

Blue and Grey

Ryan

"What are you here for?" she smiled at me, her deep ocean-blue eyes lighting up as she spoke. I took a deep breath, praying I didn't stuff up like I usually did.

"I, um, ah..." some things can only be dreamed of, I thought, cringing.

"I'm Ella. I'm here for depression and anxiety." She told me with more confidence than I had ever been able to muster.

"Uh, same." I said. "So, um, you don't seem very, ah, depressed?" Oh my god, shut-up Ryan. I just wanted the ground to swallow me whole. But if she saw me for the useless idiot I was, she didn't show it.

"Well, sometimes, the saddest people are the best at hiding it." She stood up, and started to move towards the psychiatrist that had just called her name and motioned for her to come.

"I'm Ryan, by the way," I said way too quickly. She flashed those brilliant blue eyes at me.

"See you, Ryan." She then disappeared into the psychiatrist's office.

Ella

There was something about him that made me feel like I could save the world when I was with him.

My confidence sky-rocketed, I was different around him. I acted like a person that could actually matter. I acted like I did before. Before my life got ripped away from me before my eyes...

It happened when I was 12. I had walked home from school to find that my home was engulfed in flames of red and orange, and surrounded by a cloud of black smoke. My whole family was in there, screaming for help. Like an idiot, I just stood there. I could have saved them somehow. I wanted to. But I couldn't move. I think about it every day, wishing I had of ran in and died with them.

Ryan

Ella was permanently imprinted on my mind after that day. I didn't see her until a week later.

"Heya, stranger!"

"Hila," I said then silently cursed myself for it. "Sorry, I went to say hi, then hello but changed my mind and went for hey-a."

She laughed. "It's okay, Ryan. Anyway, I've come to tell you that we're going on a picnic!"

"Now?"

"Yes, of course now. When else?"

Ella

That's when I truly saw him smile for the first time.

"Wow. This is...wow." His smile was beautiful. I grinned and popped a strawberry in my mouth. The juice of the fruit was sweet against my tongue.

"So, why do you need therapy?" I asked cautiously, hoping he would open up enough to tell me.

"Well, when I was 15, my mum abandoned my dad and I. My father started drinking a lot, and he did stupid stuff when he was drunk. He ended up in jail." There were tears in his eyes. As I listened to

him, I realised I was in love with him. I bit my lip as he continued. "After that I felt like the world was punishing me even though I had never really done anything to deserve it. I decided if the world was going to punish me no matter what, I may as well do something to be punished for. I broke into someone's house and set a curtain on fire. I wanted someone to lose everything like I had. It wasn't meant to spread as much as it did. The whole house caught on fire. It was stupid, I wasn't thinking straight. I was hurt and angry at the world, and it was an accident."

I couldn't breathe. His story brought back memories of the house fire I had encountered as a kid. I felt like I had been punched in the gut.

"What's wrong?" he asked anxiously, noticing my reaction.

I exhaled loudly. "It's just... My whole family died in a house fire." Tears stung my eyes.

Ryan

It was the first time I had seen her struggle for words. I put my hand over hers.

"It's okay," I whispered. Her eyes found mine. Goddamn, her eyes were so blue. I couldn't look away, they intrigued me. I leaned in closer, inch by inch, until our lips met.

It was amazing. I was 18 and had never kissed a girl before. I never thought I would have the chance, I was such a screw-up. We parted, and she stood up. I must have done something wrong. She ran off. I followed her and grabbed her arm.

"Ella, wait!"

She buried her face into her hands.

"Let's run away. Let's go somewhere only we know."

She shook her head. "No. No, I can't. There will be times in your life where you have to choose between fight and flight, and I don't want to be the kind of person that takes the easy way out and chooses flight."

"There's nothing left for us here, Ella! What do we have left to fight for? Flight is our only option. Please."

She bit her lip and contemplated it. "Okay."

I couldn't help but smile. "Okay?"

She smiled back. "Okay."

Ella

"What now?" I asked after we had gone shopping for food and supplies.

"Now, we find somewhere to sleep." He started towards the trees.

"Um, we're sleeping outside?"

He didn't say anything, just motioned for me to follow. I walked behind him uncertainly. He ducked through a bush and disappeared through the other side. When I stepped through, the first thing that caught my eye was the magnificent blue waterfall.

"It's beautiful," I breathed.

"Like you," he said. I smiled and we kissed again.

"It's late. We should get some sleep," he said when we pulled away from each other. I agreed and lay next to him on a big, soft grassy patch.

A sudden coldness enveloped me, ripping me from sleep, jolting me awake. I couldn't breathe. Something was wrong. I leaned over to squeeze Ryan's hand, but my hand felt nothing but grass. I sat up, panic washing over me. He was gone. I looked around me desperately, finding nothing but a folded up piece of paper:

I had to leave to keep you safe. I'm sorry.

No. No, no, no, no. Everything was perfect, we had so many plans! I buried my face into the ground and sobbed. We told each other everything, I told him about my family dying in that fire when I was 12, he told me about that time where he set a house on fire when he was 15... wait. He was 3 years older than me. That means he set that house on fire at about the time my family died. It was all adding up. This is why he had to leave. He killed my family.

The love of my life killed my family.