

Chapter 3

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A Weekend Of Betrayal

Saturday 24th September:

Well, I woke up extra early this morning, I was nervous about today's tutoring session since Emma is going to be there for the first time. I wanted to give her a good impression of me. I read everything I was going to teach for the 4th time before I got ready. While I was getting ready, my mum came into the room and asked what I was getting ready for. I explained how I was giving tutoring lessons for some kids as a part of the physics club. She scoffed at me and said "You tutor? Since when." "Did you take my permission for it?" she added. "No mum but I thought.." I muttered. "You don't think, you only listen to what I tell you and you're not going to waste your time helping other kids." I just nodded and smiled. I wasn't really in the mood for that at all. She usually picks a fight with any of us, especially on the weekend, so I just went along with whatever she said. I waited about 15 minutes then I asked her politely whether I could go and after giving me the speech about how I should focus on my studies and whatever. I nodded and apologized for not telling her earlier. She finally let me go and I rushed out of the door before she could change her mind. I really didn't know what was the point of that conversation, but as long as I got to do what I want I just sucked it up and went along with it. Anyway, as I got to school, I was getting more and more nervous and I

genuinely hoped everything would go well and I could put on a good show. I sat down in the schoolyard and revised the stuff one last time since I had about 20 minutes before the lesson started that's when I saw that James had left his water in my bag; I barely used this bag and lent it to him a lot, especially for his swimming practice, so it did make sense why it was there. Anyhow, the moment I sat down and started taking my stuff out, I heard the bell ring! "What but how???!!" I wondered. I took out my phone and according to the time, my watch was about 15 minutes, so I got up instantly and packed my stuff. I had to run to the opposite side of the school in less than a minute. I'm not an athletic person at all, so that was awful. By the time I ran through the schoolyard and ran up the stairs to 4 floors, I was dripping in sweat and I was gasping for air. I entered the class, put my stuff in, and immediately started teaching. I think I heard a few laughs behind me since I was wheezing a ton while standing up and had to take about 3 breaks in between every sentence I said. By the time I got my breath back, only half the lesson was left and I saw how everyone was bored out of their mind. I felt awful and saw how Emma didn't look interested at all, so I started thinking about a way to make them feel better. "Hey Leonard, when does an object sink according to density?" I suddenly yelled across the class. He looked confused and when he didn't answer, I pulled out the water gun from the bag and shot him. Everyone started laughing and that's when I asked someone else another question when they didn't answer I shot them, too. Everyone was soon really interacting and answering questions. The lesson looked a lot more alive than before and even Emma was interacting. Surprisingly, every time I asked her, she answered correctly and I kept increasing the difficulty of the questions, but every time she still answered correctly. I was honestly impressed and a little sad that I didn't get to shoot her at all and then she winked at me after I ran out of questions. I felt livid then and honestly took it as a battle. However, I was glad that everyone understood and everyone was having fun. The second half of the lesson went by quickly and I felt proud that I managed to push through and give this lesson life again. As everyone was leaving they thanked me for the fun lesson and praised me. I also made sure to apologize to Leonard for not warning him or asking how he felt before doing what I did. He just laughed and put his arm on my shoulder as we got out. "Are you kidding me? That was the most fun Physics lesson I've ever had." He added. He went to the locker room to change since I soaked him in water. I went back to the class hoping to catch Emma to ask how she felt about the lesson, but she had left. "Oh well, I'll just ask her on

Monday.” I thought. As I getting ready to leave when I saw Maria walk past the door. “Hey, Maria!!” I yelled hoping she’d see me. She turned around and I ran up to her. We greeted each other and I asked why was she here on a weekend and she explained how she was starting a new project in the fashion club. “I heard you put on quite the show in the Physics lesson didn’t you?” she asked laughingly. “Nah, I was just having a bit of fun you know.” I said in a teasing tone. She chuckled at my joke. “Anyway, it’s been a while since we hung out together so how about we meet tomorrow at your favorite beachside cafe?” “I heard they have a new hot beverage it’ll be my treat.” I added. “Yeah sure, I heard about their new drink and I’m honestly already really excited to try it.” “Oh, ok then I’ll see you tomorrow.” She nodded and left for her club. It was around then that Leonard got out and we went to the schoolyard. He went to play football with the other kids and invited me to play along. I don't like most of the kids there anyway, so I wasn't thrilled about the idea. I thanked him and just left.

