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Creative Writing 315

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Submission 2

The Leaves are Changing

I'm meeting up with Emily this evening to *talk*. She didn't mention what for, but I know it's never a good sign to see the text "Can we talk?". Once I saw that message, I had a million thoughts cross into my mind. Does she want to break up? Does she like someone else? Did she cheat? Was it something I did? What did I do? She refused to give me details, saying it was something she needed to do in person and wants to meet at the park. As I head to the park, I already have some nervous sweats building up underneath my armpits.

It is a sunny day. The skies are friendly and clear with an occasional big fluffy white cloud. Early October and the leaves are changing from green to orange, yellow, and brown; it is a beautiful day. She is sitting on the bench, looking gorgeous as ever, with her chocolate brown hair always looks so flowy and smooth. She is wearing a lovely dark green dress with these boots. Oh, these boots will kill me. I am worried. I don't want to lose her. I stop walking, I look down at my feet and I take a deep breath. A rapid commotion of police sirens starts. I look up and see the cops in pursuit of this blacked-out van, and they're shooting at each other. They are approaching the same street that Emily and I are on. I look at her, and I feel myself already running to her, but I haven't moved. My mind is racing to her but my body is seemingly frozen. Emily stands up and looks in my direction; she sees me and our eyes are locked. The van passes her, and I hear the gunshots, and she collapses on the ground. I can see it all in slow motion; the flow of her hair, the fear in her eyes, and the green dress exploding through the front of her.

A wave of panic rushes through my body, and finally, the fear has released me. I am running towards her. Emily feels so far away. Everything around me is a blur out. My focus is purely on getting to her. When I get closer to her, I slide down to my knees and hover over her. She got shot on her right side, and blood is spilling out onto the ground. My hands are shaking hovering above her. What do I do? I need to call 911. I grab my phone. My hands are shaking so bad I can barely type in the numbers. I put the phone on speaker, and I begin to hold down on her wound. Emily winces at the pressure. I look at her face, and she looks right in my eyes. I can tell she's scared, and her face is pale.

“911, what is your emergency?”

“My girlfriend just got shot. She's lost a lot of blood!”

“Okay, where are you?”

“We're on N Claremont Ave, in the park, right on the sidewalk.”

“Okay, we're sending someone to you now. Keep pressure on the wound. How is she?”

“She's pale. I don't know what to do.”

“Just keep applying pressure. Someone will be there soon. Do the best you can to keep her awake.”

My eyes go back to Emily's face. The color-washed out of her skin, her eyes starting to close. My hands covered in her blood from holding pressure down; I don't know what else to do.

“Emily, keep your eyes open. You need to stay awake, Emily! Emily, do you hear me!”

Emily looks at me and nods slowly. She tries to speak.

“No, don’t speak. Save your energy. You’re going to be okay. Just focus on staying awake.” The ambulance sirens in the distance. Hope rises up through me; she will make it; she has to. In a flash, people are surrounding Emily. It’s a rush, but all I can focus on are my hands pushing down on her body. I can’t let go. Someone grabs my shoulder, and I look at them. They are staring me right in my eyes.

“You did a good job. I can take over now.”

I nod my head once and look back at my hands. The EMT has her hands ready to replace mine, and I move my hands. The EMT is quick to act and pushes me out of where I was sitting. I fall back and just watch them as they take her into the ambulance. Another EMT comes up to me.

“Are you hurt?”

I shake my head; no. The other EMTs are now placing Emily in the truck. The one that asked me if I was okay ask if I want to come. I just freeze.

“Come on, get in! We need to go!” he says.

I just stand there frozen again as they shut the doors and drive away. Emily, please be okay.

Yellow Leaf Tree

I messaged Will last night to meet up with me today at the park bench we always go to, saying we need to talk. Will might think it’s a cruel joke for me to want to talk about this at a place we share together, but that wasn’t my intention. My friend, Kim, said I shouldn’t give him

an ultimatum. Still, I have to know what he wants out of this. It's not like we haven't been happy just the way we are, but I've realized that I need to know that this is going somewhere I feel like we're just stuck in limbo; well, I just want to know he sees forever with me like I see it with him, and if not, then I guess this is goodbye.

Here I am, on our bench in the park; fall is always so beautiful. I know it is just leaves dying, but it shows how beautiful the circle of life really is. I love the trees that have nothing but yellow leaves on them. They stand out and just look like they resemble happiness while they glow in the sun's rays. I hear sirens I look in the direction they are coming from. Are they in a car chase? They're headed this way. A gun fires and I jump up from the bench. I contrarily look down the sidewalk; it's Will. His eyes are locked on mine. The sirens get louder. I feel something hit me. I clench my sides with my hands; I sense my legs give out on me. I'm lying on the sidewalk now. All I can stare at is the yellow-leaved tree watching the leaves fall to the ground. Was I shot?

