

The Love Hopeful

By

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INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Instead of a sofa and arm chair, this living room is filled with beds. Chalia is lying down on the king bed she shares with her cousin and boyfriend.

She is thinking of her past life with her parents.

CHALIA (V.O.)

Man, my life is so messed up. If my mom isn't yelling she is beating me. My dad doesn't come around much. Then my living situation is just as bad. I'm sleeping on a king mattress the long way because there is two more people that is sleepin' along with me. My living room is filled with people I hardly know. I get the sense that they are all drug addicts.

Chalia's mom enters the living room from the kitchen, angry because Chalia has left the butter out. Her mom is apparently drunk.

MOM

Chalia, why did you leave the Goddamn butter out?

CHALIA

I didn't mean to. It was an accident. I forgot.

MOM

I'm getting tired of your dumb, forgetful ass. You've always forgotten shit.

Chalia is already teary-eyed from her thoughts and so she begins to cry.

MOM (CONT'D)

Why the hell are you crying for? I haven't even did anything to your dumb ass yet.

CHALIA

You always yell at me for stupid reasons.

MOM

(sternly)
Don't back-talk me.

CHALIA

But I'm not, you asked me a question and I answered it.

Chalia's mom is tired of talking. She slaps Chalia and puts her on punishment.

MOM

I told your dumb ass to stop back-talking me and you chose to continue. So you are fucking on punishment until I say you're off.

Chalia is now even more upset, but surprisingly gets happy because she begins to think about her everlasting crush, Tony. She has been liking Tony for a while now. Every time something sad or depressing comes her way, she just thinks about him and gets excited.

Tony doesn't know she likes him, or better yet, Tony doesn't even know her.

Chalia is so to herself that she is too shy to even say "hello" to her crush.

CHALIA (V.O.)

Man, Tony is so cute. He is tall, athletic, and smart. I wish I had a chance with him. A guy that perfect would never want a girl like me. I mean, I'm ugly, not as smart as him, people talk about me and the way I dress and look. Then, on top of that, I'm anti-social. I wonder how long I'll be on punishment for. Mom is so stupid. She drinks like every other day. When she gets drunk she likes to pick on me. I don't even do anything. I know some moms who would kill to have a daughter like me. I get good grades, I don't smoke or drink, and top of that, I'm not having sex. Life is messed up.

INT. CRENSHAW HALLWAY - DAY

Chalia is depressed about her mom and living situation. She confides in her only friend, Alicia. She trusts her to talk about anything but not everything.

ALICIA
Hey, girl, how you doing?

CHALIA
(depressed)
Oh fine, how are you?

ALICIA
(curiously)
Are you sure? Because you don't
look like you're fine. I'm just
asking as a friend.

CHALIA
Okay, no I'm not fine. My mom hit
me again and put me on punishment.
This time even more stupid than the
last.

ALICIA
What's the reason she hit you this
time?

CHALIA
It's embarrassing to even say. You
might even laugh at me.

ALICIA
(kidding)
I promise I won't laugh. Why did
she hit you?

CHALIA
For leaving some butter out.

ALICIA
Butter?

CHALIA
Yes, butter. She is so insane when
she drinks. She's the worst around
people. I wonder if she will ever
grow up so I can. I'm tired of her
actions. I'm sixteen and she treats
me otherwise.

In the middle of her speech, she sees Tony, 17, walking down
the hall, and begins to grin so tough until it's obvious.

ALICIA
Whoa, what was that all about?

CHALIA

(embarrassed)

What was all of what about? What are you talking about, Alicia? You're so crazy.

ALICIA

I mean, you were only having a moment before Tony passed by. I get it, you like him, don't you?

CHALIA

Umm... umm no... Okay, okay. Maybe.

ALICIA

Maybe? Are you sure about that?

CHALIA

All right, I do, okay. Happy?

ALICIA

Yes. It's just weird hearing that you have a crush.

CHALIA

(in denial)

It's not a crush. Who said it was?

ALICIA

It's obvious it's a crush, you laugh and grin every time he walks your way.

CHALIA

I know, but he is so adorable. I'm sure everyone grins and laughs when he walks their way.

ALICIA

(playful)

I don't, I think you should talk to him, and tell him how you feel. Because you never know how he feels.

CHALIA

(confused)

You know I would never do that. I know Tony doesn't like me, so why try to start something that's not there?

ALICIA

All I'm saying is you never know. I really think you should.

Chalia thinks about what Alicia is suggesting. Chalia likes Tony so much that she can't say "hello" to him. Every time he looks or says anything to her, her heart either drops or starts to beat rapidly, too fast for her to even formulate something to say to him.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Alicia and her friends are talking about an event that happened at lunch. They are laughing and cracking jokes.

Chalia is on the other side by herself as usual, thinking about Tony and her changes within.

CHALIA (V.O.)

It's like Tony is made for me. Unfortunately, he is made for any shallow girl. He is always with the wrong girl. He is very friendly, and perhaps they are just friends, but any one of them is bad for him. I wish I wasn't depressed all the time. Before anyone can say a bad thing about me, I already say it about myself. I know I don't look like everyone else, I have no friends, my mom is embarrassing and poor. I already know those things so why wait until someone tells me? If I think like this about myself, imagine what Tony thinks. Man, he is cute.

