

Julie

I couldn't stop my tears as they escaped my eyes and rolled down my cheeks. As I wiped them away, more would follow. I had said goodbye to Kate many times before and it was always hard, but this time, it was almost unbearable. I sat in my car for quite a while, unable to start the engine. The heat of the car in the parking garage finally prompted me to start the car. The silence was too much. I plugged in my phone and turned on the music, needing something, anything, to fill my head. . It had been on shuffle and down low so I didn't know it had been playing in my purse. I should have checked what the last song on was, for I regretted turning it on as soon as the music started.

*Banging on your front door
My pride spilled on the floor
My hands and knees are bruised and now I'm crawling back to you.
Begging for a second chance
Are you gonna let me in?
I was running from the truth and now I'm crawling back to you*

I sat there for a moment, unable to shut it off, but not wanting to hear more. But the song won out. As it finished and Nick's song "Burning Up" started, I pulled out of the parking garage and headed home.

AJ was true to his word, within two hours he sent me a message letting me know he had landed safely. I let out a sigh of relief when three hours later, Kate text to let me know she had arrived as well.

The next two weeks were hard. Kate being pregnant really made do a lot of thinking. I had never been on birth control and we had never used a condom. I bought a home pregnancy test, but it came back negative. I was relieved until I read on the packaging that false negatives can happen if the test was taken too early. I was an emotional wreck for over a week, not sure what was going on. Did I want to be pregnant? The thought had its ups and downs. It would be so cool to have a baby the same time my best friend did, but what if we both ended up being single moms? If only Kate had a baby, it would be easier. Kate already knew I would do anything I could for her.

Lucky, ten days later, my period came. It made all the emotional crap make more sense. I was both relieved and a little sad. But I knew I wasn't ready to be a mom. Alex and I had a long way to go before that would ever be a part of our vocabulary. The following Monday, I went to my doctor and got started on birth control.

The next three weeks went by as a blur. I was so grateful to have a convention in Denver, followed by one in Kansas City, to keep me busy. AJ called at least once a day and sent me texts. He even convinced me to follow him on Twitter. That was weird in the beginning. He would drop hints about me, without saying anything. He talked about when he mysteriously disappeared for three days. His followers kept trying to guess where he had been. I knew. Through Twitter, he kept the memories vivid.

Once a week, we set our alarms to watch the sun rise together. If we were in different times zones, like when he went back to L.A., he would get up with me, then go back to sleep for two hours. When it was his sunrise, I would listen to him describe all the colors. It was something no one would ever be able to take away from us.

About two months after everyone had left, and the NKOTBSB tour was complete, Alex decided he needed to see me again. I didn't have anything going on; convention wise, so I offered to go to him. But he insisted that he wanted to come to Omaha again. It wasn't until he arrived that I understood why.

I stood at the guest area of Terminal B waiting for him to arrive. I had knots in my stomach as I waited for him to walk through the doorway. Other than myself and a few other people, there were no great crowds, no paparazzi to snap photos. Alex explained to me in the car, as I drove home, that all he wanted was a few days of normal life. He wanted to walk in my house in nothing but his boxers and not worry about someone trying to get a picture through the window. He just wanted to be Alex, my boyfriend. Not AJ McLean, the bad boy from Backstreet Boys.

The first two days he was there, we never left the house. We swam in my pool, made love in my oversized bathtub, and almost every other room in the house, and just hung out.

It was weird for me to not be out and about, at least once in a day. I may not have a 'real' job, but I am always busy. When we ran out of milk, I finally convinced him to get out.

We went to the zoo and the art museum. We saw three new movies while he was there. And we talked about Kate and Nick. AJ wanted to know how things were going. I told him how Kate was moving in a week, to Omaha. It worked out perfectly for his trip that we both would be flying out the same day. I was flying one way to Spokane to help Kate move. It was torture not to tell him about Kate's little secret, but it wasn't mine to share.

Our week together was over far too soon. But we talked about us girls joining them on the BSB cruise in December, as well as Alex possibly coming out for Thanksgiving. I hoped Kate

wouldn't be showing much then. I would not share her secret, but I wasn't going to stop AJ from spending a holiday with me, and meeting my family.

At the airport, we did not have to say goodbye right away. We were fortunate to have the first flight together. Alex was first class and I was coach, but he was more than glad to upgrade my flight so we could ride together to Denver. From there we had to go our separate ways. I would go north to Spokane and he was headed south to Los Angeles.

Our kisses good bye in Denver, were bittersweet. He had an hour overlay and I only had 30 minutes to get to my new terminal and gate. He rushed with me, keeping me company until I was at my gate.

When he pulled me into his warm embrace, I felt my heart skip a beat. I knew it would only be a month and a half before we would see each other again, but I still began to cry. I thought of Kate at that moment and wiped my tears away. At least Alex had come back and seen me, Nick had not only NOT come to see her, but his texts and phone calls were becoming fewer and further between.

"Have I told you today how much I love you?" he whispered against my lips.

"Tell me again," I answered. His replay was in his kiss. He would never have to say the words again if he always kissed me like that. His kiss said things his words never could. As they announced the last call for my flight, I reluctantly left his arms. When I got to the door and handed the agent my ticket, I turned one last time to see him wave at me. "He remembered," I thought to myself.

It wasn't until I was in my seat and had turned off all my electronics, that I let me emotions take over. I sat there as the tears streamed down my face. I was crying because he was gone, again. I cried for Kate, as I felt guilty about crying, when she wasn't able to see Nick at all. The girl in the seat in front of me, turned around and looked at me. I wiped my tears away, looking down at my lap. It felt weird to have her staring at me. I finally looked up at her to ask what her problem was, when she spoke.

"Does anyone else know you are making out with AJ?" she asked.

"Excuse me?" I replied.

"His fiancée might be a little pissed off to know he is in Denver making out with some fan."

I burst out laughing, causing the girl to look at me funny.

"Are you talking about Rochelle?"

The girl just nodded.

“So, I take it you are a BSB fan?” I asked her.

“Well, I would say so if I knew you were making out with AJ McLean.”

I tried not to laugh again.

“Sweetie. He broke the engagement off with her over three months ago. Where have you been? And I am sure his girlfriend doesn't mind that he was kissing some fan in Denver.”

The flight attendant was coming up the row closing the overhead bins and asked the girl to turn around. As soon as the plane was in air and I was able to, I had my phone out and my headphones on. I listened to the beautiful resonating sound of AJ's voice on a track her had recorded just for me.

When Kate picked me up at the airport, I was shocked to see her little baby bump starting. With her permission, I put both my hands on her little mound and coo'ed at her belly. I was so excited I was gonna be an aunt.

When we got to her place, I was shocked to see she was mostly packed and ready to go. The following morning we were on the road. It took almost five days to get from Washington to Nebraska. With having horses, the drive was slow going, with more stops than normal. Kate having to pee every 100 miles didn't help either.

It took a few weeks, but we had her all unpacked and started in a daily routine. But I had forgotten to tell her about Thanksgiving.....