

LITTLE THINGS MATTER

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Life went on without Finn but it never felt right. He had always been a staple in Davina's life since his birth and now he was

a sympathetic look as she sat down at one of the booths. "Hey there, V," Rosie greeted her, placing a comforting hand on the girl's shoulder, "You good?"

It had been two weeks since Finn had been sent to juvie. Two weeks since the trial and since she had entered a bar for the first time. She hadn't been back since then but that wasn't unsurprising, the surprising thing was seeing Davina there in the first place. Life continued. She went to work and dealt her co-worker who couldn't

without too much complaining. Life went on. And she hated that for some reason even though it was a simple fact of life. Life went on when her dad had an a air and

betraying him, continuing on with her life like nothing happened to his. But what could she do? Just stop? Runaway for a year? No, she had to keep going – for Finn. "I'm okay, Rosie," Davina smiled at back at her but the waitress wasn't convinced, "Really. It's been hard, not seeing him all the time, but it'll get better...eventually." "Oh, hun," Rosie took a seat across from her, holding her hand, "I'm so sorry about what happened to him. If I could've taken the time o you know I would've been at his trial in an instant."

At that, Rosie frowned as her eyebrows furrowed. A blonde curl swept in front of her face but she didn't seem to notice it, or care about it. "What do you mean? Why wouldn't he want anyone there?" Rosie asked.

Davina nodded, "I know. I also know that he wouldn't want you

no one was there to watch him. We'd just hear about it later..." Davina trailed o, "Hear that I'm not gonna see my brother again for a year." "I'm sorry, V," Rosie reiterated.

"It's fine, I'm not the one who was framed...but God, I just – how

can someone be so cruel? How could, how could Caden just throw him under the bus like that to save his own skin?" Davina stressed sadly, anger burning inside her. Rosie looked at her sadly as well. Davina had always been a dreamer, never a realist. She saw the best in people, who they could

be, the best parts of them and summed people up just with that.

Never the bad, she could never even consider a dark side to people.

People called her too good for that, too naïve, and she guessed that

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she barely even spoke to Conrad, who was her first real friend. But no, Conrad was in California. He was across the country and hadn't been back to New York since he le . They talked sometimes over the phone, but it was never enough. Eventually, it just looked

God. That, that right there. She reminded the times as a child

when she tried her hand at sports because everyone did that. She

threw herself into every a er school activity before finding that she

wasn't good at any of it. She lost so many games and people never wanted her on their team during Gym because she was terrible. But Davina could remember her dad sitting next to her and ringing an arm around her kissing her hand. "Cheer up, champ," he would tell her, "You're gonna win one of these days." She never did, but that was never the point. It always made her feel better and did, in fact, cheer her up. And she remembered when

their dad said to her: "Cheer up, champ." And that seemed enough for Finn, but it also helped that they went to get ice cream a er that too. "That's human nature for you, V," Rosie broke it to her, returning Davina's attention to her and away from baseball games, "We're

Davina frowned at that, "But they were friends, Rosie. Caden

Rosie rolled her eyes in a fond manner, "You can call the guy an

used to be his best friend and then he just...he just – God! He just

betrayed Finn and now he's in juvie because of that boy."

selfish and we'll do anything to save our own asses."

asshole, Vina. Or a dick. Your choice." "Oh, shut up, Rosie," Davina bit back, but only lightly. There was no malice in her tone but there rarely ever was. "You know I don't do that." The Harlan woman grinned at her. "I know," she continued to lightly tease before pulling out her notepad, "Now what do you want to eat?"

chose to ignore them even though it was fairly obvious that she didn't want to have anything more than a colleague-type relationship with him. Even first time customers could see how much of a distain she had for the man. But Stevie, however, never seemed to notice how badly she

wanted him to leave her alone. Or how utterly gay she was, because

that should also have been pretty obvious. Flirting with female clients

and never males, who came on way too strong sometimes. No, Stevie

"Doing anything tonight?" he had asked her maybe fi een

never noticed and that was the worst part of her job, honestly.

minutes before her shi ended for the night.

tried to save himself.

night."

