

Cherry Chapstick

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INT. JORDYN'S CAR - MORNING

JORDYN peers out the windows of her small, RATTLING car, captivated by the flurry of activity and movement taking place across the lot.

JORDYN
(under her breath)
Woah.

It is clear that she has never seen the lot so bustling and busy; there had never been so many workers there while she was working on the production of their show a year ago.

As she turns off the ignition and tugs at her keys, her eyes continue to catch on bustling people and brightly-colored costumes.

She exits her car, reaches into the backseat, and loops her sleek, black bag over her shoulder.

Making her way to her trailer, dodging set pieces and camera equipment, her attention is drawn to the large stage doors in front of her. Men in stiff, tailored suits and women in crisp pencil skirts are talking with MAISIE JOHNSON.

An intimate smile tugs at her lips, but it quickly falters as she notices the look on Maisie's face; her eyes are wide in alarm and her arms are crossed TIGHTLY in front of her body.

Giving herself a quick shake, Jordyn turns away and enters her trailer.

INT. JORDYN'S TRAILER - CONTINUOUS

Shutting the door softly behind her, she drops her keys onto the table and props her bag up on the counter. She unzips it, revealing a carefully organized collection of makeup products, ranging from sparkling eye shadows to matte foundations to shining lip glosses.

With a trained hand she begins pulling products out of the bag and placing them in front of two separate chairs. Bright blue painter's tape on the back marks one chair for Maisie and one chair for NICHOLAS BAR.

She moves with ease, but it's clear that she's not really thinking about her work.

SEASON 1 MONTAGE:

...Maisie and Nicholas filming a scene together, where Nicholas has his arm wrapped around Maisie's shoulder.

...Maisie and Nicholas posing together on a red carpet, Maisie blinking in the flashing LIGHTS of the cameras.

...Maisie, Jordyn, and Nicholas in cowboy hats and boots, visiting Maisie's small Southern hometown.

...A blurry video of Nicholas catching Maisie's wrist as they dive into a waiting SUV.

...Nicholas holding an umbrella open for Maisie as they enter the studio, filmed on a shaky, grainy camera.

...An edit, with millions of likes, portraying both Maisie and Nicholas and their characters in a loving relationship.

INT. JORDYN'S TRAILER - CONTINUOUS

Jordyn looks up as a sharp KNOCK pulls her from her thoughts; before she can react, the door CREAKS open and Maisie steps in, locking it behind her.

JORDYN

Maisie, hi! I saw you talking with
some execs and you looked kinda
freaked. You okay?

Maisie surprises Jordyn when she lets out a frustrated GROAN, her fists curling tightly as she crosses the trailer and drops heavily into her chair.

MAISIE

(heatedly)

I knew it wasn't going to work.
Reformatting scenes and plot points
just to introduce our characters'
relationship this season is only
making their love craze worse!

Jordyn nods sympathetically, both trying and failing to stifle her growing smirk.

MAISIE

What?

JORDYN
(playfully)
Sorry girl, I know this is serious,
but your accent really shines when
you're mad. It's cute.

Maisie groans again, blushing as her head falls into her hands.

MAISIE
Jordyn, focus!

JORDYN
Fine.

Jordyn pauses, thinking.

JORDYN
(slowly)
I'm not an actor or anything, but it's
just your characters who are in love
now, right?

MAISIE
(hesitantly)
Yeah...but now the fans think Nic and
I are in love with each other. They
want us to love each other. But...I...

Maisie falters, glancing briskly at Jordyn before spinning her chair to face the vanity.

MAISIE
(clearing her throat)
I don't know. I don't want that. Not
with him.

JORDYN
Okay.
(a beat)
But we can still talk to Nic, yes? The
studio will listen to him, especially
if he complains to his parents.

Maisie nods, chewing her lip. Jordyn senses Maisie sinking into her thoughts, so she doesn't press her any further.

Taking a deep BREATH, Jordyn pulls a file from her bag, studying the look that she is going to apply on Maisie for her scenes today.

For a moment, the only sounds filling the trailer are the TAPS of Jordyn's brush against plastic palettes, the CLICKING of Jordyn's nails, and the soft instructions Jordyn issues to Maisie, telling her to close her eyes or purse her lips.

After she finishes the final touches to Maisie's blush, she looks up to admire her work. Absent-mindedly, she reaches into her bag and pulls out a beat-up tube of cherry chapstick, applying it quickly to Maisie's lips.

