

Twin A
Cecilya Wood

Elora POV:

“What are you girls going to get up to Friday night?” My mom questions.

“Um, I was probably just going to stay in and do laundry. Maybe work on my application to Northeastern.” I answer, shrugging my shoulders.

“Our girl is going to be a husky!” My dad beams.

“Maybe. What about you Eliza? Will you be joining my exciting laundry adventures.” I ask, trying to get the focus off me.

“I was going to ask if I could go to Lizzie’s.” She says, looking down at her feet.

My parents exchange glances with each other, and then look from Eliza to me, back to Eliza.

“I guess. Didn’t you go last weekend?” Dad sighs.

“Yeah, honey, you’ve been going there a lot. You should take a page from your sister's book and stay in and study. You guys could work on your college applications together.” Mom pesters.

I notice Eliza’s shoulders slump in defeat, but her eyes remain ice cold.

“They aren’t due for weeks. Can I please just go?” Eliza argues.

“Fine.” Our parents say in unison.

The conversation ends, and Eliza sulks off to her room. She’s always such a brat to our parents even though she always gets her way. I retreat to my room as well, not wanting to be questioned further about my college plans by my parents. I feel so suffocated all the time. The pressure from my parents, my peers, and myself. It's all too much. Going to Northeastern was never my dream, it was my parents, but they are so proud of me and I don’t want to let them down.

I wish I were more like Eliza. She has this nonchalant air about her. She never seems to care what my parents think and has so many friends that actually care about her, even if those friends are a bad influence. My parents think it's so great that I am *choosing* to stay in and work on my college applications and do chores, but it's not even a choice. I have no friends, at least not any real ones. The "friends" I have that my parents hear about are just peers who let me sit with them at lunch, and that's only because they want help on their homework. I've never been great at making friends, and the more I excelled at my classes the more people saw me as a walking textbook rather than a friend. I used to be hopeful college could be a fresh start, I wanted to go to a small liberal arts school and take classes that sounded fun and discover what I was meant to do. That fresh start was promptly squashed when I started taking AP courses as a sophomore and my parents pushed their dreams onto me. I hear a knock at my door that draws me out of my self-loathing.

"Honey, I'm going to bed, love you." My mom says.

"Night, love you too." I replied.

I listen to her footsteps retreat down the hall and a door shut. I grab my laptop and start working on a lab report, already looking forward to getting the house to myself.

Friday night rolls around, and I waste no time ordering from my favorite pizza place. I rarely ever get it because no one else likes it, but no one is here to stop me. I open my laptop and my blank Google Doc stares back at me, I decide to throw in a load of laundry before I start my essay. I make sure to separate the colors as well as the towels. Eliza always teases me for doing it this way, but I swear it makes my clothes last longer. Also like I would take advice from her, she gets in a fight almost every week at school. The doorbell rings signaling the start to my uneventful evening, and I whip the front door open.

“Thanks!” I smile at the delivery person.

I return to the living room and plop down on the couch with my box. I start typing away, determined to get at least two pages done. One too many slices later and two and half pages later I hear the washing machine beep and make my way over to our laundry closet to switch my clothes over. As I am putting the last of the previous load in the dryer I hear a big thud from upstairs, I slam the dryer shut, hoping to assert my dominance.

“Hello.” I yell.

Nothing. Well if this isn't just the start of every horror movie ever. Great. I close the dryer door and make my way upstairs, turning on all the lights as I go. I check Eliza's room first, thinking maybe she came home early, but she's not there. Then I make my way to my own room, and still nothing. *Strange*, I think to myself. Just as I am taking one final scan of my room I hear another thud, but now it sounds like it's coming from downstairs.

“Mom? Dad?” I question.

Nothing, again. I am making my way back downstairs, and notice the TV is turned off. I swear I left it on.

Creaaaak. I whip my head towards the kitchen. We've been meaning to fix that stupid old pantry door for too long. As I pass by the laundry closet, I notice the dryer is open again, one sock hanging over the edge. I creep into the kitchen, but see no one. The pantry is ajar, as I'm closing it I hear a shuffle behind me, turning around I let out a sigh of relief.

“Eliza!” I yelp.

She's standing so close to me, with a look of deviance in her eyes.

“You scared me half to death, why are you home, what's wrong?” I question her.

She just smirks at me, before looking down at her hands. I follow her gaze, watching as she twirls one of our kitchen knives in a lazy fashion.

