



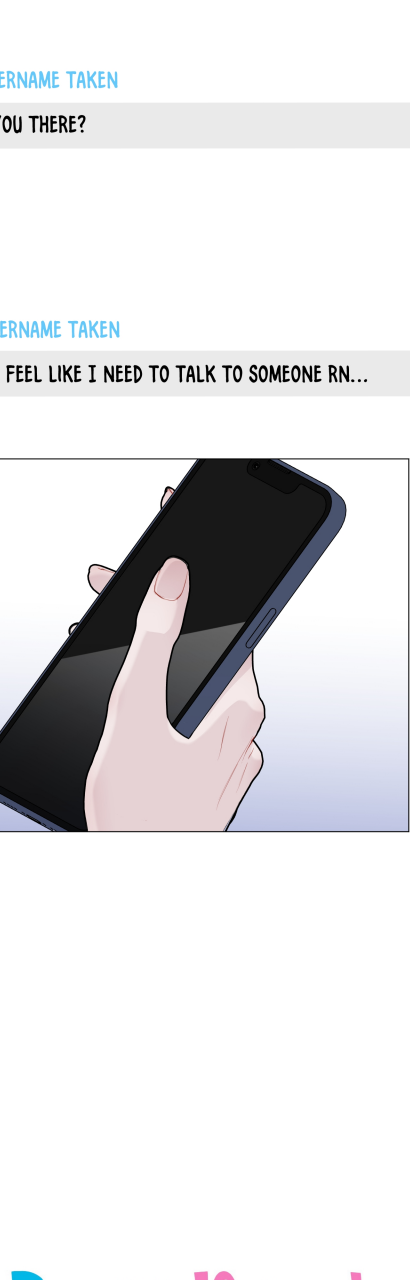
IT'S ALRIGHT. IT'LL BE FINE

IT'S KEANE

IT'S FINE. HE WON'T-

HE WON'T-

LEAVE



USERNAME TAKEN

YOU THERE?

USERNAME TAKEN

I FEEL LIKE I NEED TO TALK TO SOMEONE RN...



