

The next morning after our fight we didn't talk about it, I think he was waiting for me to decide while I was waiting for him to make the first move and talk to me, a part of me wanted him to beg for my forgiveness, to reassure me that I am the one he loves and that we can fix this, that everything will be okay.

I knew he was going to talk to me this morning, or later, most likely not about our marriage but about an important event his company is hosting

Regardless of the situation I knew mine and his responsibilities.

The charity ball that Noah's company was hosting, it will be full of guests of Noah's clients, partners, donors and possibly donors. This event will also be filled with reporters, and press, and with Noah's infidelity going around, I already know we are going to be swarmed by the press

Just the thought of it makes me nervous, and knowing Briella would also be there made it even worse, I can barely look at Noah without feeling like I want to cry, how much more if I see the women who slept with my husband, the women I once called 'bestfriend'

"Val" His voice called, pulling me from my thoughts, in almost a so whisper, as though he was hesitant to call out for me

I didn't bother turning to look at him, I felt still. Like I was drained, exhausted to even move.

I could hear his footsteps from behind me, the sound getting louder and louder as he grew closer, with each step my heart started to beat faster, my mind swarming with thoughts on what may happen.

He knelt down, and sat criss-cross right next to me, placing his hand on mine, the feeling of his so hands on mine felt warm and so, the sudden urge to lean into him hit me, but it didn't last long when the images of him and Briella flashed through my mind, I pulled my hand away from his, still not meeting his eyes, knowing if I looked at him I wouldn't be able to stop the tears that begged to be let out.

"Val, please speak to me" he begged, his voice still so and calm "I messed up, I'm sorry, please just speak to me"

I turned to look at him, his eyes were wide as if begging me, I could feel my heart being tugged at, not knowing how I should be feeling

"What Noah" I shouted trying to ripe my hands from his grip "I have nothing to say to you" I couldn't bare to look at him, I wanted to run, far away from him, I was tired of him seeing me cry, but crying is the only way I know how to let this pain that I feeling out

"I know I messed up" he started "but please baby don't give up on us, I was weak I know I took you for granted and I know that now, I can't bare to see you cry" he said almost choking on his words, I looked at his eyes, tears began to form, and my heart skipped a beat was he really serious, did he mean what he says

"Do you love her" I hesitantly asked, fearing for the answer

"No baby" he assured, his hand cupping my cheek, his thumb rubbing up and down "I want to fix this, can we do that baby?"

NO

NO

NO

My mind screamed "I'll think about it" was all I said, my heart didn't allow me to say no, no matter how much he hurt me I loved him, and he sounded serious on his statement, if there is a chance me and him can fix this why shouldn't I take it

"Thank you baby" he said happily kissing my forehead "you don't know how happy you've made me"

"Must we attend the charity ball" I asked, dreading attending later, I knew very well that I will be basically attacked by gossipers

"You don't have to if you don't want to" Noah smiled reassuring me, I was almost tempted to take him up on that offer, but I knew if I didn't go there will rumors and it will only add heat to the flame of the paparazzi's story, as while as hurt Noah, regardless if he offered or not I know him, and I know how important these things are to him

"I'm Fine, I'll get dressed and be down in 30 mins okay"

"Your a jewel" he cheered, placing a kiss on my lips, leaving me be

As I am getting ready I begin to think of my choice to stay with him, though I haven't spoken the exact words I knew deep down I was going to stay and work things out with him

He is my first everything, the person I choose to spend the rest of my life with till death do we part. He was my happiness the only person who understood me during the time my parents passed, he is my rock, how can I give that up, and if I do, how will I be able to find someone like him again.

I finished with the final touch ups for my look keeping it simple yet elegant, sticking to a white fitted, shoulder long gown, with accents on the rims, straightening my hair and wearing light makeup.

"You look beautiful" Noah complimented, giving me a warm smile as I made my way down the steps, I gave him a light smile, unable to return the energy he had

"Thank you, you don't look too bad yourself" I replied sincerely, as I took in his appearance, he was dressed as he normal formal attire, same suit, different color tie

The car ride was silent, My mind seemed scrambled, all I could do was stare out into the distance, trying to forget the thoughts that tried to fight their way into my mind, I didn't need nor want anymore reminders of his betrayal, any doubts on my decision, no more self doubt, I want to fix things with him this is what I want

"Valery" Noah called to me, breaking me from my train of thought "I just wanted to say thank you for staying"

I gave him a so smile, though it did not reach my eyes "Can we just talk more about it after the event, my mind is not at ease, and I don't think it will be unless everything is clear, and I know what measures we are gonna take to fix our marriage" I tell him honestly, I was willing to work things out, only if he is as well, and that means doing everything that is needed

"Anything you want baby" his hand reached for mine, and a sudden urge almost made me pull back, but I resisted, instead I let him lift my hand placing a kiss on the back ever so softly, with our fingers interlocking, I could feel the heat rush to my cheeks, my breath hitched, and I smiled at the gesture, it seem like before when we were still young

Maybe him cheating is a good thing, he learned his lesson and now he is going to be better, we will be better from this

Once we arrived, Noah opened the door for me, he offered his hand to me which I gladly took, I need something to hold as I walk through the storm of paparazzi, as I stepped out I forced on a smile, a smile that reached my eyes, a smile that hide the pain behind them

As we walked through, my arm wrapped around his, we both smiled, while questions were being thrown at us, I squeezed Noah's tightly as if telling him to walk faster, I was trying to block out the questions, knowing myself I probably break down into tears, and with so many people here no one could know I am deeply hurt and is taking everything in me to keep going

So I hide my pain with the only way I knew.

