

I was running up the stairs of the hotel as fast as my legs could take me. These guys were right behind me. As I looked back they were inching closer and closer. The stairs came to an end. There was a door, I tried to open it but it was locked.

I pounded on the locked door but it wouldn't ease up. As the two men came closer I could tell that I had seen them before. The door finally opened and I ran across the rooftop. I have to jump; I thought to myself, but I was too afraid. I only had one chance; I had to take it and fast.

I closed my eyes and remembered what my mom told me before she died of an illness; she said that if I was ever in trouble to just think back to a happy time and I could escape from anything. I thought back ten years ago, when I was twelve, the time my mom and I went on a cruise to Mexico and the Bahamas. In Mexico I went snorkeling, seeing the fish swim underneath me, I felt like a mermaid.

My eyes popped open and scanned the rooftop. They were still coming at me; I guess the door was easier for them. I took a deep breath, ran towards the ledge and jumped to the other rooftop. The jump made me feel like I was flying, but that ended when I landed on the ground with a huge thump. My arm was bleeding hard; I didn't know why my arm was bleeding until I looked down. I landed on broken glass.

It was a struggle to open the door of the other hotel. I managed to open it, but the pain in my arm was excruciating. I looked back at the rooftop were the two goons that were standing there in disbelief. I, myself was also in disbelief, how could I possibly have made an eight foot jump? Then I remembered my mom again, I looked up and said thank you.

I walked into the lobby. The smell of lemon cleaning polish was overpowering, (it had been because of the marble floors). The manager walked over to me, scared was written all over his face. He asked if he could help me with anything. "A ride to the hospital would be nice," I said trying to smile, but the pain was becoming more unbearable.

I could feel the bone in arm popping out. It made me feel sick, but I couldn't stop thinking about it.

Passing the stores and the shops it was taking a longer time to get to the hospital than I expected. I asked the driver where we were going but once he turned around; it was something I wasn't expecting. It was one of the two men who were chasing me.

The car came to a stop and I jumped out. I felt like I was in a tornado because of the way the rocks and dirt spun as I rolled. I could see the taillights beaming at me clearly because of the night sky. The car stopped and I saw a door fly open.

I got to my feet, and started limping away. "Great!" I yelled. "Just great. First my arm, now my leg." I looked around for a second I was on West Gate and Holden Drive. Melissa lives on this street I thought to myself. Melissa was my friend who is about five years older than me, from when I worked at the shoe department. But I forgot her house number.

I started running/jogging but I didn't know where I was going. It was too dark to see the address, even if I did know it. Then I remembered that she drove a red convertible with one black stripe going across the sides. And with that I was on my way to hunt down the car.

As I ran, thoughts of the time she had a barbeque party a couple years back went through my head. It was in the summer around mid July, it was the first time you got to see your co-workers wearing something casual like khakis or summer dresses instead of suits, pencil skirts and blazers.

Melissa's boyfriend had made hamburgers, hot dogs, and veggie dogs for vegetarians. Everyone was laughing and having fun. That's when I met Roger. He was very sweet and kind until a couple of months passed when I caught him cheating on me with this pinched face girl named Katherine. I broke up with him immediately after that.

Roger then became obsessed with me. He would send flowers to my work, come to my house to see if we could talk things out and maybe go catch a bite to eat. But every time I would say no, he would call and text me non-stop. Finally I decided to file a restraining order against him saying he couldn't come within eight feet of me, and I changed my number.

After the restraining order, he became even more obsessed. I would see him spying around the corner of a building, hoping I wouldn't be able to see him but I did. The way his eyes burned with hurt, but I couldn't let him get the best of me. Pretending not to see him, when he kept leaving clues behind. Stuff like leaving little notes around at places I'd usually go to.

I couldn't take it anymore after that. I brought a ticket to Brooklyn, New York where my sister lives to see if she would have any advice about my situation. But it was a waste of my time when all she told me to do was to just leave it alone and he'll go away. So I told her that I would give it a shot, but it didn't work out like I wanted it to. By the time I got back in town it had gotten out of hand.

There were missing signs everywhere, with a picture of my face on it and a reward of \$10,000 dollars. A random girl ran up to me screaming "I found her," repeatedly.

"I'm not lost," I said trying to untangle her arm from me "I've never been lost!"

"Well, what about this poster," she said while pulling a poster down from a light pole.

"I have no idea where those came from, I was in Brooklyn for this whole week." My phone started ringing as soon as I got done talking. I looked down at the caller id; it was Melissa.

"Chanel, is that you?" Melissa's voice was shaking so hard while she was talking.

"Yea, Melissa what's going on? Why are there so many posters with a missing sign and pictures of me on it?"

"I, I think it's Roger." My heart dropped, my stomach ached I hated hearing that name.

"Why can't he just learn to leave me alone?" I was walking, when I saw multiple police cars in front of my apartment.

"I don't know, but don't go home," she said with panic in her voice.

"Because of the police cars? Roger? Yeah, I already saw them. Can I come over to your house until I can figure something out?"

"You can stay as long as you want."

