

**Flip through the next pages for a preview of Book Three  
in the Gezellig series:**

***Curtain Call***

## Prologue

### I Don't Wanna Love Somebody Else

#### *MARCUS*

The loud roar of a car's engine woke me up from my half-sleep. I walked over to the door just in time to see a black Range Rover identical to mine pulling to a stop in front of my driveway. Lee got out of the driver's side, and then went around the car to the passenger side.

When he popped open the door, I got a peek of something white. The dress told me who it was—I gave that to Caitlin last Christmas, a white sleeveless beauty that I found in a thrift shop. She loved that dress, judging by the way her eyes lit up when she saw it. She said one of the things she liked most about the dress was that it didn't cost me as much to buy it. She never liked the idea of my spending too much money on her, so it was a plus that it came from a thrift shop.

I sighed, pushing my hands into the pocket of my sweatpants. Lee stood there for a moment, gazing at Caitlin, who was still in the car seat, unmoving. There was a slight shake of his head, and then he leaned in. When he straightened up, he had Caitlin's ballet flats in one hand. He took a deep breath before he lifted Caitlin off her seat, cradling her in his arms.

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Caitlin moved a bit, wrinkling her nose like she was annoyed at the interruption. Her mouth opened in a small yawn, and then closed again. And then she leaned her head gently on Lee's chest, her annoyance turning into a peaceful smile like she felt she was safe. I didn't know why that pained me—maybe because I hadn't seen her smile like that in a long while, especially when she was with me.

Lee finally saw me when he reached the top of the stairs. He wobbled a bit—Caitlin was not that light—and I opened the door for him and he entered my home, finding the living room with ease. *How many times had he been here?* I wondered, but I kicked that thought out of my head because I promised Caitlin—no, I swore to her—that I would try to not feel jealous of Lee. ('Try' was the operative word, and I failed, numerous times.)

Lee deposited Caitlin gently on the couch, and she moaned, managing to grab Lee's arm just as he was releasing her. "Stay," she muttered, and Lee glanced at me, apology all over his face.

"Cait," he said, turning back to look at her. There was this gentleness in his voice, some sort of caress, that told me he cared for her more than he was letting on. "I don't need to. Marcus is here."

Maybe it was my name or the fact that Lee just turned her down, but Caitlin's eyes flew open. She narrowed them again because of the bright lights in the living room, and I reached over towards the switch, dimming them.

"You're a good guy, Lee," she said, patting Lee's arm.

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There was something in the way that she looked at him—was that hope? And then her eyes were on me, and I couldn't read the emotions in them. The hope was gone; they were empty.

I crossed my arms over my chest, feeling weak as I leaned against the wall. Lee crouched over Caitlin, whispering something to her ear that I didn't quite catch. She shook her head, her mouth forming the word 'no.' Lee smirked, mumbling something—I only managed to catch the word 'stubborn.' He ruffled her hair and then turned to leave.

Lee stopped in front of me, clearing his throat, his eyes still on Caitlin. "She called me to pick her up but I was in the studio. She didn't want me to call you to do it instead. She said you needed some quiet time or something, and she kept saying she needed a happy place. By the time I got to the pub, she was already wasted," he started to explain.

Being with me was one of her happy places. Why did she need to find another one?

I nodded at Lee, and then pushed myself off the wall, hoping I was already strong enough to face this reality.

"I think you and I both know it doesn't take much to get Cait wasted," I said, and Lee nodded, his eyes sad when he looked at me.

"I'm sorry, Marcus," Lee said softly, and I wondered what he was apologizing for—that my relationship was already crumbling in front of my eyes, or that he was the one that

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my girlfriend, the love of my life, was turning to instead of me.

Or that he was the root of most of our fights.

“It’s cool, mate. Thanks for taking care of her,” I said as formally as I could, even though it wasn’t cool. It was never cool to do *this* to a relationship. Lee gave me a pat on the shoulder before walking away from me.

“Lee,” I called after him. His hand was already on the doorknob, and he stopped.

“Have I lost her already?” I asked, and he faced me slowly, his face showing all the thoughts going through his head.

