Summary

Around 1900, a ship crosses the ocean, carrying the young brothers Way and their father. But halfway to their destination, the unpredictable happens and the ship caught fire. The brothers are put on a lifeboat by the shipyard, Brian, just seconds before the ship explodes. Separated from their father and the rest of the group, they paddle around for days until miraculously, they find a desert island, just hours before they would have thirst to death. Will they survive on the island? Especially, when just days later the only adult person dies and the brothers are left alone?

A story about survival, sticking together through good and bad, natural love and hope.
**Prolog**

Chapter Summary

Fan Trailer out now! (Careful with spoilers) --> https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HmREZPgXzzM&t=0s&index=4&list=PLEntO54S00xhnETOajAkznM2aSGq7WXQ

**Disclaimer:** This is pure fiction. I do not own any of the characters, nor is any of this true.

This story is already finished and will be uploaded on a weekly base without exceptions. This is my first multichapter fanfic and I think I did a relatively good job. I know that First POV is always a bit weird and cringy to read, but I tried to make sure that you’ll get used to it and that it won’t be so bad after the first chapter, please give it a try! This story is my baby, and feedback, good or bad, is always very much appreciated :)

I created a soundtrack on Spotify, feel free to check it out here (x). At the beginning of every chapter, I will list the respective songs I used when I wrote the following chapter, maybe you’ll like them!

In those 15 chapters, I tried to get all of my thoughts and feelings about various precarious topics out there in hope I can make people understand. This is all I really want to achieve and I’m quite proud of myself for that.

With that being said- lets dive in. I hope you enjoy and stick to the end with me :)
Chapter 1

Chapter Summary

Songs I used when writing this chapter:

Electric by Madrugada
Aftermath by Lifehouse
Best Is Yet To Come by Red
Come Sail Away by Styx

New Fan Trailer on YouTube (careful with spoilers): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HmREZPgXzzM&t=0s&index=4&list=PLEntO54S00xhnEToajAkznmM2aSGq7WXQ

Chapter Notes

Wanting to take a moment to thank my wonderful, busy working beta reader! Feel hugged, you know who you are xx

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Just look over your shoulder

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As we were in the beginning, are now, and ever shall be. World without end.

Chapter 1

The first thing that comes to my mind when I wake up, is that today is my birthday. I know that because I counted 2.083 notches in the palm-bark yesterday morning. Gerard’s birthday was on day 1.895, 153 days ago. The 9th of April, to be exact. My birthday is on September 10th. Christmas is in 106 days, but it’s not like it matters, really. We came here exactly 2.084 days ago, or, to put it simply, almost 6 years ago. What year it is now, I’m not sure. I can’t remember what year it was that we got here but trusting Gerard, it was still in the early 1900s. Gerard was 12 back then, only just started to grow up. I was only 9 and it’s a wonder that we survived for so long. We were still kids then, after all.

Gerard is my brother, by the way. He’s nowhere to be seen when I sit up and stretch my limbs. You’d think to sleep on a mattress made of dry grass, bracken and leaves would be somewhat comfortable, considering the many, many nights both Gerard and I spent sleeping on one, but I don’t think that will ever be the case. I’m not complaining, though. I have other things to worry about.
At my feet sits Robin, our pet parrot.

I smile at him and stroke his feathers carefully. They are really beautiful, a mix of yellow and blue. Gerard named him, saying that one day he wants to write a book with a character named Robin in it.

Absentmindedly, I pick the sleep out of my eyes, hoping that at least today I can see a little bit better than most days. You see, I came here wearing a pair of glasses, but I grew out of them at least 4 years ago. It’s very sunny and bright today though, so I’m not hoping for much. On cloudy days, it’s usually a lot easier to get used to the light.

Gerard’s birthday was on a cloudy day earlier that year, and honestly, it’s way more important to me to see better on his special day rather than to see a little better than usual on my birthday. I don’t care about my birthday much, but I always cared a lot about my brother’s. And it’s not like I’m blind or anything, it’s just hard to see something in the distance and my eyes hurt after a while when it’s really bright outside.

On days like today, I’m brutally reminded of how much I miss my mother, my father, and Brian. Brian lived here with us for the first 77 days but then he died one night and both me and Gerard never knew the real reason why. He was just dead when we found him in the morning. Without him, we wouldn’t have survived a day. He was the one who put us in the lifeboat, paddled us here and taught us how to survive on a desert island.

He taught us how to fish, how to make a fire and how to make knots with reed and how to build a roof out of bamboos. He told us that we would die if we’d drink too much water from the ocean and how important it is to take care of our teeth. On some days, he would ask Gerard for a walk without me, saying that I’m not big enough yet to know some of the things he would tell my older brother. I never understood what he meant by this, but maybe someday I will. The only thing I noticed was, that sometimes, Gerard would look upset or perturbed after they came back from their walk but he’d never tell me why, no matter how many times I asked.

It was always important to Brian that we took a bath on every second evening and that we sang together when we sat around our fireplace. He said that music is something very important in life and that we should sing as often as we could. One of the most important things he told us was, that we always needed to take care of each other, no matter how old we got.

It’s my fault that we got here in the first place, though Gerard says that’s not true and that no one is to blame.
It was on a rather ugly day when my mother finally gave me and Gerard the permission for our father to take us with him on one of his journeys. Gerard didn’t want to come at first, saying that he’d rather want to stay at home but finally gave in when I said that I wouldn’t go without him and knowing how much I wanted to go, he couldn’t say no in the end. He could never turn a single one of my wishes down and still can’t to this day. Our journey started in the Atlantic Ocean, or so father said, and the plan was to get to a country called Australia. We sat on the deck, my small legs curled around Gerard’s middle from behind and my chin propped on his shoulder while he was painting something with the street chalk father allowed him to use after hours and hours of begging. I remember looking up from his creation on the ground for a second and I caught our father looking at us with both a smile and something like uncertainty in his eyes. I wanted to ask him why he was looking at us like that when I heard a loud noise. I remember that I thought that something probably exploded deep down in the ship and I wished that I was wrong with my assumption.

I wasn’t, though. And it was then, in the middle of the South Pacific, that our ship caught fire. It was so sudden, too sudden and everything happened very fast from then on.

Gerard stood up so fast that he accidentally caused me to fall on my back, the chalk falling to the floor with a clinking sound. He pulled me up with his chalk-dusty hands in panic and screamed for help. Brian, the shipyard, came and grabbed us both painfully on the wrists and dragged us in one of the lifeboats, jumping in right along with us. Everyone was screaming and I started to cry when our boat hit the water beneath us. Gerard put his arms around my middle and told me to cover my ears, so I did. A moment later, I heard another loud ‘poof’ and when I dared to look up, the entire ship was on fire and all we could see was smoke and nothing but smoke for what felt like hours. We screamed for our father, but his voice fainted a little more with every second and soon, we were alone, out on the ocean with nothing but the clothes we wore. I fell asleep sometime after, exhausted and with tears streaming down my face and when I woke up, Gerard was right there, stroking my hair and the spots behind my ears where my glasses sat a bit too tight and was probably smearing red chalk all over my face, matching his look fairly well. While I was out, Brian had spotted a few boxes floating on the surface of the water that must have fallen out of the ship, and got them on the boat with us.

Inside was nothing interesting for kids but still very useful, as we learned later on. Inside one box were only women’s items: 3 dresses, a hat, 2 blouses, some old jewelry, an umbrella, a hand mirror and a hairbrush. I assumed that these were the belongings of Mrs. E. Pines who was on the ship with us.

Box two held a scissor, a pan, a big and a little saw, a pack of kitchen knives, a few empty papers and an ink pen, at least 5 large linen-cloths, a music box that played 4 different songs and an old book.

In box number three, that was also the smallest, was a bunch of yarn, some more linen, and a few
empty jars.

We got thirsty very fast and after the first day and night, I lost all hope that father would come find us. The nights were cold and the days too warm. Brian told us stories about Fairies, Dragons, and Goblins and encouraged us to hold on just a little longer. And then, on the second morning, we saw it. Our new home. Of course, we didn’t know that this island would become our home for many years, but we were so relieved to see land, that we didn’t care. I squeezed Gerard’s hand and he smiled at me, brushed his thumb over my eyebrow with his other hand and pulled me in for a hug.

Brian hoisted the sails and paddled us on land and helped us out of the boat, making sure that it wouldn’t drift away. It smelled wonderfully sweet of flowers, soil, and nature. After exploring for a while, we found a little creek and just jumped in, not caring about our clothes, and drank as much as we could. Brian found some bananas and we ate them so fast that we almost forgot to chew.

During the first day, we brought our few belongings on land and started to settle for the night. That was the first time Brian taught Gerard and me how to use the right items that nature offered to build a shelter. It wasn’t much, but that night, we fell asleep on the warm sand with full bellies and with some kind of roof over our heads.

The next morning, Brian knocked the first notch into the bark of a tree and started to collect wood for a signal fire, in case someone would come by.

No one ever did.

As the days passed, Brian taught us all the things we needed to know so we could survive out here. We learned to appreciate nature, explored the island that actually seemed a lot bigger than when we first saw it, swam in the ocean, ate together and told us stories from home. All in all, it was an okay life.

Until the day Brian died and it was just me and my brother, all alone, too young and scared.

That evening, as Gerard held my fragile little body close to his after we buried Brian’s body and placed flowers on his grave, I asked him to ‘move out’ with me, because I just couldn’t stay there any longer. I felt really sorry for him at that moment because I knew how much he hated to see me like this, but he understood and just allowed me to cry, probably spilling a few silent tears himself when I wasn’t looking. At the end of the next day, we had packed all our belongings back into the chests as well as bananas and other fruits, had put on our most decent clothes and were in the lifeboat once again.
Gerard had gained some muscles over the last months due to relatively hard work and was strong enough to paddle us around the island for a while until we found our new home. It was a beautiful little beach, surrounded by the same nature that we had gotten used to on the other side of the island. Later, we even found a little cave not too far from the beach, a clean river that marched in a rather small waterfall and a lake surrounded by large rock walls. I’m not sure how you would call the nature behind the beach, but Gerard says it looks like some sort of jungle or rainforest, judging by the many adventure and nature books he read back home.

In little digits, I notched the number 77 in the bark of a palm tree and then notched in the first new line that marked our first day here. I just stood there for a moment, staring at the number and wondered how many more mornings I would repeat that action. Gerard then came to me, tapping me on the shoulder and when I turned around, I saw Robin for the first time.

“He just sat down on my shoulder, just like that, Mikey! I’m gonna call him Robin.” And from then on, we had a new companion.

Robin returned every day after that and we taught him a few sentences that he would repeat in the funniest voice and sometimes inappropriate situations. My favorite word that he can say is ‘Gee’, simply because I love Gerard and because Gee was my first word when I started to speak as a toddler. He really made me smile for the first time in days and does so until now.

117 days after we left the other side of the island and came here, we officially opened our new home. And it really was a home. A house, that offered us shelter and safety and happiness, that grew even bigger over the years and more professional thanks to the skills we taught ourselves as we got older, stronger and taller. We built 4 rooms and a basement where we stored food and water and even added a patio later on. We built the walls out of bamboos and other wood we found, added windows and even a swing and for one of Gerard’s birthdays, I made him a hammock that he immediately spun between two trees outside our house with a huge smile. We had our own bedrooms (much to my disliking, but Gerard felt that it was about time that we slept in separate beds) and tried to somehow build furniture with the materials that were available.

Though it wasn’t the way I wanted it to be, I had to admit that I liked my bedroom. It is on the second floor next to Gerard’s, which I’m glad for. We decided not to add doors just in case there was a fire or something and we needed to get out really fast. Gerard let me have the old music box that we found in one of the chests. It is probably my favorite item on this island.

It plays a song that I remember from home but I don’t know the name of it, only that it has got something to do with a rainbow.
Gerard asked me if he could keep the papers and the ink pen so he could draw pictures and I let him, remembering how much he liked to draw back home and even in the second as our life as we knew it, ended and changed forever. He’s really talented, too. I always loved the pictures he drew and the stories behind them. Most of all, he preferred to draw characters that ‘saved the world’ with the reasoning that one day, he wanted to save the world too.

We divided the few clothes and linen we had among ourselves. Gerard used to be a little chubby and therefore, he gave me all the women’s clothes, saying I was all thin and bony and kept the others for himself. I didn’t even mind that my robe from then on contained dresses and blouses. Of course, they wouldn’t fit yet, but I grew into them over the years. No one would see me anyway besides him, and he never made fun of me. He lost a lot of weight since then but refused to take the dresses from me, saying that they suited me.

I choose between four outfits every day. My favorite is a dress that isn’t even really a dress but more like a long t-shirt. It used to be bright yellow with light red hems, but as the years passed, it got a little dirty and is now the color of mustard.

My second favorite piece is a light-blue blouse that is just long enough to cover my butt and some of my upper thighs. It has holes in it now and the seams are pulling threads but I don’t mind about that. Number 3 is a simple armless, tight-fitting, white dress that ends just over my knees. The last outfit is a combination of middle-long puffy white underpants and a loose leather top that I made from one of the dresses that had a broken zipper. I grew out of it a little so it barely covers my bellybutton, but as I said, there’s no one here to make fun of me and Gerard just smirks lopsided whenever he sees me in that outfit.

On days when it’s really sunny and I need a shield for my eyes, I wear the hat that came with one of the boxes. It has a ribbon to tie under the chin which is actually pretty useful, especially on windy days.

Gerard’s robe contains a brown pair of underwear that I made out of the rest of the brown leather dress and a white button-up that is still a bit too big for him. He also has another few pairs of white and brown loincloths that he combines with a dark-blue vest that suits his dark brown, almost black, hair.

Every time I tell him that he needs to cut it, he gets mad at me but when I tell him how much I like his hair shoulder-length, he surrenders and lets me cut it. My dark blond hair just ends over my chin but since I have some waves going on, it looks a little fuller than his. Over the years, I taught myself a few braiding techniques and sometimes, Gerard lets me braid his since it’s longer and much more fun to play with. I have the habit of curling my bangs behind my ear. I probably copied that from Gerard since he’s the one who started it when his hair got longer.
When I was lazy on the day before and didn’t do the laundry, we borrow clothes from the other, but since I’m usually very consistent with my chores, it hasn’t happened too often. Not that either of us minds sharing clothes; we did that even when we were back home, much to our mothers complaining.

As I said, Gerard has lost his chub, though he is not nearly as thin as I am. During the years and due to the tasks he does every day, like fishing, cutting bananas and coconuts off the trees or repairing something on the house, he has gained muscles. Though they’re only really visible on his upper arms and maybe his shoulders and back. But he’s really strong and does most of the hard work. I’m responsible for tasks like cooking, laundry or keeping the house clean. I’m not weak or anything, not at all actually, but the only visible muscles are the ones on my upper arms and maybe a little on my tummy and flat chest.

The sun burns down relentlessly almost every day, yet Gerard is really pale. I’ve got a little tan going on though. Gerard hasn’t grown much since last year but I had a growth spurt not long ago and now I’m almost as tall as him. I’m sure I’ll overtower him in a few months and the thought makes me smirk to myself.

Robin makes a sound and startles me, pulling me out of my little bubble of thoughts and memories.

“Have you seen Gerard?” I ask him, though I don’t expect an answer. He knows our names, the few sentences we taught him and sometimes laughs along with us, but I don’t think he understands the full meaning of a sentence. It’s nice to have someone to talk to though. He nibbles on my fingertip before he flies out of my window and I rub at my eyes some more.

Since Gerard is nowhere to be seen, I decide to get up to go looking for him. I tuck the mosquito net that I made from one of the polyester cloths away and walk to my clothe-box. Though I only slept in my white underpants, my skin feels too warm and itchy already and I can tell it’s going to be one of those unbearably warm days again. I decide to wear the yellow dress, since it’s my favorite, brush my hair and braid two longer strands on either side of my head to the back. To stabilize them, I add two clips that I made out of the white shells Gerard brings back whenever he was out diving.

I take a quick look in the hand mirror, wondering if I look like a normal 14-year-old boy. It’s really hard to make statements like that since there’s no one else here to compare myself to.

Sighing, I put the mirror down and exit my room. I jump down the two stairs that lead to the 2nd floor and am immediately blinded by the sun and my eyes need a moment to focus.

The sand is really hot today but our feet got used to it over the years. We haven’t worn shoes since
the day we came here. I place my right hand over my eyes as some sort as a shield and look for my brother. He’s not out swimming, or at least I don’t see him, he’s not in the house nor is he fishing by the reef. He’s probably in search for wood in the forest so I decide to start with the laundry for the day because yeah, I was a little lazy yesterday.

I grab the self-made banana leave basket and collect both Gerard’s and my clothes that desperately need to get washed and carry them down to the laundry station by the water. It really only is a place in the shadows with two big stones to slap the clothes against and a cord between two trees, that are located in the sun, to put them on so they can dry without lying in the sand.

Just as I hung up the last piece on the cord, someone covers my eyes from behind. I smile and feel all warm on the inside because of course, it’s Gerard.

He leans in close to my ear and whispers, “Birthday boys don’t get to do the laundry!”

That makes me smile even more and I cover his hands with mine, putting them away and when I turn around, Gerard pulls me into a hug and lifts me up off the ground a little.

“Where were you when I woke up?” I ask him giggly when he puts me down again but he doesn’t answer my question. Only now I notice the little yellow flower in his right hand. He beams and plugs it into my braided hair.

“Come on little one, I have something for you!” He takes one of my hands and drags me in the direction of our house.

“Why do you still call me little one? You do know that I’m almost as tall as you, right?” I say, trying not to fall. Running on sand is not as easy as it sounds.

“That doesn’t count, I’m still older than you,” he snickers and sounds slightly out of breath when we arrive at the house.

“Wait here!” he says before going inside. I obey and kneel down. I draw a smiley face in the sand and Gerard returns a minute later, hands behind his back.

“I know it’s not much but..here. Happy birthday Mikeyway!” He sits down in front of me so our knees are touching and hands me a piece of paper.
I take it and when I see what the drawing is of, my eyes lit up. It shows me, wearing the light-blue blouse, facing the ocean. I remember that day. It was a few months ago on a pretty windy day and the cool breeze felt very good on my warm skin so I just stood there for several minutes to soak it all in. I had my eyes closed, but he probably didn’t see, since I was standing with my back to him. My hair was totally messed up due to the wind and my blouse kept flying up my thighs. Luckily, I wore one of Gerard’s loincloths that day. Everything in the picture looks peaceful and my heart skips a beat.

When I finally tear my eyes away from it and look up at my brother, I can’t help but throw my arms around him. “It’s beautiful, thank you!”

He puts his arms around me and squeezes a little. “I’m glad you like it.”

“I love it!” I say, and to show him that I really mean it, I lean in and peck him on the cheek.
“Ew!” he squeaks and wipes his cheek with the back of his hand.

I just smile and look at the picture again. He used colors that we made out of shells, blossoms, and other things since the ink pen is long empty. It’s very rare that I get a picture; I think I have only 3 of them in total. Gerard is very sparing with the few papers he owns so I know that this is a very precious present. Sure, he sometimes draws on dried leaves or stones, but it’s not the same.

“So,” he says after a moment, shifting in the sand. “What do you want to do today? You choose.” He smiles at me and I curl my lips up slightly, thinking.

“Can we go out diving? I haven’t been out there for a while.”

You see, we have two reefs. One is pretty dangerous because of the many sharp stones and shells in there and the sea tangs make the water turbid so we mostly avoid that one. The second one though, on the far end of our beach, is absolutely beautiful! Clear water with corals in all different colors, see stars, anemones, big shells that you can’t accidentally step on and lots of pretty, tiny fishes.

“Sure, whatever you want!” Now we both smile all teeth and stand up.

“I’m gonna go bring this to my room, meet you down here in a second,” I say, turning around and going inside. I fix the picture on the wall, remove the flower Gerard gave me from my hair, lay it down next to my pillow and jump down the stairs again with excitement bubbling up in my chest.

“Ready?” he asks and beams at me, already removing his shirt.

“You bet!” I say and start to remove my dress. We’re not ashamed to be naked in front of each other, in fact, we’re only wearing clothes because Brian always said that it is rather rude to run around naked, so we mostly hold on to that.

A moment later, we’re both running towards the ocean and dive right in. The temperature of the water is pleasant, not too warm and not too cold. Thanks to years of practice, we’re both pretty good at holding our breaths for a while and stopped being bothered by the salt that used to burn our eyes.

We spend at least an hour diving for shells and sea stars and I even find a few new pearls for my
collection. In moments of sheer happiness, we just goof around, drown the other for a few seconds, laugh at something that is super funny, splash or play catch in the water. We have a great time and I’m sure I’ll remember this exact moment for a long while. Sometimes we forget what it feels like to be free, even though we have the entire generosity of this island all to ourselves.

When my fingers start to get wrinkly, we decide that we should take a break and swim back towards the beach where we lie next to each other on our bellies in the sun.

“How’re your eyes today?” Gerard asks me in the evening while we’re having dinner.

“You know,” I say, waving my hand. “Same old, but it’s okay, I’m sure I’ll get used to it eventually.”

I know he doesn’t believe it, hell, even I don’t believe it, but he just nods and stuffs a piece of grilled fish into his mouth.

After a moment of silence, he says in a sad tone, “I’m sorry if today was like, super lame or whatever. I’m sure it’s boring to spend such a special day with your boring bro—“

Shaking my head, I interrupt him. “No, Gee. Don’t even say it. You know that’s not true at all.”

He sighs and drops his head.

“Hey, c’mon,” I say softly, scooting closer to him and dropping my arm around his shoulders.

“You’re my favorite person to spend my birthday with, okay? Look at me,” I say quietly, and when he finally does, I brush one of his strands out of his face.

“It’s just... you’re 14 now, this isn’t the life a 14-year-old boy should have.”

I shake my head once again.
“No, maybe not. But it’s exactly the life I want!” I’m hoping to sound as earnest as I mean to because it’s 100 percent the truth. Everything is okay as long as he’s there, he should know that by now.

Gerard smiles a little then, strokes my eyebrow with his thumb and drops his hand to my shoulder. “Love you Twee.”

Hearing him call me this makes me smile back at him. “Love you too, Gee.”

Gerard chuckles and squeezes my shoulder softly. “Come on, we should get ready for bed.”

He’s just about to get up when I catch his wrist and stop him.

“No,” I shake my head a little. “Can we..can we just stay for a bit longer? It’s nice here,” I say and look at the flames of the fire in front of us for a moment. I’m not quite ready for this day to end just yet.

“‘Course we can, Birthday Boy,” he nods and smiles at me sweetly, bearing all his tiny teeth. He scoots closer and leans his head on my shoulder again. In response, I lean my head on his head and sigh, watching the waves crash on the beach in the darkness while the fire flickers a little weaker as the flames become smaller and smaller.

Chapter End Notes

After a year of working on it, the first chapter is finally up! I'm so happy!
34 days after my birthday, there’s a terrible storm.

We spent the days until that day like all the others so far. We went swimming in the ocean, wandered around the island, teased each other, made new jewelry out of shells and other things we found, searched for food and had a few arguments. There were even two days where we didn’t say a thing to the other because we got on our nerves, which, to my liking, happens too often lately.

No ship came ever by to rescue us. I wouldn’t ever admit it to Gerard, but I’m thankful for every day that passes without a ship crossing the horizon. It’s too complicated to explain the reasons. Maybe it’s because I’m happy and feel at home here, now. I miss father and mother, but on the other hand, Gerard has always been my best friend and I’m starting to feel like he’s the only person I need, though I kind of always knew that. Our parents and sometimes even aunts and far away related cousins told us sometimes that we were unhealthily close for siblings because we only ever did everything together. It was never just Gerard or just Mikey, it was always Gerard and Mikey and therefore, I’m glad that he’s the one who’s here with me.

Only a few days after my birthday, I found myself waking up in his bed. The reason was a frightening nightmare and since I couldn’t fall back asleep but also didn’t want to wake him up, I just crawled in next to him. It’s nothing new, really. I did that more than once in the 5 years we’ve been here.
Gerard never judges me for it or asks any questions. He is well aware of my nightmares. Even when we lived at home and my screams woke the entire house at night and our parents came to my room, it was him who I found comfort in and who I wanted to crawl under my blanket with me, so it’s nothing strange or special. In fact, I dearly enjoy being that close to him most of the time.

The next night, I slept in my own room again but Gerard made sure I was okay before he went to bed himself. There have been a few nights when he couldn’t sleep or when I heard him sniffle quietly and I was the one who comforted him. He never tells me the reasons, but I guess it has got something to do with our situation here. I know how much he probably wants to get away from here.

Anyway. We kind of saw the storm coming. Once a year, between my birthday and Christmas, the weather conditions change drastically for a few days. Well, to us they’re not really drastic anymore because we got used to them, but at the beginning, it was pretty extreme, even for us.

Most of the time, it’s brutally hot and the sun burns down remorseless (we used to cover ourselves in mud as some sort of shield from the sun, but our skin got used to it and soon we didn’t need it anymore) but towards the end of the year, though we don’t count it in months but in notches, the weather changes from hot to windy, joined by downfall and thunderstorms and then to bearable warm until it gets hot again. It’s never cold here, except for when you get too deep into the forest where the sun doesn’t come through the thick leaves of the trees, but the wind and thunderstorms can be pretty unpleasant, especially when you live in a self-made house built out of bamboos and bracken.

And it’s not like we never get thunderstorms or rain during the year, because we do, but it never gets as extreme as this huge storm.

Every year, when we first feel the weather changing and then see it in the sky and the behavior of the nature and animals around us, we prepare ourselves for that very incident. We pack all our belongings and bring them to the cave we found on the 19th day here. Yes, I remember dates and numbers like that, I don’t know why. Maybe because that's all you have left to remember events from the past. The cave is located about 10 minutes away from the beach and surrounded by palms, wildflowers, bracken and other plants and trees. It’s not as big as our house, not by far, but it’s enough for the time being and grants us shelter.

It always hurts to say goodbye to our house, even if it’s just for a few days but we’ve learned the hard way that we can’t stay there meanwhile the storm. During our first 365 days here, we didn’t know anything about the weather conditions and due to that fact, we weren’t prepared when the storm hit. It was in the middle of the night and we were terrified. The roof in Gerard’s bedroom collapsed and hit him on the head. He was bleeding pretty badly and I was scared because it was dark and I didn’t know what to do.
We somehow made it through the night, wrapped around each other and hoping for salvation. Three days later, the storm calmed down and that was the first time we saw the mightiness that it had left behind. Trees and plants were unrooted, the water was nothing but foam and dirt, fishes and turtles lay dead on the sand and many parts of our house were ruined. We also hadn’t seen Robin in days and were shattered.

It took us 5 weeks to rebuild everything and to clean the beach but we learned from our mistakes and soon we promised ourselves that we would be prepared the next time. Which we were every year after. Sure, we can’t do that much about the house situation, but we do our best to steady it and we make sure that we are safe.

The cave is kind of like our little vacation-house. Sometimes if we feel like it, we spent a couple of days there for no reason but it’s always nice to be there and when we come back home, we appreciate our house even more.

A few days ago, when we figured it would be this time of the year again, we started to bring our belongings to the cave and started to work on the house. We covered the windows with big panels that Gerard built out of solid wood. We unhitched objects like the swing and hammock, the shells and flowers on the façade of the house that I put there as some sort of decoration, or our mosquito nets and lanterns, and buried them in a hole we dug in the sand under the basement where it’s most safe.

We made sure to reap bananas, avocados, coconuts and other fruits before the wind would tear them off. We fished and made sure to bring as much water to the cave as we could carry and just like that when we returned for the last time to grab the last few things, it started to rain and when I looked at Gerard, we shared a knowing glance.

Robin never comes with us, but he’s waiting for us when we finally come back and we’re always relieved to see him.

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We just settled for our first night in the cave and are now eating dinner. I can hear how the wind gets louder and the rain heavier and the faint rumbling of thunder in the distance.

“You think it will ever be as bad as that first time?” Gerard asks around a mouth full of papaya.
“Nah, I don’t think so. We know what to expect now and we got ourselves prepared so I wouldn’t be too worried.” I smile at him and he nods.

“You’re probably right.”

“Of course I’m right! I’m old and wise now!” At that, Gerard laughs and throws a banana skin at me.

“You wish, Mikeyway. I’m almost 18 which means I’m much older and much wiser than you.”

“Hey!” I squeak when the banana skin hits me. “You have at least another 200 days until you turn 18.”

“Still older than you!” he argues and grins.

“You’re the worst, Gee!” I mock and chew extra loud to annoy him. He hates when I do that and glares at me, but it’s all in good fun.

When dinner’s over and we get ready for bed, the familiar fear that I always get around this time sets in. Gerard seems to notice and scoots closer to me without saying a word, lays down behind me, tucks his knees in the crook of mine and puts his arm around my belly. I immediately relax and try not to think about the thunder that’s getting louder, but instead focus on my brother’s breath that tickles my neck.

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I woke up about 10 minutes ago, but haven’t yet opened my eyes for two reasons: The thunderstorm got worse during the night,- which it still is, judging by the darkness- the lightning is blinding my eyes even though they’re closed, and I feel incredibly relaxed because Gerard is stroking me, which was what woke me in the first place, I think. It’s the same slow rhythm all over again; he curls a strand of hair behind my ear and then soft fingertips caress my jawline, neck, and shoulder. It’s really soothing and I can feel Goosebumps on my arms even though I’m not at all cold.

I’m kind of familiar with this gesture, but he usually only does it when I’m crying and tries to comfort me. I’m not crying now though. In fact, he’s in believe that I’m asleep. It’s maybe a tiny bit
weird for a matter of fact, but I’m so relaxed and at ease that I’m not even questioning his actions.

Without really thinking about it, I press in a little closer and finally open my eyes. We’re both lying on our sides and he’s looking right at me and yes, it’s pretty dark in the cave thanks to the lantern that is almost out, but I can just make out his facial expression and he looks kind of alarmed when he sees that I’m not asleep anymore. I wonder how long he’s been doing this but I can’t quite bring myself to say the words.

“Why’d you stop?” I whisper instead when his hand stops the pattern on my skin.

“I’m sorry,” he whispers back, sounding a little embarrassed.

Now that’s something I don’t get, he didn’t do anything worth an apology and to show him, I shake my head in a weird angle against my pillow and say, “’T’was nice, you should keep going.”

Without questioning the strange look on his face, I nuzzle back in and tuck my head under his chin. I can feel him shiver a little and I’m guessing he must be cold so, in a quick motion, I pull up the thin blanket that’s trapped between us and pull it up to his shoulder. A moment later, he starts the stroking again, though not as serene as before but still relaxing enough to put me back to sleep for another few hours.

When I wake up the second time, it’s morning. The rain rattles on the roof of the cave and the wind has picked up. The thunder seems to have stopped for now, but it could start again every minute. You never know with this weather.

Gerard is still asleep, facing the wall. He must have turned away from me at some point of the night.

When I sit up, my belly rumbles and I’m quite thirsty so I decide to make breakfast. The cave is not really big but we tried to separate it in two areas: Kitchen and place to sleep. The ‘kitchen area’ is really only a little fireplace right by the entrance where we also stored our food and water. The sleeping area is on the far end.

Not bothering to get dressed just yet, I climb out from under the thin blanket and crawl to the entry, putting the bracken shield a bit to the side with one hand to spy outside. I’m immediately hit by rain in the face and when I look up, the sky is grey and the treetops are waving in the wind. I sigh and close the self-made shield again, and get ready to start a small fire.
Gerard loves cold peppermint tea a lot and it’s also a good replacement for toothpaste. All we can do to keep our teeth clean is to either drink peppermint tea, eat peppermint leaves or chew on a piece of Miswāk that Brian showed us on the 4th day here. It’s better than nothing and really, no one likes morning breath.

After a moment, it’s getting smoky in the little space we have and I have to re-open one of the bracken shields a bit. I really don’t want us to die of smoke poisoning. The sudden rush of cool air makes Gerard shift under the blanket and I can’t help but grin to myself. When the fire is finally burning for real, I carefully put in six hand-sized, clean stones that we collected the day before.

You see, whenever we need hot water, and I mean really hot, we make a fire and lay some clean stones in there so they can heat up. That’s yet another technique Brian taught us. The entire floor in and outside the cave is of massive stone and to our luck, there’s a little pit outside the cave that is about 20 inches deep and as large as two coconuts. I fill that pit with water and when the stones are hot enough, I put them in there.

The water heats up pretty fast and we have hot water within minutes, which is exactly what I need right now for the tea.

When the water seems hot enough, I throw a handful of peppermint leaves in there and mix them with a bamboos stick that I also used to get the stones out of the fire to prevent from burning myself. The fresh smell alone wakes me up fully and is so worth doing this whole process every once in a while. Besides, I want to surprise Gerard and it might be a nice way to say thank you for comforting me last night, or whatever it was he was doing.

Honestly, I don’t care what it was because it was a really sweet gesture and it felt nice.

When I think the tea must be ready, I grab two coconut shells and fill them to the brim. I put Gerard’s aside so it can cool down but I personally like my tea warm and fresh.

After several long moments of drinking in little, careful sips, I decided to wake my brother up.

With the coconut in my hand, I gingerly crawl back to the sleeping area and sit down next to him, adjusting my thin underpants. With my right hand, that is warm from holding the provisional cup, I touch his shoulder gently and try to slowly turn him towards me.
“Hey Gee, get up! It’s morning and I made you tea.” His first response is a little croaky whine but eventually, he turns around and rubs his eyes. He’s still not sitting up though, only yawns and pulls the blanket over his eyes.

“What’s the occasion?”

“Don’t know, but probably still early.” It’s really hard to tell with the weather all messed up like this. It’s like the inner clock is completely twisted.

“Come on, Lazybutt! I’m bored and your tea is probably cooled down by now!” I grin and try to pull the blanket away, but when I start to pull he shrieks, clutches it tight and curls in more on himself.

My first thought is that he’s trying to play so I try it again two more times, but then-

“Damn it, Mikey! Stop! You can’t just do that!”

I haven’t heard him so angry in a long while and I’m so stunned that I let go of the blanket and sit back a little, holding my cup close to my chest with both hands now.

“I’m sorry,” I say, but I honestly don’t think I did anything wrong. I can hear him sigh and after a moment, he pokes his head out from under the blanket.

“Don’t be, just... please don’t do that, okay?” His voice is a lot softer now and I think he sounds sorry too.

Putting my tea down, I crawl to the entry to get his. The fire is burned down and is mostly embers now, which comes in handy for cooking lunch later. I grab his cup and another container with mashed bananas and a self-made spoon and knee-walk back to him.

“Breakfast,” I offer quietly, hoping that this will lighten up his mood. Finally, after a few more moments of awkward silence, he sits up and stretches with the blanket in his lap. He brushes a strand out of his eyes and yawns again. When he sees the tea and mashed bananas, he smiles a little.

“What’s the occasion?” he asks. We both know how rare it is that either of us makes tea, just because
Suddenly feeling shy, I shrug my shoulders and look down at my cup.

“Y’know...you were very nice to me last night and I wanted to surprise you. It’s no big deal.”

When I don’t get a response after a minute, I look up and once again, I don’t know what I did wrong. Gerard looks very, very ashamed and kind of sad, kind of like he did last night when I caught him stroking me. He pinches the bridge of his nose with thumb and pointer finger and squeezes his eyes shut. Now that there’s actual light, I can make out a light blush on his nose and cheeks.

His next words hurt me so much that I can’t breathe for a moment.

“But it *is* a big deal, Mikey. You know, I don’t think we should be so close anymore and, you know...not sleep together anymore.”

When he opens his eyes again and looks at me, my eyes well up before I can stop them.

“What? But you were the one who started to cuddle...” My voice sounds as broken as I’m feeling. “What did I do?”

“Nothing! You did nothing. And I know I did, it’s just...I think we’re both too old now to do this kind of stuff,” he says, waving his hand awkwardly and sounding upset. That’s a lame answer and he knows it. Of course, age is no reason to quit sleeping together.

“What?!” I say again because he makes zero sense to me.

When he just sighs and lets his head hanging, I’m getting angry. All we ever did was to be close to one another. We’ve been sleeping together for as long as I can remember and we decreased it anyway by having separate bedrooms. I can’t just give up the rare nights I have with him, he knows that I need him in moments like this!

“What is it, Gerard?! Do I smell? Do I not cook good enough for you? Did I say something wrong? You’ve been acting very weird lately, you know that? You can’t just abandon me like that and not
give me a proper reason why we can’t be close anymore, okay? I mean, what does that even mean?! This isn’t just about you!”

After my little outburst, I expect a reasonable answer or even an apology, but all he does is shooting me an evil glance and saying, “You wouldn’t understand,” and climbs out from under the blankets, gets out of the cave and then he’s gone before I can stop him.

All I do for the next 5 minutes is to stare at the entry with tears still in my eyes, jaw agape and waiting for him to come back, but he doesn’t. I can’t believe what just happened. The day started so well and in less than 15 minutes everything goes downhill?

Worst of all, I don’t even know why. I really tried to be nice and sincere to him but apparently, I did something wrong, though he said I didn’t. I hate to argue with him. It hurts and makes me sad and angry all at once. And now... Well now he’s out there in the storm and I’ll probably die of worry. He didn’t even put on clothes, he’s just wearing a loincloth and nothing else. Not that it’s really cold, but he could get hurt or anything.

I pull my knees up to my chest, wrap my arms around them and put my chin on my kneecaps, thinking.

Gerard has been acting weird for a while now, though never as bad as today. The first time I noticed was probably a few months before my birthday. He brought back a lot of fish one day and when I hugged him from behind and gave him a quick peck on the shoulder like I often do, he pushed out of my arms and awkwardly played it off as being disgusted by my actions which was weird because he’d never done that before. He kind of smiled oddly though, so I didn’t think anything of it at the time.

Occasionally, I would catch him staring at me while I was changing clothes or relaxing in the sun or even while we were eating. On some days, he wouldn’t let me hug him and he’d act strangely when I did something as random as stretching my body after coming back from swimming or when I tried to give my shoulders a massage when they were aching after sleeping on the wrong side. So yeah, since that day, there were a few incidents like that, but as I said, I never gave much thought to it.

Now and again, he would harass me in the strangest situations but then stop quickly when I told him to go away. Whenever this happens, he’d look a little shocked, almost as if he didn’t realize what he was doing.

I guess I’m no different though.
Lately, when I let my mind wander, I’d catch myself thinking about him more and more, which would be okay if it wasn’t for the weirdness of my thoughts. If I don’t stop myself fast enough, they’d turn into something that I can’t even explain and more often than not, I feel embarrassed if I’m not able to stop these thoughts from happening.

Another thing I noticed recently is, that I get annoyed really fast for no real reason. In those moments, it’s like I can’t control my mood at all and I absolutely hate that feeling. I have more nightmares recently which unsettles me, I get sad too often because I’d think about things I can never have or people I lost and that in return makes me angry because there’s nothing I can do against any of it. Then I’d let my mood out on Gerard, who, of course, doesn’t deserve it, but as I said, I feel out of control in these situations.

Gerard seems to be annoyed with me a lot lately. On some days, I don’t even have to do anything and he’d be mad at me. Especially in the mornings when there is no reason to be upset, yet he’d bleat at me. Sometimes, when I ask what I did wrong, he would give me a reasonable answer and then I’d apologize, but sometimes I find his answer ridiculous and just snort at him.

Maybe today was one of those mornings again? Maybe I molested him without realizing it? Though that’s still no reason to say things like that.

I guess we’re both a little guilty.

If Gerard stays with his decision, I would be truly heartbroken. We don’t even sleep together every night, just occasionally when one of us has a nightmare or we just don’t want to be alone. But in those nights, I need him and I thought he feels the same way. I just hope he’s not having enough of me after all. I can’t help wanting to be close to him.

Sighing sadly, I decided to make our bed and get dressed. Might as well do something to keep me distracted...

Since there’s not enough space to stand up, I get up on my knees, flush the blanked and fold it in half before laying it back down on the sleeping mats. Then I crawl over to the pile of clothes and put on the simple white dress. It might be my upset brain, but it kind of smells like Gerard since he was the one who wore it two days ago and I didn’t see a reason to wash it after since it wasn’t dirty. It’s rare that we share clothes but when we do I appreciate the little stretch in the cotton, because he’s bigger than me, and I like his smell. I quickly brush my hair and braid two strands to the back of my head before securing them with the clips.

Not knowing what to do next, I kneel down by the fireplace and stare at the embers. It relaxes me a
little and I start to pick at my fingers. I just hope Gerard is okay. The wind has slowed down a bit, but the rain got heavier and I thought I heard rumbling again. It’s really unsafe out there and I’m incredibly mad at him for making me feel like that.

I lean my back against the wall and grimace when something sharp pokes me in the back. Grabbing behind me, I immediately know what it is. It’s my old music box. I can’t remember bringing it here so it must have been Gerard. He knows how much I love that thing and knowing that he inwardly does care and wants to make me happy, actually makes me beam on the inside and smile sadly to myself on the outside.

I spin the winding cross and open the casket. It’s playing the rainbow song and I’m hit with another wave of sadness. Music just makes you emotional, I guess. I lean my head back against the wall and promise myself to apologize to Gerard as soon as he’s back. I still don’t think I did anything wrong, at least nothing major that made him say the things he said, but still. Something upset him and since I’m the only person here, it must have been something I did.

For now, I just hope he’s okay.

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The music box has run through at least a dozen times when Gerard gets back.

He’s completely soaked and dirty with sand and mud and leaves, but I don’t care. I just knock down the lid of the music box and throw myself at him, not caring if he wants me to or not. I was dead worried about him the last two hours. I tell him that and squeeze my arms tighter around him.

“Don’t you ever do that to me again!”

After a moment, he puts his arms around me too and I’m so relieved that a tiny sob escapes my throat and I bury my face in his neck that is cold and wet from the rain. I can feel him shiver against me, he must be freezing.

He pulls me in closer and we both say, “I’m so sorry,” at the same time.

“I can’t explain it, Mikes. I don’t understand my own thoughts anymore. They,- they frighten me sometimes and I keep telling myself that they don’t mean anything but...I’m just confused you
know...I don’t want to hurt you.”

He sounds so in pieces that my heart aches.

“Don’t you get it?” I put forth and pull back a little to look him in the eye but keep my arms around his waist as if I’d let go, he’d run away again.

“You’re only hurting me by not wanting to be close to me anymore.”

He considers my words for a moment, but I can’t read his face. I’m distracted by him shivering again and I don’t care about his answer anymore. His health is way more important to me than the two of us fighting. I only now let go of him to get the blanket from the sleeping area. I wrap it around him and make him sit close to the fireplace where the embers are still glowing lightly. I then grab another smaller cloth and start to rub his hair dry and wipe some smudges off his face.

I’m relieved when he lets me and even leans in a little, closing his eyes.

“Where were you even?” I ask carefully.

“Looking for Robin,” he answers.

“Did you find him?”

“No...I wanted to go home, but I couldn’t,” he says, voice croaking towards the end of the sentence.

“But you didn’t?”

Maybe he was there but it was all destroyed? The thought alone is horrifying.

“No,” he says again and turns towards me. I look at him, stilling my hand in his hair and tilt my head to the side a little.
“We always come back together,” Gerard says, looking genuine.

We both smile at each other mournfully and that’s when I know that the fight is over. Not forgotten, but over. At least for now.


The rest of the day goes by relatively well, though the tension between us is a bit strange. There are moments when Gerard won’t look at me or when I have to hold back because I would like to sit a little closer to him. But after all, we’re not fighting anymore, which is the most important thing right now. It would be horrible to spend the next few days in here not talking to each other or worse, quarrel over nonsense.

“Have I ever told you that I like the way you do your hair?” Gerard asks me over dinner that evening. We’re sitting by the fireplace again, eating a grilled mango. The weather got worse again which mostly happens during the late hours of the day and it gets even worse at night.

“Yeah you have, actually,” I say after I swallowed my bite.

“It’s just,” he says and tilts his head to the side. “I can’t remember that the boys back home braided their hair you know?”

I snort a laugh and raise my coconut cup to drink some water.

“Yeah well, they also didn’t wear dresses and hats and jewelry,” I say and chuckle when he rolls his eyes.

“That’s not how I meant it! I was just saying that I don’t understand why they didn’t do it. The girls, sure. But is it not normal for boys to braid their hair or wear girls clothes? I mean, what even makes girls clothes girls clothes? I wore mothers shoes and dresses a few times and didn’t think anything of it...- you know what, forget it, it’s stupid,” he says when he sees my bemused face.

He ducks his head and some of his strands fall over his eyes. I think he’s ashamed again which, anew, confuses me. That’s the 3rd time in less than 24 hours and I’m starting to think that it has got something to with the way I behave. Gerard is one big mystery, seriously.
“Well,” I say and shift around a little. “I bet the other boys also didn’t run around in just their underwear all day long like you do.” I wiggle my eyebrows at him but he just rolls his eyes again.

“Yeah, but that’s just because I don’t have anything else. I mean, why do there have to be certain standards for boys and girls?” he asks, but it sounds more like a statement than a question.

“Oh Gee,” I say and pat the top of his head. “Stop thinking so much. You can’t know everything. If you want to hear my opinion on it, I think everyone should do and wear whatever they want as long as they’re happy and aren’t hurting anyone.”

That being said, I get up on my knees and collect our dishes and awkwardly knee-walk to the entry to quickly wash them in the rain.

When I’m done and turn around, Gerard hasn’t moved from his position against the wall and looks deeply in thoughts. I sit down in front of him and carefully reach out to touch his thigh.

“Gee?” I say in a soft voice. After a moment, he tears his eyes away from the spot on the ground he’s been staring at and looks at me. I try to smile at him a little but I’m still unsure how to act around him.

He sighs and says, “I think you’re right,” referring to what I said a moment ago.

I grin a little smug and say, “Of course I’m right. I’m wise and you’re not, remember?”

He rolls his eyes dramatically and snorts but for the first time in hours, probably even the first time all day, I can see a tiny smile on his lips. It’s not much, but I take what I get.

“Good,” I say and pat his thigh. “C’mon now, bedtime.” I pull my hand away and search in the basket behind me for peppermint.

When I find the leaves, I pass Gerard a few and start to chew on some myself.

While my mouth is busy chewing, I remove the hairclips and card my fingers through my hair in a poor attempt to untangle it. It’s been a while since I washed it, judging by the sand grains that fall out
and the slight grease I feel on my fingertips when I remove my hand. I peek over at Gerard and, of course, he’s looking. I blush and hope he’s not grossed out or something.

Oh well, there’s nothing I can do about it right now and besides, his hair is always a giant mess.

In a quick move, I pull the white dress over my head and put it aside. Now I’m only in my puffy white underpants but that’s okay. I never sleep in more clothes than necessary.

When I’m done and crawl over to the sleeping area, Gerard is still looking at me weirdly and I realize that we haven’t talked about the ‘sleeping next to each other/being close’ situation.

“Uh...” Scratching my shoulder, I look down and sigh.

“I can sleep by the entry if you want me to...?” I suggest, not knowing what else to say. It’s not like there’s much space left where one of us could sleep anyway.

When there’s no reply, I look up and surprisingly find that Gerard is smirking lopsided at me.

“You know I wouldn’t allow that. Come on, it’s alright,” he says and removes the white button-up I made him wear earlier. Did he really just say it’s alright?

“But I thought-“ I start, but he won’t let me finish.

He throws his shirt in the pile of clothes and sits on top of the blanket and then asks in a rush, voice pitched with a hint of anxiety, “Did I make you feel uncomfortable last night?”

I thought I made that clear by surprising him with the tea this morning but apparently, I didn’t.

“Of course not! Is that what you were thinking?”

If anything, I enjoyed it but I can’t quite bring myself to say that to him. But maybe that’s what made him say the things he said this morning? Maybe he thought he made me feel uncomfortable? That wouldn’t make any sense though because, in my opinion, I didn’t do anything that could have given
him such an idea.

He nods awkwardly, looking in thoughts.

“Okay,” he says then and shakes himself a little before he crawls under the blanket and lays down.

