



One More Night 

Prologue

David was stunned to see the young woman again. Only to realise that her attention was directed slightly away from him. She was smiling at the two women who came to the bar a while ago, now waving back at her quite animatedly.

What was I even thinking?

Of course, it makes more sense that her smile was for friends of her own age, rather than a forty year old guy she shared a one night stand with, and probably wants to forget all about.

He chuckled at his momentary naivety before returning to cleaning the wine glasses.

Elena walked to the table her friends were waiting at. Rebecca and Jennifer seemed genuinely happy to see her. Their new lifestyle seemed to be working out so well that their high spirits showed in their attires, in their makeup, in their smiles, and in almost every little gesture.

Looking at them, Elena hoped she was dressed well enough to exuberate at least some amount of happiness. Sure, her white off-shoulder crop top and shiny black pants made her feel pretty good when she stood in front of the mirror earlier that evening. But Jennifer's slick, low cut business suit and Rebecca's regal white satin dress made her feel awfully underdressed. Jennifer's long & slender neckline and the confident show of cleavage made her come off as a modern-day goddess. While the dark floral patterns carefully woven into a spiralling wave around Rebecca's dress, beautifully accentuated the curves of her toned body.

"Wow! You two look amazing."

"Really? You don't think I went a little overboard with all of... this?" Jennifer pointed her two hands towards her suit.

"No, you look like a million bucks."

"Aww.. thank you El", replied Rebecca. "You look quite stunning yourself."

"Thanks."

"So?" The two looked at Elena with a genuine tenderness. "How have you been?"

That's when it hit her. They must have heard about the break up. This was going to be one of those "Let loose and forget that jerk" kind of evenings.

No wonder they asked me to dress up nice.

Elena was sincerely thankful to her two friends for making the time for her. But at the same time, she felt a little guilty about having already executed their idea all by herself a month ago, even if it was quite unplanned.

Suddenly overwhelmed with embarrassment and shame, it took an unimaginable amount of willpower to not look in the direction of the bartender. But even if she could keep her eyes away from the man, she wasn't so successful at keeping her thoughts from returning to that night.

The shameful poses and the lust-filled moans she made, the deeply voracious embraces they shared, the incessant exchange of kisses - every single detail of the night flashed on her mind. But to her own surprise, she also felt a comforting sensation from the memories of their little conversations that preceded all that intense sex.

Still, that only made it even harder for her to look at him when he brought their drinks to the table.

David had no trouble in avoiding eye contact with her, while also being matter of fact about it. He had a feeling she might feel a little awkward around him, and so he tried his best to alleviate that.

Yet seeing her become so nervous, as he served their drinks, did make him feel a little bad.

Well, maybe she should have gone to another bar then.

Pushing aside his rather self-centred inner voice, David smiled at her two friends as they thanked him.

"Enjoy your drinks," he replied.

Having spent over a decade as someone who politely engages all his customers, he instinctively shifted his eyes towards Elena to greet her as well.

She seemed a little flustered at his gesture, but was quick to understand the intention behind it, or rather the lack of one. To his surprise, she smiled back at him. Perhaps the most genuine one he had seen in a while. In a brief second, that smile managed to convey everything he wanted to hear. That she was doing fine now. That she does not regret what happened that night. That it was, indeed, good to see him again.

The relief in his own eyes must have shown very clearly. She immediately tilted her head down trying to hide a shy smirk, oblivious to the fact that her two friends were looking at her rather curiously.

Acting like he didn't notice anything, he headed back to his place. But not before hearing one of them ask her, "Do you two know each other?"

"Huh? Who? Him?"

Elena put forth her best expression game, hoping Jennifer would buy it. But she didn't feel all that confident about her acting skills, as Jennifer always had a keen sense for these kinds of things.

"Yeah, him," repeated Jennifer.

"No, I don't think I've seen him before." She took a small sip from her drink, as though it was more interesting than the conversation they were having.

"Why do you ask?" she pressed on, to show that she wasn't really affected by the question.

After a brief pause, Jennifer replied, "Nothing. I just thought you two looked at each other a little weirdly."

"Heheh.. What?"

"Just my imagination, never mind. Forget I even said anything." As though she had made up her mind, she flicked her wrist twice to move on to a different topic. But then she casually turned her head to take a better look at him.

