

Crushed

My life is a mystery. They say everything happens for a reason. Although clearly they haven't experienced a day in my life. I am Joss. Joss Rose Walker. Today is my sixteenth birthday. Most girls make a big deal out of their sweet sixteens although not me. I don't care... Anymore, that is. A few months ago I was so busy planning this day, I wanted it to be perfect like any other girl. I used to be a happy child. Living in my perfect world where everything went according to what I wanted. That was until I lost everything I ever cared about. All within a matter of hours. Two amazing people were shot out of my world. Their names were Ellie and Patrick Walker. These people were my parents. Exactly two months ago, on April 22, 2011, they were killed. The name of the murderer or the reason they were murdered were never discovered. I just know they were murdered and it was no accident. Snatched out of my life away from me. Today I'm alone. With no one. I live in Door of Faith Orphanage on Baychester Avenue. I go to West High School. Although after the tragic incident of my parents I haven't really been going to school very much. I get messages from my friends asking what happened to me. They all know, it was all over the news. Riley, my boyfriend came to visit me a few times although I never let him in. So he just stopped coming. I just sit in my dark room alone and don't talk to anyone. No one knows how I feel. No one can understand. On a day that's supposed to be special to everyone I sit here and cry. Cry and cry. Ding. "Leave me alone, please," I mutter now getting a bit angry.

"I'm sorry, I just wanted to meet you. I just moved in next door and I just thought It would be nice to meet my new neighbor, I'm sorry if I am disturbing you....," says a mysterious new voice. I think. Who is this? I've never heard this voice before.

"Wait. I'm coming....," I yell out. I get up and walk to the door. I open each lock slowly, my hands tremble. I slowly unlock the latch and finally open the door. At the door stands a tall, fair haired guy. His eyes are as blue as the ocean while his hair is a dirty blondish. He looks at me the same way I look at him. "Whats your name?" I ask still lost in his magnificent eyes.

“My name is Alex. Alex Peters, and you?” he says smiling his gleaming smile. I look down at my feet. I can’t do this. I can’t let myself go again. Yet his eyes are just so beautiful and his smile gleams in my face. His ragged hair looks so effortlessly perfect. I need to give him a chance.

“My name is Joss. What brings you to this depressing hell of a place?”

“Well, my parents recently passed away in a car accident... Anyway enough about me, why are you here?” He smiles again except this time I can’t look at him like that.

“I don’t like to talk about it...” Tears begin to fill my eyes.

“Oh okay. Do you want to hang out sometime?” Tears start to pour out of my eyes as if there is no way to stop them anymore. I slam the door in his face and turn my back to it. A never ending flow of tears run down my cheeks. I can hear him screaming and banging on my door asking what was wrong. I just keep crying. I haven’t left this room for 3 months. When I went to school, people would always be whispering about me. Always staring at me like I am some kinda of outcast. That’s why I stopped going. My life has been in this room ever since. I haven’t left. Although that’s the reason I talked to Alex, he can understand what I’m going through. He is going through it as well. Maybe I should let him into my world. I may be able to regain myself again. I lie on my bed with tears still falling by the gallons of my cheek. Happy Birthday Joss. Tomorrow will be the day you get your life back from hell. I will take a chance on Alex tomorrow.

Ding. “Joss, it’s me, Alex. Please come out...” I walk slowly to the door. Like yesterday it feels like a million years pass before I can open the lock. I open the door and there he stands. Right in front of my eyes. “Joss I am so sorry about yesterday. I didn’t want to make you cry. I felt really bad and it made me cry as well. Please forgive me. If you don’t want to hang out with me that’s fine.” Now is my chance to live my life again.

“Alex, it wasn’t you. Ill explain. We can go out for a walk and I’ll tell you.”

“Are you sure?” I nod and smile slightly. “Great. My treat on you.” He smiles and walks into my room behind me.