“Eliza?” I breathe, meeting her eyes.

But I don’t recognize those eyes. They’re glazed over, and ice cold.

“What are you doing.” I caution, holding my hands up.

“Making sure no one can ever compare me to you again. I’m sick and tired of mom, dad, fucking everyone putting you on some sort of pedestal. Miss perfect, top of your classes, student council president, and bound for Northeastern. But I’m right behind you in marks Elora, I am on varsity soccer, the only difference is my social life and a few fights. So what I have trouble controlling my anger sometime, at least I still get A’s right? That’s all mom and dad ever care about.” She laughs a hollow laugh.

“You don’t have to do this.” I beg.

“Oh but I do. I won’t have to fight to be the favorite twin anymore, because I’ll be the only one left.”

“Eliza” I whisper, in a last effort.

But it doesn’t work. She draws the knife up and I take a step back, immediately bumping into the pantry door I closed. Shit. Eliza smirks at this, then plunges the knife into my side. I gasp, pain flooding through me. She twists the knife, a look of pride in her eyes as she does so. As he rips the knife out my hands scramble to my ribcage, trying to stop the bleeding.

She takes a step back still holding the knife and carrying it with her to the phone. Sinking to my knees, I watch Eliza pick up the phone, dial 9-1-1 and say;

“There’s been an accident, hurry! My sister and I have been stabbed!” *Click*. She hangs up just as she sinks the knife into her own side. Everything hurts. I want to wake up now. This

has to be some kind of nightmare. I hear the sirens, but they sound a million miles away. My hand drops from my stomach to lay at my side, and I notice just how much blood I've really lost. I look towards the living room and can just make out flashing red lights as my eyes flutter close.

Eliza POV:

I am sitting at the counter eating grapes and chatting with my sister and parents, or rather I'm listening to a conversation between my sister and parents, like I always do.

"What are you girls going to get up to Friday?" Mom questions.

"Um, I was probably just going to stay in and do laundry. Maybe work on my application to Northeastern." Elora answers.

"Our girl is going to be a husky!" My dad beams at her.

"Maybe. What about you Eliza? Will you be joining my exciting laundry adventures."

Elora asks me.

"I was going to ask if I could go to Lizzie's." I mumble, looking down at my feet.

"I guess. Didn't you go last weekend?" Dad sighs.

"Yeah, honey, you've been going there a lot. You should take a page from your sister's book and stay in and study. You guys could work on your college applications together." Mom pesters.

"They aren't due for weeks. Can I please just go?" I argue, narrowing my eyes.

"Fine." My parents say in unison.

I sulk back to my room, my mood officially soured. I shut and lock my door. I am so over not being good enough for anyone. Always twin B. Not for long, I know what to do, I won't live

in Elora's shadow anymore. She's not a real sister, she's never once sided with or stuck up for me. Soon I'll be free.

Friday night and I am sitting on mom and dad's hope chest. I pull out my phone and text Lizzie quickly.

Hey! I think I just need a night to myself, reschedule?

Haha, omg I am feeling the same way, next weekend!

Looking around the room, I take a deep breath. I can do this, I have to do this. The doorbell ringing has me jumping off the chest and scurrying over to the window. Peering down, I see a pizza delivery car. I laugh to myself, figures Elora would get that of all places. *Enjoy your last meal, sis.* I think to myself. Pacing back and forth, I'm just waiting for her to get more comfortable and let her guard down. I faintly hear the beep of the washer and decide I've been patient enough. Climbing on top of the chest I leap off trying to make a commotion, then I pause, listening.

"Hello" Elora yells.

Then I hear her thudding up the stairs, and I peak out of the doorway, watching as she turns into my room first. Smart girl, I'll give her that. I creep down the stairs, clicking the remote off and as I pass the laundry closet I decide to screw with Elora just a bit. Gotta make it fun, at least for me. I open the dryer, draping clothes out of it, before going to the kitchen. I grab a chair and slam it back down before rushing and grabbing our sharpest knife.

"Mom? Dad?" Elora questions.

I can hear the slight waver in her voice, my veins are humming. I reach out and slightly push the pantry door, *creaaaaak*, thank God we never got that fixed. Elora enters the kitchen,

looking around but missing me completely, she turns her back and slowly shuts the pantry door. I'm behind her in mere seconds, but she must have sensed me and whipped around.

“Eliza! She yelps, “You scared me half to death, why are you home? What’s wrong.”