Stevie Holcomb, her co-worker since she had started working at the

flower shop, didn't know what a hint was to save his life or, if he did,

wasn't who she was, "Probably just pick up some dinner for Brinley and I, watch some of The O ice or something." "Do you think you'd like to go to dinner with me instead?" Stevie asked casually, like he hadn't done this a million times before and had been shot down just as many times. Davina smiled as sweetly as she could, "Sorry, I don't think so.

back to my place, we could chill there. Order a pizza or something." "Stevie," she said, smiling at him, "I just really don't wanna hang out tonight. Maybe another time." Davina knew it was wrong to install fake hope into him, leaving the possibility that one day she would agree to go on a date in his mind, but it was the only thing she could do to shut him up that

"I think I'll have to pass," Davina said again, looking around all at

the flower displays they had, "I just feel like hanging at home for the

Stevie, however, didn't stop. Then again, he never did so it

shouldn't have been so surprising to her. "You could always come

still said things like 'maybe tomorrow' or 'next time' and maybe she was leading him on. God, she hated how complicated she made things sometimes. It was annoying and now she was going to think about it all night. Before she could say anything more, or he could continue, the bell at the top of the door rang, informing the two that someone had just walked in. Instantly, Davina's attention swayed from Stevie to the

The woman's head turned to hers slowly, as if she wasn't used to

"Well, we didn't exactly talk for long or give all the details of our

personal lives, so yeah," Davina smiled, catching herself before she

Wendy chuckled lightly, "I guess so. Um, what would you

customer, seeing a familiar brunette looking around the shop.

hearing the name, before seeing Davina. "Oh, hi," Wendy smiled,

"Wendy?" she asked before she could stop herself.

going to the counter, "I didn't know you worked here."

could ramble anymore.

recommend?"

Wendy hesitated to give her an answer before finally whispering, "My brother. I haven't gone to see him in a while and I feel bad. So, flowers." Davina nodded at the information. "Is he one of the people you had a falling out with?" she asked before seeing Wendy's confused expression, "When we talked, you said the last time you were in New York you had a falling out with someone."

"Oh," Wendy said, as if she forgot she told Davina that. The girl

"Ah, okay," Davina nodded before moving from behind the

counter and closer to Wendy, "So, your brother, what kinda flowers

flowers," Wendy shrugged, looking around at all the options.

brother? Like, 'I'm sorry I haven't see you in a long time' flowers

or...something di erent?" Davina asked, moving around the shop.

Davina frowned at that because it was sad and she was never a fan of

"Okay..." Davina continued to frown as she got the best flowers

Wanda nodded and went to pay. "Thank you, Davina, really," she

sad things, "I guess you could just give me some pretty flowers."

and handed them to Wanda, "Here. I hope they help."

"Bright ones? I don't know, we never really discussed our favorite

"Just...I don't know. I don't think it'll matter, he won't talk to me,"

"Well, what are you hoping to accomplish when you see your

didn't blame her. "Um, no. Actually."

does he like?"

V."

hot."

said before she le the shop. Davina smiled and whispered, "Anytime," even though the woman was already gone. Sighing to herself, she looked at Stevie. "I think my shi 's over. See you tomorrow, Stevie," she waved, going to the back to get her

her brother since she's visiting him." "Ah, of course. My bad," Brinley then paused, "Are you sure she just didn't say that as a cover to stalk you? Because honestly, you are a stalkable person."

It was Davina's turn to pause. "I'm not sure if I should take that as

show up randomly in your life until you fall in love with her." Davina threw her head back in laughter, the first time she had heard Finn's name and hadn't been immediately pulled into a blanket of sadness. "That is too good to be true. And really, if she worked for the government and had access to so many more people's files, why would she pick me? Plain 'ol Davina Royce when she could

"Zaxby's, obviously. Come on, V, you know me and my love for hot wings," she could practically hear Brinley rolling her eyes. "Yeah, yeah, my bad. See you when I get home," Davina said before hanging up. She smiled to herself as she walked the streets of New York, going to Zaxby's because that was what Brinley wanted and she too

loved the fast food restaurant. With her cheeks tinted pink from the

because she was okay. And she would continue to get better as time

cool air and coat wrapped around her, she hummed to herself

went on.

