Happy/Sad

By

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Thank you, and thanks for reading!
INT. ALEX CAR

Lauren, a beautiful girl, is staring out the car window, looking perfectly content with life. Ominous, but happy music plays. She turns and smiles to look at Alex, the driver of the car.

LAUREN
What?

Flash to the present. It was a memory. Alex is in the same car, but obviously very unhappy. He shuts off the engine, grabs a bag from the back, and exits the car.

EXT. BRADEN HOUSE

Alex exits his car and walks up to Braden’s house. Braden opens the door. He’s a lanky looking boy who’s happy to see his friend.

BRADEN
Hey.

ALEX
Hey.

Braden holds the door open, and they both enter.

INT. BRADEN’S HOUSE

The house is an old farmhouse, partially under construction.

ALEX
So.

BRADEN
So.

ALEX
This is where you live?

BRADEN
For a little longer. Then it’s off to USC.

ALEX
How long?

BRADEN
Tomorrow.

(CONTINUED)
ALEX
Wow. That’s ah- Soon...

BRADEN
Yeah.

They stare at each other awkwardly.

BRADEN
Alright, so.

Braden opens his bedroom door. Things are semi-packed. His cats are on his bed.

BRADEN
Here’s where the magic happens.

ALEX
You’ve got a sword?

BRADEN
Yeah. It was a gift.

ALEX
Why have I never been to your house before?

He swings the sword and knocks over something. Braden sees his cats.

BRADEN
Cats, Alex. Alex, Cats.

ALEX
Hi Cats.

Braden stares at him for a second.

BRADEN
How’re you doing?

ALEX
Fine. Why?

BRADEN
I don’t know.

LATER
They’re both eating in the kitchen.
ALEX
Dude, where’s your mom?

BRADEN
I don’t know, praying? She left money for pizza.

There’s 46 cents on the counter.

ALEX
Don’t you have a job?

BRADEN
And an elbow. Mint condition. Never left it’s pristine skin covering. Funny story about elbows, I was exploring this subreddit the other day, and I came across this thing about a guy who didn’t brush his teeth for a year...

While Braden prattles on, Alex is seen staring intently at a bottle of Tylenol, completely ignoring Braden. Braden sees what he’s zoned out.

BRADEN
Hey, fuck this place.

ALEX
What?

BRADEN
We’re going out! Tearing up the town! Lock up your daughters!

ALEX
Are you on speed?

INT. BRADEN’S CAR

They both get in the car.

ALEX
Where are we going?

BRADEN
I don’t know.

MONTAGE

The boys drive around town. They get food, look at a bridge, and do other random things.
EXT. PARK

Lauren is swinging. She see’s Alex staring at her.

LAUREN
What?

The memory ends, and Alex is swinging on a swing. Alone.

ALEX
[Realizing something] Holy shit.

Braden is spinning fast on a tire swing.

BRADEN
What?

ALEX
We’re going to be adults soon.

Braden slowly stops spinning.

ALEX
We’re going to be out from under our parent’s thumb. I can buy cigarettes. We can vote!

BRADEN
And go to strip clubs.

ALEX
Yes, the quintessential transition into adulthood. Getting into a nudey bar without the need of a parental chaperon.

BRADEN
Wait, did you go to strip club with your dad?

ALEX
Of course not. It was my mom.

Braden leaves his tire swing and goes over to Alex.

BRADEN
Damn.

ALEX
What?
BRADEN
I’m going to college.

ALEX
Yeah. You are.

They sit in silence for a moment.

ALEX
If you could tell your younger self anything, what would you say?

BRADEN
[considers] Don’t take Pre-Calc.

They both laugh.

BRADEN
You?

Flash to a bathtub full of water.

ALEX
Enjoy the little things.

BRADEN
Do you realize that we’ve spent our entire lives being told what to do?

ALEX
What? You think that because your mom isn’t right behind you, reminding you to breathe, that you’ll forget to wipe or something?

BRADEN
No, asshole. Just that... I’m almost free.

Flash to Lauren in the car.

BRADEN
And, it terrifies me. I mean, I’m leaving. For the last eighteen years, this little slice of shit has been my whole world. And now...