Smirking at her, I look down to wear I am twirling the knife.

“Eliza? What are you doing?” She asks, putting her hands up.

“Making sure no one can ever compare me to you again. I’m sick and tired of mom, dad, fucking everyone putting you on some sort of pedestal. Miss perfect, top of your classes, student council president, and bound for Northeastern. But I’m right behind you in marks Elora, I am on varsity soccer, the only difference is my social life and a few fights. So what I have trouble controlling my anger sometime, at least I still get A’s right? That’s all mom and dad ever care about.” I hollowly laugh.

“You don’t have to do this.” She begs me.

“Oh but I do. I won’t have to fight to be the favorite twin anymore, because I’ll be the only one left.”

“Eliza” She whispers.

But I am sick of listening to her talk, drawing the knife up I plunge it into her side. Adrenaline is coursing through my veins, I feel alive. I hear her gasp, causing me to smirk. I twist the knife around, smiling to myself. I’ve actually done it. I slowly pull the knife out, watching Elora sink to her knees. Taking the knife with me I pick up the phone and dial 9-1-1; “There’s been an accident, hurry! My sister and I have been stabbed!” I cry before hanging up.

I sink the knife into my own side, wincing slightly at the pain. I have to make this look like someone else though. I grab the kitchen towel before placing it on the handle of our back door and swinging it wide open. When I turn back I can see the red lights now. I drop to my

knees, making sure to grab the counter with my bloody hand for effect. Looking back at Elora, her eyes are shut, hands laying limp at her sides, this is almost going too perfectly. The door bursts open, and I switch gears.

“Help!” I scream.

“In here, please help us!”

Suddenly everything moves so fast, there are cops and paramedics everywhere. Two paramedics kneel down with Elora.

“I don’t have a pulse.” One says.

“No!” I sob, as two other paramedics are laying me back on a spine board.

They lift me onto a gurney, and wheel me out when a cop stops them.

“Is she stable enough for a few questions?” He asks.

“Make it quick or ride back with us.” The paramedic states.

“My sister, please!” I continue to sob, putting on the show of my life.

“What happened here miss?” The cop asks me.

“I - I don’t know. I was going to get a snack when I walked into the kitchen and someone with a mask stabbed her. I screamed, rushing towards her but then the person turned towards me. I tried to run to the phone but they stabbed me too before sprinting out our back door. But please, I need to see Elora. Please.” I beg, letting a tear escape.

“Thank you.” he says to me, and then;

“Units 1 and 2 start circling the block.”

The paramedics wheel me away, I look outside and see someone draping a white sheet over Elora. *Oh god.* I did that, I smile internally.

“Elora?!” I gasp, have to keep up the dramatics.

“Don’t look honey, it’s okay, you’re gonna be okay.” One of the paramedics tries and soothes me.

It’s too much, my adrenaline is crashing and I need a minute. Just a minute of sleep, I think to myself before my world goes black.

Warm, comforting. I feel warmth in both of my hands. My eyes flutter open, and I am in a hospital room. Mom and dad are on either side of me holding my hands.

“Eliza!” My mom exclaims, squeezing my hand tighter.

It’s been two weeks. Two whole weeks of freedom, and today will be the last day Elora ever gets to shine.

“Are you sure you’re okay to speak lovey?” My mom asks, coming up behind me and smoothing my jacket sleeves.

“Yes, I want to do this. For her, but also for you and dad.” I sigh for effect.

“That’s my girl.”

I make my way to the front of the church, and rehearse my speech in my head.

“Elora was more than just my sister, she was my better half. I want to thank you all for coming to today’s service. Elora was always better at this whole speaking thing than me, but I know if she were still here she’d be in the front row, cheering me on.” I lied.

This earns me a few sad smiles and some sniffles. I continue on.

“Elora was so full of light. Top of all her classes, student council president, and the best friend, student, daughter, and sister anyone could ask for. I’ve been trying to figure out how to keep her memory alive, and I think I’ve finally nailed it down. I want to announce that I will hopefully be going to Northeastern and majoring in criminal justice in honor of my *dear* twin sister.” With that, I take my place at my parents side.

My dad wraps me in a hug.

“Eliza, when did you decide that?” My mom asks with tears in her eyes.

“A couple days ago, I wanted to surprise you and dad.”

“We have never been prouder of you honey. We will get through this, the three of us, we can do it.” My dad says.

I smile to myself. Just the three of us, now that is something I could get used to.