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I'll Be Your Sun

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She knew he was there before their eyes met. There was just something about the way he had always looked at her, that her soul just knew and began to hum, like flowers turning towards the sunlight.

“Mel,” his deep voice rumbled through her ears and snaked down to her toes.

She turned and swallowed hard as he looked at her with those big brown eyes that belonged to Jack Clarkson. Blushing, she felt like she was standing in front of him naked. He had always had that effect on her. It was decades since they last stood in front of each other breathing the space. She had been 21, he was 22. His eyes look sad and a little lost. Her heart twisted as it found that to be highly disturbing. “Hey.”

“You look great as always.”

“Really? Because that’s not what you told me last time we spoke.” A little over eight years ago she had found him on social media and reached out to him. He seemed open at first but noticed she was married at the time and then shut her down. He told her she reminded him of his opportunistic sister and that she looked just like his sister.

“I’m sorry, I shouldn’t have said those things to you.”

“No, if that’s how you felt,” she shrugged and looked away.

He closed the gap between them and was standing in front of her, towering over her. Gently he touched her chin and moved it up. She looked up at him.

“I’m sorry I said that.”

“Okay,” she whispered breathlessly. Pressing her lips together she gave a small nod, accepting his apology.

He licked his lips staring down at her.

“What are you doing here?”

“I’m not sure.”

“Oh.”

“I’m glad I ran into you. You look amazing, you haven’t changed a bit. Just like I remember. Is that the same perfume?”

She gave a little laugh, “Yeah, I’m old people or old school. Find something you like and that’s it.”

“Every time I smelled that scent, I thought of you.”

“Couldn’t be that often,” she smiled.

“It was enough.”

“This is going to sound crazy. But I have missed you every day since the last time I saw you in the mall and you told me you were married.”

“I thought I was in love with Cheryl until I saw you that day at the mall.”

“I was hoping you would show up one day and tell me you had made a mistake. Come to your senses and wanted me.”

He chuckled. “I wish I knew you had felt that way. Things would have been so much different for both of us.”

“Would they have?”

He nodded. “I fell for you hard, and I never got over you.”

“It was real, wasn’t it?”

“Yes,” he leaned down and kissed her for the first time. His lips felt like they belonged to her. Soft, warm, gentle then needy and wanting.

He pulled back and that look he had in his eyes was the same look he had for her when she knew him. When they were younger, they had taken a couple of classes together in their senior year of high school and he seemed to only have eyes for her. At the time she found his attention overwhelming, and she found her feelings for him even more alarming. Visions of their lives intertwined left her as a single mom raising a couple of kids alone. Her fears wouldn't let her cross that line and let him kiss her nor could she tell him how she really felt about him. He had made his intentions and feelings clear. Yet, in her teen years, all she witnessed were men saying pretty little words until they got what they wanted and then leaving the women they proclaimed they couldn't live without.

“I would never have left you,” he brushed his thumb across her lips.

Was he reading her mind? How?

“Mel, I got to go.”

“Please don't,” tears welled up in her eyes.

“I have to babe. I just wish I had known all those years ago. We can't go back and change the past. I have always loved you.”

A hot tear slid down her face.

“Don't,” he hugged her tight, she could hear his heart beating in his chest, and his arms felt so warm and comforting. It reminded her of how he had hugged her a couple of times when they were younger. Instead of feeling alarmed she felt loved, and she didn't want to let him go.

“Mel, you're dreaming this but it's real. I don't know how to explain it.”

“Don't let go,” she whispered.

He kissed the top of her head and inhaled deeply, giving her a little squeeze. “You really are the most beautiful woman I have ever laid eyes on.”

Coming from him, she believed it. He smelled like lavender soap and a little smoke. “I wish we could turn back time.”

“Me too.” He rocked her back and forth and kissed the top of her head again. “Babe I really have to go now.”

He pulled away from her.

She felt her heart breaking.

He kissed her forehead and then her lips. “I will be your sun.”

“Son?”

He laughed, “no s-u-n.”

She laughed. “What about my moon?”

“That too. Whenever you miss me just look up. I’ll be the moon watching you sleep and the sun that always keeps you warm.”

“Don’t go,” she grabbed his hand.

The alarm went off, groaning, she rolled over and stared at the ceiling. Of course, it was just a dream. She could still smell the lavender soap and smoke. Sighing, she got up and headed to the kitchen. It was a Monday and it felt like it.

The aroma of lavender soap and smoke lingered. After lunch she wondered if she was having a stroke? Was that a sign? Some weird odors? She had asked a couple of her coworkers if they could smell it as well, but they just shook their heads no.

The day went on and before she knew it, it was quitting time. Mel sat in her car for a few minutes with her eyes closed, and the windows rolled down. That smell blew in through the open

windows and lingered. Opening her eyes, she started her car and looked in the rearview mirror. There was a man in the back seat! Turning around and checking her empty back seat her heart began to relax. It was Jack, Jack Clarkson? How? Turning, she looked in the back again, the seat was empty.

Peeking back at the rear-view mirror, he was sitting there smiling at her. He winked, then flashed into a ball of light and disappeared.

Mel jumped out of her car and took a couple steps back. Clearly her car was empty. What the hell was wrong with her? One weird dream and then she was imagining the man.

“You’re losing it Mel,” shaking her head she got back in her car and headed home.

The rest of her evening was uneventful; she had nodded off watching tv and woke up to the news. ‘In a freakish accident a local man died in a fire last night, the police don’t suspect foul play at this time, but are still investigating the death of Mr. Clarkson, who lived alone with no next of kin listed.’

Mel’s head snapped up. “Jack?”