

## Leaving the Pain

By: Dana K. Glasscock

"I'm leaving." My hand gripped the door, his hand gripped my wrist.

"No, you're not." His grip was like steel, bruising my skin again, but my will was staunch. I would not bend to his power.

"You have no right to hold me, and stop, *now*." My voice didn't shake. Improvement. I twisted my arm to face him, my hand still gripping the door. I hoped that my expression held no fear. I would not feel pain. His grip loosened as he stared into my dark, indomitable gaze, and I took advantage, forcing my wrist out of his hold. I felt the pain course over my skin, but it mattered little to me. I had endured worse from him. I shoved my bag between us, and pushed through the door. I dropped the house key at his feet. I wouldn't be coming back.

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As the car moved forward, I felt my mind tugging me back into the dark despair of my memories. Memories of him.

*"You're happy here, right honey?" His pleading voice felt like shards of ice on my skin, "You're happy with me?" I knew I had to say yes. I had no choice; it was that or more pain. Still, I didn't want to speak to him. He made me feel weak, spineless. Not speaking was the only form of rebellion I felt I was capable of doing.*

*"Yes." I cringed for what was coming. I knew that the answer had not been enough, he wanted to hear more. The devil inside him needed to hear justification.*

*"Yes, what?!" The blow to my face was almost as bad as the blow to my pride. I crumpled to the floor, but I did not answer his question. Instead, I asked myself a different question. Why didn't I say no?*

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I had said no. I couldn't believe it. I had defied him, and I had lived...

*"You don't want to live without me, right honey?" The look was in his eyes, the sadistic hunger, and the insanity. "You'd die without me, right? Say it, please." I didn't speak; I didn't say what I was thinking. He took that as a no.*

*"Fine, then, if you can live without me, then you will have to deal with living with me. You are mine. I own you. I say whether or not you die, and trust me, you won't live unless it's with me." He accented his point with a possessive bash to my ribs. As though the mark it left was his way of branding me as his forever. My despair at the future in front of me blocked out the pain in my bones.*

\* \* \* \*

Ow. My wrist throbbed painfully, the bruise was a nasty purple, and I felt the urge to cover it up with make-up. It was what he would have made me do.

Cover it up. Hide it; hide the marks of his anger. *No*. No longer would I hide my pain. Instead, I pressed my foot down on the accelerator a little farther. I was leaving the make-up, the bruises, and him behind me. It was time for a new beginning; a new start.