Lee sighed heavily, shaking his head. “There’s never an easy way—” he cut himself off. I watched his struggle, to get out the words, and then he took a deep breath. He raised his gray eyes to look into mine, and I could see the conviction in them.

I could hear it, too, in his voice, when he said, “Yes. I think you have.”

Lee turned away before I could even say anything, and I placed my head in my hands, resigning to my fate. He left, his car revving loudly in his wake, and I wanted to disappear.

One last deep breath, and then I turned back to the living room, surprised to see Caitlin seated, hands folded on her lap. She looked so beautiful, her eyes wide open despite

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being drunk, and she gazed at me, in the same way she used to look at me, like I was the best thing she has ever seen.

“We have to talk.”

CAITLIN

“Have I lost her already?”

I strained my ear as I sat up, waiting to hear Lee’s answer. He, of all people, knew what I kept denying to myself. After all, a relationship ends before it was actually over, and I was still in the process of figuring out when in the ten months with Marcus was the death certificate to our relationship got signed. We survived three years of being best friends—how come we barely scraped past a year as boyfriend and girlfriend?

“There’s never an easy way—” I heard Lee begin, the struggle evident in his voice. He paused, and then said, with more conviction, “Yes. I think you have.”

I fixed myself, moving slightly to see Marcus’ reaction. He was hidden behind the wall, but in my mind’s eye, I could imagine him: he would have placed his head in his hands, like he was washing it under water.

He took a deep breath, and I made a quiet one of my own, folding my hands on my lap as I waited for him to come around.

When he did, Marcus gazed at me, finally looking at me like the way he used to a long time ago. He was wearing his “*don’t give a f\*ck*” shirt, which wasn’t true because Marcus always gave a damn about everything.

I wanted to back out, to say we would be okay, but I know I would be lying if I did.

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And I didn't want to lie anymore.

"We have to talk."

His shoulders sagged at those words. He exhaled loudly, walking over to me. He sat on the center table in front of me. "Right now?"

I nodded. "I'm not that drunk anymore, Marcus. I know what I'm doing." I didn't say that I probably wouldn't have the courage to do this if I did not have some liquid courage.

Marcus nodded, and then he reached over. I let him hold my hands in his, our fingers intertwining. His thumb gently rubbed against the tattoos on my wrist—his initials and the key to the heart tattoo on his chest.

"I know what you're going to say, and I want to stop you, but I don't think I can," Marcus admitted.

I forced myself to look into his eyes, the same set of eyes I loved and wanted to wake up to every morning for the rest of my life...until things changed.

"This is not working for me anymore."

"I know."

"It's not because of Lee."

He paused. His Adam's apple bobbed up and down his throat, his jaw slack. For a moment I thought he was going to let it slip, but—

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“Really? It isn’t because of him?”

I met the anger in his eyes with my own. “Yes, it’s not.”

He pulled his hands away from mine. “I need to understand this. Because believe me—he’s the first reason I can think of why you want to break up with me.”

I scoffed at him. “Why, coz we’ve been fighting about him for months already and—”

“Yes!” he shouted. “Wasn’t he the beginning of all our troubles, Caitlin?”

I smiled bitterly. “No, not really,” I said, my voice also rising. “The beginning of all our troubles, Marcus, was you. You and your habit of making promises you can’t frigging keep.”

Marcus narrowed his eyes at me. He stood up, starting to pace. He ran his hands through his hair, as he croaked, “Promises.”

I stood up, grabbing his arm to stop him from moving. “Yes. Promises,” I spat. “Plural. One was that you’d stay here more often. In London. You know, the place where you asked me to move to?”

“Caitlin—”

“No!” I cut him off. “You said you’d ask your management for some time off. That you guys have been working your asses off for *years* and that maybe it’s time to finally rest,

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you know? But what happened? You guys spurted out a new album, and you've signed on for another tour."

Marcus sighed, and when he looked at me, his eyes were cold. "You're supposed to be able to understand these things. Cait, you've been my best friend for years, and you knew what you were getting into—"

"I didn't, Marcus! When I moved here to be with you, I didn't. I took a risk, all because I love you. And I held on to that, because that was the only thing that I know at that time. That I love you, and you love me, and wasn't that all we needed?"

