

CAMPUS TRAGEDIES

Written by

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INT. DORM ROOM - DAY

Cody (20), a somewhat nerdy college student in khakis and a polo, walks into his dorm room. His hair is bedraggled and he carries a jacket in one arm. He winces as the door slams shut behind him.

As he walks into the room, he sees his roommate Nathan (21), a tall and moderately built guy wearing sweat pants and a plain teeshirt. He is typing at his computer. The time on a clock reads 12:15PM.

CODY

Hey... I see you got back okay. You know... after what happened to those guys.

Cody makes his way to his half of the room and drops his jacket. Looking over towards Nathan, he rubs his eyes slowly. Nathan glances at him once.

NATHAN

Hung-over much?

CODY

Yeah... Can I get my, uh, my mug from you?

NATHAN

Sure.

Cody walks across the room slowly and waits a few feet away. Nathan picks up the mug and holds it behind his back without looking -- the knuckles on his hand are raw and slightly scabbed. Waiting apprehensively for a moment, Cody reaches out to take the mug and quickly walks to his desk.

CODY

So... how was your night?

Cody switches on his water boiler.

NATHAN

We were at the same party.

CODY

I know... I'm just asking.

NATHAN

It was fine.

Nathan doesn't look away from his laptop. Cody leans back in his bed and closes his eyes. His head nods backwards and accidentally hits the wall, so he sits up suddenly.

CODY  
You seem kinda irritated.

NATHAN  
Don't worry about it.

Pulling out his cell phone and fiddling with it, Cody takes a deep breath, then stares at Nathan from across the room.

CODY  
Come on, dude, what's up?

NATHAN  
(suddenly on edge)  
What, you want to have a heart to heart right this minute?

CODY  
(chuckles)  
If that's... necessary.

Nathan sits up straight and turns towards Cody.

NATHAN  
Okay, so how do you feel about Natasha breaking up with you? Want to talk about that?

CODY  
Dude, chill out, I'm just asking you if everything's okay.

Cody gets out of bed and stands by his desk. Nathan turns back to his laptop, shutting down again.

NATHAN  
Everything is fine. There's nothing to talk about.

Cody turns on his own computer, sitting down slowly.

CODY  
Well, there is one thing.

NATHAN  
I said I don't want to talk.

Cody signs into his account and starts logging into Facebook and his email. After a few moments he takes another deep breath and leans back in his chair, contemplating something. He scratches his stomach for a moment, then shakes his head.

Cody starts looking around online. He stops on an email that has already been opened: "CAMPUS SECURITY ALERT." He skims through it, stopping on "Four members of the fraternity were brutally accosted by the mugger, and two are currently hospitalized" and then "only one assailant."

CODY  
(tentatively)  
You see this security alert?

Nathan doesn't respond.

CODY (CONT'D)  
Seems kind of weird...

Nathan stops typing and looks straight ahead, clenching his jaw. Cody doesn't notice and pokes at a jar of pencils.

CODY (CONT'D)  
Just one guy --

NATHAN  
(interrupting)  
They deserved it.

Cody sits, wide-eyed and unresponsive. Nathan starts typing again without shifting his gaze. Cody sits up and sighs loudly just as his kettle starts whistling. He turns it off.

CODY  
(determined)  
Come on, dude, we both fucking saw what those guys were doing last night.

Nathan stops typing and immediately turns to look at him.

NATHAN  
So that's what you want to talk about? Why don't you just say it instead of pussy-footing around.

CODY  
I mean... yeah, two of them are in the hospital. You and I are the only ones that saw what they were doing before that happened.

NATHAN  
(severely agitated)  
And yet I'm the only one that did anything. You could've done something -- called the police, campus security. What did you do?

Cody suddenly looks excited and nervous.

CODY  
So you did do... something.

Nathan suddenly turns his whole chair towards Cody.

NATHAN  
Yes, I did -- gonna rat me out?

CODY  
(speaking slowly)  
No... I don't think so.

NATHAN  
Alright, so what the hell is there  
to talk about?

Cody looks around, unsure of what to say. It seems he is almost suppressing a smile.

NATHAN (CONT'D)  
We both walked in on what they were  
doing, so you already know what  
it's like to see something  
terrible. Do you want to know what  
it's like to actually do something  
terrible and have to keep it to  
yourself?

Cody's cocksure expression falters. Nathan stands up and starts approaching Cody, who tries to back away from his roommate, but is stuck in his chair.

CODY  
Uh...

NATHAN  
Do you want to know what it's like  
to hold a baseball bat and hit the  
teeth out of a few frat boys on the  
street at six in the morning?

CODY  
(balking)  
Jesus Christ...

NATHAN  
How I took their wallets so that  
people would think they were mugged  
and it wasn't some kind of insane  
campus vigilante?

CODY

Fuck, dude.

NATHAN

Yeah, "fuck, dude" is right. You want to fucking talk about this? Let's fucking talk about it, because, you're right, this shit is so crazy that maybe I should talk to someone about it.

At this point Nathan is leaning against Cody's desk and staring him down.

CODY

Okay, okay, just calm down.

NATHAN

It's over. They're not going to be fucking around with any girls like that again.

Nathan walks away and leans forward against his own bed, his back to Cody. He is breathing heavily.

CODY

But... I mean, come on Nathan, why?

NATHAN

Why? What do you mean why?  
(twists around quickly)  
Did you even know that girl's name?

Cody's mouth flaps open and closed a few times, then he looks at the floor, suddenly ashamed.

NATHAN (CONT'D)

You might not know this, but guys like them get away with that shit all the time -- at almost every college party,

fucked up shit like that is happening thousands of times across the country. And no one does anything -- you didn't even do anything.

Cody throws his hands up in defeat. Nathan looks at him with a victorious stare of righteous anger.

CODY

There are other things... to do.

Nathan tears off his sweat pants and starts putting on jeans as he's talking.

NATHAN

I'm not going to take the time to explain how futile most of those things are. I did what I had to do, what I could think of, and it wasn't easy. I'm not just some fucking nut job.

Slipping on shoes, Nathan heads towards the door.

CODY

Where are you going?

He puts on his jacket, ignoring Cody's question, then opens the door to leave.

NATHAN

Her name was Rebecca.

The door slams shut behind him. Cody watches after him bewildered.

CUT TO BLACK