"Heck, he's probably old enough to be your dad I think."

"Ew.. what are you even talking about?"

"I know, I know. I'm sorry. You're not like that."

"No, I'm not," she affirmed her friend's statement.

A part of Elena was happy to hear how her friends trusted her. That she was "not like that". But, at the same time, she couldn't help but wonder, was she no longer the same person her friends held such high opinions of? Was all the years of good will she had made for herself now nullified, just because she had a one night stand?

That seemed so... stupid.

"Listen, Jen, Becky," she started. "I know you called me here to cheer me up. But I'm fine."

"Really", she added as the two of them looked at her in doubt.

Following a few seconds of silence, the two sighed in unison, and Rebecca answered. "Well, I guess it HAS been a month since things happened. We're sorry we couldn't reach out to you sooner."

"Please," said Elena. "You came all this way, just to cheer me up. I honestly feel... blessed."

"I mean how many people would be willing to do that for each other?"

"Aww... come here you." Jennifer pulled Elena into a hug, and Rebecca quickly joined in.

Taking in the warmth of their embrace, all Elena could think at that moment was – how lucky she was to have met the two wonderful seniors on the first day of her college.

"But to be frank, we're still surprised you moved on. Knowing how you are-"

"What Rebecca is trying to say is that, it's great that you're doing well now", Jennifer interrupted Rebecca before she could continue further. But Elena caught on to what she was implying.

Truth be told, she herself was surprised by how easy it was for her to get over the whole ordeal. She looked at the man who was attending a couple of insanely drunk customers, as he gently nudged them to take a cab and go home.

Was a simple one night stand really capable of having such a strong effect on her as a person? Or did the man behind it have a bigger role than the act itself?

"Still, seeing how we're all dressed up for the occasion, it'd be a waste not to have a good time. So, what do you say?" asked Rebecca, "You, me, and Jen. Just us girls out there, dancing and partying all night long. It'll be a blast."

"Actually, can you just give me a moment?" Jennifer stood up and took her phone out. "There's something I want to check."

As she moved away to speak to someone, Elena looked at Rebecca for an answer. Rebecca shrugged, suggesting that she was just as clueless as Elena was.

A few minutes later, Jennifer returned to the table with a giant smile on her face. "It's done. We're going to Tessa's."

"But that place isn't set to open until next month," said Elena. While she was not a frequent patron of Tessa's back in college, she did find it to be a great place to be at. A safe haven for her to unwind without any worries. So, when a new branch was announced for launch in town, she remembered to mark her calendar.

"Yes, it is yet to officially open to the public," replied Jennifer. "But when you've known the owner for as long as Becca and I have, you know she's got a secret party or two happening every other day for those in her inner circle. So, I called her to see if there was anything tonight. And lo and behold, she said yes. Now, get your butts moving, we have a party to attend."

When one of her friends came over to pay the bill, David noticed that she was looking at him rather curiously. He smiled at her, "Did you like your drinks?"

"Oh, yeah. It was great."

"Okay. Have a nice evening."

"Thanks. You too."

He watched as the young woman returned to the two friends waiting by the door. He felt a little silly, but he looked at Elena, hoping to say goodbye if she looked at him.

And when she seemed to deliberately wait as her two friends stepped out, David had a feeling he was about to get what he wanted.

Just as he had hoped, she turned around to look at him. She raised her hand just enough to wave and smiled at him. He returned the gesture and then, she was gone

For the past month, he had tried his hardest to deny it. But seeing her again confirmed that he had indeed been feeling a little lovesick until then.

Still, all things considered, he felt the brief exchange of smiles and goodbyes was just the perfect closure he needed to get over it.

Little did he know, it was just the beginning.

A Week Later...

Elena tapped her fingers on the table with all the nervousness of an honorary student being questioned for misconduct. The sane part of her brain asked, what she was doing back at the bar again. What was it that she was trying to accomplish?

When she couldn't come up with an answer, she hastily drank the glass of whiskey to calm herself down.

She told herself she just wanted to talk with him. Get some things off her chest. There was no one else sh—

"Is everything alright?" he asked her. "You seem worried."

"Oh... it's nothing", she replied. "Just pondering over something."

