Can you hear me screaming? (Please don’t leave me)

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by SaltyRedhead

Summary

What if Derek had been presumed dead by the police? Driven by loss, Addison left New York, and met Meredith 18 months later in Seattle.

Notes

Whumptober, Day 16, Nowhere Else to Go | Wrong Place, Wrong Time | Loss of Control
"You mean everything to me."

See the end of the work for more notes

Meredith stumbled out in the alleyway, vision blurry from too many shots of tequila at a dive bar. The crisp night air burned her lungs, stubborn tears rolled down her cheeks. She balled her hands into fists and stuffed them in the oversized hoodie.

Too drunk to drive, Meredith walked. She wasn't too far from home. Traitorous thoughts plagued her as she crossed the street, she made a gesture at the car who honked.

Stepping into a puddle, Meredith cursed loudly at the cold water seeping into her converse and worse—wetting her socks. She continued walking, a little faster now. Slowly sobering up against her will.

"Figures, I should've taken a cab." She grumbled to herself.

If she had stayed at Joe's, instead of the dive bar, Joe would've cut her off sooner and called her a cab. But she couldn't handle seeing Derek and Addison together at Joe's. Somewhere that felt like sacred ground to Meredith, all the nights they laid their hearts bare in the booth at the back.

It hurt to see Derek, trying to shower Addison with attention when she knew he had left her, not the other way around. Their eyes met, a flash relief in her piercing green eyes before it turned to guilt. Meredith left, slamming the door behind and ignoring the shout of her name.

She came to forget. She needed to forget the way Addison felt in her arms, her soft laugh when they fell in bed, tangled together in the sheets and, and, and she couldn't do that with them there.

Just for tonight.

But it wasn't fair. It was impossible to forget the lovely redhead who held her heart with two hands.

Addison had told her from the very beginning—before they started sleeping together—that she was a widow. She hadn't seen her husband in two years, he'd left without an explanation in the dead of night. Addison assumed he was dead, the police informed her the trail had gone cold in Virginia. Meredith accepted it, the warning and that she still wore her wedding ring.

They fit together in a way Meredith hadn't expected, like pieces falling into place. Everyday she fell in love a bit more with Addison, relaxing and letting herself open up in a way she never had with a partner before. Addison was different, she could never be a one night stand—someone to forget when they walk out the door. No, you could never forget a woman like her. With her help, Meredith slowly learned what it meant to be unconditionally loved and to love a partner.

Six months of being happily together went up in the air with the unexpected return of her husband.

Meredith would never forget the way tears filled Addison's eyes and how she stormed up to him, barely perceptible rage in her shaking shoulders. She'd slapped him across the cheek

with her left hand, rings leaving a mark, the mask that tightly held her emotions in place was gone. Crying and yelling had been silenced with a tight hug, she'd fought but he just held her tighter, whispering something in her ear until she relaxed.

Meredith couldn't bear to watch, so she left the reunited couple and drove home. Entering her home, she saw signs of Addison everywhere. It got worse upstairs, the expensive perfume still uncapped next to her cheap body spray. She stripped, throwing her clothes with Addison's in the basket and stole her hoodie and shorts. She cried herself to sleep that night, tugging her pillow to her chest in reminiscence of Addison.

Meredith wiped at her eyes again, turning right at the next street over. She remembered Addison's words, the ones she whispered in her ear while they hugged in that on-call room the morning after.

"He's my husband. As happy as I am to see him, I don't want him anymore, I don't recognize him, he's different, rugged from living off the land in a trailer. I love you. I choose you. But until he and I are officially divorced, we have to stop. I'm sorry, Meredith. But I want to do this right."

Too lost in thoughts, she didn't see the shadowy figure stepping in front of her—until it was too late.

"What's a pretty thing like you walking alone at this time of night?"

Meredith stopped, blood draining from her face. Swallowing hard, awareness slammed into her headfirst, she missed her turn three streets back. Restlessly, she shoved her hand in the pocket, fingering her keys to go between each knuckle. Tilting her head up in defiance, she said, "I'm not alone. I'm waiting for a friend."

"Sure." He moved backwards a few steps into the light of the streetlamp.

Recognition immediately flickered. Shots of tequila could never let her forget him. The floppy hair. The hardened eyes.

