# First Touch of Kindness

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*Sometimes that annoying bug-eyed weirdo....*

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It wasn't the first time I'd been kicked out. My latest "family" wasn't really different than the last couple that I'd been sent to. Same old story, I lived in peace for about a week then about a month of fighting and then I'd do something stupid, the police bring me home and thrown out, but they still tell all their rich country club friends about housing a poor troubled foster child, and how I "changed their lives".

Oh the idiocy of deranged suburban social statuses. It was never really about me, it was all about outdoing their fellow "good doer" and foster kids tend to hit the top of the philanthropy charts. I never knew my mom, and because she was a teenage crack whore, I've lived my entire seventeen years like the ugly puppy in the pound, that no one has the heart to put out of it's misery.

Lush green hills rolled by outside my window. My face was in a blank stare, I stopped crying over foster families, I stop caring where I was, I would be an outsider wherever I went. The social worker's car smelled like old granny perfume, the fake leather seats were awkward and squeaked when I moved my left leg. The grouchy man looked at me and sighed, keeping a steady course on the straight road ahead of me, stroking what was left of his greying hair, muttering something about a miscreant.

My new foster "parents" were a couple by the name of Roy and Mary. They had a daughter about fourteen years old. Her name was Kara. They lived smack in the middle of suburbia, my hell away from home. Whatever. I wouldn't be here long. I didn't try to put on a happy face for them. I wasn't going to pretend to be a good kid, I was going to be straight up, show 'em what they were getting themselves into.

I headed to school with a cigarette in hand, puffing out the last few breaths before I walked on campus. I didn't plan on making any friends. I didn't have any. I lost touch with the few I made in grade school, and never stayed any place long enough to invest in new ones. It didn't bother me though. Everyone either feared me, or felt sorry for me. Both were fine.

I kept the same blank expression on by face, all day, trying to ignore all the hype about the "new chick" and the little whispers of "foster child" or "bad egg" or whatever the hell else the local neighborhood sluts liked to gossip about. The social workers convinced me that I needed to take charge! Have responsibility! So I got a job at a coffee place down the street from school. I hated every minute of it. I have no idea why they hired a juvenile delinquent like me. But it made everyone shut up, and gave me less time to plot people's painful deaths.

"Hi again," I heard a voice directed at me. I looked up from the coffee I was making, to find a good looking man, in his mid-twenties maybe, smiling at me. I didn't recognize him. I looked at him weird, hoping he'd find his error that he had addressed the wrong girl. He didn't, he smiled wide instead. "Don't be like that, Jordan," he laughed, flashing me a glimpse of his beautiful white teeth. I looked down, there was no name tag anywhere on my shirt. "I know your name, darling," he said softly.

"Do I know you?" I was puzzled. But then it hit me. "Double mocha latté guy, I remember you," I replied to my own comment. He smiled really wide, offering a hand. I'd seen him every day for the last four months. He'd smiled and said "thank you milady" every time I handed him his coffee. Oddball.

"Nice to finally speak to you, I'm Brycen. Call me Bryce."

"Nice to meet you," I shook his hand, not at all interested. He had jet black hair that stuck out every which way, and big huge blue eyes, the color of the sky, just before a sunset starts, a kind of deep-light blue. Very odd. He was tall, and lean, wearing skinny jeans, from the woman's department judging by the style of the back pockets.

It was a slow day in March I believe it was, he decided to make it slower by forcing unwanted socialization on me. He asked a lot of weird questions. I ignored majority of them, shooting him dark looks whenever I could.

"Ah, an empty hand," he motioned to my ringless left hand.

"Uhm...yeah," I started to groan. I knew what was coming next.

"Means no one has legal claim on you," he said with a twinkle in his eye. "Have dinner with me."

It wasn't really a question. I looked up from the counter I was staring at and saw how the humor had left his eyes. They were deep and serious. Last thing in the world I wanted. "No thanks," I replied and looked back down at the coffee I was making.