Satisfied, she places her chapstick on the vanity. Turning around, she finds Maisie gazing at her with a slightly confused expression dappling her features.

A beat.

JORDYN
(softly)
Yes?

MAISIE
(startled)
Oh! Nothing, you're just so good at
this. It looks great!

Jordyn LAUGHS and begins to pack Maisie's products away. Maisie smiles, stepping carefully out of the chair.

Maisie crosses the trailer back to the door, collecting her bag and her phone, her many keychains rattling against one another.

MAISIE
Hey, thank you for listening. I'm sure
I'm overreacting...I should still talk
to Nic, though...?

JORDYN
Yes, definitely.

Jordyn pauses, then pulls Maisie into a quick hug.

JORDYN
(quietly)
You feel better?

MAISIE
(giggling)
Yeah.

Maisie turns and tugs the door open, waving to Jordyn.

MAISIE

See ya!

EXT. 1970'S SET - CONTINUOUS

Maisie closes the door, then quietly makes her way to the set, a new confidence straightening her shoulders and giving direction to her steps.

Stopping closer to the studio, she enters the costume department, waving to the costume director.

He waves back, then gestures toward a clothing rack holding all of the actors' outfits in white, opaque dry-cleaning bags.

Maisie pulls hers off the rack, carefully unzipping it. She stares for a moment, then GASPS in delight.

MAISIE

Woah...my costume looks beautiful,
sir!

COSTUME DIRECTOR

Thank you! There was more room in the
budget for this season, so we made
some upgrades to your wardrobe!

Maisie's smile falters, but her concern melts as the department adorns her in a low-cut flowered button-up, flared burgundy pants, and a sleek pair of beige heels.

Stealing one last glance at herself in the mirror before she leaves, Maisie turns back to the costume director.

MAISIE

These details are gorgeous, I hardly
even recognize myself!

COSTUME DIRECTOR

I'll let the team know you think so.
Good luck today!

MAISIE

Thank you.

She leaves the department with her head held high and her shoulders set, thumbing through her script as she strides to the main set.

INT. 1970'S SET - CONTINUOUS

Swinging open the door, Maisie is greeted with noise and movement and many unfamiliar people. She doesn't look at all shaken, though; the excitement brightens her eyes and tugs at the corners of her lips as she steps fluidly past mounds of technical equipment.

Striding onto the set, Maisie spots Nicholas and gives him a friendly hug.

NICHOLAS

Maisie, what's up!

MAISIE

Hi, Nic...oh, they changed your costume too!

NICHOLAS

I know, it's so sick. You ready for today?

MAISIE

Oh my god, yes. Our lives have been so crazy lately, it'll be nice to just escape it all for a little while.

INT. 1970'S SET - MUCH LATER

It is clear that much time has passed, as the sinking sun is filtering through the studio's windows and casting a golden GLOW over the rich, warm set.

This scene is taking place in a small, maximalist bedroom, its shelves overflowing with vintage trinkets and its walls decorated with time-worn posters. A record SPINS quietly on an old player, breeding intimacy and closeness between the actors.

We follow Jordyn as she maneuvers around the camera crew in between one of their takes, flitting about the scene to touch up the actors' makeup and adjust their hair before the next take starts.

She stops at Maisie and Nicholas, dipping her brush into a small palette, TAPPING it quickly against the plastic to shake loose any extra product, then applying quick strokes to both of their rounded cheeks.

JORDYN

Okay, you should be all set for the

rest of your scenes today.

MAISIE

Thank you, Jordyn.

NICHOLAS

Yes, thank you. Maisie looks wonderful today, don't you think?

Nicholas loops his arms around Maisie's shoulders, pulling her close to his chest. Maisie smiles up at him politely.

JORDYN

(grinning)

Yeah, obviously--

Jordyn is interrupted by the director, shouting to get everyone's attention.

DIRECTOR

Alright everyone, let's reset!

Maisie, Nicholas, and their scene partners scramble back into their position, Maisie giggling the whole way.

JORDYN

Okay, bye guys, I'm gonna head out!

NICHOLAS

Bye!

MAISIE

Bye, Jordan!

Jordan picks her way across the studio, careful not to step on any expensive equipment. She HOVERS in the shadow of the doorway, her eyes lingering on Maisie.