I walk in to get my wallet and to make my hair. I look at him standing there tall from the reflection of my mirror. He is looking at something. Oh no he’s looking at my sketches. “You’re very good at drawing. I could never produce any work like that. This is just amazing. Where did you learn how to draw like this?” He looks at me and then back at the sketches. His eyes twinkle and are engrossed in my art.

“Thank you. My mother... Um... Lets go...”

My heart is aching. I haven’t talked about my mother in such a long time. She feels so far away from me. We walk downstairs and leave the orphanage. The woman at the counter smiles as I walk out. I guess she’s as happy as I am about me going out after so long. I haven’t seen so many people in such a long time. We enter a Starbucks just across the street. I find a seat while he orders cappuccinos for both of us. I look around. No one staring at me. Everyone minding their own business. I sit there. Alone on a table for two. I think about when me and my friends used to go here and cause such a racket that everyone else would leave. I remember sitting on the couch in the corner for endless evenings with Riley next to me. His arm around me. Alex comes and sits down opposite me. The only reason I am here today is because I have a good feeling about Alex he seems like the kind of guy that will never stare at me in a weird way. He knows how I feel. He is like me.

“ So would you please explain to me why you started crying? Cause it made me feel really bad. Did I say something that got you upset? I’m very sorry if that was the case-”

“It wasn’t you. You just made me think. I haven’t been out of my room for the past 3 months. My parents died and my life literally came crashing down. I blocked myself from the rest of the world.

My friends came to visit but I never let them in. I didn't want to talk to anyone. Yesterday was my sixteenth birthday. I spent it alone in my room. Then you came along and knocked on my door. I looked at you and had a special feeling about you. Like maybe you could release me from my depression. You were like the birthday present I never got. I cried cause you made me think about the way I'm currently leading it..."

"What did happen to your parents?"

"Well..." Tears begin to fill my eyes. "I haven't talked about it is a while. Yet in my dreams I can always imagine their death. They didn't die before my eyes. In ways thats a good and bad thing. Good because it would have killed me to see it happen and bad because I never had my chance to tell them how much I loved them. I dream about their death and wake up screaming and crying... They died. Well were killed. Although I never found out why or who did it. That night at around 12pm there was a loud knock on my door. I ran to the door thinking my parents were home. I jumped out of bed and ran down the stairs to open the door. At the door was an officer in the place of my parents. I asked them what was wrong. He took me outside and told me my parents were killed. I told him he was lying and ran to my house. He ran after me but couldn't catch me. Tears were streaming down my face when I slammed the door in the officers face. I cried the whole night and in the morning another officer came in and told me to pack my stuff and come with him to the police station. I refused a lot but they wouldn't listen. Then they sent me here. The next morning my parents were all over the news. Everyone knew. I couldn't show my face in public anymore..." Tears are streaming down. Alex comes next to me and takes me into a hug. I bury my face into his chest and he holds my head close to his heart. My heart is racing and my eyes are bawling. I pull my head slowly away from his arms. His deep blue eyes stare straight into mine. His finger raises up to my eye and cleans the tears from them.

"Joss, I have a confession to make..."

“What? I haven’t told anyone this ever. I just have a good feeling about you. You’re going through the same thing as me. You know how it feels. That’s why I told you.” I rap my arms around him and hug him again. He picks me up.

“We had enough sadness for one day... Let me take you home. You need some rest. We can meet tomorrow again. He smiles and leads me out of the restaurant.

Ding. “Joss, it’s me, Alex.” I run to the door.

“Hey Alex. I’ll be there in a minute.”

We go sit in the same spot as yesterday. This time with him next to me.

“Joss, I need to tell you something....” There is a look of worry in his eyes. He looks every concerned about something.

“What do you mean?”

“I committed a crime a few months ago due to the rage within me. I feel so bad about it. I just felt like I needed to get my revenge for snatching the ones I loved most away from me. Although I haven’t told anyone. If I do I may end up going into prison. Just like you blocked everyone out, I couldn’t deal with the anger within me. Joss, if I hadn’t done it I would have killed myself instead.”