Disbelievingly, I stare at him. “You have some serious mood swings, Gerard. Seriously, you confuse me sometimes.”

I lay down myself and turn my head in his direction only to find that he’s already looking at me. He looks a little stricken and I feel bad for saying that.

“Sorry,” I say and shift a bit closer. He’s not flinching away, which I take as a good sign.

“Aren’t you cold?” he asks softly and offers for me to get under the covers with him.

“Nah, I’m good,” he nods and drops the blanket again.

For the next minute that actually feels like hours, we just stare at each other and my stomach feels kind of weird. I’m writing it off as a relief because we’re okay now and I’m also glad that I don’t have to sleep at the entry. It could also be the mango I just ate. Mother was right, no sugar before bed because it raises the blood sugar and makes you jittery.

“Well,” he says suddenly, almost startling me. “Good night I guess.”

He smiles some and I can’t help but do the same.

“Yeah, night Gee.”

Taking one last look, he turns around and we both breathe out tight air.
I wake up again that night, but not because of Gerard, but because it actually got a bit parky in here and I’m cold.

It’s dark and my brain needs a moment to make out where Gerard is. He’s still facing the wall, it looks like, and the blanket is wrapped around him.

I grope around until I find the opening and just slip under it awkwardly. Gerard has warmed the blanket up pretty nicely and I can feel his body heat from where I am. I really shouldn’t, it’s not fair to him, but it’s just too tempting; in really slow moves so he won’t wake up, I crawl closer until I’m pressed up against his back.

I don’t think we’ve ever slept in this position. It always seemed a tad bit strange because he was always the taller one but this is actually truly, undeniably nice and all of a sudden, I want to get even closer. In a swift move, gingerly put my arm around him and rest my palm on his ribs before I press in closer still. This way, my face is right in his hair and when I breathe in, his hair smells like dry sand and saltwater and not at all greasy like I thought it probably would from the looks of it. Apparently, my nose and brain find that smell very pleasant.

His skin is all warm and my whole body relaxes and my stomach does this weird swoopy thing again where it feels all tingly and mellow.

Just as my eyes fall shut, I feel him shift slightly.

“Mikey?” he says very quietly.

“M’ cold,” I reply, just as quiet.

In response, he takes my hand that’s resting on his ribs and pulls it up his chest before he snuggles his nose against our knuckles.

Now, the feeling I get when he breathes warm against my fingers and cuddles back against my chest is something that I’ve never experienced and I don’t quite know what to do with myself.

“This is nice,” Gerard whispers and makes a sound almost like a purr.
I’m not sure what my brain is trying to tell me, but it’s like it screams at me and I’m momentarily overwhelmed. I do feel incredibly good though, so in response, I nod timidly and whisper a faint “Yeah,” back at him.

He squeezes my hand softly and breathes heavily through his nose and a moment later, I can feel him falling back to sleep.

My brain is still rattling, but I can feel just how tired I am myself and the rain pattering on the roof swings me to sleep.

My last thought before I finally drift off is that Gerard is probably not the only one who’s not understanding his own thoughts anymore.

Chapter End Notes

Feedback is always appreciated <3
Chapter 3

We spend the next couple of days like we do every year when we’re captured in here. We talk. And I mean a lot.

It’s just natural because what else could we do in such a small space? Going outside for a long time is not an option and that means all the things we usually do, like swimming or doing laundry or just usual chores are no opportunity. So we talk.

It always starts the same way; We talk about nonsense, just your usual small talk until it becomes a full conversation and the topic turns into seriousness.

“Do you ever think about...?” Gerard would ask me in a small voice and I’d look away. It’s hard for me to talk about the big things but I think it’s even harder for Gerard since he is older and witnessed and memorized more than me. My memories of home blur a bit more every year, but I think it’s a whole other deal to him. Gerard never forgets anything, good or bad.

The main topics we talk about are different every year. For example, 4 years ago, we talked mainly about Brian since it was not too long ago that we had lost him. The following year we talked about our parents and home. Last year we talked about the future and our hopes, dreams, and wishes.

Trust me, every year, at least one of us ends up crying if not both of us. We mostly avoid talking
about the heart-wrenching stuff during the year because it hurts and it feels vain because we can’t change anything about our situation and the past or prevent the future.

The year we talked about mother and father was probably the most agonizing conversation we ever had. It’s so incredibly painful to lose your parents. We never got a chance to say goodbye to our father because everything happened so fast that tragic day. The last memory I have of him, is him smiling at us though, which is a slight consolation.

Both I and Gerard hugged our mother goodbye and promised her to be good boys and she kissed our foreheads. Neither of us knew that this would be a farewell.

When we sat here and talked about our last memories with them and the thunder shook the earth, we both cried and couldn’t stop so for a long while.

We wondered if they got divorced after father came back- if he ever came back- or if they sat at home, slung around each other and cried like we did. We wondered if they ever got another child or sold our toys because it was too painful to look at them or if they did nothing at all or went out searching for us.

Of course, we’d never get an answer to any of those questions, but talking about it seemed important to handle our loss and somehow make it okay.

“I think it’s like in that book, remember? Where the mother lost their children, and waited by the open window for them to return?” Gerard said while the lightning flickered outside.

“You mean Peter Pan?” I said, sniffing in his lap.

He stroked behind my ear where the bows of my glasses were jammed, and over my hair that had gotten too long and said quietly, barely audible over the rain, “Yeah... like in Peter Pan.”

The next morning, the storm had subsided almost completely so we decided to pack our things and get ready to go back and by noon, we were home and started to rebuild things around the house.

“We will be okay without them, Twee. I know we will. We have each other.” Gerard said at last when he noticed me staring into the distance the first night we slept home again.
He cupped my cheek with his right hand and stroked over my eyebrow like he always does in really important moments, before leaning in and kissing my forehead like mother liked to do. It was comforting and I trusted Gerard’s words.

We would be okay.

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Sitting by the fireplace on the 3rd evening, it’s me who’s brave enough to ask the question for the very first time after all these years.

“Do you ever think about Frank and Raymond? What they’re doing or how they might look like now?”

We hadn’t done anything special yesterday. The mood was still slightly off after the fight but there were moments when we would tease each other in the pristine, brotherly way that we always have.

It wasn’t cold last night so I didn’t need Gerard to warm me and we both slept through the night without any incidents.

I think tonight might be the last night in the cave and not that I don’t like being here, but our bodies are starting to protest.

We can’t stand up or walk around except for little pee-breaks, but that’s about it. There’s barely any daylight in here and our muscles ache from the lack of movement. I desperately need to bathe and we’re running low on food.

The storm is coming to an end though, we can feel it thanks to the years of practice and experience.

Gerard throws the little stick he’d been playing with in the fire and sighs, resting his chin on his knees.
"'Course I do. I went to school with Ray, and Frank often came over to play...I could never forget 'em."

"They liked you a lot. You know, Frank always got excited when you played with us," I say, and watch as the little stick burns down.

"But he was your best friend and Ray probably I thought I was weird."

I can’t help the audible scoff that escapes my throat.

"Well that’s because you are weird, but in the best way, honest!"

He tries to hide his grin behind his kneecaps but I know it’s there. “And also,” I start and shift a bit closer, leaning my back against the wall next to him. “You got it right that Frank and I were close friends, but so were you and him. And he wasn’t my best friend.” I bend my knees and lazily rest my forearms on them. Then I let my head fall back against the wall and turn my gaze towards him.

“Was he not?” he asks and pinches his eyebrows together, looking me directly in the eye.

“Nah,” I dock my ankle against his and pull my lips into a smile. “That’s always been you.”

He smiles this crooked little smile where he first grins so much that you’d think his teeth fall out and then realizes what he’s doing and tries to hide it by awkwardly pulling his lips together in a way that almost looks uptight.

It’s my favorite Gerard smile because it’s completely honest.

“Yeah?” Another thing he’s trying to hide but, it’s obvious that he’s beaming on the inside.

I nod-smile and pick at my fingers absently.

He looks me up and down a few times before saying, “Maybe Raymond is married now,” he stops briefly when I pull a face.
“No, but think about it! He was my age and his parents always demanded that he needed to be married by 18. He’s almost 18 now, so who knows?”

It’s true. I remember overhearing a few hastily conversations between Raymond and his father when I and Gerard were over for the afternoon or even spent the night. I remember that his parents used to be super strict, which, fine, I get that. Our parents were strict, but they would have never demanded such a great big thing as this was from us.

Mother and father were stern and they gave us a lot of rules we had to follow, but we did have our freedom, which in my opinion, is something absolutely indispensable. They let us be who we wanted to be and raised us with open minds like it should be.

I remember that he sometimes appeared very forlorn and that made me sad because Ray’s personality used to be super cheerful and happy. He was always smiling, yeah, but I knew that on the inside, he was broken. His parents tried to make him into something he wasn’t. I could see that, even though I was still very young back then. It wasn’t hard to overlook.

He loved his parents dearly and they loved him back just as much, but they also destroyed him at such a young age. Maybe because their parents used the same methods on them and they didn’t know it any better. But that’s no excuse, in my opinion. They could have made him experience the same, carefree childhood that I and my brother had, but something went significantly wrong.

I guess even adults have to learn a lot of things, sometimes even more than children.

“I just hope it’s someone who he really likes,” Gerard continues, startling me a little.

I nod in response and try to imagine him with a nice girl by his side. Whoever that girl is, she is pretty lucky. Ray is a lovely person.

“Do you think his hair got bigger?” Gerard asks and we both laugh.

“I don’t think that’s possible, but probably,” I say and try to imagine how he looks now. Probably pretty tall, since he was the tallest out of us 4 back then. He liked to dress in casual clothes when he was both out or at home and not the stiff, church-like clothes his parents constantly made him wear. He was always open to try new things and take risks, he handled complicated situations with such ease that it amazed the people around him. He was extremely talented and always tried to soak in as much of life as possible.
If I had to name it, I'd say that he was one of those 'wonder-kids' who were always good at school, could play any instrument, were nice and clever and socially engaged and knew the answer to everything.

I would give a lot to see him and Frank one last time because just like with our father, we never got to say goodbye properly.

I wonder if they have other friends now and replaced us. It hurts, but I hope they did. I hope they were able to move on just like I and Gerard did, forcibly. All I want for them is to remember us and our friendship. We had something very special.

“I wonder if Frankie is still in Catholic school,” I say, trying to change the topic.

“How old is he now?” Gerard asks and I think for a moment.

“Should be 13. I think he was a year younger than me, wasn’t he?”

Gerard shrugs his shoulders in an ‘I don’t know’ kind of way and grins suddenly.

“Remember how much he hated those ties? I mean, they made him wear those silly outfits even in pre-school. I’m just glad we didn’t have to run around like that.”

I smile at the memory. Yeah, he always complained about his school outfits and said the ties made him choke and look stupid. But he liked to go to church on Sundays, not like most kids, and sometimes even took me, Raymond and Gerard with him. It was something that grounded him and gave him strength that he often needed, thanks to the illness he had to fight.

“At least his parents were nice. His mother always cooked the best pies and his father had a great sense of humor. Oh, and remember when he took us fishing with him and Frank that one day?” I say, beaming at the memory. It was a fantastic day. It was still early summer and it was all foggy in the morning and the grass was wet from the dew of the night.

He took us three to a lake by a quarry. The water was clear and deep and neither of us could swim yet, so he dressed us in swimming vests in case one of us would fall in.
He showed us how to make a fishing root with a long stick, some yarn, and a hook and he taught us those funny fishing songs. His mother had prepared sandwiches for us and little bottles of self-made cherry juice and even some candy to keep our blood sugar up, or so she said with a smile and a wink when she gave Frank the basket with goodies.

We didn’t catch a single fish, but it didn’t matter. We still had a great time. I think it was a month after I and Frank met in kindergarten and apparently, our parents were relieved that we became friends because we were both pretty shy. It was just natural, that when Frank came to our house for the first time, that I’d invite Gerard to play with us and soon, we three became close friends.

I and Frank only went to kindergarten together before his parents made him go to a private Catholic school, but since we lived on the same street, it was easy to stay in contact. One summer, me and him went to a holiday camp with his church group and our friendship got even deeper.

I remember that he was always the smallest kid, like, always, and therefore got teased quite a lot but I stood up for him like a friend should. In return, he would stick up for me when the kids at the playground would tease me for my glasses and my too long and lanky limbs. We made a great team. He was always fascinated by art and asked either me or Gerard to draw little pictures on his arms because he wanted to look different. One winter, he even cut his long hair all by himself into a strange mix of long and short strands. Others thought it was weird and his parents even grounded him for a week, but it suited him and made him happy.

He would cut slots in his pants on purpose and always wore at least 3 t-shirts at once because he always got cold, no matter what season of the year. His mother once told me his immune system didn’t work properly and therefore he got sick very fast.

He was always hyperactive no matter what time of the day, always needed to do something. It was either amusing or exhausting to watch for people who didn’t know him, but it never annoyed me or Gerard. We accepted him for who he was and he did the same for us in return.

Frank was one of a kind, that’s for sure.

“Do you remember that kid,” Gerard says suddenly, snapping his fingers, thinking. “What was his name, Jimmy? John?”

“You mean James? Of course, I remember him, Frankie was totally in love with him!” I say, grinning from ear to ear.
Gerard’s eyes widen at that and his voice sounds excited and honky when he says, “Was he really? Why didn’t he tell me?!”

I shrug in response.

“Maybe because he was ashamed? I don’t know. I remember that he always turned dark red whenever James talked to him while we were in camp or whatever and said that he didn’t like him at all when I asked him about it. It was adorable.”

Gerard huffs a laugh and scratches his toes on the ground.

“You think his parents would have been okay with it? I mean, I guess they knew that they were friends and all but did they know that he liked him?”

I have to think about that for a minute. I don’t remember Frank’s parents were super strict, (except maybe for the church stuff) but on the other hand, I mean, we were still so young and relationships and love, in general, were boring topics to us. We much more cared about being allowed to go to this super awesome new water-playground they opened in the park near our house, or playing hide and seek in our basement.

I knew Frankie had a crush on that boy because he told me when I promised not to tell anyone, but I didn’t know what that was like since I had never had a crush before. The only people in my age I knew and cared about were Ray, Frank and my brother, but I don’t recall being in love with either of them. If I had to choose though, I probably wouldn’t have picked Ray since he often appeared to avoid this particular topic for certain reasons. I can’t remember that he ever liked a girl or a boy in the time we lived at home, and he definitely was in the right age to have crushes. We always figured that he was fine by himself. And if that’s what made him happy, then so it is.

I probably wouldn’t have chosen Frank either, because he obviously liked that James kid for several months and I wouldn’t want to come in between those two. Gerard? Well, I never thought about it until now, so I honestly don’t have a proper answer to that. Maybe I would have picked him though because we were together all the time anyway and he has always been my hero, but as I said, I don’t know what it’s like to have a crush on someone, let alone be in love. To be honest, I’m not even sure if I know the difference between the two.

I was never told what love feels like.
“Why wouldn’t they be okay with him liking James?” I ask Gerard in return after a moment, because I can’t find a response to his question.

“Because he was a boy? Think about it, Mikes. Adults only ever talked about women marrying men. Have you ever heard anyone talking about girls liking girls or boys liking boys? At least I don’t.”

I narrow my eyebrows at his words. I guess I see where he’s coming from, but I’ve honestly never thought about this before. I’ve always thought it was natural for boys to like boys and the same for girls. I’m confused and I’m not sure if I understand what he’s trying to say.

“Maybe they thought it’s wrong? Or maybe it’s forbidden by the law?” Gerard continues, looking sadly in the direction of the entrance.

I snort. To that, I know the answer immediately.

“Baloney. Come on, Gee don’t be silly. Of course, there’s nothing wrong with that.” I hesitate for a moment when I don’t get a response. “Or do you think there’s something wrong with it?” I tilt my head to the side and wait for an answer.

He snaps his head back and looks at me funny.

“Of course not. But I’m not like them. I’ve always seen the things a bit different than most people, you know that.”

I consider this for a moment but shake my head in the end.

“I don’t think you’re right. I think a lot of people see the things like you, or me, by the way, thank you very much, but they just don’t say it. Maybe because they’re afraid to speak up.”

I change my position so that I’m sitting cross-legged in front of him. Suddenly, this topic is very important to me for some reason. I take a long breath for what I’m about to say next.
“I think it’s like the thing with the hair and girls-clothes you told me, remember? People have this retracted opinion on specific things because important people on the television or in the papers say how certain things apparently are or have to be when really, they only tell lies or at least not the whole truth. They’re all wrong though. Don’t you think that every single person was born the way they are? I think so. And something like love can never be wrong. Relationships, no matter which people are in it, are great and precious and should be accepted for as long as it’s reciprocated on both ends. I think the people on TV have no right to say otherwise. That’s what should be forbidden by the law!”

I’m mostly done with my explanation for now, but I have one last thing to say.

“The world never matches the thoughts and things that go on inside our heads, Gee. But that doesn’t mean they’re wrong.”

Gerard looks at me and sighs. “But why would they be so mean? Don’t they know that they’re hurting addressed people? Hurting people, prohibiting certain things such as love and telling lies is forbidden, Mikey.”

He looks really upset and crushed and I have to ask myself if he ever got hurt in that regard. The thought makes me sad so I try to say something to cheer him up.

“I know. But maybe the people on TV have changed while we were here? Who knows, maybe everyone is smart and wise now.” When I hear him giggle slightly, I know that I have him back.

“You mean wise like you?” he asks and tips his fingertip to my nose.

I grin and nod feverishly. “Exactly! See, I knew you thought I was wise and smart.”

He rolls his eyes and snickers. “Yeah yeah, whatever. I guess you’re right after all. Seriously, the world needs more people like you. You would make a great superhero, you know?”

Hearing him say that brightens me up. “You mean like the heroes you want to write about?”

My heart does a jump. Gerard’s opinion on superheroes is pretty particular and I know what big of an honor it is that he would pick me as one.
He smiles sweetly and nods. “Yeah. You would save the world with your cleverness and I would write about it and we’d become famous and everyone would love us.”

I touch his knee with the tips of my fingers and look him in the eyes, smiling.

“Keep that in mind for when we get out of here.”

He strokes over the fingernail of my pointer finger and nods. “I could never forget.”

While we talked, it got late and Gerard’s yawning and eye-rubbing told me that he must be pretty tired. I told him to go to sleep since we’re having a big day tomorrow, and only a few minutes later, I heard him snoring softly.

I’m tired too, but not quite ready to sleep yet. I have too many things running around in my head after the conversation we had, memories about Frank and Raymond, mother and father, Brian. Hope that the world really did change after we left.

Our mother always told me that I overthink everything too much and that I shouldn’t waste my thoughts and time on ‘unimportant things’, but that’s exactly the thing; nothing was ever unimportant to me. Maybe that’s why Gerard’s words that first morning in here hurt me so much and still plague me in moments of silence like right now.

I sigh and pull the thin covers over Gerard’s sleeping form before I crawl over to the entrance to peek outside. The weather seems to have settled mostly which means we can actually go back tomorrow if it stays that way. That’s both good and bad. As I said, I and Gerard need our full body circulation back, we need food and water and sunlight, but I’ll also miss how close we are in here. And I mean the talking and occasional cuddles. The fighting part was obviously no fun for either of us.

I have a feeling that as soon as we’re back, we won’t be as close anymore. We don't really have a choice in here but back on the beach, we have separated rooms and another everyday life.

Maybe I have to work out a plan, I think, as I stare out into the black night. If Gerard thinks he’s
harming me by being close and all, then maybe I need to find a way to show him that that’s not the case at all. To be honest, after the last three days in here, I feel like I want to be even closer to him, probably because I got used to the idea of us being like that for mere hours at once. I’ve always been the clingier person of the two of us.

And I wouldn’t mind a repetition of the way we cuddled that second night.

I blink a couple of times in the night sky before I shrug out of my clothes, make sure the fire is out completely and then crawl back to the sleeping area. When I’ve laid down and made myself comfortable, I take a minute to look at my brother in the dim light of the lantern. He looks exhausted and tired, even though he’s fully asleep by now. His face is scrunched up and he breathes too fast. A long strand has fallen over his eyes so I carefully brush it away. I hesitate for a moment, but then I brush the pad of my thumb over his eyebrow like he does with me all the time.

I wonder why he does it but I think it has got something to do with the glasses I’m missing now. When I got my first pair of glasses at the age of 4, Gerard always stroked behind my ears because I just couldn’t get used to the pressure of the bows. They always felt too tight and itchy. It’s another habit he still does occasionally when I get a headache or he just gives me a head rub and pays special attention to that particular spot. The eyebrow thing probably comes from those times, mostly evenings when I snug into his bed and was finally allowed to pull them off and my face looked different without them. I know he liked to touch my face in the weirdest places and when there was no barrier of the glasses in the way, he took that as a chance to stroke over my eyebrows.

No one was ever allowed to touch me, especially my face, except maybe my parents and occasionally Frank, but Gerard was always the exception to everything.

Doing the same for him now feels kind of strange. He’s in a vulnerable state right now and he didn’t give me the permission, but I just had to try it out.

While I’m stroking over his eyebrow for a second and then third time, I think I’m starting to understand it. It makes me feel connected to him in a way that is familiar and comforting. It’s kind of like I can see myself through his eyes and is strangely intimate, as weird as it sounds.

As I drift off, I realize that I feel closer to Gerard than when we came here almost 4 days ago. We survived yet another storm, another bad fight, another painful conversation and another few days on this island. I never doubted that we couldn’t, but I guess we can survive anything together.

Chapter End Notes
Sorry this took so long, I forgot to send the third chapter to my beta while I was in Mannheim for a Walking Dead convention, but now here it is and I hope you liked it, feedback is always loved <3
Chapter 4

Chapter Summary

Songs I used while writing this chapter:

The Meeting by John Powell (for the first part)
Everytime by Britney Spears (for the second part)

Check out the Trailer to this Fanfic (contains spoilers for later chapters) -->
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HmREZPgXzzM&index=4&list=PLEntO54S00xhEToajAkznmM2aSGq7WXQ&t=0s

Chapter Notes

Chapter 4.. I remember how much I hurt while writing that second part late April a year ago. But probably because of that it's one of my favourite chapters in this entire story!

Trigger Warnings for this chapter!!

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Chapter 4

“Do you think we’re soulmates?”

I was right and the weather allowed us to come back home after 4 days. Gerard woke me up when it was almost midday and stunned with our bags he had already packed, saying that he couldn’t wait for me to wake up and when I asked him why he didn’t just wake me, he waved his hand and said that I needed my beauty sleep. I just laughed and stretched my tired limbs.

We both got dressed and ate a quick breakfast before returning to the beach. The walk there was a bit taxing considering how little we had moved the last few days and also because the storm had unrooted a few trees, there was mud everywhere and the ground felt cold and slippery beneath our feet.

When we saw the beach for the first time, both of us smiled brightly, ignoring the mess the storm had left behind. It was just good to be back.
We put down our bags and went to work without hesitation. Gerard rebuilt a few parts of the house that didn’t make it and I started to clean the beach from dead leaves and branches. While I worked my way down to the water, I noticed a small item that must have been washed up. I expected it to be a box full of crap, but to my surprise, it turned out to be a wooden box full of old, dusty action figures.

In the 5 years we’ve been here, we only ever found 3 items on the beach. Mostly after stormy nights because the waves were higher and wilder, I think. It was never something useful and I can’t even remember what the things were, except for one time when it was a tin box full of old hard candy. We ate the drops within two days and got a bad tummy ache in return, but we weren’t complaining.

I kept the action figures from Gerard, figuring they would make a great Christmas present. They looked like strange monsters to me but that’s what made me sure that he would love them.

After only 3 weeks, everything was back to normal. The house was intact again, the beach as clean as ever and the weather was all sunny and warm. Not as warm as before, but still warm enough to walk around without three layers of clothes. As I said, it got never cold here, or even close.

“What?” Gerard asks me, poking his head around the corner. We’re both inside, enjoying the luxury of four walls and a roof over our heads and relaxing after a long afternoon of fishing and doing chores.

“Do you think we’re soulmates?” I ask again, rolling my eyes and grinning while stroking Robin’s feathers who’s sitting on my lower arm. He came back three days after we returned, unharmed and healthy as always.

“Where did you get that idea from?” he asks and puts the new forks he’d been working on to the side before walking into my room.

I shrug my shoulders and tilt my head to the side a little. “I don’t know, just a thought?”

That’s not really true but I can’t bring myself to tell him the whole story about how I always secretly wished that we were soulmates and would share the same thoughts or could talk imaginary and confuse people around us.

Gerard sits down a bit distant from me and looks me up and down in a mocking way.
“What?!” I snap and feel myself blush under his stare.

He chuckles and looks down, smiles in his lap and shakes his head.

“Nothing it’s just..first you ask me if siblings can be in love with each other and now you want to know if we’re soulmates? You ask the funniest things, Mikeyway.”

It’s true. About two weeks after we got back, I asked him that exact question. The one if siblings can love each other in the mature way like mother and father did. He just pulled a face and looked down like he did a minute ago. He never answered me so I figured he didn’t have an answer and I stopped being bothered. I’m not sure what made me ask in the first place. Maybe it was my subconscious wanting answers after the long conversation we had about boys liking boys and all, and how some things were forbidden by the law.

I’m more than a hundred percent sure that it’s normal and natural for people with the same gender to love each other, because I’ve seen it happening with my own eyes, thanks to Frankie, but I’ve never seen something similar happening with siblings. I don’t think it’s wrong for the same reasons I said to Gerard before, love is love and everything is okay for as long as it’s on a consensual level. I wanted to hear Gerard’s opinion on it, but I guess he just never gave a thought to it, which is totally okay. It’s not a daily topic, after all. I just wanted to know if he maybe ever witnessed something similar around him in the years he is ahead of me.

In moments like that, and really only in moments like when I desperately need an answer, I wish we were still at home and I could read about it in books or ask my friends or parents about it. How can I ever continue learning if there’s no one here to teach me? And I don’t mean things like Mathematics because that’s just boring and complicated, but about life, about history and important aspects and values. My knowledge stopped with primary school and that upsets me. Sure, Brian and Gerard taught me a few things, but not nearly as much as I’d like to. Gerard knows a few more things considering his age prostitution, but I know he also complains about the lack of things he doesn’t know and probably never will know.

I don’t like that he’s making fun of me right now for wanting to know things, and when I don’t say anything back to him, he sighs and skids a bit closer but still keeps his distance. He does that a lot now, just like I anticipated and it’s slowly starting to destroy me, bit by bit. I can’t tell him that though, so I try to swallow it down as always.

“Aw, come on. I didn’t mean it like that. I mean, what even defines soulmates? I know that the girls in higher grades always talked about their best friends being their soulmates, but is that it? Just friends?”
He sounds sincere now so I look up again but keep my face stern.

“No, I think...” I start in a weak voice and continue to stroke Robin’s head. “I think there’s more to that than being friends. They made us read that book in 3rd grade about two siblings who called themselves soulmates because they always felt it when the other was sad or needed help, even if they weren’t in the same room.”

At that, I have Gerard’s attention, it seems because he suddenly looks very interested.

“You mean like reading thoughts?” he asks and leans forward a little with big eyes.

“Kind of? I’m not sure, I don’t remember much of it. All I know is that they called each other best friends even though they were sisters and I figured since we are also best friends and brothers, that maybe we were soulmates as well. You always know when I’m sad even if I don’t tell you,” I say, finally daring to look him in the eyes.

He looks bemused and says, “That’s because I’ve known you since the day you were born, Silly. But I can’t read your thoughts.” A short break, and then, “Or can you read my thoughts?”

His curiosity finally makes me grin, but I have to shake my head. “Nah, sorry to disappoint you.”

He does look a bit disappointed but half smirks when he says, “Man, that would be cool! I could use all the secrets that you keep in there against you!”

I glare at him but he ignores it. “Hey! How is that nice? It’s not fair to sneak up in someone’s mind and steal their secrets!”

He smirks even more now, kind of evil and wiggles his eyebrows. “Why? You keepin’ some dirty secrets from me? Anything you wanna tell me?”

My eyes widen at his words and I let out a shocked gasp. It must scare Robin because he makes a sound and flies out my window. I cross my arms in front of my chest and shoot him an angry glare.

“How dare you say that about me!” I say exasperated in a high-pitched voice, but he just laughs
which makes me blush even more than before. He clearly wants to embarrass me.

“If you must know, no. I don’t have dirty secrets and even if, I wouldn’t tell you! You always tease me about things anyway, so why give you another reason to. And also, they’re called secrets for a reason.”

He stops laughing at that and defensively lifts his hands.

“Fine, fine. No dirty secrets. Relax Mikes, I was just making fun.” He looks a little sorry and I take a breath to calm down.

“Just don’t humiliate me, you know I don’t like that,” I say in a small voice and he looks even more sorry, though I can tell there’s still a tiny smirk behind his facade.

“’M really sorry,” he says and scratches his neck. “To answer your question from before... I don’t know if we’re soulmates or whatever. I guess we are but without the ‘reading minds’ part. I do know when you’re sad and you always know how to make me feel better. Not even mother or father could do that, you know?” He smiles a bit and I feel myself smiling back, my anger subsiding.

“Sounds good to me,” I say and scoot closer so we’re finally next to each other. I’m feeling vulnerable and I need his comfort even though he was the one who put me in that state. I miss him so incredibly much lately that it hurts both physically and mentally. Without his permission, I tuck my face in the crook of his neck and in return, he cards his fingers through my hair and down the back of my neck.

“Why are we always fighting...” I mumble, barely audible but loud enough for him to hear. I don’t even care that I sound like a whiny child.

I feel him chuckle and leaning his chin on my head. “’Cause we’re brothers. It’s normal. Also, you’re a stinker.”

“Speak for yourself you butt.”

He pulls back and looks at me outraged before his face turns into something I really try to avoid most of the time because I know immediately what he’s about to do. He’s in play mode. Evil play mode!
“You did not just call me a butt, Mister!” he growls and I can feel his hands wander down my shoulders and arms to grab around my wrists so I can’t flee, which I was totally trying to do. He knows me so well.

“Please don’t tickle me, I’ll take it back I swear!” I say so fast that I’m tripping over my own words, but he won’t have it.

“Ohhh no, Mikey. Too late for that now!” he says and grins widely before tackling me to the ground, straddles my thighs and starts tickling my belly and that mean spot right under my ribs.

He knows he’s not playing fair because even though I’m strong, he’ll always be stronger than me and right now, there’s no way for me to push him away, especially not when I can hardly breathe from laughing like a maniac.

“Please stop! I said I take it back! I-can’t breathe like that-

I try to gasp out under my laughter, but it’s barely working because he just tickles me harder with every word that leaves my mouth.

He grins down at me and moves one hand up and under my armpit where he continues the tickling. He’s so mean, that spot is the worst and he knows it! A strange squeak escapes my throat and I wind my head from left to right while trying to kick him with my legs, but he’s barely bothered by it.

“Please stop, I’ll do whatever you want!” Now, that was probably a mistake to offer, but he does stop and narrows his eyes while his hands grab around my lower arms so I can’t trick him by sneaking out from under him and run away. He leans down and stops just a few inches away from my face, so close that a few strands of his hair tickle my cheeks. He’s still grinning like crazy when he says,

“Aaanything?"

Now I really do regret what I said because I’m not too keen on the idea of doing his chores for a week or serve him or wave him cool air with bracken leaves. It wouldn’t be the first time. Gerard is a mean big brother.
“You’re a mean big brother!” I say out loud and try to look annoyed but I can feel myself grinning. I’ll just tackle him down next chance I get and make him take it back. I can be mean too. (Little brother specialty.)

We’re still in the same position, but now he tilts his head to the side a little and huffs out a breath when he says, “Give me a kiss!”

Okay, that’s not quite what I expected but it’s definitely better than the things I had in mind. I roll my eyes and lift my head a little to press a quick peck on his cheek.

Gerard grins when I lay my head back down and says, “Again!”

I sigh but repeat what I did a second ago.

“Again!” he says, a little softer now, and smiles down sweetly at me.

“Gee, you already had two, the deal was one!” I say and can’t help but giggle a bit. There wasn’t a deal but whatever. He looks so funny from down here. His face is a little round and his hair is totally messed up and there’s a blush on his cheeks from laughing so much. And wow, his eyes are huge! His teeth are the funniest part though because it looks like he still has all his baby teeth. Of course, he doesn’t, but they’re so small and even that you could easily mistake them as milk teeth.

“Last one, I promise!” he says and releases the grip on my arms a bit.

“Scouts honor?” I ask and lift my eyebrows in a testing way. He rolls his eyes but never stops smiling.

“Cross my heart,” he says and suddenly leans down to kiss me instead of me kissing him.

It’s shocking for a split second because he’s actually kissing me on the mouth instead of the cheek I thought he was aiming for. It’s nothing new, we kissed each other dozens of times like that, but it usually only lasts a second if not less. This kiss right here is already going on for over three seconds and I’m confused and I don’t know how to react.
It’s not unpleasant, but my belly does this weird swoopy thing again and I have to turn my head to
to the side to take a breath because the feeling gets too overwhelming. Gerard pulls back immediately
and sits up straight on my thighs. When I look at him, he doesn’t exactly look shocked but more like,
surprised? Confused? I’m not quite sure. At least he’s not mad or anything because that would
seriously kill the mood.

“Uhm,” he mutters and nervously runs a hand through his hair. It’s one of his habits, like chewing on
the tip of his pointer finger or biting his lower lip.

That makes me smile and I lift my hand up to poke my finger in his bellybutton, all the confusion
from moments ago washed away. He squeaks and slaps my hand away before he pokes me in the
bellybutton myself and stands up. He helps me up and we brush the sand off our clothes that I
apparently missed while cleaning up in here.

Then another thought crosses my mind.

“Please tell me you’re wearing underwear under that!” I say and point to the white dress he once
again borrowed from me. His evil smirk is enough of an answer.

“Gerard! That’s my dress and now I have your... Gerard-Germs on it!” I whine and glare at him.

He just honks a laugh and puts his hands on his waist, which looks really girly.

“Yeah well, I would have put on something else this morning but if I recall correctly, someone was a
Lazybone and didn’t do the laundry yesterday,” he says in a challenging way and taps his right foot
on the ground.

“But-“ I start but he stops me by patting his flat hand on the top of my head.

“C’mon Mikeys, it’s just me,” he grins and I sigh and roll my eyes.

“Yeah yeah. I guess it was my fault after all,” I say and wave my hand defenseless.

“Glad you see it that way,” he says and shoots me another huge smile before wandering off in the
direction of the door.

As he walks away, I can’t help but notice the way the dress curls around his thighs with every step, and how deeply black his hair looks against the contrast of the bright white and how he easily could be mistaken as a girl like that because I didn’t cut his strands in a while. That reminds me of the way his hair smelled that night in the cave, like dry sand and saltwater, and my hands automatically clutch on my belly because I’m overwhelmed with that strange feeling that I came to notice more frequently lately.

“You coming?” Gerard shouts from where he is, probably already down in the basement. Right, time for dinner.

I nod dumbly to myself and slowly make my way to follow him, suddenly feeling sick.

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*Lord, have mercy because I am in misery. My eyes are weak from so much crying and my whole being is tired from grief.*

It’s been two whole days since I last sat a foot outside my room, except maybe for pee breaks, but that’s about it. If Gerard wouldn’t bring me food and water every few hours, I’d probably be unconscious by now, or at least extremely dehydrated, though I barely touch the things he brings me. The only thing I’ve seen in the last 48 is the ceiling because I haven’t even bothered to turn and lay on my belly, let alone sit up. The only light in my room are the faint sun rays that sneak through the sheets I hung over my windows the first night I started to feel like...that.

I haven’t spoken anything more than ‘yes’, ‘no’ or ‘leave me alone’. Sometimes, my body would be shaken by heavy, involuntarily sobs and strange crying noises that I didn’t know I was capable of making. After those outbursts, I’d go back to staring at the ceiling again, not bothering to wipe away the tears.

My entire body hurts, my face is puffy and probably red from crying, my throat is sore from trying to suppress those painful sobs and my bones and muscles hurt from all the motionless. I know my body hurts but I can’t feel it or be bothered by it because it feels so indifferent.

There’s this dismal numbness that is slowly overtaking my body, my senses and, most frightening, my thoughts.
When I was 7, I had a terrible asthma attack. An ambulance came and brought me to the hospital where they put tubes down my throat, glued stickers on my chest to check my heartbeat and fastened me on a cold mattress in an even colder room so I couldn’t move. It was disturbing and I still have horrifying nightmares about that incident.

However, when I finally calmed down and could breathe on my own again, they put me into a room with a young woman who couldn’t be older than 21. It’s usually the rule to put kids in a room with other kids and adults with adults, but apparently, the hospital was packed and that was the only free bed so they gave it to me, saying I needed to stay a few more days to make sure it wouldn’t happen again and run some tests.

My mother, who was with me the whole time and held my hand, was sent home when visiting hours ended, and so I was left alone for the night but she kissed my forehead and promised to be back early in the morning. She would even let Gerard stay home from school so he could come too.

Of course, I couldn’t sleep that night, even though I was incredibly tired and exhausted from the events that happened earlier that day, but I was afraid it would happen again in my sleep and I wouldn’t notice and suffocate, so I forced myself to stay awake.

The girl who shared the room with me was very quiet the whole day, but around 11 that night, I heard her crying. It started with soft sniffing but after a while, she cried her heart out. Half an hour after she started, a curvy nurse with glasses and a blond ponytail opened the door, closed it behind her and sat down on the girl’s bed without turning on the light.

I guess they thought I was asleep, but I could hear everything that they said.

It turned out that the young woman had lost her baby. Apparently, it was still in the early pregnancy, but it destroyed her like she would have lost it while she was holding it in her hands.

The girl poured out her heart and the nurse listened to everything she said while occasionally stroking her arm or her shoulder. I’ve never heard so much pain in a voice.

I had no idea how badly a heart could break.

She said that her life would be pointless without a child. All she ever wanted was to see her eyes on a little version of herself but some higher force took it away and her heart right along with it. She said
that she wasn’t sure if she could ever be happy again, if she could ever find joy in anything again. The nurse told her that her child had gone to the stars for a reason and that she had to keep trying for another baby.

That made the girl cry even more and I heard her whisper that it wouldn’t ever be the same, she had lost her baby, her baby, and since that was everything she ever wanted, she lost herself as well.

She was broken beyond repair.

“One day, you’ll wake up and it will feel okay, I promise.”

That was the last thing the nurse said to the girl before she stroked her hair and left the room. It seemed to help because soon the sniffling came to an end.

It’s the pain in her sobs and her voice that I remember until that day and I’ve never thought I could feel such pain, even prayed that I would be spared from it, but that’s how I’m feeling right now.

Maybe not as extreme as what she went through, but it’s a close thing.

Worst of all, I don’t know why. I honestly don’t know why.

It started shortly after Gerard tickled me a few days ago, after I watched him walk away. I wrote it off as another mood swing because I keep having those a lot lately, but I don’t think mood swings can get that bad, especially not without reason.

That same evening, after I sat in my room and those strange sobs escaped my body, Gerard rushed into my room and wanted to know what had happened, but I couldn’t give him a proper answer since I had no idea what was happening myself. He sat down and wanted to comfort me, but it was like a switch was turned and I snapped at him, telling him to leave me alone. He didn’t deserve it, of course, he didn’t, but it felt like my body was out of control.

He tried to help me a few more times but I kicked him out every single time. He told me that he was worried and begged me to talk to him, but I just ignored his pleas.
Another day like that came and went and now it’s my third day in this state. It’s almost like counting notches in the bark of the palm tree outside our house all over again.

I’m tired and exhausted and my head falls to the side where I see a sheet of paper next to me on the mattress. I’m so tired and weak and it’s an effort to stretch my arm out to grab it, but I do it anyway.

It’s a drawing from Gerard. He must have smuggled it in here while I was asleep.

It shows him and me in the middle of nothing, just white around us and we’re hugging. He’s holding me tight while I’m sobbing into his shoulder. It hurts to look at it, but what hurts, even more, is that it’s not just me who’s crying, but him as well.
Suddenly it’s like it’s getting too much, like the pressure in my chest is exploding into pieces and I have to sit on my hands and knees to let it all out and somehow manage to breathe. And then, to my utter surprise, I cry for him. I’m howling and bawling until I feel his arms around me and then I collapse against his chest, but thankfully he’s holding me up.

Then it hits me: I’m scared of being lonely. Just like the girl was scared of the nightmare of spending her life without the child she hadn’t been gifted yet. I’ve lost so much already, my parents, my friends, my home. Losing Gerard would destroy and break me beyond repair.

I clutch so hard at his shoulders that I’m probably hurting him, but my body is on autopilot again.

“Don’t ever leave me,” I say, or at least try to say after not having spoken for so long. My own voice sounds so strange to me and I’m shattered by the fact that I let myself slip that much into misery. I’m usually so positive and happy about everything and now it feels like I’ve woken up in another body.

“Mikey,” Gerard says, but his voice is distant. Only when he pulls back and shakes my shoulders, I’m able to focus on my surroundings and on him through gleamy eyes.

“Mikey, what are you talking about? Why would you think that?!?” he says and I see tears escaping his eyes. “Talk to me! Did you do something? Why would you say that?!?” Now he’s shouting and pulling me in again and I’m glad for that because I couldn’t stand a second longer of seeing his face like this. He wasn’t even that upset and drained after we got here, and that has to mean something.

All the worrying about losing the only person I have left, my best friend, my family and my soulmate, all the worrying about us getting older and the too many nights I’ve spent alone since that night in the cave before and after, all of that comes crashing down like a meteoroid, without warning and it hurts so much. It was him all along, the reason why my brain shut down and made me act like that. Maybe it was a self-mechanism to my own protection for the day when I lose him or when he’s finally having enough of me.

But it’s real and true and right here; I cannot live without him. I was born into this world to spend it with him and I’m praying to every God out there that the girl from the hospital back then didn’t give up and got pregnant again and was able to love that new baby as much as the one she’d lost because otherwise...otherwise she must have gone over her own head eventually.

I’ve been in this state for only 3 days now and I’m already at my limit. I couldn’t take much more of it, I’m pretty sure.
In a weak attempt, I eventually try to explain all of this to Gerard, everything that happened the last few months, my worries about losing him and how much I need him in every aspect of life. I’m keeping the story about the girl to myself though because even she doesn’t know that I know her story. But I do, and I’ll keep it safe in my head until my last breath. I owe her and her Starbaby that much.

“Oh Mikey Sweetie, my darling little brother... I need you to listen to me now, okay?” Gerard says in a very soft voice and wipes a tear from my cheek before continuing.

“What I did in the cave, I did that to protect you-no listen to me,” he says when I try to argue with him about that damned protection thing.

“Listen to me,” he says once again and I do so. “I promise I will explain it to you one day, and that day will come, but for now I can’t tell you. You know I don’t promise easy, right?” he asks and I nod my head. It’s true, he never makes a promise for nothing.

He smiles very lightly and takes a deep breath to continue.

“However, if I’d known that cut being close would bring you into this state, I would have never opened my mouth. I’m sorry that I did this to you and I’m asking you to forgive me, but Mikey, I’ll always be here okay? Even if we get older, even if we die as old, wrinkly men on this island, I’ll always be here. Don’t you know that yet?”

When he’s done, he does the one thing he always does in the most important moments; he strokes over my left eyebrow and runs his pinkie up and down behind my ear.

“Can you make that a promise as well?” I ask and my voice is shaking. My head feels heavy and I let it slip into his hand that is resting on my cheek.

He smiles for real now, a sad smile but still a real one and says, “Yes,” and nods, more to himself than at me and takes my hand.

“I know you’re tired, but you should come out for a bit. It’s already dark outside so your eyes won’t hurt that much, okay? Just let me take care of you. Trust me, you’ll feel better after a bath and mashed bananas.”
I let him lead me down the stairs and to the beach. I even let him remove my underpants that I haven’t changed in days, much to my embarrassment, but he doesn’t comment on it, and then I let him wash my hair and my body while I just sit there and look at the stars.

After, he hands me a clean cloth to dry my skin and then dresses me in his white button-up and makes me sit by the fireplace where we eat together. The hot air from the fire feels good on my skin. I don’t feel numb all over anymore, though I feel like I won’t be back to normal for a while.

We barely speak, but there’s no need to and by the time I finished my bananas and drank a cup of water, I’m so tired that Gerard has to steady me on the way back to my room.

He stays that night, and the night after, and then a week passes, and then a month, and then we decide to use my bedroom as our bedroom and his room becomes a dressing room.

He’s not always there when I wake up in the morning, but that’s okay because he’s always there when I go to sleep and after two months, on day 2.190, which happens to be Christmas Day, I’m okay again, because Gerard throws his arms around me and kisses me on the cheek when I give him the action figures that I found on the beach after we returned from the cave all those months ago.

Late that Christmas Evening, when we eat our special Christmas dinner and I look over at the tree where I notch in the lines, I can’t believe my eyes.

“I think... Gerard! It’s been six years, can you believe that?”

I can hardly believe it myself, to be honest. I thought I would notice when I’d carve in the line that marks six years, but I must have missed it a few weeks ago while I was trying to put myself back together with Gerard’s help.

“It feels more than that,” he says and shakes his head disbelievingly. Then he smiles brightly and says, “Let’s make this a great year, okay?”

I smile back at him and nod, because yeah. I have a good feeling about the new year that will start in a few days. He’ll turn 18, I’ll turn 15, Robin is still around us day after day and we barely fight anymore, which is the most important thing, for both of us. I feel like my break-down a few weeks ago helped us renew our relationship because we’re both a lot happier with our new living situation.
Who would have known?

Chapter End Notes

Feedback means love and is always appreciated! Let me know what you think :)


Chapter 5

Chapter Summary

Songs I listened to while writing this chapter:

He Mele No Lilo by Mark Keiali'i Ho 'omalu
Sandstorm by Darude
It is you (I have loved) by Dana Glove

Chapter Notes

NSFW Warning for very light sexual incident

Author's side note: I know that some things that occur in the second half are veeery unlikely to happen, but I needed it to happen and I figured this was the only way, I hope it doesn't come across too weird *giggles*

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Chapter 5

It’s only six days after Christmas and it’s been one of the hottest weeks ever on this island. Moving is exhausting, you feel sticky all the time and my eyes hurt like crazy thanks to the sun that burns down relentlessly twelve hours a day. There’s not a single cloud in the sky or even the hint of one. I don’t mind the heat as much as Gerard does, though. I fact, he’s like a whiny baby about it all.

Right now, he’s lying down by the water not too far away from me, arms and legs stretched out like a sea star, where he found a sweet little spot in the shadow of a palm tree. Every now and then, I can hear him mutter things to himself like, “Gonna die,” “Too hot,” and “This is it, we’re finally melting.”

Every time he does it, I can’t help but grin and shake my head amused. I think he’s being cute and given the circumstances, I let him complain. Not without being a teeny bit sassy about it, though.

“Stop being overdramatic, Gee...” I call over my shoulder in his direction, not minding the smug tone in my voice.
I take a quick glance at him, seeing that he hasn’t moved at all in the last 15 minutes, and smile to myself yet again. His hair, which desperately needs a cut, lies messily around his head and there are patches of sand lumps sticking to it. The only item of clothing he’s wearing is the brown leather loincloth and nothing else. Understandable, every extra layer would be torture. I, myself, are wearing his white button-up and the sun hat. I stole it from him this morning because I had nothing left and I’m glad that the shirt is kind of long-ish, because there wasn’t even any underwear for me to take.

Gerard doesn’t need to know.

“Too hot...” he mumbles again and I flash him a smile when he turns his head slightly in my direction before staring up at the sky again. I roll my eyes and let my lips curl up into a smirk one last time before returning to what I was doing before, which would be taking watch.

You know, it can get pretty boring here, and if you don’t find anything that entertains you at least for a few hours every few days, you’ll go insane. I remember one time, a year or so after we got here, I was so bored that I built myself a hula-hoop out of wet wood that I curled, with Gerard’s help, around a big enough and hopefully round enough looking rock. After the wood had dried, I removed my creation and actually had fun playing with it until it broke in the middle after only two days, but it was fun while it lasted.