I waited for Marcus to react but he wouldn't even look at me. The tears in my eyes already threatened to fall, but I parried them with a sharp shake of my head.

I plowed on. "I wasn't sure how we're going to work out—*if* we're going to work out—but I took that risk, because loving you, Marcus, became as easy as breathing. Until it became suffocating. Making this relationship work is just so goddamn hard."

"Okay," Marcus said, and I could almost see the gears turning in his head. When he spoke, I saw the resolve in his eyes—his arguments were already formed, ammunition ready.

"I get it. I didn't take time off as I promised. And whenever you come to visit me on tour, it wasn't the quality time that you expected. I didn't take time off as I promised. I didn't teach you how to drive the car I gave you when I said I

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would. I let you have my big house when it was virtually just you living here. I didn't have the patience for your cooking and I didn't give you a chance when you said you were getting better. I might have a hundred other faults that I can enumerate. So sure, I might have slipped a bit on being the good boyfriend," he rattled off. "But don't you think you're as much as at fault here as I am? It takes two for a relationship to work; it takes two for it to fail, Caitlin."

I let out a shaky breath. "What are you saying?"

"Why is there a Lee, Caitlin? There shouldn't be a Lee."

I groaned. Here we go again. "There is a Lee, because you're not here—"

"Which shouldn't be the bloody case, Caitlin! I'm your boyfriend! I'm the one you're supposed to need. I'm the one you're supposed to trust. I'm the one you're supposed to love!"

"Dammit, Marcus, *I love you*, but how? When you're not even here? When you're not even trying as hard you did when we were just best friends or when we were in that stupid in-between?" I spat back.

Marcus looked at me exasperatedly. "Your love, Caitlin, is so conditional."

I wiped the angry tears that fell from my eyes, looking at him incredulously. "Condition—what?"

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“All I could hear is that you’ll only love me if I’m with you. If I’m *here* with you. And if I’m not...” His voice trailed, and I tried to absorb his words.

“And if you’re not, I still do love you. Even when I think it won’t ever be enough,” I whispered back after a few moments. “You want the truth, Marcus?”

“YES,” he exhaled. “I always want the truth from you.”

I stepped up to Marcus, holding his gaze. “Yes, Lee is the reason why we’re breaking up.”

Marcus grunted, but he averted his eyes. I could see the tears forming in them, and I continued. “It isn’t because I love Lee. Believe me, I don’t.”

“Then why?” he asked, his voice breaking.

“Because he showed me the life I wanted to have, Marcus. The alternative life. The life I can’t have with you as long as you’re in Gezellig,” I said with a heavy sigh. “He showed me what you and I would have been if I wasn’t playing second fiddle to your career and your fans. And he made me see who I used to be when I wasn’t *just* Marcus Wayans’ girlfriend.”

A tear fell from his eyes. “S-so you’re s-saying—” he paused, gathering his composure. He cleared his throat. “You’re saying you want out because this isn’t the life that you wanted.”

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“At this point, yes, it’s not the life I want.” I held his face in my hands, wiping his tears.

“You don’t love who I am.”

It wasn’t a question, but I answered anyway. “I love who you are, Marcus, even the parts that I don’t like. I just don’t love what you do anymore. It’s too much.”

“But what I do is who I am, Cait.”

“It’s not, Marcus. You’re still *you*. Your job is not you. You’re still this guy who is charismatic and friendly. The guy who’d send dozens of pizzas to homeless people or send flowers to an old lady to make her smile. You’re still the guy who’d sit next to a lonely girl and talk her out of her misery. You see everyone, Marcus, even the littlest of people, and you make people feel good about themselves. That’s who you are. That’s the guy I love. It’s not the Gezellig frontman.”

Marcus stepped away from me, turning so that I couldn’t see his face. His shoulders shook as he sobbed, but I didn’t offer comfort.

“And you don’t like who you turned into when you were my girlfriend.”

I bit my lip to stop myself from speaking, but Marcus caught my hesitation.

“You owe me the truth, Cait,” he pressed. With a loud exhale, I said, “Yes.”

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Marcus faced me, staring at me. I stared back, wondering what he was thinking. I used to be able to read Marcus easily, but the past few months, it was a hit and miss.

