



## 20 | Capsize

**Photo is a little leading.... so I'm going to keep my mouth shut and let you read. Enjoy.** a<sup>k</sup>

**Chapter 20: Capsize** a<sup>1</sup>

The rain beat down in torrents over Camp Beaver Hill. A full moon cast an ethereal glow over the lake, where a rowing boat was stranded in the middle. The piercing screams of a little girl haunted the night. The wind carried her cries for help as she fell overboard. a<sup>1</sup>

Fear was the chill that ran through my spine. She could drown. a<sup>1</sup>

Suddenly, the cabin door opened, and Luke walked out. His blue eyes scanned the horizon, looking out at the rowing boat on the lake. He glanced over at me just as I was running up to him. a<sup>18</sup>

"It's Alicia and Dupree," I identified them. My voice cracked, from fear of what would happen to our campers. a<sup>30</sup>

Dupree screamed for help. The rain cascaded from the sky, in a heavy downpour around us. They were stranded: two small kids. Helpless. a<sup>2</sup>

Luke didn't hesitate. He sprinted towards them. He ran faster than I could ever dream to. a<sup>52</sup>

I heard Tamara catch up behind me, calling out his name. a<sup>52</sup>

I wasn't going to let him do this alone. There were two kids out there and they were half my responsibility. I pulled the straps of my heels and flung them aside. I raced down towards the lake. a<sup>36</sup>

The wind and rain beat against me, lashing against my face. I stared at the cold, dark lake ahead of me. Alicia and Dupree were somewhere out there. a<sup>5</sup>

I watched Luke far ahead of me. He was already close to the docks. a<sup>1</sup>

I was relieved he was here to help. He didn't slow down as he pulled his shirt off, throwing it aside, before diving in a perfect form into the dark lake. His stamina didn't fail him. a<sup>11</sup>

I heard the splash before I saw it. a<sup>1</sup>

"LUKE!" I yelled out in instinct. a<sup>8</sup>

I was afraid for him. He didn't come up to the surface for a long time, but when he did, he was already far out. He swam butterfly, his strong arms pushing through the water. His style was graceful and powerful. a<sup>3</sup>

I jumped in – taking a deep breath before hitting the water. Sharp pain struck my body from the icy water. I almost freaked out imagining all the fish swimming around, nearly touching my feet. a<sup>7</sup>

Then I concentrated and oriented myself. I rose to the surface, spluttering. a<sup>1</sup>

I wiped the water out of my eyes and searched for the rowing boat. I saw it bobbing in the distance and made out Dupree's shape, leaning over the boat, searching for Alicia. a<sup>1</sup>

"I'm coming!" I called out, more in motivation for myself than anyone else. a<sup>12</sup>

I swam a mixture of breaststroke, backstroke, front crawl and doggy paddle. I was already tired and doing whatever I could to get over there. I didn't have the power to do a butterfly – it was the fastest swimming style but the hardest. a<sup>51</sup>

"Millie?" A faint little voice called out into the night. a<sup>1</sup>

"Alicia?" I replied, the emotion rising up in my voice again. a<sup>1</sup>

I felt tears well up in my eyes as I swam in darkness around the rowing boat and saw her in Luke's arms. Her arms were wrapped around his neck, and her head was leaning against his chest. He held her in one arm as he treaded water beside the boat. a<sup>9</sup>

"She's ok," I said, swimming up to them both, "You're ok." a<sup>4</sup>

I wanted to kiss him I was so grateful. a<sup>15</sup>

He looked at me under the moonlight. She unlinked her hands from around his neck and reached out to hug me. She pulled me towards her and, as a result, I was pulled close to him. My heartbeat sped up for a whole other reason. a<sup>7</sup>

"Let's get you back on the boat," I told her, noticing how she was shivering from the cold. a<sup>1</sup>

Dupree was leaning over, trying to help us. I grabbed onto the side of the boat and tried to pull myself up. a<sup>0</sup>

"Stop-" Luke started, just as the boat began to capsize. a<sup>7</sup>

Dupree lost his balance and almost toppled into the cold water. Luke's free arm came out of the water and shoved him back on the boat. He stabilized it. a<sup>5</sup>

"Sorry!" I exclaimed, realizing that I was causing more harm than good. a<sup>3</sup>

As usual. a<sup>3</sup>

"It's okay," Luke said, raising Alicia in his arms and helping her get back on the boat. a<sup>1</sup>