“What do you mean by instead...?” I’m getting a bit scared. He comes close to my ear and whispers...

“I... I... I killed some people... In my defense I didn’t know what to do with-”

“YOU WHAT?!”

“Please keep your voice down. Please.”

“IM CALLING THE COPS! I’VE HAD ENOUGH BAD EXPERIENCES WITH MURDERERS IN MY FAMILY!” I start to crying. Tears streaming down my face How could he do this? Why would he do this to me?! He comes next to me and puts his warm arm around my neck. I keep crying. I can’t stop myself. Everyone in Starbucks have their eyes on us now.

“Listen I would never do anything to hurt you. I care about you. This is why I told you. I haven’t told anyone. The time I killed them, that was a time I really lost it. Like you said you blocked everyone out. At first I was like you. I blocked everyone out until I finally lost control of my actions and killed. Two. I have always regretted it. I just felt the need to get revenge. The thing that hurt most was that I was with them when they fell to their death. The car crashed was hit with a car going the other way. My parents slammed head first into the glass. I was shocked and started crying. The other two people in the car were injured as well. Yet not dead. I had to kill them. I have always regretted it. They were the reason that my parents were killed. Then I didn’t know what to do. That’s the day my parents were killed. April, 22, 2012. I killed the two people. The same day my parents died.”

“Wait.... What did you say?! April 22, 2012?! THATS THE DAY MY PARENTS WERE MURDERED!” I screamed. I push Alex away and run. Run as fast as my legs can take me. I run into a small dark alley. I can hear my name being called in the background but all I can do is run. The taste of my tears fill my mouth. Alex killed my parents. He murdered my life. He stole everything that mattered to me. He stole my happiness. He stole me. I thought he was the one. The one I could finally open up to. Be myself again. Then he stole that away as well. Not only is he a murder but a thief as well. Suddenly Alex appears in front of me. “Leave me alone! I want you to leave. Please. Go. I’m calling the cops on you! You deserve to go into prison where you belong for stealing my life away from me.” Tears pouring out of my eyes.

“Joss, please listen to me. Yes, I did kill your parents... Although let me explain why. ”

“No and I will never. Never will I give you that chance again. I trusted you. I thought you were the one. You broke my heart like everyone else. Except you were the reason I became like this. Always a barrier in front of me. While you couldn’t think you took away what was most important to me. My life. My parents took away your parents as you say. Although there’s one problem with that

theory. My parents never drank! Did you know who you were killing?! Did you just kill anyone you felt like!”

“I know Joss, I made a mistake. I’m sorry. It was stupid on my side. I couldn’t think straight-”

“LEAVE ME ALONE!” I run away again. I call the cops and tell them all about Alex and how he murdered my loved ones. I run to my room. Slam the door shut and just sit there and cry. Now I know what it means by all time low. I need to stay strong. I need to stay myself. Moving on is the only way I will ever live a happy life again. I need that or else I’ll end up like Alex going insane and battling my inner motions. I can’t ever go back to where I was. Like that I will never live right. Alex has showed me what people are capable when they are angry and sad. Life goes on is what they always say. It certainly does. It was difficult, no doubt about that. There were times when I doubted myself; questioned myself through tears asking, “Could I do it?” But no matter what they threw at me and how hard I fell, I picked myself up and got right back into life’s race. In the midst of the troubled rapids I found calm. As cheesy as it sounded, I realize that there is indeed no point crying over spilt milk and that life really does move on. Sometimes, I feel that the meeting with Alex was a blessing in disguise. It had torn me apart, no doubt, but had spurred me on to heights I could never even have dreamed of achieving. Today, I stand proud and tall, on the path to realizing my dream and achieving my goals. I know that my parents would be proud of me, no matter where they are. As for Alex, I’m really not sure what happened. I guess you could say our lives were like intersecting lines, meeting once and then gone, forever. To this day, those ocean blue eyes have become etched in my memory. What doesn’t kill you truly makes you stronger.

By Akanksha Jain