Jhada McKnight

“Ready or not, here I come,” Jacob said.

I started freaking out because I still had yet to find a good hiding space. I scanned the backyard one last time in hopes of finding a good spot when all of a sudden it hit me; the garage door was open as was the trunk to my mom’s car. He’d never find me in there.

I climbed into the trunk as quiet as possible knowing I had to make this quick before he came this way looking for me. My body fit perfectly into the trunk even though it was hard to get in because it was so much taller than me, it was the perfect hiding space. I closed the trunk from the inside slowly hoping not to make it slam and waited for him to try and find me. It was very dark in there but it was a good thing I wasn’t afraid of the dark like all my other friends. Poor kid, he’ll never be able to find me in here. He’ll probably get scared and start crying to mommy because he thinks I ran away or something. I’ll have to climb out the trunk and explain to him that I’m the best hide and seek player ever, so he shouldn’t be surprised if he can’t find me. He’s only 6 anyway. He’s an amateur, a baby, a beginner; he doesn’t have nearly as much as experience as a pro like me, no reason to be upset.

I wondered what a good amount of time would be for me to stay in the trunk to make sure he had given up and I won this round. It was starting to get a bit toasty but it wasn’t too bad, I could last a little longer. I decided to count to 30 and by then he should’ve given up and I will be declared the winner. Once the 30 seconds was up, I started laughing to myself, knowing I had won. It was dark so I couldn’t see where the handle to open the trunk was at so I just had to feel around until I found it. I kept patting around the inside of the trunk but couldn’t find anything. I started thinking maybe it was above me so then I began patting all on the top of the inside of the trunk, still nothing.

That’s when I got scared, if there was no handle on the inside of the trunk how was I going to get out? By then it was really hot and felt like the space inside the trunk was getting smaller and smaller. I started crying and banging on the trunk hoping Jacob or anyone could hear me and would come get me out.

As I sat on the ground in the stopped elevator the memory came rushing back to me, from that day forward I had been extremely claustrophobic and even the thought of being in an enclosed space for too long made me panic.

The lady across me seemed really concerned about me but I tried my best to stay calm and look calm, I didn’t want this random lady to see me having a panic attack.

“Hey, are you okay? You’re looking really sick.” She said.

“I’m fine.” Unfortunately, my voice quivered when I answered. She gave a bit of chuckle which pissed me off as if she was making fun of me for being scared. “Is something funny?”

“Other than the fact that you are obviously not okay and you’re trying very hard to hide it, no.”

I turned away; I honestly didn't care enough to argue with this lady. I was more worried about when they would get the elevator fixed and I would be able to breathe fresh air.

“Listen I’m sorry, I didn’t mean to come off so sarcastic. If we’re going to be stuck in this elevator I feel like we should probably not, ya know, hate each other. My name is Lindsey, you?”

I didn't know if I should tell her my real name because I read a book once about these people that met somewhere and the girl gave the guy her full name and number and after that the dude stalked her for like 2 years. She eventually got a restraining order but he got angry and then found her and killed her. Lindsey seemed nice though disregarding her sarcastic comment from earlier and she also looked kind of familiar so I figured it would be okay.

“I’m Jasmine, nice to meet you.” She smiled and I noticed she had really straight teeth that were very white giving her a nice smile.

“You have a very pretty smile,” I told her.

“Why thank you, I was thinking the same about you actually but I didn’t know if it would be too weird for me to say considering I just met you and do to the cause of us meeting is because of a stopped elevator.”

I had actually kind of forgotten that we were trapped inside of the elevator because Linsey had distracted my mind. She kept looking at me a little weirdly and something about her gave me a weird feeling but I figured it was probably just me being silly. Either way I didn't care because she was distracting me enough that--somehow--I wasn't having a panic attack.

“Ya know you seem really familiar for some reason, have I seen you before? Oh, maybe at church, I feel like I’ve seen you at my church before.” She chuckled a little,

“Um no probably not, I'm not a big church person, I feel like church isn't really meant for me if ya know what I mean.”

“Church can be for everyone you’ve probably just gone to the wrong churches. Everyone is welcome to my church. Trust me.” She gave me the weird questioning look again and raised her eyebrow.

I didn't know what she meant by that so I just smiled and shook my head yes. I was a really sheltered kid; 2 parents, one younger brother, and one older sister. I went to a private school because mom wanted nothing but the best for us. Dad was a county police officer, Mom was a teacher at my school and also the children’s Sunday school teacher at my church that we faithfully attended, and as a 20 year old college student I still faithfully attend.

All of a sudden the elevator shook and started making a buzzing noise snapping me back to the reality of me being stuck inside of an elevator. I started breathing really heavy and shaking, I could feel the panic attack coming on. “What’s going on?  What’s that noise?”

“I don’t know they’ve probably come to fix the elevators finally and that’s what all those noises are coming from. Oh no what's wrong, are you okay?”

Tears started coming out my eyes, “I have really bad claustrophobia, and I guess it just hit me that we’re stuck in here. Don’t worry about me I'm just scared.”

“Just breathe it’ll be okay I’m sure they're fixing it right now and we’ll be out of here in no time.” She scooted over beside me and hugged me from the side; the she began to rub my back as any good friend would do to another friend that is upset.

It helped me to stop shaking so bad and crying, I was still breathing heavy but I felt better. I had unconsciously slouched over as I was crying so I sat up straighter.

Turning towards Lindsey, I said, “Thank you so much, you’re very nice. I bet all your friends are happy to have someone as kind as you around.”

She grabbed my hand with her free one because one of her arms was still wrapped around my back, but I couldn't really figure out why that was necessary. It was quite a weird position and made me a bit uncomfortable but I figured she may have just been a touchy person, so I let it go.

“It’s no problem at all, I’m always willing to lend a helping hand,” she gave my hand a squeeze.

It was quiet for a while because I didn’t really know what to say and I started to feel very uncomfortable so I just gave her an uneasy smile. She smiled back at me and started leaning towards me. I didn't know what she was doing until her eyes closed and her face was a few inches away from mine.

She tilted her head and planted her lips on mine.

I jumped back frantically grabbing my purse and the keychain on the side of it. I didn’t know what to do; I was confused and still in a panic from the whole being stuck in an elevator situation, so I opened up my mini can of pepper spray and sprayed her.

She starting screaming, ‘’Oh my God,” and, “What the Hell,” over and over.

Just as I began to remember that this elevator is a very enclosed space, my own eyes started to burn.

My plan had backfired.

Not that I really had a plan it was more of just panic from this girl I barely knew kissing me. Lindsey started coughing and patting her way along the ground. Just as I had backed myself in the corner hoping she wouldn’t find me, the elevator door opened. There was a plethora of people waiting for us outside the elevator when it opened and they all seemed very shocked to see us in the state we were in. I grabbed my bag off the floor and hurried out the elevator and straight for the door. My eyes were still burning and I could barely see but I turned around long enough to blurredly see her giving me the middle finger and hear her yell, “F you,” but she certainly used the actual word.

I felt bad, but my eyes were hurting as well and that was my first time ever meeting a gay person. I guess it could’ve gone better, but it also could’ve gone a lot worse.