

-Saturday Morning-

I used to stay up until four to five o'clock in the morning, every single day. Wake up at eleven, worse for wear yet unencumbered. I might eat twice that day. Just enough to supplement the requirements and festivities only to do it again.

Not a particularly unique story. Remenescenting is for the old and I seem to be doing this more and more. It was three in the morning and I was asleep until I wasn't thanks to someone deciding to dial my number.

Staring up at the ceiling that had been littered with harnesses meant to strap unsuspecting prey that dared enter my newly furnished bedroom aboard *The Extravaganza*, a recently purchased houseboat anchored just off a pleasant looking cove not far from L.A. It flew the Jolly Roger flag, something I actually did look to ensure was legal given apparently piracy is still a legitimate thing.

Had been asleep for all of an hour before getting this rude interruption of a process I unfortunately had to begin appreciating more than I used to. Maybe Lexy needed me to come by for something. An emergency, she saw a drone flying overhead and assumed the worst. Maybe Ravyn makes three o'clock phone calls for abusive booty calls.

Peering at the number, it wasn't one I was familiar with. Annoyed and still half asleep, I answered it. Rudely.

"Who the fuck is this?"

"Are you **sober**?" a man's voice responded.

“That's not an answer to my question.”

“You’re not tweaking out, are you? Not halfway into injecting yourself with a dose of crudely slapped together heroin, the fentanyl added in by some high school dropout measuring doses out with a dinner spoon in his kitchen in a neighboring project. Snort anything? Don’t answer. We both know you’ll just lie.”

“... Matt Hodges?”

Sitting up, I debate just throwing the phone into the bay. It would be cheaper to change my phone number but destroying it would provide an emotional emphasis on how annoying this was.

“How the hell did you get my number?”

“Learning to overcome your addictions is going to take great effort, something I know someone like you only applies to avoid any other sort of responsibility. You need to believe you can do it. Really, truly believe where even I doubt you’re capable.”

I try to think of a comeback and can’t, deprivation getting the better of my mind. I couldn’t care enough to be angry which likely would be the only thing drawing out more coherence in this exchange.

“Yeah, yeah okay, sure,” I responded sheepishly.

“What is Autumn’s pussy like?”

“Are you serious?”

“I’ve always pictured her having a horseshoe. Willing to be surprised with an adorable tulip. Possibly with one of the lips misshapen, I see defects but they just add character. Something special and-”

Hanging up I toss the phone back over onto the dresser and stare at it for several minutes daring him to call me back or else I'd, I don't know. Whine about the intrusion or something to that effect. It never comes.

Getting back to sleep proves to be more challenging, thoughts now wheeling and racing.

Life was truly something special at the moment. Other than peculiar new bedfellows in some weirdly placed manager. The thought of working with Adam again would be fun I suppose were I actually interested in the notion.

I don't know. I was always more there as Shawn's friend than anything else. Not like it mattered. Greaternity was long dead.

It all made sense then. I was young, had no fucks to give about anything but getting my rocks off which, I suppose not much has changed for me in that regard. I just look at Adam and always thought even then that I didn't want to become him. Some weird older dude hanging around with guys then almost half his age to get his rocks off.

Ten years later, if I wasn't with Lexy I probably would be that guy. I was officially the age he was then as the group would shortly then go their own separate ways or close to it.

Everyone from there had their own path to make. Ten years later the only active members were Adam and I.

I suppose I should rejoice, we obviously had different successes in our careers. Otherwise we were both failures when it came to parenting. We apparently love abusing substances from time to time, his alcoholism much further along than mine in terms of ramifications. Very selfish people.

I kept looking at Adam saying I'd be better than him when clearly I had more in common with him than Shawn.

I wonder if he is anywhere near as self loathing?

It's a completely useless component in my make up, dwelling on the shit that I do. It was a genetic defect, an imbalance of the brain. By all rights it goes completely against my nature. I just needed to be slightly further along the scale of sociopathy to fully appreciate the perks.

I don't know. I needed to focus more on appreciating life given all of the wonderful gifts. I was still a social creature like everyone else and this was supposed to be the season of spending money on the people you love most. I could focus on that, damn it.

So while trying to go back into sleep I tried to imagine what would be fitting gifts. I usually go for gags, things that are fun and I suppose for some that rule would remain true. I am rarely good with the sentimental.

I try to imagine something that could potentially be meaningful if not for me, for others.

It's along these lines I finally do succumb to sleep.

