

PRT 405- "The Reason"

"I can't believe in just a few hours my baby brother will be a married man." I said as I helped Blake straighten his tie. Blake smiled, "I know. I can't believe it either. I feel like the luckiest man alive."

"You have the woman of your dreams. You are the luckiest man alive." I said with a sigh.

"She'll be here you know." Blake replied, he knew exactly what I was thinking...or who I was thinking of.

"Yeah, I know...she'll probably have Rocky or someone with her."

"Um, you're bringing a date too ya know."

"I know."

"What's with you and Jessica anyway?"

"I don't know."

"Do you like her?"

"She's a friend...a way to pass the time. I'm not 'in love' with her or anything."

"Does she know that?"

"Yeah, I think so."

"I'm sorry. I know you miss Michelle."

"Yeah, but today isn't about that. It's about you and Tor."

Blake smiled again, "I'm still in shock. I can't believe Tori agreed to marry me."

"Believe it." I said as there was a knock on the door.

"Come in." Blake said.

Auggie walked in.

"Hey bro, you ready?" he asked.

"As ready as I'll be." Blake replied.

"Hey Hunter." Auggie said.

"Hey man." I replied.

"Everyone is seated and ready." Dustin said as he, Cam, and Shane walked in.

"Good. I'm glad you guys are all here. Thank you for being my groomsmen" Blake said.

"It's an honor, truly." Shane said.

Dustin nodded, "If anyone deserves a perfect day it you and Tor."

"Are the bride's maids ready?" Blake asked.

"I'll go check." Dustin said.

Michelle

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Jon and I arrived at the church a bit early. I had my make up and everything done but I needed to get my bride's maid dress from Tori. Jon and I walked into the church and found Eric and Kyle seating people. They were the ushers I guess.

"Hey Mich!" Eric said as he ran up to me.

"Hey Eric." I said as I hugged him.

"Oh, wow...you're..."

I laughed, "Yes Eric, this is Jon. He's my 'plus 1'. Jon, this is my friend Eric McKnight."

"Nice to meet you Eric." Jon said.

"Likewise." Eric said.

"Can you seat Jon? I need to go get ready with the other bride's maids." I said.

Eric nodded, "This way sir."

Jon kissed my cheek and headed off with Eric.

I went to the bride's room and knocked.

"Come in!" Marah called.

I went in and saw Marah, Kapri, Tally, and a woman I didn't know helping Tori get dressed.

"Michelle! Hi, I'm so glad you're here." Tori said.

"Hi Michelle, I'm Tori's sister Emily." The woman I didn't know said.

"Ohhh, hi Emily. It's so nice to meet you finally." I said.

“Likewise. I’ve heard so much about you.”

“It’s good to see you Mich.” Marah said.

“Totally.” Kapri agreed.

I smiled, “It’s good to see all of you too. How are you doing Tor?”

“Nervous…but so excited.” She said.

“I’m so happy for you.”

“Thank you. I’m so glad you could make it.”

“I wouldn’t miss it for the world!” I replied.

“OK, here’s your dress Michelle.” Tally said as she handed me the baby blue gown. I took it and slipped it on then put on the matching high heels that went with it. As I was getting my dress on Emily and Marah helped Tori put on her dress.

“Wow, you look amazing Tor!” I said after she was dressed.

“Thanks. So do you.” She replied as there was a knock on the door.

“Who is it?” Emily asked.

“Dustin.”

“Ohhh.” I ran to the door and opened it. “Dusty!” I cried.

“Mich, hey!” he said hugging me, “Wow you look great.”

“Thanks. So do you. You clean up nice.”

“Oh wow, Tor, you look amazing.” He said as he noticed her.

“Thanks Dustin.” Tori replied.

“Are you guys ready?”

“I think so. Tor, you ready?” Emily asked.

Tori nodded, “Let’s do this.”

Hunter

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Dustin came and let us know that the girls were ready. Blake took his place in the front of the church then the rest of us gathered to be paired off. I saw Michelle. She looked amazing.

“Hi.” I said.

“Hi.” She replied.

“OK, Hunter and Emily, you’re up first.” Eric said as he looked at his sheet. He was organizing us to walk in.

“OK.” I said as I went over to Emily.

“OK, after they walk in it’s Auggie and Tally, then Dustin and Marah, Shane and Kapri, and finally Cam and Michelle.”

I nearly choked. I don’t know who decided Cam and Michelle would walk each other down the aisle but someone other than me had to realize what a bad idea that was.

“OK, we ready?” Kyle asked as he prepared to open the door.

“Let’s do this.” Tori said.

The music started and I started walking in with Emily. Blake looked so nervous. When we reached the end of the aisle I stood by Blake and Emily stood on the other side next to where Tori would soon be.

“You ok?” I whispered as Auggie and Tally walked in.

“Yeah, just nervous.” Blake replied in a whisper.

As I watched everyone walk in I noticed Jon sitting in the crowd. Michelle had brought Jon as her date! Of all the people she brought Jon! I took a breath and tried to calm down. This was about Blake and Tori, not Michelle and Jon. I watched as Cam and Michelle entered. She looked so beautiful. Jon looked very in love. I so wanted to smack him. I moved my gaze to Cam. He looked uncomfortable, to say the least. Finally, Tori entered with her mom walking her down the aisle. I heard Blake gasp when he saw her.

“She looks perfect.” He whispered.

“She is.” I whispered back.