Another time, I tried to dig a tunnel into the sand, but all I got, in the end, was a weirdly shaped hole with super cold and strange smelling mud at the bottom. It was cool to hide in there though and it kept me busy for a few hours.

We could play soccer or tennis or baseball, but that would contain running around and moving more than necessary and neither of us wants that.

A tiny cracking sound pulls me out of my thoughts and I stare down at the white eggs in the sand pit. A few days ago, I and Gerard discovered this turtle egg lair and sadly found out that the mother lay dead on the beach right by the water, tangled in masses of seagrass. So, without question, we accepted our duty and kind of became part-time parents and protected the eggs in separate shifts.

I know that it isn’t necessary to protect them and it’s probably normal that the mother doesn’t stick around after laying the eggs, but then again, I don’t know how nature works in that regard and I like looking out for people and animals, Robin, for example, so why not spending time with this and doing something good?

Actually, this happened before and we just watched in awe as the babies hatched and run towards the water without a second thought. I find it fascinating that those little creatures know how to swim
from the second they poke their heads out of the eggshell and even more so that they can crawl so fast.

“Gerard! I think the babies are hatching!” I call out and excitedly sit on my heels.

A moment later, Gerard sits down next to me and looks in awe at the tiny baby turtle that cracks its way out of the white shell. There are at least 15 of them and now that one started to hatch, the others are following their sibling’s task.

“Look at them, Mikes, they’re so small!” Gerard says rapturous and carefully lifts Number One up and holds it in front of his eyes, the heat he was complaining about minutes ago completely forgotten. The baby rows its legs hastily and we both laugh thrilled.

While Gerard admires his little turtle, I carefully take Number Two, who just got free, in my hands and say in an overly dramatic voice, “Your name shall be Pig and you have to win this fight for me, your mentor and part-time father Mister Michael James Way! You have to win against your brother...-“

I stop and look over at Gerard who looks confused for a second but quickly catches on and says, with a huge smile on his face, “Lola!”.

“Lola, well, your sister I guess- so I will win against my stupid brother and claim victory over this island!”

Gerard accepts the game with a challenging look and we both get into position, directed to the ocean. We nod at each other and then Gerard says:

“Turtle Masters and Baby Turtle Warriors, get ready in position to defend our victory in three, two, one- and **GO**!”

And then, after we carefully sat them down on the sand, our turtles crawl, pretty fast actually, down to the water where they can swim away into freedom and find their new homes.

“Go Pig, you can do it! Make your mentor proud!” I cheer and crawl on hands and knees after my baby turtle.
“No Lola- No that’s the wrong direction, don’t you know your instincts at all!?” I hear Gerard whine a few steps behind me and when I turn around, his little representative apparently decided that it wants to go back to where some of his other siblings are still in the eggs. Shortly after mine are now following three more, who are crawling in baby steps into freedom.

“C’mon Pig, we’re winning, keep going keep going! Wohoooooo!!!!” I scream because my turtle did indeed just hit the water and now tries its first wobbly swimming pulls before diving under and disappearing into the ocean ahead of him.

Carefully, so I don’t step on the others, I let myself fall on my back and kick my arms and legs into the air in victory, not caring how ridiculous I must look. I’m still cheering when Gerard finally crawls down the few meters to the water to where I am sprawled on the wet sand, shoving tiny grains of sand into my face in the process thanks to his not so graceful movements.

“Don’t worry Lola, I get it. It’s way too warm to function correctly. Not all of us are resistant to the heat, am I right Mikey?” he says in a sulky tone and when I decide that I cheered enough for myself, I sit up, brush the sand out of my face and see that he’s sitting there like a grumpy child with his arms crossed and patches of sand on his knees and elbows. Lola just dove under and now follows Pig to wherever it drags them.

“Not all of us can be sun-hating Vampires, am I right Gee?” I say smugly and giggle when Gerard gets ready to slap me on the arm but I’m quicker and get up to make space for the rest of the baby turtles, who are crawling their way down to the water.

Gerard does the same and actually holds his hand out for me to shake it.

Now, this could be a trap. It’s not his nature to accept a loss without at least complaining about it. I suspiciously look him up and down a few times, but he looks sincere so I carefully stretch my hand out to shake his. After a moment, his grip tightens and his lips curl into an evil smirk.

“Think I let my baby brother win that easily?” he sneers, and before I get a chance to respond, he grips my hand even tighter and turns me around in a quick move so that I’m standing with my back to his chest.

“What are you- ouff!” I try to ask, but then Gerard puts both of his arms around my belly and lifts me up completely and carries me deep into the water.
“NO! Gerard I swear don’t throw me, please I’m still wearing my-“ but the next thing I know is that he laughs devilishly and throws me into the water with my clothes still on.

When I can manage to swim to the surface, I see that Gerard joined, as well in his underpants, and splashes happily around.

At first, I think about tackling him down for nearly drowning me, but he looks so carefree at that moment that I can’t be really mad at him. So what I’m doing instead is swimming towards him and stopping right in front of him with a huge smile.

Gerard smiles back hugely and beams when he says, “In for a ride?”

I beam just as much at him and say, “Hell yeah I am!” before awkwardly trying to get a hold on his shoulders.

“Wrap your legs around my waist or else you’ll fall,” he giggles and giggles, even more, when I wrap my legs around him and cross my ankles for better support. Then I tuck my face in his neck, which is kind of complicated because of the hat that’s dripping with water and wrap my arms around his neck as well.

I know what’s coming next.

“Hold your breath!” Gerard announces and when we both catch air, he dives under and swims towards the beach. We could swim blindly because we know every inch of this island and reef, but it’s way more fun to keep our eyes open and watch the fishes and corals floating by and feel them tickling our skin.

Gerard swims in strong pulls under the water and tiny bubbles of air tickle my face, making me grin so that salty water floats through my teeth, but it’s okay, it doesn’t really bother me.

The temperature of the water down here is genuinely pleasant and cools our over-heated skin down in only a few seconds.

When the water is low enough so we can easily stand again, I loosen my grip in the same second that
he pops up on the surface, where we cross the last tiny turtle that finally found its way to freedom.

“That was fun!” I say when we’re both on the beach again, both of us dripping from head to toe.

“Yeah but it’s still not fair that Lola wasn’t used to the heat. She’s only a baby, there was no way she could have known what was waiting for her out here,” Gerard complains and shakes his head like a dog in order to dry his hair.

“Whatever, I still won,” I say after removing my hat and am just about to shrug off the blouse when I remember that I’m not wearing anything under it.

Gerard notices and singsongs, “What’s the matter Twee? You embarrassed?”

I am, in fact, a little embarrassed, but he doesn’t need to know that.

“No? We look just the same and you walk around naked all you want most days so what should I be ashamed of...”

Of course, I’m blushing, thanks to my annoying older brother who smirks at me as if I didn’t just say something reasonable.

Now I’m even more embarrassed, but I won’t give him that much of credit, so instead, I shrug and pull that damned blouse over my head in one swift motion. Gerard, it seems, didn’t expect me to do so because his eyes widen and then he looks away quickly.

I find that quite amusing, to be honest, it feels good to be the one making him act weird for a change.

“I have to put it in the sun for a while because I don’t have anything else so if you feel uncomfortable you maybe shouldn’t be around me for the next hour,” I say, trying to keep the nervous jitters out of my voice and try to grin instead and make my way towards the laundry station.

You see, normally when one of us is naked, we just don’t talk about it because it isn’t really that big a deal, but lately, Gerard thought it would be hilarious to tease me about my body since it ‘changed’ so much, as he would sometimes say.
I don’t think that’s fair because he’s a boy just as much as I am and his body changed the same way and I never made fun of him because of it.

I know my voice is kind of different now and often croaks when I speak in higher octaves and I know I have those weird hairs on my body now, but so does he but instead of just letting it drop, he teases me about it whenever he gets the chance. Whatever.

I’m not saying that I’m not looking at him sometimes, like when he changes or just got out of the ocean or whatever, because I do (though I would never admit it to him), but I know he looks too, which is bizarre to me because if he finds body hair so interesting, he could just look at himself. I’m new to this and he isn’t, so I’m allowed to look, right?

After lying in the sun for a while and waiting for my blouse to dry, I decide to go make dinner. Apparently, Gerard was indeed uncomfortable around me because I haven’t seen him since he teased me earlier. Now that I’m back in the house though, I can hear him rummaging in our room, probably cleaning up or something.

It’s still hot and now that it’s getting late, the air feels kind of humid and stuffy. As I’m standing in front of our stocks in the basement, I come to realize that we haven’t had anything to eat since this morning. Now that I’m standing in front of all the food though, I realize how super hungry I am and my belly growls for attention. Cooking would take too long and we don’t have any fish in stock anyway. A big bowl of pickled mango catches my eye.

The last time we had Mango was a while ago and I’m wondering if it’s still eatable, but when I take it out of the shelf and check it for possible mold, I can’t see any. It does, in fact, smell really good still. Not as sweet as fresh mango would smell, but still good enough to make my belly growl again.

It does taste strange. Like, seriously, mango shouldn’t taste like that. It’s not sweet and fruity, but bitter and kind of prickly against my tongue and after swallowing it and slurping some of the juice we potted it in, my throat burns and then my belly. The feeling is gone as quickly as it came and now that my stomach received food, it wants more. I’m not even surprised that I eat three more slices and drink half the juice because after you swallowed the first bit, it doesn’t actually taste too strange, you know?

I would eat the entire bowl if I could, but I have to be fair and let something left for Gerard. I’m
wondering if he finds that it tastes strange. If not, I’ll just eat it.

When I’m trying to climb the staircase a few minutes later that leads to the first floor, my head suddenly starts to swim and I miss the first step twice before finally managing to climb up with the bowl precariously in my other hand that’s not clutching the rail.

When I finally reach our room after what feels like an hour, my head spins so much that I trip and fall down, butt first, on the floor. It kind of hurts, but apparently my brain never found anything funnier and I managed not to spill the mango slices on the floor, so what I’m doing is laughing. And I mean hysterically.

Gerard, who stands about a meter away from where I am on the floor, just looks puzzled and kind of confused at my outburst.

That makes me laugh even more.

“Uhm, Mikes?” I hear him say over my laughter.

“You gotta try these, they’re so yummy Gerard. They’ll make your belly feel so warm!” I giggle and hold the bowl up with both hands so he can grab it. When he takes it after a moment of hesitance and raised eyebrows, I let myself fall flat on my back and clutch my poor belly that hurts now that I laughed so much in such a short amount time.

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“’M tellin’ you Gee, Lindsey Ballato had a total crush on you!”

“No, she did not! And even if, who was Mr. Casanova in elementary school and had a dozen of girls running after them?”

“So, what, I never liked Sarah or Alicia or Kristin anyways, they annoyed me! And you’re just jealous because your little kid brother was so popular, m’ I right?”

“Pfft, lier!”
“Jeealous…”

Okay. I don’t know what was in that pickled mango, but whatever it was, seriously made me and Gerard say the stupidest things and act like maniacs.

Gerard hesitated for only a second before shrugging and stuffing his mouth with the leftover slices I gave him and then his eyes went big and he clutched his throat and belly after swallowing.

He stood there for several minutes and then shook his head and smirked down at me, helped me up from where I was still lying spread on the floor to drag me out of the house.

After that, it was just a weird combination of running around and chasing each other, tripping and falling over too many times, getting laugh flash after laugh flash, pulling stupid faces that were so funny that we couldn’t breathe properly and slurred sentences that made no sense at all. What a scenario of events in just one day.

This went on for about two hours before we decided to take a break and lay down on the sand beside the stairs that lead to the first floor. It’s still crazy hot despite now that the sun is setting and even down here in the shadows, the sand is warm and everything spins when I close my eyes.

Judging by Gerard, who squints his eyes every so often, he feels the same way.

“So maybe I was jealous,” Gerard states after neither of us had spoken for a little while. For a second I’m confused as to what he’s referring to, but then my brain gets the message and quickly catches interest; I change my position from lying on the ground, spread like an eagle, to getting up on one elbow so I can look at him properly.

“For real?” I ask and try to steady myself a little more on the slippery sand, ignoring that my voice breaks on the last syllable.

His eyes are closed but he peeks one eye open and looks up at me before grinning and shoving me over with his hand.

“Hey! What was that for?” I squeak awkwardly and mentally slap myself because apparently, my
voice has a mind of its own. My head seriously spins at that point and I feel tipsy and I’ve already
forgotten what we were talking about when Gerard gets up suddenly, maybe a little unsteady, and
pulls me up on the arms with a honky laugh.

He looks me up and down in a bizarre way a few times with that evil smirk still plastered on his face
before grabbing me roughly on the hip with one hand and sticking two fingers inside the chest
pocket of the blouse that I’m wearing yet again.

Then, in a swift but also uncoordinated move, he pushes me up against the trunk of the palm tree
where we cave in the notches.

It all happens a bit too quickly for my head to adjust and when I can focus again where I am, he’s
pressed up against me from chest to knee and grins at me with a light blush on his cheeks.

“Ouch,” I say, because, ouch! Now that I can focus again, he did shove me a bit too rough against
the tree.

His expression softens a bit and he slurs “Sorry,” before starting to run both his hands up and down
my sides, shoving the cotton of the blouse up and down in the act.

“Did I hurt you?”

“Not much,” I say and return his light smile. And then, all of a sudden, I’m brutally aware of his
palms on my hips and ribs and his breath on my cheeks, which kind of smells a little bitter, owing to
the strange mango he ate earlier. I’m figuring my breath must smell the same and I’m wondering if it
drives him as much crazy as it drives me crazy. And I don’t mean crazy in a nauseating way, but
more like in a very strangely pleasant kind of way.

What’s wrong with me? This is the most ridiculous thought I have ever had!

While I’m standing stock still, my eyes never leaving his, his hands wander up and down my sides a
few more times before sliding higher and then one of his hands disappears into my hair and the other
slips under my left armpit awkwardly. It tickles at first but I don’t even have time to let a giggle or
laugh arise before he says, sounding kind of helpless,

“You,- you wouldn’t know...”
“Wouldn’t know what?” I breathe out shakily as his fingertips stroke over my scalp and I can feel Goosebumps forming on my arms and the back of my neck.

He considers this for a moment until he pinches his eyes shut and leans his forehead against mine.

“Sometimes you look so...it’s so difficult sometimes not to-“

“Not to what?”

All this nonsense is driving me nuts and my body is going crazy too; I feel like I broke out a sweat and my legs are tremulous and my heart beats so fast that I’m getting dizzier by the second. What’s worse though, is my belly. It’s doing that swoopy thing again but this time it feels ten times worse and every time Gerard says something or strokes over my skin or even just looks at me, my entire belly drops out.

My brain tries to tell me something, I can feel it, but it’s not coming through the fog that’s occupied most of my brain cells, so in a frustrated movement, I tip my face forward a bit and immediately crash against Gerard’s cheek with my nose. The smell of bitterness is even stronger now and my mind goes bedlam.

I’m about to fall over, so in a poor attempt not to, I quickly grab him on his upper arms and manage to only fall forward a step. A tiny weeping sound leaves his throat and his hand in my hair tightens weirdly alluring.

Now it’s my turn to squeeze my eyes shut.

“Mikey,” he whispers, his breath mingling with my own now that he’s so impossibly close.

My mouth doesn’t seem functional like it lost the ability to talk because all I do is breathe in and out very fast. Then, suddenly, he lets his head drop to my neck in the same moment that his left hand slips down to my hip again.

Automatically, my head falls back against the tree trunk and I have to swallow hard as I feel first his nose and then his lips pressing down against the juncture of my neck and shoulder.
This is too much. I feel like my body is about to explode. I’m not used to this kind of sensation.

“What are you doing?” I try to ask as steady as possible but it comes out in a whispeery breath. I’m about to shove him away when my entire body freezes at the feeling of something hard lined up right under my bellybutton.

Gerard seems to notice in the exact same second as me because he shrieks and pulls away from my embrace entirely. The light flush on his cheeks extended to a full-on flush that seems to even spread down to his shoulders.

“I’m sorry,” he says quickly and covers his face with his hands, dropping his head in the process. His breathing is still as fast as my own and now that I get to look at him from a few inches away, I notice that he’s shaking. His hair is sticking up in all directions, his shoulders heave up and down hard and his toes are curled inwards.

I also notice that his underpants have, in fact, adopted a weird shape which I’m figuring must have been what I just felt on my belly. My face heats up even more at that. It is not very polite to look as obvious as I am right now at someone’s private parts and I abashed turn my head to the side so I can’t betray myself by looking any more.

I don’t understand this. I have never seen this happening to him before or to anyone at all and I don’t know what to do or say to make this situation better.

“I’m sorry,” he says again and balls his hands into fists against his eyes. He looks so mortified and it’s all because of me. I’m angry and mad and confused and my head still feels foggy and tipsy and my belly is going nuts as well as my heartbeat. On one hand, I want to walk away as fast as possible and never talk about any of this again, just because I don’t know what’s happening, but on the other hand, I want nothing more than his hands on me again. My lumbar areas feel so tingly and hot in a way they never felt before. But this isn’t about me and my confused feelings right now, because he’s obviously distressed and needs comfort.

I can’t stand seeing him like this and suddenly I don’t care about his weird body reactions anymore, I just pull him into a tight hug and hold him as close as possible.

He stumbles a little but seems to let me. He doesn’t return the hug in the way he usually would, though. He just stands there and lets me hold him.
“I don’t understand,” I finally admit in a hush and feel my cheeks flushing with embarrassment, obviously referring to what I just saw. Something tells me that this must be something really private if it makes him act like that.

I feel him shake his head against my shoulder and then he says, very quietly and kind of out of context, “You can’t be mad at me.”

This, once again, confuses me.

“’M not,” I say because I am not. He didn’t do anything wrong.

“My head kinda hurts...” he slurs and sighs miserably.

I nod dumbly because I don’t know what else to say. I’m getting a headache myself and I’m promising to any God that might be up there that I’ll never eat old, sunburned fruit again in my entire life. Maybe it was stale and we poisoned ourselves after all. Then I decide to kiss him on the hair, just because it feels right at this moment.

“C’mon, we should go get ready for bed, okay?” I say and try to sound as gentle as possible.

He nods against my shoulder before finally pulling back. He won’t look me in the eyes as he did before but instead looks on the ground which I’m kind of thankful for at the moment because I don’t want him to see my face like that. The flush hasn’t really subsided yet and I don’t want to look feeble in his eyes.

It’s gotten really dark now and the crickets chirp happily in the humid air of the night as we slowly make our way to our room.

Though I’m super tired and exhausted and have a giant headache, I can’t seem to find sleep. Not much like my brother, who fell asleep five minutes after we lay down.
I still feel Gerard’s lips on my neck, though they were there for only a few seconds.

That, and the memory of his breath on my face and the way his hands felt on my body, make my heart beat faster and as much as I’m trying not to, I can’t help but also think about the way his underpants looked, giving a rare idea of what must be happening inside of them.

Why did it happen though? And why in that moment? Does that happen a lot to him? Does it have something to do with the strange way I felt in my loins? Does it hurt? That would explain why he clutched at his face and made that weird whiny sound.

But then again...

He did press me against the tree trunk first and though I couldn’t read his expression, he did seem to enjoy himself.

Did I enjoy it? The way he pinned me against the trunk or how his hand felt in my hair or how close he was? Did I like the feel of his lips on a part of my skin where they never were before and I certainly never imagined them to be?

It frightens me to admit it, but yes. I did enjoy it, if in a way that is foreign and strange to me.

What does this mean now? And did he mean it when he said he was jealous of the girls who were after me in elementary school? Thinking back, he never seemed bothered by it, only teased me about it from time to time. I was young though, so how could I possibly distinguish between jealousy and teasing?

There are so many things I don’t understand and it’s exhausting to know that I’ll probably never understand any of this. Who could I ask? Gerard, who immediately shuts down as soon as I bring topics like this up?

I sigh and try to lose track of these thoughts but to no avail.

After another hour of staring at the ceiling and listening to Gerard’s regular breathing, I decided to give up on trying to fall asleep. If my body doesn’t want to, I can’t force it to, can I?
Carefully, so I won’t wake him, I slip out of the mosquito net and tip-toe to Gerard’s old room where we now store the clothes. The only item I can find in the dark is the blouse I threw on the ground earlier and pull it back on, not bothering to button it up all the way.

I quietly make my way down the stairs and out of the house, down to the beach and make myself comfortable on a big rock by the reef. The moon shines bright tonight and there are no waves crashing on the beach. It’s very quiet and peaceful out here actually, and the fresh, though still warm air, helps me clear my head.

I don’t feel dizzy and tipsy anymore and I’m thankful for that because it’s a strange feeling not to be in charge of your own thoughts and actions. Not that I couldn’t control either, but it was certainly difficult and seemed unimportant at the time so I let my mind and body do whatever they wanted.

Now that my head is aired out a little, I remember how father often acted when he came home late in the evening and smelled like alcohol and cigarettes. Alcohol... we surely did not consume alcohol, right? All we did was eating a small, innocent mango that may or may not lay in the heat for a while too long.

Whatever it was, I blame my stomach. If it wouldn’t have made those sounds and made me hungry, well then, I wouldn’t have eaten obviously stale food.

I’m just glad it didn’t make me sick. That would have sucked extra on top of all things.

“Hey,” a voice says behind me and I startle. “Sorry. Didn’t mean to scare you. What are you doing here?” Gerard asks and sits down next to me on the rock, wearing nothing but the thin sheet that we use as a blanket.

He pulls it up higher and over his shoulders as soon as he settled down in a comfortable position.

All I want to know is what happened earlier and if he would have kissed me on the mouth if I’d asked him to and like I long for right now, or if he really was jealous and what would happen next, but I just can’t bring myself to ask any of these things. I don’t want to make him uncomfortable again or in believe that he should be ashamed of what had happened.

When did I start making up excuses when it came to my own brother? It was never like this before and I’m mad at my own thinking. This is not how it should be. Brothers should be able to talk about everything without thinking about consequences.
The biggest consequence would be that he would move back to his old room again, and if that would happen, everything that we built up so carefully over the last few months would be shattered and I cannot let that happen.

So instead, I simply say quietly, “Couldn’t sleep.” It’s not a lie but it’s not the whole truth either.

Gerard seems to accept my lame excuse and nods before looking back at the ocean where he was looking before.

I pull my legs up and rest my chin on my knees, looking in the same direction as him.

“Does it bother you that we live here?” Gerard asks after a while, voice just loud enough for me to hear in the quiet night.

“No,” I say honestly and without much hesitation because it doesn’t. It never bothered me to be here with him.

He doesn’t say anything to that, so I ask concerned, “Does it bother you?”

Now I turn my head back in his direction, looking closely and searching his face, that is gleaming bluely by the moon, for concern. He looks deep in thoughts and then says, to my complete and utter surprise, “No,” but offering nothing more.

I always thought he hated it here and wanted to get away from this island as soon as possible. Maybe I was wrong in my thinking all these years.

“I miss them, though,” he whispers, still not looking in my direction.

He doesn’t let me know who he is missing, but it’s not like I can’t guess. Thinking about home makes me sad and he’s obviously upset about it right now, which makes me sad in return. We had such a fun day, I don’t want it to end like that.
“C’mere,” I say gently and shuffle closer to his side. He sighs sadly and does the same until we’re sitting pressed up from hip to hip and shoulder to shoulder next to each other. I put one arm around his shoulders and make him rest his head on my shoulder and when he does, I slip my other hand under the blanket to where his hands are clutching at the sheet.

I tangle my hand in one of his and lean a bit more into him.

After a while, I feel him turn his head a little more into my neck and a second later, I discover two wet spots on my blouse where his eyes must be leaking.

There could be many reasons for him to cry at that moment, but it doesn’t matter. Whatever it is, he needs to let it out and I’m right here to hold him. He doesn’t tell me the reason and I don’t ask, but slowly rock him back and forth and try to offer comforting words and shushes against his hair.

He smells like warm sun and salt water and there’s also this very special note to it that can only be described as Gerard. It’s comforting in its own way and it makes me emotional on a peculiar level.

I don’t allow myself to cry as well, he doesn’t need that right now, but it surely is a close thing.

“I’m so confused,” he finally admits into the dark night and sniffs as I pat over his neck and hair soothingly.

Then I nod against his head and say, “Me too, Gee,” because that’s exactly how I’m feeling about everything lately.

It’s a frightening feeling, but knowing that I’m not alone in this lessens that unpleasant feeling. At least a little bit.

Chapter End Notes

Would love to hear from you! <3
Chapter 6

Chapter Notes

Songs I used while writing this chapter:

Not Alone by Red

I remember writing this and absolutely loving Mikey in it, especially with the song playing on repeat. I hope you feel the same xx

NSFW warnings for this chapter!

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Chapter 6

It’s on an early morning in February when it happens to myself, totally unexpected and without warning.

I’ve thought a lot about the incident at the end of December, when we ate the Poisoned Mango as we like to call it now, that made us act like we were different people and Gerard shoved me against the tree.

He never told me what it was exactly that happened that night, but I figured it was just something that had happened for a certain reason and wrote it off as a onetime thing. He also never came that close to me again after that but in moments of weakness, I found myself stroking my fingertips over the spot on my neck where he kissed me.

There were rare moments during the last month and a half, when I was alone in the house or took a walk into the back of the island, when I would sit there and look down at my crotch, wondering if the same could happen to me, how it would feel, if it would hurt or not and most importantly, what actually happened when it did happen. I even dared to touch myself down there a few times out of sheer curiosity, but when nothing exciting or out of the ordinary happened, I’d be even more embarrassed than before. Just thinking about this made me feel guilty and unchaste.

I wished there was someone here to explain it to me and answer all of my questions that I can’t cross out of my head anymore since that night.
I’m not completely stupid, I know about the gist of the bees and birds; I know that it takes a man and a woman to make a baby and I know that this particular act is called sex and I know which body parts are needed.

Well, okay. I know the word, but the actual act of doing it is foreign to me except for a rough idea of it in my head. Most 14 something boys probably now all about it, but then again, they don’t live separated on an island in the South Pacific with no one there to communicate or teach them.

Back home, it wasn’t really ordinary to talk about such private things when you were among your friends or colleagues. Sex was something that people did after they got married and if you didn’t stick to that, you counted as dirt by social standards, or so I heard.

I personally never heard any of the older kids talk about this topic, probably because their parents told them not to or they just weren’t interested, considering the age of my friends and myself.

However, as I sat alone in those moments and thought about these things, I wondered if Gerard knew anything about sex. I even wondered if he’s interested in it and thinks about it sometimes, if he would like to try it or if he’s indifferent to it.

Since my little private studies never revealed into anything, I eventually gave up and tried not to think about this topic anymore and it almost worked for a while.

With a huge intake of breath, I woke up from a very weird dream a few minutes ago with the white dress sticking to my sweaty body. The first strange thing about this is that it was relatively cool last night, even so, that I decided not to sleep in just my underpants and now I’m soaked with sweat even though it isn’t really all that hot in here.

The second thing I noticed was my irregular breathing and that bizarre tingly feeling in my crotch area. When I sat up, I embarrassedly discovered the odd-looking bulge that formed a tent in my lap and caused me flush a deep shade of red.

Thankfully, Gerard had already left to go out fishing. I definitely do not need him to see this.

I’ve been sitting here for mere minutes now, not knowing what to do. Should I touch it? Is that the same thing that happened to Gerard a while ago? Where did it even come from? Looking closely, I notice that there seems to be a wet spot against the white cotton like something is leaking from the
This whole situation is making me nervous. For all I know, I could be sick! Maybe I broke something while I was sleeping, but surely I would have remembered if I hit it against something, right? Though I have to admit that it hurts a little bit. It’s nothing bad, but it does feel uneasy the longer I’m sitting here.

I haven’t yet dared to pull the cotton away and take a look because I’m afraid Gerard could come in and see it.

And then, as if on cue, I hear his footsteps down in the basement, probably storing the fish he caught. Quickly, so he won’t notice, I pull my knees up to my chest and surprise myself with the invidious sound that escapes my throat at the change of position. The small amount of pain I might have felt a minute ago is completely gone, now that there is some sort of friction.

And now that I know how it can feel, apparently, I crave for more but then there’s Gerard standing in the doorway with a puzzled look on his face.

“Are you okay?” he asks and comes closer.

I start to sweat even more and my face burns up in embarrassment but he can’t possibly know the reason why if I don’t tell him. I can’t really help but draw my eyebrows together in vain because the pressure in my crotch builds up by the second and I’m afraid that if I move, something terrible could happen.

“Mikey?” he asks concerned when I don’t respond. He kneels down by my side and puts his palm on my forehead.

“You’re not getting sick, are you?”

The touch of his hand makes me flinch away a bit, not knowing how to handle all these new sensations and at the same time, I don’t want his hand to ever let go again.

“Please go away,” I whisper, in hope he just gets it and leaves me alone until I figured out what to do.
“Why, Mikey, are you-“, and then he gets it. His eyes dart down to where I wound my arms around my shins and withdraws his hand quickly and stares at me with wide eyes, a blush forming on his own cheeks.

I feel so humiliated that I feel tears forming in my eyes. I pull my arms tighter around my knees and can do nothing to suppress the tiny whine that leaves my mouth.

He seems to finally get my agony because he wraps his arms around himself, leans away and turns his head in the opposite direction, giving me a little privacy.

“If you wanna...if you want to talk about it...we can,” he stutters out but never looks at me.

I consider this for a moment, but I’m not too keen on the idea of us talking about my private parts, not right now anyway. There is one thing that I need to know though, “Is it bad?” I ask hesitantly and feel even more humiliated when he gives a laugh.

“Leave me alone!” I say distressed and crunch my face up in pain and shame. It’s so unfair that he makes fun of me in such a vulnerable situation.

“Sorry, sorry I didn’t mean to laugh, but...but no, Mikes, it’s nothing bad, okay? Promise,” he says, a little more gently now and that relaxes me a bit.

I dare to look at him and see that he’s looking at me as well, the smile on his face looking odd and uptight.

He awkwardly scratches the back of his head and says, “Uhm...so, I’ll like, give you a few minutes...just come down if you want to, you know...talk. Okay?”

I nod dumbly and watch him nod in return. Then he runs his hands over his face and sighs before getting up and exiting the room.

When he’s gone, I breathe out heavily and consider my next step.
It did soothe me a bit that he said it’s nothing bad but that doesn’t help me know what to do to make it go away.

When I’m sure he’s out of the house, I carefully get up and lift the white dress over my head. Now I’m only wearing my underpants that have a similar wet spot on them like the dress. Taking a deep breath, I hook my thumbs into the waistband and start to pull them down mid-thigh.

Removing the cotton is not as easy as it normally is, given to the extra amount that is now in there.

So, I’m no stranger as to how my own genitals look, but they certainly never looked like that. The tip is flushed red, almost purple even, and there are some veins popped out along the shaft. And it was never, ever this big and well, hard. I haven’t even touched it yet, being too sheepish, but I mean I do have eyes.

When I dare to finally touch it, my belly tightens and my breath hitches in my lungs. I can’t even begin to describe the feeling that seems to overwhelm my entire body. I quickly remove my hand pull my underwear back on ashamed. Maybe distraction helps to reduce it.

It does, actually.

While I got dressed in just my white dress again because there was no clean underwear, brushed my hair and knotted it back the way I always do and ate my peppermint, the bulge subsided and the weird feeling stopped almost entirely. It’s still kind of there, now that I got a vague idea of how it can feel.

I feel betrayed by my own body because it did something it never did before and makes me feel like a little, uninformed child.

After another 10 minutes, I decide to go meet Gerard and finally get answers to the many, many questions that built up over months now. I’m super nervous and kind of embarrassed, but he said we could talk about it, and I trust him enough not to make fun of me anymore.

-  

“"I know this must sound super fake, coming from someone who is feeling like that all the time, but you really shouldn’t be embarrassed about it, okay?”
We’re sitting down by the stairs again where the sand is fairly cool beneath us.

When I don’t say anything but bury my face deeper against my knees, he sighs and says, “I’ve been waiting for this to happen, you know...”

“You...what?!”

He sighs again and takes a deep breath.

“I wanted to tell you all about it for a while now, I mean-I knew this would happen to you eventually because...okay look.” He shifts around in the sand and sits opposite of me.

“Please look at me? I don’t bite,” he says in a small voice and I can’t resist him so eventually, before squinting my eyes one last time against my knees, I pull my head up and rest my chin on them instead. I don’t dare to let go of my legs though, it could happen again at any time for all I know.

When he sees that I obeyed him, he smiles sweetly and nods to himself. “Okay, so, remember when Brian would sometimes take me on a walk without you?”

I nod at that.

Apparently, Brian told Gerard about all those things that formed questions in my head over the last few months when things started to change between us and also for just myself.

Brian would put his hand on one of Gerard’s shoulders, saying, “Listen, Lad, there are some things you should know for the future...”, and then he would tell my brother all the mysterious things that happened when you became a ‘man’, as he called it.

As Gerard started to explain, his face turned into a slightly scrunched up expression and sometimes he would stop for mere long moments, seeming deep in thoughts until he continued.

He told him that once you hit puberty, your body changed completely. Your skin, especially in the
face, would look blemished, your hair became greasy pretty much after washing it, you became taller seemingly overnight, your voice got deeper, you started to sweat more and you had pretty extreme mood changes.

“Do you think that’s why I felt so sad a few months ago?” I ask him when he looks at me sympathetically.

“Yeah, that’s what I was thinking at the time,” he says and smiles sadly.

“And what do you think now?”

He sighs and says, “I think that whole puberty thing was a factor, yes, but I think I made it worse with the whole, you know, quit being so close thing,” gesturing with his pointer finger between me and him hastily.

I hate to admit it, but he’s got a point.

“It’s okay now though,” I say gently and try to cheer him up by smiling for the first time since yesterday evening.

He relaxes a bit, but I can tell he’s still thinking about it. I don’t have time to do anything about it though, because he continues speaking after exhaling audible.

Brian told him about the weird hair that suddenly would start to grow in places you never had hair before and that at some point, you’d grow a beard if you didn’t shave.

As he’s saying that, I press my upper arms in closer to my sides, thinking about the armpit hair that I’ve had at least for a year now.

“Down...” I stop, clearing my throat awkwardly before continuing in a small voice and hoping he gets what I mean, “Down there too?”

I’m surprised when he doesn’t laugh at me but instead pulls the right corner of his mouth into a tiny smile.
“Yeah, that too. Apparently also on the chest and belly, but Brian either lied about that, or I’m not as much a man as I thought I would be.”

Now he does laugh, but he’s blushing and looks a little uneasy.

My feet curl inwards and there might be a tiny smirk on my face when I say, very quietly and sheepish, “I- have those... I mean, down my belly...”

He rolls his eyes and says, “I know, duh...I’ve seen you, you know.”

Now we both blush and grin abashed at each other. This whole conversation is so awkward.

“I guess since you’re manlier than me, you’ll also grow a beard first.”

Now, that’s a weird thought. “I don’t like beards, though,” I say and giggle when Gerard kicks me with his toes.

“Beards are awesome!” he says and runs his fingertips over his chin where there are still no stubbles that could give a hint of facial hair.

“Some of the things don’t make sense though, like, my skin is clear and your voice isn’t that much different, my hair doesn’t get greasy so fast and you never had those extreme mood swings.”

He looks lost in thoughts as I say it but quickly reacts to answer.

“I don’t think it’s the exact same for anyone, like, the basics are similar to every boy but everyone experiences it differently? I don’t know, I’m not smart...”

“Yes, you are! Gee, I’ve wanted to know these things for months now and in less than an hour, you told me almost everything I wanted to know. That’s pretty smart to me.”
He smiles down into his lap but shakes his head lightly. “That’s just because Brian told me.”

“But you remembered all of it over the years.”

We smile at each other and then he keeps talking.

He still hasn’t said anything about what happened this morning or back in December and I’m desperate to know, so when he finishes his speech about growth spurts and muscles that would apparently grow overnight, whatever, I ask, almost so quiet that I don’t hear my own voice, “And what about the other thing...”

He freezes for a moment, but then he lays back down on his back, bends his knees and crosses his arms behind his head before saying in an almost dreamy voice with a smile on his face, “That thing...it’s just awesome Mikes. I mean, as long as you know how to handle it. Probably a gift from the Heavens if you ask me.”

Okay, that was certainly not the answer or reaction I was expecting, but Gerard is full of surprises.

I expect him to say something else but when he doesn’t and only stares up at the sky, still with that dreamy smile plastered to his face, I want to know, “And where does it come from I mean, does it have something to do with...is it...sex?”

Finally speaking the word out loud for the first time in my life is awkward, but I just have to know. All the thoughts I had lately about kissing and being touched in forbidden places and body parts that you shouldn’t be thinking about so intensely, finally made me ask this embarrassing question.

I know I’m blushing again, but I don’t dare to look away from him now. I need to be taken seriously for once because this is important to me and I just need to know.

Gerard turns his head slightly in my direction and looks up at me from under his bangs, grins his baby-teeth-smile and emerges a pretty blush of his own.

“One morning, you will wake up only to find a wet spot in your underwear and memories of a weird dream still floating your mind. You’ll wonder what happened, but since it’s something that never happened, you won’t understand it. That’s why I’m telling you now.”, Gerard quotes Brian in a ridiculous voice, now with eyes closed and face directed to the sky again.
It’s called ‘to have an erection’, or ‘to be aroused’ and usually it ends in ‘masturbation’. The words sound foreign to me, but Gerard is quick to explain them, almost as if he was reading my mind which momentarily reminds me of the conversation about soulmates and I feel my lips curl into a tiny smile while listening to him.

Apparently, once a boy hits puberty, your testicles and penis start to grow and change looks slightly, which, yes, happened to me as well. Hormones would start to produce sperm liquid, which happens to be the wet feeling in the underwear and is needed for reproduction.

A boy can get an erection or feel aroused for any number of reasons; While you’re asleep, when you feel sexually attracted to someone, when you’re thinking about something sexually, when you see something sexually happening, when someone (or you yourself) touches you either right on down there or in places that are sensitive to you, or, when you are simply about to commit to the actual act of sex.

During the first few years of puberty though, sometimes an erection would happen for no real reason, often more than once a day and mortify you to no end.

At this point, I need to disrupt Gerard.

“But wait.” I say, completely and utterly confused, hitting my right hand over my eyes distressed and super humiliated because now it comes all crashing down at once and stagers me right off my feet.

Memories of the cave flash up in my mind, when I tried to pull the blanket away from Gerard’s lap and he screamed at me, all the mornings he wouldn’t be there when I woke up, me, waking up this morning, confused and startled, Gerard, pressed up against me—

“Does that mean you were- when you -”, there’s no way possible that I can finish this sentence without fainting right in front of his eyes. This is all too much, I’ve never felt so vulnerable in my life.

To summarise everything he just said, you get aroused when something sexually happens.

Me, okay. I somehow get it now. I’ve always felt drawn to Gerard, and in a totally new way for a while now, though I never thought it was this, but he, in other words, just admitted that he feels like that towards me as well and probably has for a very long time.
Suddenly, I get very angry.

“Why would you know all of this and never tell me anything about it?! Do you have any idea what I went through the past year?! Why did you hide it? How long has this even been happening to you? Why did you never tell me, Gerard!”

I withdraw my hand in anger from my eyes and pound both my fists into the sand on either side of my body, making Gerard jump and sitting up with a startled look on his face.

Then his expression changes and he looks sad and full of sorrow and guilt. He lets his head fall forward miserably and I hate myself. See? Another mood swing. I really don’t like them.

Sighing and in a swift motion, I plaster myself at his side and touch his knee lightly.

“I’m sorry... I didn’t mean to scream at you, but you gotta understand, I mean-“

“IT’s okay. You have every right to be mad, but Mikes I was just trying to protect you, you know...”

He sounds so small and young right then that my heart aches.

“You don’t have to protect me,” I say gently and lean the side of my head against his.

He huffs and says, “I’m your big brother-“

“Yes, and I’m your little brother and I can take care of myself. You protected me all through my life but I’m an adult now. Maybe you should let me protect you for a change.”

At that, he titters lightly and turns his head a little so that his face is close to my own, making my belly tingle.

“I like looking out for you. I’m not very good at it, but it’s my duty and that will never change so you
“Yes I am, I get erections now!” Gerard seems to be just as stunned by my words as I am because he pulls away from my embrace to properly look at me. It swipes the sadness off of him though, and that’s enough to make me happy and not caring about what I just said (okay, maybe a little, but whatever).

“So, you’re basically saying that I’m an adult then, too,” he states, looking smug from head to toe.

I roll my eyes after punching him on the shoulder and say, “Urgh, fine. But just to be clear, I’m giving you extra credit here because you’re turning 18 soon.”

“Jesus, you can’t let me be in glory for one second, can you?” he says and pretends to be annoyed, but I know he’s absolutely not.

“Okay, but let’s still go back for a second”, I say because there are some things that are yet unsolved but I need answers to.

After asking with another blush high on my cheeks, Gerard explains that there isn’t really a way for an erection, as I know it’s called now, to subside, if you don’t do anything against it. But if you do, you have at least a few hours of freedom before it would happen again; that is if you’re lucky and you have your thoughts together.

“And how do you do that?” I ask curiously, clutching my arms tighter around my legs, feeling both anxious and excited about the answer. I can’t believe it, but now I want to try it out with him. I mean, if he knows how to do it, he can help me, right?

To my surprise though, Gerard just looks at me startled.

Was that the wrong thing to ask?

“What??”

“Uhm,” Gerard mutters, scratching irrelevantly behind his ear, flickering his gaze to my where my
crotch is hidden behind my shins and turns scarlet.

“How did you, if you didn’t- I mean I thought...how did you get rid of it this morning, then?”

Something tells me that waiting for it to go away wasn’t the common way of doing it and I feel yet again like a stupid, unknowing child.

“Forget I said anything,” I murmur embarrassed, feeling exposed by the look he’s giving me.

“No it’s okay, hey-look at me,” he says and when I uptightly do so, he admits, “I didn’t know.”

Then he gulps audible and whispers, after coming to the conclusion that I am indeed just an inexperienced 14-year-old boy who wouldn’t know anything about this, “So you seriously don’t know.”

After that, we stare each other boldly for a long moment while my heart starts to beat faster and my palms get sweaty so that grains of sand stick to them.

After meekingly clearing his throat and letting his eyes dart briskly to my lips and back to my eyes, he asks, in a husky tone that I’ve never heard him use before, “Do you want me to tell you?”

When he says it, I feel a rush of heat flush through my body and starting to pool in my groin again. I can feel my face reddening, but so is Gerard’s.

My mouth drops open a bit and my brain is shouting at me to quit this right here, but I can already feel my body betraying me, so instead of getting up and running away like I maybe should, I nod.

Then it’s like a switch is pulled inside Gerard, because without hesitation and shame, he says, “It’s fun to start teasing yourself before getting to the real business.”

A tiny whispered, “How...?” is all I can manage.

“Depends. What are your sensitive spots?”
I take my time to think about it, but in the end, all I can do is shrug my shoulders and look down at my knees which are still pulled up my chest.

“Wouldn’t know.”

I hear Gerard click his tongue and then he says, “Yes, you do. Think about December for a second when—”

But he doesn’t even have to finish the sentence, because then I get it and my fingertips automatically find the spot on my neck where he kissed me, back when I had no idea why my body was reacting so strongly and I didn’t have a name yet for it all.

When I look up from under my bangs, he watches me intently with slightly parted lips and equally big eyes as my own. It astonishes me that Gerard knew about my weak spot even before I did and that alone makes my guts twist in the best way possible.

Feeling brave for the first time today, I reach out to take his hand in mine only to press his fingertips against the same spot where I had mine just now.

It’s a pleasant feeling but it isn’t as strong as when I felt his lips against that spot. I’m about to reveal this to him when suddenly his hand sneaks up higher my neck and curls into my hair. At first, I think he wants to stroke it, but then his fingers tug on some of my strands lightly and my breath hitches.

“Do you remember that too?” he huffs out and stares at me in wonder when my eyes flutter shut and my hand grasps around his wrist when he repeats the action. The feeling is so strong that I feel my belly tightening as a result, and all the worries my brain shouted at me only moments earlier seem to be washed away.

“What is this feeling?” I ask, sounding breathless and bewildered, with my eyes still closed.

“Hmm... arousal, want, desire... a lot of things,” he says easily, reminding me of how inexperienced I am and making me feel shy again.

He seems to notice because instead of tugging on my hair, he gently strokes over it which leads me
to open my eyes and smile up at him and my heart does another swoop when I find that he’s looking at me lovingly.

There’s another moment where we just look at each other, his fingers still caressing my scalp, and I’m so gone for him, I just know it.

His fingers stop then for a moment and he scrunches his eyebrows together, blinking at me which looks like he’s in memory of something.

I was right.

“I wasn’t even 13 yet when it happened to me for the first time."

“Oh...am I late to this?”

A short snort escapes him and he shakes his head, restarting the stroking.

“No, I think I was just early. Maybe. I don’t know if there’s a set time for it. What I’m trying to say is, that even though Brian elucidated me into everything, it still scared me to no end and it took me a while to figure out how to live with this around you.”

“I never noticed,” I say honestly, because yeah, thinking back, there were a few situations where I got suspicious, but never in my life would I have thought about this.

“I did a good job then!” he says and grins sheepishly.

Suddenly, there’s another burning question forming in my head.

“Was it because of me?” Because I don’t recall getting the erection this morning because of him.

He looks confused for a moment, but I can see the second he gets it because his eyes widen.
“No!” he says quickly and I can’t hide the slight disappointment that must be showing on my face because he adds, “I mean, not at first. Jesus Mikey, you were only a kid. That...that only came when you probably grew up a little.”

He basically just confirmed my thoughts from before and my brain makes me want to do things to him that I never even dreamed of before. It’s like piece by piece, this whole confusing concept is coming together and the final product is what my subconscious was screaming about all this time.

“What comes next?” I surprise myself by asking, eyes never leaving his.

He seems to know exactly what I’m talking about, because in a slow and considered move, he sits closer to me and brings his mouth close to my ear, removing his hand from my hair which upsets me at first, but his next words really make up for it.

“You wrap your hand around it and start rubbing it until the pleasure starts building up.”

It’s too much and I can’t hold his gaze anymore. I have to shut my eyes and my knees involuntarily squeeze together in a very pleasing way, so much even, that a tiny, strange sound leaves my mouth without my intention.

The thought of doing what he just said makes me raise my hand, the one that was wrapped around Gerard’s wrist until a moment ago, and slide to a spot on the back of my upper thigh where my legs are still bent, not caring about the grains of sand that are sticking to it.

When Gerard sees this, he freezes but doesn’t back away.

“I feel anxious,” I admit in a tiny breathless whisper, but don’t let go.

Immediately, Gerard’s face softens and he tilts his head to the side a bit. Then he smiles sweetly and says, “Aw Twee. I’ll go now, you know what to do now.”

What? That’s not what I meant at all! In a quick move, I catch his wrists again when he gets ready to stand up and looks at me startled.
“No,” I say, but nothing more. I can’t do this alone. Well, I suppose I could, but I don’t want to. I want to do this with him. So much, that it scares the Holy Ghost out of me.

He’s already half turned away from me but stops in his tracks when I stop him.

On an intake of breath, I squeeze my eyes shut, and on the exhale, I remove my arm from around my legs. Then, I finally part my knees for the first time since we sat down here together almost two hours ago.

The only sound I hear is Gerard’s huge gasp and when I open my eyes again, his eyes are fixed on the spot between my legs where, for the second time for today, a tent is forming under my white dress.

I honestly didn’t feel it swelling that much, but I guess all the talking about this topic and the light hair pulling eventually lead to that result. It’s quite fascinating, actually. I had no idea what my body was capable of.

I know I’m blushing again, but right now I could care less because Gerard’s eyes darken like they never have before as he sits back down next to me without really seeming to realize it.