I rarely dream anymore.. That isn't entirely correct. We all dream, it's recollecting dreams that we have that is an entirely different story.

I used to wake up recalling dreams constantly when I was younger, at some point I could never recall anything.

Until recently, sleep was just a daily succumbing to the darkness. Here I was, having another.

Alexis and I were in a car, driving down a highway in the desert. Lexy was there and then James appeared because, why not? He was speaking about some concern with Katelyn and his daughter who he spoke of just committing a school shooting. I assure him everything will be alright, we'll figure it out.

We arrived outside of a space shuttle, where Lexy would launch the new Lexy satellite into orbit. The shuttle would morph into something resembling a transformer.

I began to get frustrated, not understanding any of this. Alexis pouted stating she was bored and I wasn't sure what to do, not understanding why a giant Lexy transformer satellite wasn't doing it for her. I didn't know what to do, I was all used up. Handing her a knife I suggest we kill James, her reaction unreadable. To sell this I stab him. He tells me to stop that but otherwise does nothing. He seemed more annoyed than hurt.

Alexis looks at her knife and then throws it. So then I chained her to the hood of the car and started driving back through the desert. Everyone was now naked for some reason and we were driving into a sea of tornadoes. I asked her if this was exciting and she looked miserable.

It was all very confusing.

Waking up I peered up disoriented and found myself confused, all of those mental images currently being allowed to be recollected.

It felt like I had been out for at most a brief spell but the clock on the wall had it posted as just past ten.

If dreams are supposed to be some part of our subconscious at work, I am not sure what it was trying to tell me besides I was clearly focused all too much on specific people.

I didn't get James' involvement, that was just weird.

Peering around the bedroom at all the newly purchased unused toys and contraptions, it occurred to me that everything I did earlier this year was due to some early put on mid-life crisis and I was very much still living through it.

That could probably describe the entirety of my adult life. A prolonged never ending mid-life crisis, furthered constantly by an unwillingness to truly change anything. Everything I get in between is just a reaction to the stimuli I inject into any situation.

Looking back over my phone, I see no other late night callers or texts were sent. Making my way into the bathroom I shower for the day's festivities, after immediately taking a picture of myself posing in front of the mirror, hair wet and slicked back with a towel around my waist.

I sent it to Autumn and Lexy both. Why not?

One texted back heart filled eyes and a gushing emoji. The other ignored me.

Lexy proceeded to send another text of a sobbing emoji.

*'THIS WEDDING IS STRESSING ME THE FUCK OUT'*

Wasn't sure what to come back with really. The whole thing was absurd but it was a game testing wills between Lexy and her father. Who would crack first. Knowing Lexy as well as I did, her father didn't have a chance in hell.

I told her as such, hoping to cheer her up before telling her I was on my way. She continued sobbing in emoji.

She wasn't really one to show that to anyone else, she had her own pride and determination to contend with. It was always fascinating seeing the differences in her when we were alone and when everyone else was generally present and she was then going into full Lexy Mode, hitting the dial and cranking it to eleven.

We all played roles the best we could.

Feeling my job was done it was time to fill in the day with festivities. Unanchoring from the cove, I made my way back toward the main pier. It wouldn't be long. I debated going to get breakfast first, I imagine Lexy would be agitated regardless of whether or not I was full.

Still, if I could help I would. Besides, why stop raiding Kat's kitchen? It was just another long standing tradition.

It took about twenty minutes upon leaving the pier but before long I was arriving back at Kat's and Lexy's home. Whistling to myself I pulled out the spare key Lexy gifted me(Whether or not she got Kat's permission was questionable) and made myself right back at home. Was immediately greeted to the sounds of pent up frustrations.

Katsumi was in the hallway peeking into Lexy's bedroom, in classic stalker formation, bent down with one finger to her chin, deep in concentration.

She saw me and grumbled.

"Hello Katsumi."

"Katsumi didn't do it."

That was good to know. I nodded in full understanding, waiting to consider the worst. If she didn't set the bedroom on fire in my absence I'd consider that a win.

*"Damn it, this dress is too tight! Is it making me look fat? I am not fat, right?!"*

That was all I needed to hear. Stepping past Katsumi I was greeted to the sight of Lexy in a wedding dress.

A ball gown silhouette with a sheath. I would have expected something more extravagant and absurd if I am to be honest. Then again all this talk on weddings and never did it really occur to me this was going to be a part of that. Are wedding dresses a fetish?