Boy Girlfriend



Art + story by: Nicole

4 MONTHS AGO

4 MONTHS AGO,
I FELT LIKE THE
GROUND WAS SWEEPED
OUT FROM UNDER ME

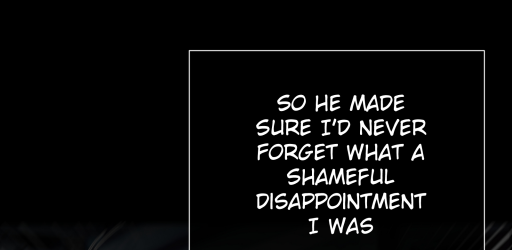


THAT MAN CAME
AND FORCED HIS
WAY BACK INTO
MY LIFE



HE WAS THE
ONE PERSON THAT
COULD NEVER KNOW...
YET HE FOUND OUT
EVERYTHING

I'VE NEVER
FELT MORE
MORTIFIED



HE WAS
FURIOUS, HIS EYES
FILLED WITH
DISGUST AND
LOATHING

SO HE MADE
SURE I'D NEVER
FORGET WHAT A
SHAMEFUL
DISAPPOINTMENT
I WAS



I GOT
REJECTED

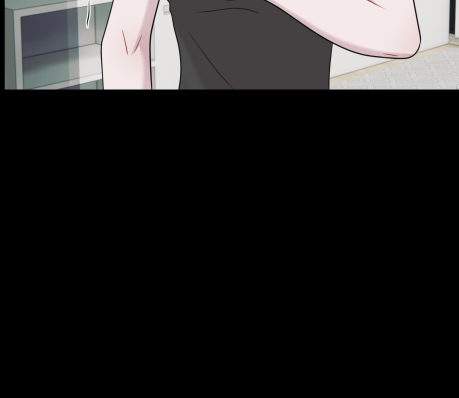
BOTH BY
MY FAMILY, AS
WELL AS SCHOOL



A/N: CENSORED HATE SPEECH

MUM REMAINED ENTIRELY PASSIVE THE WHOLE TIME, THOUGH IT WASN'T LIKE I EXPECTED ANYTHING ELSE FROM HER

SHE HAD ALWAYS BEEN TOO AFRAID OF HIM TO EVER DO ANYTHING



AND AT SCHOOL THAT PICTURE OF KEANE AND I GOT SPREAD AROUND



I FELT ASHAMED

WORTHLESS

UNWANTED

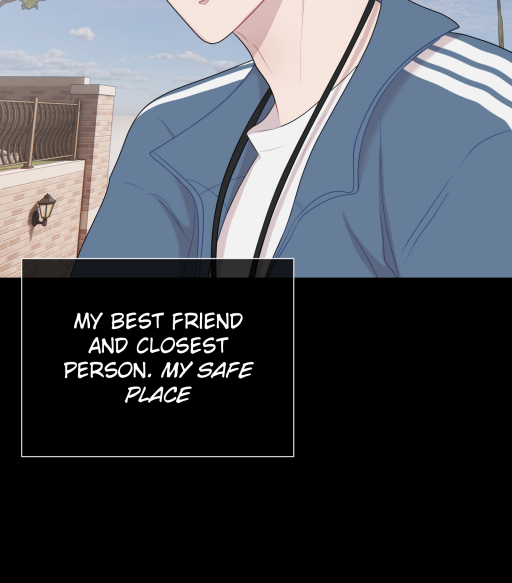
I WANTED TO CRAWL OUT OF MY SKIN

I WANTED TO DISAPPEAR

SOMEWHERE NO ONE WOULD FIND ME. WHERE NO ONE WOULD KNOW ME

THE ONLY PERSON I HAD KEEPING ME AFLOAT WAS YOU...

YOU AND YOUR
BRIGHT SMILE,
REGARDLESS OF
ANYTHING THAT
HAPPENED



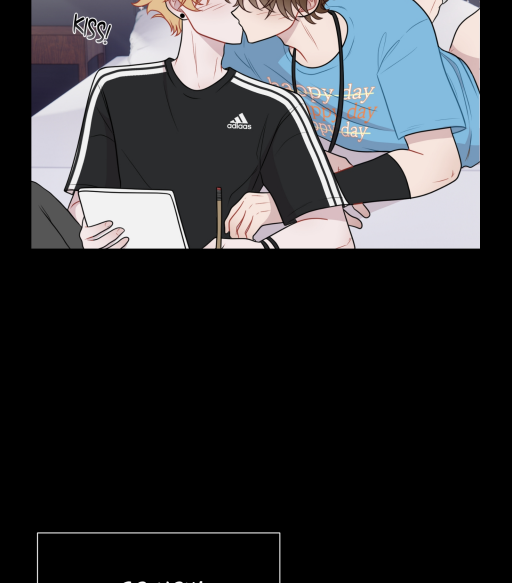
MY BEST FRIEND
AND CLOSEST
PERSON. MY SAFE
PLACE

YOU WERE
THERE FOR ME
JUST LIKE YOU
HAD ALWAYS BEEN

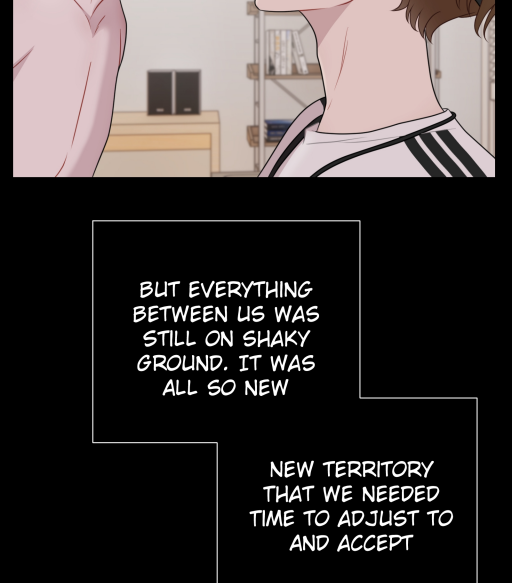
BUT...

THINGS WERE
DIFFERENT THIS
TIME... *WE* WERE
DIFFERENT

WE HAD CROSSED
THE LINE OF "BEST
FRIENDS"



SO NOW
"COMFORTING"
HAD A WHOLE
DIFFERENT
MEANING



BUT EVERYTHING
BETWEEN US WAS
STILL ON SHAKY
GROUND. IT WAS
ALL SO NEW

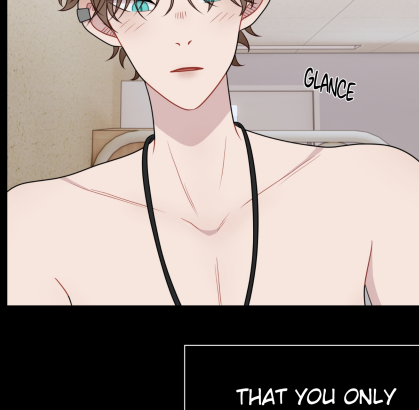
NEW TERRITORY
THAT WE NEEDED
TIME TO ADJUST TO
AND ACCEPT

IT FELT AS
IF YOU, THE ONLY
PERSON I HAD,
WERE HANGING BY
A SINGLE THREAD

I COULDN'T
SHAKE OFF THE
FEAR FROM
MY MIND

WHAT IF
YOU DIDN'T TELL
ME?

