

A True Friend Stabs You Upfront

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Submitted: April 12, 2007

Updated: April 12, 2007

Hormones, Heratbreak and Attraction levels run high in small groups of friends. Even if all of the friends are the same gender...

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Living behind a curtain, hiding. That's what Ray Toro had been doing for the past six years, both literally and figuratively. The literal part of the equation was his hair- the mop of ginger-brown curls that hid his face so he couldn't see, especially if he was crouched over his guitar. Figuratively, it was Gerard. Ray wasn't exactly sure what his feelings for Gerard were, and when they had started. But all Ray was that it wasn't helped by having to constantly watch Gee prancing around a stage in tight black jeans at shows, or wandering around the tour bus in next to nothing when they were on the road. There was another thing that hurt- Frank.

Frank was- there was no other word for it- hyper. Running around screaming happily, playing guitar 'til his peachy fingers bled, and worst of all for Ray, engaging in physical contact with Gerard. Hugging and touching and kissing. The My Chemical Romance lead guitarist wasn't at all surprised that the two were so intimate- though he didn't like to admit it, and didn't like to be jealous of his friend, he knew that Frank was as gorgeous as Gerard. Why should Gee like Ray when he could have- and partially did have- Frankie?

This was the thought running once again through Ray's head as he sat on the bed in his hotel room, clutching his guitar. He wasn't playing anything, wasn't trying to, he was just holding it while he thought. He almost jumped when he heard someone clear their throat. Gerard was half-in, half-out of this room, his long black hair wet and tousled, a towel around his neck. Ray swallowed. Many, many a time he had dreamed of the day Gerard came into Ray's room and confessed his love for him. Many, many a time it had seemed to be coming true- but then didn't.

"Hey." Ray said flatly, trying not to look at his bandmate.

"Hey," Gee replied, stepping properly into the room, "Wanna come out for a meal?"

Ray looked up.

"What?"

"With me and the other guys...Frank and Mikey and Bob." The guitarist's heart sank. Ah well. It'd happened before, it'd happen again.

"Oh. Uh. Yeah. Sure." Ray said, wondering if he could manage anything more than two syllables that wasn't,

"I LOVE YOU, IDIOT!" He instead said,

"Just let me put my guitar away and change my shirt." He did the first of those things, and then glanced at Gerard, "See you in a minute," He prompted. Gerard smirked.

"I'll stay here. You're not embarrassed are you?"

"No." Ray said defiantly, very clearly embarrassed, "Just...uh. Fine." His heart pounding against his ribcage, he pulled off his shirt. Gerard whistled.

"You been working out?" He laughed.

'Oh God, please no. Don't blush.' Ray thought quickly. But too late. His face flushed pink. 'Pink,' Ray pondered to himself, 'Why always pink? Why not red?'

"Oi, Ray," Gerard said, interrupting Ray's thoughts, putting a hand on his bare shoulder and shaking him, "You alright?" His hand might as well have been a red hot poker; it sent a burning energy through Ray, but not in a good way. It hurt. The guitarist shrugged the singer's grip off.

"I'm fine," He almost snarled, being angry in an attempt to hide his pain, pulling on a shirt so vigorously

he almost tore the seams, "I'll catch you up, honest, give me a minute."

Gerard blinked his large hazel eyes, shocked at Ray's outburst, then shrugged. He turned on his heel and left the room without another word. Shaking, Ray sunk down to his knees and started to cry.

Again.