"I see, well if you need anything. Just let me know." He flashed his warm, friendly smile and started to head towards the counter.

"Actually," she stopped him. "I wanted to talk with you about something."

"IF.... it's alright with you, that is," she added hurriedly.

He looked at her in surprise. Clearly he wasn't expecting to hear that. But he collected himself quite quickly and said, "Sure. Just give me a second."

He walked up to the bar's entrance and hung up the closed sign.

Wait, he doesn't think I'm here for that, does he?

But, despite her initial worries, her past experience with the man told that she was in a fairly safe place. At the worst, all she'd have to face would be a few seconds of awkward explanation.

"Sorry," he explained as he sat down opposite to her. "I presumed you wouldn't have come here again unless it was something important. So, I figured it'd be best if we weren't bothered."

"Sorry."

"It's okay. Tonight was a slow business night anyway."

He seemed to have taken her sorry as an apology for bothering his business. But she apologised because she wasn't even sure what she wanted to talk about.

"So, what did you want to talk about?" He asked.

As she tried to make sense of the cluttered thoughts in her mind, she positioned herself into a more attentive pose.

"Er... This is kind of hard to explain," she began. "Because I myself am not sure what is on my mind."

"It's okay. Take your time."

"Normally, I'd discuss this kind of personal stuff with my friends and family. But this... I'm sure you understand, it's not something I can share with others. Even if it's with someone close. Or in my case, especially since they are close to me."

"Anyways, about what happened that night last month..." she continued. "I was really surprised by how easy it was to forget about the whole thing in less than a week."

No sooner than the words left her mouth, she realised how poorly it might have sounded to him. But he showed no sign of disappointment or anger, and simply smiled in acknowledgement.

"It's not that you were... erm.. I mean.. I just meant to say that I initially had no regrets about the night. So, it was easy to move forward."

"It's alright. You don't need to explain yourself to me. Also, I know exactly what you mean."

"Right. Thank you." She took another sip of her drink.

A heavy silence lingered in the air. She half-expected and half-hoped him to break it. But he remained patient, letting her collect her own thoughts. On the other hand, the whirlwind of emotions inside her showed no signs of stopping. So, she decided to lay them out as they were.

"I don't know what is the point of telling this to you, but... I think that night was a mistake."

She waited for him to say something. But once she realised he wasn't going to, she dived in deeper.

"That was NOT something I would ever do. And last week, at this bar, when my friends said it out loud, I felt so angry."

"Not at myself, but at them."

"..."

"Clearly, I had changed. And I did not like that."

"I tried really hard, but I just can't shake off the feeling that I've been..." she paused for a moment, unsure if she wanted to finish that sentence.

"I thought I was doing fine. And for one short month I really was. But now, I'm just not so sure anymore."

"In my blind hatred towards that jerk, I feel like I've let everyone down. But at the same time, I also feel like they do not deserve my sympathy for looking down on me, just over the one mistake I did. Which is REALLY stupid because, they hadn't actually looked down on me, because I didn't tell them in the first place!!"

She saw him patiently wait as she pulled herself together.

"It's just..." she finally said in a tired voice. "I feel so alienated from everyone."

"Like they wouldn't understand what was going on in my mind. About why I did what I did. About why I was right to do that, even if it was a mistake."

"..."

"This is the first time in years I've been afraid of opening up to my friends and family. Clearly, if that doesn't prove I'm in the wrong, I don't know what will."

David let out a hearty laugh upon hearing her troubles. So much that he almost felt bad about it. Thankfully, she seemed more confused than offended by his reaction.

"I'm so sorry. I didn't mean to make light of your problem," he began. "If anything, I've heard this exact same concern shared with me over fifteen years ago. And I'm just going to repeat what I said to that person."

"I think you've just come to experience this thing called sexual freedom. It's as simple as that."

It was uncanny how she had the exact same expression he remembered all those years ago on Cassandra. A vague mix of understanding and irritation at how he had the galls to reduce all of her feelings into something so incompetently simple. But, be it back then or now, that was the best he could offer to them at that moment.

"Forgive me for being presumptuous, but what might be possibly for the first time in your life, you seemed to have tried something that goes completely against the conventional way of living. And it scares you that you don't feel so put off by it. At least, not as much as you thought you would be."

"And the more the time goes by, the more annoyed you feel about how okay with it you actually are."