“No,” I say again dumbly, sounding desperate and in another moment of bravery, I take his hand and direct it to my crotch. I can almost feel his hand on me, but then he seems to realize what is happening and uncurls his hand from mine and puts it over his face.

“Mikey we- we can’t do this...”, he mumbles into his hand and my heart sinks.

“Why not?” I ask, suddenly feeling nervous and self-conscious.

“We shouldn’t be doing this,” is all he says, offering nothing more.

I’m about to accept that because if he doesn’t want to, that’s okay. It’s his decision. But as I let my gaze wander, I notice the bulge between his own legs and I know that he wants to. I know why he’s acting like that, I know that his response would be that he needs to protect me and that he doesn’t want to hurt me, but that’s almost a funny thought by now.
It shows me that he cares though, and that makes my heart flutter.

Looking at his erection does the weirdest things to me and if he’s not going to touch me, then I’ll do it on my own. I’m starting to feel frustrated now, I need to find a release in all of this eventually or else I’ll go crazy.

“You don’t have to look or touch, just don’t go,” is what I manage to choke out before I finally, finally put my flat hand over my cloth-covered erection with firm pressure, nothing compared to the light touch from this morning.

The sensation I feel when I press down is so strong and sudden and feels so incredibly good, that it pulls me off my feet and my other hand that isn’t touching myself curls into a fist in the sand. The sound that escapes my throat at the touch can only be described as a moan.

I’ve never heard myself make such a sound and I’m yet again surprised as to what my body is capable of.

When I press down for the second time, I open my eyes and see that Gerard looks at me with lust in his eyes that makes my belly curl in on itself.

“You...Mikey-“, he gasps out and before I can react, his lips are back on my neck and his right hand curls around my ankle.

My name never sounded so beautiful coming from his mouth and I forget the hand on my crotch for a moment because I’m greatly distracted by the feeling of his lips on my neck.

When he parts his lips and traces his wet tongue over the skin there, only to stop and close again over my pulse point and suck, I lose all ability to speak and cry out in delight instead.

My free hand shoots up and closes around a bunch of his hair on the back of his head to hold him in place and I feel him groan against my skin.

Without really thinking about it, I tilt my head back, exposing more skin for him to kiss, or well, suck on. At this point, he can do whatever he wants and I’d take it greatly without a second thought.
I’m so aware of everything that’s happening right now, like the moist breath on my neck when he exhales hotly through his nose or how his hair smells or how his hand on my ankle now wanders up to my knee and then slides down to where the hem of my dress pools around my thighs.

I’m maybe a little, okay, very, nervous about him touching me, because I can feel myself leaking against the cotton again and what if finds that gross? But then I’m reminded that the exact same thing is happening to himself right now, has for years now, and he spoke of it as a gift from the Heavens so he must be enjoying it and then nothing of that matters anymore, because he slides his hand under the hem of the dress and curls his experienced fingers around my erection.

A shocked “Hhhaaa,” escapes my mouth at the feeling of it.

My entire body relents and now that there’s no hand for me to steady myself on and keep me in a sitting position, I fall back down on the sand, while my knees fall apart more and another loud moan leaves my mouth, causing Gerard to curse against my neck where I pulled him down with me.

I haven’t heard him curse a lot in my life, always thought of it as something wrong, but right now it really does it for me.

When his hand gives a squeeze and starts to pump up and down slowly, my back arches off the ground involuntarily and my toes curl inwards in the sand. I feel him shift in position so he leans over me a little. Then he releases my neck and instead presses his forehead against mine with his eyes shut tight and his lips are slick with spit and parted and then he swipes his thumb over my tip and my eyes roll back in my head, feeling my belly tightening in the most amazing way.

“All the times we kissed, it was never on that level of intensity and I don’t know what to do at first when he moves his lips messily over mine, but I quickly figure out what to do and follow his lead. The sounds he’s making in the back of his throat in return are nothing I ever heard before, so needy and out of control, and I’m pretty sure that I’ll fall asleep to that sound in my head tonight.”
The kiss and his hand pumping faster now are taking me to a point where the air stays in my lungs and my entire body tightens. I even have to break the kiss, much to his dislike, but I can’t help myself anymore. What I’m feeling right now can’t be compared to anything I’ve ever experienced in my entire life and it’s damn amazing, but it doesn’t seem to lead to something.

“Gerard what-“

“You gotta let go, Mikes,” he says out of breath, almost slurring the words and starts to stroke me impossibly fast.

My free hand gropes around in the sand and lands somewhere next to my head when I feel my eyebrows knit together tightly and involuntarily and my mouth falling open in the same moment that my head tips back and the aching between my legs turns into something even more, like electric shocks and heat and the greatest delight.

Then there’s Gerard, looking down at me and that’s it; A loud “Uhhhhhhhhhhhh,” leaves my throat and my hips buck into his first as the final straw snaps and a hot liquid lands on my belly where the dress drew up somewhere in the process.

It seems to go on forever, but just as I think it wouldn’t stop, it does and my body goes slack against the sand.

I lie there for what feels like an eternity with my eyes closed, waiting for my breathing to become normal again when I feel Gerard withdrawing his hand from my crotch only to rest it on my hip, sticky with what I suppose must be sperm. The thought alone is strangely arousing on its own and sends another wave of sparks through my twitching body.

His forehead is still pressed up against mine, his own quick breath mingling with mine, still so close that it wouldn’t take much to kiss him again, so that’s what I’m doing.

This time, it’s much gentler and when I tilt my head slightly to the side and he presses in closer, it feels like we were made for this. He nips at my bottom lip and then kisses over the same spot and everything is perfect.

That is until Gerard suddenly pulls away from my embrace and looks down at me with shock on his face as if only now realizing what just happened. As he sits on his heels, I see his eyes widen in fear and he quickly turns his head to look over his shoulder, as if checking if someone saw us, which is
totally ridiculous.

Then I notice the dark wet spot against his now flatter loincloth, understanding how he must feel right now because I feel just the same.

We’ve just crossed a line that neither of us probably even thought about and yes, that is a scary thing. Not to mention that now that it’s over, the embarrassment comes back in full force. Not that I let him do this, but more like the whole concept itself. But I don’t want to feel rejected and he doesn’t need that either, so when he hasn’t moved from where he sits, I reach out and take his hand, making him turn his head back in my direction.

He hesitates and looks stricken for a moment, but when I smile at him slightly with a blush still on my cheeks, he goes and lays down beside me in the sand.

I can feel that he’s in a vulnerable state right now, just like me. But when he, much to my surprise, shifts and rests his head on my chest and buries his face into the cotton of the white dress, all the embarrassment and fear seems to dissolve into the warm air of the day.

He puts his forearm on my belly so that his hand rests upon my ribs next to his head and holds me there. Then he presses in closer with his torso and throws his leg across one of mine, sprinkling sand across me in the process, so we’re tangled from head to toe.

Automatically, my left hand finds its way to his head where I begin to card gently through his hair. Then a tiny grin flashes across my face while dreamily looking up in the sky, much like he did earlier.

“So that’s what it can be like.”

I feel Gerard huff a small snort against my chest and his hand squeezes my side.

“Yeah, that’s what it can be like.”

“I feel so fine right now, like nothing really matters and my body feels very light,” I state happily and nicely exhausted, stretching my legs against the sand and trying to work the muscles in my shoulders but that’s kind of difficult with his weight on top of me, which I’m not complaining about though, because I really like the feel of that as well.
“’M tired, too,” I admit and once again feel him laugh against my chest before burrowing his face deeper against the white cotton and winding his arm tighter around me.

“So sleep,” he mumbles and exhales through his nose, creating a hot spot on my ribs which gives me Goosebumps. He must be equally exhausted after this.

All I can manage to do before passing out into a light and pleasant sleep is a nod and one last movement of my fingers in his hair and a tiny, “Thank you,” on my lips.

- Waking up a few hours later is almost like torture! We fell asleep outside when the sun did not yet stand high in the sky but now it’s afternoon and we’re basically cooking. I don’t think my eyes ever hurt this bad. We also didn’t clean ourselves up after what happened and the sticky feeling on my belly and crotch is everything else but pleasant like before.

Gerard is still fast asleep somewhere dragged over my upper body and my skin is sweaty everywhere our skin touches and he might be even drooling a little on my collarbone. It doesn’t bother me though. Nothing he ever did bothered me, or at least most of it didn’t.

I’m hot and I feel itchy and my eyes hurt, but that still isn’t enough reason for me to wake him up and do anything about it. Instead, I start carding my fingers through his hair again, keeping my eyes closed as some sort of weak protection from the devil that is the sun right now.

After a while, I start stroking his neck and shoulder and as far down his back as I can reach from this angle. His skin is hot and I feel grains of sand sticking to his spine and hip. I continue stroking his skin there until I let my hand wander up higher again, along his neck and then jaw, over the bridge of his nose, the spot under his eyes and then over his forehead and into his hair again.

It’s really lulling and relaxing to do that and I could go on forever, but after some time, I feel him stir and mumble out an incoherent sentence against my collarbone.

“Hmm?” I hum out, not really feeling like talking just yet.
“Said where are we,” he says, clearer this time, but still husky with sleep.

“Beach.”

“Bad idea.”

“Yup.”

Then, he slowly sits up ungracefully and stretches his arms. “Mmm...I do feel rested though,” he says and yawns with his fists rubbing his eyes.

“Yeah, and sun-cooked.”

Now I opened my eyes but immediately regret it. “I hope all of this was worth getting me blind!”

I hear him giggle and then there’s his hand stroking over my hairline, brushing some of my bangs back where they unbound from the clips.

For a moment, he looks down at me with something that I would like to call love in his eyes, but then he breaks eye contact and looks down somewhere next to my head that is still resting in the sand. Then he turns his head and looks in the direction of the ocean and his face falls completely.

He sighs and closes his eyes, withdraws his hand from my hair and starts to inconsequential finger at a loose threat on his loincloth, his dark hair falling into his face.

I sit up, trying to ignore the sticky feeling between my legs and touch his knee lightly before asking, as gently as possible,

“What is it?”

I see him purse his lips as if in thoughts and then his shoulders fall and he sighs again, quietly.
“Please talk to me?”

He finally turns his head to me, looking at my face for a few seconds before saying, completely emotionless, “We should maybe get some work done.”

My hand, that was resting on his knee, falls down into the sand and my eyebrows knit together confused. I don’t even have time to ask why he’s suddenly acting like that, because with one last look at the ocean, he gets up and disappears into the house, leaving me completely bewildered and concerned.

In a quick motion, I pull my legs back up my body and rest my chin and mouth on my knees, the tip of my nose brushing lightly against the rather blond hair on my kneecaps.

I decide not to freak out yet, maybe he needs a few hours to digest what had happened. I think I even need some time myself, to re-point all my thoughts and to fully understand all these new things. After all, I did learn a lot today, more than I learned in all the 6 years we’ve been here at once, even.

His reaction would be okay and understandable if it wasn’t for that look on his face he’s used quite often today.

I guess I just have to wait and find out.

Chapter End Notes

I would love to hear from you guys <3 Thank you for all the sweet comments I’ve received so far, it means the world!

(btw, you would not *believe* how hard it is to *not* use the word 'fuck' in such a situation, and everytime I let Gerard 'curse' it was meant to be just that, but I figured that since they were kids when they got there, along with growing up in the early 1900s and all, that they just never heard that word)
Chapter 7

Chapter Summary

Please don't hate me *sweats nervously* I really really like this chapter but I also hate it the most

Chapter Notes

Songs I used while writing this chapter:

Better Than Me by Hinder
Too much Love will Kill you by Brian May
Don't know what you got (till it's gone) by Cinderella
Wasted Time by Skid Row

As always found in my JLOYS Spotify playlist ->
https://open.spotify.com/user/lawsbianforever/playlist/4gVeWoNGVTzBYxVTurC3 Eh?si=JIsuD--PR-2CiUh8H_d8_w

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Chapter 7

Frustration.

That’s the only word to describe my current mood. I’ve been frustrated for days now. It’s been exactly 7 days since the thing happened and I almost wish I could rewind time at that point. The mood between me and Gerard can only be titled as plain awful. It’s not like we’re fighting, but he rejects me. And that’s even worse.

It hurts.

I let him alone pretty much all day on that very day, figuring he just needed some alone time. But when he didn’t cuddle up against me that night but kept his fair distance, that’s when I got really concerned.
I tried to talk to him about it over breakfast the next day, but he would just change the topic and look down at his food or stare out the window or not react at all.

I tried everything; I left him alone, I pleaded, I screamed at him, I tried to be nice, but nothing helped.

On the first evening, after we did our chores and took some well-needed baths, I decided to approach him because I noticed the tiny longing looks he’d been given me over the day. But when I wrapped my arms around him from behind and kissed him on the shoulder, he shrugged out of my embrace and went into the forest until it was pitch dark outside.

On the third day, he wasn’t there when I woke up fairly early in the morning. I thought about using his absence to touch myself alone properly for the first time, but while it did feel nice, it never felt as incredible as when he did it and, in the end, I gave up and waited for it to go away again, my frustration only raising.

At some point during the week, in a moment of weakness, I asked him if he could kiss me again because I craved the feeling (though I didn’t say that), but he just shook his head and looked away guiltily without saying something.

The worst thing is that I know what it feels like now. I’ve never been kissed or touched like that before, no one ever bothered and I certainly was not interested in such things for a long time. Now it’s different though.

I’m feeling frustrated because he won’t talk to me in full sentences, won’t even look at me most of the day and when he does, he looks sad and guilty and longing. He won’t listen when I need to talk about my nightmares and I’m frustrated because he won’t show any kind of affection towards me or touch me. And I don’t even mean in a sexual way. It’s been so long since he last hugged me, or simply smiled at me. He avoids me as much as he can in any way possible.

Deep down, I don’t care if he never kisses me again or touches me in forbidden places or tells me about the wonders of adulthood. All I want for us right now is to go back being kids again, who would chase each other all day and laugh about nonsense.

All I want is to have my brother back.

He pretty much turned into a stranger over the last week.
On the late afternoon of the 7th day, I decide to give it one last try because I simply cannot take much more of this.

I find him sitting down by the stairs with his arms curled around his legs, the wind messing up his hair, making him look absolutely unhappy and beautiful at the same time.

Taking a deep breath, I walk down the stairs and stand grievously in front of him, not daring to sit down.

I feel totally stupid. There’s nothing intimidating about me, nothing that shows magnitude. All I have to offer are wobbly in-turned knees, feathery hair, too long and skinny limbs and a croaky new voice I’m still not used to.

He’s definitely noticed me by now, but he continues staring at the ground.

“To be straight, I don’t regret what happened last week, you obviously do. But Gerard, I don’t know what to do anymore and if you continue being like this, I will-“

“You will what, Mikey! Scream at me some more? Cry? Beg for me to talk? Go and tell mother and father what an ass I am if they come back? Move out? Well, have fun with that because we’re stuck here and there’s no one here for you to cry your eyes out to or to complain about how mean I am being to you, so leave me the hell alone!”

The only thing I can perceive are the tears that well up fast and hot in my eyes and him getting up to leave, but then I react and grab him tightly around the wrist.

“No! I’m not letting you leave just like that again!”

The words barely come out but when they do, they’re high-pitched with shock and tears and grief.

“Let go of me!” he growls in a dangerous tone that scares me and tries to pull his wrist out of my grip.

“No! Not until you tell me what’s going on-“
And then he slaps me straight across the cheek with a loud smack, leaving me to tumble backward with my palm pressed against the spot he just hit. I’m so perplexed that I can’t speak and my entire body starts to tremble in dread, making it hard for me to stand.

Gerard never hit me. Never.

I stare at him with shock and tears in my eyes and mouth slightly open and he looks equally shocked as to what he just did, looks apologetic even, but a second later he looks angry again and spits out,

“All I did was trying to protect you! If they ever come back and find out what happened, they’ll separate us and throw us into prison! I tried to prevent that from happening all these years but all you ever do is ask ‘What’s wrong Gee? Why don’t you want to sleep in my bed anymore? Am I not good enough for you anymore, Gee?’ in your ever so sweet voice but the answer is No! No to everything! Do you finally get that now, Mikey?”

After that, I truly feel like throwing up, his words and the way he quotes me so odious. Doesn’t he see how utterly much he’s hurting me right now?

“Shame on you, Gerard,” I say bitterly and humiliated, my breath caught painfully in my throat and choking me. There’s nothing left for me to do but to swallow my pride and ignore the shattering pain in my heart. But still... “I don’t understand,” because I truly don’t. Who is he talking about? Why is he suddenly talking about prison and people finding out? About what?

“We are brothers, Mikey!” he screams at me from the top of his lungs and moves his arms around wildly.

I’m shaking my head confused because, well, I know that.

“Brothers don’t do that, okay? Brothers aren’t so close to each other! They aren’t supposed to be attracted to each other and they certainly don’t have sex together! It’s wrong! It’s forbidden!”

“But you-“

“You forced me!” he spats out bitterly, but I know he’s not believing his own words. He knows just
as much as I do that I didn’t force him. I didn’t force him to touch me, like me the way he does or to kiss me or to fall asleep on my chest. Those were all his own decisions.

“Throw around these horrible things all you want, but at least stop lying to yourself, Gerard.”

I’m about to leave, grab my things and go wherever, but then he says, “You can’t have me,” simple and plain, and that hurts a million times more than him hitting me.

I turn around from where I just walked past him, hand still on my cheek and tears mingled with snot and reddened skin, “Who says that, you? Who told you all these things?”

Then he turns his head away with a betrayed look on his face and tears of his own running down his cheeks and says, suddenly very quietly,

“Brian did.”

That takes a moment for my brain to register because I never thought of Brian as someone like that, but I don’t think Gerard is lying, either. Instead, I clench my jaw and say, pain and disappointment audible in my voice, “And you believe that?”

He must so, because he doesn’t say anything in defense.

It startles me that he thinks that way, him above all people. All the conversations about equality and love thrown away like they never mattered.

A final nod and a “Good to know,” is all I have left to say before turning around and leaving for good.

I don’t know where I’m going, but something will come of it.

-

I’ve been walking for at least two hours, judging by the way the sun stands now.
I don’t know where I’m going, but it’s not like it matters. I just needed to get away from home. I thought about going back to the cave but quickly discarded the idea because that place would be too painful with all the memories we’ve created there.

Deep in the jungle, it’s cold and unfamiliar. All I have with me is the light blue blouse on my body and nothing else. No food, no water, nothing from home.

Maybe it’s for the best that way.

After another hour of walking around aimlessly, I’ve reached the other end of the island. I think I’ve been here only once before, with Gerard, years ago when we explored our new environment. I didn’t like it here then and I don’t like it now.

The beach here is of rocks and not of the white sand I’m used to. It smells like rotten fish and not like the clean ocean-air that I love so much.

It looks cold, dreary and unfamiliar. I’ve crossed a couple of weird looking animals, some sort of monkeys and reptiles on my way here that I’ve never seen and I wonder if they’re dangerous. I’m scared and lonely and my heart aches. But I wanted this, right? I wanted, no, needed to get away from there.

Trying not to think about Gerard and all the cruel things he said and, well, did, I take a breath and go back into the forest. I’m starting to get thirsty and I should probably find a water source before it gets dark.

I do, indeed, find a small pond about 500 meters away from the beach and even found two fairly big rocks sitting next to each other that serve poorly as shelter.

It’s evening when I threw a few brackens unlovingly over the stones as some sort of roof and made a tiny fire to warm up to, but the fire is as useless as the hungry growling from my stomach. I couldn’t find anything to eat earlier, not even berries or bananas. Gerard is the one who knows how to fish without a spear. I mean, I know how to fish, but I don’t have any equipment with me and without it, I’m useless. And I’m still cold. I can’t even feel the heat from the flames. My body feels numb and motionless, much like my soul.

I feel like there’s a huge wave of emotion coming up and I know I’m not prepared for either one of
It starts with realization.

As I sit there, with my forearms braced on my bend knees and a dead straw of grass between my fingers to stop me from ripping my hair out or something, a thought that is as painful as a fist to my gut floats my mind.

It comes so fast and unexpected; I was thinking about something entirely else but then, one, clear and simple sentence takes over my brain.

I am in love with Gerard.

And then, that one sentence takes on different shapes:

I’m in love with my best friend.
I’m in love with a boy.
I’m in love with an adult. (almost)
I’m in love with my soulmate.
I’m in love with my brother.

Then, the one last, precarious straw that I so desperately tried to hold on to to keep me sane snaps, and I almost hear my heart shattering into pieces inside my chest while tears start to fall from my eyes like heavy raindrops.

The blade of grass falls to the ground and my mud and grime-dirty hands shoot to my face where I begin to sob uncontrollably.

I know I once said that I was never told what love feels like so I wouldn't know if I was in love with him or anyone at all, but oh was I wrong all this time. I know so well that it feels like.

I fell in love with Gerard without even realizing it. I always knew we were pretty close, closer than most siblings I used to know, but that it would turn into love one day, pure, adult love... I would not have thought that.
And of course, I always loved him, but in the normal way you love your family. This though is something completely different. This is huge and scares the last remains of my soul out of my body.

I know that this is different because I felt it a long time coming. At least looking back now, I know that it was always there, crawling under the surface and waiting for me to discover it. And it would be great and wonderful if it wasn’t for this situation.

It’s not even for the butterflies I feel in my stomach or the touches or the kisses, but for the glances he would give me when he’s worried about me, it’s for the way he always knows how to cheer me up or hold me in the right moments when I need him the most. It’s for the many nights he sat sleep drunken by my bed to make sure that I was okay after waking up from a nightmare. It’s for the way he says my name and makes me feel like I’m never alone.

It’s for moments when he feels unwatched while drawing and he’d look deep in thoughts, his teeth worrying his lower lip without even noticing. It’s for the way his hair smells and the warmness of his hands and those huge eyes that always watch me so intently with protection and adoration.

It’s for when he looks so indescribably beautiful when he would wear my white dress, or when he curls his hair behind his ears or when smiles and those dimples form under his eyes. It’s for the way his voice sounds and how he would sometimes chew with a slightly open mouth while being deep in thoughts or how awkward his pinkie fingers look when he spreads his fingers while talking wildly and excited about a new idea he got.

It’s for how he said that he would never stop protecting me, no matter how much I disliked that.

I love him because he is my brother, but a higher force decided that this term wouldn’t be enough to explain everything that I’m feeling towards him.

It’s for the way he loves me back but never dared to admit it. I know he does, because I always felt it, in one way or another.

It has to be love what I’m feeling right now because, despite all the horrible things he said and did, I miss him so much that it’s hard to breathe and think.

The next feeling that makes itself home inside my body is grief. Pure, bitter and honest grief.
My cheek still throbs where he hit me, but I know he didn’t mean to and he’s probably hating himself right now for doing it. That, or he’s glad I’m finally out of the house and doesn’t have to see my face anymore.

I’m wondering if he’s looking for me? It’s hard to tell and I decide that he probably isn’t. But it’s a nice thought.

His words hurt me so much. I feel so humiliated for the way he mimicked me earlier, the way he made me sound like the neediest and forlorn person on the planet.

“..What’s wrong Gee? Why don’t you want to sleep in my bed anymore? Am I not good enough for you anymore, Gee? In your ever so sweet voice..”

All I ever tried was to be sincere and honest with him and show him how much I cared for him. I honestly thought he appreciated that more. How can I ever face him again without feeling absolutely ludicrous?

He made me look like a little, desperate child again and again and with every sentence he spat in my face, it hurt more than I ever thought words could hurt.

“..there’s no one here for you to cry your eyes out to..”

“..but the answer is No! No to everything!”

“You forced me!”

“You can’t have me.”

All of this echoes over and over in my head in his voice, taking me right back to that horrible conversation and after another hour of bawling my eyes and heart out, I’m so exhausted that I feel like I could pass out from my headache so I decide to call it a night and crawl in the small space between the rocks, trying to tuck all of my too long limbs under my body.
I don’t like it here. God knows what animals sneak around at night in the jungle. It smells unfamiliar, I’m cold and hungry and I ache all over.

I am so, so sad and alone. I feel small and wrong in my own body.

I feel like we became stranger in a matter of seconds when we fought. Everything I believed to know about him until that point vanished in a flick. I’m not even sure if that was considered fighting. In my eyes, that was something more. Something more painful and agonizing.

My stupid weakness brought him into a situation where he got badly hurt and caused him a kind of pain I could probably never understand. And not just today, no. It was probably building up inside of him for months, if not years. Every move I made, every word I said. He said that he tried to prevent terrible things from happening, things that didn’t make sense to me, but he must have had his reasons. That in return makes me incredibly mad because If he would have said something and made me understand what was going on inside his head, maybe things wouldn’t have gotten so horribly out of control.

But still...I can’t help but wonder what Gerard is doing at this moment. Is he already asleep? Is he out looking for me? Does he even miss me?

Was running away really the right thing to do at that moment? It certainly seemed like the right thing to do, given the circumstances. But then again, what if he wanted to say something else but just didn’t know how? I guess I’ll never know because it’s too late now. The damage is done and is done greatly, on both sides.

We’ve never been separated for more than a couple of hours, except for when we were at school and that one Summer when I was at camp and while I had fun, I remember how much I just wanted to go home to be with him again. Every night, I made believe that he would somehow magically stand in front of my uncomfortable camp-bed because he sneaked away from home and crawled under the covers with me. It wasn’t much, but my childlike thinking helped me back then.

It doesn’t now, however. I seriously feel like passing out, but how can you fall asleep when your brain is shouting at you nonstop? The fire is out completely now and as I watch the last remains of the embers expire with red and tired eyes, I make a promise to myself that I’ll go back first thing tomorrow and see if he’s still mad at me. But will he forgive me for running away or for hurting him? Will I be able to forgive him for everything he did today?

I don’t have an answer to either, but living under the same roof with Gerard while he probably hates me to hell is still better than living here, all on my own with no promise of, well, of anything at all,
But after telling myself that I’ll be going home and be able to see his face again, there’s a tiny spark of hope bubbling up inside my chest that finally lets me drift off into a light and restless sleep for a few hours.

However, when I wake up very early in the morning with a cooled down body and pain all over, especially my face, I change my mind without second thought. I woke up every 10 minutes from hunger and pain and strange sounds from the jungle that scared me. It was a mistake not to eat lunch yesterday when I was still at home and in the end, I’m only even more tired and exhausted than before.

It’s anger that comes next. And when it does, it comes in full force.

Gerard, the person whom I came to realize that I love most in this world, hit me in the face and didn’t even make a move to apologize. By hitting me, he humiliated me, broke my trust in him and most of all, hurt me. Both physically and mentally.

I know it bruised. I wouldn’t even need my cranky old hand-mirror to know that there’s an ugly bruise stretching over my cheek. I can feel it whenever I accidentally brush over it.

If you hit someone, you’re scum in their eyes. At least that’s what our grandma always told us. It means you don’t respect the person in front of you.

Deep, deep down somewhere in my heart, I know that he didn’t mean to hit me, it was probably just a rash reaction (though that’s no excuse), but my heart broke too much yesterday and now my brain takes over and induces everything he did and said on a completely new level.

He acted violently towards me in more ways than just one; The looks he gave me, expressions I’ve never seen on him before and that scared me to death. He took it so far that he made me feel feared of him.

The way my body reacted when he screamed out that first painful and hurtful paragraph where he made fun of me, was something that I never experienced before in my life and hopefully never, ever
I felt like my heart stopped beating, I felt like choking because my body was trembling so heavily and uncontrollable. Even my teeth clattered. My voice sounded chopped and thin and foreign to me. I was barely aware of the tears running from my eyes or my hand that was yet clasped around his wrist. It felt like I was out of my body in some frightening way.

And when he slapped me, that’s when I got really scared. Who slaps someone, and for that matter, their little brother, with such hate in their eyes?

Will I ever be able to come near him again without feeling the urge to curl into a ball to protect myself?

I’m angry that he hid, or at least felt like he had to hide the things Brian said to him, whatever they were. Doesn’t he know he can trust me? Didn’t I always show him that I trust him in all aspects of life? I mean, for all that is Holy, I trusted him so much that I let him touch me in my most vulnerable area to bring me into a state of sheer joy. Isn’t that the biggest proof of trust someone could come along with? Did he just take that for granted? The thought makes me sick to my stomach.

Of course, I miss him, sickening so, even, but I wouldn’t be here if he hadn’t acted so extraneous and fierce towards me.

Half of the morning passed, and I still haven’t calmed down. I tried to distract myself by finding something to eat, but I came up with nothing, my hunger increasing minutely. The only thing I fed my stomach since yesterday was the poor breakfast in the morning before the fight and then two hands full of disgusting tasting pond water.

Dehydrating doesn’t sound so much fun though, so I squeeze my eyes together and swallow a few more mouths full of water before going back to my pathetic rock-shelter. There’s no use in making a fire now that I have nothing to cook and I gave up on warming up at that point.

So here I am again, with nothing to do but to listen to every gruesome thing my brain shouts at me.

Between all the chaotic and tangled thoughts, I find something that catches my interest. Something I haven’t yet given a proper thought to. Something that always tried to sneak away whenever it crossed my mind, hidden behind other thoughts and emotions. Just one, single word. A name.
What on earth did Brian tell Gerard that made him act so damn brutal?!

“If they ever come back and find out what happened, they’ll separate us and throw us into prison! I tried to prevent that from happening all these years.”

“Brother’s don’t do that, okay? Brother’s aren’t so close to each other! They aren’t supposed to be attracted to each other and they certainly don’t have sex together! It’s wrong! It’s forbidden!”

“You can’t have me.”

-“Who says that, you? Who told you all these things?”

“Brian did.”

After I repeat those words over and over in my head, I come to the preliminary acceptance that all of this is entirely Brian’s fault. Whatever he told Gerard, besides what he revealed to me in tiny bits the other day, must have gotten to Gerard in a very serious way.

I’m taking a deep breath to contain my anger and to try to bring some sort of structure into all of this.

So, what I know, is that he told Gerard that if someone ever came back to rescue us and found out what we did, they would throw us into prison because we are brothers and brothers don’t have sex with each other. Am I getting this right?

I must be because if that’s what he told him, I sure as hell would have acted the same way as Gerard did. And what we did wasn’t even considered sex yet, I think. A preliminary stage, if anything.

Bit by bit, memories find their way to my brain and it becomes painfully clear what Gerard must have gone through the last years and especially the last few months.

When I woke up that first night in the cave because he was stroking me when he thought I was
sleeping, the way he froze and the look on his face when he found that I was awake. The morning after when he struggled with a morning erection, as I know now, and tried desperately to hide it from me. Every moment after when he was scared to let me come too close when I begged him to never leave me alone when I felt so anxious back when I was so scared of losing him. I can hear his words still so clearly:

“What I did in the cave, I did that to protect you..”

“I promise I will explain it to you one day, and that day will come, but for now I can’t tell you.”

That situation not too long ago when he had me pressed against the tree trunk...

“You,- you wouldn’t know..”

“Sometimes you look so..it’s so difficult sometimes not to-..“

And finally, that eventful day barely over a week ago.

“Mikey we- we can’t do this..”

-“Why not?”

“We shouldn’t be doing this.”

None of this were ever Gerard’s decisions, but he felt like he had to do as he was told because someone, someone who I thought I could trust and always looked up to, abused his trust and fed him lies and threatened him with the most absurd things.

It’s so horrible to think about it. Gerard was only twelve back then, just an innocent child when someone came and enlightened him into the secrets of love and desire and forbade him in the same moment to do any of those wondrous things with the person he loved.

I don’t even know if he felt like that towards me then, but judging one of his statements he made, he
didn’t. That only came later. How terrifying must it have been for him to grow up and realize that all the bad things he was told to keep back did in fact occur?

I remember now how he looked over his shoulder anxiously several times after we actually got this far and let happen what had happened. He must have been totally frightened that someone saw it happen and immediately take us away from each other like Brian promised they would if they ever found out.

Now I feel devastatingly sorry for forcing all of this on him. Of course, I had no idea, but knowing what pain it caused him is just dreadful.

And while all of this is awful even to think about, it does have a positive side to it.

I know now that none of this was ever one-sided on my end.

To know that all those tiny, shy glances and secret touches he’d often give me were real and honest, to know that none of it was ever forced or fake or that he felt like he had to be close to me because I told him to do so, is so relieving, that I could cry again.

His love for me must be really big if he was ready to give up all of his feelings and secret desires just so I would be okay in the end, or both of us, for that matter.

That thought sews a few of the many broken pieces of my heart together again.

It surprises me that I don’t feel any sorts of betrayal towards him. I would have thought that I would feel betrayed for the simple fact that he believed all the things Brian told him, but I know my brother. I know him better than anyone else in this world and I know that he felt like he didn’t have a choice.

I would risk my life to assume that deep down, he knew that what he was told was wrong. After all, he was the one who told me that everyone should be able to love whoever they wanted to love. I know he strongly believes in equality for everyone and that people who say otherwise were full of crap.

When I was maybe five or six, Gerard told me that I could do whatever I wanted to do in life for as long as it would make me happy and didn’t hurt anyone. I mean, how must he have felt when suddenly someone came and told him that everything he ever believed in was wrong?
Love, in any way, is one of the few things in life you cannot prevent from happening and I know, just know from the bottom of my heart, that Gerard lives after that.

Kids have such fragile minds and they should be protected from getting hurt in every way possible.

Brian hurt my brother.

And for that, I will hate him until the end of my life.

I’m grateful that he saved us and enabled for me and Gerard to be together after we lost everyone else and I’m grateful that he taught us how to survive out here and, yes, we had fun times together that I will surely never forget, but now that I know that there was always that unfamiliar fear creeping in the back of Gerard’s mind, I can’t help the hate and disgust that gathers up inside my stomach.

I can’t even begin to understand the guilt he must be feeling after all of this. I won’t take back that he hurt me, because he did plenty, but it wasn’t his fault.

How did he even live like this for so many years without going completely crazy? All his feelings, the good ones and the bad ones must have gathered up for so long now and while it’s sad and wrong that they finally came out this way, I’m glad they did because now we can talk about it. Now that I understand.

I just hope there will ever be the chance to do so.

Now that I experienced everything from realization to grief, anger, and betrayal, more or less, it’s nostalgia that floods my body and soul from head to toe, and it’s absolutely awful. There is simply no other way to explain it.

While I was struggling with my thoughts, the day stretched over my head and now that I thought every thought one could possibly think, my headache from yesterday returns and wrecks my head greatly.

It looks like it is the middle of the afternoon and my poor stomach whines for food. I also tried to
avoid drinking that disgusting water since early this morning, and now I’m paying the price for it because my mind starts to swim.

I can’t stay here for a second longer. I need food and water and clean clothes. I need a warm body to curl up against to warm me up before I catch pneumonia. I need to get away from here and apologize to Gerard.

With that goal in mind, I stand up on shaky legs to make my way back home, where I belong.

Chapter End Notes

Please comment and let me know what you think!

Also, I saw Fall Out Boy a few days ago..it was the best night I've ever had <3
Chapter 8

Chapter Summary

This chapter is probably the most important one in the entire story...also has one of my favourite quotes I've ever written in it <3

Chapter Notes

Songs I used while writing this chapter:

Fairytale by Harry Gregson-Williams
Now or Never by Mark Medlock
Heart Like Yours by Willamette Stone

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Chapter 8

I’m approximately halfway home when my head starts to swim heavily from dizziness and I miss a step, causing me to trip and fall over in a blurry haze.

On the long and exhausting walk home from the other side of the island, I stopped counting the painful cuts on my feet put there by the wild nature of this jungle I’m not so much used to.

The pain of that, the lack of food and water and sleep must be what caused my brain to almost shut down. I know I didn’t pass out, but I feel like it was a really close thing. I know that I’m still all the way there when I feel the sudden and agonizing pain that shoots through my right foot and ankle, causing me to cry out in pain.

When I pull myself together and try to focus on what happened, I see that I jammed my foot in between a split root of a tree that emerges from the ground, it seems like. I must have bent my foot too far and I pray that the bone-shattering pain isn’t the sign that it’s broken. Wouldn’t that just be my luck on top of everything else?

It must be, though. Because with every poor attempt at getting my foot out of there, the pain
increases to a point where I’m about to lose my mind, so eventually, after a good half hour of trying and crying out in pain with every weak pull, I give up and slump back against the trunk of the tree that caused me to break my foot.

My entire face burns from the dirt that has been accumulating there since I left home and mingled with tears that left my eyes for too long now, and from the several cuts inflicted from falling over and crashing into several random bushes and branches in the good hour and a half I’ve been walking now.

It’s hard to focus and watch where you’re going when your brain is constantly clouded with dizziness and a black fog. None of this would have happened if I just drank enough water from the pond or, well, if I wouldn’t have run away in the first place.

Another hour and the evening is making itself noticeable in the sky, and that’s when I get really scared. There’s no way for me to move in that state which means I have to spend the night here, in the middle of nowhere, without any sorts of shelter and in so much pain that I threw up twice already. Nothing but stomach acid came out which is just another proof of how long I’ve gone without anything to eat now. That can’t be a good sign.

I feel so inhuman in my own body; every inch of my skin hurts, my foot is still painfully twisted between that damned root and started to swell and turn blue and purple, I long for a bath because I’m covered in dirt and grime from head to toe and I’m so incredibly weak that I can’t think straight anymore.

This is not going to be the end for me, is it? Wouldn’t that be just funny? Two kids survived a shipwreck, magically found an island in the middle of the ocean and made themselves at home there for over half a decade. Then one of them dies because they got mad and run away, tripped over and broke their foot and will now find the end of their days lonely and alone in the depths of a jungle and will probably get killed by wild animals.

The worst of it all is, that I never got a chance to apologize to Gerard. I might be overdramatic here, but I can’t help it.

Thinking about him lets fresh tears well up in my eyes and I don’t even bother to brush them away. It’s not like it matters anymore.

Another two hours later, and I’m sure that’s it. The pain increased to a point where I zoned out a couple of times now and I feel like my body is drying out from the inside which is one of the worst feelings I’ve ever experienced and hopefully never, ever will again if I come out of here living.
As the twilight breaks in and dives everything around me in sinister darkness, something catches my eyes.

I engage my eyes and brain to focus one last time and after a moment of weird haze, I find a little, yellow monkey sitting by my broken foot, happily chewing on something and looking up at me through big, black eyes.

My first thought is that I imagined him. We don’t have these kinds of monkey on this island. Or do we and I’ve just never seen one? Maybe they only live on the far end where we never bother to go? That must be it.

When he makes a shrill sound and runs to a bush a few feet away from me, that is when I’m sure that I didn’t make him up.

My eyes follow him to the little bush where he made himself at home and that’s when I recognize what he’s eating so happily: Mint! How come I didn’t see that until now?

“Hey...would you mind passing me some of these?” I haven’t spoken for too long now and since my mouth is all dry, it’s hard to form words.

The yellow monkey turns his head and looks at me while chewing wildly on the leave in his tiny fingers. Of course, he doesn’t make a move to actually give me a handful of leaves, but it almost doesn’t matter, because now that I know that there’s something to eat, even if it’s just a gap filler, it is something and I feel new motivation bubbling up inside of me.

Very, very slowly, I reach out and weakly rip some of the leaves from their branch. The monkey watches me intently the entire time and doesn’t make a move to run away.

When I slump back against the tree and I put some of the leaves in my mouth, I could nearly cry from joy. The minty flavor revives my brain cells and the tiny dew drops, that gathered in the grooves of the leaves, slightly help to re-saliva my mouth.

It does nothing to still my hunger, but it gives me a fillip to stay awake and to keep fighting against the darkness that makes itself home inside my head for a little while longer.
The monkey makes another high-pitched sound and jumps on the trunk of the tree I’m leaning against.

“You’re leaving already?” I ask in a husky voice and when I tilt my head to look up, I see him hanging there upside down on the trunk, watching me with those dark eyes.

A smile creeps onto my face and the pain seems forgotten for a precious moment when he crawls down and starts to mess up my hair. At first, I’m startled as to what he’s doing, but when I feel his tiny fingers carding through my hair, I relax and let him do whatever he’s doing since it doesn’t hurt.

After a while, he stops and crawls down my head and shoulder and sits down on my forearm that I can barely hold up because I’m weak, but for him, it’s worth using all the strength I have left inside of me. His claws hurt a little bit on my sensitive skin, but I’ve felt worse pain.

“Aren’t you beautiful,” I say in a quiet voice so I won’t startle him.

And he really is. It’s almost entirely dark by now, but I can still make out his tiny, almost human-like hands and fingers that grab my arm tightly, his dark nose and even darker dots of eyes. His fur is grey and yellow and his tail is long and flexible.

“What are you doing here all by yourself?” I ask him and watch as he flexes his head from side to side nimbly. “I got into a fight with my brother and run away from home, you know? We hurt each other pretty badly, but I miss him a lot.”

I don’t know why I keep talking at this point, it’s not like he understands a single word, but it distracts me and that’s enough for me to keep going.

“If I told you a secret, would you keep it?”

He sits up straight and starts poking at his slightly round belly and I can’t help but stifle a small laugh.

After watching him for a moment, I eventually sigh and say, almost in a whisper so no one will be able to hear the secret slipping from my lips, “I think that’s how nature wanted us to be all along, you know? Together. Me and my brother, I mean.”
My own words bring a sad smile on my face and remind me how badly I want and need to be with him.

The monkey stops poking at its belly and looks back at me, curling his tail around my arm.

“Do you have a name? Would it be okay if I called you Peppermint?” he did, after all, save my life in a way. Or at least extend it for a little while longer and in my opinion, that deserves a cool name.

He makes another sound and jumps from my arm and that’s when I notice that he’s only got three feet. The left one on his backside is only a stump where his little leg ends. It doesn’t seem to bother him at all though, because he runs around happily and ably.

“Well, for one so small you are pretty strong, huh?” I say and watch in awe as he jumps on another tree across from me. Then he shrieks again, startled from a sound that makes me jump as well, and before I can stop him, he disappears into the high crones of the trees above my head and into the darkness.

I follow the direction he left to with my eyes for a few more seconds until I hear the sound again that startled us in the first place.

It’s Gerard.

It must be him, because who else would be walking around with an old lantern in his hand and my white dress in the dark of the night? And have I mentioned yet how much I love that dress on him?

I know that I didn’t make him up either, because he calls my name from the top of his lungs and every single emotion I experienced from the second he started to reject me a week ago comes up and overwhelms me, causing the exhaustion the monkey eliminated for a moment to come back, stronger now than ever.

If he didn’t notice me by now, he certainly has now because my sobs are loud and uncontrollable. I don’t find the strength to call out his name. It doesn’t matter though, because the light of the lantern stops to move from left to right in the dark, and then it comes closer and closer until he’s there and falls to his knees in front of me.
I’m unable to move and it seems he’s going through the same moment of shock as me when he sees me in the dim light of the lantern. He looks equally wrecked as me, with dirt clinging to his clothes and skin, hair a mess, red around his nose and eyes from salty tears and the look of insomnia and exhaustion in his gaze.

His hands shoot up to his face and clasp over his mouth, and new tears fall heavily from his eyes in pain and shock and guilt.

“What did I do to you…” he starts to sob out, but I ignore it and clumsily throw my arms around his neck, screaming out in pain when another shot of hot pain fires through my ankle from the sudden movement.

“Oh Mikey, I’m so-“

“Take me home, I want to go home now, Gee,” I try to gasp out, but it’s nearly drowned by the pain that takes over my voice. Another very unpleasant move and I have to let go from Gerard to grasp at my foot with gritted teeth and eyebrows drawn together in pain.

It seems he only now realizes why I’m sitting in such a weird position on the ground and his eyes go wide when he sees my swollen ankle in between the tree root.

He looks up at me quickly with a frightened expression on his face and asks, “For how long have you been here like this?”

I want to answer, but my mouth won’t seem to function and all I can do in the end is to shake my head purposeless. Then my head suddenly feels like it weighs a ton and it falls to my side while a tiny sound of debilitation escapes my mouth.

“No okay, don’t move Mikes, I’ll figure something out, yeah? Don’t go to sleep,” he sounds worried and panicked, just like I feel.

There’s no sound for a long moment and I wonder if I passed out again because when I open my eyes next, he breaks the root apart with two thin but massive sticks.

I watch him as he works but can’t help to contribute. Every few seconds he would look up and make sure that I’m still awake.
“There was a monkey,” I say breathless, not really realizing that my mouth moves.

He stops in his tracks and looks up at me funny. “What?”

“He was yellow...stroked my hair,” and then my eyes fall shut again.

“Damn it!” he curses and heaves a heavy breath and then I hear a loud cracking sound that must come from the root. I feel the pressure on my foot subsiding but another kind of pain shoots through my ankle as he lifts my leg.

I whine out another moan of agony and he says, “I know, I know Mikes I’m sorry,” and then I feel him by my side again, wrapping one of his strong arms under my armpits and the other under my thighs.

“Sweetie, can you wrap your arms around my neck? Can you do that for me? You can sleep soon, I promise.”

His voice is sweet and familiar and loving, causing my belly to burn. I nod and weakly lift my arms to let them slump around his neck like he ordered me to do. He takes in a loud breath and everything around me starts to swim again when he stands up, holding the lantern in the hand he has under my thighs.

My head immediately falls to the side and crashes against his collarbone and as much as I try to tighten my muscles so I’m not so heavy for him, it’s not working. My legs dangle together in the air from the way they are hanging from his arms and with each step he takes, they crash together, causing me to groan in pain.

He shushes me well-meaningly and apologizes whenever he needs a small break, but at some point, I only zone in and out, not perceiving what’s happening anymore. That is until he says something that catches my interest in the haze of darkness.

“Look ahead, can you see them?” he asks and when I lumberingly open my eyes, I see tiny dots of light in the dark of the night.
“Lucioles,” I whisper out the only French word we both know and he nods with a small smile on his face that I can barely make out but God, I missed that smile.

When we finally reach the beach after what feels like an eternity, we’re both so strained that we’re close to passing out on the spot. I can’t believe he carried me all the long way without saying a word. I mean, I know I’m not that heavy, but I’m large and unhandy.

He looks so tired when he carefully lays me down on our bed, but instead of going to sleep, he gets up and comes back a minute later with a wet cloth and a cup of water.

He puts me into a half-sitting position and makes me drink the entire cup before refilling it and making me drink that one as well. It hurts to swallow and my stomach protests at first, but it gets easier after the first couple of gulps.

Then he carefully removes the dirty blouse over my head (that is everything but light blue at this point) and lays me back down again. When I shiver, he feels my forehead and brings all our blankets but doesn’t put them on me just yet. Instead, he swipes the wet cloth carefully over my chest, my arms, my hands and eventually my face.

He stops then, with his palm on my cheek on the spot where he hit me and the bruise probably still blooms angrily. It must be because new tears float his eyes and he looks down at me sadly. He tries so hard not to let the tears fall that his chin starts to quiver.

“Your beautiful face…” he chokes out in a whisper, but I’m not ready to hear long preachings about how he’s sorry and wishes he could take it back. I do want to hear it, but just not right now.

I weakly lift my hand to cup his own cheek and copy his sad smile and when one of his tears falls down and lands on my shoulder, I feel his thumb stroke over my eyebrow.

He squeezes his eyes shut tightly for a moment and I let my hand fall back on my side and when he opens his eyes again, he continues to swipe over my face carefully and hisses to himself every time he accidentally catches a cut on either my face or later on my feet.

“Can you sing?” I ask, barely able to keep my eyes open at that point. I barely heard his voice in the last week and when I have, it was either angry or loud or scared. I long for it to sound normal and carefree again.
“Okay,” he says without questioning and carefully starts to inspect my broken foot. “Any wishes?”

“The Wolf Song,” I say through gritted teeth and try not to cry out again when he carefully turns my foot this way and that.

It’s a German song about a hungry wolf that wants to steal the mother’s child. Our grandma used to sing it to us when we were over for the weekend and later, she taught us the words in that foreign language. She knew German because she liked to travel and got stuck in that country for a few years in her youth. Whenever I hear it now, it reminds me of her, and Gerard and I as kids cuddled together in her big bed that smelled like her cologne.

When Gerard starts to sing, a little shy and croaky at first but then sure and strong, my heart aches in both grief and joy.