"Oh come on, don't be shy," he leaned over the counter, his obnoxious rainbow pony bead bracelets

clattered on the hardwood.

"To be honest I thought you were gay all this time," I retorted. He smiled and laughed a hearty laugh.

"Not at all," he said with meaning behind it. I stared at him, hoping maybe if I glared at him enough he'd be scared and run away. He didn't. I rejected him six more times before my shift was over.

I dragged myself to work the next day, feet dragging, grumbling to myself, upset with the god damn world, when I spotted Mr. Desperate sitting contently at a table closest to the counter. I moaned when he waved at me and tried to ignore him. He sat in the coffee shop every day for a whole week, three hours a day, that's twenty-one hours!It was pretty creepy but what could I do? He never did anything wrong enough to bust him. He never asked for my number, stared at my boobs or ever tried to touch me. He just smiled at me and kept talking, even though I never listened and never answered.

A week and a half after his first little debut he got the courage up to ask me out again.

"At least take a walk with me, if you won't talk to me, just a friendly one," he finally pleaded.

I rolled my eyes and sucked in a breath. "Will you shut up and go away if I go?"

"Most likely yes."

"You've got yourself a deal."

He smiled hugely and sat back down. I guess he wanted me to go on the "walk" as soon as I was done.

"Alright bug-eyes let's go for a walk," I retorted to him as soon as my shift was over. I was tired, greasy and sweaty but I didn't give a shit. I was actually hoping that'd repulse him enough to want to leave me alone. I didn't have much hope. He grabbed the door in front of me, holding it open as I trudged through it, my worn out old converse making a slapping sound at the end of the obnoxious linoleum floor as we walked out.

"The park is only a block from here," he pointed out, cheerily.

"Whatever," I dismissed it, and walked, a step ahead of him, annoyed and wanting to go 'home'. He quickened his pace so he was even with me, making me groan, cause my legs were obviously a lot shorter than his.

"You're new around here," he stated.

"Are you stalking me or something?" I glared at him, no humor intended.

"No, I just asked your manager."

"Hmph."

"Where are you from?"

"Chicago."

"How did you end up here?" he asked, blue eyes questioning me.

"Look, why does it matter so much?"

"Why are you so defensive? I was only asking, Jordan."

I glared at him, and kept walking, ignoring him as much as I could.

"Can I buy you an ice cream?" he nodded towards the ice cream stand.

"No," I replied, annoyed again.

"Watching the weight? You don't need to, you're beautiful, honey."

I stopped and stared at him, mouth scrunched in an effort not to scream profanity while kids were around.

"What the *hell* is your problem? Don't you have other seventeen year old girls to stalk?" I asked. This only made him smile. I wanted to smack the stupid smile from his stupid face, make him bleed all over the ground.

"Two chocolate ice creams," he told the cart guy. He scooped two out and handed them to Bryce. He set some bills on the cart and turned to me, as if telling me to lead the way. I walked down the dirt path, through the middle of the park, arms crossed over my tight black jacket. I found a bench and plopped down. I was sure stalker man had a bazillion creepy questions for me.

I decided to humor him before he went home and cried to his cat in a lonely, empty apartment that I

imagined he lived in. He handed me a cone, I didn't dare eat it. I half suspected he drugged it.

"Why do you always dress like that?" he motioned to my jeans with rips and chains and black paint splattered on them, ratty old converse, and a shirt from a band I'd never heard of, and dark, dark eye liner.

"Because I like it," I retorted. The truth.

"Is it real?" he pointed to his nose. I felt my own. Oh yeah, I forgot about my nose ring.

"Yes," I lied.

"Didn't that hurt like hell?"

"Why do you care?" I avoided his eyes, staring straight on ahead.

"Because it looks like it would really hurt."

"Why do you care?" I asked once again.

"No, I uh, I'm just curious. Stop being so defensive. I only want to chat with you."

I looked at him for a long moment and replied, using as much ice in my voice as I could. "What if I don't want to 'chat'?"

"Then you'd get up and leave," he said quietly.

That's exactly what I did.

