

hard feelings/loveless

by

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INT. TESS'S BEDROOM - MORNING

TESS is laying in bed, asleep. There's a faint sizzle of cooking bacon from the kitchen.

Her alarm beeps. She groans and rolls over to turn it off.

TESS

God.

She takes a deep breath. She stops, sniffs the air, and looks to the other side of the bed. Noticing it's empty, Tess sits up.

INT. TESS'S KITCHEN

Tess walks out of the bedroom, yawning. She wears a T-shirt and sleep shorts, nothing fancy. Her hair is a mess.

JAKE is at the stove, flipping pancakes. His hair is shower-damp and he wears jeans and an unbuttoned shirt, showing an undershirt. There's a stack of bacon, which he grabs from.

TESS

What are you doing?

JAKE

Making breakfast

TESS

(She squints)

Are those pancakes? I can't see. I don't have my contacts.

(She walks closer)

You haven't made pancakes in forever. What's the occasion?

She grabs for a piece of bacon but Jake slaps her hand away.

JAKE

Wait till it's done.

TESS

But you're eating some.

(beat)

You never answered my question

She leans against the counter, crossing her arms to cover herself.

JAKE

I thought it was time. I wanted today to be a good day.

TESS  
(Smiling sadly)  
Yeah... thank you.

JAKE  
For what?

TESS  
The pancakes

JAKE  
I know they're your favorite. Plus,  
I get bacon out of it.

Her smile slips.

TESS  
I'm going to go get dressed

She places a hand on his arm in a friendly touch. Jake tenses for just a moment before relaxing.

Tess leaves the room.

INT. TESS'S DINING ROOM

Tess and Jake eat. Jake's shirt is buttoned but his hair is still a mess. Tess has fixed hers and now wears a pretty sundress and has a bit of mascara on. They eat in silence for a moment.

TESS  
Did you talk to your mom?

JAKE  
Yeah. Before you got up.

TESS  
How is she?

JAKE  
She's good. Just got back from her solo trip to Italy. I'm pretty sure she got wine drunk with a different man every night.

TESS  
(faking interest)  
That's nice. Good for her.

JAKE  
(Snorts)  
Good for me too.  
(MORE)

JAKE (CONT'D)

Maybe I'll have a new dad by the end of this. You never know with that woman

Tess doesn't say anything. It stays silent for far too long.

JAKE (CONT'D)

So how's your sister?

She finishes her food.

TESS

You know Kat. Always moving. She starts school in the city in two weeks and she's looking for a place. I told her she's always welcome if she can't find one.

Jake stops chewing for a moment before swallowing.

JAKE

Here?

Tess is oblivious to his hesitation.

TESS

Of course. Kat's always welcome in my place

Jake looks at her for a moment, like he wants to say more. After a second, he takes a long sip of coffee, swallowing hard.

Tess stands and grabs her empty plate and mug. She reaches for Jake's empty plate, but he shakes his head

JAKE

I've got it.

Tess just nods and takes her plate into the kitchen. Jake remains seated for a moment and sighs.

EXT. UPPER EAST SIDE ACROSS FROM CENTRAL PARK - AFTERNOON

Jake and Tess are walking next to each other in silence. Tess's hands are by her side and Jake's arms are crossed. He glances at her from the corner of his eye and drops his arms.

He brushes his finger across her hand like he's trying to hold it and watches as she she shrugs her hand away and crosses her arms.

TESS  
It's getting chilly

Jake tugs his jacket closer.

JAKE  
Yeah.

They continue to walk in an awkward silence for another few moments. Every once in a while it seems like one wants to speak up, but neither ever do.

JAKE (CONT'D)  
(eventually)  
So where are we going, anyway.

TESS  
You'll see. We're almost there.

There's another moment of silence, then Jake opens his mouth as if to say something else.

Tess accidentally cuts him off.

TESS (CONT'D)  
We're here.

Jake looks up at the storefront, confused.

JAKE  
My favorite bookstore?

Tess watches his confusion.

TESS  
(softly, sadly)  
It's where we met.

JAKE  
Oh. I must have forgotten.

TESS  
Yeah. You must have.

A beat

JAKE  
Do you want to go in.

TESS  
That's why we're here, isn't it.

Jake smiles and goes through the door, dropping it behind him so that Tess has to catch it to get through.

INT. BOOKSTORE - CONTINUOUS

Jake is at the register, talking softly to the young woman working it. She giggles at something he says. Tess drifts to a section of poetry, but continues to watch them. Jake leans on the counter and CASHIER giggles again.

CASHIER

No, I haven't read it

JAKE

(talking louder)

Really? Not even for school?

CASHIER

They let us pick our own books  
mostly

JAKE

(groaning)

But Catcher is a classic. Holden  
Caufield is one of the most complex  
characters I have ever read.

CASHIER

(batting her eyes)

I'll check it out sometime.

Tess walks up and sets a book on the counter. Cashier is visibly upset.

TESS

I'd like to buy this.

CASHIER

We were talking. And there's a  
line.

Jake puts his hand on Cashier's

JAKE

(still flirting)

Be nice, Livvy. This is my... This  
is Tess.

TESS

Nice to meet you.

LIVVY

It's eleven dollars.

Tess pays with a strained smile

TESS

Thanks.

Jake leans on the counter again and makes like he's going to start speaking again. LIVVY leans in.

Tess is still right there and makes a disgusted face before backing up.

TESS (CONT'D)

Are you ready to go?