Derek.

"I see you're wearing my wife's college hoodie. Cute." He pointed, fresh bruises along his knuckles on one hand.

An uneasy feeling settled in her gut, his hand had been free of any marks earlier. "What are you doing here?" Meredith inched herself backwards, slowly putting more space between them.

"Nothing much, really." Derek shrugged, putting his hands in pocket. "I was just checking out my competition. I knew my wife liked women when I married her, but I didn't expect her to go for such a matchstick whore. She usually likes her women a little more curvy. But you know," He paused to look her up and down, smirking at what he found. "You do look like a decent fuck."

She ignored his words. It didn't matter what he thought of her, she knew Addison loved her. And right now, she needed to call her.

"What? Nothing to say. She said you were feisty. Seems she must have been mistaken."

Meredith lowered her eyes, if he thought she was weak, she'd let him think it. "What do you want, Dr. Shepherd? My friend will be here soon."

"Addison seems to be under the illusion that she loves you because she gave me divorce papers tonight." Derek tightened his jaw, frowning at Meredith. "Her name was already signed when she handed them to me."

She clenched her hands tighter around her keys, making herself smaller and backing up again.

He continued, "You wouldn't happen to know about that, would you?"

"No." Meredith shook her head slightly. "Nothing about that. Is that all?"

"I want you dead." Derek lunged, running toward her.

Heart pounding, Meredith turned tail and bolted. Showing him her house was the worst thing she could do, but staying out in the open, carless and defensiveless was even worse. Lungs burning from exertion, she turned a sharp corner, cutting across a neighbors yard. The boots thudding on pavement stopped, wet grass squelched followed her. Meredith kept going, not daring to look behind.

Meredith recognized a street sign. Turning right, she moved back into town and away from the houses. She'd have better luck. She hoped.

"Run, little whore." Derek taunted. "I'll catch you."

Even though she was running for her life, she only had one thought running through her head.

What did he do to Addison?

The houses slowly made way for stores, tree roots lifted up sections of the pavement. She jumped over the worst, her landing unsteady, she ignored the sharp twinge in her ankle. Meredith cursed her luck. She sucked in a mouthful of air, pumping her aching legs harder.

The headlights of a car came in the distance, temporarily blinding her from seeing the way forward. Her toe caught on the raised lip, stomach dropping as the world tilted. Momentum against her, she fell forward, hands and knees taking the worst of the impact. The sensitive skin of her palms and fingers shredded against the unforgiving surface. Keys still tightly clutched in one hand, Meredith bit her lip and got up.

The sound of the car coming closer hit her ears. Cursing her stupidity, she got into the street limping towards a fast moving vehicle. She sensed Derek a step behind her, turning around, she made a fist and aimed for his face. The keys pierced his cheek, pulling it out, blood freely

dripped down into his beard. She kicked him in the balls, he screamed and held them with one hand. Pure rage stared back, he pulled out a knife and swung at her as fell to his knees. Meredith saw it too late, she cried out as the blade sunk into her thigh. Pain lanced through her as he cruelly dragged it down, with her good leg she kicked his shoulder and held the handle. She moved out of his reach, keeping the knife steady.

Squealing brakes stopped twenty yards away from them, the passenger got out, sprinting toward them. Meredith saw the police uniform first. For once in her life, she'd never been so happy to be found by them.

"Ma'am, paramedics are on the way."

Bailey finished placing the bandage on her thigh. "You're good to go, Grey. As soon as you're discharged, I need you to go home and rest. You have the next two weeks off."

Meredith slowly nodded. "Do you know where Addison is?"

"No, I'm sorry. She's not here."

"Okay."

"Karev dropped off some clean clothes for you. They're from your locker." She handed the pile over and left, closing the curtains.

Meredith pushed the tears bubbling up in her throat down; she would not cry at her place of work. Home. She just had to make it home and then she could drown herself. A bottle of tequila had never judged her life choices like people do.

She got off the exam table and limped toward her clothes. She ripped off the hospital gown, carefully pulling on clean underwear and jeans.

"No bra." Meredith said to herself as she put on a tanktop. She stared at the hoodie, Alex had somehow gotten it washed and dried in the hours she'd been here. Slipping it on, she smelled the collar, Addison's scent was nearly gone. A pained whimper left her body. "Where are you, Addie?" She stuffed her feet into the uncomfortable flats, ones she'd been meaning to pull out of her locker but kept forgetting.