A thousand questions popped inside her head, but Elena did not interrupt him. Instead she tried her best to parse his words into something that would sound nicer in her head. Which only became harder and harder as he continued.

"Whatever justification or validation you're searching for may be... The answer can come from only yourself.

Not me, not your friends, not anywhere else. Only you."

A burning sense of anger rose inside Elena. There she was trying to get a different perspective on her situation, perhaps one of a lived experience even. If not, some form of comfort. And there he was, simply reiterating what she already knew.

"So, what do you think I should do now?" She asked, dropping all pretence.

To her surprise, he gave a straightforward answer.

"If I were in your shoes, I would imagine myself doing the same thing one more time."

"What?!!"

"You said you hated the idea of becoming someone else. But you also find your friends' standards unfair. There is simply no reason for both to be true. Is there?"

"If you'll excuse me for a moment..." He stood up from the table and went to get a drink for himself. Leaving her to ponder over his question.

Drinking his glass of beer, he sat down to explain further.

"What you did is no different from trying out a new hobby, like trekking, or yoga, or cooking."

"People try different things throughout the course of their lives. And inevitably end up being changed as a part of the process. Only in your case, it comes with a sense of taboo. So, it's harder for you to decide whether it is good for you or not."

"And sometimes, to find the answer, you just have to try doing it a second time.

Some people just take that risk and end up liking the change.

While some just let it go and stay content with their usual life, trusting that what they already have is good enough for them.

But here's the thing. It's not like those who try new things always come out liking it.

Sometimes, they end up hating it so much that they never take another chance in their life ever again.

And sometimes, those who only enjoy what they already have turn out to have the best time of their lives.

In the end, it all just comes down to what you want deep down in your heart, and how much you want it."

"Yeah, right." Elena nearly snorted at the absurdity of his answer. "Sounds so easy when you say it like that."

"But it's not like there is any way to know beforehand that the guy I'm hitting on won't turn out to be a creep, a stalker, or a serial killer."

A part of her was surprised by how easily the words came out of her mouth. The real cause of her frustration. But it didn't matter anyway. It's not like knowing the reason has brought her any closer to an answer.

She took one last swipe at the whiskey, savouring the drink as it slowly travelled down her throat.

"Our world is not the kind of place that allows people to safely explore these kinds of things. Especially if you're a woman."

She looked at her empty whiskey glass in defeat. Her mind was in such a sorry state that she did not notice David smiling at her with a knowing look on his face. So, when she looked up at him, she was rather confused at his expression.

And then it hit her, that the answer to her questions sat right in front of her.

In an attempt to show her discontentment over his implication, she swiftly stood up from her chair and looked him straight in the eye.

"Thank you for listening to me. I should probably leave now."

"Okay."

There was no disappointment, or anger, or even the mildest hint of annoyance in his face. Just the same understanding smile again.

She quickly realised that she was going to visit him again, even if she was feeling a little irritated by his unnaturally steady demeanour now.

Sighing in frustration, she said to him, "I need you to do something for me."

"What is it?" David asked. Judging by how the conversation was going, he thought she was going to need another week or so before making up her mind. But that didn't seem to be the case.

She pursed her lips with a worried look on her face. Perhaps wondering if she was supposed to say what she wanted. Eventually she found her resolve and looked straight into his eyes and said, "I need to see how you pick up someone."

"What?" David asked, rather indignantly. That was NOT what he expected her to say.

Maybe it was the tone of his response, but the resolve inside her was almost immediately replaced with doubt. Trying to sound confident, she answered him.

"You say that it's all going to be okay. But the way you speak..."

I can't tell if that's the real you, or if it's just some technique you're using to sway my mind.

So, I need a different perspective to get a better look at you and truly get you."

David sighed in disappointment, before calmly explaining to her the nature of her request.

"Before we go any further, No.

I'm not going to go out there and 'pick up' a girl, JUST to prove something to you.

Also, do you even understand what you're saying?

You want to bring another person into this as some kind of a trial run?

That's just... not right."

He watched her in silence, as the reality of her words slowly dawned on her, before overwhelming her with disgust and defeat.

"Fuck. I'm so sorry." She sat back on the chair, massaging her forehead. "That was a horrible idea!!! What is wrong with me?!!!"

