

## Sweet Surrender

Life comes at you with opportunities that you wouldn't expect; sometimes you have to trust and seize the moment, other times you have to let it pass.

"I'll see you in a bit," he said.

I threw the phone down on my bed and sprinted into my bathroom to continue painting on my makeup. It was exactly one hour and 36 minutes until I was to meet him at Jansen Park for pictures. Sweat was starting to bead on the back of my neck out of sheer nervousness and butterflies swarmed in my stomach. This would be our first night to dance as a couple. In fact, this would be the first time I would ever be in formalwear.

"Olivia, are you ready yet? Your father is ready to go."

"I will be there in a minute, mom!"

That did nothing to calm my nerves. How did over an hour pass with me staring into the mirror trying to find any faults or imperfections in my appearance. Oh well, show time! As I take one last glance at the girl in the mirror, I finally accept my reflection. Standing there with long brown yet almost black hair curled and sprayed into a non-moving form was a specimen almost foreign to me. I have never seen myself look so dramatically different. I had a blue-sapphire strapless dress hugging my body tightly and glittering silver jewelry lying around my neck. I looked just how I wanted to look-elegant.

I ran the best I could into my room and grabbed my silver beaded heels and hauled for the car sitting in the driveway. I jumped in the back seat as gracefully as I could and slipped my

newly pedicured toes into my shimmering shoes. On my way to the park, all I could think about was, did I make a good choice?

As I got out of the car and stepped into the golden sunshine in the city park, my mom kept asking me if I had everything that I needed. She was just like a mother hen taking care of her little baby chick. I started wandering towards the cobblestone bridge in the middle of the park and made sure I still smelled like my favorite scent at the time, Chinese cherry blossom. As soon as I reached the bridge and looked down at the sparkling water rushing under the bridge, I heard my name.

"Olivia?"

I swirled around to find him standing there, looking me up and down, analyzing my appearance. His face said "I'm in love" and his body language said "I want to kiss you" but what he actually said was "You look amazing".

Who was this guy? He was so different from the memory I had. Did he realize was that he was a Greek god's competition? He was in an all black tux. His toffee brown hair was tousled from the wind and his green eyes knew that I was looking at him. I brought my eyes up to his and noticed a blue sapphire tie. I wanted to melt. He hinted that he wasn't going to wear any color except black, but he had the blue sapphire color just for me!

He sauntered over to me and placed his hand in mine and led me to a bubblegum-colored dogwood tree. There were no words exchanged, just smiles plastered on both of our faces. At that time he put his arm behind my waist and rested his hand on my lower back. The gesture surprised me and then I looked up at him awed.

Snap. Snap. Snap.

I shot my eyes at the direction of the sound and there standing before us was our own personal paparazzi team consisting of my family and his. Our lineage was photographing us in our little out-of-this-world moment. It made me giggle and I finally told him how great I thought he looked. Soon more pictures were taken and we finished with about 600 pictures. Now it was time for the whole reason we were dressed formally.

As we walked up the stairs just before dusk, we looked at each other and whispered out of nervousness. We entered through the threshold into a black draped room with white lanterns hanging from the ceiling, creating an atmosphere you wouldn't expect a high school to be able to achieve. We searched the crowds for our table of friends sitting in the right corner. As we pushed through the crowd, I could smell the chocolate-covered strawberries our moms had just dipped that afternoon and heard the sound of ice hitting clean plastic cups from the drink station. Music was playing softly from the DJ's large black sound equipment and the air around us was electrified with excitement in anticipation of the first dance.

Soon, everything got quiet and the lights were turned down. We heard the thumping of the bass of the first song pumping out of the speakers. It was fast paced and had a pulsing beat. As I looked toward the dance floor, I was soon being led to the center. Jeremy was taking me for a spin. My heart raced. Did he know I don't dance well?! My dancing occurred in my room all alone with my girly music blaring from my oversized computer, not in a room full of other teenagers who are probably born natural dancers. But here is my chance to show him I'm not afraid to try anything!

My body caught the rhythm. I was soon in a whirlwind of fun, dancing and singing to all the songs played, I didn't even realize the minutes passing, but then the music hit a slow chord. It

was time for the first slow dance. Couples coupled and loners drifted to the punch table. I was caught in the middle of the two. I started to move away when Jeremy slipped his hands around my back and pulled me to him. At first I was taken aback. I hoped I still looked put together when I was really breaking on the inside. We started swaying when I finally realized what song was playing. It was Aerosmith's "I Don't Wanna Miss a Thing" streaming beautifully from the DJ. I looked up at Jeremy wondering what he was thinking when I felt him pull even closer and whisper in my ear how pretty I looked to him. I smiled and almost screamed because I was so giddy. But I retained my dignity and placed my hands even tighter around his neck.

I love this boy, I thought. As the moments passed in "sweet surrender" (as Steven Tyler sings it), we both just enjoyed each other's closeness. I'm so glad I took a chance on this guy, who in the past seemed almost completely different than me. He was chubby and unpopular in the 7th grade and was the first boy to have a crush on me. Not that I was the epitome of popular, but we just seemed to like different things. He liked Nascar and soccer. I liked Disney and tennis. In fact I couldn't even tell you the name of a driver or position in Nascar or soccer. I'm glad I took his offer to be his date even though I didn't really know whether I should. I guess that's why they say, when opportunity comes knocking... I sure will be answering the door more often!