Alicia sees Chalia all by herself and goes to talk to her. Chalia is all wrapped up in her thoughts.

ALICIA

Chalia... Chalia, come over here to us.

CHALIA

Okay.

Chalia gets over where Alicia is. She is so quiet and timid that it is like she is by herself.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Two weeks have passed since Chalia was put on punishment. Chalia's mom has forgotten that Chalia is on punishment because everything is normal. Chalia doesn't hang out, talk on the phone, or anything that teens do.

Chalia is trying to go to sleep while the "adults" of the house are in the kitchen. The kitchen is divided by a sheet curtain, which means you can hear and smell whatever comes from the kitchen.

CHALIA

(to herself)

They are so loud. Why do they have to be inconsiderate, I'm trying to sleep. And what is that smell?

Chalia suspects that the adults are smoking crack in the kitchen. She is pretty sure they are. The smell is very strong. Chalia sometimes gets sick from the smell. She knows it's not weed, because friends and sibling smoke weed and she knows what it smells like. Chalia can't sleep so she writes in her journal.

CHALIA (CONT'D)

My mom is so naive to the point it's not even funny. I hope that I don't turn out like her. She has a kind heart, but she is stupid. Have all of these people living in this small-ass apartment rent-free. They are on county when they get the "free money." It's gone within two days. I go hungry because no one buys food with the money. I do believe that they have some type of drug habit. It's embarrassing living at the "crack house." I wish my mom knew how I felt. If I can tell anything, she knows in my face, and if it's too much when I tell her she hits me. I really want to sleep but they are so loud. I have school tomorrow. I wonder what Tony is doing. Well, that's dumb. He is sleeping, of course, like a normal person.

Chalia's oldest brother walks into the living room and notices Chalia isn't asleep.

Chalia's brother is the man of the house, just because he slang drugs and pays the bills, food, etc. Of course her brother doesn't tell her these things. It's her instinct.

BROTHER

Chalia, what the hell you still doing up? It's three o'clock in the morning.

CHALIA

I couldn't sleep because of them stupid idiots.

BROTHER

(laughs)
Where's momma?

CHALIA

In the room, snoring her brains out, something I should be doing.

BROTHER

I know, right? I gotcha because they are loud. Watch this.

Chalia's brother bursts through the kitchen curtain and sees about ten adults squashed in the kitchen. He sees broken crack pipes, beer bottles, and cigarettes in an ash tray.

BROTHER (CONT'D)

What the fuck do you guys think this is? My fucking little sister is trying to sleep. Y'all disrespectful. Y'all need to get the fuck out of here now.

CRACKHEAD #1

My bad, didn't know that she was up.

BROTHER

Well, don't give a shit about none of that. You knew she was in here, and you know you are loud. It's three, of course she is asleep. So vacate now.

From the look on his face, everyone knows he is serious and they stop what they are doing and leave, other than the six that live there.

BROTHER (CONT'D)

Chalia, you can go to sleep now.

CHALIA

Thank you.

BROTHER

No problem. I can understand
because they were loud. Good night.
I love you.

CHALIA

You too.

EXT. SCHOOLYARD - DAY

Chalia and Alicia are talking at their hangout area when Tony comes to talk to Alicia about a class project. Chalia is going crazy in her mind.

TONY

Hey, Alicia, did you do your
portion of the project yet?

ALICIA

Yeah, duh. The question is, have
you? Because it's due next week.

TONY

I started it, I'm almost finished.

ALICIA

Well, you need to finish.

TONY

Alicia, don't worry. It's due next
week. It will be done, okay?

ALICIA

All right, it better.

TONY

It will, that's all I wanted. I'll
talk to you later.

ALICIA

All right, see you later.

Tony walks off. As he walks off he notices Chalia grinning so he says hello to her. Chalia can't find words so she nods, "What's up?"

CHALIA

Oh my God, he said "hi" to me. I'm
going to scream.

ALICIA

Please don't. I don't think my ears can take that; sensitive.

CHALIA

He so bomb like man. Only if he knew.

ALICIA

Well, I told you to tell him, and you don't want to so it's your fault.

CHALIA

I know, but I can barely say hello to him. I really don't know him like that anyway. I don't want to be weird and out of nowhere say "Tony, I like you." Besides, I'm ugly, and I'm pretty sure he thinks so as well.

ALICIA

Chalia, you're not ugly. You look better than some of the girls he's with. You just need confidence.

EXT. TONY'S FOOTBALL GAME - EVENING

It's a Crenshaw vs. Dorsey game and Crenshaw is winning. The bleachers are full of excited people.

Chalia notices that there is a girl cheering for Tony immensely. She assumes immediately that it is his girlfriend.

CHALIA

Alicia, is that Tony's girlfriend?

ALICIA

I don't know, but the way she's cheering sure makes it seem like it, huh?

CHALIA

(disappointed)

Yep, it sure does.