*Wild heult der Wolf des Nachts im Wald,*

*vor Hunger kann er nicht schlafen.*

*Und seine Höhl´ ist bitterkalt,*

*er giert nach fetten Schafen.*

*Du Wolf, Du Wolf, komm nicht hierher.*

*Mein Kind bekommst Du nie mehr...*

There are many more verses in this song, but I’m only able to hear the first one before finally passing out to his voice and the feeling of warm blankets being dragged over me and a warm hand brushing over my forehead.

*When I wake up, the sun stands high in the sky already and a big variety of fruits, fish, and drinks stands next to the mattress on the floor. I’m disappointed to find that Gerard isn’t sleeping next to me,*
but maybe that was a bit too much to be expected. It doesn’t surprise me now that I had no trouble letting him close to me last night, when only a few hours before, I wasn’t so sure. The worries were blown away the second I saw him and I’m glad it came that way. I guess that’s how I saw it coming, or hoped so, at least. I depend on him and I don’t want to feel like that towards him, not ever.

When I try to sit up without moving too much, my ankle makes itself noticeable and when I lift the covers, I find it resting on a bunch of bundled up clothes and wrapped in a thick bandage of leftover cotton that we stored in one of the boxes in our dressing room.

My toes poke out and I notice something yellow lurking out from under the bandage when I take a closer look.

“That’s arnica. Mother always used it when we had bruises. I went out to get it last night...”

I didn’t notice Gerard standing in the doorway and when I look up, I see that he nervously twists his hands together. He looks awfully tired and I wonder if he got any sleep at all last night.

“Thank you,” I say dumbly and look down on my foot again.

There’s an awkward silence where neither of us knows what to say, so instead of saying something, I gesture for him to sit down and eat with me, which he does after a moment of uncertainty.

Despite how very little I ate in the last few days, I can’t seem to get more than a few bites of grilled fish and two cups of tea down. It is a start though and my blood sugar seems to thank me greatly.

Gerard only eats little himself in tiny, unsure bites and whenever our eyes meet for a quick second, he would look away immediately and fumble nervously at his button up.

After another awkward 15 minutes of pretending the other isn’t in the room, I finally can’t take it anymore.

“You hurt me.”

When I say it, Gerard’s head snaps up and he looks at me with big and guilty eyes. He’s about to say
something, but now it’s my time to speak. I shake my head and he closes his mouth again.

“You hurt me,” I repeat, quietly and calm. “And I’m not even talking about my face, that scared me. But everything you said hurt me and I don’t think I’ll ever be able to forget any of it. But...”, I say, but stop when I see that he starts crying and I know I’m crying too.

I force myself to keep going with a shaky voice and start to get desperate when I say, “But I forgive you. I forgive you if you promise me here and now to never do that to me again, and if you ever break that promise, I will-“

But then he shakes his head violently and throws his arms around my neck, his head crushing against mine but I seriously don’t care about pain at this point anymore. So instead of complaining, I curl my arms around his back and press my face into his neck and we’re both sobbing into each other’s skin.

“I promise you, Mikey, I swear I’ll never hurt you again! I’m so sorry- I. I’ll never forgive myself for any of this and I know you deserve so much better than me-“

“Shut up! Shut up, you idiot! Don’t ever say that!”

Then there are no more words for a long while and the only sound in the quiet room are our heavy breaths and our mixed snuffles and tiny whines.

After a moment, he sags against my shoulder and then I realize that he probably stayed up all night to make sure I was alright and didn’t die in my sleep or something. And he says I deserve better than him...

“When was the last time you slept?” I ask and card my fingers through his hair, which seems to relax him a bit.

“When you-“ he starts but doesn’t finish the sentence, and he doesn’t have to. He didn’t sleep since I ran away, just like me.

“Come on,” I say quietly and pull him in a lying position with his head still on my shoulder.
He doesn’t protest when I pull the many blankets he brought last night over our shoulders, and when I turn in on him a little more, he’s already passed out from exhaustion.

I follow not much later.

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The next time I wake up, it’s already getting dark again which means we slept almost the entire day. This time, Gerard is curled up low against my side and I’m painfully relieved.

My head is still throbbing as well as my ankle, but I don’t feel dizzy anymore and I’m rested for the first time in days. Carefully, so I won’t wake him, I get up into a sitting position with Gerard’s head in my lap. Then I reach over to where the food is and stuff my mouth with Gerard’s home-made specialty: Banana mango pancakes.

While I’m eating, I watch Gerard sleep. I normally don’t do that, mostly because I don’t like being watched while sleeping myself, but this time I can’t help it.

He looks small and fragile. His head is positioned on both of my upper thighs, facing my feet, and one of his hands rests lightly on my left thigh next to his eyes and nose. His hair is messy and unkempt, probably also unwashed for several days just like my own. His face is scrunched up, almost as if in pain. His knees are curled up next to my own knees and his ankles are crossed, his toes curled. He must have thrown the blankets away in his sleep, probably because it’s so warm in here.

He’s still wearing the button-up and also the brown leather loincloth I didn’t notice this morning. The birthmark high on his cheek looks redder than usual, maybe because he’s so pale or maybe because the lighting in here is bad.

Despite all the dirt sticking to his hair and body and clothes, and despite the unrelaxed look on his face, he looks absolutely gorgeous in my eyes.

He’ll be my own personal doom eventually. He’s a beautiful disaster.
“You’re still here,” is what he says when he wakes up and turns his head, looking up at me with sleepy eyes.

When I nod and curl a strand out of his eyes, his mouth curls into a slight smile and one of his arms wraps around my belly. Now he’s lying in the opposite direction as before with his face facing my belly and his knees bend somewhere up his body. When he nuzzles his nose deeper against my belly, that is only covered with the thin blanket I wrapped around myself earlier, I have to suppress a cackle.

“Are you sniffing me?”

“Mmm, maybe. You always smell so nice.”

I snort at his words. “How can I possible smell nice right now?!?”

I can smell my own body, which is something I’m now very self-conscious about, now that he put it out. I know I smell unwashed and probably like leftovers of undefinable grime he didn’t catch with the cloth yesterday.

“Dunno, you just do,” he says, but it comes out muffled against the cotton of the blanket.

“What do I smell like, then?” I want to know.

“Like...sweat. A little raw maybe, but also...you know how really warm sand smells like? Like that, too. And soft.”

“You like that I smell like sweat?”

There’s a moment of silence and I might feel a grin on his face, but I can’t know for sure with his face hidden like that. Then he makes a snarling sound and says, “Yes,” and nothing more.

The self-consciousness I might have felt a minute ago is now gone and replaced with amusement.
Gerard is ridiculous.

“You’re a weirdo,” I state and now it’s his turn to snort.

There’s a moment of comfortable silence and he might even have gone back to sleep, but there’s something I need to know, something that has been nagging on my mind for too long now and I need answers and most of all, a proper clarification.

“Gee? Tell me about Brian.”

Crying while speaking is not the best combination.

Less than half an hour into the story and Gerard is a weeping mess in my lap and every single one of my assumptions got confirmed. And there is more.

“It was maybe only 30 days after we got here,” he began. “I was twelve at the time and you were just about to turn ten. At first, I didn’t understand what he was trying to tell me. Most of the things didn’t make sense to me. I mean, I was only a child...”

That was the first time I heard a soft sniffle coming from him and I stroked his hair to let him know I was there.

“He said that at some point, my instincts would kick in and I’d be all over you in a matter of time because you were the only person there with me besides him, and he knew how close we were. I didn’t understand what he meant with ‘instincts’, and when I asked him, he laughed grotesque at me and said that I’ll figure it out sooner or later, so I left it at that.”

“The next time he took me on a walk was only a few days later. This time, he was really nice, not
like the last time, and sat down with me to explain puberty to me, what would happen with the body and all that gist. It made me feel excited and anxious at the same time because he spoke of it as something very terrifying and big and I wasn’t sure if I was ready for that to happen to me in less than a year… and… well, the next time was also the last time, he died the next day.”

At that, my gut wrenched. I didn’t like remembering that day and Gerard didn’t either. It was just another black day in our lives. And his next sentence made me want to throw up.

“He asked me if I knew what abusing was,” he said, very quietly and anxious and I reached down to tangle our hands together, which made him relax a little.

“I told him that I had a fair idea because one of mother’s friends was an abuse victim and I heard family members talking and I remembered a few things. I didn’t understand why that was important to him, but then he said ‘Pal, if you ever get too close to your brother, then that’s abusing.’ That also didn’t make sense to me because we were close all the time and no one ever said anything, but then he told me that this was about other things… sex things.”

I heard him heave a heavy, painful sigh and then continued, his hand getting sweaty in mine.

“I asked him if it was wrong if I wanted to kiss you at some point or even go further than that, I mean, I didn’t even understand what sex or masturbation or serious kissing meant at that point. I only had a few pictures in my head from what he told me the first few times. Anyways… when I asked him, he looked at me, so engrossed and disgusted, that it scared me for a moment. It was just natural to me that these things could happen, you know? Well, after that, he told me that these things were called ‘incest’ and that they were wrong and forbidden and people who did it deserved to die in a fire.”

As he said that, my body went numb and my heart stopped beating for a long moment. And this is where he is in the story now. As I said, only half an hour, maybe even less, in, and every terrible thought got confirmed.

Brian really did tell him these things and it’s even worse than I thought.

“You don’t have to keep going… I understand it,” I say sadly now and with tears of my own in my eyes. I don’t want him to re-live all these horrifying things and I feel bad for forcing this on him.

But he shakes his head and sniffs, “No, it’s okay. I’m sick of keeping secrets from you.” So, with
another heavy sigh, I let him continue.

“I told him that no one deserved to die, except maybe the worst murderer or war leader, but he said that this was on the same level as murdering someone. I told him that I would never abuse you or do anything against your will, but I could feel that he didn’t believe a word of what I was saying. I really meant it, though. I would never do anything without your permission. ...Or did I ever-?”

But I stop him before he gets any further. This is getting ridiculous. He looks up at me now though, for the first time since he started talking, and I can see the deep worry in his eyes so I try to relax my face as much as possible, not letting my anger show.

“Oh, Gee…no. Never, okay? You never forced me to do anything. Not once, okay? Don’t ever let anyone tell you otherwise.”

His expression softens a bit by my words and he leans his head down again, but in the other direction so his face is turned towards my knees.

“He asked me if I could imagine doing these things with you, but I couldn’t give him a proper answer, just because I sincerely didn’t know. It never crossed my mind until that point. It was all foreign to me, you know?”

I agree with him because I do know. I didn’t understand any of this until a week ago and it still confuses me. And I’m fourteen and a half now, he was only twelve. How can someone expect a kid to know what any of this means or what they might be wanting to do or desire in the future?

“Apparently my silence was the wrong answer because then he started to shout at me. Didn’t you hear it?” he asks and turns his head a little to look at me from the corner of his eyes.

“I guess I didn’t.”

I don’t have any memories of this and he looks relieved when I say it.

“Good, because it was very ugly. He grabbed around my wrist and shook me a little and told me, well, screamed at me that if he ever had to see any of this while he was still here or if anyone ever came back and found out, they would separate us forever, throw us into prison, if we were lucky, or killed us right on the spot if we weren’t. That scared me so much that I believed him. I mean, what
was I supposed to do, Mikey? I couldn’t live with myself if someone-“

“Shh, Gee, it’s okay, you can stop now. I’m not mad at you for believing what he said, I would have acted the same way to protect you, you know that it’s okay.”

“But you said-“

“That was because I didn’t know. How could I? You never said anything and I was mad and thought that was you talking. I know better now, okay? I knew it the moment I turned my back on you.”

Well, that isn’t entirely true. I mean, I knew that he was probably just mad and threw these things against my head in anger a few days ago when things got out of hand, but after calming down and really thinking about it, I got it. I tell him that much and he seems to accept it.

“’Prevent from getting attracted to your brother in any way. That way, you do humanity a great favor.’ That was the last thing he said before going back. After that, he acted like nothing happened, as if we had a happy talk about the weather or God knows what. The next day he was gone. If it was because of me or not...that I’ll never know.”

After that, he goes completely silent and the only way I know he’s still with me are the hot tears that leak through the blanket on my skin.

I don’t know what to do or say to make any of this okay or better. All I know is that I need him closer, put him under a blanket and protect him from the world and anyone who could hurt him in any way.

I’m so done with the human race at that moment.

“Will you hug me?” I ask him carefully, and before I even finished the sentence, he has his arms around me and his face in my neck.

“I never meant to bring you down,” he sniffs against me after he’d seen how upset I am myself after all of this. I quickly shush him and stroke over his back in a way that is hopefully comforting and reassuring.
“Don’t worry about me right now, okay? But please do me a favor and don’t force this on you. Even if it was because of what you talked about the day before, what I don’t believe, it was his decision to go and if it was like that, it was a really selfish decision. We could have died the day after without him and our death would have been on him. This is not your fault, Gerard. And no one will ever have to find out, because we won’t go with them if someone ever shows up. We’re here, okay? Just us. Just you and me.”

He doesn’t respond to that in words, but I can almost feel how he gets lighter like a burden is taken off of him. It’s so horrible to think that he had to live with that on his chest all these years. No wonder he’d gone mad.

He sobs again bitterly then, cries all of his pain and hurt and betrayal and fear and relieve into my neck and I let him, glad that he can finally let it out and make himself free from all of this.

It hurts so much to see and hear him like that and yes, I’m sure. For that, I will hate Brian until I leave this world someday, hopefully far in the future. How could he even dare to do this to him! It’s horrendous.

“It’s okay,” I whisper into his hair, trying to soothe him.

After another few minutes, he seems to calm down and I’m so relieved that I feel light myself. I couldn’t stand seeing him like that for much longer, I’m sure.

In a slow and careful move, I lift his head from my shoulder and brush a light but sure kiss against his lips. It’s barely even a touch, just a tiny lingering and he tastes like salt and sadness.

When I pull back, he looks at me with new fear in his eyes and I brush the tears under his eyes away lightly with my thumbs.

“It’s okay,” I say again, sincerely meaning it.

“Promise?” he says, sounding so fragile and scared that it breaks my heart.

“I promise.”
He nods and takes a deep breath, finally looking slightly okay for the first time in days.

“What happened after that?” I ask unsure, going back to the conversation one last time and hoping that the worst is over.

He surprises me when he blushes and says, suddenly very shy,

“You grew beautiful.”

That, in return, makes me blush too and I look down to hide it.

“I’m not beautiful,” I mumble, but his hands pull my head back up and I see that he’s shaking his head.

“You have no idea...” he mutters and runs a hand through my hair and leans our foreheads together before sighing out, “You grew beautiful and everything I was told to believe was simply gone.”

After heaving another sigh, he turns around and leans his back against my chest, asking me approximately a thousand times if that was okay or if it hurt to sit like that, but after I slapped him playfully on the shoulder, he accepted it and made himself even more comfortable.

This position is actually quite nice and I carefully wrap my legs around his waist, making sure that my broken foot doesn’t move too much and lays in a good position. It kind of does hurt, but I keep that to myself and I’m glad that he can’t see my face from this position, because If he saw that I just caused myself pain, he’d pull away and I don’t want that. It will stop hurting if I keep it still. Whatever.

When I also wrap my arms around him and pull him closer so I can rest my head against the side of his neck, he makes a content noise and continues talking.

“I don’t even remember the exact day it happened, all I know is that I was already outside, I let you sleep in I think, and when I saw you the next time, you were just coming down the stairs with a huge smile on your face, for some reason. You wore your favorite dress, you know? The yellow one? Your legs looked so long and your skin was slightly tanned. You were braiding your hair back while
walking because it had gotten a little too long, and you were looking at me and it just hit me. It was almost like I had never seen you before, not properly. You grew so handsome overnight that I didn’t know what to do with myself. Before you were my annoying, cute little brother, but that was something entirely different and it scared me to death.”

Wow that’s… that’s a lot of information and I’m yet again glad he’s facing away from me because now I’m blushing for real. I always knew he found me cute and probably nice to look at or whatever, he did give me compliments every now and then, but that is almost shocking. Shockingly amazing and relieving. That as well wasn’t just one-sided, then.

“Gee...” I mumble sheepishly into his shoulder with a tiny smile, not knowing what else to say. Should I say Thank You?

I hear him giggle quietly and then he says, “Sorry, I didn’t mean to embarrass you, but it’s the truth and I meant it when I said no more secrets.”

In response, I fumble around until I find his hands and entwine his fingers with mine. “Keep going,” I say, sticking my nose in the spot behind his ear.

“Well, before I came to the realization that I was falling in love with my little nerd brother, I had to go through puberty, and we both know how much power that drains from you. Everything is awkward, your body does strange and, in some cases, embarrassing things, you don’t understand what’s going on anymore and all of a sudden, you realize that you become interested in, well, sexual things.”

It’s almost like he’s explaining my life-story here. I’ve gone through every single phase of what he just listed down myself and I know how exhausting any of that can be at the end of the day.

“I told you before how scared and ashamed I was the first time I woke up with an erection and how long it took me to figure out how to go through my day to day life with it happening randomly around you. And it wasn’t even about you for the first two to three years. That only came when you were 13, maybe even close to 14 already. That’s when it became a serious issue because you were growing up as well and I was scared that you’d understand the reasoning behind it all. So I separated myself as much as I possibly could and…we both know how that ended.”

Of course, I know. The sudden shut-down of him sleeping in the same bed every night, the strange morning in the cave and the many mornings after, when I woke up alone in our bed.
“Well, that was when I got worried for the first time. I realized that I wanted to kiss you and touch you and do and say all these things Brian warned me about. All of that became real suddenly and I simply didn’t know what to do.”

His voice turns sad again after that, and I can only imagine the pain and resistance it must have caused him. I’m so sorry that he had to face all of this alone. I gently kiss his shoulder and let him continue.

“When you started to reciprocate some of my touches in moments when I was weak and dumb, that’s when I became really, really terrified. You grew up pretty fast and became clever and I could tell that there was a huge conflict going on inside your head and I so badly wanted to tell you everything I knew, but I just couldn’t, and so I had to wait for you to figure it out yourself, which was not how I wanted things to go, not ever.”

He must be referring to the day when I woke up startled and confused and he enlightened me into puberty and attraction and whatnot.

I shift around a little and say, “I had a feeling that you wanted to touch me, but I thought you didn’t do it in order to protect me, which I now get, but again, if you’d have just said something, I could have acted differently, you know? Also, you’re not dumb, you twit.”

He snorts a laugh and says, “Yeah well, I told you I didn't know what to do...and you're a twit yourself.”

He lifts one of our entwined hands up to his mouth and presses a kiss to the ball of my thumb before continuing.

“The week after, when I acted so repellent, that was because I felt like I reached a point where there was no turning back. It scared me how my body reacted when I saw you in this state, I mean, I didn’t even plan to kiss you or, in the end, touch you like that, it was like my body did it on its own and now that we had crossed this line, I was so sure something would happen. I kept hearing Brian’s voice in my head; I almost imagined him standing in front of me again and shouting at me, reminding me that this was it, people would come and tear us apart now that finally both of us knew what we needed and wanted.”

After that, there’s a long pause. He just admitted to me that he does want me and knows that I feel the same way towards him. That’s just...that’s huge and should be a perfect moment between us, but someone took that privilege from us a long time ago, decided for us to feel regret for how we feel. What kind of world is that?
“You know all of that is nonsense though, right?” I say and sigh at the same moment he does.

“Some of it is, I even knew that when I was a kid, but in some ways he was-“

“If you say he was right I will punch you!”

“No but think about it, we have the privilege to live here, all on our own with no one to judge for how we feel. But I don’t think he lied when he said that it’s a forbidden thing. Think about all the other poor souls who are in the same position and don’t have the freedom to experience it. I think the rest of the world is still so backward that it is a crime by the law, and that’s just sad.”

That actually sounds about right and I wouldn’t be surprised if that’s the case. If the world can’t even accept people of the same gender loving each other, how will there ever be a chance of acceptance for siblings to fall in love with each other?

“The important thing here is that it has to be a thing on both ends, but that should go without saying, you know? If it’s a one-sided thing and the other person would force you to do things, just like you said earlier, then that’s a crime, no doubt. But that goes for everyone and not just people who are in the same position as we are.”

After I say that, Gerard turns his head a little in position so he can look at me and when I meet his eyes, there’s understanding and trust in them.

“You clever man, Mikeyway,” he says and I immediately argue back.

“You don’t need to be clever to know that, Gee. C’mon.”

I feel kind of annoyed after that, but when he is unabashed by my childish outburst and just smiles at me, my anger subsides.

“I think we’re somehow different in their eyes when really, we’re not. I mean, there’s a huge difference between simply being sexually attracted to someone or really feeling love towards one another,” he says as he turned his head back again.
I’m getting angry at this once again. I just can’t comprehend how some people apparently think. “People have their own stupid, restricted minds and when something happens that they don’t immediately have an explanation for, they take the right to make decisions for everyone without the consideration of affected people.”

There’s another pause after I say that and my anger is just about to explode again when Gerard says the one thing that explains everything.

“I guess in order to understand something like that and accept it and make it okay for yourself, you have to see it happening with your own eyes once in your life to see that these things exist and work if you do it right.”

“And you say I am clever...” I grin into his hair and for the first time ever, I feel the real and true love between us. The love that was always there and only turned into different shapes over the years and probably will change another few times in the future, but it will always be there.

“Hmm... those who might laugh at us or condemn us have no idea how it feels to have a world of your own inside your head, you know? But we know, and that’s enough.”

“So what does that mean for us now?” I finally ask, both excited and anxious about his answer. This still could turn out the wrong way if we’re not careful.

But then he turns around and unexpectedly kisses me on the lips, soft and sweet and gentle and this time, there’s no hint of tears or sadness on his lips.

When he pulls back, he smiles lovingly at me and says, “It means we can stop pretending now.”

Chapter End Notes

Hey you, I love you!
Let me know what you think :)

It’s been like that for the last few days. Whenever I’m hungry or thirsty or need help or I’m just simply bored, I’d call him. I feel sorry for him because, on top of him babysitting me, he has to do all of the chores, his and mine.

My ankle is a little better, but still stabilized with two flat pieces of lumber and a long piece of linen to keep from moving, and there is no way I can walk anywhere anytime soon without help. I feel like I know every inch of our room by now since I spent every single minute in here since I came home. God, I’m so incredibly bored. I would have never thought it, but I miss doing my chores. I long for
the sweet sound of dirty clothes being slapped against the stone and the super boring act of freeing the house of sand.

“Hey Twee,” Gerard’s voice pulls me out of my thoughts and I grin up hugely at his slightly annoyed face. I know he’s not really annoyed to help me or whatever, I think he’s just stressed out.

When he sees my grin, he doesn’t look so stressed anymore and that makes me happy. I like what an effect I can have on him.

After he helped me down the stairs and let me take care of my needs, he takes me back up to our room and sits me down on the chest, that is placed on an elevation of the floor at the far end of our sleeping area, and escapes the room.

A minute later, he comes back with my yellow dress and a hairbrush.

“What’s that for?” I ask and curl my fingers around the lid of the chest.

“What do you think? I’m taking you out, you could use some sun and also, I have something for you,” he says and gestures for me to lift my arms. We’re about the same height even though I’m sitting, so his hips, knees, and face are on the same level as mine. I can’t quite reach the floor with my feet, but that’s probably for the better. It would hurt to put my broken foot down anyway.

The only thing I’m wearing is a piece of white cotton as underwear that I wound around my crotch and hips easily. It’s pretty uncomfortable to be lying around in clothes all day. I lift my arms, and when he slips the dress over my head and my hair pops out in all different directions, he grins and cards his fingers through it, either to smooth it down or to mess it up even more.

“You have something for me? A surprise?” I ask and lean forward a little so he can close the button on the backside of the dress, not bothering to stretch it properly over my butt but let it pooled around my hips instead.

“Well, I guess it kind of is a surprise, but it’s nothing special so I wouldn’t get my hopes up too much.”

“Too late!” I say excitedly and clap my hands together like a child on Christmas Eve.
He rolls his eyes but smiles, takes the brush, and runs it through my strands a few times, carefully untangling my birds nest of hair and making sure to catch all the little knots on the back of my head where I lie on it most of the time.

“You forgot to braid it!” I say when he’s about to lift me up again to get out.

“What?”

“My hair, it needs to be braided or else it’ll fall in my face all day.”

“I don’t know how; can’t you do it yourself!”

“Nope, I’m sick,” I say and giggle when he sneers and crosses his arms across his chest, sticking his hip out in that way that makes him look super girly.

“It’s your foot that is broken, not your hands,” he says in that honky voice that makes me swarm and I bat my eyelashes at him, swinging my legs carefully in the air.

“Please? Pretty please?”

He stares at me for a few seconds before sighing heavily and leaving the room again only to come back not much later with my hairclips.

“I’m telling you now, this’ll look like crap.”

I giggle again at that. I actually don’t care if my hair is braided or not, it’ll get messed up by the wind after a few minutes anyway. The real reason is that I want his hands in my hair, but of course, I won’t admit that to him. And this is fun, so why not let him do this for once. Who knows, maybe he’s a born hairstylist and none of us knew?

He places one of the hairclips between his teeth, just like I always do, and then takes one of my long bangs that’s dangling down beneath my forehead and ear. To help him, I turn my head to the side a
bit, but when he doesn’t do anything for a long moment, I look back only to see a totally confused Gerard in front of me.

“I don’t know what to do,” he murmurs, and when he notices that I didn’t get what he just said, he lets one of his hands go of my hair and takes the clip out of his mouth.

“I don’t know what to do,” he repeats, clearer this time and I snicker. Yeah, this is kind of fun. But since I’m a good little brother and all that, I decide not to torment him any more than necessary.

“You take a strand, part it in three and then you put the ones on the sides alternately to the middle until you have a braid. I could probably also explain how to use a new strand every time you take one from the sides, but that might be a bit too much for the first session.”

“The first session? I’m doing this again?!” His mortified expression makes me laugh. He’s such a twerp sometimes.

“Sure, why not, if you do a good job?” I say and grin even wider when he starts to look ridiculously frustrated.

“Come on, it’s not that hard. I’ll talk you through it if you want?”

“Guess you don’t really have a choice because I already forgot what you just said.”

He tries to look annoyed, but I know he’s not. Under that façade is a little smile and it’s addressed to me and no one else and I love him.

I smile to myself as he sticks the clip back between his teeth and takes the strand from before between his fingers.

“Okay, now part it into three equally big units,” I say and decide not to turn my head this time so I can watch him. He looks super concentrated; his eyebrows are knit together so there’s a tiny dimple forming on his forehead and his eyes are focused on what his fingers are doing.

“What do now?” he mutters out between the clip between his teeth.
“Take the one on the right side and put it over the one in the middle, then do the same on the left side,” I say, quietly and a little tense now. He unconsciously pulls tighter than I ever would, but I find that I don’t mind at all, quite the opposite actually. I totally forgot about the hairpulling thing until now.

I keep watching him intensely and after a while, he seems to get the hang of it. Sometimes he would turn my head this way and that with the strand in his hands, evoking a really nice dragging pain that lets my toes curl inwards against the chest. It’s that, and the way he’s looking and smelling. He’s so close that I can smell his peppermint-breath and his body, he hasn’t showered in a few days just like me, and he looks totally fixated and concentrated, which is a really nice look on him.

Sometimes his tongue pokes against the clip between his teeth and that brings back the memories of how he absently sucked the remains of his breakfast from his fingers this morning. He didn’t know I was watching him at the time because he was away in his own little world again. Sometimes he would do that, zone out completely, not observing anything around him. That’s mostly when he gets a new idea for a picture or forms a new concept for a story inside his head.

Later he would tell me about it, probably when we’re both in bed and just about to fall asleep. I love that, hearing his voice and listening to his latest ideas. It’s been one of my favorite things about him since the day I was born.

I’m pulled out of my thoughts when I feel a scraping against my scalp, which is Gerard trying to stick the clip in my hair. That’s a nice pain as well, actually, and I wouldn’t mind feeling it on some other parts of my skin. This could become a thing if I’m not careful.

“It looks stupid,” he says and crosses his arms sulkily across his chest.

I lift one of my hands and carefully feel over his creation. It doesn’t feel any different from when I do it, maybe a little loose, but that’s about it.

I look him in the eyes and smile.

“It’s perfect,” I say and turn my head to the other side, gesturing for him to do this part as well.

He sighs and says, “What I wouldn’t do for you,” before grabbing another section of hair. My bangs are on this side and they’re a lot fuller then the hair on the other side of my face and also longer and
if I’m lazy, I just comb them across my forehead. This could be a challenge for him because if you’re new to this, you might not be able to tame my curls.

When he’s on his second and then third attempt, it’s a challenge for me not to shut my eyes in indulgence. This pulling is somehow really doing it for me as well as his presence so close. During the act of him trying to fix my hair, I parted my legs a little so that there’s more room for him to stand in between my thighs, which in return, brought his crotch closer to mine.

Another one of his frustrated pulls and I can’t help the tiny, barely audible sigh that leaves my mouth by accident. It must have been loud enough for him to hear though because he immediately stills his hands and looks at me with wide eyes. He must also get that what he did wasn’t in discomfort for me, but the opposite, because his eyes darken, just like they did when helped me to touch myself.

We stare at each other for a long moment and I can feel myself blushing. It could be embarrassing, but I don’t have time to think about that before he experimentally tugs on my hair again and watches mesmerized as my breath hitches and I finally give in and allow my eyes to flutter shut.

“You actually like this, do you,” he whispers fascinated, sounding a little breathless himself.

I don’t open my eyes but nod in return. Then I lose my grip on the lid I’m sitting on and slowly place my palms on the naked skin on the small of his back to pull him closer, before saying in a dark voice that I never heard myself use before,

“Can you try it harder?”

He actually gasps at my words, if only very slightly, and the sound goes straight to groin. Now, we haven’t done anything since the big fight and after I returned, which was a good five days ago. We haven’t even really kissed except maybe for a little peck on the cheek and a few shy kisses on the mouth, but that doesn’t really count in this case I think. That doesn’t mean I didn’t think about it though, because honestly, I had a lot of time to think about every single thought a human brain could think about the last few days. I often caught myself thinking not only about what we did so far in that regard and replayed the scene over and over in my head but also what could come next.

I know I’m not experienced and I bet I don’t know half of the things that involve sex, but well, one can fantasize, right?

I did wake up with a hard on at least 3 times since we started sleeping in the same bed again and I
know the same goes to him, but neither of us was really bothered to take care of it. We were either
too tired and exhausted or simply not in the mood. And maybe not really ready after what had
happened.

On the first evening, after I got back, we both decided that there was no need to rush any of this and
would just go with whatever time and circumstances offered.

I guess this is one of those circumstances if I’m reading this correctly, or if not, then it could turn into
one very fast from here if we’re both on the same page about this.

He does tighten his grip on my hair after I ask him, not as hard as I might have wanted him to, but
it’s good. Really good, even. He does it again and tilts my head back a little in the act, exposing my
throat to him.

Suddenly I’m brutally reminded of that scene back against the tree trunk when he did almost the
exact same thing, back when I had no idea yet as to what was happening in my body and I didn’t
know what I wanted.

I’m smarter now though, and I know exactly what I want.

I let one of my hands wander yet again while the other stays where it is, and run it up his back and
over his shoulder until I reach his hairline at the back of his neck where I curl my fingers in. Then, in
a swift motion, I arch my back and pull his head closer until he gets what I’m silently asking for, and
puts his lips on my collarbone without hesitation.

At first, he just nibbles around a little bit but when I make a frustrated noise that surprises both of us,
he swipes his tongue over the juncture of my neck and shoulder before he starts to suck.

This evokes another sound from me; a little whiny pant.

I never had someone sucking on my neck like this before and I’m fascinated what difference it makes
to simply kiss and suck. It’s the combination again, too; the hot air he releases through his nose
whenever he breathes out, the slight scraping of his teeth against my skin, the smell of him even
closer now and his entire body pressed flat against my own.

After a moment, he releases my skin with a loud smacking noise and pulls back, much to my
disappointment. When I finally open my eyes again to see why he’s not doing anything, I’m surprised to find him staring at my neck with wide and shocked eyes before looking me straight in the eye.

“Did I hurt you?” he asks, totally out of content.

I’m still a little breathless when I say, “What?! No, not at all, what makes you-“

“It looks like I hurt you,” he says and the anxious look doesn’t fade, but when he sees that I don’t get what could possibly make him say that right now because I was really enjoying myself here, he sighs and mumbles,

“There’s like, a mark or whatever. It looks red and painful. Are you sure I didn’t-“

“You mean like a bruise?” I ask, totally surprised now.

He nods and grimaces when he touches his fingertips to it carefully. It doesn’t hurt at all, it tingles, more like, and even though I don’t get how he possibly managed to bruise me without hurting me, I also find that I don’t care because it felt incredibly arousing in a way that could be addictive as well as the hairpulling.

“It doesn’t hurt,” I say hastily and pull him back in. This time, he hesitates for a moment but eventually gives in and kisses gently over the spot where he just had his fingertips against my throat.

He kisses up my neck and when he reaches a spot behind my ear, my body shudders involuntarily and I tighten my fingers in both his hair and the skin on his back. It’s not helping that he’s wearing nothing but my longish white underpants today, thanks to the heat, and when did it become a thing that we share clothes on a daily base now?

Not that I mind, of course.

“I wanna try something,” he says in an airy and rushed voice against my neck and I can feel his lips brush slightly against the tip of my ear.
“Okay,” I breathe back, not even bothering to ask what he wants. I’m sure I’m okay with whatever he’s got in mind and if not, I know he’ll stop if I tell him to do so.

After another moment of mouthing over my skin, he runs his nose through the hair that starts right over my ear and says, “Just tell me to stop if it’s too much,” before turning his head and crushing his lips against mine before I get a chance to respond and it happens so fast that some of his and my own strands stick to our lips.

I’m perplexed for a second because this isn’t really anything new, but then I decide that I really don’t care and kiss back out of instinct without much hesitation, not even minding about the few hairs that got caught between our lips. But then, when he tightens his grip on my hair again and I gasp into his mouth, I feel his tongue slide against my own for a lingering moment that leaves me totally dazed.

This is definitely new and would swipe the ground away from under my feet if I’d be standing. I am, in fact, so puzzled over that new feeling, that I’m unable to do anything for a moment which in return leads to Gerard pulling away slightly. Not much, just enough so I can still feel his lips ghosting over mine and one of his hands sliding up carefully to remove the hair from both his and my lips before tugging it back to where he held me before.

I’m secretly glad that he’s giving me a moment to think and catch my breath over this new thing. Out of all the times we kissed, it was never with tongue and to be honest, I didn’t even know that this could be a thing. Thinking about it now though makes kind of sense and seems like the natural thing to do.

Whenever I saw our parents or grandparents kiss, I never saw them doing it like that. Does that mean it’s an uncommon thing to do? Well, to be fair, I was never really enticed to stare at our parents when they decided to smooch in front of me and Gerard, so I wouldn’t really know because I simply never looked long and hard enough.

After another few seconds, I come to the conclusion that it has to be a thing that you did when you were in private and not around others. A peck on the cheek or lips is probably more appropriate to do around others than half eating someone’s face.

...A thing to do when you were in private...the thought of that is strangely arousing and brings forth a side in me that I didn’t know existed until just now but I sure as hell want to explore more.

The slight shock I felt a moment ago subsides completely when I hear Gerard’s quiet, whispered, “Mikey,” against my still slightly parted lips and without waiting a beat longer, I close my eyes and crash my mouth back against his, much to his approval.
After a minute of just sliding our lips against each other’s, I feel brave enough to slide my tongue against his upper lip in hope he gets it. He does, because he immediately opens his mouth and when I let my tongue lick into his mouth, maybe a little halting, I’m rewarded with a beautiful moan from him right into my own mouth that goes straight down to my forming erection.

It’s weird at first on both sides because neither of us really knows what to do, but after a while, we get the hang of it and suddenly a whole new door is opened right in front of us that leads to a wonderland of new and unbelievably strong and awesome sensations.

When I thought that whatever Gerard did to me in that regard felt good, then I was certainly wrong because while of course, everything he does feels good, this right here is something entirely else.

The way he messily runs his fingers through my hair and occasionally pulls, much to my delight, and the way he slides his wet and hot tongue into my mouth and against my own nearly makes me want to roll my eyes back inside my head. This is mind blowing.

Then my eyes do roll back inside my head because one of his hands lets go of my hair and slides down low under my hip, grabs there strongly and pushes me forward against his own hips.

With a loud smacking sound of our lips parting, we moan at the same time into each other’s mouths at the feeling of both our erections pressed up against each other tightly.

For a moment, the only sound in the room is our heavy breathing and the very faint rush of the waves crashing on the beach.

“Hhh—is this okay?” Gerard asks then, totally out of breath and in a voice that I would like to hear a lot more from now on.

“Yeah,” I say back and wrap my thighs around his hips, silently cursing when it does no good to my broken ankle. It feels too good to pull away though, so in an ungraceful move, I swing the ankle that is broken over the good one to carry the weight in hopes it’ll stop protesting because I really don’t want to stop right now or concern Gerard.

It works good enough, I decide but stop thinking about it completely when Gerard makes a gorgeous, crushed noise at the new position and grinds his crotch against mine, even closer now than before. The feeling is so overwhelming and intense that my mind goes blank except for the white-hot
sensation that’s building up now.

Gerard pulls me in again for a messy kiss that’s all teeth and tongue and sloppy wet sounds and I’m eager to follow his lead and give him back as much as I can.

I have to break this kiss with a loud, “Gnnaaaghh,” only a few seconds later though, because that’s Gerard’s hand sliding from my hip down to my thigh and under the hem of the dress to dig his fingers into the almost unclothed skin of my hips.

With my mouth gone from his, he drops his head back to my throat again and starts licking and kissing over my Adam's apple (Yes, Gerard taught me the name for it).

His thumb slides under the cotton that serves as underwear and presses right into the hollow spot where my thigh ends end my genitals start.

“Oh my God,” I gasp out and I’m so glad that we’re the only people living here because there would be no mistake in what’s happening right now if we would still share a room back at home with our parents only ten feet away in the living room.

I wonder if people suspected that this could, or, would happen someday when they said how unhealthy close we were and stayed that way into teen and adulthood. I don’t know the answer to that and probably never will, but I honestly don’t care because this right now feels right on so many levels that it just can’t be wrong.

My hands start to get sweaty against Gerard’s skin and create a nice sliding friction that maybe should be gross but really, really isn’t. Gerard doesn’t seem to mind either because he chokes out those beautiful little pants and whines whenever I stroke over a particular spot on his back or sides that he apparently really likes.

He slides the hand on my hip down my thigh and dips his fingers and palm into the underside of my thigh, which in return, lifts a little up and pushes us closer together, if that is even possible, and evokes another moan from both of us.

It’s still not enough to lead into something though and I think I’ll go crazy if I’m not being touched within the next five seconds. Now that he showed me what it can be like, I can’t wait to feel it again-all of it, in every way possible. I’m figuring he must feel the same, because when he pulls his mouth away from my neck and looks down at me through his long and black eyelashes, his eyes are dark
and unfocused and his voice is strangled and breathless when he says, “Can I?” and grinds his erection against mine again, asking for permission to untangle the knot that precariously holds the cotton in place, and then get off like this.

His face looks blissed out and beautiful, blush high on his cheeks and nose, lips slick with spit and red and slightly parted and hair sticking to his forehead where he sweats a little.

I can’t believe my own eyes. I made my brother look like this.

I nod at him in permission and feel a little nervous when he starts to work on the knot and about my next move altogether, but not enough to make me stop from reaching to the waistband of his underpants and slightly tug on it, hoping he gets the message without me actually saying something.

He seems to get it, because his eyes widen and he nods as well, his eyes never leaving mine while I start to pull the white and worn cotton down his fairly hairy thighs.

I feel my heartbeat hammering in my ears when I let my palms slide over the now naked skin of his butt and nearly stop breathing for a second at the look on his face.

His eyes fall shut tightly and his eyebrows crease together, his jaw falls open a little more in a beauteous way that should be illegal.

Gods, I’m so gone for him.

After a moment, he opens his eyes again at the same moment that his hands start to wander again, both hands on my thighs now and slowly pushing under the hem of my dress, pulling it slightly and just enough up in the act, making my breath hitch when I feel the hot air of the day on my now totally exposed skin between my legs.

“Okay?” Gerard asks in a slurry voice once he’s got one of his palms spread over my thigh and the other over my hip.

As an answer and to hide my slight nervosity, I lean forward and start kissing him again which he returns happily. The act of me pulling his underpants down and him pushing my dress up separated us in the middle and to fix that problem, I dig the heel of my good foot into that spot right above his butt cheeks and pull him close again in one swift move.
Now, I underestimated the power of the feeling of skin on skin a big time because that is, once again, nothing compared to anything that I felt so far. Not even his hand on my erection felt as good as his hard on against my own and that has to really mean something.

A shocked gasp that escapes both of us stops us from kissing and for a while, we just breathe against each other’s mouths, eyes closed and eyelashes tangling together.

But then he starts moving and my back arches and hollows so I’m pressed against him from chest to chest and our hardons are side to side straight against our sweaty bellies.

“God, Gee,” I groan out, not able to form a proper sentence. He doesn’t seem to mind though because I feel him nod shakily, almost in fascination, and sets for a regular rhythm with his hips against mine.

It feels so good that I’m unable to hold my broken foot up for any longer and it slides down over his butt and thigh until the heel digs into the wooden pattern of the chest while the other stays wrapped around his waist.

Gerard seems to notice that I’m kind of losing control over my body because he removes the hand from my thigh and wraps his arm around my back in a tight grip that feels really damn good.

With the now steady grinding and skin on skin pressure between our legs, I’m starting to feel the heated pool really fast low in my belly and it feels so good that I just have to buck my hips against his or else I’m going to explode.

“Ohhhhh, Mikey-do that again, please do-ahhhhhhh!” Gerard gasps out and stops mid-sentence to moan high-pitched and beautiful. His forehead and nose are pressed up against my cheek and I know he must be close because his breath starts to come irregular against the corner of my mouth and his hips start to stutter, nothing compared to the regular thrusts he made until a few seconds before.

Wanting to memorise everything that’s happening right now for later, I make a mental list and add the feeling of the way he sounds in that exact moment, the way his skin is damp against my palms, the slight scrape of teeth against my cheek where he tucked his face, the way his body smells; like sweat, Gerard and something strong I can’t identify, and the feeling of his curly pubic hair where the tip of my erection slides through it roughly with every thrust and, last but not least, the indescribably mind-blowing feeling of the wet spot against my belly where he must be leaking that liquid I remember from the first time he swiped his thumb over my tip back on the beach, against my belly,
and leaves a wet smear that I maybe shouldn’t find as arousing as I do.

Feeling brave and too far gone to care about possible embarrassment, I groan, very lightly and breathless, “C’mon Gerard,” and thrust my hips against his harder now which costs me a lot of concentration because I can feel myself close to the edge as well, so close actually, that I might even finish before him and then suddenly I’m right there and my head rolls back against my neck and I choke out, “I’ll finish, Gee, I’m gonna-“, in the same moment that he goes, “Ah-ah-ah,” and presses so hard against me only to still his hips completely a second later while my thighs clench around his hips and one of my hands shoots up to his head and curls tightly into his greatly messed up hair. My toes curl inwards and my eyes are pressed together so tightly that I’m seeing stars.

When I come to my senses again after a few long and blissed out moments, my body still occasional twitching with aftershocks, the air in the room seems used up and hot and I make out a heavy, earthy, musky smell that nearly makes me moan again right on the spot.

Now I’m also aware of the hot and sticky liquid low between our bellies and now softening erections. God, I really need to step over my embarrassment and refer to our...parts with their normal names soon. But I’m not quite ready to do that so I decided to stick to the term Gerard taught me a few days ago for a little while longer.

“How are you still standing,” I mumble into the mess of his hair after a moment, out of content and just for the sake of saying something. I’m sure my legs would have given up if I was standing right now.

Gerard replies something against my skin that I can’t make out and I carefully pull his head back a little so I can look at him.

“What?” I ask and smile a tiny content smile when I see that he gives me the same look, screaming on the inside when he doesn’t look freaked out and makes no move to run away within the next five seconds.

“I said I was kinda holding on to you, twerp.”

Now I smile hugely and smack him against the shoulder, eternally grateful that things are good between us.

“Hey! What was that for?” Gerard shrieks and rubs his hand over the spot where I smacked him,
ignoring the sticky mess between us where we are still pressed together.

“For calling me a twerp?”

He sneers at me and then smirks and blushes, running a sweaty hand through my hair.

“Guess you have to re-do your hair after all.”

I roll my eyes in an amused way and run my fingers through his own hair before pulling him in for another kiss, gentle and slow this time. I can feel him smiling as he returns the kiss and shiver when he slowly runs his palms over my sides and shoulders until he cups my face and tilts my head to deepen the kiss.

It’s perfect and I’m pretty sure that I’m the luckiest person on earth right now and every second in the future.

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“Crutches!” I shriek excitedly and nearly jump on him from where I’m standing crooked and pressed against his side where he’s supporting me.

After we somewhat cleaned ourselves up and I braided my hair back in place, only because Gerard refused to try it again because ‘it wouldn’t stay in place anyway’, whatever, he picked me up and brought me outside again where he carefully let me down on the sand next to the stairs so I could hold on to the railing.

Then he grinned hugely and disappeared around the house only to come back a second later with what turned out to be the surprise he promised earlier: Crutches!

“I thought this way you could train your muscles and get a bit of your strength and mobility back, you know? And also because I miss having you out here.”
“I love them, they’re perfect! Thank you so much!” I say happily and try to make a careful first step with them.

They are two rather thick but not too heavy sticks in the perfect size for my height, and my hands fit perfectly into the mounts where I’m supposed to prop myself up. On the bottom of the sticks, so I won’t sink in the sand too much, he assembled to flat wooden plates. The wood feels good on my palm and the back of my forearms. It almost feels soft and warm and I have to wonder how long he worked on them...

“How long did it take to make them?” I ask out loud and immediately know the answer when I see the look on his face.

“The night after I found you...It kind of took a while because most of the sticks I found were too thin or fragile and I didn’t want you to get splinters so I had to sharpen them and try them out myself a couple of times because I’m heavier than you. I wouldn’t want them to break and cause for you to fall over again, you know?”

He grins kind of apologetic and guiltily and even with both of the crutches in my hands, I throw my arms around him which causes me to half fall over and for him to almost losing an eye because of my clumsiness.

“You’re the best big brother, do you know that?” I mumble into his hair and press a kiss behind his ear.

“I can’t serve as a big brother anymore if you chop my head off, you stinker.”

He giggles and squeezes his arms around me tightly before leaning away and letting me take a few slow steps on the slippery sand.

It takes a moment, but once you get the hang of it, it’s actually not that hard and after an hour of slowly walking and hopping around awkwardly, I feel like I could walk a marathon with them. Except it’s also really exhausting and I need a break. So instead of exploring and annoying Gerard where he’s in the middle of doing something on the façade of the house, I decided to sit down by the fireplace and start preparing something for lunch with the supplies he set there for me.

After we ate and Gerard cleaned the dishes, he sits back down next to me on the sand where we...
always eat or hang out if we’re too lazy to do anything.

“You know what these remind me of?” I say after a while, interrupting the comfortable silence between us. I smile and point to the crutches that lie next to me, ready to be used at any time.

To my surprise, Gerard winks knowingly and says, “Where do you think I got the idea from?”

At that, I smile even more and allow myself to slip into memory for a moment.

All through my life, I had to fight horrible asthma-attacks which often lead to long hospital stays. I met a lot of interesting people with terrible diseases and more often than not, I made friends with some of the kids. We didn’t stay in contact after one of us was released, but we sometimes would play cards or chess in our hospital beds and quietly tell each other stories when we couldn’t sleep at night or comforted each other when we missed our family at home.