Days went by, with no sign of stalker man. I was relieved to have my shift in peace, making coffee for all the yuppies and rich snobs that wandered in, most of which couldn't control their own lives, so they ordered coffee with a longer named than my Spanish teacher's, to feel like they can accomplish something. Sad lives.

It wasn't until maybe two, three weeks later I started to feel a tiny pang of regret, and maybe loneliness. The man bothered me. His huge eyes and huger smile made me angry.. .so why did I feel horrible inside? Shouldn't I have been happy he was gone?

I skipped school. I slumped to work. I didn't smile. I didn't pretend to be polite. It pissed off manager,

but no one else had no life like I did to work her three hour shifts everyday.

It was a three weeks since the day I left him in the park. I knew I'd never see him again, but I still wanted to make things right. "Jord," my manager called. I went into her office, she handed me a small blue envelope with my name on it. She said she didn't know where it came from. I went back to the counter, and opened it curiously.

"Such a beautiful girl shouldn't wear such a sad face," was all it said. I was stunned.

Two days later, I got called down to the office at school, to find someone had left brownies with my name on them, no one knew who did it.

I was on my way home, and something caught my eye as I was walking. It was graffiti on an old building. "Jordan Jamie Ross, you are so beautiful, in every way," in his curvy, scratchy handwriting. It looked new, I didn't see it earlier that day, so it must have been recent. My hands shook as they dug for a sharpie in my backpack.

"I miss you," was all I could come up with.

I kept getting notes and surprises all over the place. I was beginning to lose my mind at the fact that I couldn't contact him. I knew nothing about him, not even his last name. There was no way I could find him. I was beginning to give up, when a thought suddenly occurred to me.

I dashed to the stock room and started digging through old receipts from months ago, until I found March, and the day I met him. I almost cried when I found one with his name, and signature. I grabbed it, shoved the box back in place and ran home, a bit early, I didn't care.

I jumped on the Internet and tried to search for a Brycen Caros, on Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, absolutely everywhere.

No luck, none were him. I sighed and sunk down in my computer chair, defeated and sorrowful, and let a tear fall for the first time in six years.

I went to school, more irritable and depressed than normal. I don't know why. I thought for sure I hated his guts... but he left and empty void when he left.

I got a new lab partner that day. That really wouldn't be important at all to my life, except that, his name was Justin Caros. My heart leaped.

"Justin," I addressed him, barely able to contain my joy, he looked shocked I spoke to him. "Do you have a brother names Brycen?"

He looked at me funny for a long moment, and replied, "No."

My heart sank, shot through again. "I have a cousin though," he replied thoughtfully.

"How old is he?" I started to get really excited.

"Twenty," her replied hesitantly. I wanted to scream!

"He lives around here?"

"Yeah, you know him?"

"Yeah, do you have his number? I desperately need to get a hold of him, it's so urgent," I pleaded. He gave me a stranger look.

"I don't have it. But I'm going to see him tomorrow, I can get it."

"Would you tell him that Jordan is trying to get a hold of him? And that she's sorry?"

He nodded, still shocked.

To my luck Justin wasn't at school the whole next week. Conveniently down with the flu, apparently. I was dying to know! I ached in my heart and in my mind to see Bryce. I wanted to kiss him and touch him and hold him! I'd do anything. I was losing my mind. The surprises stopped, as well as the notes. Everyday a jab of pain would stick me in the heart as I saw our graffiti. I wondered if he ever saw what I wrote. ..I wondered if he still thought about me.

It was mid-May, and I was heartbroken, by a mysterious man I hardly knew. It was silly. I never was affected by anyone, but he made me cry myself to sleep every night. All I wanted was to see him.

My feet dragged me to my car at the end of the day, to find a large white piece of paper duct taped to the outside of my windshield, so that you'd have to be inside to read it. I fumbled getting the door unlocked, scrambling to get inside.

"Darling Angel," it read. "I cannot for the life of me express my feelings in mortal words, please be my beauty for prom- if you accept my invitation, meet me at the coffee shop doors at 8 pm, May 14th."

