

MIST FROM THE FALLS

"Stairwell Scene"

Alex is returning from a magical first date with a cheerleader named Kelly when he encounters his good friend EJ.

Typically EJ is a football player who is very personable and charismatic. However, he has just learning that Kate, a girl he has been seeing, is pregnant. He is understandably but uncharacteristically struggling with the news and with himself. Earlier in the day he attempted to confide in Joe, a mutual good friend of both him and Alex. The conversation ended badly.

Huddled in a dark corner, Alex approaches his pained friend...

*****CAUTION EXPLICIT LANGUAGE*****

EXT. DORM PATIO - NIGHT

Alex returns from his date and is basking in the events of the evening. As he walks up the steps, he notices a figure in the shadows.

ALEX

EJ?

Alex approaches EJ, crouched in the corner with a paper bagged bottle in hand. It looks as if EJ has spent a considerable amount of time crying.

ALEX (CONT'D)

You okay?

EJ gives no response.

ALEX (CONT'D)

You look terrible.

EJ

Joe tell you?

Alex slowly sits next to EJ.

ALEX

He did.

EJ

I don't know what to fuckin' do, dude. This shit's not supposed to happen.

ALEX

I know.

EJ

I mean, bang, everything, fucked. I don't know how to deal with it. Shit, I've been fuckin' cryin' about this shit. Fuckin' cryin'.

ALEX

Have you talked to her?

EJ shakes his head.

EJ

She told me, and my head's been spinnin' ever since. I haven't talked to anybody. I tried with Joe, but that didn't fuckin' work.

ALEX
Well, you're talkin' now.

EJ
I guess. What'd he say to you?

ALEX
He told me about Kate. He also
said you were thinking about...
options.

EJ
I don't have a clue what I'm
fuckin' thinkin'.

EJ notices Alex is kinda dressed up.

EJ (CONT'D)
Say, how was the night with Kel?

ALEX
It was nice.

EJ
Anything happen?

Alex smiles. EJ understands, and before Alex can go any
further...

EJ (CONT'D)
You deserve it, man.

ALEX
Thanks. (beat) Is there anything I
can do?

EJ
Just treat her good I guess.

ALEX
I mean for you.

EJ
I don't know. I've just had my
whole fuckin' world turned upside
down.

Alex just sits there.

EJ (CONT'D)
You know what my problem is? I'm
not dumb enough. I'm just not dirt
fuckin' stupid enough.
(MORE)

EJ (CONT'D)

There was this kid, right. When I was little, our school did this talent night thing. There was this kid who played the violin. Now classical music was bad enough, but this kid sucked bad. Sucked bad. That night, I happen to be sitting next to his family. You would've thought the kid just shat a golden egg, made it hatch and had a white freakin' dove fly out. God he sucked. And he had no idea. Too fuckin' stupid to realize. He was so happy playing his stupid little thing. Now look at me. I'm good enough where my ball gets me a scholarship, a chance. A chance to go to school and get a degree. A chance for a good job, a chance for a good future. See, I'm smart enough to see that. And I'm smart enough to know that I may have just ruined lives.

Alex is moved to speak and yet, something keeps him listening.

EJ (CONT'D)

Ruined lives. Why couldn't I be too fuckin' dumb to realize it?

After a moment.

ALEX

Maybe he was deaf.

EJ

What?

ALEX

You know, the violin kid. Maybe he couldn't hear.

EJ

So?

ALEX

Well sure, he wouldn't know he sucked. But then, he never got to really enjoy the music either. Maybe, you're actually lucky.

EJ

Lucky, huh.

Alex watches EJ get up and labor a few steps. Then, suddenly, EJ throws his bottle against the far wall. He winces as it shatters. A ricochet has cut his cheek.

EJ (CONT'D)

Lucky.

Alex watches helplessly as his friend wanders down the dark street. He pulls out his pen and writes something on his hand.