While walking home, I got a call from my dad telling me that he was dropping James off at his swimming practice and he wanted his gun there, so I headed over to the swimming club to give it back. I didn't want to go home yet, as the idea of staring at a book for the next 8 hours didn't seem exactly thrilling to me. I got to the club and saw my dad sitting on a lounge chair smoking and scrolling through his phone and didn't pay any attention to James. Granted James was with his coach, but he was still really scared of the water since he almost drowned last year in the pool. It was the worst moment in his life and just then I thought I wouldn't see him again. I couldn't even help him as I just froze in my place and couldn't think. I guess that's part of the reason why I feel the need to always protect him from everything. I didn't want to freeze again in any situation. I also developed a slight fear of the water because of that incident and I didn't swim for a year. I didn't try to get over it and just hoped it'd go away one day but looking back I should've done something about it. James saw me while swimming and waved at me. I waved back and got closer to give him his water gun back. “Hey buddy, how’s swimming?” I asked with a smile on my face. “Great!” he replied excitedly. I was really glad to see him smiling again and feeling better while he was in the water. He hated going to these practices and fought us every time we tried to take him there. We didn't send him to a therapist or anything since my parents always believed that therapy was a waste of time and money, so I was always there with him during the first 2 months of classes. It warmed my heart to see him doing a lot better now. I went over

to my dad and told him I was going home. He didn't even look at me and just said "Go ahead." I sometimes really wondered if my parents even cared about me, granted they've done a lot to help out and stood by me in a lot of things but they just never listened or cared for how I feel. I just turned around and left after that.

It was about midday when I got home and saw my mum cleaning the house. "Hi, mum." I greeted her as I entered the house. She didn't even look at me or answer and immediately asked me to help her clean the windows even though she knows how my allergy acts when I smell dust, but I complied since you know she's my mum after all. My mum is a clean freak and she had to deep clean the whole house every weekend. Don't get me wrong I like being in a clean house, but what I hated was how she soaked the whole house in chemicals and that could irritate my nose and eyes for days later. I brought it up a couple of times with her and she ignored me every time. I really couldn't afford to have an irritant nose since I was finally meeting Maria tomorrow and I wanted it to go perfectly since it had been a couple of weeks since we hung out together. I slowly approached my mum and I asked politely "Hey,...mum... can you please limit your detergents this weekend please?" She looked at me with a weird look and asked "How do you even expect me to clean the house if I don't use detergents?" "I'm going out tomorrow and I don't want my allergy to act up, please." She suddenly turned to look at me and asked "You are going out?...with who.. and when?" "Yes.....I am going out with Maria, remember her?" I answered. "Oh yeah, I remember her. This girl is a smart young woman, I hope you don't screw it up." "It's not that!!!! We are not going on a date! We are just catching up since it's been a while since it's been a while since we hung out you know." "OH! Either way, don't lose her." She added. Anyhow, I got up to my room and started studying my favorite subject; Physics, if you couldn't already tell. While studying I was daydreaming about tomorrow and was excited about our hangout since I had a feeling that Maria was drifting apart from me for a while, but now I was assured that we were still friends.

It was around 7 when I got called to dinner and I went downstairs. We were having our weekend special; food! I couldn't eat everything since again I have an allergy to most of it, but my mum always made sure I could eat some of the fish. As we sat to eat, I asked where James and Dad were. "Oh! They are just parking and coming to eat now." She answered. "Parking? Why were they parking?" I asked. "Oh, you didn't know? Your dad is taking James to the amusement Park since he's starting school on Monday." She

answered. "THE AMUSEMENT PARK? DO YOU MEAN SKY-HIGH AMUSEMENT PARK? I was dying to visit it. Why didn't they take me?" I asked shockingly. "You had to study though." She said. I was starting to get quite annoyed and wanted to answer back, but I sucked it up. It was around then when my dad and James entered the house with a huge smile on their face looking overjoyed. I just sat down and tried to get through dinner while listening to their day at the amusement park. I barely ate and just wanted to leave. At some point, while they started about the rollercoaster; which is the one ride I was dying to go on, I got up and left. "Where are you going??" My mum yelled. I just left and went to my room. I sat on my bed and I wanted to cry, that's when I heard someone open my bedroom door. I hoped that it'd be one of my parents, but it wasn't. It was James. He came over and sat on the bed next to me. "I'm sorry you didn't come today, I didn't know you wanted to go." I just looked at him and told him that it was fine. I had a good day at the school clubs this morning and I'm going out tomorrow with Maria, so it was fine. I tried not to yell at him even though I felt the rage spiral in my head. He got up after that and left. I felt heartbroken and I felt myself go into a spiral of sadness, so I quickly brushed that thought and started thinking about my hang-out tomorrow with Maria that kept my mind off it for a while, so I stood up and went back to studying. "Since I was home and already studying might as well continue right?" Around 11, I finished studying and I went to bed and tried as hard as possible not to think about what happened today it must've worked since a few minutes later I felt myself doze off and finally slept.