IF YOU REALIZED
ALL THIS BETWEEN
US WAS A MISTAKE,
THAT YOU DIDN'T REALLY
LIKE ME LIKE THAT



THAT YOU ONLY
LIKED "LYNX". THAT
YOU WERE NEVER
EVEN INTO GUYS

THAT YOU
DIDN'T WANT ME,
JUST LIKE NO
ONE ELSE DID

WHAT IF YOU
KEPT IT TO YOURSELF,
JUST BEING WITH ME AND
ENDURING IT FOR THE
SAKE OF OUR FRIENDSHIP?
FOR THE SAKE OF ME

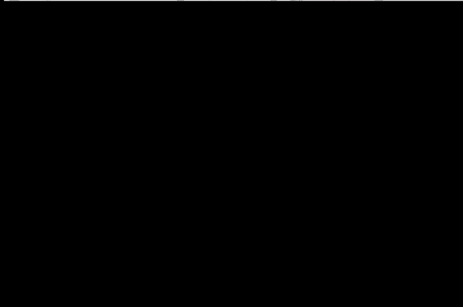
AH

SORRY, I-
ZONED OUT THERE
FOR A SECOND

MIND
IF I KEEP-

OR WORSE...

WHAT IF YOU
DID TELL ME?



WHAT IF
YOU TOLD ME
THAT THIS WAS A
MISTAKE. THAT YOU
DIDN'T SEE ME LIKE
THAT

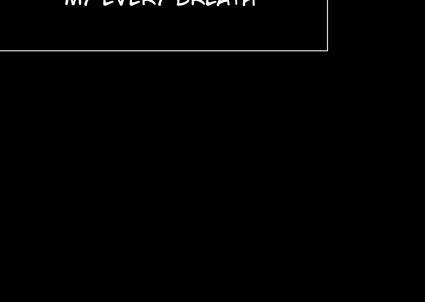
THEN THIS
WOULD BE THE
LAST REJECTION
I COULD TAKE



THE THIN STRING
BETWEEN US WOULD
BREAK

I WOULD
BREAK

THAT DAY
PART OF ME
WANTED TO HEAR
IT AND BE DONE
WITH IT

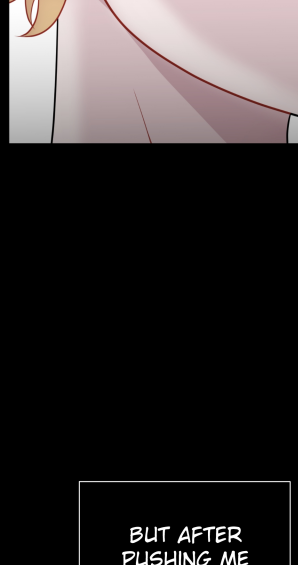


I WANTED TO
PUSH YOU SO
YOU'D HURRY UP
AND SAY IT



TO REJECT ME,
JUST LIKE EVERYONE
ELSE, SO I COULD STOP
FEELING THIS UNBEARABLE
FEAR. THIS... ANXIETY IN
MY CHEST, CONSTRICTING
MY EVERY BREATH

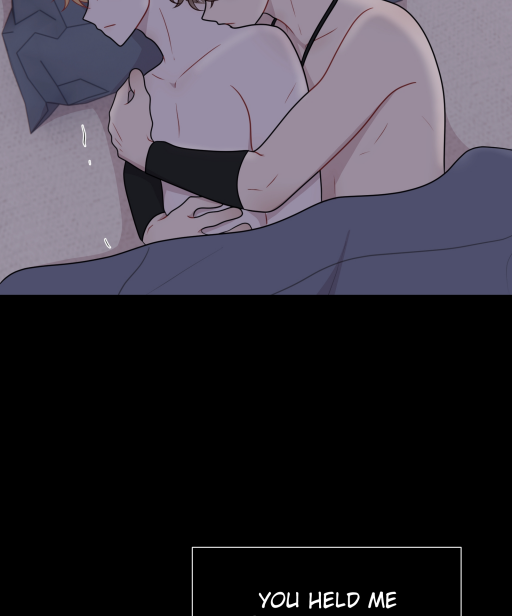
...AND THEN MAYBE
I COULD BREAK
COMPLETELY, SO MUCH
SO THAT I GOT NUMB,
AND FELT NOTHING
ALTOGETHER