I don't know. I imagine it also has a lot to do with the symbolism. I was beginning to get jealous of a fake lover.

"Actually... Wow, I look amazing."

Yes. Yes you do. Staring, I am oblivious of Kat's presence directly behind her until she speaks up.

"You're really going to go through with this charade," she mutters, unable to keep a hint of a smile from her lips.

I don't see how that could have in any way been a mystery given the boards up on her walls. Pins nailing in pages of photos and lists, concept designs and dates for events tied in with conspiracies and weddings. Seating arrangements, a guest list, flower arrangements, a canvas with an incredibly immaculate painting of Lexy and Ryan standing in a ring dressed the part to spend eternity together in holy matrimony.

Lexy spotted me peeking in and immediately turned away, slightly blushing a bit before turning to face the doorway, a hand falling to rest on her hip.

"What do you think? How do I look?"

"Like the most beautiful woman that ever walked this earth about to shame her father and make a man out there the luckiest mother fucker alive."

She blushes a darker shade still before raising a hand up to shoo me away.

"Oh stop. Don't you know it's bad luck to see the bride dressed up before the ceremony?"

"It's only bad luck if it's Ryan." I assumed this to be the case in all instances.

"What's that superstition supposed to represent anyways? I don't think it could get any worse with the Russian involvement in the hacking of the World Title Contendership vote."

"I... Don't know actually." I shrug.



“It’s probably ‘unlucky’ to get ‘married’ on a Thursday. There’s tales for everything. I am sure you’ll be fine,” Kat responded.

I want to say something. Unfortunately my words are caught in my throat. I think I had a thing for Lexy in wedding dresses. That’s when it hit me.

“Want to try on another one? I don’t know. So many options out there and we really want it to be perfect.”

It was more of a plea than a suggestion. She pondered this for all of three seconds before dismissing it, Kat giving me an evil eye. I suppose it had been her in here helping for a while. Throwing my hands up I shrug.

“It’s a beautiful dress, more than a mockery deserves,” Kat retorted, sticking her tongue out at me halfway while shaking her head.

“Katsumi thinks Ryan is very, very lucky,” Katsumi piped in from the doorway.

“I am going to grab a snack, we’re sticking with this one I figure. It fits you to a tea and sweetie, you don’t look fat in that wedding dress. You look like a million dollars,” Kat said playfully, blowing a kiss before heading out. Walking over to the bed I sat down at the edge.

Where was any of this going to go? I, for one, couldn’t possibly tell.

I often felt like a spectator with Lexy, just flowing with the motion of the tide. Wherever it crashed, that’s where I would be.

I figured it was at least worth asking.

“You know, I am curious. What happens next?”

Lexy continued admiring herself in the mirror, the material of the dress, the way it emphasized and highlighted her most attractive attributes below the neck. They had apparently even gone so far as applying the make-up. From what I could tell she had on her face, that had

taken the better part of an hour, and that was with Kat helping apply it for her. Hollywood level, she wasn't a bombshell. She was a supernova.

“Isn't it obvious? Lexy's Finest will be the Tag Team Champions! I am going to have the most amazing wedding ever portrayed on live television and we're going to dox and have the hackers arrested who-”

“Do you really think the wedding will be the end all with this game you're playing with your father?”

She blinked and peeked around. Katsumi had heard the word snack and I imagined her then scurrying after Kat Version One to the kitchen. Just to be safe Lexy slowly crept over to the door and shut it.

*“I don't know!”* she responds almost whispering, fretting over it in her mind. “On one hand it's nice that he's at least showing he cares! On the other he's blown this up to proportions I wasn't intending. Why? Is it getting to you too?”

No. Although things could get really weird really fast and awkward for everyone. When this had begun all the way back at the start of the year, I was at a peak level of apathy towards anything. Just numb. Not even finding humor in the world around me.

Going back over the videos of the early days with Lexy starting off as an interviewing before making her way up to the ridiculous on air feud she had with Autumn leading into Rise to Greatness in a match where Autumn as the Dancing Bear and I were booked as opponents. Since then, just through purely willing to do anything and everything to get attention, to stand out, Lexy had by herself as someone who doesn't even wrestle on the program turned herself into a central figure.

I had taken a dramatic backseat compared to the man I was before all this, leaving it up to her to make pretty much whatever decision she wanted to go with. I'd play along. It was easier and fun in it's own way and until very recently, I was also in an incredibly dark place.