Before she could slip deeper into self doubt, David sat down and held her palm.

"Okay, stop right there," he said. "Nothing is wrong with you. You're just in a bit of stress. That's all."

"Here, drink this." He handed her the glass of water on the table, and watched her drink it in a hurry, as though that would help her push away her fears.

After making sure she was relaxed enough, he answered her.

"Listen.. you say you want proof that you'll be okay.

Isn't the fact that you're able to just be here, and say such a stupid idea so freely, already proof enough?"

A tiny raspy chuckle slipped out of her. "That is true, I suppose," she replied, smiling at the empty glass in her hand.

She looked up at him with a sad smile, as if asking for help.

"Listen," he said. "No one is forcing you to do anything.

And I'm definitely not looking to have any kind of actual relationship, especially with a young woman like you who has her whole life ahead of her.

You do not need a middle aged guy's nonsense in your life.

All I'm saying is... if you want a safe space to explore these things, I can help.

Alright?"

In an attempt to relax her, he gently rubbed the back of her hand in a circular motion.

Her eyes looked straight into his, searching for a reason to go further. And as though she had finally found it, the uncertainty in her eyes slowly turned into a nervous curiosity.

"Alright," She said in a near inaudible whisper. But she didn't need to be loud, for actions were far more telling than ever.

Elea inched closer and closer towards him, desperately holding onto the silent desire that welled up inside her. In return, she was greeted by his lips greedily pushing into hers. Thus, kicking off her second intimate night with this strange man.

One More Night

When Elena walked into David's living room, she found it to be surprisingly minimal, and not in a good way. In contrast to his bar, which came across more livelier, this felt entirely perfunctional, almost sterile even.

She turned around to see him lock the door, and suddenly the state of his house was no longer a point of concern. The loud click sent a shiver down her spine. She realised that, despite all the conversation and reassurance she had had earlier, it was quite hard to simply switch off the natural instincts of safety she had cultivated for years as a woman. Only this time, the tingling sensation of fear was mixed with a sense of thrill and excitement. Not so different from her previous night with him.

As he walked close to her, she unknowingly clenched her fist in excitement. The warm smile that kept her calm all night was nowhere to be seen. In its place was a sharp expression that told her how badly she was wanted by him. The unabashed traversal of his eyes on the curves of her body made her want to tug her shirt to cover herself up, just so she could be a bit more prepared for what was to come. Thankfully, her brain signalled how silly that would actually look, so she simply crossed her arms tightly to give herself a sense of security. A gesture that seemed to have only made him even more bullish.

He placed both his palms around her waist, grasping strong enough to assert his hold on her, while also letting his fingers sweetly trace her back. She let go of her arms as he leaned into her neck and began to shower it with soft kisses. Soon, her hands held him tightly around his broad shoulders. As his relentless kisses on her neck slowly inched towards the collarbone and below, the grinding of their pelvises grew more and more salacious. Any reservations she had a few moments ago were now tossed into the wind. All she wanted at that moment was for her lust-filled body to be satiated at any cost.

So, when he pushed her down onto the couch, she was more than ready for whatever he had in mind.

David looked down at the stunningly beautiful woman seated on his couch. Her nervously excited eyes asked him, "What are you going to do to me next?"

A momentary slip of his eyes showed how the first button on her shirt was not fastened, teasing him with an inviting view of her breasts. That shirt had to go. Right away.

He lowered himself closer to her and began to undo the rest of the buttons on her shirt. With each inch of her body being revealed, her breath became ever so slightly heavier. Finally, he moved his hands to undo the strap at the back of her bra. She instinctively held onto it in the front, to keep it from falling off. But he held her hands and moved it out of the way to let gravity do its job.

With the bra now on her lap, David was treated with a view he would never forget. Elena's embarrassed expression as she quickly turned her face away from him, unable to stop him from devouring the beauty of her naked breasts with his eyes.

Since she seemed quite flustered with his eyes on her naked top, he decided to respond in kind by placing his mouth on it instead. He ignored the sudden gasp that followed, and fervently pushed his lips onto her nipples.

As his tongue circled around Elena's left nipple, she heaved up and down, unable to hold back the little moans that slipped out of her mouth - which only seemed to have agitated him even more. Her nipples hardened and poked out in response, which he was more than eager to suck on.