Pain shoots up through me, and I look down at my side. Will is holding down on me. I did get shot, didn't I? I look at Will's face and into his eyes. He looks so scared and worried. I lean my head back on the ground and look at the clouds; they look soft and fluffy like cotton candy. I feel lightheaded. It's a bad sign when I can't feel pain, isn't it? Maybe it's adrenaline; isn't that a thing you won't feel pain because your body is trying to protect you from the pain, right? I'm going to die here, aren't I? My eyelids feel heavy; maybe I can just rest my eyes just for a second.

“Emily, keep your eyes open. You need to stay awake, Emily! Emily, do you hear me!”

Right, Will, I look at him. I have never seen him make this expression before. I nod my head. Okay, staying awake, don't close my eyes. I need to tell him I love him. I try to speak, and it hurts.

“Uh ... I ...”

“No, don't speak. Save your energy. You're going to be okay. Just focus on staying awake.”

Am I, though? I look back at the tree with yellow leaves. I wonder if reincarnation is real, I think I would want to become a tree, hopefully, that no one chops down. I want to live a long, tree life where I die on my own time. Sirens again, I look down at where Will's hands are; wow, that's a lot of blood... my blood. There's a bright light in my eye; what the hell? When the light gets out of my sight, I realize all the EMTs around me. I look for Will, and he isn't there anymore. Where is he? The pain is here and holy fuck I feel like I must be screaming, but nothing is coming out. Will?! Will! I need you! I can feel myself crying. The EMTs load me into the truck, and that hurts the most. My eyelids are starting to feel heavy again. I look at my arm and have an IV in me—one of the EMTs in the right in my face now.

“It's okay. We got you now.”

I close my eyes. Will

The Yellow Leaf Falls

In the hospital room three months later. Will is sitting by the bed. Emily is in a coma. Emily lies in her blue and white hospital gown. Her brown hair lays over her shoulders. Will holds her hand and places a yellow leaf on her stomach.

“They caught the guys in the van. The ones that you know... hurt you. They are going away for a long time... Your mom came by yesterday to my house to check on me. She brought by my favorite casserole of hers that she makes on Thanksgiving. It felt like having two thanksgiving.” Will chuckles, then his expression gets more serious.

“The holidays just feel wrong without you there. I know we came to see you during visitor hours, but you know what I mean. I just want you back here with me. I swear when you wake up and you feel better, we’re going on a trip to wherever you want. We’ll get our passport, and we’ll head to Paris. How does that sound?”

Emily lays there while her breathing tube makes loud sounds. A nurse walks in, and Will gets quiet. The nurse is checking on her vitals and making marks on the chart.

“How is she?”

“About the same. Emily is stabled with no real change, but she looks good.”

“Do you know when she will wake up yet?”

“The doctor hasn’t mentioned anything, but it’s hard to say. There’s still brain activity, and that’s a good sign.”

“Ok...”

“I’m all done here.”

The nurse leaves, and Will is alone with Emily again. He brushes the hair from her face. He kisses her on the cheek. Then places his head upon her left side. He grazes his thumb against her hand.

“I’m going to keep waiting for you. As long as it takes. I don’t know what you wanted to tell me that day if you were going to dump me or I don’t know even if you woke up and told me you didn’t want to be with me, I won’t care; I’m waiting to make sure you’re okay. I will take it... I won’t like it or want it, obviously, but you deserve everything you want, even if it’s not me. I know I want you more than I ever did before. I want to spend my life with you, and if I was taking that for granted, I’m so sorry. I love you, Emily.”

Will stands up, leans over, and kisses her. He turns around to leave when he hears a moan. Will’s eyes widen, and he whips around. He sees her finger twitch.

“DOCTOR. We need someone in here.”

Will rushes to the call button and runs out of the room.

“Help someone! I think she’s waking up!”

Nurses rush into the room, and the doctor hurries in. They take some tests. Emily’s eyes open, and she starts panicking. The doctor tells her to calm down and takes out her breathing tube.

“Welcome back, Emily. You’re going to need to take it slow, and your voice is going to be sore okay?”

Emily has panic all over her face. She reaches up to her throat and touches it with her hand. The yellow leaf falls to the ground. She tries to speak, but it doesn’t come out right away.

“Wh... Where... Where am I?”

Will moves in next to her. He picks up the yellow leaf and places it in her hand.

“You’re at the hospital, but you’re okay now.”

Emily looks at the leaf with confusion and looks back at Will.

“I’m sorry, but who are you?”