Continue reading next part □

just gone. Not really, she could go and visit him at any moment in juvie with glass between them, talking from a phone if some TV shows were to be believed. But life went on yet it never exactly felt right. She went to Apple Eye's, the diner where she used to work at and then Finn, and she hadn't even realized how she expected it to be Finn waiting on her and then disappointed when it wasn't. Because didn't work there anymore. But Rosie still worked there and sent her

get it through their mind that she didn't want to date them. She went to college and did her homework – unlike Finn – and attended class still continued when her parents divorced and Finn was born. She still aged when Lucy married her dad and now it was still happening while Finn was in juvie but for some reason she felt like she was

there. He didn't even want me there, honestly." "I don't know, I guess he thought it would be easier if he lost and

was true. She was naïve to believe that friends lasted forever but now like their friendship had faded away. That was reality; friends never lasted. But she still had Brinley and Rosie was there for her if she ever needed the blonde so she would be okay. She could cheer up...

she was sixteen – God, a decade ago – when Finn had tried baseball because that's what every little boy was doing. They had lost their first game and only she had come. Lucy never liked sports and Finn had assured his mother she didn't have to be there and their dad just never showed up. He probably excused himself, saying that he had work to take care of. But she found herself sitting next to time and holding him close and smiling as bright as she could and saying the same exact words

 \Diamond Stevie was probably the most persistent man that Davina had ever met, and that was not a phrase she used in a good manner

"No, not really," she answered honestly. As much as Davina disliked his attempts, she would never straight out lie to him, that I'm not really in the mood for a date." Or one with you, she didn't add even though she thought it. That would just be so cruel. Something Brinley would say, but she wasn't Brinley. "Oh, no, no, no. I wasn't suggesting a date! Just, you know, two friends going to dinner. Like, to uh, McDonalds or something," Stevie

night. If she le the question in the air, he would accept it and move on, probably dreaming of next time. Of the time where she did say yes, not that she ever would. "Really?" he asked hopefully before coughing and calming down, placing on his nonchalant persona again, "I mean, uh, yeah. Sounds great." She sighed to herself, already feeling guilt for leading him on. She wasn't really, was she? Because she had made it so clear that she would never date him and had let him down so many times yet she

Davina shrugged, "Honestly? It depends on the occasion and the person. Some people like sunflowers or roses – definitely roses if you're going down a more romantic route – or petunias, lilies. There's so many types of flowers. Sorry, rambling again. What – uh, who are you giving the flowers to."

stu and take o her nametag until tomorrow. Getting out her phone, she moved through the shop and out the door as she found Brinley's contact and called the woman, bringing the device to her ear. "Hello?" Brinley's voice came from the other end. "Hey, Brin! I just finished my shi and guess what?" Davina asked teasingly, knowing what was to come. Brinley gave a hu, "You know I hate playing the guessing game,

The Royce woman snickered to herself, "I know, I know. I'm just

"Looking for you?" Brinley asked, confused, "Because, I mean,

"No, she didn't come in looking for me," Davina rolled her eyes,

"That would be stalkerish behavior. She was getting some flowers for

that sounds pretty romantic in a movie but in real life? Wendy darling

might be a stalker. Sorry to break it to you, I know you said she was

messing with you. But the woman from the bar – Wendy, I told you

about her – just came to my work."

a compliment or run for the hills."

"It's a compliment...kinda. Okay, I guess saying that you're a stalkable person isn't really a good thing but I said it with the best intentions," Brinely admitted. "Weird, but oddly heartwarming," Davina agreed, "But I'm sure that she didn't just use her brother as a cover, okay? Plus, how would she even know to find me there? All I gave her was my name – first name, not last."

"Maybe she works for the government and has access to your

file," Brinley suggested, "Oh! What if she works for the government

you, thought you were hot and decided to stalk you. Or, well, just

and because of Finn's trial was looking into him and his family, found

have a model? Be sensible here, Brin." "Come on, don't sell yourself short. You, Miss Royce, are a catch and if I were gay I would snatch you up in a heartbeat. But, sadly, I am straight," Brinley sighed overdramatically. "And if you were gay, I would date you back. Sadly, you're

Stevie?" "No, Stevie's just the same. Tried to get me to go to dinner with him tonight but I refused," Davina informed her, "But I did call to ask what you wanted for dinner."

straight," Davina went along, "Yes, we know. But we're still best friends so that makes up for it." Brinley hummed in agreement, "So did you really just call me to tell me all about Miss Hot Wendy or did something happen again with