The scene has reset, and Maisie has taken her place in the very center of the room. Maisie looks perfectly comfortable as she lounges across the soft, plush bed dappled in pink and orange and peach.

DIRECTOR

Aaand, action!

Jordyn watches as Nicholas sits quickly on the bed beside her, leaning close and cupping his hand to WHISPER into her ear.

Maisie lets out a scandalized laugh, pushing her palm against

Nicholas's shoulder. She stands up, still laughing, and Nicholas softly catches her hand before she can walk away.

Abruptly, Jordyn lets the door fall closed, the golden, picturesque glow of the set fading behind her as she walks to her car in SILENCE.

EXT. 1970'S SET - CONTINUOUS

DIRECTOR

Cut! Wonderful, both of you. Nicholas,
please stay for just a moment, but
Maisie, you are free to go home.

Maisie steps down from the set, waving behind her.

MAISIE

Thank you!

While the building and its grounds aren't nearly as populated as they were at the beginning of the day, much of the crew is still milling about, waiting for filming to wrap up.

Maisie is stopped by many of them, their lively conversations punctuated with Maisie's bright LAUGH, her jewelry catching the yellow glow still pouring from the studio's open doors.

As she calls her final goodbyes, she walks quickly to her trailer, shutting the door behind her.

INT. MAISIE'S TRAILER - CONTINUOUS

The clothes she changed out of at the costume department have been folded and placed neatly on her countertop. She slips into them, grateful for their simplicity but already longing for the confidence her costume had granted her.

Shuffling to her sink, she bends forward and scrubs off the sultry, SMOKY makeup Jordyn had so deftly applied to her eyes and lips.

Standing up, we get the first good look at the dark circles under her eyes and the worried CREASE between her eyebrows, worry marks that the makeup and the outfit and the soft lights had completely hidden away.

Tiredly, she neatly folds her costume and places it gently on her counter, then pats her pockets to make sure she has her keys.

She steps gingerly through the entryway, her shoulders

hunched and her arms held close to her body as she locks the door.

EXT. 1970'S SET - CONTINUOUS

Trudging down her steps, she sees Nicholas exiting his own trailer next to hers. She calls out to him.

MAISIE

Nic, wait for me!

Nicholas turns, surprised etched into face.

NICHOLAS

Maisie, hey! Shit, I didn't realize you were still here too.

MAISIE

(performatively upbeat)

Yeah! Actually, could I talk to you about something really quick, if you've got time?

NICHOLAS

Uh, I guess, yeah.

MAISIE

(quickly)

You heard about all of the fan edits, right? The ones about us...our characters, I mean?

NICHOLAS

(confused)

Yeah...

MAISIE

Well, I've just been thinking and I don't know if our characters' romance is the best idea.

NICHOLAS

(suddenly annoyed)

Wait, why? Have you seen how many people watch this show just for us? And think of all the money we're making the studio! You would be so fucking stupid to back out now.

Maisie's heart sinks, her face falling. But she presses forward.

MAISIE

Yeah...yeah, I guess you're right about that. I just don't know if I'm very comfortable with...um...

Maisie grimaces, then meets Nicholas's eyes. A flash of hurt and anger moves across his face.

NICHOLAS

With...me?

MAISIE

No! No...I promise, it has nothing to do with you. I don't even know what it is about...but Jordyn, she--

NICHOLAS

(angry, jealous)

What does Jordyn have to do with any of this?

Maisie stops, taken aback. She steps away from him, stuffing her trembling hands into her pockets before he can see.

At the same time, he seems to realize how quickly his voice rose and how angrily his eyes FLASHED.

NICHOLAS

(gently)

Hey...wait. It's just been a long day, and you have no idea how stressful this all is for me, and with my parents...I just really think we should do this.

Nicholas pauses, imploring her to meet his gaze; Maisie's eyes don't leave the CRACKED pavement below her feet.

NICHOLAS

Please. If not for me, then for the rest of our team. I mean, I know you saw how stoked the costume department was and how beautiful our set was. I- we need this, Maisie.

Maisie hesitates, seeing the resolve and desperation in Nicholas' eyes. She NODS, afraid her voice will betray her.

Nicholas lets out a relieved breath, blissfully unaware of how shaken Maisie truly is.

NICHOLAS

Okay, good. Good. See you tomorrow,
yeah?