My mind snapped back to reality and I was still searching for Melissa's house. I finally gave up and knocked on a random door. The door open and this really cute guy came to the door.

"Hello, can I help you?" He had a British accent and bright blue eyes that had me lost.

"Miss?" I snapped back to reality, I positioned my body towards the right so he wouldn't notice my arm, which was still filled with an unbearable pain.

"Yeah, I was wondering if you knew a Melissa who lives on this street?"

"She's my neighbor actually. Did something happen to her?"

"No, I just kind of forgot where she lived and wondered if you knew which house it was," I looked down, feeling stupid.

“Hey, no worries she’s to the right,” he pointed to the building that had a bunch of Halloween decorations. I had forgotten how much of a big deal she made out of holidays.

“Oh, well thank you for your help,” I started down the steps. A thousand thoughts were racing through my mind. Did I tell him my name? He probably thinks I’m stupid right? I mean if I’m suppose to be friends with her shouldn’t I know where she lives? Did he notice my arm? What about my limp? I heard footsteps coming from behind me, then felt a tap on my shoulder.

“I didn’t happen to catch your name,” he said with a shy smile.

“Chanel, and you are?” I said as I stuck my hand out.

“Gavin. Nice to meet you,” he reached his hand out and grabbed mine. His shy smile turned into an outgoing smile.

“It’s nice to meet you too,” I gave him a smile back. We were standing there for a minute but it seemed like forever just staring at each other. We weren’t talking, but it wasn’t awkward.

“Well I got to go,” I said while I started to walk backwards.

“Can I at least have your number?”

“Depends on if I can have yours?” The smile returned on my face and his. I pulled out my phone and handed to him and he did the same. I was smiling the whole time I was putting my number in, then I took a picture and saved it as my contact picture. Then handed the phone back to him. He asked me if I could take a picture of him. After I did, I walked away with a smile on my face knowing we would be talking to each other for a while.

I walked up the steps to Melissa’s while looking at him. Gavin I thought in my head about how much I liked that name and how it suited him well. I knocked on the door and Melissa came to the door holding her baby. I had totally forgot she and Kyle had a baby about four months ago.

“Chanel! Oh my god, what are you doing here,” I just nodded my head down. That’s when she caught a glimpse of my arm. “Come in, come in,” I waved to Gavin and gave him a smile. Melissa stuck her head out to see whom I was looking at then she grabbed my good arm and pulled me in.

“First what’s going on,” she said as her eyes were focused on my arm as she set her baby down in the play-pen “and second, you and Gavin?”

“Well,” I said taking a second to try to found out how to tell her. “First I jumped from a rooftop of a hotel to a different hotel and landed on glass, that’s what happened to my arm,” I

pause for a moment, then continued. “Also I jumped out of a moving vehicle and that’s why I’m limping.”

“Do you think it was Roger?” she said with an uncertain look.

“Possibly, but don’t you think he would’ve given up by now?”

“He gets kind of obsessed with girls, so probably not,” now she tells me, I think to myself. “Okay, now about you and Gavin?”

“Nothing, we were only talking for like ten minutes while I was looking for your house.” I looked over at her baby, who was playing with a stuffed-animal Elmo. Melissa gave me this look which was her *I know something’s up* look.

“Alright, well we should get you to the hospital.” I nodded and started putting my shoes back on, good thing they were slip-ons. “Kyle,” she screamed.

“Yes Babe.”

“I’m taking Chanel to the hospital, can you watch Annabelle?”

“Chanel’s here?” I heard footsteps coming down the stairs. “How are you?” he asked while giving me a hug. The pain started coming back into my arm.

“Good, thank you. How about you?”

“Good, expect not getting any sleep,” he said with a wry smile.

“Yea, you look tired but I guess that’s what a baby will do to you.”

“Speaking of which, when are you going to find a guy to settle down with,” he asked while smiling.

“Now you sound like my parents,” I said letting out a small laugh. “And—“

“She has,” Melissa said cutting into my sentence, and then winked at me. I shook my head and gave her a strained look, trying to get her to not bring him up.

“Really? Who?” he asked, he face expression was excited, concerned, and suspicious.

“Gavin.” A shy smile appeared on my face but I quickly made it disappear.

“Really?” he said again, trying to look me in the eyes. “He’s a really nice guy. I’ll talk to him about you.”

“Honey, that’s a great idea. Right Chanel?” she was trying to make me agree with her. So I did.

“Yes, you would do that for me?” I looked at Kyle and he gave a smile, which was his way of saying yes.

“All right Miss Sarcastic, let’s get you to the hospital.” She was pulling me out of the door. Kyle yelled good luck.

As we were pulling out of the driveway, I looked at Gavin’s house and smiled. I saw Melissa looked at me but didn’t say a word because she knew what I was thinking.

“Alright, stop thinking about living in that house with mini Gavins running around.” A crooked smile came across my face. Melissa knew me, ever since she first saw me in the shoe department.