His emerald eyes connected with my brown ones. Was he trying to figure out what changed in me when I became his girlfriend? His eyes went down to my lips, his brows in a deep frown. Did he finally see what took me months to realize?

And then after what felt like hours, he gazed into my eyes again, sadness filling them.

And I knew that he knew. That he figured it out.

“I want another truth,” Marcus said, his voice gruff.

“Yeah?”

“Will we still be friends?”

I stopped, not knowing what to say. Marcus waited, staring at me, and I said finally, “I don’t know how we can move past this.”

“That’s bullshit.”

I raised an eyebrow. “I can move past this, Caitlin. With you holding my job against me. I can move past that. Or that you changed for the worse because of our relationship. But what I can’t move past is the fact that you look like you’ve given up on our relationship, and then you’re giving

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up on our friendship, too,” he said, the fight already out of his voice.

“You tell me if you’re still going to be my best friend. If after all this craziness dies down and I can finally be the proper boyfriend to you that you need, you’ll come back to me. That even if I let you go right now, you’d still be in my life. That we would still be friends, because that’s how we started, and that’s how we’re going to be. Because I can help you get yourself back again, Cait—”

“Marcus—”

“Caitlin, please. I can accept that I failed you as a boyfriend, that I wasn’t keeping my end of the promise we made, but what I wouldn’t accept is that I’m losing you completely. You’re my best friend.”

“I’m not the same person I was—”

“You’re still my Caitlin, B. Please. Please say—”

A sob escaped his lips, and I shook my head. I reached behind my neck, removing the latch of my necklace. I caught the platinum ring lined with turquoise gems as it fell on my palm, cold, and then I held it out in front of me.

He stopped, looking at the ring and then at me, disbelief in his eyes. “I can’t, not yet. I need some time to be your friend again, Marcus,” I whispered, and I reached for his hand, aiming to deposit the ring on his palm, but what he did was close my palm over the ring instead. I stared at his

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hand over mine, his ring identical to mine like a bad reminder.

“No,” Marcus said firmly, his eyes angry. “I’m already allowing you to walk away from this relationship; I am not letting you go as my best friend as well!”

He forced my hand open, took the ring and then slid it into my left ring finger, still a perfect fit. “You fight for this friendship, Caitlin,” he said, seething. “You fight for *me*, even just as your best friend, because I’m bloody hell going to fight to keep you in my life.”

I swallowed my sob, meeting his fiery gaze, not speaking.

“Damn it, Caitlin!” Marcus yelled, and I just drew back, taking my hand from his. I grabbed his face, cupping it in my hands, and I moved closer—so close that he thought I was going to kiss him.

It worked—he fell silent.

“I didn’t say I didn’t want to be friends with you. I just said I needed time to work things out. I need time to think, to be someone you can be friends with again,” I reasoned, and Marcus just sighed.

“A week. That’s all I’m going to give you. After that, we go back to the way we used to—before we were boyfriend-girlfriend,” he said firmly. “We’re going to save this friendship, because right now it’s all we’ve got. It’s all I’ve got with you.”

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I released his face, pulling him back to the couch. At first we just sat apart, but he reached out for me after a while. I didn't move, so he was the one who moved, placing his head on my lap. He turned away so I couldn't see his face, but the way his shoulders were shaking, I knew he was crying.

I took a deep breath, placing my fingers in his hair, massaging his scalp. I heard a sob escape Marcus' lips, and I dropped low, gathering him in my arms as I hugged him tightly.

**Uh-oh, no more #TeamMarlin: Gezellig's Marcus Wayans and Caitlin Tan call it quits!**

Carina Simmons, *Insider*

May 20, 2014

Marcus Wayans and Caitlin Tan “shined bright then burned too fast” – that was how one of Wayans’ closest friends described the power couple’s relationship a few weeks ago, adding fuel to the fire that people have been seeing in the past month.

Today, the fire was put out as Gezellig’s representative confirmed that Wayans, 24, and Tan, 28, have parted ways after ten months together.

In a statement released exclusively to *Insider*, Wayans said that while the split was amicable, it was ‘one of the hardest decisions’ that either of them had to make. He also added that he and Tan were working things out to save their friendship.