Meredith put her wallet and newly returned keys into her pocket. Somewhere along the way, she'd dropped her phone. No one had been able to find it. She hoped she had left it at that dive bar.

She opened the curtain and waited for the nurse to come with the discharge papers.

The police had come and gone, taking her statement. She'd told them everything she knew. Her relationship with Addison. Derek's disappearance and reappearance. The chase. Right up until they came across them in the street.

They hadn't had luck in finding Addison either. Wherever she was, Meredith prayed to a God she didn't believe in that she was alive and breathing. The past two weeks apart had been

Hell, she couldn’t go a minute longer without being in her arms.

Meredith winced, the early morning hour didn’t help the massive hangover. The sun felt like it was piercing a hole in her head as punishment. For what, she wasn’t exactly sure.

She turned onto her street—Alex had given her a lift to her car—driving up the street. A familiar Porsche had been parked in her driveway. Heart thudding in her chest, Meredith gripped the wheel tighter, pulling in and parking her Jeep.

She got out, slamming the door behind her. Walking up to the red car, she touched the hood — cold. She dashed up the stairs as quickly as her leg would allow her. Thankfully, Derek hadn’t hit her femoral artery, but she had no interest in popping a stitch and undoing Bailey’s hard work.

The front door swung open. There she stood, a bruised cheek and wet eyes. A suspicious hand-shaped mark wrapped her throat peeked out from the collar of her hoodie, sweat pants hung off her frame and feet bare.

Addison.

Meredith greedily drank her in. “You’re here.”

“I had nowhere else to go.” She shrugged, stepping back to let her in. “Home is wherever you are.”

Meredith softly closed the door behind her. “I missed you.”

“I missed you too.” She reached to touch her but hesitated, like she wasn’t sure she had the right.

Meredith decided for her, stepping closer into her space. “We’re safe. Derek’s at the hospital. Under police control.” She held her hand, Addison glanced down at her wrapped palm.

“They caught him?” She breathed out, relief flooded her green eyes. “How do you know that?”

“He chased me down with a knife.” Meredith started. She tugged her to the living room and filled in what happened after she left Joe’s.

Addison listened, tears rapidly falling. Her left hand never left Meredith’s—her wedding ring was gone.

“I’m sorry.”

Meredith shook her head. “Addie, listen to me. This wasn’t your fault. None of his actions were yours. It was his fault.” With her free hand, she cupped her cheek, thumb rubbing under the bruise. “Did he do this to you?”

“Yes. He didn’t like me handing over the divorce papers. It was a long time coming.”

“Are you okay?”

Nodding, Addison said, “Joe stepped in and called the cops. He rushed out before anyone could grab him. They already documented my injuries.”

“Good. I’m sorry I didn’t stay.”

“Sh, I know it’s been hard on you. You have nothing to be sorry about.”

“But I—” Meredith started.

Addison covered her mouth with a finger. “Honey, this was not your fault. I chose a public setting for a reason. I’m just sorry I chose Joe’s over a lawyer’s office. Maybe it would’ve ended differently, but there is no use playing with all the what if’s.”

“I’ll try.”

“You mean everything to me.” Addison kissed her temple, breathing her in.

“Let’s go to bed. I want to be close to you.”

Addison stood up, holding a hand out. Meredith smiled and took it, gently squeezing her fingers in quiet thanks. They went upstairs together.

An open suitcase with more clothes had been put in the corner.

“Addison?” Meredith pointedly asked.

“I gave it some more thought about what you said a month ago. I’d love to move in with you. If that option is still on the table.”

“Of course it is. You’ll always have a home with me.”

Addison smiled and helped Meredith wiggle out of her jeans, revealing the large bandage on her thigh. Dropping down to her knees, Addison trailed kisses over the bandage.

“Are you kissing my boo-boo better?”

Gazing through thick lashes, Addison said, “Yes. Are there any more *boo-boo’s* on you?”

Meredith feverishly nodded.

“How about we take this to the bed?” She eyed the marks on her knees and her wrapped hands.

“I like the way you think.”

End Notes

Thank you, Plegg, for everything!

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