The next morning, I woke up around 10 and I woke up irritated and angry. I tried to stay calm and just thought about my hangout today. I didn't go down for breakfast with the rest of my family since I was still quite angry from what happened last night and I couldn't face them. My mum came up herself. "Good morning honey." She greeted me cheerfully before giving me a plate. "Good morning sweetie can you come down after you eat your dad and I want to talk to you." I scoffed and agreed. After breakfast, I went downstairs to hear them out and I tried to keep my frustration while sitting in front of them. "So Edward, we saw how annoyed you were yesterday and we wanted to make it up to you, so ask us for anything you want and we'll do it." My dad explained. "I don't know I'm just really annoyed right now," I said. "Ok.." "Once you know what you want let us know and we'll be more than happy to do it." He added. I excused myself and went back to studying till around noon. I am supposedly meeting Maria around 4, and the

place was quite far, so I started to get ready since I wanted to look my best and for today to be amazing. I sent a text to Maria confirming that we'll be meeting and she confirmed. I was excited and wore my favourite shirt for good luck. It was around 2.35 when I was done getting ready and I spent the next 25 minutes reading my English essay again for the 3rd time since it was due in a couple hours and I wanted to make sure it was perfect. Anyway, as soon as it hit 3.15 I took off to Maria's favourite cafe. I didn't like the place at all since all their drinks were weird and I just ended up ordering like a hot chocolate or a coffee anyway, but if it made my friends happy then I could handle drinking a weird drink for a day. The closer I got to the cafe, the more I got excited and I was really happy to finally be meeting another human being and just be out and have fun. Well, I arrived there at around 3.55 and waited at the entrance for Maria. I was so excited to see her again and just get to talk to someone again. I texted and let her know that I have arrived and I was waiting at the entrance. I stood there for about 15 minutes and then I checked my phone and she didn't reply to my message, so I called her and she didn't answer. "Oh.., maybe she didn't hear it or couldn't answer because she was on the bus or something." I wondered. I waited around for around another 20 minutes and I called again, but again, I had no answer. I was starting to get worried since she's never late to our hangouts at all and I kept calling again and again, but yet again no answer. I was going to call her parents since I only had the worst on my mind when I got an Instagram notification from her account. I opened it and I saw that she was with other friends at the mall. I felt my heart break and my mood suddenly shift and I was about to cry. "Why wouldn't she tell me?" I asked myself. "Why,...Why,...why aren't we friends." I was on the verge of tears and I just didn't know what to do now. The cafe was across from the seaside, so I just walked over there and just kept walking and walking and I was just thinking why would she do this to me, and did my friendship even matter to her, maybe an emergency came up so she headed to the mall and saw them there. I was too lost in my head, I nearly got hit by a car and a cyclist. I kept trying to make excuses for her, but nothing made sense. I decided to sit down somewhere since if I continued walking, I would die. I went to the nearest cafe and just wanted to sit down. I entered through the door and I sat down at the nearest table I just put my head down and stared at my phone, looking at our chat hoping she'd respond or at least tell me anything, but nothing. There was nothing just silence. I know that things haven't been the same with us, but I still had hope that we were still friends. I was on the verge

of tears when I heard someone call me. "Hey, Edward!" I put my head up and saw that it was Emma. "Hello!" she greeted cheerfully. I could barely talk and I couldn't even greet her back, but she still sat on the chair next to me. "Are you okay? Why are you doing here?" she asked. "Well,...I was waiting for someone and I came here." I was stuttering a lot while talking but managed to get a few words across. "What are you ... doing here" I asked.

"Oh! I work here."

"Really... I mean it's obvious by the uniform, but I didn't know since when?"

"I only work here on the weekend, since I need the extra cash." "Are you sure you're okay? You don't look well." She added.

"To be fully honest, not really but I'm not gonna bother you with that now."

"Oh no no I'm done with my shift and we could go somewhere and talk if you're not busy," she explained.