“Stop it!” I yelled while laughing. “Let’s just get to hospital,” she nodded. I noticed Melissa didn’t live that far from the hospital, which would come in handy when Gavin and I get together because of how much I get injured. I shook my head trying to escape the thought that was entering my head. I turned toward the driver seat noticing Melissa had left and was standing by the passenger seat waiting for me to get out.

She smiled. “Thinking about Gavin again?”

This time I didn’t dare to lie. “Yea,” I said my voice lowered into a whisper. She laughed and told me not to worry. Walking into the hospital made me feel like I needed someone else, like Gavin. Why did he keep popping into my head? I thought to myself. I feel like I’m in middle school and crushing on the captain of the soccer team.

Melissa explained to a passing by doctor that we needed Dr. Green for a Chanel Westwood. I couldn’t speak; I was mute while thinking about him. I guessed Dr. Green had told us to meet her in room 102, because Melissa was dragging me by my good arm. When we made it to the room I sat on the examining table and Melissa started snapping her fingers in front of my face. I blinked twice, her fingers were way too close.

“Yes,” I said while grabbing her hand.

“Snap out of it,” she said looking me straight in the eyes. “You seem like you’re in a high school crushing phase.”

“I’m sorry for thinking this could be the guy to help me forget about Roger,” I yelled at her frustrated. She didn’t say another word; instead she nodded and sat down in a chair. I felt bad, but I couldn’t get the words to come out my mouth. I was sorry, but I think she could tell from the way I looked at her.

“How are we today,” Dr. Green said walking into the room holding a clipboard, ready to write down notes.

“Not so good,” I said taking off my jacket. “I kind of had an adventure today.” She walked over to examine my arm.

“All we’re going to do is put you in surgery.” She tried to put on a comfortable smile, but it wasn’t working.

Surgery? I think to myself. I’ve never had surgery before let alone stayed overnight in a hospital.

“How long will I have to be in the hospital?”

“I’ll put you in surgery now and you’ll be out sometime tomorrow.”

“Overnight?” there was a little bit of sadness mixed in with scared in my voice.

She let out a chuckle. “You’ll be okay, but you can’t do anything with your arm for awhile.” Dr. Green went into her cabinet and grabbed a small bottle of anesthesia. I blacked out after that.

My eyes fluttered open and closed as I was trying to wake up. During those few seconds of my eyes fluttering all I saw was complete whiteness, and maybe a person but I wasn’t quite sure. Everything came into full clarity; I saw a TV plastered on the wall, sink area, bathroom, and a person sleeping. Melissa, I thought to myself. Then I looked down at myself, I was wearing a hospital gown with a bracelet around my wrist. The bracelet said *Westwood, Chanel A. 6/20/1990*.

I heard a knock at the door then I heard the door open. A group walked in with balloons and stuffed animals. I saw everyone I knew. My mom, dad, Melissa with Annabelle in her arms, Kyle, and a bunch of people from work. I smiled, I was glad everyone came here to see me. But then I thought if Melissa is standing right in front of me, who was sleeping. I turned back to the place by the windows; the person had a grey sweatshirt and a pair of sweatpants on.

Kyle walked over to the person and woke them up. It’s a guy I could tell by the way he jerked awake and rubbed his eyes. As I took a closer look I couldn’t believe he was here. He looked up at the group of people staring at him and smiled. Then he looked at me and jumped to his feet and walked over to me. A huge smile formed across my face. It was Gavin.

He grabbed my hand and that's when everybody left the room. "I'm so glad you're okay," he kissed me on the forehead, and then smiled. I couldn't say anything; I was still in shock that he had actually come. "What's wrong?"

"Nothing, I'm just surprised you came," I let out a small giggle. "I mean we've only known each other since yesterday, it hasn't even been 24 hours."

"Well I guess when you like someone you would do anything for them."

"I guess but it's still --," I thought about what he said, and then it dawned on me. "Wait did you just say --."

"Yes I did. Chanel," he caught his breath then continued. "I really do like you, a lot." He leaned over the railing of the hospital bed and kissed me. I swear sparks started flying.

"Aw," everybody that was in the room earlier were standing in the door way with my nurse and doctor. Gavin and I looked at each other and started laughing.

Epilogue

Chanel is now living with Gavin at his house, right next to Melissa's. The day after she got released from the hospital, Melissa threw a party for her. Chanel never saw Roger again and if she did, she didn't care because she has Gavin to protect her now.

Her dad got into a car crash shortly after and didn't survive. She was so broken-hearted that she cried for three days straight. His funeral was held about a week after his death, and Gavin was with her the whole time and that's when she knew he was definitely the one for her.

Annabelle turned one and Melissa asked Chanel to be her godmother and Chanel happily accepted. Melissa and Kyle got married about six months later. Almost two years after that Gavin and Chanel got engaged. And about 4 years later they got married. Their marriage happened on a beach in California. Annabelle was her pretty little flower girl, Melissa was her Maid of Honor, and Kyle was the person she picked to walk her down the aisle

A couple of years later she got pregnant with twins. Isaac was born first and Jasmine was born five minutes later. She was glad to have Isaac first so he could protect his little sister.