I literally screamed, thankful tears falling down my face as I laughed in hysterics.

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My nerves were getting the best of me. They kept telling me to turn around, go home, avoid the hurt this could cause you. But my steadily beating heart told me absolutely not, that I must go. My heart won. I saw the shop in the dark. My shaking hands steered my car into the parking lot, and I gasped!

There was a table in the middle of the lot, white tablecloth, lit by dozens of surrounding candles. But he was nowhere to be seen. I got out of my car and sat at the table, my baby blue dress rustling as I situated myself. My heart pounded a million miles an hour, I couldn't help but shake in anticipation.

It was 8:15. If he did all this and stood me up, I deserved it. I was horrible to him. I waited in silence for a few more minutes, deciding wether or not to go home, and give up.

"Jordan," I heard a familiar voice whisper from the shadows. I turned around to see him enter into the circle of candles. I let out a surprised yelp at the sight of him.

His black hair was still messy, but an organized chaos. A classy tuxedo, a nice pair of shoes, and a baby blue tie, exact color of my dress, were his attire.

I stood up. I walked to him in my heels, a feat not conquered so easily for someone who'd never worn them before, and he held both my hands, my body quivering at his touch. I glimpsed the ocean at high tide in his beautiful eyes, captivating array of perfection, almost impossible to look away from.

"Bryce I'm... I'm so sorry, look, I didn't mean to, uh, I-" His finger pressed to my lips, silencing me. His pale skin shown beautifully by candle light, I was so mesmerized by his flawless beauty. My gut started to react when I saw what he was doing. His hands came to rest on both my cheeks, making the hair on the back of my neck stand up, and my hands to clam up, and stupid babbling came out of my mouth.

His eyes smiled at me, and suddenly his lips inched closer to mine, causing my breath to come in rapid, irregular gasps, following in example of my erratic heartbeat. Just when I thought I was going to internally combust, he pressed his lips to mine, ever so lightly, I wasn't sure that I wasn't dreaming.

I stopped breathing.

My knees started to buckle.

I was quivering and shaking and vulnerable!

I let my guard down. I lost control of my emotions. I was terrified, petrified! I loved it.

He slowly pulled his lips back from mine, quickly pressing them to my forehead, then my nose, then my eyelids each in turn, sweet, tender, butterfly soft kisses.

"I've never seen anything more beautiful, than a heart softened inside a beautiful girl," he said quietly, all the while staring into my eyes. I was at a loss for words. "I always knew there was good in you, lovely," he wrapped his long arms around me, securing me to his chest.

My arms wrapped around his neck in a long awaited embrace, securely holding him to my chest, never ever planning to let go.

His hand reached into his pocket, and he hit a button on a remote, a slow song started playing, one I heard in the coffee shop frequently. I looked up into his twinkling eyes, as his hands found their way to my hips. In time with the music, he taught me how to dance, silently as we went along.

I glanced up at the stars, silently thanking god for the miracle he had placed before me. For the first time in my entire life, my shattered heart was perfectly together, and belonged to the most unlikely candidate.

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It's been years since that first dance, although I can see him, smell him, feel him perfectly in my mind's eye, he is no longer with me. Brycen passed away three years later, on the anniversary of that night. He had leukemia; he found out the morning he first spoke to me. The lack of time is what inspired him to reach out to a rough-around-the-edges foster kid, working in a coffee shop. He wanted to make a difference, he wanted to mean something to someone.

To me he meant the world. It was that man that I had my first kiss with, my first dance with, my first date with, the first guy I held hands with, the guy I lost my virginity to, the first person I ever loved, all because he was the first man to display a gentle hand, and a tender heart.

Kindness can go a lot farther thank you think. Love like there is no tomorrow... you never know if each day is your very last.

*Feedback and comments =]*

*Oh And I've overcome my spelling And formatting issues I think. Thanks for bearing with me everyone!*
*You're all too sweet :)*

*Tell me what you think, criticize away, that's the only way we learn :)*