He had everything under control. He'd saved them both. a<sup>8</sup>

They had lost the oars to the little rowing boat, so Luke and I stayed in the water to push the boat towards the dock, kicking with our legs. I pretended to push, because... I couldn't do more and Luke had this covered. My panting was real though. I was exhausted from all the physical activity and emotional turmoil. a<sup>4</sup>

Nothing ever goes to plan, but this night was the exact opposite of the plan. a<sup>1</sup>

We slowed down and let the rowing boat drift the last remaining yards to shore. Our hands released. a<sup>1</sup>

Alicia and Dupree looked out at us. "Are you coming?" a<sup>4</sup>

"Yes, we're-" I started to respond, swimming ahead, but a cool hand took hold of my wrist. a<sup>0</sup>

It was Luke's. a<sup>7</sup>

He wanted us to stay back. My body had adjusted to the cold water and I felt more comfortable swimming in the unknown. I stopped moving, feeling a warmth spread through my body from where our skin touched. a<sup>1</sup>

I had lived a very structured and organized life up until two weeks ago. A safe one. But since meeting Luke, everything had been flipped. a<sup>4</sup>

And somehow, he always made it face the right way up again. He made sense out of the chaos. a<sup>12</sup>

I was grateful he had been here. Without him, I didn't know if I would have reached Alicia in time. I looked at him. a<sup>1</sup>

His gray eyes shifted color to a dark blue, matching the waves that passed him. The moonlight reflected over his skin, drowning out the color. The moonlight reached his chest, and I saw the upper body strength he had. a<sup>4</sup>

He still held my wrist. a<sup>1</sup>

The lake was ice cold but his touch was warm. Slowly, he pulled me towards him. The water drifted past me, closing the space between us. My breath hitched in my throat as I realized what was happening. a<sup>82</sup>

His other hand brushed my wrist, and his fingers trailed up my arm. He was relaxed, and his touch was gentle – a far cry from the strength I had just seen him exert. a<sup>3</sup>

"With you, I'm living life on the edge," he murmured, his voice sounding as smooth as silk in my ears, "I'm glad we met." a<sup>7K</sup>

I breathed out, my eyes lowering to his lips. His smooth and so lips. He was so close to me now. Our legs were almost entwined underwater. I reached out and gently rested my hand against his chest. a<sup>55</sup>

I could feel his heartbeat. A steady, strong beat. a<sup>9</sup>

I brushed a strand of jet black hair out of his eyes and his hands circled my waist. Our breaths came out in short bursts as the distance between our lips began to close. a<sup>99</sup>

"Luke! Where are you?" a<sup>3K</sup>

"Millie! Millie! Are you ok?" a<sup>3</sup>

I pushed him away, shocked at what almost happened. He didn't let me go at first. I was so shocked I accidentally drank the lake water and choked. I coughed, sputtering the water out. The rowing boat had hidden us from view of the docks. There, behind it, a small crowd had formed. a<sup>39</sup>

Alicia, Dupree, Malik, Stacey, Tony and Tamara. a<sup>99</sup>

Tamara was holding blankets that she had brought from our cabin. Stacey was standing under an umbrella. The four campers huddled together, drenched and shivering. a<sup>7</sup>

I clambered to shore, heaving myself up onto the dock. My dress clung to my body like plaster and my wet hair clumped together. I didn't have any words to say. My breath was still trapped in the lake with Luke. a<sup>0</sup>

Luke emerged from the river, water dripping off his chiseled body. It dripped down his torso, carving around the hard edges of his abs. a<sup>1</sup>

He walked onto the dock, soaked. The girls stared at him, having witnessed his heroic effort. They praised him for it. a<sup>1</sup>

He glanced over at me, in my drenched dress and ragged hair, and said, "You look beautiful by the way." a<sup>5K</sup>

I looked the worst I had all night. a<sup>3</sup>

**A/N: A er all that drama, he noticed she dressed up. Melts my cold heart lol** a<sup>8</sup>

**If you didn't like their interruption, I'll give you a direct line to complain: DM me on Instagram @NFT\_Raccoon and I'll send back a word of sympathy.** a<sup>9</sup>

**Yes, I'll literally write back "sympathy".** a<sup>5</sup>

**P.S. I wonder if this little game will age well. Future me will hopefully remember to come back and edit this comment if I no longer do this haha** a<sup>1</sup>

a<sup>9</sup>