

ON MY OWN

Written by

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INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

An empty gallon of ice cream, candy bar wrappers, and pages of fashion designs litter the table. Balled up papers and tissues are scattered on the floor.

The only light comes from the glow of a small television. A cheesy, sappy chick flick scene plays on the television.

MARIANA, 24, cradles a jar of Nutella. She recites every line in the movie, her inflection and timing identical.

She scrapes her spoon along the edge of the jar and eats the spoonful. She goes for another scoop.

It comes up empty.

Mariana tries to get every last drop of chocolate onto her spoon. No luck. She collapses into the sofa.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Fashion sketches and photographs cover the refrigerator door.

In the dark, Mariana opens the refrigerator. Empty. She checks the freezer. Just as empty.

Closing the fridge, Mariana focuses on one of the photos: a handsome, young man in a baseball uniform. She grabs it, crumples it and tosses it.

She flips the light on, shielding her eyes. Inside the cupboards she finds two boxes of cereal, a packet of ramen noodles, and a jar of peanut butter.

Mariana groans.

She snatches her car keys from a hook on the wall.

INT. GROCERY STORE - NIGHT

Mariana peruses the aisles. She holds a basket full of jars of Nutella, Oreos, cheap wine, and a gallon of ice cream.

She makes her way to the candy aisle and stops.

JARED, 25, browses the chocolates. He glances towards Mariana, smiles, and then walks up to her.

JARED

Mariana?

Mariana's shoulders slump, but she forces a smile.

MARIANA

Jared.

JARED

It's been like, what? A month?

MARIANA

Eighteen days.

JARED

Wow. It seems like it has been forever. So much has changed.

MARIANA

Has it? I mean -- It has. Yes. Definitely. Of course. Making my way in the big world of fashion. One stitch at a time.

Jared laughs.

JARED

That's great. You seeing anyone?

MARIANA

Oh. Umm. Yeah. Lots of guys.

Jared cocks his head.

MARIANA (CONT'D)

Not like lots of "lots of" guys. Like, I've been on a couple dates. Like, five. Two. One. No. No, I haven't. I mean, I'm not. I'm not seeing anyone. Are you? How are you? How is the team? Are you still playing ball? Of course you are. Stupid question.

Jared laughs.

JARED

Things are fabulous. The team is great. Going five to one. But what about you? What've you been up to?

MARIANA

Oh, you know... stuff.

Mariana sets down the basket. She shakes her arms out.

Jared motions to Mariana's basket.

JARED

What's all this? Are you still upset? That's precious.

MARIANA

No! Of course not. What? Still upset? Me? No. This is -- uh...

Mariana leans against the shelves, laughs a little too loud. She stumbles. Bags of candy fall to the floor.

Mariana kicks the bags underneath the aisle.

MARIANA (CONT'D)

A dessert party.

Jared laughs, doubtful.

MARIANA (CONT'D)

All the rage in the fashion industry. French silk pies. Red velvet cupcakes.

An awkward silence.

MARIANA (CONT'D)

Like the fabric... It's punny.

Jared laughs, then looks at her with affection.

JARED

Mariana... I've really missed y --

DANTE (O.S.)

-- Jared! Where are you, papi?

Mariana and Jared turn towards the opposite end of the aisle.

DANTE, 18, sashays down the aisle and wraps his arms around Jared's forearm. He looks Mariana up and down.

Jared crosses his arms. He slouches.

JARED

Mariana, this is Dante. Dante, Mariana. I mentioned her, remember?

DANTE

This is *her*?

JARED

D!

DANTE
I'm just saying.

Dante motions to Mariana's pajamas, then to himself.

DANTE (CONT'D)
Fodongo... Fashionista.

Mariana glares at him.

MARIANA
And yet, the crop top. But, I'll
let it slide, because at least
Jared looks stylish.

Dante glares at Mariana, then looks at Jared. He puts his hands in the back pockets of Jared's jeans and pulls them up. He winks at Mariana, then he slaps Jared's butt.

DANTE
Anyway! I don't want to interrupt
this awkward-fest, but I really
need your help over there, papi.

JARED
Just get the same kind as last
time. You're being rude.

Dante tugs at Jared's arm.

DANTE
But I need you.

JARED
Really, D?

DANTE
How am I supposed to know what box
to pick? They all look the same.

Jared grabs Dante's shoulder. Dante stops.

JARED
Dante. Shut. Up.

Dante pouts and stomps off.

JARED (CONT'D)
Boys. Am I right?

Mariana bends over to grab her basket.

MARIANA
You learn fast.

Jared grabs Mariana's hand.

JARED
Why did we break up?

Mariana steps back.

MARIANA
Um. You told me you were gay.

JARED
So it is always the guy's fault. I
am the woman.

MARIANA
What?

Jared presses his palms to his temples and sighs.

MARIANA (CONT'D)
Are you okay?

JARED
I just came out to my family. I
have the most annoying boyfriend in
the world... and I'm wearing skinny
jeans. How do you even deal with
boyfriends? I mean, it's insane.
"Papi this." "Papi that." "I need
help." "Wear this. Wear that."
"What's a touchdown?" I want to
strangle him. I'm the woman. Karma.

Mariana looks at her basket, then back to Jared.

JARED (CONT'D)
You're so lucky...

Jared grabs both of Mariana's hands.

JARED (CONT'D)
Let's go man hunting together.

Mariana looks at him like he's crazy. She eases her hands out
of Jared's.

MARIANA
Who said I needed a man?

DANTE (O.S.)
Papi! I need you!

Jared slumps over, defeated.

MARIANA

You should go. He *needs* you. Papi.

JARED

Don't make me...

She smiles, grabs a jar of Nutella from her basket and then hands the rest of the basket to Jared.

MARIANA

Pace yourself.

She leaves the aisle, smiling.

At the register, she hands the Nutella to the CASHIER, 20s. He smiles at her, then waves the jar in front of her.

CASHIER

I know what this means.

Mariana shakes her head and laughs.

MARIANA

Probably not what you're thinking.

Mariana swipes her credit card.

CASHIER

Then, why the comfort food?

Mariana laughs.

MARIANA

No, no. Just treating myself.

CASHIER

I'm glad to hear that.

The Cashier smiles and hands Mariana her bag. Mariana starts to walk away.

CASHIER (CONT'D)

Hey. I know this is probably really forward, but I was wondering if --

MARIANA

-- I'm sorry.

The Cashier's shoulders slump.

She walks to the exit, listening to Dante and Jared argue in an aisle. She laughs.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Mariana clears off her end table with one sweep. She puts the Nutella jar on the table with a spoon.

She sees the crumpled photo of Jared and picks it up. She cracks up, walks to the fridge and puts it back up, all crumpled.

She sits on the sofa, legs crossed on the end table, arms behind her head.

She smiles.