With a smile,

but it wasn't a real one

how do I know this?

Smiles.

A form of one's features into a pleased, kind or a amused expression with their mouths.

Before I was told, and read about how many people fake their smiles, and I could never understand why would someone fake happiness, now I understand smiling is easier than explain why your hurt.

Because I'm refusing to admit my pain in front of all of our friends and family, especially tonight.

Cause a real smile is formed by happiness one you don't even notice you have unless its been pointed out to you, that's a real smile, while the one I have is being forced, I can feel my cheeks stretched upwards, they suddenly felt heavy and comfortable.

Before I never understood how one could fake a smile, why would anyone want to fake happiness, now I realize people don't put on a smile to fake happiness, they do it to hide the pain they are feeling, they don't want people to know they are not okay, that they aren't fine, that they are unhappy and in pain. Underneath this smile is everything no one not even myself understands, but what I do understand is that its easier to smile then explain why I am not happy

We entered the ballroom, that was in full motion, everyone mingling appearing to all be having a good time, as I looked around I felt break free my hold, "I need to go speak to some of my partners, your friends are probably already at there usually table, are you gonna be okay" he asked looking quite concerned, for the first time in a long time, it actually made me happy to see that he cared about my feelings, I gave him a reassuring smile, slightly nodding in response. He smiled brightly, quickly kissing my cheek before leaving me, I kept my smile on my face, I was ignoring the stares I was getting and proceed to find my friends, I was in desperate need of a distraction and what better source then my friends

"I knew you would come" the familiar voice of Catelyn said cheerfully as she wrapped her arm around my arm suddenly "lets go to our table shall we"

"We shall" I said doing my best to give the same enthusiasm she is giving, thankfully she hasn't given me any looks of pity but I knew that they would be asking questions that I will need to answer

Once we reached our table I greeted Allison and Emily, and took my seat next to Catelyn, they all smiled at me, but I could see the look of sympathy, and suddenly dread filled me as I began to feel the engergy of our table change

"I'm sorry to hear about the news Val, you are strong, and don't worry we know you and Noah will come back stronger then before" Allison was the first to open the topic, as she gave me a sad smile looking sincerely apologetic

"How can you be so sure"

"Business men always cheat, but it's not like they will leave there wives, they just want some fun every once and a while" she said it so casually that it almost made me vomited "and its Briella, its just her personality"

I stayed silent, her name in the convo suddenly made it harder to keep a deep breath, stood up from table placing a smile on my face would rip

"Briella is a slut" Catelyn said casually, as if what she just said about Briella was a known fact "I bet you she has slept with half the men in this room"

"It's just hurts more cause I consider her as my best friend, she knows how much I love Noah and she is still able to sleep to him?" I open up to them, hoping that they would be able to comfort me and guide me on what do to next "I don't know what to do next, if I'm making the right choice by staying, I don't expect you guys to understand, I'm sorry for pouring this out to you guys"

"No need to say sorry for expressing your feelings darling, and we completely understand" Allison replied

I gave her a puzzled look, waiting for her to continue, as I didn't want to jump to conclusions and assume anything

"What Allison is trying to say is that all of our husbands have slept with Briella, its disgusting yes, but its the boys sort of ritual" explain Catelyn, this time I could not hide the horror on my face by hearing this revelation, I was shocked to say the least "But there is nothing we can do but accept, but don't worry Noah won't leave you for Briella, she is just a fun fling to him"

I was speechless, amazed and disgusted how casually they were able to speak ill of our friend, and about their husbands infidelity, as if cheating is normal

Catelyn noticed the shock I was clearly showing on my face so she continued in effort to ease my mind I suppose "its common knowledge, were surprised it took so long to get out" she wasn't able to finish her sentence as Allison stopped her but what she did say caught my attention

"What do you mean" I practically sneered, trying to control my temper that was desperately trying to show, my emotions slowly started to get the best of me, various possibilities began to race into my mind, I tried to deny my assumption giving her a chance to explain, to deny what I fear is true

"What she meant-" Emily began stuttering, before she could continue I stopped her

"Did you know about her and Noah" I asked inhaling sharply trying to stop the tears from slipping through

When they didn't answer, each looking at the other, none knowing what to say, I knew I had my answer, I was backed and mortified, I couldn't look at them, I began to stand from our table, desperate to leave

"Valery please, we were just trying to protect you it would hurt you and be alot to take in, so we let things unfold on its own, we didn't want to ruin your happiness"

I was on the verge of snapping at them "no you were only protecting yourself, you knew if your up husbands found out one of you told me they would be pissed, I get it, but don't try to justify it by using my emotions as an excuse" I say as calmly as I can, not wanting to draw any attention from anyone near by, I needed to keep my cool, so I took a deep breath, stood up from table placing a smile on my face "excuse me ladies" I say ever so softly pushing back my chair as I dismissed myself from the table

As I begin to walk away I whispered to myself

"I need a drink"

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Hey guys! I hope everyone is safe, I know its been a long time since I updated and I don't know who is still reading or who is from my old version of my book, but I hope you all enjoy this chapter, feel free to leave any suggestions and comments you may have I am looking forward to reading each one

