Lambaste

by sunshine_kin

Summary

Michael can't take it that Justin is with Brian. Justin feels sorry for Michael and takes the abuse. Brian is oblivious.

Notes

Note from IrishCaelan, the archivist: this story was originally archived at The Brian/Justin Fanfiction Archive. To preserve the archive, I began importing its works to the AO3 as an Open Doors-approved project in September 2017. I posted announcements, but may not have reached everyone. If you are (or know) this creator, please contact me using the e-mail address on The Brian/Justin Fanfiction Archive collection profile.

lambaste 

1. To give a thrashing to; to beat severely.
2. To scold sharply; to attack verbally; to berate.

I

He sits still even though his left cheek stings. Michael is, after all, right handed.

So off his hand goes again, Justin is thankful "Little Mikey," endearing name and all, suits his strength well. There wasn't much then, and there isn't much now. Justin doesn't go to the gym often,
but he's *still* a hundred percent certain he can lift or push or press twice as much as The Mr. Novotny.

Yet he swears Michael is getting stronger. Convinced he has somehow begun perusing through Ben's old workout books and trying a few for himself. See if he can build up some strength and hurt Justin just a tiny bit more than last time. Michael is, after all, very weak.

Once, once, once, which makes it thrice, Michael pushed him as he fell over the back of Brian's loft steps leading to his bedroom. Michael scrambles up the steps and kicks him sharply in the ribs. Justin curls himself into a ball and rolls away trying to get up. Once he's up he'll be alright, but damn, Michael kicks a hell of a lot harder than he slaps. Sometimes he'll get in five or six kicks before Justin begins coughing up blood. After that, Michael will stop, spit on his face, and calmly walk out of the door without turning back to see Justin clutching his side in pain crawling towards the bathroom.

Staring straight ahead without meeting Michael's eyes, Justin suddenly realizes that the chair has fallen from under him. He looks up in surprise to see a wicked smile on Mikey's face under cold unforgiving eyes and a foreign object careening towards his face. His head moved back instinctively hitting the leg of the table, hard. Something wet was on his neck; probably blood.

He tries a new tactic and closes his eyes, (very dangerous around Michael) and slumps to the ground stilling his breathing. Michael leans in close until Justin can feel every hair on his body pricking upwards, and a sick malicious whisper, "Nice try, but not good enough," before soundly kicking Justin in the gut once more. He heads towards the door with a high shrill laugh uncharacteristic of him and chuckles to himself, "He's finally afraid of me. I might be able to *use* this..." before Justin stopped listening to Michael's voice and instead to his own breathing. His breathing is labored and short.

Ironically, he didn't hear the sound of the door rolling shut, only his shallow breathing as it slows to a still.

II

Brian looked out of his office window and sighed slowly. For the umpteenth time, he felt like someone was hurting Justin. His hand instinctively moves towards his phone for a "check up" call, but he freezes midway through dialing, and replaces the receiver. He has to trust Justin. That nothing will go wrong. He smiles bitterly, aching uncontrollably to hear that voice.

He calls anyway.

"Hello?" it's groggy, he's probably sleeping.

"Justin? You're alright, aren't you?" Brian asks worriedly. "I can't shake off the feeling that there's something wrong. Listen, I know you're probably tired and stuff, so don't let anyone outside of "The Family" in, alright? Got it? Justin, you with me?" Brian talks really fast when he's concerned. Just finds it endearing.

"Got it, gotta go, alright? Someone's at the door. I won't let them in unless I know them alright? Well. I won't let them in unless I know them *well.* Good enough for you? I'll see you when you get home. Later." And he hangs up.

Brian does too, after another twenty seconds. But he goes back to work feeling a weight has been lifted from his shoulders and this time, when he looks out of the window, he smiles to the sunset.

III

Apparently it was the wrong thing to say because the next thing he knew, Michael was yelling at him, "Not that it's not my problem right now, but HE IS DEAD. Where has he been the last time I came here? NOWHERE! I've come by almost twenty times these past six months and I've seen him TWICE, Justin. ONE TWO." He holds up two fingers, one from each hand for emphasis. Justin finds it slightly funny, but maintains his cool expression. "And now? I need to see him Justin, I don't care if you're in the middle of your sex games or if he's wearing a pink furry bunny costume. He's not at work, so he must be here."

"Actually Michael," says Justin calmly stifling yet another giggle, "Brian *is* at work. He just called me. I hung up with him when I heard the door. Just call him now and I'm sure he'll be free."

He does, and Cynthia tells him he's been in a meeting for the past hour. He won't be out for a while and to try again later. Michael is livid. His face turns green and his expression is almost bug-like. Had Justin not been scared he might have actually found it comical.

Michael stomps his foot and screams at the top of his lungs in Justin's face. He backs Justin into a wall and continues yelling how he is the most despicable creature to grace the planet and that Michael hated him with passion. That Brian would never be his, that Justin should consider committing suicide right now, and that bat might as well have clocked him dead. It would have made the world into a better place. Especially for him and Brian and Debbie. And everyone else for that matter. Even his *family* hates him. No one wants him, so he might as well just die.

This strikes a chord in Justin and he stands still as Michael continues. When he leaves, Justin is shaken to the bone and takes a warm shower. Brian calls again and asks him if he's alright. He tells him in a falsely cheerful voice that he is, and hangs up.

When Brian gets home, Justin can forget all the things Michael had said, and he can be truly happy. Soon he would crave for those little phone calls from Brian during the day, and usually, he'll sit and wait for Michael to come over. Michael did have a key and he was Brian's best friend, after all.

And on it went for the next three months. Until one day, Brian walked in with Michael screaming and Justin sitting still with tears streaming down his face when Ben had died.

Brian's reaction is slight. He seems to have issues with Michael yelling at Justin and asks him not to do it ever again, but that he understands Michael and if he'd ever like to talk, he's willing to listen. Michael promises never to yell at Justin again and hugs Brian tightly. Brian hugs him back and kisses him on the forehead.

IV

That's when he came by. Justin, thinking that he owed Michael one last verbal bashing, he shuddered as he thought about it, decided to let him in. What he didn't count on was Michael's quiet demeanor. Or the fist heading towards his face.

That was when the verbal stuff stopped completely and the silent physical blows came.

Justin has Brian thinking he is the most clumsy bastard on the planet with all those bruises he's acquired. So Brian sometimes calls to check up on him. Today is no different, "Hi Brian," Justin says with a smile.

"Sunshine. I've got something I want to try. Look in one of the kitchen drawers. If you find it, you
can have it." Brian mysteriously tells him.

"Someone's knocking, gotta go, later!"

"Later, Sunshine. I lo.." but he hears the dial tone and sighs as he hangs up. Brian supposes it'll have to wait until that night.

It's already been another three months since the first time Michael hit him. He doesn't know why he doesn't tell Brian, but he feels compelled to keep it a secret. So he let's Michael hit him and he sits still. Well, until the chair falls out from under him, anyhow.

V

Brian comes home and prepares to scold Justin for not finding the tickets to Hawaii and for leaving the loft door open. He said "Hi" to Mikey briefly before scampering up the stairs. Michael calls after him but he lets the glass door shut behind him as he runs up the stairs, foregoing the elevator. Why was Michael heading from the loft?

He walks into the loft and pauses, in shock. The place is a mess, and out of the corner of his eye, a still leg is seen. He runs toward it and sees Justin's still form having trouble breathing. Brian doesn't know how to react. All he knows is that Justin isn't moving and that Michael was going to die for this. He dials 911 as he cradles Justin in his arms, hoping against hope that Justin would survive.

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