I don't think anyone would give her the credit they give her old man, but her performances had often led to getting the result she wanted. She was doing it her way, not Desoubrais'.

While the people she brought on were questionable, I suppose you just had to work with what you were given. Be it weirdos in masks and costumes or a Japanese hentai voice actress that liked setting shit on fire.

"I'll support anything you want to do. I said it before and I meant it. Just, where does it lead?"

"Hopefully, with a win over him. He must be so proud of himself, thinking he has us on the ropes. He has *no idea* how far I am willing to go. I said I was going to be the best and I meant it."

Her expression softened as she turned around to face me.

"Do you *really* like it?"

Fantastic way to quickly change the topic. It was forever when we were alone I'd ever see glimmers of what was tucked away in that head of hers. She was probably more like her old man than she'd acknowledge. Which was just weird, is this what fucking CHBK is like?

"I cannot wait until the honeymoon." I smile as she tests the waters with maneuverability.

"I am almost afraid to sit in this thing. I *love* the way it feels. Although I'd totally get a different dress for our wedding." She pauses, looking up before seemingly regretting her words.

"Not that I am thinking about it!"

Well that just came out.

“Of course not. I smell bad and I might possibly be gay.”

She pauses a bit before laughing. It was what she told Autumn and Kat before filling them in on the secret that wasn't a particularly well kept secret from them.

Delicately leaning over she sat upon my lap and wrapped an arm around my shoulder.

“Yeah, just so you know, I never thought you were gay.”

I blink, somewhat confused. Is she joking or being serious?

“... Yeah, I know.”

“Really, never.” I can see my own reflection off her eyes and I look just as confused as I feel. She turns away, looking down to the floor. “Okay, there was one time when you were drunk and, wanting to put it in my ass I **WONDERED** about it, but-”

“Lexy! I know!”

She turns back and smiles.

“Good.”

Here I am thinking she's a secret evil genius like her old man and now I am wondering if she's a fucking cartoon character. It's just part of the act. I've seen it. I swear I have.

Then it hit me.

“Wait, are you implying that I have stunk in the past or something?”

She freezes up and looks down at my collar, adjusting it with one hand awkwardly.

“No! No I- I mean. Okay, so, I don't think your cologne works with you the way you think it does.”

“You're joking.”

“Yeah, ha ha... I am just joking.”

She turns away, fidgeting a bit, clearly wanting to say more. No she wasn't joking. I am just trying to picture how this went on for almost a year now where she put up with a scent that offended her.

"Is this seriously coming out now?" I ask.

"I didn't want to hurt your feelings!" She reaches up and cusps one of my cheeks. "See? You're getting upset."

I am trying not to. This is usually something you state early on. Now I felt like shit.

"Buuuut, you know, since you brought it up-" she stood up off my knee and went toward her closet. I watch in bewilderment as she pulls out a small box with what appears to be-

"You could try a *different brand*?" She says gleefully.

Yeah she was very serious.

"Lexy, can you do me a favor?"

"Of course!"

"Can you not wait until eleven months later to tell me I am offending one of your delicate five senses?!"

"Hey! Someone is snappy. I love you for *you*! I just had these on standby in case it came up. It did!"

I resigned myself to my fate. I mean nobody else seemed to hate it but everyone has their preferences. I am more annoyed that she didn't feel comfortable mentioning it herself. I could even see that as endearing, what she'd willingly put up with just to keep someone else happy. If changing a brand would make her happy then great.

So there she then was, in a wedding dress, on her knees over her bed shifting through a box of cologne.

“How about this one?”

And that is how I now found myself with the future Lexy ‘Watson’, sniffing blasts of cologne.

“Not really fond of that kind of musk. Have you never smelled Adonis? I feel like that would just combine with my musk and create super mutant odors.”

“Oh, no. No can’t have that,” she says cheerfully pulling out another one. For a brief stint in time she was able to focus on something that wasn’t wedding, conspiracy or Katsumi caused. She was having too much fun with this.

“How about this one? Ooo, I like that one. Makes me want to-”

Sniffing it, it wasn’t bad. It was just...

“Isn’t that what your father wears?”

I’ve been too close to him recently. It showed. She immediately gagged, waving the bottle in her hand panicking before tossing it over into the small trash bin beside her bed.

“Ew. So much ew!”

I smile.

“Yeah I like it. Don’t worry, daddy is going to make it right.”