There was this girl my age, maybe 8 or 9 at the time, who had an illness called Myalgic Encephalomyelitis, or short, the Chronic Fatigue Syndrome. I don’t know exactly how I managed to remember that complicated name over the years, but I guess it’s because I have a face behind her name, and I usually don’t forget faces easily. Her name was Edwina.

Her disease caused her to get weak very fast; she was almost always in pain from her muscles and veins and sometimes, she couldn’t even move her arms or fingers. Sometimes, when we played cards or drew pictures in my bed, the pencil slipped from her fingers because she got another batch of fatigue.

On bad days when her legs hurt a lot, she walked around with those super cool blue crutches that were designed just for her. With them, she was able to push herself up and relieve her legs, if only for a little while. She could do cool tricks with them as well and I always admired her for her strength.

She always used to smile a lot and make jokes, but behind that façade was a sad, exhausted and tired girl.

One night, when neither of us could sleep, she told me how crushing the long way to her diagnose was. She had the symptoms for years and they got worse as time passed, yet no doctor believed her and said that she made everything up. She told me that that was because it was a very rare disease, as she found out later. In fact, she was the one who told the doctors what she was suffering from. Even
at such a young age, she read every book and paper article her local library offered that had something to do with medicine. She taught herself a lot of things and after months of reading and desperation, she found a paper article from years and years ago where a doctor in that domain talked about the illness that finally gave her a name from what she was suffering from.

It took the doctors another few months to finally diagnose her and with that, the opportunity for medical treatment she so desperately needed.

Gerard and our parents knew her as well from all the visiting hours and times we sat together in the cafeteria to eat popsicles and cheesecake.

I don’t think I will ever forget her and I hope she found someone with the same story, just so she’s not alone in all of this.

I also remember two boys, Adam and Gabriel, who I shared the room with once. One suffered from Asperger’s and the other one had an illness called Crohn’s Disease. The Autistic boy always fascinated me to no end because he was incredibly smart and everything he did seemed to be part of a big plan that he had inside his brain. The boy with the Autoimmune Disease made me sad because he had so many scars on his belly from former surgeries and I remember that he told me that there were a lot more to come. He seemed to struggle with his fate and I hope he got the strength and support he inwardly needed but never admitted.

There was also Kathrin, the mother of a child I shared a room with, who I know suffered from two different kinds of cancer. I know that because she talked about it with my mother when her kid was not yet back from an examination and I was half asleep after another asthma-attack. Honestly, I have no idea how she did it. Caring for her children, working and dealing with her diagnose, and yet she seemed super strong and full of life and for that, she’ll always a hero in my books.

“I’m glad that time is over, you know?” Gerard says, startling me.

“What do you mean?”

“You know,” he says and shrugs a little. “The time in the hospital. No idea how you did it, honestly.”

I snort at that. “It’s not like you really have a choice you know? You get used to it. I made friends there, even, and all the nurses liked me.”
“I know, but like, I remember how terrible you felt whenever we had to go in the evening. It was hard to bear sometimes, not just for me but mother and father, as well as Grandma and Grandpa.”

I know that.

I know that I also made it harder for them on some days than it could have been when I aggravated everything by crying hysterically when visiting hours where over and they had to go. I even remember that Gerard sometimes tried to hide in the small bathroom that was attached to the room because he didn’t want to leave me alone. Every day, as soon as the door opened when my family came to visit, he was the first one to shrug out of his shoes and jacked and climb under the covers with me and curled his chubby arms around me. I always loved that part the most about visiting hours and it was the one thing I truly looked forward to when the door closed again in the evening and I was left alone.

“I’m sorry,” I say, futile, and lean my head on his shoulder lightly. It’s not like I chose to be sick and I was always very sensible, much to anyone's annoyance, including my own.

He reaches up and runs his fingers through the hair on the back of my head and says, “Nothing to be sorry for, Twee. I’m just glad it’s over.”

“It’s kind of funny, isn’t it?”

“What is?”

“You know,” I start and curl my arm across his belly, sighing. “All these years, they fed me all kinds of medicine and nothing ever worked the way it was supposed to. Then we come here and all my symptoms vanished in a flick...that’s so weird.”

He’s quiet for a moment, before saying, “I still think it’s the air here, don’t you think? I mean, the air back in the city was always thick and polluted while here, it’s all clear and salty which even helps me to breathe properly.”

“If we would still live at home in Jersey, you and I should have moved to the sea when we were old enough to afford a house...maybe where we always went on holiday, remember?”
“How could I forget, you learned to walk there. I’m never forgetting that” he says and leans his head on mine with a tiny giggle.

“You mean where I learned to chase you!”

You know, the story mother always told everyone at family gatherings was ‘when little Mikey Way learned walking by chasing his big brother on the beach during his first vacation’. Basically, the story is that Gerard was happily chasing after a butterfly that flew around near the sand dunes, and I, apparently, thought it was a game of catch and tried to follow him. Crawling soon was too slow, so I tried to copy him and scuttled after him on my chubby toddler legs.

When Gerard saw what I was doing, he forgot about the butterfly and instead took my small hand in his slightly bigger one and stomped down to the water with me with a huge smile on his face.

That’s what I’ve always been told and I like to believe that it’s the truth. Not everyone starts walking because they feel so drawn to their brother catching a butterfly, you know?

“Hmmm...you taught me a lot of things,” I sigh contentedly and close my eyes when Gerard strokes his fingertips up and down between that spot behind my ear and down my neck and shoulder.

“That’s ‘cause I’m awesome!” he says, the cheeky tone of his voice so audible that it makes me smile.

“You really are,” I say and hear him huff a quiet laugh.

Then he turns his head to the side a little so that his nose is buried in my hair and after a moment, he says, ”Same goes to you, baby brother.”

I snort again at that. “’M not your baby brother anymore, Gee. Come on.”

“Uhm, yes? You will always be my baby brother. Nothing will ever change that, no matter how old you get, Silly. Just like I’m always going to be your big brother, even though you’re probably going to over tower me in a few months.”
He giggles to himself and I slap him lightly on the belly where I flung my arm over him earlier.

“Fine, baby brother it is.”

Actually, it’s kind of nice. It’s intimate and personal and kind of deepens the connection we have between us, in a way.

“’Should really take a bath at some point,” Gerard mumbles, probably sniffing my hair with his nose still buried in it.

He’s probably right. It’s been a while and I’m not ashamed to admit that. Also, we might not have cleaned ourselves up very considerably after that fiasco in our room. Whatever.

But on the other hand...

Is it weird to admit that I kind of like the smell of us together on my skin? I mean, there was not only sweat and spit involved, but also other body fluids and greasy hair. I decide to tell him that. Might as well be honest, right? Who knows, maybe he feels the same way. He did say that he liked how I smell and that was way beyond our regular baths.

“I don’t mind y’know,” I say, maybe a little shy now that I said it out loud.

He leans back slightly and looks at me with a searching and probably also amazed look on his face. That, of course, makes me blush which in return makes him grin and shake his head amused.

“Aw man, we are both cut from the same cloth, aren’t we,” he says and leans in to kiss me when I try to roll my eyes but can’t hide a grin.

I like the idea of that as well.
Next chapter will follow in probably 4-5 days!

Let me hear from you <3
Chapter 10

Chapter Summary

This chapter was soooo much fun to write!

Chapter Notes

Songs I used while writing this chapter:

Be My Baby by The Ronettes
Hey Baby by Bruce Channel
Hungry Eyes by Eric Carmen

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Chapter 10

I wake up to the feeling of someone’s stare burning into my scalp and when I peek one eye open, I see a grinning Gerard sitting cross-legged next to me. I smirk to myself in amusement over his excitement but pull the pillow over my head anyways in hopes to get a few more minutes of sleep. I worked till late at night yesterday to prepare the last things I need for today because today is a very big day for us.

A little while ago, Gerard brought up a topic that immediately caught my interest. As you know, I’m pretty into the idea that Gerard sometimes, in certain situations, looks and behaves a lot like a girl. One evening, he told me that he sometimes wondered how he might have looked like if he was born a girl, and that lead to me filing out a plan.

I told him that I had been working on new colors for him for a while now, and, sure, the actual use was for his drawings, but when I saw his eyes light up in understanding, I knew that we had the same thing in mind. Make-Up.

I started working on different colors and substances right after that to get the best possible product. Of course, I’m no specialist when it comes to this topic, but I remember that I often watched mother get ready in the mornings when she was getting ready for work or late in the evening, when Nanna came over to babysit me and Gerard when our parents went out for dinner, so I have a fair idea how some of the stuff looks like.
I used resin, grounded shells and coconut wax and oil for texture and dried seaweed and blossoms for color. It took a while, and I had a lot of the things hidden down in the basement so Gerard wouldn’t find them, but now I have a whole assembly of self-made white nail polish, red lipstick, and brown...eye powder, or whatever that stuff is called, bronze powder for the cheeks and even some black color for the eyelashes.

I hope it works out the way I want it to.

For clothing, I made a new top out of the brown leather rag that we had lying around for ages now and turned one of the white linen cloths into a wrap-skirt. The top has thin shoulder straps and ends just over the belly-button because A, there wasn’t enough leather left and B, I thought the look would suit him very much. The skirt is longer on one side and needs to be tied right over the left hip.

I also collected shells and flowers for new jewelry and even managed to make a hairband for a ponytail.

I showed all of this to my brother when I had it all done late last night and when he grinned sheepishly at me, I knew that he was just as excited about this as I was. And yeah, I know that we’re totally going after social standards and clichés for girls here, especially with the choice of make-up, and we’re both no big fans of that, but in this case, we can bend the rules.

“Come on Mikes, get up!” Gerard squeaks and tickles my shoulder when I burrow my face into the pillow.

How can I resist him when he’s so excited about something?

“I’m up, I’m up. Jesus,” I chuckle and sit up to stretch my arms and back. My foot is getting better every day and I’m in big hopes that in a few weeks, I can walk without the help of the crutches again. It’s been nearly two months since the accident after all.

When I look at Gerard after rubbing the sleep out of my eyes, my heart does a flip, just like it does most mornings when I wake up next to him. He sits there all casual in just underwear, long strands of dark hair an absolute mess and he’s chewing on his fingernails while he grins gorgeously at me.

“Hey,” I say quietly and stroke over his hair. In return, he stops the chewing and turns his head to give a quick peck on my wrist.
“Ready to make me pretty?” he asks and smiles hugely at me when I nod with an equally big smile.

“Not that it’s necessary, of course,” I say and sit back when he stops me from getting up. I look at him in question and then let my lips curl into an amused smirk when he says, “You know what? This isn’t thaat important right now, I mean, we could smooch for a while now and then...”

“First things first, Gee, c’mon we agreed on this,” I say and have to stifle a giggle when he pulls a face.

He lifts his hands over his head and says, “Fine, fine,” before sighing dramatically and getting up and then helping me get up as well.

I’m trying not to let it show as I get dressed, but on the inside, I’m beaming. I love how much he’s over me lately. He’s always around now, he lets me be close to him whenever I feel like it and I do the same in return. Maybe it’s just because I still need a lot of help thanks to my broken foot, but I don’t think that’s just it. I think he really, truly enjoys it. And that makes me incredibly happy.

I also like that it brings him joy and apparently also pride when we’re ‘smooching’, as he just put it out there kindly. I know smooching is just a codeword for making out but it’s still cute. Most mornings, when we wake up at the same time and we’re too lazy to really do anything, we just grind lazily against each other until we both come. It’s a nice technique we figured out a couple of weeks ago and it’s a wonderful way to start the day if you ask me.

After getting dressed and eating a quick breakfast with Gerard on the beach, it’s finally time to get started.

We made ourselves comfortable outside next to the stairs where the sun is yet not reaching thanks to the early time of the day. I made him sit across from me and put the basket with everything I need next to me.

“Okay,” I say and take the hairbrush out of the basket. “Make-Up is first but let me just brush your hair back, yeah?”

He smiles and gives me thumbs up.
“Do you actually know how to do this?” he asks when I replace the brush with the first container of color in my hands.

“Nope, no idea,” I say and crawl closer to him until I’m sitting with my knees touched to his. Then I get up in a kneeling position and tip his head back a little so I have better access.

“Let’s just find out, shall we?” I say promising and tip the brush I made out of thin feathers, a stick and some yarn, into the dark brown powder that hopefully works as eyeshadow. Then I ask him to close his eyes and without even protesting or teasing me, he does. In fact, as soon as I touch the first light brush of the feathers to his eye, he seems like a completely different person. Throughout the entire process, of me applying the color to his eyes, he’s very still and even seems concentrated, like he’s soaking it all in so he can memorize the feeling of it to write about it later.

When I think I’m done with the eye powder, I lean back a little and ask Gerard to open his eyes, which he does immediately.

“How does it look?” he asks and makes grabby-hands for the mirror.

“Nu-uh, not until I’m all done!”

“Urgh, fine...at least tell me if I look ridiculous?”

“Actually...” I start but take a minute to consider how I like it. The color came out quite nicely, there are no thinner or thicker spots where I applied it all over the moving lid. The color definitely suits him, but I feel like there’s something still missing.

“Can you open your eyes wide and look up?” I ask him and after pulling a face because I won’t tell him what’s wrong, he does so.

And then, carefully so I won’t poke his eye out, I tip the very tip of my pointer finger into the powder and then brush over the thin line right under his eye. I start at the far end and work my way slowly to a spot a little over the middle of the line before doing the same on the other eye. Gerard isn’t moving an inch and I even have to wonder if he still breathes when I’m done.

When he carefully blinks his eyes a couple of times and looks up at me, I think I might be the one who’s not breathing. It’s not even that it makes him look a bit more like a girl because honestly,
every boy or man could wear that and look amazing without being mistaken for the other gender. I seriously don’t get society.

It makes him look like a different version of himself, it makes him look both sad and beaming at the same time for some reason. It looks beautiful.

“You look great,” is all I can manage to say, mainly because my brain hasn’t processed this new look yet.

He smiles hugely and pushes the next container of pitch black color into my hands without saying a word. This one is for the eyelashes and I grab behind me for the item I made for the eyelashes. It’s a mini version of a comb maybe, or a weird toothbrush without a handle. I made it out of a thick and robust leave and cut countless tiny bristles in it. I have no idea if it works at all, but I couldn’t come up with anything else and I figured a feather wouldn’t do the job since it’s way too soft and movable.

“Should I close my eyes again?” Gerard asks and I shrug my shoulders.

“What...may maybe try it out?” I suggest and he nods and closes his eyes again.

I dip the comb thingy into the black color and brush the remains on the edge of the container before carefully trying to apply it on his eyelashes. It doesn’t really work though, at least not without making a giant mess. Not even after I make him move his head this way and that so eventually, I ask him to open his eyes and try it this way.

This works way better and I even manage to do a considerably good job without smearing half of the goopy stuff on his face. If it would be someone else, I’d feel watched and that could easily intimidate me, but since it’s Gerard, I only feel joy and I might even blush a little when he grins up at me shyly during the process.

When I think I’m done again, I lean back and take a look. It doesn’t make that much of a difference in color actually, but definitely in length, which surprises me because I didn’t even think about that, only about the effect the black might have. But again, I know zero to nothing about all of this and it does look fantastic so I’m definitely not complaining.

Next is the bronze powder. For this, I take a thin piece of linen that we usually use to dry the dishes, but I washed it yesterday so it’s as good as new.
I’m just about to brush it over his cheek, but then I have to stop because now that I think about it, I have no idea where to actually put it. On the cheek, sure, but where exactly? Right on the cheekbone? Under it? Over it?

“What’s wrong?” Gerard asks when he sees the look on my face.

“I uh... where do I put it?” I ask and maybe feel a little stupid. I don’t want him to think that I don’t know what I’m doing, which I don’t and he knows it, but still. I have my pride or whatever.

To my relief, he just chuckles and strokes his knuckles right over my cheekbone. “Try this,” he says and winks when I roll my eyes.

Of course, he’s right and it fits him perfectly. I think I chose the right color for this because even a tiny bit lighter or darker would look too much or not enough at all. It emphasizes his face just right and makes his cheekbones look sharp and soft all the same and weirdly enough his nose even more up-turned than it already is. The girly look is coming through more and more and I have to say that I already love this on him. I wish he could do this on his own, just so I can watch him all the time. Maybe someday that’s the case. I mean, he’s an artist. Wouldn’t he go crazy for something like this? That is, of course, if he likes the result in the end and wants to keep doing this every now and then.

Last would be red for his lips that serves as lipstick, but before I grab it from behind me, I get an idea. Instead, I take the neatly folded skirt and top, brush the few grains of sand off and give both to Gerard, who gives me a questioning look.

“What about the other one and my hair?” he asks and I grin and lean back on my hands to watch him as he starts to pull the top over his head.

“The lip color could smudge and your hair could get messed up so I’m doing that after,” I answer and take a good long look at his belly before he grabs the skirt. I calculated the length of the top perfect because it ends just over his bellybutton and it doesn’t sit too tight, which is exactly what I wanted.

“Uhm,” he says and raises his eyebrows as he grabs the skirt and the white linen falls like a waterfall to the ground from the grip in his hand. Yeah, I think I should explain how to use it but it’s quite amusing to watch as he takes it in both hands and holds it in front of his belly and mutter to himself when he doesn’t get how to put it on after a few attempts. That’s when I decide to jump in.
“Here, let me,” I chuckle and take the skirt from his hands.

“You could just show me you know,” he says and sounds maybe a little sulky.

“Nah, where would be the fun?”

Then I pat him on the hip twice with my palm as a hint for him to get up, which he does and then helps me get up as well.

“Steady me?” I ask and smirk when he puts his sandy hands on my shoulders with a strong grip so I won’t fall over or trip on my broken foot too hard.

I hear him sigh over-dramatically (seriously, Gerard is the biggest drama-queen I know) from where I’m bent down and I know that he leans his head back to look at the sky while I’m busy tying the skirt around his hips and push it in place here and there. For a moment I think about removing his loincloth, but decide against it. At least for now.

It seems he doesn’t notice when I’m done because even as I straighten myself again, he still looks up and seems lost in thoughts. It’s cute because he’s chewing on his lower lip and his hair dangles over his shoulders just a tiny bit. Now I’m kind of glad that I didn’t cut it in so long.

I could watch him forever, but we’re not done here so to pull him out of his trance, I give him a peck right in the middle of his collarbone and place my palms on his clothed hips.

“How?” I say and finally get his attention when he moves his head and looks at me with big eyes that seem even bigger now that there’s eyeshadow on them. He also raises his eyebrows as if he has no idea where we are and who I am and he still chews on his lip which has got to be the most adorable thing in the world.

“What?” he asks after another moment of silence and looks grumpy when I laugh.

“What?!?” he asks again when I sit down once again and gesture for him to do the same.

“You’re just cute is all,” I say cheerfully and move around so I’m sitting behind him. Then I carefully
tilt his head back and start working on his hair.

“’M not cute,” he mumbles and probably thinks I don’t hear him but of course I do. The sea is quiet today and even the brush running through his hair is audible to my ears.

First I think about tying his strands into a knot, but in the end, I stay with a simple ponytail that actually reaches down to his shoulders. Well, almost at least.

He holds still the entire time and moves his head this way and that patiently when I ask him to. Since it’s the very first time ever that I’m doing this it takes a few attempts and at some point, I even get frustrated because his hair is kind of silky and thin and slips from my hands too easily. I mean, my hair is much thinner but his is longer and uneven cut which makes it a little difficult but eventually, I get the hang of it. To finish it off, I stick three tiny white flowers that I collected, into the band that holds his hair and pull the entire creation tight one last time, not minding the tiny little grains of sand that I didn’t manage to brush out. They could even be mistaken as glitter if you don’t look too closely.

When I move to sit in front of him again, I notice that I forgot some of the baby hair on each side of his face and a few of his shorter bangs already got loose again but honestly, this way he looks even more beautiful than he does already. It’s like his face got a whole new shape with his hair all the way back except for the few strands that hang obliquely over his forehead. The bun is by far not perfect, but I kind of like the messy style of it and I like that the tips of his hair curl in on itself.

“Can I touch it?” he asks then with a delighted smile and excitedly taps his fingertips against his upper thighs.

“Not yet, but I’m almost done okay?” I say and he rolls his eyes in a ‘pretending to be annoyed’ way, and I stifle a giggle.

“What’s next?” he asks and I look what items I haven’t used yet. There’s only the lip color left and the bracelet and necklace I made as well as the white nail color.

“I think we should paint your nails now so that they can dry meanwhile, what do you think?”

He shrugs with a smile and says, “Sure why not,” before holding one of his hands out for me to take it.
“Have you been chewing on your nails again?” I ask concerned when I apply the first drop of white color to his nails.

He doesn’t say anything until I’m done with the first nail, but I notice that he’s trying hard not to withdraw his hand because his fingers twitch slightly every now and then. Eventually, he says in a strange tone, “You know it’s a habit okay, just like you always pinch your eyes together weirdly.”

That makes me stop in my tracks and I look up at him only to see that he’s grinning mean and cockily at me, which, in return, makes me snarl offended. And of course, that’s when my voice has to break on the last two syllables. When will this ever stop?!

“Hey! You know they hurt...”

Then I drop my hand with the brush in it, as well as my head, because suddenly I feel very vulnerable. I didn’t mock him for chewing his nails, it just surprised me because I haven’t seen him doing it in a while and he usually does it when there’s something major on his mind. He knows how I feel about this ‘habit’ of mine and I’m a little hurt because he usually doesn’t comment on it for this exact reason. And now I feel stupid because why would I feel attacked because of this? This is pathetic and I can feel myself blushing.

“Sorry Mikey, I didn’t mean for it come out like this,” he says in remorse and I feel him scoot next to me, shoving sand all over my legs in the process.

Of course, I knew that he’d apologize immediately if I reacted like that, but I’m still hurt.

“I was just worried is all,” I say quietly and feel him hook his chin over my shoulder. That’s comforting and intimate and I feel a little better, especially when I feel his hand stroke over the nape of my neck and the hair there.

Then I shiver when he mumbles with his lips pressed against my shoulder, “I know, I just felt caught there for a moment and didn’t know what to say, m’ sorry I hurt you.”

I sigh and say reluctantly with my head still bowed down, “It’s okay, I’m just overreacting again.”

“Which you have every right to.”
“Do you find it unattractive?” I ask in shame and finally, dare to lift and turn my head to look at him where he’s sitting half beside-half behind me.

“I never found anything about you unattractive Twee, quite the opposite, more like!” he says immediately and with certainty in his voice.

Hearing him say that releases the tension and hurt in my body and I smile a tiny bit when I sigh and rest my cheek against his jaw and say, “You look pretty.”

“So do you,” he says honestly and strokes his hand from my neck down to my shoulder and up again.

“Wanna finish my nails?”

At that, I smile bigger and take his hand and the brush again.

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While his fingernails dried in the sun that is now standing higher in the sky, I secured the necklace around his neck and carefully slipped the bracelet on his wrist without smudging his nails.

The necklace only has one shell on it, right in the middle of the yarn so it’s not too much at once, but the bracelet has many little shells and flowers on it and I love how both turned out. I also like that the shell of the necklace reaches to his chest, that makes it look more casual but still elegant, at least in my opinion.

“Okay,” I say and take the container with the red lip color from behind me. “Almost done now, are you ready?”

“I’ve been ready since we first talked about this,” he says and giggles, but then suddenly looks very serious when he adds,
“Actually...can I do that? I’m curious to try it, but if you want to, you can-“

“No that’s fine, let me get the mirror.”

I find it lying a little buried in the sand and quickly brush the grains off before holding it up but cover most of it with my palm so he can’t look at his entire face just yet. I still want that to be a surprise.

And suddenly, nothing really matters anymore because that’s my brother looking like a lady, and I’m so gone.

Seductive. That’s the only word that can describe how Gerard looks while he applies the dark red color carefully and precise on his spread lips.

He looks completely different like this, so mature and attentive to what he’s doing. I mean, he always looks sure of what he’s doing, but this is...this is alluring!

It’s like he’s born to do this and I’m sure this is his first time doing something even close to this, at least in that regard. I know Gerard is a born artist, always has been, and this is the ultimate proof. Art, in my opinion, isn’t just about the end product, but also about the process and the thoughts you put into it and even though I have no idea what he’s thinking about right now, I’m sure it’s something very significant.

The way he dips the brush into the color and then carefully but sure applies it with such a look of concentration is art itself.

I wish I could draw half as good as he does because I want to capture this moment right here forever.

“What do you think?” he finally asks and I must have zoned out on his mouth because I have to shake my head to focus again. He looks at me questioning and I put the mirror slowly down next to me without once looking away.

In front of me sits the most beautiful creature I have ever seen and I’m seriously speechless. Gerard seems to get it because he smirks and gets up, straightens the skirt, that floats down his right leg like a waterfall, straightens the top and then walks a few steps back and forth, maybe to test it out or to make me go crazy. I’m rooting for the latter.
Not that I didn’t know that before, but Good Lord can that boy swing his hips and still look manly at the same time. And I think that’s just it: He still looks like a man.

I mean, he could easily be mistaken as a woman like this, absolutely no doubt, but I know him. I know what he looks like underneath the layers of clothes and make-up and prettied up hair. I mean, from what I’ve seen and heard back when we still lived at home, was that women were supposed to shave their legs, at least father sometimes said that he liked women with smooth legs and I know Brain said the same about the other gender. They had to have breasts, soft features, and long hair and had to smell like fruits or flowers or vanilla. That’s what I remember from TV or articles in mothers boring magazines. There was always that one ideal, rules that made a woman look like a woman.

This right here has got nothing to do with any of the girls or women from back home. It might be that I’m in love with this nerdy ninny right here, but seeing him like this makes me go totally and beyond crazy.

Gerard doesn’t have smooth, shaved legs. In fact, his legs are quite hairy with dark hair and they spread up his crotch and someday maybe even over his belly like it is with me. He doesn’t have breasts, he’s as flat as a tray and has muscles in places where most girls are ‘supposed’ to be soft. He doesn’t smell like fruits or vanilla, he smells like saltwater, dry sand and a bit sweaty. Then there’s also the obvious; he doesn’t have a vagina, but a penis, so there’s that. His hair might be longer than the hair of most men I used to know, but then again, it’s always been like that. His features, yes, they could be mistaken as girl ones and the older he gets, the more I see that coming through.

His cheekbones are prominent as well as his upturned nose and his big eyes and perfectly shaped eyebrows. He has a huge smile if he allows showing it and teeth that might look ridiculously small and weird to others, but I think they’re the cutest teeth I’ve ever seen. He does have shaped hips and a nice butt and a neckline that some women could be jealous of.

But yeah, all in all, his body has more characteristics of a man and that, if you ask me, makes him more of a woman than anything else if he wants to be one.

Still, that doesn’t change the fact that he looks like a fairy with a doll face right now and all I want is to rip his clothes off again and do things to him.

He’s damn handsome.

“Help me up, will you?” I ask when he walks past me for the third time in a row with swinging hips.
He smiles sweetly and offers me both of his hands, which I gladly take, and let him pull me up. When we’re standing in front of each other, I entwine my fingers with his and squeeze both of his hands.

“You look really, really pretty,” I say and feel shy all of a sudden. This isn’t the first time that I’m telling him this, by far not, but it’s a new situation and I’m not sure yet how to act.

Much to my surprise, he ducks his head so that his bangs fall over his right eye a little and blushes right across the freckles on his nose. Then he squints up at me cooly through twinkling eyes underneath eyeshadow and long lashes and his smile grows bigger than before, which looks absolutely stunning with his lips so dark red and perfectly shaped like this. Then he says in a tiny and unsure but hopeful voice, “Yeah?”

I nod at his question and gently brush my lips over his red ones, only for a second and not hard like I would love to so I don’t smudge the color, but I need him to know that I mean it. When I pull back, I whisper a soft, “Yeah,” back at him and the smile I get in return is brilliant.

I think I have really outdone myself here and I’m quite proud that everything worked out the way I hoped it would.

Sadly, we both have to start doing our chores for today soon, me especially, since I spent most of my time the last few days with working on the things I needed today, so there’s a lot of catching up to do.

That’s said easier than done with Gerard walking around like this all casual like nothing is different, which it isn’t, not really, but you have to cut me some slag, I don’t get to see him like this every day so the staring and occasionally flirting are totally okay and explainable.

At the end of the day, I somehow managed to get most of the laundry, dishes and beach cleaning done. I really can’t wait until I can walk normal again because while I love the crutches and am thankful to have them, they do get in the way and are unhandy in certain situations.

Gerard caught a lot of fish today and rooted bananas, mango, avocado, and coconuts, fixed a broken window on the house and helped me cook dinner.

“You walk different like this,” I say later when it’s starting to get dark and we’re sitting on our bed.
He puts the old book down that he must have read a thousand times by now and looks at me funny.

“T do?”

I nod and say, “You also pull this face-“

I try to copy it, but I don’t even get close. He laughs and makes the exact face I’m talking about where he purses his lips and creases one corner of his mouth into a tiny smirk. It’s complicated to explain, but he really nails it.

“I think it’s the lipstick,” he says casually and then smirks again, the normal smirk I’m used to and that makes me blush under certain circumstances.

Right now, for example.

“What?!” I say, maybe a little grumpy, but whatever. I don’t like it when he puts me in a position where I don’t know what he’s got in mind, though I have a pretty good idea.

“I like how you looked at me today,” he says and folds his arms over his chest amused when I blush even more.

“Oh yeah? And when was that?” I know that he knows that I know, but I can tease him back just as much.

“Oh you know,” he starts and gets up, goes to the chest where I stored the cosmetic products earlier, gets the red lipstick out and turns around so he leans with his butt against the lit of the chest with his ankles crossed casually and starts to renew the color that faded over the day. While he does it, he continues talking and he knows how much he’s teasing me right now and he enjoys every second of it.

“Let’s see...when I had to bend down to pull the fish out of the water, or when I had to stretch to cut the fruits off the trees...what else, oh right, when I knelt down to saw the wood for the new window or when I walked past you just now to get this-“
He holds up the small container of red color and then abruptly changes his expression from smirking to a mix of straight face, dark eyes and slightly open mouth.

I have to clear my throat then when I say, almost in a whisper, “Yeah I-I did that.”

He just nods at that with the same expression on his face, puts the container behind him without removing his glance on me and then lets his arms hang loosely at his sides.

“And why did you look at me like that?” he asks in a dark voice and I can hear his breath hitch when I accidentally squeeze my thighs together. I pretty much tried to avoid getting hard since this morning and now that he acts like this, there’s absolutely no way that I can hold it back any longer.

I have to close my eyes for a second to clear my thoughts and to catch some air myself before saying, with still closed eyes, “Because I thought you looked pretty and...”

“And what?” he asks, and when I open my eyes, I almost have to close them again because one of his hands is pressed flat against his crotch and the other curled into a fist by his side.

“...and hot,” I finally manage to answer and clench my thighs together again, but the yellow dress isn’t doing much of hiding.

Until maybe a few months ago I would have never dared to use words like 'hot', 'sexy', 'making out' or whatnot because I always thought of them as dirty and inappropriate, but now I find that I don’t really mind and thankfully, Gerard doesn’t either. Actually, he sometimes uses a lot heavier words than me and more often than not I have to wonder where he learned them.

Speaking of; One of the things that is even more of a turn on than him touching me and bringing me off is watching him doing it to himself. I don’t know why really, but it’s probably the dirty and forbidden aspect of it. I love how he looks then, how he breathes, how he tries to contain himself or how he sounds like when he finally comes. Especially though the way his fist looks wrapped around his dick and the way he knows just right how to pump and touch it in the right spots and angles.

I learned the word ‘dick’ only a few weeks ago. Gerard taught me that there are several words for penis but apparently, most of them are really inappropriate. Dick is inappropriate too, but I was sick of the word ‘erection’ so finally, I asked him if there were synonyms for it or how he called it. I thought that 'dick' sounded a little less inappropriate than 'cock' so I stayed with that and Gerard
seems to be okay with it too. If the circumstances were any different and we were at home surrounded by other people such as our parents, I’d never ever dare to use such language, but since we’re the only ones here, I can make an exception. And like I just said, I found out that I actually don’t mind it too much.

The first time Gerard touched himself in front of me was at the beginning of all of this when he brought pleasure to me once again and I wanted to return the favor but didn’t know how. I mean sure, I could have easily copied what he did to me, but I wanted everything to be perfect for him.

I knew that he wanted it for a long time but never said anything because the horrible memories of Brian’s speeches flashed up in his mind again. When I told him that I wanted to do it though and that I thought about it literally every night since that first time on the beach, he looked like the old Gerard again and there was no hint of fear or shame or guilt.

I told him that I needed his help because only having done it to myself maybe once or twice at that point wasn’t that much of a help and I needed him to guide me yet again. He didn’t seem to mind though, he seemed proud that he could teach me something new and soon, I brought him off with my hand under his in a firm grip and I was absolutely amazed by the way his body reacted.

It was the first time ever that I purposely looked at him entirely naked and more so, that I touched him in such places. I quickly learned that he liked having his balls touched and that he didn’t like it as rough as I liked it sometimes. Just like me, he liked it when I put light pressure on his lower belly with my flat palm and he’d practically explode when I kissed him, pressed my knee against his balls and stroked him slow and steady all at once.

Gerard is beautiful when he comes. He has that look on his face that makes my stomach drop and takes my breath away. He always squeezes his eyes shut when he’s close and pulls his eyebrows together in the most alluring way. That and his mouth slightly open and his cheeks a soft shade of red and the high-pitched noises he makes are sometimes enough to get me going again.

And thinking about that now with him looking like that and his hand now slowly teasing himself through the white cotton of the skirt is absolutely enough to get me hard in only two seconds flat.

I wish I could read his mind because he doesn’t say anything or makes a move to come back to bed, he just stands there and looks like art and sex. My toes curl inwards and I stick them under the thin blanket I’m sitting on to hide it, but of course, he notices it and smirks teasingly.

“Watch out for your foot,” he says and closes his eyes for a second when he twists his hand and I hear him curse softly under his breath.
It’s astonishing how he always knows everything about me and yeah, shoving my toes under the blanket a bit too roughly might hurt a little, but whatever. That’s really the last thing I’m concerned about right now.

I’m not saying anything in response, I’m way too mesmerized by him. When he sticks his hand under his skirt gasps softly, I give up and do the same. There’s no way I can resist on touching myself any longer.

He must have heard the tiny moan that escaped my throat because he immediately stills his hand on himself and opens his eyes.

“Oh no no Mikey, hands off.”

He can’t be serious, can he? As much as alluring as he is, he’s just as frustrating. But I can never deny any of his requests and I’m still hoping that he comes back over and does the job himself.

“Would you mind coming back here, then?” I say and withdraw the hand from under my dress and run both of my hands over my face and hair in a poor attempt to regain some self-control.

He smiles sweetly when I let out another frustrated noise and then finally, finally comes back to bed. A little too slowly for my liking, but I really shouldn’t complain.

Especially not when he kneels down next to me, fast but carefully pulls my legs apart and sits in between them. He hovers there for a moment with that same look as before on his face, before putting his flat palms on my chest and presses me down gently so I’m lying in front of him. Then he takes a firm grip on my biceps and pushes my arms over my head, or well, next to my head due to some space issues.

This could be a little frightening, in all honesty. He’s never manhandled me like this before and for someone who’s new to all of this, this could be mistaken as something entirely else. But, this is Gerard. I trust him with every ounce of my body and he knows that. When he leans over me then, gently swipes his thumbs over my upper arms and whispers in a comforting voice, all of my last worries are blown away.

“Always say stop if it’s too much, you hear me?”
He searches my face for concern but all I do in return is smirking, simply because I can. He raises an eyebrow at that but when he smirks back down at me, I know he understands. I trust him and I know he’ll stop as soon as I say so. And by the way, I kind of like this. I never would have thought that I’d let someone manhandle me, but with Gerard, it’s always different.

This is exciting.

One last smirk on his side, and then he dips his head low to suck and kiss on my neck. While he does it, he shuffles my knees further apart with his own ones and makes a frustrated noise when the seam of the dress won’t slide up enough.

To fix that, he releases one of his hands from my biceps and pushes the dress up high enough that it slides over my hips. Of course, I take his missing grip on my arm as an invitation to burrow my fingers in his hair, but as soon as he gets what I’m doing, he sits up, puts his hand back to where it was and then presses down hard enough with both of his hands to make me gasp.

“‘Said hands off!”

He doesn’t say it in a mean or threatening way, more like in an amusing and slightly breathless way.

I have to bite my tongue not to giggle or something else, and I know very well that this is so not the response he wants, but I can’t help it. I love everything about this right now. Under any different circumstances I’d feel intimidated, but not when he looks so damn sweet and seductive.

He raises an eyebrow again to challenge me and I surrender and nod without saying anything, but I leave the tiny smile on my lips which I know makes him happy.

“Leave ‘em there!” he growls and tightens his grip on my arms again so I know what he’s referring to. I nod once again and sigh happily when he lowers his head again to nibble at my collarbone.

He lets go of my arms then and instead runs his palms down over my torso and lets them rest on my hipbones. I like the feeling of that because he has big and warm hands. Nothing like my skinny cold ones. Until now, I managed to leave my eyes open but that quickly changes when he presses his thumbs down hard into that crook between upper thigh and pubic bone.
I can practically feel his smirk against my skin when he does it again and I wince in arousal. I can only imagine how my neck and collarbone must be looking by now thanks to his lipstick. I find that I like the idea of that a lot and to encourage him to do more, I buck my hips up, or at least I’m trying because his firm grip barely allows me to move.

In return to my poor attempt to grind against him, he pulls his head up slightly and before I get a chance to comment on his red smeared lips, he crashes them against mine so hard that our teeth clack together.

I’m glad that Gerard wanted to try out the tongue kissing thing a while ago because it’s one of my favorite things to do now and I find that I’m not too bad at it. Gerard seems to be on the same page about that because he groans deep in his throat while we kiss. I’m so lost in that act for a moment, that I barely notice one of his hands wandering up and slide under my dress where he strokes over my waist, my chest and eventually curls his hand in between my armpit and the arm of the dress. It would look absolutely ridiculous if it wasn’t so hot.

He digs his fingertips flat into the skin where my armpit hair starts to grow and where the arm of the dress ends so the very ends of his fingers poke out from under the cotton.

Surprisingly, it’s turning me more on than it tickles.

“I like that,” he says in a low voice as our lips part with a smack.

“What?” I ask in a breath, not quite sure what he’s referring to. It could be a lot of things for all I know.

“These,” he breathes back and strokes the thumb of his left hand over my armpit hair and three of his fingertips of his right hand over my pubic hair. I don’t even make an attempt to stifle a laugh at that because of course, of all things right now, he’s talking about the weird hair on my body. I shouldn’t be surprised though, Gerard is weird like that and to be honest, I get where he’s coming from because the same goes for me. I never thought it could be an important thing to comment on, but to him, apparently, it is.

“Freak,” I snort out and really have to contain myself not to reach down to touch him.

Luckily, he distracts me from that for a moment longer when he sits up suddenly and cups both of his palms around my hip bones again. Only now do I dare to open my eyes and I’m greeted with a
grinning Gerard whose upper lip is tucked between his teeth and whose ponytail is totally messed up. The red of the lipstick surprisingly stayed mostly on his lips, only smudged out a bit here and there.

What a look.

“So I wanna try something,” he announces in that squeaky voice of his and absently starts to stroke the fingertips of his right hand through the curls between my legs and the underside of my dick.

“Oh yeah?” I gasp out and have to swallow before adding in a shaky voice, “and what’s that?”

His grin only gets wider at that and he shakes his head.

“Can’t say.”

At that point, my hands are curled into fists because it really takes a lot of self-control not to reach down and either stop his hand or encourage him to do more, so through gritted teeth, I ask, “And why not?”

“Cause you wouldn’t let me.”

I wouldn’t? I’m pretty sure I’d let him do whatever he wants right now. He must see the questioning look on my face but all he says is, “Remember what I told you earlier,” which I assume must be to say stop. Okay, so maybe I’m a little unsettled now. What could he mean that would make me stop him?

I’m so busy thinking about that, that I don’t notice that he changed his position slightly from hovering over me, more or less, to bending his head down low on my belly where the dress slipped up.

Then I’m busy thinking about how good he looks down there that I don’t even have time to be alarmed when I feel him run his tongue from my bellybutton down into my pubes where his chin nudges against my dick.

He’s never done that before, but it’s nothing that would make me stop him so why was he so excited
about it? This is actually quite nice and it takes all of my willpower not to reach down to bury my fingers in his hair. It’s only when I realize what he’s aiming for that my eyes fly open in shock and I try to turn my crotch away, but he’s holding me down with firm pressure on my hips so there’s nothing I can do.

My idea gets confirmed when I feel his tongue press down on the tip of my dick and my hands desperately curl into fists around the thin sheet I’m lying on.

Now I understand what he meant when he said that I wouldn’t allow it when I knew what he was talking about because never in a million years would I have given him an O.K. to put his mouth on that part of my body. Not because I wouldn’t like the feeling of it or whatever, but because I do things with it! It can hardly be hygienic or pleasant or God knows what and is that even allowed? Is that something that people do? Did Brian tell him that this is yet another thing that connects with sex? Thank God we took a bath last night or else I’d feel really bad now!

All of this runs through my head in the short second that his tongue licks over my tip and I just gave myself enough reasons to stop this right here, but the feeling is so overwhelming, especially when he does it again and then runs his tongue along the shaft, that I decide that I give a flying damn about it. Instead, my mouth falls open and my back arches, which doesn’t seem to stop him but encourage him to continue.

I can feel that he’s testing the waters because one second he’d very carefully touch his tongue down on one spot and then full on lick over it when he noticed that it brought pleasure to me. At this point, my eyes are squeezed together so tightly that I’m seeing white dots and my feet dig into the sheets so hard that it almost hurts too much, at least on my broken foot. He must sense that because he pulls away slightly and carefully lifts the leg of my broken foot over his shoulder so it hangs loosely in the air. Then he runs his palm over the shin of my good foot and when I feel light pressure on it, I know that he wants me to bend it.

This position is much more comfortable and I’m silently thankful for his thoughtfulness. I don’t have time to say that out loud before he lowers his head again and full on puts my dick in his mouth.

That evokes a loud moan from my throat and I bury the side of my face into my upper arm in a poor attempt to stifle it, but of course to no avail. Now I also get why he’s got some sort of death grip on my hips because if he wouldn’t push me down, I’m pretty sure I’d choke him because there is barely a way to not buck up into the tight heat of his mouth.

For a second he seems lost down there because there’s no movement nor can I feel him exhaling through his nose and I’m just about to tell him to stop when that suddenly changes and he slowly begins to bob his head up and down. If I wouldn’t be so turned on right now, I’m pretty sure I’d be dead embarrassed because I can feel myself leaking and I seriously doubt that that tastes any good.
I’m not even sure if you’re allowed to swallow that, no one ever told me if that’s harmful or not but I sure hope he knows.

Gerard doesn’t seem to mind about the feeling or the taste though, because with every noise that I make and with every move that I try to contain, he gets greedier and even makes noises himself. Not that I can hear them, not really, but I can feel them vibrating in his throat and the feeling of that brings me so close to the edge that it would be almost funny, well, if it wasn’t so wretched.

I’m breathing so hard and heavy at this point that I’m starting to feel lightheaded and the side of my biceps must have bite marks by now from where I tried to hold back moans and bit down instead.

I’m scared for a second when he lets go of my hip with one hand and slides it up my side. I really don’t want to choke or hurt him but I don’t think I’m able to control that, I need him to hold me down or else I don’t know what happens. Thankfully though, he pulls off for a moment and just nuzzles my pubes while his hand slides up higher, all the way to my armpit. Then he curls his hand as far under my shoulder as he can reach and pushes to make clear that he wants me to reach down.

I’m not so sure if I’m interpreting this right, so I very slowly lower my right arm and when my upper arm is within the reach of his hand, he takes it and guides my hand to his head where I immediately curl my fingers into his hair.

When he moves to suck again, my hand tightens so hard in his hair that I hear and feel him exhale loudly through his nose and I’m really glad that he’s put his palm down on my hip again. It’s really difficult not to push him down now, but there’s no way I’m letting my body win over, not when he’s being so good to me.

Not much later I’m so close that I’m starting to panic again. Especially when he curls his left hand around the base of my dick where he can’t reach with his mouth. There’s no way I’m going to come in his mouth, no matter how arousing the thought might be.

“Gee- Gee, come on,” I stutter out and gasp high in my throat when he tightens his grip and dips his tongue into the slit of my tip. That’s good because at least he pulled off a little, but that’s still too close to his mouth and also really not helping because that spot gives so much pleasure that I have to tighten my grip on his hair yet again to try to pull him away and my thighs start to clench around his head.

“You have to pull off, come on I’m gonna- please pull off Gee,” I’m starting to babble now, but there’s nothing else I’m capable of. I’m so close that it almost hurts but I don’t want it to happen like this, not because of me, but for his sake.
It seems like no matter what I’m doing or saying, he won’t listen to me, he just keeps on sucking and licking and when he slides his free hand over my sweaty hip bone and up to my lower belly to press down, I give up. Especially when he moans around my dick when I pull on his hair again.

With a loud and embarrassingly high-pitched, “Ngghhhhaah,”, arched back and lulled back head, I come, and now even his hands can’t stop me from bucking up at least once where I lost control over my body.

I’m barely even done coming when he pulls off with a slurping sound and kneels up to untie his skirt with shaky fingers. I’m still totally blown away and it takes an effort to open my eyes, but when I do I’m gifted with what I see. Gerard’s pupils are blown, his cheeks are flushed, there’s a light line of sweat on his hairline, his lips are still red but not only from the lipstick, that is smeared greatly around his mouth, but probably also from all the sucking, and the thing that makes that even hotter than it already is, is the small stripe of come dripping down his lower lip. My come! The thought alone is enough for me to moan again, especially combined with the view of Gerard finally untangling that damned knot and wrapping his hand around his dick.

When he does, his eyes shut immediately and he falls forward a bit but catches himself with his palm on my hip. Only a second later he comes with a groan, in the same second that I moan, “Christ, Gee!” It doesn’t disgust me when he comes on top of me, he did that a few times now and I only find it hotter the more he does it.

“Come here,” I say quietly when his knees tend to give up. He lifts his head when he hears my voice and after a second, maybe after realizing what just happened, he smiles sheepishly and brushes a loose strand behind his ear.

After taking the skirt, this time to clean us up, and after slipping on the white puffy underpants, he curls up by my side and kisses my cheek gently. Without hesitation, I wrap my arms around him and bury my nose in his hair.

At this moment, I decide if it is a good moment to tell him that I love him. He knows that I love him, I told him that more than enough, but when I did, it was always in that brotherly, best friend and family kind of way. But I fell in love with him over the last quarter and a half year and I know that he knows that as well, but I never said it out loud.

I desperately want to say it, but I’m scared that I wouldn’t get the same words in return. Which I know wouldn’t happen, I know that he loved me way before I even let that thought cross my mind, but I’m scared to hear it. Maybe because it’s a big thing. Not any bigger than what we have already, but it’s just...different.
In the end, I decided that I won’t tell him. Maybe not ever. I like the idea of the unspoken but still known. I wonder if he feels the same about this, but why would any of this be important when the one person on earth I love with all my heart and soul lies next to me and holds me close? The one who protects me at all costs, saves me from nightmares, makes me laugh, trusts me and accepts me for who I am? More importantly, the one who would give up the only person in life he loves above all else in order for them to be okay?

That, if you ask me, is honest, unconditional and irrevocable love that doesn’t need to be outspoken. It exists on its own.
Chapter End Notes

Would love to hear from you:)  
(Yes I know I can't draw but I tried)
Chapter 11

Chapter Summary

Songs I used while writing this chapter:

Iris by The Goo Goo Dolls
Unchained Melody by The Righteous Brothers

Chapter Notes

This chapter is very, very important!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Chapter 11

“Do you mind if I ask you something?” I say the next morning, shortly after we’ve woken up.

“Course,” Gerard says tiredly and stretches his arms gracefully over his head where he’s lying next to me. How beautiful to watch.

“What’s it feel like to sleep with a minor?”