Best friends for three years prior to being in a relationship, the former couple had a whirlwind ten months: Wayans’ rumoured cheating, dealing with his busy schedule, and her adjustment after moving to London for him.

And to top it off were the rumours that Doc Brown’s bassist, Lee Saunders, was wooing Tan. The two had been seen out and about in London the past couple of

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months while Wayans was touring *Love, Panic, and Other Things* with the rest of Gezellig.

Tan and Wayans had previously shot down those rumours, saying that Tan and Saunders were just friends.

Tan could not be reached out for comments.

Read Wayans' statement in full below:

*I love Caitlin, and I always will. The past year with her as my girlfriend has been one of the most fulfilling and learning experiences I've ever had.*

*But some good things come to an end, don't they? Even if we hoped they would last forever.*

*Caitlin and I have parted ways last month. The decision to end the relationship was mutual, despite it being one of the hardest decisions we've ever had to make. I will always treasure Caitlin as one of the most amazing women to be in my life.*

*She will always be my best friend, and I hope you give us the space that we need as we try to fix our friendship.*

*Thank you to everyone who has cheered on and supported our relationship even before we knew we loved each other more than friends.*

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*#TeamMarlin will soldier on; we just have to keep fighting.*

*This time, not for love, but for our friendship.*

*Best, Marcus Wayans*

## Chapter 1: Walk It Off

*Denver in a week. You still game for this?*

I stared at Lila's email on my screen, exhaling slowly. Lorin was copy furnished here, and I knew Lorin won whatever toss coin she and Lila did as to who would follow me up on this overseas trip. My calendar beat them to it—it reminded me this morning: *Double-check if leaves are already filed for Denver... Marcus! <3*—and my first instinct was to want to un-file the leave.

Four: the number of months since Marcus and I broke up.

Three: the number of months since he released the statement regarding the breakup, entrusting the announcement to Carina. It was Marcus' idea, finding it fitting that since Carina had the exclusive on our relationship's start, she should also get the scoop for its demise.

Three: the same number of months that I had endured getting hate from all the Gezers. Even if there wasn't any mention of Lee in Marcus' statement, people connected the dots, with tabloids saying that *he* was the real reason for the breakup. I think it didn't really help my cause that a month after the announcement, I was already spotted out with Lee.

Admittedly, the hate has died down. I had only been getting a handful of Gezers tweeting me that Marcus still has sad

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eyes, and that *that* was my fault. Of course there are still some tweets calling me a whore and a cheater, but on the flipside, there are still some #TeamMarlin shippers that send me hopeful messages that Marcus and I would get back together.

*No pressure, Cait. Sorry. It's all cool if you don't want to go.*

Another email from Lila came in, and I just sighed. Are you sure, Lil? Really? No pressure?

I rolled my eyes, and was about to close my email when I received another email.

\*\*\*

From: Isabella Renner  
To: Caitlin Tan  
15 August 2014 13:53  
**Subject: MISSING YOU! SHOW YOUR FACE, POPPET!**

The subject says it all. I really do. We all do. I know you've got Denver scheduled with Lil and Lore in a week. Please go. If not for Marcus, please come for me and the rest of the gang.

xx, Iz

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“Cait?”

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I minimized the window as Lee popped his head into my study. The easy smile on his face faded quickly when he saw my expression. He rushed towards me, kneeling in front of my swivel chair. He twirled it so we were face-to-face.

I reached towards him, brushing the hair off his forehead. I amused myself for a split-second there, seeing how much Lee and Marcus were alike hair-wise—it was like they are scared of hair stylists, scissors, and even combs.

I kicked that thought out of my head as Lee asked, “What’s wrong?”

I sighed, knowing Lee would want to know even if I didn’t want to say. That was the way it was with Lee. He valued the importance of everything anyone didn’t want to say, because to him, unsaid things were regrets that would weigh you down.

“Before I knew Marcus and I would break up, Lila, Lore, and I planned to visit the boys on tour. That’s next week, at their Denver stop. I’ll be there for three days plus travel—total of a week,” I said slowly.

A thoughtful look crossed Lee’s face. “And you’re thinking if you would push through or not.”

