

Chapter 7 - Daisy - Did He Learn Nothing From The Stickers?

They've been arguing since I hung up. I won't pretend that doesn't make me a teensy bit delighted. But seeing Cole all frustrated and pent up is kind of sexy. I need to figure out how to push his buttons when we're together so that I can see this side of him up close.

I had hoped he'd like... figure out who I am from my tone of voice, or realise I'm right outside his window by triangulating the sounds in his head or something equally detectiv-ey. But yet again he disappoints and all I get from the conversation is that Jessica is alright 'considering she just got pulled out of a grave' well... duh... People don't usually come out of graves. Sometimes he's an idiot.

I put it on my list to go check up on the girls from afar. I don't want to scare them. I won't go close. I just want to... know.

As I watch with my back to the tree-trunk, stroking Jake's ears as he slobbers on my skirt, Cole keeps pointing to the door and slipping his hand through his hair.

Eliza, I just heard the voice of the woman of my dreams, and I'm going to find her. I don't love you anymore.

Eliza makes a groan to the heavens in frustration- I'm starting to like her more.

Cole, what an idiot I've been! I can't believe that I thought I could have you when you obviously belong with your soulmate.

He karate chops the air in front of him.

Stop! It's over! I'm going to find Daisy!

She comes forward with her palms towards him in surrender.

I understand. I know. I will always be your friend.

He drops his head back and sighs at the ceiling.

Eliza, I'm really looking forward to being with Daisy.

She leans forwards to whisper in his ear... which... must... huh... maybe:

You're going to have such a great life with her.

She pulls back and plants a gentle little... friendly... kiss on his lips.

Definitely, definitely friendly. With... tongue...

She plants more friendly kisses down his chest and stomach, bending her knees to kneel between his feet. She... could be... pleading for him to stay?

Her hands reach for his waistband and....

No

No

NO!

I lurch to my feet and turn away causing all the dogs to leap up in alarm. Stupid... stupid Daisy.

Stupid Daisy.

Tears spring to my eyes as my pack barks an alert to nothing.

God. Why am I even here? He's still with her. And... happy with her. And I'm...

Just left here, walking through the park, my back to the obvious scandal happening behind me, tears rolling down my eyes.

Did he learn nothing from the stickers??

The pain in my chest is unlike anything I've ever felt. It genuinely feels like my heart is breaking. I gulp in the bitter night air as I walk aimlessly around in circles.

I stride around the jogging path through the park, around and around in circles for what seems like hours. I only have to stop to pick up countless poops and one very old pug. When I return to my tree, the lights in the flat have all been turned off, the darkness a confirmation of my most horrible nightmares.

Cole in bed with another woman.

If they're fucking, they're doing it in the dark. And if they're not, I know he's lying awake.

He sleeps badly. He's too emotionally connected to his work to sleep well. I've even noticed he has the occasional nightmare and wakes up covered in a thin sheen of sweat.

I sigh and lean back on the tree bark, feeling the teensy prickles at my back and head. I need to be patient; I remind myself. He doesn't know yet that I'm the person he wants the most.

I sigh and close my eyes, imagining it's me in bed with him. It's me holding him close and talking him through his terrors.

I might have fallen asleep because when I wake and check the time, I notice a message on my phone that I didn't feel.

"Hi Daisy. Cole Maddox. We met at the precinct. I heard you're new to the city. My Chief thought you might appreciate a friendly tour."

A date??

An actual date with Cole! My heart does gleeful gymnastics in my chest as I give a hushed squeal of delight, paddling my feet on the grass in front of me.

He loves me!

And Eliza obviously gives awful head!!

I message back immediately:

"Hi Cole, great to hear from you. I'd love to! Sorry if I wake you up. I struggle to sleep sometimes."

And he sees it the moment it says delivered, making me cuddle the phone for joy. The little typing box dances on the screen as he types. Then:

"No need to worry. Me too."

I stare at the screen. The conversation could end here. It really could. Just... nothing more. But the dots bubble and stop, then bubble again.

"What do you do when you can't sleep, then?"

I bite my lip. Steering away from all the things I can't tell him I do when I can't sleep. It doesn't feel like the time to reveal I'm fifty feet from his bedroom window and I don't think we're at the point of starting talking about... other... lonely night time things.

"Walk the dogs. Tell them my troubles. They're excellent listeners."

I try out a little 'x' at the end of my message just to see how it looks, but then I delete it. He doesn't need that while he's lying next to his girlfriend. When it's sent, I send another straight after.

"You?"

Just to make sure that the conversation doesn't stop. I'm not ready to let him go back to her.

"Stare at the ceiling. Think about work until the sun comes up, and it's time to go back to work."

"You need to try talking to someone."

"Therapy isn't really my thing."

He's lying to me. He used to visit a therapist twice a week when he first joined the force. I can kind of understand showing off for your future wife. I'll have to teach him that sharing makes you strong, not weak.

"I'll lend you my dogs for you to talk to if you like?"

There's a pause as he takes time to reply. I imagine him lying on his back in the darkness, Eliza's drooling form right next to him as he smiles at the text.

"I'm not sure they could handle the intensity of this case."

My stomach reacts to the message as though I've just gone over a hill too fast. He thinks I'm intense? I give a little giggle to myself.

"Well, maybe give me a try. I'm a great listener and I can handle intense really well."

I send it before I can overthink it. Which is problematic as I overthink after it's sent. I give a little squeak of fear while I wait, cause that was bordering on flirty. Please respond, please respond.

"Alright." Oh my god, really?? "How about tomorrow? I'll show you around the city centre in exchange for some top-notch free therapy?"

I bite my lip and kick my feet in the air as I roll onto my stomach. It is a date. A date where we can talk all about my case! And, God knows, he needs the help.

"Deal. I'll meet you at the precinct at 11?"

"Perfect" His message twinkles from the screen. He thinks I'm perfect. "Good night Daisy."

I smile. He finally said goodnight back. Not to the Heartbreaker. To me. Daisy. Just Daisy.