

Maybe One Day

Imagine towering buildings by the sandy shore in Morro Bay. On one of those buildings, you'll notice a rustic sign, "Emily's Dance Studio," plastered above a stairwell. Climb those stairs, and you'll find four studios covered in floor-to-ceiling mirrors.

That's where I'm walking to on the busy sidewalk.

My lesson wasn't for another hour, but I put in my earbuds and turned on my music, starting the walk anyway.

My phone buzzed. I pulled it out to see a message from my best friend, Addy.

Addy: Madeline Jones! Answer me!

Madeline: Sorry Addy, I've been busy.

Madeline: See u tomorrow?

Addy: Alright.

I tucked my phone away and closed my eyes, walking for thirty minutes, until a brick wall slammed into me. I don't mean I was so careless I ran into a wall, something ran into *me*.

Within an instant I was pushed into a small alleyway. My heart beating frantically, I kicked and screamed for about thirty seconds. I realized whoever was behind me was about ten times stronger than me. I

slowly turned my head around. All I saw was a man with curly brown hair and ice blue eyes put a finger to his lips and point out to the sidewalk.

I turned my head and saw at least ten girls run by. You would've thought they had all just won the lottery.

He must've been running away. My heart still didn't slow down.

After what seemed like an eternity, he slowly stepped back. Instead of running, I turned to meet him.

"Sorry about that."

"Sorry? Seriously? You just dragged me into an alley!" I shouted.

"I'm really sorry," he said, picking up my phone and flashing a smile. "Here, you dropped this."

I hadn't even noticed. I tugged my phone back and looked at the time. *Great.*

"I don't have time for this," I stated, practically running out of the alleyway.

When I finally made it to the studio, Emily was tapping her foot impatiently.

Emily is a short lady, with jet black curly hair.

"I'm so sorry," I gasped.

“None of your excuses, Madeline, we have already wasted enough time.” With that, she hustled up the stairs.

Emily’s been teaching me since I was three. I’m 19.

“Let’s start.”

In the morning, I heard a knock on the door. It must be Addy. *This early?* Usually Addy sleeps in.

Sighing, I walked downstairs to meet Addy.

“I’m still jealous of how amazing you look.” Addy states.

I can’t disagree. My straight brown hair and olive complexion are on point. My eyes offset them, due to the emerald green, but Addy likes them.

“Ready to go?” I ask.

“You know it!”

It’s funny, but you wouldn’t think Addy and I were friends. She is extremely creative. Her hair is even artistic. It’s bleached blonde with little highlights of red, orange, and pink.

We walked down to the dance studio. When we opened the door to studio three, Emily was already waiting for us.

“Madeline, I have a new job. Addy is perfect for helping,” Emily said.

Addy and I exchanged curious looks. Emily knew Addy pretty well, but never addressed her during lessons.

We all waited by the far wall for about five minutes, until the door handle to the studio turned. I couldn't believe it.

"You?" We said at the same time.

Everyone stared at us. *What is he doing here?* He brought someone with him. His friend had black hair and blue eyes. I saw Addy turn and stare.

"You two know each other?" Emily said with a hint of shock.

"He was the reason I was late." I stated.

"I said sorry," He responded.

"What are you even doing here?" I retorted.

Addy jumped in saying, "Wait, your Aiden and Leo."

I stared at Addy for a second. Wait, I've seen them before. Emily started talking.

"Great, you know them. Saves time. Now Madeline, meet your new students."

"You're kidding me." I said with shock, "I can't teach people how to dance!"

“You can and you will. You’ve been dancing at a professional level for years now. Time to start using your talent.” Emily said with a note of finality, walking out of the studio.

We all stared at each other for a while.

“Nope. Not doing this,” I said.

Addy pulled my arm before I could head to the door. I gave her an annoyed glare.

“Come on Mads! You’re amazing at dancing. Plus, how could you say no to them?” She whispered with exasperation.

