

33 | Addicted

Chapter 33: Addicted

I have trust issues.

I walked out on Luke before he got the chance to hurt me. OK, I'll calm down. It's not real, since we're not even together.

At all.

Realistically, this would have been one kiss. A kiss that didn't even happen. As of now, it's all in my imagination.

But I'm a sappy romantic and that kiss wouldn't have been just a kiss. My emotions are invested. It's too late. My heart's already been broken once this year. The band-aids are just coming off, and I'm not about to throw myself into the ring again.

Sorry, nope, not happening.

Player, heart breaker, I'll see you later.

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I avoided Luke. It's not hard to fly under the radar when you're already invisible. I excel at it.

On Wednesday, I saw him in the driveway. He tried to call my name but I hit the gas and knocked over a garden gnome in my getaway car.

On Thursday, I was in class with him. He came early to talk to me but I hid in the hallway until the bell rang.

On Friday, I saw him by my locker and I kept far away. I ended up in class without any of my books.

Finally, it was Saturday.

How long before I forget the color of his eyes?

I sat behind the cash register at Lola Rae. It was a slow day and I was doing all I could to distract myself from thinking about him again.

I knew I was weak around him. He was a bad influence on me and I knew our twisted friendship was going to end badly... for me. He'd be fine. He is fine.

The bell over the store door jingled and Julia walked in.

I perked up, "Jul! What are you doing here?"

"I feel like we haven't spent any time together this semester. I was in the mall so I thought I'd pass by," she said. Her hands ran through the dresses on racks and her eyes bulged at the price tags, "These are expensive!"

"I know, right?" I hopped off my stool and ran over to her, "Come check out these new dresses. They just came in today and they're stunning."

Julia followed me to the front of the store where cocktail dresses adorned skinny mannequins.

"This one is breathtaking," Julia commented, touching the silk fabric of a silver dress, "Can I try it on?"

"Sure," I nodded happily, and helped find her size.

"I've lost some weight recently. Lexi has me on the South Beach diet so I can find a boyfriend this year. I know you don't care about that," Julia said.

I actually do care. I found her the dress in her size. She ran into the changing room and I waited for her to try it on.

It was nice to hang out with Julia again. I missed her. I was glad she's having fun at the store with me. I wanted to help her find a perfect dress and I didn't want to be the boring Millie everyone thinks I am.

"Millie."

Who in the-

That was not Julia's voice. Nope, that was not Julia at all. I looked up.

Luke Dawson was at the door of the store.

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I think my eyes were about to fall off my face. I gripped the till to still myself. "What are you doing here?"

"You've been avoiding me," he said.

He was wearing a sleeveless shirt, baseball cap and jeans. His car keys were in his left hand and he walked into the store like he owned it.

I nervously glanced at the changing rooms. Julia was still in there. I didn't have long to wrap this conversation up with Luke before she would emerge.

"I came to find you," he said.

I slipped off my stool and walked round the counter to face him. "I don't want to be found."

"I got that when you ran away from me and spent all week avoiding me."

"I didn't avoid you," I lied, "We never crossed paths."

"Not possible. I'm everywhere."

Luke is arrogant. I knew that, we knew that, but this was a beautiful moment that he cut into with his characteristic arrogance.

I may be invisible but, wherever he went, everyone noticed. He practically walked around with trumpets sounding his name.

We go to the same high school and we live across the street from each other. It's likely that we cross paths. The unique part... is that he's saying he would have noticed me

"You kept an eye out for me?" I asked, surprised by what he was saying.

"Of course I did. You're a pain in my ass and suddenly you were gone."

"A pain in your ass," I repeated, trying to hide the smile from my lips. It was a fricking insult and here I was smiling. "Is that what I am?"

He smirked and started to tell me words I never thought would come out of his perfect mouth.

"You're a pain, a nuisance, an addiction. I crave your reaction. You make every situation ridiculous, but you've got your head on straight," his blue eyes pierced through me with a passion, "I respect you. And I need you to keep mine straight."

My heart stopped at the word addiction. Luke was my addiction. Was I really his?

"We can go back to how we were," he said, "Forget what happened at Austin's. I won't do that again."

He apologized, though I really wish he wouldn't. All I could think of now was kissing him. A part of me wanted him to do it, even though another part didn't trust him. A player doesn't change his ways.

He didn't notice my internal debate to myself and continued, "I don't know why the thought of us kissing freaks you out, but I'll back off."

I don't know what came over me, I swear I don't. I walked towards him. I walked right up to him. We were almost touching.

His breath was on my cheek. His scent was in my nostrils.

And then I pushed him out of the shop.

I pressed a button on the side wall and the doors locked.

He looked at me through the glass, confused but handsome as usual, "I said I respect you, Millie Ripley. You can't run away from that."

I swapped the 'Open' sign for 'Closed'.

My heart was thumping through my chest like drums. He couldn't be saying this to me. I... I was lost for words. He'd stripped me clean.

"Wow," a voice said from behind me, "If that was Luke Dawson right now, there's a lot you've been hiding."

I turned around. The curtains from the dressing room were pulled apart. Her face was one of utter shock, but she was wearing a glorious new dress. Julia.

A/N: Millie's big secret is not so secret anymore! Do you think Julia will help her keep it or use it to her own advantage?

Also! I'm going to have a weekly posting schedule. I'm thinking Wednesdays, Fridays and maybe one more day in the week? Which one would you want?