“No! **DON’T YOU DARE.**”

Laughing, I poke her belly before tickling her a bit. Her frown turns into a smile before the forced chuckle escapes her mouth.

“No! NO! Stop damn you!”

She smacks my nose while falling onto her back. Sitting back I grimace. She chuckles, not intending to but hitting the target spot anyway.

“Sorry!”

“Ouch.”

“See, that’s what you get,” she teases, leaning up as she reaches over to rub over my hand grasping my nose gently. Reaching into the box I pull out another bottle and spray it in front of my face.

“What about this one?”

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Whistling, I tap away at the front door while peering down at the wrapped box in my hand. I can’t remember the last Christmas present I gave to an adult that wasn’t meant to be inserted into a personal orifice, man or woman. This would be new for me.

As Autumn peered out from the small glass panel beside the door frame, I smiled and waved like a jackass. I was easily excited. As she opened the door, I couldn’t help but feel a bit antsy. I always hate these overly emotional, sentimental conversations, I assume because I have the emotional maturity of a five year old.

Regardless, Kat had spoken up about Autumn going through a rough patch and then mentioned Ryan for some reason. I just don’t get why he’s playing such an important role for us now, literally being married off to my girlfriend for a PR stunt. Lexy could have at least gone with an eight or above. This man looked like he was beaten in the face in the womb as a fetus.

Regardless, if my partner was going through a rough spell, she needed people who cared about her and damn it, I care.

Had anyone told me I would care about Autumn Valentine a year ago I’d have laughed. Now she’s the love of my life and a true friend. Just having that dawning realization reminds me why I hate me. I am an asshole who wasn’t afforded the luxury to be a part of her life or deserved it.

“Ace, what’s up? Does Lexy need something?”

“No, no, I just figured I’d come by, spend some time with my choom. Can play some games, have a little fun. Hang out, you know?”

“Choom? Uh- Ryan might play a game or something?”

Ryan?

As if on cue the man stepped out from behind Autumn carrying a bag. He saw me and muttered something under his breath in passing in his weird non-English native tongue.

Why is he now carrying her bag to the car? The show wasn’t for a week. She just got back from one. Come to think of it, I can't remember the last time he carried one of my bags for me.

Ignoring this I remain vigilant and offer her the gift with one hand.

“No, with you silly. Merry Christmas!”

I hold out my hand to her, offering her the gift. She peers down at it slightly surprised before taking it respectfully from my hand.

“Oh, wow, thanks! I uh, your gift is still at the store. Two weeks away.” She smiles as I assume she hadn’t really planned on anything.

“Can I come in?”

“Sure.”

She stood back and motioned for me to enter. Immediately upon entry I make my way to the couch. Peering up at her television set in the living room I reached over and turned it on.

“Have any movie channels? Pay Per View?”

“Yeah, of course. You wanted to come over and watch a movie?”

“Oh thank God. Let’s watch a movie, just you and me. Something preferably not animated and not a musical. You wouldn’t believe Lexy’s movie collection.”



She laughs.

“I am sure I would.”

“Just everything Disney and thirty to forty years old. The boat singing wasn’t staged, the songs I know every word to...”

I say, reflecting on the hours of my life laying back on Lexy’s bed as she had her head glued to movies I had long forgotten about or frankly never even knew existed that I could now sing to.

Autumn seemed confused, which was a bummer. We needed to be best buddies damn it. I was dedicated to us being the closest and best tag partners *ever*.

Even closer than Autumn and Gable, I suppose with far less fucking. We’d have to be connected spiritually.

As she sat down she leaned just a tiny bit closer.

“Wow, did you change cologne?”

I grit my teeth. Only several, several times today did I change colognes. Then it took a shower to try and rid myself of the mixture.

“Smells *nice*.”

“Thank you!” I say feeling defeated. “Have you seen The Nice Guys?”

“I don’t think so. Are Lexy and you doing okay?”

She was just proving the case, we clearly needed to spend more time together. If just the thought of me randomly showing up to spend time with my best bud in the whole world led to the belief I was having relationship problems, that needed to be worked on.

“We’re great. I just want to focus on us damn it! We’re tag team partners and more than that.”

“Please don’t remind me,” she mutters, shaking her head. I laugh. Can’t help it.

“Look, I know it was silly we’re having this on-air fling. I thought it was silly too but it makes Lexy happy and hasn’t really hurt either one of us. I just see it as fun.”