Just as the last word leaves my mouth, Gerard stirs and looks up at me with huge eyes. There might be something like anxiety in his gaze but I can tell that there’s also a tiny smirk hidden somewhere.

“Well,” he starts and shakes himself a little. Then he closes his eyes and sighs. “First of all, I could ask you the same question.”

He squints one eye open to look at me and smirks for real this time. “Because if I remember correctly,” he continues and pulls me in close so I'm hovering over him, “I'm just as much a minor as you are, young man!”
I grin down at him and scoot around a little so I can put one of my legs between his and prop myself up on both elbows next to his head. “Yeah but not for much longer, your Birthday is right around the corner and then you're 18 while I'm still 14 for a little while longer.”

“Does that bother you?” he asks and does indeed look a bit concerned.

Of course, it doesn't bother me, not in the slightest, but it's fun to tease him and I'm curious as to what he has to say about this. I bet he sees the things just like me. We're pretty much alike like that.

“Just answer the question,” I say and give him testing eyes in a playful way.

He rolls his eyes over-dramatically but purses his lips, thinking.

“You wanna know what it feels like to sleep with a minor...well to answer that correctly I have to step in and tell you that we didn't sleep together yet,” he starts and shushes me with a sweet smile on his lips when I want to jump in to argue about that.

“My turn, you wanted to know my thoughts on that so let me finish, Twerp. Where was I...right! We didn't sleep together yet but everything else we did is definitely in the area of sex so I see where you're coming from. To be honest, I don't see you as a minor. I mean sure, on the papers you are one but Mikes, you're the most mature person I know. If I had to guess your age by just looking at you or from what you say sometimes or how you see things, I'd never think of you as a fourteen-year-old. Do you really think most boys your age act and behave the way you do?”

“I don't know,” I say honestly and try to remember how boys that age acted but I come up with nothing. I don't think I ever paid special attention to anyone who wasn't my age back then, with the exception of Gerard and Ray of course. But even they weren't 14 and older then so no, I really don't have an answer to that.

“Trust me, you're pretty special in that regard,” he says and gently strokes over my hips with his thumbs. “Guess you were always a little ahead of your age but especially these last few years. You grew up faster than me.”

“I did not,” I mumble and duck my head, maybe a little sheepishly.

“You did too. And also, do you really think that if things were different and we'd still live at home
that I'd crush on a random 13-year-old?” he asks and raises his eyebrows when I slowly lift my head to look at him. Oh right, he said once that he became interested in me when I grew up a little which, according to him, was when I was 13.

“Why not? I mean you don't choose who you fall in love with. You could have fallen in love with Frank and he was even younger than me. The important thing here is that you gotta be sure that you're not taking advantage of the younger person.”

When I say that, Gerard turns his head to the side a bit and asks me to explain that a little further.

“Well, I mean...okay look. Let's just pretend you're not 17 but 35, okay? And I'm...I don't know, 17 or 18. The same situation as now, we both like each other and are in a relationship, not just as brothers. Would there be anything wrong with that? To others maybe, yes. But then again, that's because they probably wouldn't understand. Just like with the sibling thing. It's out of the ordinary, that's because they'd be against it. We would have to make them understand, or anyone in that situation, for that matter. Of course, I'm not saying that it's exactly 'normal' for older adults to feel this kind of love towards someone who's way younger, but I mean...the world is full of exceptions, right? And if there's a reasonable explanation on both sides, then I don't see a problem here.”

“You know, I was supposed to answer that,” Gerard says with another one of his smirks when I'm done with my speech and ruffles my hair. “You're right though, just like you always are. That's exactly what I meant when I said you're ahead of others your age. You think like a grown person with lots of knowledge and life experience and I admire that.”

I'm not quite sure how to respond to that, so instead of saying something, I give him a smile that I hope looks earnest and touched by his nice words, and lean down to cuddle up against his chest.

He seems to understand that I want to say thank you for what he said that way because I hear him huff a tiny laugh before he winds his arms around my middle and buries his nose in my hair.

“You wonderful boy, Mikey Way,” Gerard says quietly against my hair and my heart starts to swell and I grin against his chest.

“You wonderful man, Gerard Way.” He giggles when I say that and starts to stroke over my back soothingly.

I knew that we would be on the same page about this. Not that I gave him really a chance to speak.
up because of course, I couldn't keep my mouth shut for one second, but whatever. It also touches me that he thinks of me that way. I always knew that he liked my opinion on certain things, such as what we just talked about for example, but that he admires it and thinks it's something special? That's definitely something I didn't know. I don't think he just said it to be nice, either. He usually truly means his words, especially in situations like this when it means so much.

But thinking about it now kind of opens my eyes in a way: Maybe I really am ahead of others that are my age. Of course, I can never be sure because I was so young back then and didn't pay attention to certain topics, but maybe I am premature when it comes to things like sex and liking someone the way I like Gerard. I'm also pretty tall already, I definitely started puberty early, at least in some ways, whereas Gerard kind of just skipped a few steps. And yeah, maybe I do think differently. I know that I was always open-minded, but a child thinks different than a teenager and I like the idea of me being smart when it comes to topics like the one we just had.

I wonder if people would understand that if they saw me. Like, would our parents support my actions and decisions? Would others at school accept it when I told them how I see the world? Would they accept that I am sexually active at the age of fourteen?

And I'm counting Gerard as my partner out here, as much as I dislike the idea of it, but I have that strong feeling in my stomach that no one would ever understand what we have. Not even our parents. Actually, they'd probably the first ones to tell us that what we feel and do is wrong. But I would always defend myself because I know, just know so surely, that I'm right with the way I think and with what I do. I wouldn't do anything if I wasn't completely sure that what I was doing is the right thing.

In the end, I come to the decision that I'm a little proud of myself, and that is a rare thing for me to say about myself so it really has to mean something.

Gerard's stroking on my back could easily bring me back to sleep for at least another hour, but then I remember another thing that I'm curious about since yesterday evening.

“Gee?” I whisper and carefully tap my fingertip on his chest next to where my nose is located.

“Mhh?” he mutters back like he's on the verge of falling back to sleep himself.

“What you did yesterday, y'know...with your mouth. Why'd you do it?”
His only response at first is that he nuzzles his nose inside my hair some more and huffs a soft and nervous sounding laugh before saying, equally quiet and nervous, “Cause I wanted to try it.”

“Have you thought about it for a while now?”

“I...yeah. A long while.”

Now his voice is even more softly and I have to wonder if there's more to it, but I'm not going to ask, he'll tell me himself if there's more when he's ready. Maybe that’s why he’s been chewing on his nails so much lately? Because he was too nervous to ask but excited about the idea of me saying yes?

Then my body goes stock still and I hold my breath when I ask, “Was it like you imagined it? I mean, was it good?” Thank God he can't see my face from this angle because I'm pretty damn sure my face is every shade of red right now.

The reaction to that is a mixture of snort and nervous, high-pitched giggle and a chocked out, “Ohh yes!” and his entire body squeezing around me even more than before.

His response kind of surprises me, but on the other hand, it really, absolutely doesn't. Gerard is a weirdo sometimes and I wish it was easy to believe his words but the thought of what he did yesterday, I mean the very act of him sucking me off and apparently truly enjoying it? These two things just don't really work together when I think about it.

“What was it like?” I want to know then and bury my face deeper against his chest because I'm not so sure myself if I want to know the answer. And why am I suddenly so shy again? I thought I worked on that quite nicely over the last few months, but I was wrong it seems.

I blame it on Gerard. He has that effect on people.

“You taste really good if that's what you want to know,” he says in a happy voice, totally unperturbed and pleased with himself.

“Oh my God, you're the worst!” I say and slap my left hand over my eyes in embarrassment.
He just giggles some more and kisses me on the hair. “It's true though, don't be embarrassed about it.”

“How did you even know that this is a thing,” I mumble against my hand that is still slapped over my face.

“Just...intuition I guess? Dunno.”

Okay, I can accept that. And if he liked it and didn't make him feel uncomfortable, then that's even better because I sure enjoyed myself a lot. Just thinking about it would be enough to get me going right on the spot, to be honest.

“Did you like it?” he asks after a moment as if he was reading my thoughts, sounding a little shy and insecure himself now.

Now it's my turn to huff out a tiny laugh along with a nod against his chest. “It was incredible, actually.”

I can practically hear the huge and pleased smile on his face when he says, “M glad then.”

We're in comfortable silence for a while after that, just enjoying the silence and company of each other when another thought crosses my mind.

“You looked like a doll yesterday,” I say quietly, now lying next to him with my arm flung across his belly and nose and forehead pressed against the bone of his shoulder. This close I could count the many tiny freckles on his shoulder...maybe I'll do that someday. Then I decide to kiss the skin there, just because I feel like it and because I can do that now, kiss him at (almost) any given time and in random places.

I don't have to look up to see the last faint remains of the dark color around his eyes and even fainter red on his lips, the soft powder high on his cheekbones. It was all pretty smudged after we went to bed yesterday, or well, fell asleep on top of each other after last night’s events. It looked good even then, the smeared color around his eyes kind of gave it character and made him look mysterious and secure at the same time.

“Is that a good thing?” Gerard asks after considering my words for a minute.
“Yes, that is a very good thing! But I like how you look no matter what, you know that right?” At that, he takes my hand that rests on his belly, lifts it up and gently kisses my knuckles.

“I do know that yeah, I always feel good around you,” he says with his lips still pressed against my skin. After a moment he adds something that makes me incredibly happy because that’s exactly what I wanted to hear. I want to be the one who makes him feel like that; “I’m never ashamed of anything when I’m around you you know, you make me feel pretty.”

“Hmm...you really are pretty,” I agree dreamy, not caring that I sound like a school girl in love, and dig my nose deeper against his shoulder.


After we spent another half an hour in bed and talked about random things, we decided that we should maybe get up and get some work done.

So after our usual 'bathroom' routine, Gerard started to saw new wood for a broken part on the facade of the house and I dug out my sewing-kit because a few of our clothes need to be patched.

Gerard washed up the leftovers of the make-up and dressed in his normal clothes and while I tried to search for something like disappointment or regrettable for not seeing him like yesterday again, I only found honor and worship. Gerard is his own person and he can do whatever he wants as longs as he feels comfortable doing it, and now that I know that he feels good around me in whichever attire, I'll just go with the motions and wait for the next time he decides to change his looks.

While I'm sitting here in the shadow of a palm tree with my yellow dress in my lap and a needle in my hand to patch together an open seam on the armpit of the fabric, I let my mind wander back to something that I thought about this morning in bed.

The very thought of me being premature.

Over the last few years, when I started to notice changes on first Gerard's body and then a little later on mine, I always wondered why these changes had happened. Of course, I know that part now, but back then I didn't and I often caught myself comparing our bodies to each other.

Back then it was just little things like how his voice slowly started to croak and then just stayed that
way until today, while mine was still child-like and clear. Or little details like the hair on his legs that suddenly looked a deeper shade of black and a tiny bit curly, not like the almost non-existent and light blond baby hairs on my own legs.

I remember how confused and almost shocked I was when I first took note of the hair that started to grow under his arms and then between his legs. I also remember that I found myself not liking the sudden change on him at first because it was just so strange to me to talk to my brother and hearing him answer with another voice, or see him scratch absently under his arms where the strange and new hair scratched him when he wasn’t yet used to them suddenly being there.

I was only ‘used’ to the Gerard he was until then, the Child-Gerard, and waking up almost every morning and notice something new or different on him was just strange and confusing to me. Of course, I never felt revolted or repelled by any of this, I was always drawn to him. It scared me, more like. Maybe it would have been different if I had known that the very thing would happen to me sooner than later and that it was purely natural.

I was always so astounded about the simple fact that he was so totally calm about all of this. I would have thought that he was the one who’d be startled and scared because everything was changing, but he just took it and lived with it, all confident. Now I know that he knew that it was just puberty wriggling through and that he was prepared and all, but still. I was never so calm about any of this.

And yes, while it kind of scared and confused me, I also found myself more and more drawn to it as the time passed. And I say ‘as the time passed’ because I only took further notice of certain things when I myself started to grow up and feel changes on my own body.

Suddenly, one morning I caught myself staring at him while he changed and pulled faces in front of the mirror, stroking softly over his cheeks and chin with the flat of his hand. Thinking back now, he was probably looking for facial hair, and when he found none, wondering when he’d finally grow some and being excited about it ever since Brian had told him about it.

I remember the first time the air got caught in my throat when he stole one of my smaller loincloths and the muscles on his lower belly stood out more than ever and I just wanted to touch them, find out how they would feel under the warm skin that was almost constantly sprinkled with grains of sand.

I don’t know exactly when, but at one point it became part of my daily routine to just watch him. Watch him swim with such grace and concentration, watch him carry heavy things and pay special attention to his strong yet not very muscly thighs, listen to him talk with that new voice and being so completely comfortable with it as if nothing had ever changed. And it wouldn’t matter what time of the day I was paying such strong attention to him.
Sometimes it would be early in the morning and I’d secretly watch him stretch and get up from under
the blanket, yawning and absently scratching at his crotch hair. Sometimes it would be at the light
hours of the day and the sun would catch his hair just right and make it look even softer and darker.
Even at night, when it was so dark it was impossible to see when there weren’t any lanterns on, he’d
still be so beautiful and mysterious to me, simply because he was.

On some days, I felt extremely self-conscious being around him, simply because I felt like I had
nothing to offer against him and all that he was. At one point he had grown into this strong, tall man
with dark body hair and firm hands while I was still just a kid. I was almost jealous and frustrated
when the months passed and I was still just the same. My hands weren’t weak, but they were thin
and never as strong as Gerard’s. My muscles only started to show much later when I finally grew
some body hair myself and my voice started to break. How many times did I look down at my body
and cursed at my strange wobbly knees that were always turned at an angle and my feet that were
always turned inwards and made me look all weird and shy. There were a few months in my still so
short life where I hated to look in the mirror because I couldn’t stand the way my face looked. I had
a short phase, years and years back when I still had a bit of baby chub going on and my face looked all
round and strange and I hated it. It started to thin out rather quickly after that and my sharp
cheekbones made themselves prominent and I started to like it because that was almost the only thing
that looked manlier than the things Gerard had to offer up until that very point.

Gerard’s facial features are still so soft and make him look almost fragile and girly, while I like to
think of mine as strong and masculine now. I have a trail of coarse curls down my belly and even
discovered the tiniest of hair around my nipples a few days ago while Gerard has none of those. We
both have pit hair but I guess women have those too. Everything else on me though, starting with my
feathery hair and small shoulders to my tiny waist and long legs makes me kind of girly looking. I
guess the choice of clothes I’m wearing isn’t doing me any favors in that regard, but I put that on
myself and that’s the only thing I was never self-conscious about. Boys and girls can wear whatever
they want and that has always been final in my mind.

Gerard is tall, but I know I’ll be taller than him not long from now which is yet again weird to me
because all of my life, he was always the taller one and it worked well with the reference of ‘big
brother’. He also carries himself so differently than me. He knows how to move his body, knows
how to work with it in every situation that comes up. He’s bendy and always looks graceful, even
when he cuts off bananas and should look funny, but he never does, not really. I sometimes feel like
my body was randomly given to me and I never figured out how to live with it. I’m so clumsy and
awkward, my shoulders are always hunched over and my spine is crooked and I’m not bendy at all.
I’m almost glad I don’t have to go to prom anymore because I’d embarrass myself when I’d have to
dance. I mean, okay. Maybe it’s not that bad, I can swing my hips a little and all that, but have you
seen Gerard?! That boy has hips like a Goddess and everyone compared to him just has to stink
against him. I’ve never actually seen him dance, but I bet he’s great at it.

I like Gerard’s hips because they’re soft and kind of curvy and I guess also girly looking and I kind
of want to bite them. They’re nice to grab and probably the only part of his body where you can find
a tiny bit of chub.
But yeah, back to the thought of me being premature.

It may have taken a while, or at least it felt that way because looking back it really didn’t take that long at all, but puberty started fairly early for me and now that I made my peace with it, I like how everything turned out. I guess I find myself pretty now, or at least good-ish looking. I now like my weird knees and too long fingers, I actually love my hair because I can do so much with it now and I definitely like my new voice, except when it embarrasses me to no end, of course. Gerard likes all of these things too, apparently, and that’s enough for me.

Gerard is by definition perfect in my eyes and if such a perfect person decides to fall for me on so many levels, then everything else stays unconcerned.

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Late in the evening, when our chores are long done for today and dinner was served and we called it a night and went to bed, I found myself confused over something Gerard had said this morning and even though I thought about it during the day and tried to find the answer myself, I came up with nothing. So that’s where I am right now, head lazily resting on Gerard’s upper arm with my arm flung across his heaving chest that’s covered in thin sweat after another make-out session not too long ago.

“Gee uhm, you said we didn’t sleep together yet...what does that mean, exactly?”

He doesn’t answer for a long while and when he does, I’m surprised by his words.

“I actually don’t know what that means.” I’m surprised because he always seems to know the answer to everything, especially in that regard. When he says it, he turns his head in my direction and smiles kind of apologetic and there’s a little flush on his cheeks.

“You don’t?”

“No, I mean,” he starts and sighs and turns his head back to stare at the ceiling in the faint light of the lantern. “I mean I do know what that means, theoretically. I mean...real sex. Like, I mean I know how it works and how you do it and all, at least I think I do, but...”

I just stare at him and try to make sense of the mess of his rambling but it’s pretty confusing and I’m
not sure if I’m getting what he’s trying to say, but I wouldn’t dare to interrupt him, this is probably hard for him and I respect that, so I’m staying quiet and let him continue.

“I try to imagine it sometimes, sex with you. And me, well...obviously but you’re still so young and still just a kid even if I said you weren’t, in some regard, but this is so much bigger you know? But anyway, that’s not what I’m trying to say, I try to imagine it sometimes but I kind of get stuck whenever I do because well...I uhm, I wouldn’t know where to...urgh, please Mikes, don’t make me say it,” he says with a remorseful voice, sounding more and more frustrated and embarrassed towards the end but I still can’t make sense of any of that.

“Say what,” I ask honestly, trying to think of a way to make this somehow easier for him because it wasn’t my intention to make him feel uncomfortable with this.

I see him squeeze his eyes shut and when I take a closer look at his body language, I make out that his right hand fidgets and his knee bounces lightly. He must be really nervous about this and I feel minutely guilty.

“You’re not a girl you know,” he finally breathes out quietly, sounding strangled.

I don’t know what to say to that because well, I know that much myself, yet I don’t get what he’s trying to tell me with that statement. When I don’t say anything back but keep quiet and look at him confused and apologetic myself now, he opens his eyes and turns his head in my direction with a matching look on his face. He even has his lower lip tucked awkwardly between his teeth.

“You’re not a girl Mikes, I wouldn’t know where to...where to put it, okay?”

And oh. Oh! God, why am I always so stupid with these things?!

My eyes widen and I mentally slap myself in the face because that one was really obvious and I didn’t get it, again! Maybe I am only 14 after all, I don’t even know anymore. I try really hard not to, but I’m so damn uncomfortable right now and I know he is too and this is me being so incredibly brainless again, that I just have to laugh at the entire situation.

I’m laughing and my entire face is red, I can feel it and at first, he looks at me confused and as if I was a maniac, but then Gerard joins me and starts to laugh and giggle as well. And it’s good because it definitely lightens the mood and maybe makes it easier to talk about this.
Sex, of course. Babies come from sex and the man has to somehow get it inside the woman. I didn’t even think that far, which, again. A clueless teenager who lives alone on an island in the South-Pacific with no experience whatsoever.

“So oo oo,” Gerard says after we calmed down again and grins at me awkwardly, obviously still uncomfortable which I totally get now.

“Yeah, so, when I tried to imagine it, I kinda got stuck at one point in my imagination because we are in fact two boys and I don’t know how that would work... if that would work. So yeah, to answer your question, I don’t know.”

He shrugs his shoulders when he’s done and purses his lips and looks kind of sad.

“Maybe two boys don’t do it?” I suggest and shrug my shoulders myself.

He doesn’t say anything to that but shrugs his shoulders again, looking in thoughts.

“I’m happy with the way things are anyway,” I blurt out before I can stop myself, and Gerard’s tiny smile makes me smile right back at him.

“Yeah?” he asks with a tiny voice and brushes a strand behind my ear.

I nod and say, “More than happy.”

“I’m happy too,” he says and pulls me in closer and I immediately snuggle up against his chest which makes him giggle and I snuggle in even closer.

We’re both almost asleep when a terrifying thought crosses my mind and I find myself asking with a breathy and small voice, “Gee... would you also be happy if we were still at home? I mean, would we be like this? Would you still want me when there would be so many others for you to choose?”
I almost don’t want to know the answer and I’m glad that the flame from the lantern has died down a while ago because I don’t want him to see my pathetic face right now.

His first response is that he turns us around so that we’re spooning, him being the big spoon like almost always. Then he tucks his nose behind my ear and entwines our fingers against my chest before saying, with the biggest amount of love in his voice I’ve ever heard and like it’s the most obvious thing in the world, “S’ always been you, Mikey.”

And I believe it.

Chapter End Notes

Please let me hear from you <3
Chapter 12

Chapter Summary

Songs I used while writing this chapter:

Moon River by Henry Mancini
One Family by Mark Mancina

Chapter Notes

Lots of time jumps in the first paragraph x
I adore this chapter for certain and personal reasons...I hope you like it too <3

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Chapter 12

Gerard’s 18th birthday comes and goes and nothing changes, only the fact that on some unimportant paper he’d be an adult now, but it changes nothing between us. He treats me just the same as ever and I’m thankful for that. The days grow longer and spread into the hot days of late spring and then early summer and by the end of late summer, at the end August, when it’s crazy hot and humid every day, my foot is completely healed and the crutches long forgotten but carefully hidden in special spot in our dressing room.

On the morning of my 15th birthday in September, I’m 6 inches taller than Gerard, just like I always knew I would, and I tease him about it non-stop, but he doesn’t seem to mind. We barely fight anymore and if we do, we make up only a short time after and everything is okay again. Gerard’s hair grows longer and I forget to cut it, but neither of us minds.

When October turns into November and we come back from another few days in the cave after the yearly storm, I think back to a year ago when I was so utterly depressed when things between us got out of hand and I spent my days in the darkness of my old room. Then I smile to myself, because so much has changed in the last months, and only for the better.

The end of November marks our 7 years on this island and yet no ship came ever by, and we’re the happiest we’ve ever been.
A week after Christmas, we get a special visitor.

Behind the line of trees, that separates the beach from the deep rainforest, sits a little yellow creature with only three feet and a long tail and I know I would recognize him everywhere because he saved my life almost a year ago when I thought everything was lost and I was about to pass out.

It’s Peppermint.

Gerard is actually the one who finds him on his way to cut coconuts, in one of the many bushes, and calls me over, and I immediately know it’s him. He hasn’t changed much, he’s still as tiny and furry, has the same deep black button eyes and those fragile little fingers. He might have gained some weight, but probably he was just extra hungry. And, of course, I recognize him because one of his feet is missing.

“What’s he doing out here?” Gerard asks when I kneel in front of the bush he’s sitting in and carefully reach out to pat him.

“I don’t know, I haven’t seen him since that night, I almost thought I imagined him after all, but here he is...” I say bewildered, trying to keep my voice quiet and low so I won’t startle him.

I might haven’t seen him in the last 10 months, but I thought about him many times. Gerard once asked me to tell him about the little monkey who apparently saved my life, and so I told him the story of how I tried to get back to the beach after we fought so terribly and I was tired and weak from the lack of water, how I almost passed out and fell over and got my foot stuck in the root of a tree and how I thought that I wouldn’t ever see my brother again, that I might never get to apologize for running away and not understanding what he was going through the last months when he was so afraid because of everything Brian had told him. I told him that I was about to give up when suddenly Peppermint appeared and lead me to the plant that gave him his name and made me hang on for just a little while longer until I saw the light of Gerard’s lantern in the dark of the night.

Gerard listened closely when I told him all of this and said that Peppermint sounded like a squirrel monkey from the way I described him, judging by the books he read when he was a kid and said it was fate that we met. He said that he must have sensed that I couldn’t walk because of my broken foot and tried to show me that it was no obstacle to live with a broken foot because he himself had one missing, and yet acted like he had all four still. He said that I and Peppermint belonged together.
because of the handicap we both shared and that made me smile; I never even thought of it that way.

So seeing him now, alive and well and as chipper as ever and even well-fed, makes me unbelievably happy. I always wanted for Gerard to meet him, we even went back to that place a few times but the little yellow monkey was never around.

“He might have gotten lost,” Gerard says, matching my quiet tone and kneels down next to me and absently putting his hand on my bare shoulder, looking at the little foreign animal in front of him with wonder in his eyes.

I’m not sure what to do, I don’t want him to leave again but I also don’t think that he really wants to be here, this isn’t his territory after all, but there must be a reason for his visit.

“Hey you,” I say and grin widely when he slowly crawls on my outstretched arm after a moment of hesitation. “Did you come to visit me?”

Peppermint chirps at my words and jumps on my head and starts rummaging through my hair, just like he did that eventful night. That makes both me and Gerard laugh and giggle because really, what is he doing?!

“I think he’s delousing you!” Gerard says and my eyes almost pop out of my head, because what?

“I don’t have lice! I just had a bath and you’d be the first to know if I had parasites in my hair!” And okay, my voice might be a bit squeaky and high-pitched, but this is kind of embarrassing to me for some reason. Whatever.

To my surprise though, Gerard just laughs some more and reaches out to touch the tip of Peppermint’s tale that dangles in my face.

“No I know, but remember when I was a kid and I always read those books about nature and animals in foreign places? I think I read that monkeys delouse each other as a sign of uhm...friendship or trust or anything? I’m not really sure, but this is a good thing he’s doing, he likes you!”

Okay, that I can live with because I like him too and he’s definitely considered a friend after saving my life. And trust? If that’s true and he really does trust me, then I feel honored.
If I was him I’d probably be scared of me because come on, humans are weird looking, walking on two legs, with no fur and this strange language and all.

Maybe he did want to come back to see me, maybe his nose is super sensitive and tracked our footsteps back or something like that. The thought makes my heart swell and puts a huge smile on my face.

“Should we get him back to our place?” Gerard suggests and is already on his feet to help me get up with the monkey still on my head. He doesn’t even make a move to jump down on the way to our house, just sits there and strokes through my hair as if it was the most normal thing on earth.

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“He looks just like you described him, only a little thicker,” Gerard says in fascination that evening, Peppermint lying fast asleep in a small box that we filled with a thin cloth so it’s a bit more comfortable.

He had stayed all day, only run off a few times to get food but he came back every time and eventually made himself at home in the very box he is curled up in right now. He must want to stay here because he had plenty of chances to run away, yet he decided to stay with us for some reason. Not that I’m complaining, quite the opposite actually. It’s nice to have him here, he made us laugh really hard a couple of times today with his silly behavior that neither of us is used to, he’s just so fun to watch. It can get boring here really fast but he took all of that away in a second.

“Yeah I mean,” I start and shift around a bit, making myself more comfortable on the ground next to his box, “It was pretty dark, maybe I just saw it wrong. He’s beautiful though, isn’t he...”

Gerard nods, the hand he has put his chin on moving in the process.

“There must be a reason why he’s here though, I mean this is kind of unnatural, don’t you think?”

“I guess so yeah...maybe he’s in pain? Oh God, I hope not!” I say, suddenly terrified and already reaching out to wake him and trying to make sure his small limbs are okay, but Gerard catches my wrist and pulls my hand in his lap, holding it there.
“Let him sleep Twee, maybe he just needs some good rest, he didn’t appear like he was in pain to me.”

I sigh and keep watching the little creature in front of us, making sure that he’s breathing steadily. I owe him that much, he looked out for me, too, after all. Gerard stays a while longer but eventually gets up before kissing my temple and goes to bed. He knows it would be a lost cause to ask me to join him right now, so he just lets me stay here on the ground with Peppermint.

Even though I tried so hard not to, I must have fallen asleep eventually because suddenly it’s morning and I’m tucked in under a blanket in Gerard’s and my bed. Gerard isn’t sleeping next to me like usual and when I make a quick move to jump out of bed, I see that the box is empty as well.

Panic is already rising in my chest and I’m just about to jump down the stairs when I make a stop by the big window and see Gerard lying giggling in the hammock with the biggest and happiest smile on his face and Peppermint on his chest, his tiny fingers wrung around Gerard’s pointer fingers. It looks like he’s trying to teach him how to dance and I have to put one of my hands over my mouth because I might as well cry on the spot.

He looks like a father right then, with a baby on his chest, so completely fascinated by another creature’s life and looking totally in love. It makes my heart ache that he’ll probably never have a child, thinking back to the brief conversation we had a while back in the cave last time, and it hurts to look, but it’s also the purest, most beautiful thing I’ve seen in my entire life. Maybe if Peppermint decides to stay with us, he can be some sort of child for us.

Then I’m reminded of what I told him in secret that first night we met, and I still hear my own words so clearly... “I think that’s how nature wanted us to be all along, you know? Together. Me and my brother, I mean.” Peppermint came back here, carrying this secret and now knowing who the person on the other end of that secret with me really is. He stayed all day yesterday, even spent the night and is now as happy as ever, playing outside with my wonderful Gerard, and he accepts it. Of course, I know that the monkey has no idea about all of this, about the secret I whispered to him and the full meaning behind it, but I like to think that he does understand, came back and just accepted it.

Accepted us, together. Just because it can be that simple.

In the end, I decided to go back to bed and let the two bond or whatever it is they’re doing. Gerard’ll look out for him, I know he will.

I know Gerard has read all those books years back, but I bet my two hands that monkeys aren’t so...I don’t even know what to call it, open-minded? Trusting? I mean sure, if we would have raised him
from the beginning, I guess he would let us touch him and all that, but this seems weird to me. He’s only known my brother for a day and yet he trusts him enough to be so close to him. I really hope he’s not sick or dying and tries to look for some comfort before he has to go, but I try not to think about that and just accept that he’s here now and wants to be with us, for whatever reason.


About a week or so later, I’m really convinced that he’s sick.

The days he has been here so far, he acted ‘normal’ I would say, ran off for food a lot, slept a lot, jumped from tree to tree and stayed close to us wherever we went. And while I know that this isn’t quite normal, I still say it because two days ago he suddenly started to get jittery, never stayed in one place for long, and just looked sick all over. I could even live with all of that, but when I woke up this morning and went to check on him, I found that his box was empty and was surprised to see him sleep on the pillow next to me and when I took a closer look, I saw that he must have ripped some of his fur out because the entire ground of the box and cloth were covered with it along with bits of grass and dead leaves he must have put in there.

Gerard suggested that he might have a bad stomach ache because he’s gotten even bigger over the week he’s been here now, but his eating habits didn’t change and since there isn’t anything we could do even if he was in pain, we let it go and just hoped he would feel better soon.

He’s gotten so clingy and it shatters my heart that he’s probably trying to tell us something and we don’t understand it and therefore can’t help him. He must be so alone, Gerard told me that he read that monkeys usually live in groups, and Peppermint was a loner from the beginning, or so it seemed at least since he was alone back in the forest when I first met him, and he came here alone, too. The entire situation breaks my heart, we’ve gotten so used to him being here with us and in a way, he really is like a replacement for a child. I don’t want him to go or worse, to die.

The situation stays like that for a couple more days, the weather gets worse and it rains a lot, and then something really, really unexpected happens.

It turns out that my little boy Peppermint is actually a she because when I wake up one morning, rain still falling heavy on the roof, I’m shocked to find Peppermint with two tiny, tiny babies under his warm and now thin, body. Actually, I think my heart stops beating for a second or two.

I’m so stunned that I didn’t notice Gerard coming up behind me, and when I’m finally able to turn my head from the sight in front of me, I see that Gerard has teary eyes, much like my own.
“Did you know?” I ask him with a jittery voice.

“I had no idea...it seems so obvious now...” he answers gently and pulls me down to sit with him.

“So that’s why he acted so weird lately.”

“I think you should say that’s why she acted so weird lately,” Gerard says with a tiny snicker, and I take a moment to think about that.

All of the time I’ve known Peppermint, I always just assumed he was a boy. I don’t even know why, it just fit from the moment I saw him and weirdly enough, seeing him now with two babies clinging to his fur, which is the ultimate proof that he’s a girl, he’s still a boy to me.

In the end, I shake my head slightly and say, more to Peppermint than to Gerard, “No, he’s still a boy to me,” and both Gerard and Peppermint accept it.

When I take a closer look, after wiping the tears out of my eyes, I see just how incredibly tired and wrung out he looks, which is understandable after giving birth twice last night, but he doesn’t look happy, somehow. I can’t really name it, but seeing him down there, he appears unhappy, almost sad.

I remember that Gerard told me that monkeys always live in large groups, yet Peppermint kept to himself. Maybe getting pregnant was more of an accident? I don’t know, but he doesn’t look happy right now. But who knows, maybe he just needs time to get used to the new situation.

“That’s so unusual,” Gerard says suddenly, startling me almost.

“What is?”

“Two babies. I’m almost positive about the fact that monkeys, especially the really small ones, usually only carry one baby because of their small bodies, yet he gave birth to two.”

I let that sink in and I’m yet again astounded by him. First, he saved my life, then the missing foot,
and now this. Peppermint truly is a hero.

“We should let them sleep,” Gerard says gently after another few minutes of us just watching and appreciating the sight in front of us with fascination and love in our eyes. I don’t think I’ve ever seen my brother so moved and rapturous by anything and my heart grows three sizes inside my chest.

After we got dressed as quiet as we could and went outside, Gerard turns to me and says, “He didn’t look like a happy dad to me.”

“I know,” I say back, without hesitation but a hint of sadness hidden in my voice. So he felt it too, then.

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During the day, we tried to figure out what to do with the new situation but in the end, decided to let nature do its thing.

Peppermint is smart, he’ll know what to do. But that’s not the only thing, it’s also that I and Gerard don’t know how to act around the new family inside our house. The first week or so we let them alone most of the time, only came in to check on them and make sure they were all alright.

The second week, I dared to carefully stroke one of the baby’s heads with my fingertip and to my sheer and utter surprise, Peppermint let me. He didn’t even seem nervous or angry like you’d think he would. He just looked up at me through his beautiful big eyes and I smiled down at him to somehow show him that he can trust me, and he seemed to understand.

A few days later, I took one of the babies out and held it carefully in my hands while Gerard sat beside me with his palm on the small of my back and a gorgeous smile on his face. And yet again, Peppermint fully trusted me with this.

“Autumn.”

“Huh?” Gerard says and turns his head to watch me hold the baby close to my face to inspect its tiny button face.
“I want to call him or her Autumn, because the weather,” I start and nod my head upwards in the direction of the roof, “was always like this in Jersey, not only just in the Fall and I like to remember that. It hasn’t really stopped raining since they were born so I thought this would fit, and since we don’t know yet if they’re boys or girls, I thought Autumn would fit for both…does that make any sense?”

“It does,” Gerard whispers lovingly and kisses my ear before carefully stroking over Autumn’s extremely tiny fingers that are clutching the pad of my thumb, grinning when the little bundle chirps and says, “Hi Autumn, you know you have a bit of milk on your mouth, here…let me-“ and then he gently wipes the small pearls of milk off of their mouth with such tenderness and attentiveness that something inside of me shatters, but in a good way and in the beat of a second, I break a promise I made myself so long ago, maybe because I can’t handle all those great big emotions lately, and say with a shaking yet strong voice,

“I love you, Gee, I’m so in love with you,” and Gerard turns to look me in the eyes, finger with milk still in the air between us and huge eyes of love and adoration.

“I know Mikey, I know I know I know,” he whispers over and over again and buries his nose in my hair, right under my ear where he kissed me earlier.

“You know I feel the same,” he whispers once again and I nod, leaning my head against his and carefully press Autumn against my chest where it’s hopefully warm and a little cozier. He or she immediately snuggle in closer and right at this moment, with Gerard here, Peppermint and his babies, my heart feels full and everything is perfect and peaceful.

It turned out that Autumn is a girl as well as her sister and Gerard named her Ermintrude, after Mrs. Pines, who served as our nanny and kept an eye on us while we were on board. We loved her dearly and Gerard wanted to keep her memory upright by naming our sweet baby girl after her.

It’s been 9 weeks since the girls were born and they start to get independent and don’t cling to Peppermint 24/7. They don’t need as much milk as before and they even tried their own first and careful swings in one of the lower trees behind the house. Most of the time though, they want to cuddle and explore their new and interesting environment with us and their dad.

Peppermint fully trusts us with the babies, lets us carry them, watches vigilantly when we feed them tiny bugs or leaves or flowers and even allows for Robin to play with them.
Peppermint has become very close to me and he’s become a big part of my life, yet I can tell that he’s still unhappy. As much as I hoped it would change after the birth, it didn’t. He takes more and more distance from the babies and sometimes sits for hours alone in the trees, far away from us.

Gerard told me that baby monkeys stay at least six months with their mother until they become fully independent and that’s still such a long time, but I feel as if he wants to have his free and independent life back. Not that he doesn’t love his kids, he cares for them, provides formula and teaches them things, but he was put in this role and never really wanted it, it seems.

So yeah...in the end, it shouldn’t take me by surprise and hurt the way it does, but when Gerard gently strokes my hair back one early morning and whispers that he’s gone, a big part of my heart breaks.

But I know it’s for the best. This was never what he wanted, it wasn’t what gave him purpose and he wanted his freedom back and I had to accept that, no matter how much it hurt.

When Gerard tucks the blanket around me again and gets up to check on the babies who started to wake up as well now that there was movement in the house, I squeeze my eyes shut to try to keep from crying and listen to his soft and gentle whispers and mumbles when he greets them and it hurts, yes, but deep inside I’m also happy because while Peppermint might be gone, part of him will always be around us with his babies.

Gerard carefully lifts the two up along with their own blanket still wrapped around them and brings them to our bed where he lies down next to me and places the little bundle between us where it’s warm and cuddly.

He lies on his side, matching my position, and reaches over to me to stroke over my eyebrow and when I open my eyes, I find him smiling, all pure and happy.

“Don’t be sad Mikes, you just became a Papa after all,” Gerard whispers and when I reach out, wanting to tuck a strand behind his ear, Autumn catches my pinkie and pulls it towards her and when I look down at those tiny, beautiful creatures in our bed, Autumn already falling back asleep and Ermintrude sucking softly on her thumb like she always does when she sleeps, I suddenly get it.

This was Peppermint’s plan all along. It must have been because it makes so much sense now.
It started when I first met him and he took interest in me for some reason, he trusted me that night and I trusted him. He must have kept that memory and when he sensed that he was about to have a baby, or babies, for that matter, but also knew that he didn’t want them, he came back, tested the life on the foreign beach and learnt that Gerard, me and Robin already were a loving little family and would accept new members into it.

Peppermint will always be part of our family, but I know that much like Robin, he won’t come back. He did his part, contributed to feed the girls with the much-needed formula, raised them for the last ten weeks and taught them what they needed to know until time had come and he had to go, almost like it was with Brian and me and Gerard, as little, unknowing kids back then.

He trusted and loved us so much that he entrusted us his offspring, and with that, giving me and Gerard the chance to become parents of our own in the most beautiful way life could offer.

It broke us that we could never have children of our own, a little version of ourselves with Gerard’s eyes and my hair, but this is almost better, in some ways. This is nature, this is life, new and tiny life put in our hands and we will do our best to be amazing parents to these little girls.

Of course, they’ll miss the one who birthed them and was so much more like them then we could ever be, but they also trusted and accepted us from the beginning. They started copying some simple parts of our human behavior even when they were just a couple of weeks old and improved their skills ever since then. They had no problem clutching to our hair when Peppermint wasn’t around and they let us feed them with bugs and flowers Peppermint brought back, so it’s not like that much is going to change for them.

It’s so fascinating how much baby monkeys and human babies are alike. Right from the habit of sucking on their thumbs to the crying when they’re left alone for a moment too long, their voices yet weak and uncontrolled but getting stronger and more defined every day.

I even sewed them tiny diapers a while back, even when Peppermint was still around because they seem to poop everywhere in the house and there’s nothing funny about cleaning that! They want to eat every few hours and need so much cuddle units that sometimes, we fall asleep right with them.

I mean, I’ve never been around human babies for long and neither has Gerard, but our aunt had a new-born not too long before we went on the journey with our father, so we do know a little bit about the way they behave, I guess.
It’s intriguing to watch as their fur slowly grows a bit longer and starts to get fuzzy and changes color here and there. They still don’t have teeth yet, which is why Gerard and I have to make extra sure that the small bits of flowers or leaves or even bugs are as pulpy as possible, which is sometimes a little, well, unpleasant I’d call it, but there’s far worse.

I love how the fur behind their ears curls into kind of long-ish strands, at least compared to their otherwise rather short fur. I love their tiny button eyes and their little noses. Their faces look still so smashed together and almost even human-like, even after eleven weeks of being on this world. Gerard once called them Pacifaces because he said that they’re so extremely small and adorable and remind him of a human babies’ pacifier, and while I wasn’t so sure if I got that, I totally agreed and even started calling them Paciface as well.

When I thought Peppermint was tiny, I was completely wrong because these little creatures are the definition of teeny tiny! Their fingers and fingernails are so small and fragile looking that it amazes me how much strength they have in them already. Their tales are already so bendy and long and look almost funny on them.

Ermintrude is a little bigger than her sister, yet they both still fit easily in our hands and sometimes you have to be almost scared that you won’t accidentally smash them, especially when we fall asleep with them in our bed, yet that never happens, so I guess we kind of developed something like a mother instinct, we even wake up in time with them when it’s feeding time.

The morning after Peppermint left and we were left alone with his offspring a week ago, Gerard immediately went to build them a brand new bed and painted a little A and E on it and they mostly sleep in there when they get tired from playing during the day, but they always sleep in our bed at night when it’s dark and they become extra needy for cuddles.

Gerard called them our daughters last night before we all went to bed, and something inside of me clicked: The fact that we biologically can’t have blood-related children is shattering because as I said earlier, it’s crashing that I’ll never see Gerard’s eyes on a little version of me, but I guess that’d be taking it a step too far. Our relationship, I mean. Even I know that siblings aren’t meant to have children together, something about that just seems a little wrong, even to me. But then here’s the thing, Autumn and Ermintrude are probably what comes closest to human babies, at least on this island, and they were brought to us and we loved them from the second they were born. I saw it in Gerard’s eyes that morning when he tried to hold back tears, just like me.

Peppermint gave them free to adoption, in a way, and we immediately took that responsibility upon us. So yes, they might be an entirely different species, they’re animals and usually don’t belong with humans, but we, Gerard and I, we don’t belong here either when you think about it. The entire situation of us being here, being together the way we are is so twisted already, no one but us would
understand it. This is their territory and not ours, yet this wild island in the middle of the ocean has become our beloved home. We are free here, there are no rules.

We can call ourselves lucky to have that much freedom while others don’t. And when you put all these facts together, we have the damn right to call them our daughters and I wouldn’t want it any other way.

“I love watching you two,” Gerard says lovingly later that evening, and I look up at him questioningly and a little startled, having fallen almost asleep with Autumn on my chest tucked under the blanket around me.

“You look so peaceful and happy when you’re with her.”

“Well,” I start and gently stroke over her tiny fuzzy head, “I am happy. Doesn’t she make you happy?” I ask and nod my head over to where Ermintrude is curled around Gerard’s upper arm and grin when she makes one of her adorable baby squeaks.

Somehow, Ermintrude has become Gerard’s and Autumn has become mine. I don’t even know why, but from the moment I first took her out of the box all these weeks ago, she was just so special to me and the same happened with Gerard and his little lady. Of course, we don’t treat them any differently! It’s not like we ever separate them during the day or love them more than the other, not at all. It’s just that I have a closer relation to my little baby Autumn here.

And it’s also kind of funny because her fur is much lighter than Ermintrudes, which fits perfectly with Gerard’s dark hair.

“She’s my baby, of course, she makes me happy,” Gerard answers my question from before and holds her close to her face and presses a kiss to her head. He does that a lot, kissing her and Autumn, and it takes my breath away every time. He’s so loving and gentle with them, it’s beautiful to watch.

“You know E,” Gerard says, calling her by her nickname and holding her up, looking at her with a funny expression on his face, “I haven’t had a minute alone with your daddy since you were born. And as much as I love kissing you, I also want to kiss him a whole lot. How do you defend yourself?”
When he’s done with his speech, spoken in that funny and adorable baby voice he has developed, his eyes flicker down to me and he raises his eyebrows, grinning brightly and huffing a tiny giggle.

That in return makes me giggle too and I look down at Autumn, who’s twitching in her sleep and say in a joking and mocking voice, “Yeah little lady, you should defend yourself too! Your daddy wants to kiss me but there’s just no time anymore, what do you say to that?”

She’s totally unperturbed by my words, I mean of course she is, but it’s funny to play along. And it’s also so very, very true! I barely manage to keep the household upright, the dirty laundry piles up, there are barely any clean dishes on the shelves and I can’t remember the last time I swept the floor. And besides all of that, I seriously barely had Gerard all to myself because the babies take all of our attention and I get that, I really do, but Gerard’s right, we haven’t had a chance to do anything that goes further than a few pecks and too rushed hand-jobs a few weeks ago, but that was when Peppermint was still around and helped us out.

Gerard sighs dramatically and says, “I guess that’s what parenting is like huh, no sex until they move out...”

“Aw come on Gee, it’ll get easier. They’re just babies now, what’d you expect? Besides, maybe waiting will make it even better in the end?” I suggest and okay yeah, that was dumb of me, because it’s always good. I don’t see how it could possibly get any better and judging by the way Gerard pulls a face and grunts, he must feel the same.

“I just like sucking you off is all,” Gerard says and pouts and I actually have to stifle a laugh.

“Oh I know, trust me I do!” Because seriously, he loves it for some weird reason. Ever since he tried it the first time he’s gotten more and more into it and better at the job each time if that’s even possible. And I don’t have to say it out loud, but he knows I love it too. How could I not? Gerard’s an expert at it.

“Hey, come on,” I say roll my eyes in a playful way when he ignores my latest statement and just watches as Ermintrude rolls on her back and plays with her tail in Gerard’s lap.

“Gee, come on,” I say again and shake my head amused at his immaturity and apparent sexual frustration. It’s adorable.

He finally looks down at me again and I take the chance to carefully curl my hand around his neck to
pull him down for a kiss without squishing Autumn. He seems startled at first but leans down willingly and when I dip my tongue into his mouth, he sighs and returns the favor. Surprisingly, he’s the first one to pull away and when he does, he props himself up on one elbow, holds E in his lap with his free hand and brushes my bangs out of my eyes with the other one.

“This is the best happiness for me, nothing could ever change that,” he says quietly and when I tilt my head to the side in question, he adds, “Seeing you like this. I don’t know how I got so lucky.” Then he lets go of Ermintrude and strokes over Autumn’s small head and smiles sweetly down at her before maneuvering us all four into a comfortable position with Gerard’s arm flung around my shoulders and my head in the crook of his neck and the babies in our middle. It’s amazing how good they smell, you’d think that wild animals smell like dirt, grime and probably urine or something equally gross like that, but no. Their feathery yellow fur smells just like Gerard, soft and like dry sand and salt water and sun.

“You got so lucky because you chose to be it,” I mumble quietly and with closed eyes when he’s almost asleep, but I had to get the words out there. And it’s true, too. He could have easily decided not to accept me as his lover and stayed brotherly with me, could have just listened to Brian and never tell me about all the gruesome words he plastered into his head all these years ago. He could have stayed on the beach after he slapped me in the face and didn’t come looking for me after like he did. He could have decided to not keep the babies, not act as a parent to them and bring them back into the forest where they ‘belonged’. Yet he did all of this. Not because anyone forced him, but because he himself chose that he wanted all of that, every second and every single day, for hopefully the rest of his life.

When I open my eyes to see if he heard what I said, I find him already looking at me, lying on his side and matching my position, and with a pretty and content smile and his face and sleepy eyes glimmering in the flicker of the lantern on the far end of our room.

