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WRIT 178-02

Professor Millis

Story #3

Word Count: 1,217

January 30, 2024

Lover

The house was quiet when we walked in, dark and cold. The silence was broken by the clacking of her heels, heading straight to the bedroom.

“We forgot to leave the heater on,” I said, closing the door behind me. No response. I listened to clothes rustling as she took them off or the sound of the shower starting. I meandered down the hall, setting the keys on the table and walking towards the freezer, hoping to find some ice cream. Excluding the tin of olives and a half empty tub of Greek, 0% fat and 0% sugar Yogurt, the fridge was empty. I shut it and treaded nervously back towards the bedroom. The light from the bathroom bled into the hall. I entered, dropping onto the bed with a heavy sigh.

“We need to go grocery shopping.” I said, raising my voice over the sound of the water splattering against the shower basin. She was ignoring me. The sound of running water stopped and gurgled into the drain. She came out of the bathroom, hot steam billowing into the room and fogging up the vanity mirror. Her eyes met mine for a split second before she turned toward the dresser.

“Are you mad at me?” I asked.

She ignored me, rummaging through her clothes, picking out a large shirt and sliding it over her head and through her arms. "No." she said evenly.

"You haven't talked since we left Lo's."

"Yeah, I have, I commented on the traffic." she smiled a fake smile.

I hummed agreeably and asked, "so... Did you have fun?" I fidgeted with the blanket and watched her walk toward me on the bed, her eyes steady, frigid.

"Sure, it was fun." She sat next to me.

I smiled, relief washing over me as I pulled her to my side. "You looked good tonight..." I began feathering kisses on her cheek, "all I could think about was getting you home." My mouth, moving slowly towards her neck, but she pushed me away.

"Not today." She turned away from me.

"Why are you mad?" I sat up trying to meet her gaze.

She huffed in annoyance. "I'm not mad." Her voice was forceful.

"I know when you're mad." I said.

"Well, maybe you don't," she said, grabbing her book from the nightstand. She remained in the same position.

I exhaled sharply. "Why are you being difficult?" I asked, "Today was supposed to be about celebrating the fact that I got that deal. Are you not happy for me?"

she let out a deep, drawn-out sigh. "I don't want to talk about this tonight."

"Of course, you don't."

“Drop it.”

“I don’t fucking get you.” My patience was thinning

“Exactly. You don’t.”

There was a pause before I boiled over and said, “I’m so fucking done with this crap. I’m going.” I moved to stand but stopped when her head snapped towards me.

“Fine. Go. Do what you always do.”

“It’s just too damn hard for you to be happy for me, isn’t it?” I said. “All you did today was sulk, during the party and now after.” I paused, waiting for a response, but again there was none. “I announce that I’ll finally be able to move us out of this shit hole, get us a new car, and you’re upset. I don’t understand!”

“Wow.” she said, drawing out her vowels. “Congratu-fucking-lations on your big break. I’m so happy for you!”

“Here we go.” I sighed.

“Yes, here we go.” Her eyes were slits as she regarded me. “What day is today?” She asked as I looked at her stupidly, stumped by her question. “Of course, you don’t remember. I should have expected this, you haven’t cared about anything more than your music for a year.” she snarked “It’s Friday, Friday the 23 of January.”

I stared at her as the realization struck me, she stared back as if her heart had been mangled, the pain in her eyes was now evident and I felt terrible.

“You’re a fucking prick.” she hissed.

“I missed one anniversary. Stop making it such a scene. It’s time to grow the fuck up! We are adults; shit happens I was busy and you know it.” I said

“Oh, yes.” Her hands flew up, slicing the air before they smacked back down, onto her legs. “Mr. Hardworking man, Mr. Provider, Mr. Bring home the fucking bacon.” She laughed. “When have you ever fucking cared about anyone but yourself?”

She watched me, as if waiting for a reaction. “Of course, the fact that I *also* work my fucking ass off for us means *absolutely* nothing to you. Isn’t it crazy that somehow, working and all, I was still able to remember today!” she huffed out a long breath before continuing “The only difference between us is I care about you, and you couldn’t give two shits about me.”

“You’re being ridiculous.” I said.

“Am I?” She asked. “What was I doing tonight, at the party?”

You were alone, sulking.” I smiled, mocking, triumphant, but it was short lived.

“If you cared enough to look at me for more than two seconds you would have seen that I was with Nick the whole night.”

“Nick?” I mulled the information, a pang of... something hit the pit of my stomach.

“He thinks I deserve better than you,” she said. “Maybe he’s right. At least he cared enough to comfort me *all night*.”

“Comfort you? Just because I missed *one* fucking anniversary?”

“Everyone thought your ‘big announcement’ was that you were going to propose. Nick said that when you told him to invite everyone, he was sure you were going to do it. Everyone thought so.”

“Propose?” My eyes widened.

“Yes. Propose. We have been together for seven years, in case you forgot. I was just stupid enough to think you cared enough about me to at least consider it. Of course I was wrong. It seems like you don’t know a good thing until you’ve lost it.” Her voice calm, she smiled and took in a long suck of air before continuing. “Maybe it’s time for you to lose me.”

I stared at her blankly as she scooched to the edge of the bed, sliding on her baggy jeans and long socks before walking towards the hanger and grabbing her bag.

“Goodluck.” She said, “this really is your big break.” her back was turned as she said this. The sound of the door gently closing echoed in my head. After she left the house was quiet. Dark and cold.