At that moment I just needed to be with someone, so I reluctantly agreed. "Great give me 5 minutes, I'll change and we can go." I sat there waiting and I just tried to keep my mind off the whole thing. "What a weekend." I wondered. A few minutes later, she came out and pulled me by the hand out of the cafe. I was like a kid being dragged across the street by my mum again. As we made it safely to the crosswalk which was a surprise, I asked "Where are we going exactly?"

"Nowhere really, we could sit down or walk whatever makes you feel better." She replied.

I didn't know what I wanted, I just felt my brain drown in despair slowly and painfully.

"You know what, follow me!" she with a soothing voice. She started walking towards the beach and I just pursued slowly, she would look behind at me to make sure I was keeping up. We strolled for a few minutes until we reached a remote part with a long metal fence covered with tree leaves. Emma jumped over it and then nagged me to come along. On the other side was a run-down cabin and a couple of benches.

"And we're here!" Emma yelled enthusiastically.

I stood there tilted my head and looked around "And where is here exactly is here?" I asked.

"Well this used to be an old cabin rental but it went bankrupt and closed down," "Now it's a place that I come to when I'm stressed." She added.

She slowly approached one of the benches directly in front of the sea and then signaled

for me to sit next to her. I just sat down and gazed at the golden sky and the soaring seagulls as I felt the freshening rush of air caused by the violent crashing waves on my face.

“You know why I come here when I'm stressed?” “It's because I get reminded that life is beautiful and not everything and everyone is horrible you know,” “The interaction between the sea and the sky is beautiful isn't it.” She explained in a calm tone as she looked at me with her eyes glimmering full of hope. I turned my head away, I couldn't answer or reply.

“We don't have to talk, we could just sit here until you feel better.” She explained.

“...Yeah...I'd love that.” I replied back

We sat there admiring the sea and the sunset as I felt my nerves soothe down, but there were questions just flooding my brain like why would Maria do this? Did I do something to hurt her or annoy her? Was I a bad friend to her?

I didn't know what was the next step going forward with her should I forgive her or talk to her or what? I brushed my hands on my face as the next breeze of air passed by. Right then Emma got up and told me to wait for a moment. She started walking towards the fence and then hopped over. My brain instantly filled me with doubt and fear that I was left behind again and I started picturing scenarios on why she left maybe I was too boring or she got fed up with me. Trying to ignore it and brush these thoughts away was impossible I just couldn't. A few moments later as I lay down on the bench Emma stood behind me and asked if I was alright. I got up and she gave me a can of lemonade. “You looked so stressed and worried I thought a refreshing drink could help.” She explained as she passed me the can. With every sip of lemonade, my anger turned to sadness and despair. Bottling up my emotions was so difficult to maintain at that point that I just burst into talking. I started explaining everything about how I felt my friendship with Maria fading and how she stood me up... Emma looked at me with sorry eyes and told me

“Every one of us is sacred and worried but if the people you truly love act like you're redundant then that was that,” “You shouldn't yearn for what you won't have.

Sometimes even if it's hard to do, we have to let go,” “I know from experience how hard it is to give up on someone you love dearly, but we have to do it”

I nodded battling the waterfall of tears about to be unleashed.

It was starting to get late and I had to go home to avoid getting yelled at. I thanked

Emma for staying with me and she insisted on walking with me for a bit till I was okay. Before we left she took my phone and dialed her number. "This is my number in case you ever need anything, I'll always be on call." She added.

Usually, I'm not the one to open up to people I barely know but for the first time, I was glad I did. As we parted ways I was still conflicted about what I should do, at the end of the day Maria was my friend; we went through ups and downs together so letting go was my last option. Sometime later, I made it home and walked past my parents; I couldn't handle talking to them at all. I dropped onto the bed and lay as Emma's words passed my mind again. Even after I rested a bit I was still conflicted about what to do. On the one hand, I truly loved Maria's company and I couldn't envision myself at school without her company. On the other hand, though, it wasn't the first time she did that; the incident at the school gym is still engraved into my mind. It was around 9 pm then and my heartache became too much to study so I decided to call it a night and sleep. I decided to send Emma a message just before I dozed off. Her kindness that day touched my heart on so many levels and aided me in so many ways. She instantly replied saying "No worries Edward, this is what friends do for each other right."

"Right" I replied. I laid there just thinking with the loss of a friend I got another. I dozed off on that thought and hoped for a good rest of the week.