

For some context, this is a rivals to lovers' romance, but the characters haven' t seen each other in three years. However, on this plane ride, they have been forced to sit next to each other.

An hour into the plane ride, I headed off to the bathroom.

It just felt weird, sitting next to Nathaniel. Every once in a while, our arms would brush against each other, like if he was turning a page in his book or if I reached for my water bottle. It didn' t seem to bother *him*, but I had a knee-jerk reaction every single time..

And with the flinching came a racing, furious heart.

The moment the girl' s bathroom was free, I rushed to the back and practically jumped inside.

Even the *bathroom* was nice. A clean mirror, a shiny sink, a nice aroma. It looked like no one had ever used it before.

I stared at myself in the mirror, wondering how I got into this mess. I planned *everything*. How are my plans already falling apart?

"It' s alright," I reassured myself, applying a fresh layer of lip gloss to my chapped lips. "I got this."

Otherwise...

I shook my head. I refused to think of life in the apartment, with Ma' s relentless baking along with her never-ending ignorance.

I mean, *seriously*. Couldn' t she have at least *pretended* to care about my math test? It was so unlike me to fail.

I rinsed my face in water, cleaning the memories away. Or, at least trying to. Maybe I could convince myself that the water could wash away my anger.

I wiped my face, fresher than before.

Still—I couldn' t shake the aggravating thought of my plan crumbling around me.

With nothing else to do, I stepped out of the bathroom—
—and bumped straight into Nathaniel' s chest.

As I stumbled, he reached out and grabbed my shoulders to steady me before harshly letting go.

My head swam at the short second of contact, but I acted as if it didn't faze me.