Jake looks to her, distracted.

JAKE

Hmm?

TESS

We have a lot to do today. We can't stay in one place too long or we won't get to everything.

JAKE

Yeah. Yeah of course.  
(turning back to Livvy)  
Check out that book.

LIVVY

I will.

Jake turns to leave.

LIVVY (CONT'D)

Oh! Do you have an instagram?

Jake turns back with a smile.

JAKE

Yeah. It's-

Tess looks disgusted and leaves the shop as he gives his info to Livvy.

EXT. BOOKSTORE

Tess is bouncing in place, shivering. Jake walks out, pleased.

JAKE

Ready?

Tess walks away from him as he asks her.

JAKE (CONT'D)  
Tess? Tess what's wrong?

TESS  
(pissed)  
You were trying to hold my hand on our way to the store and now you're chatting up some kid in our bookstore?

Jake catches up to her, also pissed.

JAKE  
Oh, it's our bookstore, is it?

TESS  
It always was. You knew that. We met there and then you took me again for our anniversary-

JAKE (CONT'D)  
(talking over her)  
And I *knew* that you knew what was going on with the hand thing. I was making an effort!

TESS (CONT'D)  
An 'effort' to not be an asshole isn't the same as not being an asshole. I'm not going to congratulate you for something you should be doing automatically!

JAKE  
Oh so now I'm the bad guy?

Tess speeds up and talks under her breath.

TESS  
You've always been the bad guy.

JAKE  
What was that? Where was this attitude this morning when you were eating the breakfast I made you? You loved that shit. Just admit it.

TESS  
You made that meal for yourself and just let me share it. And I was trying to be polite.

JAKE  
Alright fine. Whatever. It's not worth it.

(beat)  
(MORE)



JAKE (CONT'D)

But for the record I wasn't  
flirting with her. We were just  
talking.

Tess throws her hands up and walks even faster.

EXT. PARK BENCH - EARLY EVENING

TESS and JAKE are sitting at a bench, on opposite sides with  
space between them. They are both eating ice cream. JAKE has  
vanilla in a cup, TESS has chocolate in a sprinkle cone, with  
all the works.

TESS finishes up her ice cream. She wipes her face with a  
napkin and rubs her now-clean hands on her thighs.

JAKE

So... Are we still on for dinner  
tonight?

TESS

Um...

(pulling out her phone and  
opening  
to instagram)

Actually, I just got a text from my  
mom. She asked me to call my  
grandparents tonight, so I'm not  
sure that I can. Maybe another  
night?

JAKE

(looking at the phone in  
her hands  
with a sad expression)

Yeah. I guess.

(beat)

Well, if that ends earlier-

TESS

It won't.

JAKE looks crestfallen, even though he was the one upset a  
few minutes earlier. Tess looks at him, smug for a moment  
before her face falls a bit.

TESS (CONT'D)

(crumpling her napkins in  
her hand)

I just... I haven't talked to them  
in a while, so it'll probably be a  
bit. But next time. I promise.

TESS begins looking off into the distance. JAKE takes a final bite of his ice cream, then looks at her for a moment. He grabs her crumpled napkins, still watching her. When she doesn't flinch, he stands and walks off to find a trashcan. TESS wipes at her face with shaking hands as soon as he's gone, but her hands are back in her lap and she's in the same position as before by the time JAKE sits back down. They both sadly sigh in unison.

EXT. TESS'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

TESS and JAKE walk up to the apartment in silence. They're wearing almost the same thing, but TESS is wearing JAKE's jacket and JAKE's shirt is slightly different. TESS runs up the steps so she's above him. JAKE follows so that he's just one beneath her.

TESS

Well, I guess that this is  
goodnight, then.

JAKE looks at her, then glances at her lips, then back at her. She nods slightly and he leans in and kisses her once, quick and soft. He leans back and looks at her.

TESS (CONT'D)

(slightly out of breath)  
Do you want to come in? F-for  
drinks or... something?

JAKE

(nods)  
I'd like that

TESS nods once then continues to her door, where she opens it and holds it open for JAKE to go through. He does, smiling. TESS waits a moment before following him, a slight smile on her face while she bites her lip. She shuts the door behind them.

EXT. UPPER EAST SIDE STREET

TESS and JAKE are walking hand-in-hand down the same streets as before. JAKE spins TESS, who starts laughing as he watches, grinning.

INT. BOOKSHOP

An older man works the register as JAKE and TESS check out. TESS leans her head on JAKE's shoulder as he buys her Catcher in the Rye.

EXT. PARK BENCH

JAKE is sitting in the same spot as before, but TESS is laying across the bench, her head in his lap. They're both laughing. JAKE points at something and TESS turns away to look. JAKE watches her with a soft smile on his face. She turns back with a grin and they both start to laugh again.

EXT. TESS'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

TESS and JAKE are back in their original outfits, with JAKE wearing his jacket again. TESS is standing on the top step again, JAKE is two down. They're staring at each other but not looking, eyes distant

TESS  
(rocking on her heels)  
Well, I guess that this is  
goodnight, then.

JAKE  
(putting his hands in his  
pocket)  
I guess it is.

TESS  
I'll see you later?

JAKE  
Sure.

They look at each other for another second before JAKE releases a breath and turns away, heading down the street. TESS opens the door to her apartment and holds it, watching him as he walks through the twilight. As he leaves the light of a streetlight, TESS sighs sadly and goes into her apartment.