I nodded. “Lila emailed me, asking about it. You’d think Lore would ask me considering we live in the same place, but Lila won the honor,” I said, shaking my head. But then again, Lorin sort of already moved to Nigel’s place already,

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staying there for three days in a week instead of at the flat that we were sharing.

“I got an email from Issa too,” I continued, mentioning one of my close friends who worked with the band and Gezellig’s hair stylist and makeup artist.

“And there’s the issue of Marcus,” Lee supplied.

“Uh-huh.”

I felt his hand on my thigh as he used it as support as he sat on the floor. He looked away, brows furrowed, so I knew he was really giving it some serious thought. I started to play with his hair, and he smiled a small smile. Like Marcus, he liked the scalp massages that I give.

“You haven’t seen him since?” he asked after a long while.

“He’s been on tour, and I know I promised on making this friendship work. And I am failing miserably at that. I just couldn’t...” I paused, sighing heavily. “Look, I shouldn’t be discussing this with you—”

“Cait, I’m your friend. I actually should be worried if you chose *not* to discuss this with me.”

I almost protested. In the past few months, I thought Lee and I had established that he wasn’t *just* a friend to me, but I was still somewhere in the zone of trying to get my foot out of my previous relationship and I couldn’t enter another one. But I knew what Lee meant to me, and he was just

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putting himself in the so-called ‘friendzone’ so as to control his feelings, too.

Lee looked up at me, his eyes intense. “Are you scared to see him again?”

I paused, trying my best to get a read on my feelings, but I knew the answer to it, and I knew Lee has an idea, too. “A bit, yeah. It’s the first time that we’d be seen again after the breakup was announced,” I said. “I’m just a bit hesitant as to how it would affect the interaction. We’re *fine* in principle—we’re good and civil as far as exes go—but in terms of best friends... I’m not sure I could still call him that. I left him hanging. He told me to fight for the friendship and I didn’t.”

“He’s the one who wanted to be friends.”

I smirked. “Hey, I wanted to keep him as a friend, too!” I said, and Lee shrugged.

*Can you ever be just friends with an ex?* With his exes, Lee was just at the hi-hello-back-to-strangers stage, kept at an arm’s length. Marcus had always been friendly with his exes, and I was fine with that until that Tammy incident. Marcus was my first ex and the best friend I ever had, so I never knew how this would run.

I wanted to keep Marcus as my friend, but I was scared that he and I were treading a ground full of landmines where one wrong move would cost us the ‘friendship’ we wanted to save.

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“I know you’ve been trying,” Lee said, gathering my hands in his and blowing into them, just like the night when we saw each other at the trains. “It’s going to be tough, but Marcus means a whole lot to you. I’m going to be here for you.”

“Will you be okay with this? I mean...” I let my voice trail.

*I mean, what?* That Lee was like an almost boyfriend and he was here, pushing me to amend the broken ties that I have with my ex so we could be friends again?

Jesus, was there a rule book somewhere for this? A manual for people who haven’t had any relationships before? Pretty sure some relationship etiquette would say that you shouldn’t be talking about your past to your present because it would ruin some sort of future, right?

When Lee peered at me with those gray orbs, sad and sweet at the same time, I wondered if I was already hurting him. “I’m going to try to be fine with this,” he answered truthfully. That was what I liked about Lee—he was always honest. “But I think I cannot ask you to get rid of Marcus because he’s just...the whole reason you’re here in the first place. He’s just this big part of you.”

I nodded, and I caught his eyes as they lingered on my left wrist, where the key and MJW (Marcus James Wayans) tattoos were.

“You know how much I wish he wasn’t,” I whispered.

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Lee leaned in, kissing the key, his lips gentle like a feather.  
“I don’t think so.”

I opened my mouth to protest, but he already stood up, leaving the study room. I listened, and I could hear the sounds of pots and pans. I drove Lee to cook, which was bad. (He only ever cooked for two reasons: to make other people happy and to release pent up emotions.)

I turned to my laptop, opening the windows again, sending a couple of emails.