She smirks. “Of course you would. I don’t really let it bother me. I mean with Ryan here now and tying him with Lexy in the same sort of PR campaign, it's been a trip. And even if I don’t understand it, her ideas always seem to work in their own crazy ways.”

“Look,” I began feeling awkward. I suck at these moments. “When you suggested and then went out of your way to get me put into rehabilitation with Hodges, I found it annoying as all hell. But at the same time, it was possibly putting at risk our chance at going for the Tag Team Championships. It was putting my career at risk of being put on hold, possibly even affecting yours.”

Autumn held her breath for a moment.

“But,” I continued. “You did it because you cared. And honestly, I don’t think a lot of people are out there that actually give a shit about me. My wellbeing was more important than the ramifications and impacts it could have had and I really appreciate that. It means a lot to me.”

“If I had realized your rehabilitation would have led to trying to assault the World Champion and Hodges being a self serving asshole suddenly being forced into being involved with you further I probably would have just-”

“Hell was paved with good intentions or whatever but I am appreciative nonetheless. You’re a better friend to me than I deserve and damn it I want to really commit to us and return the favor.”

Leaning over I wrap my arms around her in the biggest bear hug I can manage. She seems to have the air knocked out of her as she grunts. She pats my back gently. It took a moment to realize I might have been halfway suffocating her.

“Urm- Okay. Anytime! Glad you feel this way.”

Letting go I sit back and nod. I really suck at these. Being a dirty whore is so much easier.

“I got you a gift and yeah it is a couple weeks off from Christmas but damn it, go ahead and open that bad boy up. It took a while to find something and I really hope you like them. They’re perfect for us.”

She peered down at the wrapped gift I had handed her on the couch beside her.

“Sure, I can do that,” she says while lifting it up and peeking around the bow. She steals a glance at me and smiles. “Please tell me it’s not something dirty.”

“Don’t be ridiculous, I am far more classier than that,” I lied.

Peering down at the box a moment longer, she delicately pulled at the ribbon and let the material fall back naturally from the lid. Lifting it up I grinned, trying to think of how I wanted to phrase what I said next. She pushed through the layer of gift paper revealing a jewelry box.

“This isn’t another engagement ring, is it?”

She was referring to what Lexy mistook for an engagement ring. That had been a diamond studded anal plug Ravyn later had the pleasure or displeasure of wearing.

“Don’t give Lexy any ideas, I am assuming we’ll be getting married next.”

“Don’t speak it into existence.”

Lifting the small box up she opens it before blinking awkwardly at the twin rings resting there in the box.

“Are these... Promise rings?”

“Yes! Something we can wear together to show we’re connected!”

“Do you know what these are supposed to represent?”

“A promise, obviously.”

Reaching over I pluck one of the rings up from the box. Reaching over I grab her hand and lift it up slowly.

“Did Lexy suggest this?”

“What? No. I saw them and fell in love with them. She did approve of them when I showed her though and said it was the sweetest thing.”

“Of course she would.”

“Autumn Valentine Winchester. I promise to put in all the effort in the world of being the best tag team partner you’ve ever had. I’ll be your best friend and concerned citizen to be there at your beck and call. I will never give up on you. I am never going to let you down. I will never run away and desert you. I will try not to ever tell you a lie and hurt you.”

“Oh my God, you’re Rick rohl’ing me.”

“Who the fuck is Rick Rohl’ing?” I ask, feeling slightly hurt. I am trying to connect with her and be serious with my commitment. She goes to pull her hand back. I raise the ring up and she pauses. She thinks I am trying to be funny.

“Okay, boomer,” she smirks. I knew that reference at least. Placing the ring onto her finger, I stop myself from grumbling. I had so much more I was going to say. Looking awkwardly between an engagement ring and the newly applied promise ring, I slowly took it off.

“It’d fit better on the other one.” She rolled her eyes but offered no resistance as she raised up her other hand. Things had really been serious between Gable and her, I hoped he was in a better place.

Softly grasping her other hand, I slid it carefully up her middle finger. I figured we could do a thing where we flip the same person off and show the rings in a meaningful way. Just layers

and layers of meaning, damn it. Telling someone to get fucked while we're awesome, we are together as one unit and a reminder for us of this special moment.

"Thank you, this is all just so... Surprisingly sweet coming from you." She murmurs. I ignore the implication. I am always sweet. Raising my hand up as a divide between us I smile gleefully.

"What do you say, partner? Ring me?"

She turned away, her eyes focusing on the remaining ring in the box. She couldn't help but smile at least.