Maisie nods again, waving to him as he saunters to his car. She watches him until his car is well out of her sight.

INT. JORDYN'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

We cut to Jordyn alone in her studio apartment, her bag tucked neatly in the closet and her keys thrown haphazardly onto the counter.

She has changed out of the sleek, professional outfit she had been wearing earlier, sporting loose sweatpants and a threadbare tank top. She is lazily scrolling through her phone, finishing her takeout in slow bites.

She pauses, her attention caught by a video that has begun playing on her phone. Over her shoulder, we can see Maisie's face, her characters' dramatic makeup accentuating her features in the smoky haze of one of season 1's most emotional scenes.

Then we see Nicholas' face, gazing up at her, followed in quick succession by brief, friendly moments between their characters.

She watches the entire video, then abruptly exits the app. Taking a deep BREATH, she opens up her messages, finding Maisie's number.

Before she can stop herself, she calls Maisie. The dial tone rings long enough that she believes Maisie will not pick up, until...

MAISIE

(quietly)

Jordyn?

JORDYN

(relieved)

Maisie, hey! I've been thinking a lot about what you said. I really don't think you should have to do anything you're not comfortable with.

(a beat)

Especially not because of fans on the internet.

SILENCE stretches on the other side of the line, and Jordyn

listens in growing anxiety. Fidgeting with the ends of her braids, she glances at her phone, ensuring she didn't end the call by accident.

JORDYN

Maisie?

MAISIE

(sniffing)

Sorry, I'm still here. That was just really sweet.

JORDYN

(concerned)

Wait, what's wrong? Did you talk to Nicholas?

MAISIE

Yeah...

Another long silence. Jordyn's eyes dart around the room as she tries desperately to think of something to say.

JORDYN

(hopefully)

You wanna stop by my apartment for a little? You must be hungry, and I just got takeout...

MAISIE

(distractedly)

I am, yes.

JORDYN

Good, okay. I'll see you in a little bit, yeah?

MAISIE

Yeah.

Both girls quickly hang up.

EXT. TV SHOW STUDIO - CONTINUOUS

Maisie stares in disbelief at her phone, simultaneously touched by and terrified of not only Jordyn's offer, but her readiness to accept it.

She crosses the parking lot slowly, fumbling for her keys the entire way.

She unlocks her car, sinking into the front seat. Her phone PINGS, and she sees a text from Jordyn; heart fluttering, she unlocks her phone and opens the text to find Jordyn's address.

Overwhelmed, she stares at her screen, which brightly illuminates her face in the rapidly falling darkness. She lets out an incredulous, dazed laugh, realizing she's never actually been to Jordyn's apartment.

INT. JORDYN'S APARTMENT - LATER

Just as Jordyn has flipped off her overhead light in favor of a few soft, COLORFUL lamps placed sporadically throughout her tiny apartment, she hears a soft KNOCK.

Taking a deep breath, Jordyn rushes to the door and pulls it open. Maisie smiles shyly, Jordyn's eyes lingering on the faint pink glow of Maisie's cheeks.

JORDYN

Hi, come on in.

Maisie steps lightly into the apartment, eyes roaming over every surface, as if she is trying to commit every detail to memory.

Jordyn watches nervously, closing the door gently behind Maisie.

JORDYN

(haltingly)

You sounded sad, over the phone. Do you...do you wanna talk about it?

Maisie sighs, tilting her head back and closing her eyes.

MAISIE

I just-I tried to talk to him, but he got really sad and angry. All he cares about now is how much money the show is gonna make.

Jordyn's jaw drops in disgust, her hand hovering over her mouth.

JORDYN

Oh Maisie, I'm so sorry...

MAISIE

(softly)

And...

A beat.

MAISIE

I don't get it...he's my friend, I
should be able to love him like
everyone wants me to. I should care
about him like I care about you...

Jordyn swallows nervously, taken aback by Maisie's comment.
Silence falls; Maisie's face loses its color as she realizes
what she has admitted not only to Jordyn, but to herself.

Their eyes lock.

Slowly, Maisie steps toward Jordyn, trailing her fingers
softly along her waist, tugging her almost imperceptibly
forward.

Jordyn, fighting her surprise, steps closer to Maisie,
cupping her face gingerly in her hands and trailing her
thumbs over her laugh lines.

Maisie's eyes flutter towards Jordyn's mouth, a rosy BLUSH
climbing back into her cheeks.