“They’re just boys Addy, don’t be intimidated. Why should I embarrass myself for them?” I answered.

She stared at me. We must be talking too loud.

“Madeline! They are like super stars!” Addy said. “Please?”

One look at her and I knew I couldn’t say no. I sighed, walking over to them.

“Hey. I’m Madeline.”

“Hey. I’m Leo. I take it you and Aiden are friends?” Leo asked.

“I wouldn’t say friends.” I stated.

Aiden stepped in. “I am really sorry about yesterday, are we cool?”

“Were cool,” I said hesitantly.

We spent the next thirty minutes planning. Two hour lessons, twice a day.

I left as fast as I could, making our first lesson tomorrow. At least I only have to do this for a week.

“Happy I talked you into it?” Addy asked.

I answered automatically, “Not even a little bit.”

“This is going to be fun!” Addy said.

I rolled my eyes. I’m only doing this because Addy talked me into it.

“I’ve never taught anyone before.” I said anxiously.

Aiden answered, “We’ve been doing this for over an hour. It’s good I’m a fast learner.” He laughed, and Leo gave me an apologetic smile. Aiden had a very big ego.

They wanted to learn “ballroom dancing”. I know that’s weird, but it matches their music.

“I’m sorry okay?” I whispered, “I hate dancing in front of people.”

That’s when I got my idea.

“New idea.” I said, dragging Aiden over to Leo. They both were a couple inches taller than me.

“You two dance with each other.” I said.

“Let’s give it ago.” Aiden responded.

At least Aiden was into trying new things.

At first they were so hysterical, we couldn’t get through the bachata. It progressively got better. By the end of the week, they actually looked amazing!

During the last practice, Addy pulled me down.

“Aren’t you happy I made you do this?” She asked.

Surprisingly, I said yes. I had enjoyed this, whenever we weren’t being chased by fans. Leo was very kind. Aiden, whenever he wasn’t joking around, was generally understanding. We even became decent friends!

“See! I told you this would be easy.” Emily stated happily, walking in.

Just by the look on Emily’s face, my dread settled in. It was another dance competition.

“Aiden, I know you’re staying for a while longer in Morro Bay. You should enter the Morro Ballroom Dance with Madeline.

Aiden just smiled. "You know I'm all in."

I'm horrified

Just by the expression on my face, Leo laughed. I can't dance in front of people. *I really can't.*

Emily smiled. If this was a mafia, she would be the kingpin.

I regretfully exchanged phone numbers with Aiden, said goodbye to Leo, and ran home.

"Aiden, you really don't have to do this." I said.

"Why wouldn't I?" He asked

"Because I hold people back, can't dance, and freeze on stage." I stated simply. We were on top of the dance studio's roof.

He was silent for a while. "Come on, let's try." He said with a smile.

We entered closed position. Hyperventilating, I automatically mess up. *I can't do this. I hate when people watch me.*

Aiden stops moving. "Madeline, you're doing amazing. Breathe and look at me. It's just you and me, alright?" He asks.

I find myself nodding. The way he said it seemed so simple. Within minutes we were laughing.

Once we were done, I surprisingly smiled. Maybe this wouldn't be so bad.

We spent the next few months dancing, laughing, and just having fun. I went to some of his concerts, took him to the beach, and just enjoyed it. Never thought *we* would enjoy each other. Maybe it's something more. Or maybe I'm misreading it.

The competition came too soon. In my white sundress, I wasn't ready.

Aiden noticed. He embraced me before I could freak out. I smiled into his chest.

"Just have fun Mads."

Definitely not misreading. Now I'm ready.

It's funny how you might be having a normal, uneventful day, and then one thing changes. Maybe it's who you talk to, or your favorite place. That one thing can change your whole life.

What if I wasn't at the dance studio that day? What if me and Aiden never met? I guess I wouldn't have this amazing journey ahead of me, but I'm ready to grab it and hold on. It's all we can do.