"Your dimples are *adorable*."

She turned away, before staring back with mock intensity. "Are you trying to make me blush or something?"

"No! I was just stating the obvious, that didn't mean stop. Come on! Ring me, partner! Don't leave me hanging!"

Taking the ring, she shakes her head but puts the ring over the tip of my finger before dragging it down. It fit snugly near the base.

"Ahh, I feel whole now," I say while curling my fingers into fists then releasing, eyeballing the ring and stealing glances back at her for effect. "Like a part of my soul has been restored. Everything is in order. Want to go take over the world?"

"You're silly, you know that right?"

"You get what you pay for."

"I am not paying you anything though."

"**Even better**, *who doesn't like free stuff?*"

Turning back to the television I picked up the remote from the corner of the couch.

“There are just so many good movies we need to watch buddy. Buddy buddy. *The Nice Guys*. *Lethal Weapon two*. We’re going to be like Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid.”

“Wasn’t that more of a tragedy?”

“We’re dying together either way.”

Playing around with the controller, she did seem to have every streaming service on the planet at her beck and call. Would make finding a good flick easy. Just the way I liked it.

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**-Shoot-**

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*Thunderdome. Thunderdome. How the mighty and the frail can shiver in anticipation and dread, stepping foot inside your chamber.*

*This wasn’t what I was expecting when this match was announced if I am to be entirely honest but you know what? Fine. What a **twist**.*

*I’ve participated in every other absurd match this year, let’s add another special event. My first time ever stepping inside of the dome that has become a staple for SCW’s brutality. Next can be the death chamber or something, because **why not?***

*This year alone I’ve been thrown off scaffolds, put through almost a full dozen tables, assaulted by every flea hoping to make a name for themselves, put to the limit inside of the elimination*

*chamber in the performance so many only dream of giving and I even gave Selena her stupid  
unbelievable main event. I've got the posters and t-shirts to prove it all.*

*I am a living, breathing crash dummy. What can I say? I live for the abuse.*

*It's been the name of the game and you know what? I can't get enough of it.*

*Autumn.*

*Love. Dearest.*

*Finally, there will be another special hallmark moment where we can come together and do  
something truly special together. I am sorry I wasn't there for you at Rise to Greatness.*

*I am almost ashamed of what happened and I am The Shameless.*

*I've regretted it ever since.*

*It's funny, you know. Some people just don't believe in us. As a team. As lovers. As equals.*

*They are under the delusion that this doesn't matter to me. That, I am here out of boredom,  
perhaps a simple obligation. That Lexy was chasing a match not on our behalf but hers.*

*Seemingly not grasping that we want the same things, as a collective unit.*

*They seem to think, I'll just go back to chasing the World Championship. I'll just forget about us  
the moment the opportunity arises and move on.*

*They don't know us as well as they think they do.*

*Autumn, **my love**. The sun that illuminates my world every morning, my stars that shine over my  
head every night, wrapping me in your ever loving embrace.*

*No one is going to turn down the opportunities we get in the Lexy Nation, but the idea I'd ever  
truly abandon you is absurd. We're in this together now, until the very end.*

*People seem to forget I used to team with a man that called himself Porno Lad. That we  
competed in the tag division hoping to strike it rich. Never paid off. If the name didn't prove it,  
clearly I was one who would willingly team with anyone to pursue this goal.*

*Even teamed with good old James Evans there for a while before he became another raging  
psychopath this industry has a tendency of creating.*

*The night I was set to face Regan Street in a steel cage after she had went about attempted  
murder on my wife, I chased for gold. I entered into an open invitational tag team elimination  
with Sophie James.*



*Failed there too.*

*It isn't like I didn't still try to murder the bitch. I am a man who simply does have ambitions and I've been willing to shave years off a long life to chase them, often multiple goals in one night, making Rise to Greatness all that sadder.*

*Then there was a short stint with Asher. Alas, it just wasn't meant to be.*

*I am not someone that lingers on defeat however. If I did, I would have never built up my successes that I've now got tucked away to relish over. It simply made me a stiffer, stronger, more conniving son of a gun.*

*And then through Lexy?*

*Magic came to life. I finally found a partner that I could become Champions with and so much more.*

*This weird notion cast by idiot members of the Jackals that the tag division is somehow, beneath me? I've been chasing the tag titles throughout my entire career.*

*If you think it's beneath me I say you then can get the hell out in my stead. I mean, seriously?*