They lean forward together, Jordyn's fingers weaving into
Maisie's windswept hair and Maisie's thumbs pressing into
Jordyn's waist, anchoring her in place.

After a moment, they break apart, slowly stepping back from
one another. Maisie's eyes flutter open and find Jordan's
already lingering on her face, searching for any traces of
fear.

Maisie takes a quick step backwards, panic building behind
her eyes.

JORDYN

Maisie, wait--

MAISIE

(panicked)

I'm-I'm so sorry, I have to go, I...I
can't...

JORDYN

Maisie, please! I know, we haven't

known each other for very long, but there's no way you're truly okay with sacrificing your authenticity for...for what, money? Fame? Nicholas might be, but I know you're not. And I care about you too much to let you make this decision on your own. Just please, please don't leave. We can figure this out-

MAISIE

(whispering)

No...no, you don't get it. It's not any of that, I swear. But I *can't*. My parents won't understand...and the studio...and Nicholas...I just can't, I'm so sorry.

Maisie pushes past Jordyn and tugs open the door, turning towards it so Jordyn cannot see her face. She SLAMS it quickly behind her.

Jordyn, unseeing, stares at the door, a blank expression having fallen over her face.

A heavy, ringing silence descends upon the room. With her eyes still glazed over, Jordyn reaches for her phone with a trembling hand, the other pressed to her lips.

CLICKING the phone on and opening her messages, Maisie's texts fill the screen. Jordyn's finger hovers again over the call button, but she cannot bring herself to press it.

INT. 1970'S SET - THE NEXT MORNING

Jordan's car limps into the parking lot, where a slight DRIZZLE is dampening the lively atmosphere Jordyn had so deeply enjoyed just the day before.

Dejectedly, she weaves through cohorts of workers until she reaches her trailer, where she quickly opens the door and ducks inside.

Shutting the door behind her, she begins her routine on autopilot. Halfway through organizing Maisie's vanity, the weight of everything that happened the night before hits her like a punch in the stomach.

Her eyes begin welling with TEARS, and she chokes back a sob. Taking deep breaths, she fights to calm herself down enough to finish setting up for Maisie and Nicholas.

Just as she places the last product on Nicholas's station, she hears a loud KNOCK on the door.

Plastering on a small, fake smile, she strides to the door and opens it up. On the other side of the threshold, she sees both Maisie and Nicholas standing together. Holding hands.

Nicholas is ecstatic, grinning from ear to ear. Jordyn is only visibly hurt long enough for Maisie to notice. Maisie looks down at her shoes, BLINKING rapidly.

NICHOLAS

Jordyn, look!

Nicholas proudly displays their intertwined fingers, and Jordyn manages another small smile.

JORDYN

Wow, that's wonderful you guys. Could we get started though...

NICHOLAS

(playful)

Yes, ma'am

Maisie and Nicholas move quickly to sit in their respective chairs, Nicholas gripping Maisie's hand across the space between them.

NICHOLAS

Okay, let's get going!

Jordyn nods, but it is only when Jordyn begins applying concealer to Maisie's face does she notice how puffy and RED her eyes are, even though they still won't meet her gaze.

Jordyn pauses, clenching her jaw. She tilts Maisie's chin upwards, blending and tapping along Maisie's face until every trace of her sadness, swollen eyes and her chapped lips and her pale cheeks, are expertly hidden away.

Jordyn finishes both of their makeup without uttering a single word. If they notice her silence, they do not comment on it.

NICHOLAS

(bored)

Almost done?

JORDYN

Yes. Just one last touch.

Jordyn stands up and maneuvers to her bag, reaching to the very bottom of it and extracting the small tube of cherry chapstick. Kneeling in front of Maisie, she carefully applies it.

She catches Maisie's eyes, gives her an almost imperceptible SMILE, then swiftly stands back up and places the chapstick back in the very bottom of her bag.

Standing up, Nicholas guides Maisie out of the chair and towards the trailer door.

NICHOLAS
Dope! Thanks Jordyn!

JORDYN
(quietly)
Of course.

NICHOLAS
See you!

Nicholas drops down the steps, Maisie trailing alongside him; he never bothers to turn around and close the door.

Blinking back tears, Jordyn watches as Nicholas leads Maisie through the studio doors' golden glow, catching only a glimpse of Maisie's features when she turns to wave goodbye.