

Broken Pieces

By Hannah T.

The Karson's have been my neighbors since I was 7. We've always been close because my mom is the book keeper at Mr. Karson's company, and Peyton Karson is my best friend. I've always thought her brother, Caleb, was attractive. I thought he always liked me too, but about the time we turned 12, it was almost as if he became angry just at my presence. Now we're 16 and it's still the same.

That Saturday, like any other Saturday, Peyton invited me over. I rang the doorbell and Caleb answered the door. He seemed surprised and I didn't know why. We locked eyes and he just stood there, looking at me. His eyes looked tender for a moment, then changed. "What are you doing here?!", he scoffed. Peyton ran downstairs. "Because she's my best friend and always has been, get over it!", Peyton replied. I don't think he ever will.

That Monday at school, I packed up my things and walked out of 2nd period. I went to my locker to grab my history book. When I shut my locker door I saw Caleb standing there. I gasped and jumped at the sight of him. My heart rate picked up. "Stop hanging out with Peyton.", he said, "I don't want to see you in my house anymore. If you don't stop hanging out with her I will make sure your mom never works at my dad's company again." Caleb walked away. My heart shattered.

I was worried about my mom and decided to avoid Peyton the rest of the week, until Friday when I heard running footsteps approach me. "Addy, hey! Where have you been all week?!", Peyton asks. I put my head down and turned the corner immediately. "Addison, wait!" I quickly shuffled down the hall. I hated doing this to Peyton. She's my best friend. I was just so scared of my mom losing her job, I thought I had no choice. But then I thought, how was I going to make it without my best friend?

Later that day, I heard the doorbell ring as I was watching TV. I got up and looked through the peephole. It was Peyton. I sighed and started to walk away when I heard her voice. "Addy, I know you're in there. Open the door so we can talk!" I opened the door. "Addison you better tell me what's going on. You have been avoiding me all week and today you ignored me. What has gotten into you?!"

"I just want to focus on my schoolwork that's all.", I lied.

"Addy, I know when you're lying. Tell me the truth."

"Caleb told me we couldn't be friends anymore. He threatened my mom's job at your dad's company. I'm so sorry", I said as a tear fell down my face.

"Hey, it's okay. That won't happen, I'll make sure of it." She leaned over and hugged me. "Friends?", She asked. "Friends.", I replied.

That weekend, I wanted to hang out with Peyton, but I really didn't want to be around Caleb. I decided to just text Peyton.

Me: *is Caleb there? i want to come over*

Peyton: *he's not ur fine. i want to talk to u*

What could she want to talk about? I walked over to her house and just let myself in, as usual. "Hey! I need to talk to you.", she said, stuffing a grape into her mouth.

"Okay..."

"Caleb tripped and fell and hit his head on the coffee table. He's fine and in the emergency room but he says he wants to talk to you. He said he feels guilty.", she said. Wow, did she just say Caleb felt guilty?! "Uhh, Okay.", I said. "He'll be home tonight. You can stop by after school tomorrow.", Peyton said.

The next day after school, I got in my car and drove straight to Peyton's. My heart was racing. I was getting scared. What if Caleb only wanted to talk to me so he could tell me my mom was fired, or something else that I didn't want to hear? I took a deep breath and rang the doorbell. Peyton answered and told me Caleb was in the living room. I walked in and he looked nervous, shaking his knee. I sat down next to him and he didn't look at me. "Caleb?", I asked. "I'm sorry, Addison, for everything I've done. I've hurt you and I want to make it up to you.", He said as he stared in my eyes. "I never want to hurt you again."

"Caleb, I hear you, but you have been mean to me since we were 12. It will be hard for me to forgive you, but I won't hold a grudge.", I replied.

"I know, and I want to be your friend now, if that's okay.", He said. "Of course.", I said

On Thursday, when I shut my locker, Caleb was standing behind it.

"Hey!", He said with a smile. I smiled.

"Hi."

"I want to take you somewhere today. After school?", He said.

"Sure. Where?", I asked.

"Surprise", He answered simply.

Right after school, I drove to Caleb's house. "Hey! Ready?", Caleb said.

"Yep!"

Caleb drove a little way until we reached a lake. He led us to a picnic area set up next to the water. "Wow!", I said, amazed.

"I thought we could watch the sunset together.", He said. We stayed there for about 30 minutes before the sun started to set. We sat down together and shared a blanket. "It's beautiful, isn't it?", He asked. "Yeah, it is.", I replied. I looked into his deep hazel eyes that I had known since I was 7. They were so gorgeous. We locked eyes. His eyes shifted from my lips back to my eyes. We both slowly leaned in and our lips pressed together before releasing.

"This really beats homework, huh?" We giggled.

"Yeah.", I said smiling.

I guess he always did like me after all.