*Tommy, you're a six time Tag Team Champion. If it's beneath me then why are you wasting your  
time?*

*Oh, Hall of Famer. Supreme Champion. Man chasing a seventh title reign that is beneath the star  
that shines brightest, Ace Marshall!*

*What are you smoking? Sneak out with a box of Asher's product did you? Do you need to come  
sit beside me in rehab? There's plenty of room.*

*I am specifying you for a reason. You're a mess of statements that just don't really hold up merit.*

*To think, you likely have more experience than anyone in the Thunderdome.*

*I truly am thankful you were included into the night's festivities. You're public enemy number  
one.*

*Not because of personal successes. Not because of grudges made through intensive matches and  
well fought victories. Your only weapon in the arsenal as of late has been with petty numbers  
games and doing what, you're suddenly against happening to you. You're in this match not  
because of recent merit but because you're pests. **Fleas.** **Parasites.***

*And I am absolutely fine with that. You'll get to once more be put out like the old dogs you are.*

*I am more so thankful I get to do it with Autumn again. See, for those who wish to seemingly imply I am carrying her, I almost feel guilty she's having to carry a burden by lifting me to greatness.*

*I used to refer to Christy Matthews as the sleeping giant. Clearly, I wasn't off my mark with that statement. Little did I know, there was another sleeper down there by the name of Autumn Valentine.*

*The longest reigning and still dominating TV Champion. Why, she is doing what Kandis couldn't. She beat Kandis to win that bad boy, to only then lead to this amazing feat, this new benchmark. Toppling the attempts of Kennedy Street and Ravyn Taylor in the process. Two names none of you idiots would have ever put next to Autumn's.*

*She is a five time Tag Team Champion, yet she is proving she isn't just an expert in tag team wrestling. She is another blossoming star that is proving she can do it all by herself.*

*If you think she's stopping anytime soon? You've lost your damn mind.*

*As great as I am?*

*Autumn is proving to be so much more. Mark my words. She will be a future World Champion.*

*Not a past, prior Champion. Her days of scaling to the top are only going to continue.*

*And if I have my way? We'll still be the Tag Team Champions. Neither of us view the gold here as  
beneath us, no matter how great we are!*

*Together? We will only do what a tag team is actually supposed to do. We compliment each other.  
We fill in our blind spots. We make each other whole, as a unit.*

*I could go into an entire sermon in terms of what this event is supposed to be but you idiots know.  
You're here chasing after what Christy and Lucas possess just as much as us.*

*Your confidence is unwarranted I am afraid to tell you. Baseless. You didn't face us at Rise to  
Greatness as a unit and that is entirely my fault. At the end of the day, I agreed to focus  
elsewhere.*

*Now? Between everyone in this match?*

*You have my undivided attention.*

*You have **our** undivided attention.*

*Yes Kandis, I know you're all about making it clear that no matter how many times you two get  
knocked over you're both always going to get back up.*

*You've made this abundantly clear, time and time again. Nevermind that statement describes the entire roster, genius.*

*Nevermind that describes Autumn and I for every time you ambushed us. For every time you believed there weren't ever going to be consequences.*

*And the truth is? I want you to keep getting up. I want you to pull yourself back up from fleeting consciousness every single time we take you down, swearing up and down that the next time?*

*You'll have our number. The game will be up.*

*I can't think of a more fitting hell for you.*

*It will only be a grand joy for the both of us to continuously knock your fat ass out, time and time again until memoriam.*

*Now, I am not going to claim we're going to enter the ring this week and leave unscarred. Frankly for any participant involved, I think you have better odds of being struck by lightning before getting launched via a tornado into the sun. It's impossible!*

*Just stating the obvious here. This is going to be a very elaborate torture session that honestly?*

*Caleb Knight should probably not watch.*

*I mean, just between the fleas and the current Tag Team Champions? We should expect some downright nasty to occur here and I suppose that was the intention with our 'leader' in booking this event.*

*It's supposed to be one hell of a show and one hell of an ass kicking long in the making for seemingly everyone involved.*

*While it isn't the one on one opportunity Lexy wanted for us?*

*It's going to be a spectacle that the world deserves and a showcase for quite legitimately the past, present and future of SCW's best and brightest.*

*It's going to be a night of remembrance. Just, not in the way anyone not a member of Lexy Nation is intending.*

*For everyone else not a small child? Lexy Nation, I hope you're all staying tuned in. There is only going to be more. There is always going to be more.*