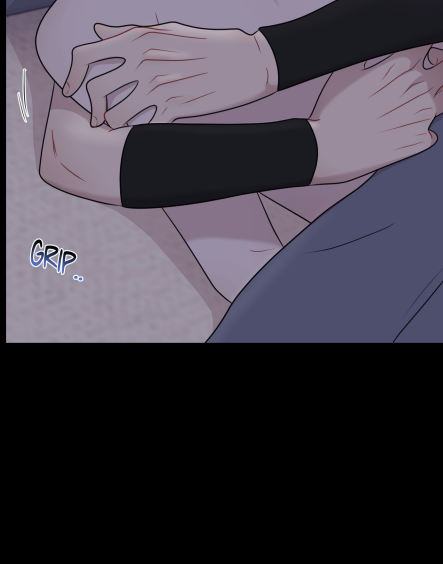
BUT AFTER
PUSHING ME
AWAY...



YOU SIMPLY
HUGGED ME



YOU HELD ME
FOR THE WHOLE
NIGHT AND SLEPT
BESIDES ME...



IT WAS
DISORIENTING

IT MADE ME
NAUSEOUS

BY THE MORNING I
HAD ALREADY
MADE MY DECISION



I WOULD
LEAVE

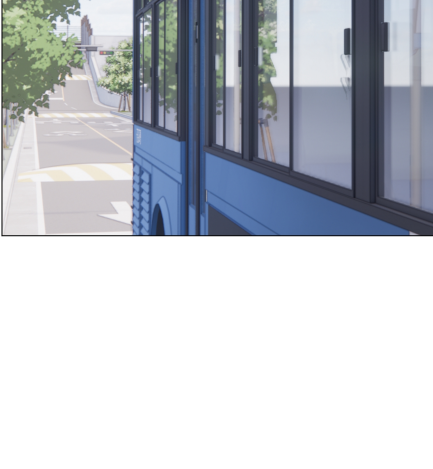
I WOULD FIND
A WAY TO STAY
AFLOAT WITHOUT
RELYING SOLELY
ON YOU

THAT WAY I
WOULDN'T HAVE TO
HEAR YOU REJECT ME.
I WOULDN'T BURDEN YOU
OR YOUR FAMILY ANY
FURTHER

SO I DID



I TOOK THE FIRST BUS THAT PASSED AND GOT OFF IN THE LAST STATION



NO PLAN IN MIND, NO PLACE TO GO, NO PERSON TO TURN TO



IT FELT LIBERATING IN A SENSE

I WALKED UNTIL THE SUN WENT DOWN, UNTIL MY LEGS WERE SHAKING AND I FELT EXHAUSTED



SOMEWHERE ALONG THE WAY IT HAD STARTED RAINING. SO I FOUND A SHAGGY BAR AND WENT TO TAKE SHELTER



I STAYED THERE FOR HOURS, WATCHING PEOPLE COMING AND GOING,

THEN GOT SOMETHING SMALL TO EAT WITH SOME OF THE LAST MONEY I HAD



FORTUNATELY, THE STAFF DIDN'T KICK ME OUT, AND LET ME STAY. AS IF THEY KNEW I HAD NOWHERE ELSE TO GO...

CRACKLE

HEY EVERYONE,
THIS IS MIDNIGHT
PARANOIA!

IF YOU'VE BEEN
TO THIS BAR AGAIN
YOU'VE PROBABLY
HEARD US BEFORE, BUT
IF YOU HAVEN'T, LET ME
INTRODUCE US REAL
QUICK



WE'RE AN
INDIE BAND WHO
ARE JUST STARTING
OUT. MY NAME IS KAI,
AND I'M THE LEAD
SINGER AND BASSIST

THIS IS ASH,
OUR GUITARIST, AND
FELIX ON THE
DRUMS

"MIDNIGHT
PARANOIA" HUH..?
CATCHY NAME

HAVEN'T
HEARD
OF THEM



THAT KAI GUY
SEEMS... VERY
ENTHUSIASTIC

THOUGH NO
ONE SEEMS TO
BE PAYING THEM
ANY MIND...



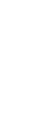
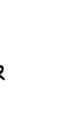
CHATTER

TO BE CONTINUED...

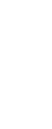
Boy Girlfriend



DON'T
FORGET TO
LIKE, SUB AND
COMMENT!



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