle through my nose.

"And I'm sorry I hit you."

He pulled me tighter into his chest.

"That's alright, sweetheart."

"It's not alright, JJ."

He sighed, probably understanding that he wouldn't win that argument.

"Anything else you want to apologize for?"

"I'm sorry you're stuck here with my emotional, anxiety filled ass."

JJ pulled away enough to look down at me.

"Hey, I love that ass. It's a great ass."

I laughed, a blush rising on my cheeks, and rolled my eyes.

"I think we should wait until after we find the gold."

I scrunched my eyebrows in confusion as I looked up at him.

"What?"

"You know, to tell the others. And I definitely think that we should tell John B first, so that way when he kills me, we won't have to bother having to tell Kiara and Pope."

"Wait, you mean tell the others about-"

"Us? Yes."

"Huh."

"What?"

"I wasn't sure there was an... us."

He started rubbing his hands up and down my back.

"There can be. If you want."

"Do you want there to be an us?"

I halfway expected him to make a joke or pretend that he had to think about it. His immediate, strong answer had my eyes going wide.

"Yes."

My lips slowly spread into a smile before I slid my hands up from his chest to the back of his neck and stood on my toes to press my lips against his. He gripped my hips as he kissed back.

"Does this mean you want it, too?" He asked in between pressing kisses across my jaw.

"Yes."

It came out breathless as he slid his hands under my shirt, pressing them into the skin of my back to bring me closer. He placed a kiss just under my ear, causing me to sigh and tilt my head to the side.

He suddenly pulled away.

"We should stop," he whispered, and I pursed my lips as I nodded.

"Not that I don't want to, you know, but we should take it slow."

I blushed at his words before nodding in agreement.

Neither of us had really had a serious relationship. I knew he bounced from Touron to Touron during the summer and from girl to girl for the rest of the year, and I have been known to disappear from parties to make out with guys. I dated a guy for a month or two freshman year of high school, but he turned out to be a dick, so I broke up with him. I don't think JJ has had a girlfriend for quite as long as that.

"Yeah, slow is good."

I ran my fingers through his hair, causing him to close his eyes.

"We should get some sleep. It's been a long day."

"That's an understatement."

He let out a laugh through his nose as he opened his eyes. He pulled away, grabbed my hand, and tugged me towards the direction of my room.

I resisted the urge to skip behind him. I felt so happy and relieved. Honestly, it felt like I was high. I thought about how this is the lightest I've felt since my dad disappeared as I snuggled into JJ's chest.

I'm glad I took that night to enjoy the feelings because the next morning is when everything began to go to shit.

[Continue reading next part](#)