“Wiser as the years go by, Mikey Way,” he says eventually and nuzzles in closer, tucks his nose in the birds’ nest of my hair and sighs happily.

We both got so lucky.
Chapter End Notes

Thank you for reading, I love you all xx
Chapter 13

Chapter Summary

Songs I used while writing this chapter:

When I look into your eyes by Firehouse
Got 2 Luv U by Sean Paul (for the smutty parts)
Animals by Martin Garrix ("")

Chapter Notes

I am truly sorry this update took so long! I was in the hospital for a couple of days and I had no Wifi there so I couldn't upload what my awesome (i love you) beta had already sent back to me. Anyways, here it is!

Heavy NSFW Warnings for this chapter

This is the last big chapter and the story is so close, too close, to come to an end... I love you all, thanks for reading and sticking until now, for leaving comments and kudos, you are the best readers and I hope you like this chapter and the last two that will follow shortly xx

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Chapter 13

With all the stress and parenting over the last few months, neither Gerard or I realized that it was already April and Gerard’s birthday was just a few days away. It’s weird how time flies when you have a proper distraction, responsibility for others and obligations. Not that all of these aspects weren’t there before the girls were born, but you almost can’t compare our day to day life from now to the past.

The babies are 15 weeks and three days old when Gerard’s 19th birthday approaches and they have grown up so much in the last months that they don’t need to be around us all the time anymore, which fits just well because I planned to cook Gerard’s favourite dinner for today and spend some much needed alone time with him because while we both love being around the girls and put our entire time and hearts into raising them, we do miss having a bit time to ourselves, so today seems to be the perfect opportunity for that.

I quietly rushed out of bed and put on my yellow dress but let him sleep in because he was up until
late last night to increase our fish inventories, saying that it’s easier to fish in the evening now because that’s when Autumn and Ermintrude are asleep. It’s almost funny how much they copied our lifestyle.

I’m sure monkeys are actually active in the night and don’t go to bed when the sun starts to set behind the ocean. I guess that’s just what happens when humans and animals live together, they get used to each other’s habits. What’s really adorable about this is, that one night when Autumn had a little stomach pain and couldn’t sleep, Gerard started to play my old music box and it has become some sort of ritual since then to bring them to bed and play the rainbow song.

But anyway, back to Gerard’s birthday. Man, sometimes I really feel like a proud Papa who wants to constantly talk about their children and be super lofty and excited about every little thing they do even if it’s probably nothing special at all and just, well, them doing something. Whatever, Gerard is like that as well and there’s nothing wrong with it, we’re allowed to be like that.

But still, today is about him so I try to concentrate on that and try to figure out where I put the damn pan because if I don’t find it, the food will never be ready in time.

As if on cue, I hear a loud banging noise coming from the basement, and when I climb down the stairs, jars are on the ground with their contains spilling everywhere, the pan I was looking for lies on the ground as well and a small, cheeky monkey sits in it, happily chewing on something.

“Ermintrude Way! Damnit what did I tell you about the going to the basement?!” I say, loud enough to get her attention, crossing my arms in front of my chest and she immediately looks up at me with huge, innocent eyes as if nothing happened.

“Well, at least you found the pan I guess...” I say, more to myself than to her and sigh and start to clean up the mess she made and when I’m done, I lean down to give her a quick kiss on the head because I just can’t stay angry at her for long.

“Today is your Daddy’s birthday and we want to let him sleep in okay? Try to be quiet, Dollface.”

But of course, as soon as I let Ermintrude jump on my shoulder and make my way to go back up, Gerard stands in the doorway and greets me with a yawn. “Wha’ was that noise I heard,” he mumbles tiredly and rubs at his eyes.

As if she knows it was her fault that Gerard woke up, she makes a shrill squeaky noise and runs
away, probably to find her sister or to cause some more damage.

“You happy now E?” I call after her and turn to look back at Gerard with a guilty smile. “I’m sorry Gee, I wanted to let you sleep in but she, well. You know how it goes.”

He grins at that and raises an eyebrow, totally knowing how ‘it’ goes. Two girl monkeys growing up in the house ain’t easy after all.

Gerard stretches his arms over his head and says, voice still deep and scratchy with sleep, “Mmmm, ’s okay. I was gonna get up now anyway. Do I smell tea?”

I roll my eyes and grin at him because tea is not the most important thing right now. “Will you come here already?” I giggle and pull him into a hug.

“Happy Birthday Love, you’re getting more beautiful every year,” I say against the skin of his neck and pull back a bit to kiss him on the lips. And I really mean it, too. Gods, he’s so truly, truly beautiful. “I hope everything you wish for comes true!”

“There’s actually one thing,” Gerard says, after a moment of thinking about it.

“Really? What is it?” I ask excitedly and lean back, even more, to properly look him in the eyes but keep my hands around his waist.

“Nu-uh, I can’t tell! Otherwise, it might not come true and all,” he says and bears all his brilliantly white teeth in a smile that reaches to his ears.

“Well,” I start and lean in again, pressing the side of my face against his collarbone, “Tell me when it comes true, okay?”

He kisses the top of my head and squeezes me tightly before saying, “You’ll be the first to know.”
The day is relatively uneventful, which is sad because I want Gerard’s special day to be perfect, but unfortunately, there’s nothing much to do. It’s not like we can go out, watch a movie or meet with friends. But Gerard seems happy throughout the entire day and says that it’s the best dinner I’ve ever cooked, which I know is only his way of being nice because I cook this very dish pretty often, but I thank him anyway and he smiles his Gerard-smile when I probably also blush a little bit.

After dinner, the sun still standing low on the horizon, I pull him up to our room and take hold of both of his hands and lean in to kiss him passionately.

“What about the girls,” he asks, already a little breathless when I lean down to start sucking on his neck and buries one of his hands in my hair.

“They’re out playing, don’t worry about ‘em,” I mumble back and bite down on this particular spot that always drives him crazy.

He gives in and pulls the dress over my head, leaving me completely naked, and pushes me down on the messy bracken-mattress before settling down on my hips and pulling the white blouse over his head in a swift motion, but leaving his loincloth on.

“Look at you,” he says and runs his palms over my naked chest, making me keen but before I have a chance to respond, he leans down and kisses me again, all needy with tongue and teeth and I melt into it.

God, it’s been too long!

I try to sneak my hands up his back and into his hair, but he’s quicker and catches my wrists, pins them over my head just the way he knows I love it and smirks down at me, making me bite my lower lip in response. Seeing him like this is a treasure.

“Leave ‘em there, you know how it works,” he says, sounding heated and sexy.

I nod and arch my head back when he slowly slips down my body, leaving trails of kisses and tiny bite marks on his way down, touching every inch of my skin and giving me Goosebumps all over.

When he reaches my crotch, he looks up real quick, flicks the hair out of his face and asks me for permission with his eyes. I love that he still does that, even after all this time.
I nod once again and hold my breath, knowing exactly what comes next. The first touch of his tongue on the tip of my dick is as sweet as ever, and yeah, it’s been way too long.

I desperately want to reach down and curl my fingers into his dark hair but I know the game. It’s not my turn yet. Except it is so totally my turn because Gerard’s going down on me and he’s perfect at it. He sucks the tip in and laps at the pre-come, pulls off for a second and then goes down until his nose is brushing against my pubes. I still wonder how he does it. He tried to teach me, but I’ve never managed to go that far down on him without choking.

Everything just starts to get all tingly and my muscles tighten in my belly when he pulls off again and asks me to bend my knees for him for better access. I do so willingly and though I know exactly what comes next, I still moan loudly when he starts to lick and suck at my balls, making needy sounds himself while doing so.

He spends a few minutes there and curls his hand around my dick every now and then but always stops just before I get a chance to come. He lets his fingers wander quite a lot today, up my belly and my sides, curls his palms around my sharp hipbones and digs his fingernails into the skin of my back when I accidentally arch off the bed with an embarrassing loud moan when his tongue reaches a spot it never has before. That spot happens to be my but...well. My butthole actually. He has kissed and licked my butt cheeks before, but never, ever anywhere farther down than that and we’re both so shocked that he pulls away and raises his head to look at me with dark and lust filled eyes, his long strands a complete mess and there’s a soft flush on his cheeks and a thin layer of sweat on his forehead, just where his hairline starts.

My first impulse is to cover myself and look away out of sheer embarrassment and shame, but he makes no attempt to move away and the wild look on his face only turns into something more and I ease off again.

“Did you,” he starts and gulps, licking his lips absently, “I mean, did that actually feel good?”

I squeeze my eyes shut for a second and think about lying to him, telling him that I didn’t like it just so he doesn’t feel obligated to do it again, but there’s really no denying it. He’s heard my moan and saw my response so I might as well be honest and nod and try to catch my breath.

“Jesus,” he whispers, sounding more turned on than ever and I feel his palms, still under my back, wander down lower until he squeezes my butt cheeks in a swift move and then pulls his hands free, plastering them on my trembling thighs.
“Can I do it again?” he asks and I can’t help but huff a breathy laugh at that and shake my head amused on the pillow because seriously. That’s just such a Gerard thing again. Of course he wants to do that again, how did I ever doubt him and his wonderfully crazy mind.

I’m glad he’s asking though because while it did feel good, I have to ask myself if I really want him to lick anywhere near that part of my body. It just seems so strange to me, kind of wrong and yet so right. Maybe it’s a normal thing to do? I mean, why else would it feel good... But this can’t be pleasant for him, right? This is the most private part of my body, I mean, I do things with it. He’s aware of that, yet he still wants it, so in the end, I decide not to think about it too much and give him permission again and I’m rewarded with a brilliant smile that, again, relaxes me.

He gently spreads my still bent knees a bit further apart and grabs his pillow that’s lying next to my head, folds it in half and tucks it under my butt after asking me for permission again.

And okay, yeah now I’m really nervous. I might not have been this nervous since the very first time he touched me for real and he must sense that because he soothingly strokes over my legs and kisses my knees.

“You really sure this is okay?” he asks and scoots up a little, leaning his torso over my chest and looking me in the eye.

“Here,” he says gently and carefully grabs my wrists, that are still over my head, kisses them each and lays them down on either side of my hips on the mattress. I’m silently thankful for his act of thoughtfulness and to show him, I lift my chin up and catch his lips for a kiss.

“You can always say no if it gets too much, okay? But if this makes it any easier for you, I really want this. Like, Christ Mikes, you have no idea how much okay? I thought about it too, but I was too mortified to say anything and I wasn’t sure how you’d respond and I swear I didn’t do it on purpose just now, it kind of just happened and—“

“Gee!” I say with a tiny and amused smile and stop his rambling before it gets worse. “I said it’s okay so it is okay. I trust you and if you really want it, then that’s fine by me, promise.”

He smiles down at me again and looks relieved and turned on at the same time if that is even possible. Then he nods happily and slides down again but not without caressing my skin on the way there.
The first real touch of his tongue on my hole is shockingly relieving and feels like all of my nerves are located in this tiny area and it’s mind-blowing.

At first, he seems a bit shy about it, going really slowly and backing off every time I make a sound or my thighs and knees accidentally want to buck together around him. But the longer he does it, the more I’m able to relax and just let go which in return encourages him to go on and do more.

When I thought before that I was close to losing it, like, ever, then I was so horribly wrong. Because it’s the exact second right now; feeling his tongue pushing the muscle apart and slipping inside. It’s only a tiny bit, it can’t be deeper than maybe half an inch at the most, but every last breath rushes out of my body and leaves me completely puddy.

My brain almost switches back to being totally embarrassed again, but that lasts only for a split second because he does it again and then again but goes deeper. I didn’t even notice one of my hands clutching at my thigh while the other is buried lightly in Gerard’s hair and I only notice now because he pulls off for a brief moment, saying, “You can push me down if you want, I don’t mind,” in that animalistic and deeply sexy sounding sex-voice of his.

And really, if he’d touch my dick just for one instant right now I’m sure I’d be gone, but he’s not and while all this licking feels incredible, it’s not enough to push me over the edge. But it might, if he keeps doing it because the more time he spends down there, the better he gets at it, experiences more, licks a long streak from behind my balls to my now weirdly loose hole, pushes his nose into the crook where my thigh meets my pubic bone and breathes hot and moist air all over that area and causes my knees to fall further apart.

I know he said I can push his head down with my hands, but it’s more like I’m ripping his hair out while my hips buck up against his face. I couldn’t stop the movement even if I wanted to, it’s too overwhelming and my body seems to be on autopilot while my brain has given up on me and only focuses on the wet lapping sounds and needy whines Gerard produces. The bucking of my hips is also probably caused by Gerard’s fingers, or well, his thumbs, that are pulling my buttcheeks apart. It’s like I have to work against his fingers to make it even better.

When I once again push my butt against his face, maybe a bit more stuttery and faster than before, one of his hands slips from its original position and causes one of his fingers, pointer finger, probably, to heavily slide over the puckered skin and inside my hole, just like his tongue earlier but this is different!

The new sensation causes me to gasp out loud and squeeze my eyes shut. “Did you,” I start and breathe heavily, my chest rising and falling fast and severely. “Did you think about that too?” I finally manage to ask and push down again, hoping for more friction. He hasn’t moved the finger out, too shocked to do anything, or God knows why. I’m too blissed out to open my eyes and look at
him to maybe find out with the look on his face.

It can’t be in more than down to the first knuckle, but it’s thicker and stronger and the second the tip of the finger slid in, my body reacted and tried to dislodge the object by clenching down on it with the ring of my muscle and walls inside of me. It doesn’t exactly hurt like you’d probably expect. It stings a little, maybe, but in no way does it feel bad. In fact, it feels amazing and I want more of it.

“No,” I hear Gerard’s deep voice replying after a moment of him doing absolutely nothing but being frozen. I feel the rapid warm air when he breathes against my inner thigh and I’m tempted to reach further down to get his finger to move again, but I don’t.

“I haven’t even...I never even considered...do you-“ he starts to stutter and I think I just heard something like wonder or fascination or conclusion in his voice, but I can’t concentrate on that now. Maybe it’ll come back to me later.

He’s just about to pull the small bit he’s got his finger in out, but I’m fast to stop him. “No! No please keep going, don’t stop!”

“But I don’t want to hurt you, I’ve never-“

“Just trust me,” I say and I’m finally able to breathe relatively normal again. When he still doesn’t do anything, I open my eyes, tilt my head to the side and look down at him.

He’s not looking at me like I thought he would, but looks down at his hand and probably his finger up my butt with dark and wide eyes. The embarrassment comes back to me, now that my brain calmed down a little and I almost want to tell him to look somewhere else, but I don’t. He looks too good like that and just thinking that causes my body to react and to clench down on his finger again while my dick twitches against my belly. That in return causes him to finally look up at me and I can’t handle it. I just can’t look at him when he looks so incredibly hot and turned on or else I’ll come on the spot without being touched at all.

“C’mon Gee, do something, please!” I don’t care if I sound desperate and whiny anymore. I need him to do something or I’ll lose my mind. I’ve been hard for too long now and I’m starting to feel dizzy. I hear him curse out some vulgar words as a response to what I just said and while I should find his choice of words rude and outrageous, my brain filters it as something amazing and great. Mother and Father would be disappointed at my thoughts.
I’m just preparing myself with a deep breath for him to continue when he does the opposite and pulls his finger out, much to my disliking but before I can protest, he cuts me off.

“I love that you’re so needy, but there’s no way I’m going to hurt you, so we’re doing this differently.”

He leans over my body and props one of his palms next to my head while the other is firmly cupped around my hip. Then he smiles brightly at my confused face and leans down to kiss me. Just like his curse words I should find that wrong and nasty because he just had this very mouth and tongue down on my butt, but I can’t bring myself to care, not even when I make out a raw, musky, bitter taste that definitely is neither Gerard mouth or my pre-come. I know what both tastes like, and this is different. It’s not pleasant but it’s also by far not bad. Just...new.

The kiss is messy and slippery and our teeth clank together more than once, but it’s perfect. I don’t know what exactly he’s got in mind for this to continue, but I can tell that he’s excited because his erection, that is pressed against my hips, feels harder than my own.

I break the kiss with a gasp when he grinds our hips together and ask in a husky tone, “What d’you have in mind,” though it doesn’t come out like a question but more like a demand.

The grin I’m rewarded with is brilliant and turns into an almost devilish-like smirk when he lets go of my hip and strokes his way up my body until he reaches my chin with two separate fingers. I lay stock still and try to figure out what he wants, but I can’t read it in his eyes and I’m getting minutely more frustrated when he just grins again, his face so close to mine that I his dark strands tickle my face.

“Open up,” he finally offers and strokes the tips of his pointer and middle finger over my lower lip. And okay, I could have gotten that. Without breaking eye contact, I open my already slightly open mouth some more and allow his fingers entrance.

Not that I know where he’s going with this, but I like the act itself so I go along with it.

As soon as I start to suck on his fingers, Gerard’s grin turns quickly into this animalistic, turned on face again that always really does it for me. When he experimentally pushes the pads of his fingertips flat against my tongue and grinds his hips against mine at the same time, my eyes roll back inside my head and I moan around his fingers which only encourages him to curl them more inside my mouth. It feels strange because that way my mouth seems to produce more saliva than before.
“Don’t swallow!” he growls when he senses what I was about to do, pressing his nose against the side of my forehead and pushing his fingers in a little deeper up to his third knuckle and nearly choking me.

I obey his weird wish for a minute longer but I’m just about to ask him for a quick break so I can just breathe, but it seems like he’s reading my mind because a moment later he pulls the two fingers free and kisses me instead. It’s not a long kiss, just a quick and dirty peck on my upper lip, giving me the opportunity to finally swallow.

I feel him shift against me, flinging one of his legs over the knee of my left leg so he’s not exactly kneeling between my legs anymore, only leaving one of his legs between mine and the hand next to my head stays where it is, causing him to still lean over me. Then he uses the one leg he has tucked between my thighs to separate them more. That causes my left leg to stretch out against his but the other remains bend up.

“This okay?” he asks carefully and I’m just about to ask what he means when he strokes his spit coated fingertips against my hole, putting pressure on them but not yet pushing in.

I nod to let him know that this is more than okay and leave out a sigh when he presses down more and more. The spit feels a bit cold against my sensitive skin but it’s a nice sensation. “Still okay?” he asks again and I feel him separating the two fingers from one another so that only one flat tip is caressing the ring of my muscle. Another nod and I can’t help but let my eyes flutter shut. He repeats the circling motion for a while until finally, I can feel him putting on enough pressure to let the tip of his finger press the muscle apart and push in a bit.

To try to keep quiet, I was breathing through my nose up until this point, but when he slowly pushes in deeper and I feel his second knuckle push through, I give up and gasp loudly while my head lolls back against the pillow.

“Oh my Mikey? Talk to me,” Gerard whispers breathlessly and even though I’m not looking I can feel his intense gaze on my face to make sure I don’t flinch in pain or worse.

“Keep going,” I say through gritted teeth and clutch one of my hands around his bicep when he pushes in deeper until he’s all the way in.

I can feel my body working against the finger inside of me, trying to press it out but after a moment I’m able to relax and slacken my entire lower region. Now I know why Gerard made me suck on his fingers so much because it wasn’t hard at all to slip inside like that. How’d he know that? I thought he had no experience with this. Another thing for later to ask because right now I’m trying to catch
my breath.

“Does it hurt?” Gerard asks with a surprisingly strong voice and since I don’t want him to be concerned, I open my eyes to look at him and even manage to form a smile in my turned-on state.

I shake my head no and when he slowly moves to pull his finger back out, my eyes squeeze together on their own accord again. It doesn’t hurt really, it stings, sure, but it’s not bad once you get used to it. The stretch is maybe a little weird but I have a feeling that it can be really nice if you do it more often.

Just when I think that he wants to pull out entirely, he pushes back in, and faster as last time as well. The move is so sudden and unexpected that my hips snap up and that causes my dick to brush against his side where he leans slightly on me.

“Ahhh yeah, do that again,” I manage to choke out between a gasp and an embarrassingly loud moan.

“Damn Mikey, I…” Gerard moans right back and crushes his mouth against mine while finding a steady rhythm with his finger working inside my butt and his crotch grinding against the bone of my hip.

The feeling is amazing but it’s not as pleasuring as when my dick is being touched. I’m even surprised to find my erection softening slightly but I’m okay with that. Maybe it’s better that way because five minutes earlier I was ready to come with just one touch and while that would be obviously amazing, I don’t want this to be over just yet.

After a while, I find myself pushing back down on his finger every time he pushes in and the feeling is incredible and I want more but I just don’t know how. I’m growing frustrated and Gerard must sense it, too, because he slows his movement and places his mouth over my ear to whisper, “We can try another one,” which goes straight to my dick.

To show him that I want to try that, I squeeze the hand that is still fisted around his upper arm and take a deep breath to untighten myself around his finger.

This time, it does hurt. But still not so much that it makes me want to stop. I’m trying really hard to hide it, but once Gerard’s second finger is inside of me up to the third knuckle, I must pull a pained face because Gerard looks at me alarmed and moves to pull out, but I stop him in the last second.
“No, wait! Let me get used to it,- just wait a second,” I say through once again gritted teeth and I can tell that Gerard’s not happy with my decision but he obeys and leans down to gently kiss me.

The kiss does help immensely and after a minute or two, I can feel myself relaxing again. “I’m trusting you here, Mikey,” Gerard says seriously when he pulls away and looks at me through worried and but still dark eyes. His words make me smile and feel happy and loved and cared for. It must be hard for him to see me in pain, knowing he’s the one who caused it, even if I gave him permission to do what he’s doing right now.

To show him how much his trust means to me, I tangle my free hand in the hair on the back of his head and pull him down for another kiss. The kiss grows from gentle and slow to rushed and heated and soon we’re both gasping for air. “You can move,” I say and I’m surprised at how easy it works this time. It only stings for a little while longer but soon the pain is gone completely and it feels even better than with just one finger.

Just like last time, I start to push back against his fingers and he even goes as far as moving his fingers inside of me while pushing in and out. He didn’t do that when it was just one and it makes the biggest difference. The stretch is perfect and I’m surprisingly relaxed. So much even, that I let the leg that is bent up fall to the side in the exact same moment that Gerard pushes in on a fast thrust and curls his fingers, causing me to cry out in pleasure and arching my back.

“Ahhhh, hhha- do that again!”

I’m not able to open my eyes but once again I can feel his eyes on me, this time wild and glassy with lust and fascination. He repeats the move, pushes his fingers just right against the spot that caused me to moan out loud and the feeling is even stronger this time because he stops thrusting his fingers but more like rubs his crooked fingers against that spot.

“God, yes...uhhhhhhh,” I groan out and this time, I can feel myself getting hard again. Pretty fast actually, and Gerard must see it too because he nuzzles his nose against my cheek and breathes hotly against the skin there.

“Jesus Mikey, you- I need to,” he starts and suddenly sits up on his heels, carefully as to not accidentally rip his fingers out of my butt, and squeezes his free hand in a tight grip around his erection that is still hidden behind the loincloth. He’s leaking, I can see it on the fabric and with shaky fingers, he removes the knot that holds the underwear together and throws it next to him on the ground before gripping around his length again.
He’s trying to hold back, I know that grip. It’s just a squeeze to calm down and hold back a bit longer. It’s such a sight to see him so blissed out and touching himself and with his fingers still working inside of me, going back to thrusting them in and out quickly now that his position has changed.

And that’s when I get it. This is how we’re able to sleep together. I’m reminded of the conversation we had ages ago about sex and how women and men do it but were at a loss when it came to two men wanting to commit the same act.

It was so obvious all this time. Well, it could have been if we would have thought about it just a little differently. I don’t think Gerard has put the two together yet so to get his attention, I reach down and curl my sweaty palm around his hip.

He immediately opens his eyes and looks down at me, stilling both his fingers inside of me and the grip on his erection. “Pull out for a sec,” I say in a quiet and hopefully calm sounding voice when his eyes widen and he looks like he hurt me.

Once his fingers are out, I feel strangely empty and loose and to change that as fast as possible, I pull him down by his arm and move us around until he’s fully on top of me like earlier when we started. He still got a quizzically look on his face and he looks so adorable like that, with his eyebrows raised and his lips curled into this confused and helpless little smile.

“Mikey?” he asks eventually and to show him what I want rather than to say it, because yeah okay, I’m a bit embarrassed about that again, I reach down with one hand so I can grab his dick and direct it to my hole. I can see the exact second he gets what I want to do because his eyes widen and his mouth falls open.

“Wait wait wait, hang on- what are you doing?!”

“Isn’t that obvious?” I ask and brush the tip of his dick over my butthole teasingly, ready to push it in but Gerard moves his hips back which causes me to loose the grip on him.

“What are you doing?” I ask, suddenly concerned and unsure at his infuriated gaze. Doesn’t he want me?

He sees the look on my face and his features immediately soften and he leans down to brush a kiss on my mouth. “Hey... look at me,” he says gently when I look down ashamed after he pulls back.
from the kiss. “Come on Sweetie, I didn’t mean for it to come out like that. I’m sorry. Please look at me?”

I can’t, because he only ever calls me by this nickname when something is really going bad and this is a vulnerable situation for the both of us.

“I just thought...” I start to mumble out but stop with a shrug of my shoulders.

“This’ll hurt a lot, Mikey... I don’t know if that’s such a good idea,” Gerard offers, and while I know that he truly means his words and that he’s afraid of hurting me, I can sense that now that I put the option of doing it this way out there, that he wants it. Or thinks about it, at least. He can be either completely predictable or absolutely not. This is not one of those times.

“It’ll be okay. We’ll go slow yeah? Just like you did last time, it didn’t hurt once you had em’ both in.”

He still looks concerned, but I can tell that he’s thinking about it. “I don’t know...”

“I have an idea!” I say and ask him to sit up and scoot up until he’s almost straddling my face. “To make it easier,” I giggle, a little mortified by my own actions of pulling him up here to straddle my face, but maybe it will calm him down a bit. It did last time, so why not try it again, right?

He looks down at me funnily, apparently amused himself by my boldness and not concerned about his exposition in the slightest, but before he can say anything about it, I push him forward with a hand on his butts and curl the other hand around the base of his erection before pulling him in my mouth. Or well, rather pushing him down from this angle.

Whatever he wanted to say gets lost in a high-pitched moan and he squeezes his eyes shut while I have to work really hard not to grin too much with his dick in my mouth. God, he’s such a dork, I love him.

Obviously, the purpose of this blowjob was to get him coated with saliva to make things easier down there, but I almost get too lost in blowing him. It’s just so good and I haven’t done it in a while and I could seriously go on for hours, especially from this angle, (note for later), but it’s not my intention for Gerard to come, which he is about to do any minute now if I don’t stop. So that’s what I’m doing and I’m rewarded with a whiny protesting sound, but I just smirk up at him and give him a slap on the butt.
He shrieks at that and says, “Fine, fine. Urgh, you’re such a tease!”

“I am?!” I say and prop myself up on my elbows, watching him as he settles back between my legs.

“Well...” he says in that funny high-pitched voice, making it sound more like a confused question than a cocky reply to my words, but he grins sheepishly and I know that this time we will try it.

“Are you really sure?” he asks after a moment of just sitting between my spread legs a little helplessly and I feel actually a bit bad for putting him in that position. I know he’s afraid of hurting me and I have to admit I’m a little scared myself, but I know we both want it. Just thinking about him being inside of me makes me keen.

I reach down and adjust the pillow he put under my butt and when I’m done, I curl my hand around his wrist to pull him up towards me to kiss him. “I’m sure. And we can always stop. And...you’ll go slow, yeah?” Now I’m getting really nervous, but I can do this.

Gerard’s nervous features soften at my words and he brushes the bangs out of my eyes with his fingers. Then he smiles sweetly and says, “I’ll do exactly what you tell me, okay?”

I nod my head and when I pull him down for another kiss, one of his hands wanders down my body, stopping here and there to pinch my nipples or to scratch his fingernails bluntly through the hair on my belly before his touch disappears completely. But only for a moment, because the next thing I feel is the wet tip of his erection against my entrance and I force myself to calm down.

“‘M scared,” Gerard admits in a whisper right against my mouth, his eyes are squeezed together tightly and his lower lip trembles slightly.

“Me too,” I say honestly and I’m surprised when he opens his eyes at my words to look at me with so much emotion that my belly starts to tingle. We share that moment of love, trust and adoration for a bit longer and just like that, I’m completely calm and I can tell that the same goes for him. I think it’s good that we admit that we’re both scared of this, it’s good, to be honest, and open.

I take another deep breath and reach one of my hands down to stroke over the small of his back, telling him that way that I’m ready, and he understands. As soon as he puts a little pressure against my hole with his dick and I feel the muscle parting again, my eyes shut close on their own accord and both of my hands fly up to clutch at his bicep and shoulder.
He pushes further and further until the head of his erection slips inside with a blob and the arm Gerard was supporting himself on gives out beneath him and he falls flat against my chest, his face against my neck and his free hand curling around my strands.

We both gasp at the feeling, me in unexpected pain but Gerard definitely in pleasure. It doesn’t hurt enough to stop yet, but it’s super weird and uncomfortable. The stretch so much more than when he had just his fingers inside. But okay, what was I expecting. Gerard’s dick is bigger than mine and definitely bigger than just two of his fingers.

He stays still for a moment, giving me time to adjust, and when I tell him that he can keep going he uses the hand he had on his dick to pull my hips up a little more before he once again puts pressure on and slides in further.

I ask him to stop three times total on the way in but I just can’t help it. It hurts a lot! The stretch isn’t even the worst, it’s more like the feeling of being so unnaturally full in an area that you probably shouldn’t be. Gerard stops every single time I tell him to and looks at me concerned, even asks me if he should pull out again and just forget it, but I tell him no. I want this and I know the pain has to stop eventually.

Every now and then I’m forcing my eyes to open to check if he is okay as well, but judging from the way he crushes his eyes together, the way he blushes so deeply and even bites his lips every few seconds, I can tell that this is really good for him.

So good even that it’s a struggle for him not to just thrust in all at once but he’s holding himself together for me.

As if on cue to what I was thinking just now, he stutters out, “I can’t Mikes, I don’t-” against the side of my cheek and I feel both the hand in my hair and on my hip tighten. Even though the pain is still prominent, I curl my trembling thighs around his hips and use one of my feet to push him all the way in in a quick motion until I feel his balls against my skin.

“Ahhhhh,” we both moan at the same time and Gerard curses against my skin when I feel myself clenching around him. It hurts, but now that he’s all the way in I have to admit that I like it. I was never one to argue about a little bit of pain and now that he’s fully inside of me, all hot and twitching every few seconds, my body adjusts to his size and it’s good.

“Mikey,” Gerard breathes shakily and moist against my jaw and I feel his fingernails digging into the
skin of my hip, probably to hold himself back from pulling out and snapping back in again. “How do you feel,” he asks through gritted teeth but it barely sounds like a question. His voice is wrecked but so is mine when I say, “Feel okay, s’ just a lot, you’re kinda big but it feels good...you okay?”

Gerard huffs a half-moan-half-laugh out when I say that and mutters something like, “I’m great,” against my collarbone before he lifts his head a little to look at me.

“Move,” I say to him while looking him directly in the eye and I’m picturing the way he looks right now in my Gerard-Stash for later because he looks so unbelievably hot that I have to pull him down for another kiss. He goes willingly and just as he slips his tongue into my mouth, he pulls his hips back slightly only to shove them back against me. We both gasp into each other’s mouths and our teeth crack together on the next thrust.

The pain does subside after a little while but stays at a certain level and I guess that it’ll stay that way, but it’s okay. It’s definitely manageable and soon Gerard finds a steady rhythm. He accidentally pulls back too far a few times and slips out, but I actually like the feeling of being stretched apart from the beginning.

He continues to pound into me and at some point, my head must have fallen back into the pillow because he’s sucking on my neck and collarbone, probably leaving some marks there. Actually, he might have pulled my head back to expose my neck because his hand is still buried in my hair in a tight grip and he knows how much I love having my hair pulled.

Every now and then, one of us moans or gasps and the room smells so much like sex already, the air hot and used, that my head starts to swim.

“How’s it feelin’,” Gerard blabbers out, repeating his words from before after snapping his hips back in with a hard thrust and licks a trail from my collarbone to my jaw at the same time.

“Like sex,” I gasp back at him and he bites down on my jaw with a low groan.

His next move is unexpected and my head swims even more when he suddenly wraps an arm around my lower back and rolls us around so that I’m straddling him and the exact second I’m completely vertical on top of him, the weight of my own body pushes me down even more on his dick and it’s so deep and hot that I have to brace my palms on his chest or else my body would give up.

“Jesus Christ Gerard!” I whisper out in shock with a set jaw and low hanging head, trying to
remember how to breathe.

“This okay?” he asks and struggles once again to stay still, curls his palms around my hips instead and I can feel that there are grains of sand sticking to our sweaty skin and it itches and stings but I love it.

I nod dumbly and dig my fingertips into his chest when I sit back properly and arch my back a little which pushes him in deeper once again and he pushes up and this time my head lolls back because there’s that spot again!

“Ahhhh yes, yes do that again!” I moan out and breathe heavily through my open mouth.

“There?” Gerard groans and snaps his hips up again, holding me up a little by my hips.

“Yeah! Yeah, God- I,”

“You feel so damn tight Mikey. Look so hot and pretty like- Ahhhh Lord, like that!”

When he says these words and moans when I start to meet his thrust in a steady rhythm, one of my hands slips from his chest and curls around my dick that is so hard that it almost hurts to touch. I can feel a drop of sweat run down the dip of my back and the backsides of my knees are sweating as well as the back of my neck.

When I force my eyes open for just one little moment, I look down at Gerard’s palms around my sharp hipbones, watch the way he pulls me up and down slightly and how his fingernails leave little red half-moons on my skin. Then I look at my own hand around my dick, noticing both Gerard’s and my dark pubes, and how I’m barely able to pump myself because my limbs start to burn but in the most amazing way. Lastly, I let my gaze wander up to Gerard’s face, watch closely as he licks his lips and crushes his eyes together in a way that looks almost painful, his eyebrows arched beautifully and his mouth curled open in a way that all his dirty little moans and gasps can slip out.

After a while, I decide to change something and switch my bouncing to low and deep rocking and that’s even better because that way he brushes almost every time against this really good spot, whatever it is and more importantly, whatever it’s doing in there! Gerard notices the change of events and slowly lets one hand go from my waist and curls it gracefully over his head instead, fisting the pillow I had my head on earlier. The other hand stays on my waist and helps me move forward and back again.
“You’re beautiful,” I state, sounding almost surprised by the sound of my own amazed voice. Not that I didn’t know he was beautiful already, but there’s something about this moment right here, him being so open and trusting and blissed out, with his hair a mess and beautifully arched neck and yeah, I love how his dark armpit hair stands out on his otherwise white skin and how he makes those little “ah-ah-ah” noises whenever I grind down on him.

He doesn’t say anything back at my statement but curls his lips into a gorgeous smile and I can’t not; I lean down and kiss those exact lips and feel him smile against my own. He tangles his fingers in my hair at the back of my head and tilts his head to the side, deepening the kiss and breathing heavily through his nose, much like me.

Leaning on him like this is yet another different angle and position and when I leave his mouth to kiss and nibble at the skin behind his ear, he snaps his hips up fast and hard, creating a loud slapping sound that my brain directs straight down to my dick.

He holds that pace for a while until I feel my muscles tightening around him, the hand on my length jerking faster and my breath coming rapidly against his skin.

“I can feel, God- I can feel you coming,” Gerard gasps and slaps his hips up even faster, pushing his dick in deeper with every thrust. And maybe only 5 thrusts later I’m doing just that.

I squeeze my dick hard and moan wetly against his neck, my teeth pressing against the moist skin there and nose squished somewhere in between the mess. My come lands on Gerard’s belly and slips down my fist, my muscles clenching relentlessly around him and I have to wonder if it might hurt him, but he moans loudly and I know it feels good for him. But then suddenly he makes a move to pull out of me, probably because he’s not sure if he can come inside of me, but I don’t want him to pull out at all!

“Don’t you dare! I wanna feel it,” I say breathless and sit back up in a straight position and thrust my hips down on his, even propping myself up on my palms on his upper thighs behind of me to get a better angle.

He looks up at me for only a moment before his eyes roll back inside his head and his hips start to stutter. I can feel the exact second he comes because I can feel him jerk inside of me and how he shoots his come against my walls. This has got to be the hottest moment of my life so far. He arches his back and it’s almost too deep again, almost too much since I’m all sensitive and in my post-orgasm glow, but then his hips slow down, his hand slips from my waist and he takes a deep breath to come back to himself.
Before he softens entirely, I carefully lift myself up and let him slide out, not minding how wet and sticky we both feel, and fall sated down next to him on the mattress.

“So that was something.” I say through a happy yawn after a long moment of comfortable silence and tuck my nose into the crook of his neck and shoulder.

“That was something, yeah,” Gerard agrees with a tiny giggle and kisses the sweat-damp hair over my ear before burying his nose in there. “You know what? You just lost your virginity to me!”

“Oh my God, you’re the worst!” I say and can’t help but laugh a little before adding, “But yeah, you’re right. And you, Mr., just lost your virginity to me as well!”

“Mhh...yeah...wouldn’t want it any other way, Jesus what a birthday present...” he says in a dreamy voice and starts to gently stroke over my side. “I didn’t hurt you though, did I?”

“Nah,” I say and bury my nose deeper against his skin. “I’m perfect, promise.”

“’M glad, then,” he mumbles, sounding close to sleep but then he adds, “Where are the girls, anyway? They’ve been out the entire time we’ve been in here.”

“Yeah well, I guess they didn’t want to see their dads getting it on,” I say and shriek when Gerard playfully slaps me on the shoulder.

“Who the hell says ‘getting it on’?!”

“I do!” I say with a grin and prop myself up on one elbow to look at him, only to find him grinning equally big as me.

“Dork! Now come on Twee, we should check on them before they plot something while we’re not looking.”

“Alright, but I’m not getting dressed!” I say loudly after him when he’s already out of the door.
“Fine by me!” he calls back happily and I follow him outside with the biggest smile on my face and a nicely sore butt that I’m sure I’ll feel for a while, but I couldn’t think of anything better at this exact moment in time.

God... I love my life.

Chapter End Notes

As always, let me hear from you guys. All my love.

Special thanks to @mikeywayplease for Way In The Streams, I'm more than honoured, and to @ahnseulji for all your love xx
Chapter 14

Chapter Summary

This is officially the last chapter of this story, enjoy <3

Chapter Notes

Songs I used while writing this chapter:

Heaven by Bryan Adams
Then by Brad Paisly

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Chapter 14

On an early July morning, five months after Gerard’s 19th Birthday, on day 2,760 on this island and one year & nearly seven months after I broke my foot after our big fight, Gerard asks me if I want to become his husband.

I was standing in the kitchen area of our house, preparing some fish he had brought back the day before, when he came up behind me, curled his arms around me from behind, smelling so wonderfully soft and warm, kissed my neck and whispered, “Will you marry me,” into my ear.

You’d think that you’d have a thousand things running through your head when someone asks you the probably most important question of your life, you’d maybe be stunned or confused if someone asked you this when you never even thought of it before, hell, you might even be scared and uncertain. But not me, no. There was only one thing running through my head, and I took one of his hands, lifted it up and kissed his knuckles, breathing a “Yes,” onto them and Gerard told me soon after that my Yes was what he wished for his last birthday, and my heart did the biggest jump of joy and happiness when he told me this, keeping his promise of telling me.

I know that it’s meant to be. And I also know that he knows it, too.

We’ve always loved each other, in one way or another. My love for my brother has grown so much
over the years, developed itself into something I didn’t even knew existed for so long and whenever I think that I can’t possibly love him any more than I do in that particular moment, I’m always proven wrong.

Literally, he is my whole life. And I want to spend the rest of my days with him.

With him as my brother, with him as my best friend and soulmate and now, as my lover and husband. All these terms describe what Gerard is to me. There’s not just one word to describe it. I know he feels the same about me, and I guess I will never truly understand how I got so lucky that my still so short life turned out the way it did so far.

Time can do so much. Nearly 8 years ago, I was just a kid going to third grade, sitting in my room and playing with my plushie donkey. Now, so many years later, me turning 16 at the end of Summer and Gerard reaching his 20s soon after, I’m a married Teenager, living on a desert island in the middle of the ocean with a pet parrot and Autumn and Ermintrude as our adopted daughters.

When we first got here, I never thought I’d ever be happy again. But then someone came along and taught me that everyone and everything can always turn out to be good again, made me smile on a daily base, protected me night and day, taught me things I didn’t know yet, wiped away my tears when I was having a bad moment, accepted when I wanted to be alone, gave me my first kiss, my first sexual experience, eventually took my virginity and told me he loved me over and over again. Sometimes with words, sometimes without.

That someone was Gerard. He’s always been there, all through my sometimes scary and sad, amazing, wonderful and perfectly complete life, and he will be there for every second in the future.

I know he’ll keep protecting me until I’m an old man with grey hair and wrinkly skin, I know he’ll keep making me smile and wipe away my tears if they should ever fall again, and I know they will. That’s just how life goes. You have good and bad moments, but the bad ones are so little compared to the good ones when I look at it in the big picture, and that is all thanks to Gerard.

Sitting on the beach now in my favourite yellow dress and braided hair, with the warm July sun on my back, listening to Autumn and Ermintrude play under the stairs where it’s cooler than on the hot sand, I stroke carefully over the small mark on my wrist that Gerard has matching with me on the same part of his body.

It’s a branding that we got instead of wedding rings. It might sound a bit extreme, but we talked about it and agreed that we wanted it. It’s a maybe one inch long, plain line. Nothing more, nothing less. It’s meant to be a symbol referred to the notches we carve into the bark of the palm tree day
after day, year for year. We chose that exact symbol, if that’s even what you can call it, because it means so much to us. It means home, it means emotions, but most importantly it means time. Time we spent here together and will spend here in the future. Everything we went through so far and everything we want to go through together as the days here on this island go by, with our new life and new family, and if a ship should ever come by, we won’t get on it. We belong here now.

I stroke over the marked skin with the pad of my thumb and smile to myself, more happy than I ever was, and turn my head to look over my shoulder to catch a glimpse of Gerard, who’s wearing my white dress and once again works on our house to make it bigger and more beautiful than it already is and has been from day one. He catches me smiling and stops hammering for a moment to smile satisfied back at me, before going back to work with the smile still brightly on his beautiful face.

It’ll always be like that. I just have to look over my shoulder, and he will be there. Forever.

I’m so, so lucky.

The End.

Chapter End Notes

And because I love you all, 'Mikey' is waiting for you! xx
Mikey

Chapter Summary

Songs I used while writing this chapter:

All The Words by Kutless

Chapter Notes

This chapter, or well, epilogue...I need you to know that it means the world to me x

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Mikey.

If I was to explain what Mikey Way means to me, I’d be at a loss. Simply because there are no words to describe how beautiful and perfect he is to me, or how deep my feelings for him reach. This is more than love. It’s the greatest feeling one can feel for another person. But I’ll try and explain it anyway, starting with the obvious. Mikey is incredibly handsome to me. Others might say he walks funny, say his legs and arms are a little too long for his body, but I think it makes him look graceful. His hair is the most important part of his body to himself, and that’s why I also love it the most. He always makes sure to do something with it, be it one of his adorable braided strands or some flower jewellery he put in it. I love that it looks so thin and soft but feels rough and strong against my fingers. I love the sandy color of it and the way he brushes his bangs over his forehead when he doesn’t notice that he’s doing it. I love that the structure is different than mine, slightly curly and not just straight down. I like how his hair smells, even after a few days of not washing it. It always smells like sand and coconut and it always feels warm, no matter what time of the day it is. Next thing is his face. I love how he has grown into this beautiful, handsome man over the years. His jaw got stronger and more defined when he reached puberty and later adulthood. I love his eyes that always look a little sleepy, even though he’s wide awake, and how soft his eyebrows feel when I stroke over them with my thumb in a moment of importance. Mikey knows what these exact moments are. I adore how he looks when he squeezes his eyes together, even after all this time without his glasses when the sun is too bright outside. Sometimes I’m still mesmerized by their color and how it seems to change when the sun sets and the waves crash more quietly against the beach, whilst the jungle behind us grows louder and louder. I love his nose and his mouth, his fairly thin lips that can do so much more than just smile and kiss me. I love his narrow shoulders and flat thorax, I marvel how his ribs feel under his tanned skin and how his spine sometimes pokes out when he moves in a funny way. I adore his tiny waist and sharp hipbones, the way they feel when I curl my palms around them and how they look when he doesn’t wear anything to cover them... I can never get enough of that. I love his legs and arms that look both so thin but are yet so strong. I love his fragile looking hands, his long and clever fingers and that tiny little freckle on one of his toes that I know he hates and finds ugly. I love his body hair, the soft, light blond curls on his almost bronzed skin of his legs, his dark pubic hair and the coarse hair on his lower belly, under his arms and even the little soft hair right
under his tailbone that he finds strange and stupid looking. Another obvious thing is his voice. The way he laughs and talks seemingly through his nose most of the time is beauty in my eyes and ears, his voice has always been one of a kind and I know he’s sometimes embarrassed about it, but I find it mesmerizing and alluring. I love how he sounds when he talks in a low voice late at night and how he sounds when he calls me Gee. I’m fond of how he sounds when we have sex, or when he giggles or sneezes. I even love how he sounds when we’re fighting and his voice reaches another octave. It’s just fascinating what can come out of such a slim yet tall body. And that’s another thing. The fact that he’s taller than me by a few inches. I might be the older brother, but he’s the taller brother, and I’m absolutely okay with that. Things that are not obvious to the eye that I love about Mikey are simple things like the way he thinks. He’s so smart and clever, always has been, and he sometimes causes the air to rush out of my lungs when he seemingly creates another world with just his words. I love how he sees everything around him, how he only tries to see the best in people and is open to any idea that is brought to him.

I sometimes tear up from emotion in a quiet moment when I secretly watch him cuddle with Autumn. Right from the start, I was so in love looking at the both of them together, right from the moment he held her for the first time, carried her like she was something precious to him, and I know that’s exactly what she is to him. It’s pure joy to watch when he gently strokes over her tiny fingers or tickles her belly when they play. I love that he always, without any excuses, kisses her goodbye before she goes off to play in the jungle with her sister and I love how proudly he talks about her with such pure happiness in his voice.

I love that he sometimes gets sad but always lets me cheer him up, comes to me voluntarily and wants to be held. I love how he smells and how he looks when he pulls his knees up his chest, curls his long and thin arms around them and smiles at me. I love that his teeth look a little crooked and out of the ordinary. I love how adorably sweet he looks in that yellow dress. God... there are so many things that I love about him, and I could go on forever, but the most important thing about me loving him, is that he is Mikey... and I love that he fell in love with me. As soppy as it might sound. But it’s true. He is Mikey Way, the only person in my life that I would ever admit my pure and honest love to.

He is my entire life. Sometimes it’s as simple as that, and I’m the luckiest person on this earth to be able to say that he chose me.

As we were in the beginning, are now, and ever shall be. World without end.

Chapter End Notes

Guys, we did it. This is the ending of Just look over your shoulder. I want to thank every single reader out there, everyone who left a kudo and comments and thank you to my beta reader, you deserve an award after this!. I'm touched that there's so much feedback, I could have never dreamed of it when I started writing this story. I'm proud of my work, I wanted to get my words and thoughts out, and I think I did a fairly good
job. If you didn't watch the Fantrailer until now, check out the Prolog for the link, maybe you'll like it as well as the Fanmix on my Spotify.

Again, I thank you all from the bottom of my heart, you are all wonderful people and the best readers an author could ask for.

All my love,

Kayleigh from Germany aka mikeysgerard xx
This was sent to me by an anon and I LOVE it!! And I appreciate it soooo much. Thanks to EVERYONE who has shown me love for JLOYS ever since I started this project. It means the world to me. xx

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Loving this! I love Mikeys hair and his favourite dress and how G holds him!

https://imgur.com/a/rAVbGlo#1nYY1tV

I love you MW <3

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!