While she felt herself being unravelled by his greed, she feared how easy it was to get to that moment. How soon she wanted him to turn his attention to a much lower region of her body.

She twisted and twirled as the whirlpool of lust gathering at her clitoris desperately needed his attention. And as if on cue, he reached his hand below to push her jeans and her now wet panties, just low enough for his fingers to get to work.

Memories of their previous night together momentarily played again in her mind as his fingers quickly reached her vagina. She was shocked by how easily her body remembered his touch, but it was nothing compared to how it 'reacted' to it.

Her near naked body now flushing red, her breath so erratic, Elena felt her womanhood getting more and more wet by the second. It was all happening so fast that her mind couldn't keep up with what her body craved. She almost wanted to tell him to stop. But she couldn't. Ashamed, she let herself be taken over by David's presence. This was what she came there for anyway. Right?

And that was when he kissed her again. Only this time, instead of ravishing her lips with a burning desire, his lips caressed her with a gentleness. Slowly their tongues danced with each other, expressing their mutual attraction with an unexpected ease. She cupped his cheeks to kiss deeper and deeper. Before she knew it, she felt soothed. He parted his lips from hers to let her collect herself, a single strand of saliva still lingering between their lips. She pushed out her tongue to lick it off. He answered by playfully sucking on it instead.

She smiled at him after he let go.

"We won't be having sex tonight," he said.

"Okay?"

Before she could ask what his plan was then, he kneeled down in front of her, and took off her pants and soaked panties.

As she sat there on the couch, all hot and bothered, he lowered his head and brought his mouth to her vagina.

What followed was a deeply passionate moment of her inner cravings ignited, and fanned like a fire. His tongue circled over her now drenched walls, occasionally teasing her clitoris with a deliberate pressure to it. As she melted into the touch of his salacious tongue, she was jolted into a shock as he quickly became aggressive. Whatever sense of self she had was now gone. She fidgeted, and moaned as he kept on attacking her senses with the tiniest of movements. Her insides danced to his tunes with ease, contracting and expanding rhythmically as the tension inside her began to reach its peak.

The dark secrets of her heart opened up to her once again, as the sense of how much she loved that moment, how much she **loved** being who she was in that moment, overtook her senses. As the endless waves of pleasure overtook her body, she let out a shockingly loud scream.

"Aaahhnn!!! Aghhnnn!! Ahgnmhh!! Oh my god!!! Don't stop!! Don't stop!!"

"I'm.. ahhm... I'm Cumming! I'm Cumming! I'm cUMMMINGGGGG!!!"

"AGHHHHNNGGGGHHHHH!!!"

It took a moment for Elena to gain her senses. But even as she was coming back to reality, she found it a little hard to adjust to it.

Eventually, the sound of her uneven breath slowly came into focus. She had done it. She had absolutely done it. And it was not to help her deal with something else, but simply because she wanted it.

And it felt so. fucking. good.

Epilogue

Elena slid her pants up silently. She knew David was watching, so she moved a little more deliberately than she normally would have.

She thought about how he made her come three times that night, but didn't ask her to do anything for him. She turned around, hoping to say something. But no words came.

Her relationship with this man was a strange one indeed. So, she wasn't sure how fast was too fast. Unlike their last time together, where there was no need to worry about the next day, it wouldn't be wise to be too careless. Which was ironic, considering how the whole idea of their whole bond was about the freedom to do anything.

"What're you thinking?" He asked.

"Nothing really," she responded automatically, before eventually asking what was on her mind.

"You didn't ask.... Erm.. I didn't do anything for you tonight."

"You didn't have to," he replied. "You asked me to prove that you could feel safe doing this. And I just wanted to show you that."

She realised that she didn't want to push the matter any further, and replied with a simple smile. "Thank you."

She scanned the couch to see where her bra was and noticed it had fallen to the floor. Probably sometime when he was taking off her pants.

As she bent down to pick it up, he said, "Although... there is something I'd like to get from you."

There was no malice or scheming in his voice. Whatever he was about to ask must be a harmless request.

"IF you're okay with it that is." He added anyway.

"What is it?" She asked, smiling at him.

The End

My heartfelt thanks to all the wonderful patrons who made this short story happen.

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