Chalia is now feeling upset but she is trying hard not to show it so Alicia doesn't say anything.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Chalia's mom is getting news from one of the housemates that Chalia started mess with the brother and friends the other night. Chalia's mom overreacts and starts to yell at Chalia.

MOM

What is this I hear about you starting shit in the house?

CHALIA

(confused)

When?

MOM

Don't play dumb, you know when. The other day, you dumb ass.

CHALIA

I didn't start anything.

MOM

Yes, you did. Why would they lie to me?

CHALIA

Maybe they want to see me get in trouble, because honestly I didn't start anything. They do know that you overreact to things a lot.

MOM

You sound dumb ass fuck, they have no reason of wanting to see your ugly ass in trouble.

Chalia's brother is listening to the conversation and he interrupts his mom before Chalia begins to get frustrated.

BROTHER

Chalia didn't even do anything. The other night they were too loud. Chalia was trying to go to sleep for the next day. It was a fucking fiesta in the kitchen the other night.

MOM

Oh, well she didn't have to call you, and I believe I was talking to her anyway. Stay out of it.

BROTHER

So fucking what? You're going off on her, when you should be going off on those people who were inconsiderate? Not her. She's just a child.

Chalia is looking at them but thinking about Tony. Chalia's mom is getting annoyed because she knows she is wrong but doesn't want to admit it.

BROTHER (CONT'D)

I wonder sometimes about you, I wonder if you grew up. You would think after eleven kids you would be real mature but you are not.

MOM

Chalia, see what you have done. Everyone always thinks you're the victim. Poor Chalia this, poor Chalia that. That is all people say. If only people knew.

BROTHER

Mom, you always turn shit around. You do always pick on Chalia for no reason at all.

At this point, Chalia's mom wants to just slap Chalia. She doesn't because she knows Chalia's brother will stop her. Chalia's mom just drops the subject and walks into her room.

MOM

This is not over. You're real lucky he's here, because I would've beat your ever-living ass.

Chalia begins to cry because she feels that her mom really dislikes her. She has no clue why her mom feels this way about her. She is in her brother's room, talking to him.

CHALIA

(crying)

Why doesn't she like me? I do almost everything to please her. She has to where I can't even be social. I hear the worst ridicule from her then my peers.

BROTHER

I know it may seem that way, but she really loves you.

CHALIA

No, she doesn't. She always calls me names. If she's not hitting me, I'm like her personal slave.

BROTHER

I think that she is jealous. She didn't grow up with the integrity you have.

CHALIA

I don't know why. The reason I have so much integrity is her. I always have my guard up.

BROTHER

That's good, don't bring them down either, especially for a boy. Okay, little sister?

CHALIA

Okay, good night. I love you.

Chalia knows that anytime he says "little sister" that's her exit. Chalia returns to her bed and starts to ponder about night. She begins to pray.

CHALIA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

God, please help me. Help me get through my years with this lady. I know what ever you got in store for me is going to be good. Lord, can you please give me strength and confidence to talk to Tony? Amen.

INT. CRENSHAW HALLWAY - DAY

Alicia and Tony are talking. Tony is telling her how he feels about Chalia.

TONY

Alicia, I really think your friend is cute.

ALICIA

Who?

TONY

The girl you're always with.

ALICIA

Who? Chalia?

TONY

Yeah, I like her. She doesn't look like the average girl and I like that.

ALICIA

Wow, that's crazy.

TONY

What's crazy?

ALICIA

Oh, nothing.

Alicia thinks about Chalia and how much she likes Tony. Alicia is shocked that Tony feels the same way.

ALICIA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

This is exciting news. I can't wait to tell Chalia. I know she'll be happy. It's a good thing because she really needs to bring her confidence up. Finally, something going well for her.

Alicia runs off to go look for Chalia and tell her the news. She forgets that Tony is even sitting there.

TONY (V.O.)

I wonder if she knows I'm still sitting here. I look stupid just sitting here by myself. Hopefully it's a good thing she ran off like that. I really like Chalia.

INT. CRENSHAW HALLWAY - DAY

Chalia is standing by her locker. Alicia is trying to tell her the news.

ALICIA

(bursting with excitement)
Chalia, guess what?

CHALIA

What?

ALICIA

Tony likes you.

CHALIA

What? No, he doesn't.

ALICIA

Yes, he does. He thinks you're cute.

CHALIA

Alicia, that's the reason I don't tell you stuff. You play too much.

ALICIA

(confused)

What are you talking about? I'm not playing.

CHALIA

No, he doesn't. You're playing. Why would you play with my head like that?

Chalia runs off, crying and sad. Chalia really thinks that Alicia is playing. Chalia drifts off to McDonald's. It's surprisingly crowded.

CHALIA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I can't believe Alicia would do that to me. I thought she was my friend. This is a lesson learned. Never trust anyone with your personal business.

Tony is right behind Chalia in the long line. Chalia is unaware of his presence.

TONY

Hi, Chalia.

CHALIA

(shocked)

Hey, Tony.

TONY

Enough of the small talk. What Alicia told you is true. I like you.

Chalia is shocked and embarrassed. Now she feels bad that she went off on Alicia.

THE END.