\*\*\*

From: Caitlin Tan  
To: Lila Wayans  
Cc: Lorin Perez  
15 August 2014 14:03  
**Subject: RE: Denver**

Yup. Get M (and Nigel) to send us the hotel deets already!  
See you!

Xoxo, Cait

P.S. You need to give me the 411 on you and Lo. And Lore, come home soon, please? We need to talk.

\*\*\*

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From: Caitlin Tan  
To: Isabella Renner  
15 August 2014 14:06  
**Subject: RE: MISSING ZE GANG <3**

Iz! Yep, Denver it is.  
Loads excited. Say hi to Gi for me.  
See you all next week.

Love, Cait

\*\*\*

From: Lila Wayans  
To: Caitlin Tan  
Cc: Lorin Perez  
15 August 2014 14:08  
**Subject: RE: Denver**

Oh whoaaaa I wasn't expecting a positive answer, to be honest! So good that you'll come—but I don't know what you mean by '411' on Laurence.

I'm not bloody dreaming, am I, Cait? You'll come?

Cheers, Lil

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From: Caitlin Tan  
To: Lila Wayans  
Cc: Lorin Perez  
15 August 2014 14:10  
**Subject: RE: Denver**

You can show me this email, Lil, in case I bail out. Plan B is to get Lore to drag me to the airport, haha!

Send my love to Alice, Paolo, and Fox?

\*\*\*

From: Lila Wayans  
To: Caitlin Tan  
Cc: Lorin Perez  
15 August 2014 14:15  
**Subject: RE: Denver**

They send their love. Mum says she wants to see you again soon, okay? No more rain checks!

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CURTAIN CALL  
Uncorrected Preview

From: Lorin Perez  
To: Caitlin Tan  
Cc: Lila Wayans  
15 August 2014 14:16  
**Subject: RE: Denver**

Meanwhile I'm sitting here, thinking a) stop giving us excuses, Lil, we know something's up with you and Lo, b) YAY, YOU'RE COMING, CAITLIN! And then c) how is Lee feeling about this? I don't like the guy, but...

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I sighed, listening again to the sounds of Lee's cooking. He wasn't okay with this, but he felt I needed this.

I glanced at my calendar again, the week in Denver popping out at me unlike before. In the middle of it was a very small Post-it, stuck there quite unassumingly.

“Oh shit.”

I grabbed it and ran out of my study, finding Lee as he was cracking two eggs in a bowl. He looked at me, eyebrow raised, and I showed him the note. “You didn't remind me about this!” I said, panic in my voice. Lee chucked the empty shells in the bin and shrugged.

“I can reschedule,” he said simply, and I stood there in disbelief.

The Post-It was Lee's reminder to me that next week, we would head out to Kent for a camping trip. We would leave on Thursday night and then run through the forest next

CURTAIN CALL  
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morning, and camp out Friday night. He did clear this out of his schedule—the rest of Doc Brown were on a holiday next week, too, their last hurrah before setting out to write and record Album #10.

“No, no,” I said, approaching him, and Lee just stared at me, waiting for me to speak. “Come on, you planned this! And then you’d be off for a month—”

“Caitlin,” Lee cut in patiently, “I can reschedule. We can do the camping trip when I get back.” He plucked the Post-It from my fingers and tossed it into the bin. I watched as it fluttered over the edge, as if it was unable to decide if it would go in or not.

“I can adjust my time on tour with Marcus,” I said, taking my eyes off it. Lee didn’t speak, mixing some bell peppers into the eggs in the bowl. The smell told me he had fried them a bit first—just like how I wanted it.

“And what?” he said after beating the eggs and the bell peppers. “You’ll spend just a day in the States and then fly back?” He shook his head. “You’ll just tire yourself out, Cait, and I don’t want to see you just sleeping through camp. It’s fine.”

Lee started to slice those mushroom buttons rather furiously. “I *can* reschedule,” he repeated. I stared at him, waiting for him to change his mind. In retrospect, I may have been waiting for him to insist on the Kent trip so that I would escape Denver, but Lee wouldn’t give it to me.

**CURTAIN CALL**  
**Uncorrected Preview**

I groaned, tossing my hands in the air in frustration. I headed back to my study, hearing the sizzle of the eggs as he poured it into the pan.

To Denver, we go.