ALEX
The good thing about growing up, is that it forces you out of your own anonymity. You’ve gotten so used to the way this world turns that if you don’t leave, you’ll never stop following it.
CONTINUED:

BRADEN
We’ve.

ALEX
What?

BRADEN
You said You’ve gotten so used to it.

ALEX
Yeah.

BRADEN
You’re not leaving?

Flash to Lauren.

ALEX
I was supposed to start classes two weeks ago. When I told them what happened, they gave me a month. I told them to fuck off.

BRADEN
Do you still miss her?

ALEX
Every day.

Alex’s eyes tear up.

BRADEN
You know it isn’t your fault. There’s nothing you could’ve done. Nobody knew what she was going through. Not eve-

ALEX
I tried to kill myself.

BRADEN
What?

ALEX
Two years ago. I took a bottle of pills, I got in a bath, and I tried to kill myself.

BRADEN
Alex. Why didn’t you tell me?

(CONTINUED)
ALEX
Because you didn’t know! You
couldn’t see that something was
wrong. Not you, not my parents, not
the fucking counselor, nobody knew,
except for her. She felt something
off that day. She came to the
house, she made me puke them up,
she hid it from everyone so I
wouldn’t be committed. She knew.
But I didn’t. I didn’t know. I
should’ve known.

Alex breaks down.

BRADEN
Alex-

ALEX
No! Don’t you dare tell me it
wasn’t my fault. She literally
pulled me from the brink of death,
fixed what was broken inside, and
then kicked me forward so I
wouldn’t let myself fall again. She
is the reason I’m alive, and I’m
the reason she’s dead.

Braden holds his friend as months of pent up emotion pours
out of Alex. Right as Alex starts to calm down, Braden
speaks again.

BRADEN
She called me that night.

ALEX
What?

BRADEN
Right before she did it, she called
me. She said that you she couldn’t
talk to you, because you’d come
over, and she didn’t want you to
see it, but she didn’t want you to
blame yourself.

PAST

Flashes of Lauren and Alex fighting. Alex walks out. Lauren
cries into a journal with SLUT and FAT written all over it.
Lauren approaching a gun.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: 8.

LAUREN V.O.
All couples fight. Some breakup.
But that’s not why I’m doing this.
A whole can’t exist if half of it is broken. I am unfixable.

The line ends. Braden, halfway dressed and in a rush, appears shocked. He gets in his car and drives fast. Lauren grabs the gun, and slowly brings it up to her mouth. A heavy knock is heard on the door.

BRADEN
Lauren!

Lauren, crying, slowly backs into her basement.

BRADEN
You are loved, Lauren! Nothing is broken.

A shot rings out.

EXT. PARK
Alex is sitting, stunned.

BRADEN
I’m sorry-

ALEX
Let’s go back to the house. It’s almost dawn.

INT. BRADEN’S CAR
They drive in silence. Alex stares out the window.

ALEX
You’re going to be fine.

BRADEN
What?

ALEX
In college. You’ll be fine. Whatever you think will go wrong probably will, but you’ll survive. It’s what people like you do. When shit gets thrown at you, you don’t shut down. You wake up, wipe the corn off your face, and carry on.

(CONTINUED)
Thanks.

They pull into Braden’s driveway.

I should have told you earlier.

No, you shouldn’t have. If you did, I would’ve gone right back to where I was two years ago. But this time without her to pull me out of the water.

They start to get out.

For what it’s worth, I’m glad you didn’t die.

Me too.

EXT. BRADEN’S HOUSE

Braden climbs up the steps to his house, but Alex doesn’t follow.

You coming?

I think... I think we’ve got to do this next part on our own.

Yeah.

They stare at each other for a moment.

So, is this the part where we hug, and get all bromancy?

I mean...

They both stick out their hands and shake. They turn away from each other for a second.
BOTH
Fuck it.

They hug. In a bro way. Alex goes back to his car, Braden climbs up his steps.

ALEX
Thank you.

BRADEN
For what.

ALEX
Saying what I couldn’t.

Alex gets in his car and drives away, Braden enters the house. The sunrise is just about to crest over a hill, when a remixed version of Churchill’s "Happy/Sad" plays, and the credits roll.

END