Tori’s mom gave her away and then she took her place by Blake. The preacher did the ceremony in traditional fashion, until the vows. Blake and Tori had written their own.

“Tori, ever since the moment I first saw you I knew I wanted to be with you for the rest of my life. It was a moment that changed me forever. You’ve made me a better man and given my life reason. I want to spend my life making you as happy as you’ve made me and showing you each and everyday how completely and fully I love you.”

“Blake, when we first met I was so insecure in my femininity. I’d always been ‘one of the boys’ and I didn’t think any guy would ever see me as a woman worth loving. You changed all that. You loved me for who I am and let me be me. You saw my inner and outer beauty even when I couldn’t. You helped me find and become who I wanted to be. You inspire me by living your dreams and it’s because of your love and support I feel I can follow my own.”

After the vows the preacher continued, “Do you, Blakely Jacob Bradley, take Victoria Erin Hanson to be your lawfully wedded wife for as long as you both shall live?”

“I do.”

“And do you, Victoria Erin Hanson, take Blakely Jacob Bradley, to be your lawfully wedding husband for as long as you both shall live?”

“I do.”

“Then by the power invested in me, by the state of California, I now pronounce you husband and wife. You may kiss the bride.”

And just like that I had a new sister-in-law and my baby brother was married.

After the ceremony we all went to the reception hall. When everyone got there I had to give my toast.

“It’s weird for me, as the older brother, to watch Blake get married. For so long it’s been just the two of us and when he first met Tori I won’t lie, I was very jealous. I didn’t want to share my brother and I felt like I was losing him. Of course now I know I haven’t lost him and I’m just sharing him and if I have to share him with someone I’m glad it’s you Tori. Tori you really have made my brother a better person and brought so much happiness to his life but you’ve also been an amazing friend to me. I’m honored to have you in the family and I know the two of you will be very happy for years to come.” I said.

After the first dance we ate then everyone started to dance.

“You want to dance?” Jessica asked me. We had met up at the reception.

“Sure.” I replied. We walked onto the dance floor. I noticed Michelle and Jon. “Jess, can you go get me a beer from the bar? I have something I need to do.”

“Sure.” Jessica said as he headed off.

I went over to Michelle and Jon.

“Can I cut in?” I asked.

“No.” Michelle said.

“Please?”

Michelle sighed, “Fine.”

Jon moved to the side and let me take her hand. We started to dance.

“What do you want Hunter?” she asked as we slowly moved to the music.

“What were you thinking bringing him here?” I asked.

“He’s my date.”

“He’s married.”

“That’s not your business.”

“Are you two together?”

“Yes. He’s my boyfriend...sorta.”

“Oh god. Of all the crazy things you’ve done...”

“Stop. You don’t get a say.”

“Michelle, please...”

“No. Now stop. I don’t want to make a scene. Besides, you’re here with Jessica...my friend of all people...well...former friend.”

“She’s just my friend. We’re not together like that.”

“Have you slept with her?”

“Well...”

“There you go. Now this isn’t the time or place so just stop.”

I sighed, “Fine.”

“Hunter, I got your beer at the table.” Jessica said as she walked up.

“Thanks.” I said as I let Michelle go.”

“Hi Mich.” Jess said.

Michelle rolled her eyes.

“Be nice.” I said.

“Whatever.” Michelle replied.

“Mich, I hope we can still be friends.” Jessica said.

“Have you slept with Hunter because the opposite of the answer to that is the answer to your question.”

“It’s not like you two are together.”

“I don’t care. If I slept with Nick you’d be pissed so just save it.” Michelle said as she stormed off the dance floor and went to sit with Jon. I sighed and walked off with Jessica.

Michelle

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After my run in with Hunter and Jessica I went and sat with Jon.

“Are you ok?” he asked.

“No, not at all. Hunter and Jessica both need to leave me the hell alone.” I fumed.

“Just relax. We don’t want to make a scene here.”

I sighed, “I know, I know.”

“Come on, let’s go dance. We won’t let anyone cut in this time.”

I smiled, “Sounds great.”

I so loved dancing with Jonny. Being close to him was always so amazing. It made me feel safe and calm and like nothing else mattered.

We survived the rest of the wedding and went back to my place afterwards.

“Thank you for going with me.” I said as I changed into my pajamas.

“Baby, anything for you. Besides, it was nice to show Hunter I’m with you.” Jon replied

I laughed, “You’re an ass.”

“So I’m told.”

“Come here and let me thank you properly.” I said as I pulled him into my arms.

OK, so it wasn’t the perfect relationship, but it was what I needed now.

Hunter

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After the wedding I took Jessica home.

“This isn’t working is it?” she asked.

“What? Why?” I asked.

“You want her. I see it in your eyes. This isn’t working. We’re not working.”

I sighed, “No, I guess we’re not. I’m so sorry. I didn’t want to hurt you.”

“It’s ok, I understand. Better we know now than later.”

I nodded, “Can we still be friends?”

“I’d like that.” She said.

“Thanks.” I said as I kissed her cheek. She got out of the car and I watched her go inside. As I drove back to my apartment I got lost in thought. Seeing Michelle with Jon was heart breaking for me...but it also made me realize that just maybe it really was over and maybe it was time to accept that. The important thing now was I made it through the day, my brother and Tori were happy and Michelle and I hadn’t ruined their wedding, contrary to what most people

expected. Everything was ok for now and it was time to decide where to go from here.