What happens after you fall for your best friend?

Sincerely, Arizona

NEW YORK TIMES & USA TODAY BESTSELLING AUTHOR

WHITNEY G. G.
This is a work of fiction. Similarities to real people, places, or events are entirely coincidental.

SINCERELY, ARIZONA

Table of Contents

Copyright Page
Dedication
Sincerely, Arizona
Sincerely, Arizona | Whitney G.
To you, Best Readers Ever :-}
Sincerely, Arizona

**Note: This is not a standalone or a novel. It’s the previously unpublished epilogue to Sincerely, Carter, and the easiest way I could make sure as many readers as possible have it since I normally post things like this on my blog. :-)  

PS—Yes, I will still post this on my blog

PPS—This title will be officially released September
10th.

Just friends.
We’re just friends.
No, wait. We’re no longer *just* best friends...
Sincerely,
Arizona
Whitney G.
The night of the diner incident...

“I loved you then. I love you now. And I always will...” Carter’s words were currently repeating themselves in my mind as he held me close.

With a smile on my lips, I replayed the past few hours of us in bed, how months of distance were easily erased.
As Carter ran his fingers through my hair, I looked into his eyes—unsure of what to say. What to do next.

There had to be some exception about returning to the semester late, some special clause about having your best friend tell you he loves you and your world coming to a complete standstill.

Even if there wasn’t, I was tempted to call the dean
of academics and ask.
  I didn’t want to go back to France at all. I wanted to stay
  “Are you okay?” He brushed a strand of hair out of my face.
  I nodded.
  “Why are you so quiet, then? What are you thinking about?”
  “France.”
  He secured his arms around my waist and rolled
me on top of him. “I’m taking you to the airport on time. As much as I’d like for you to, I won’t let you stay this time either.”

“What makes you think I would ever consider staying?” I asked. “I was just thinking about how I can’t wait to get back actually.”

“In that case, I can take you to the airport right now if you like.” His lips curved into a smirk and I rolled my eyes
—unable to keep up that charade.

“Three and a half days...” I said softly. “I feel like I’ve already wasted most of my time here being mad at you.”

“No, you wasted it with Sean.”
34. You Are In Love

Arizona

With the taste of pancake batter still on my lips and the sting of my recent tattoo on my arm, I hugged my mother days later. She’d been right; I’d nearly forgotten to stop by during my last few days. I’d been too busy trying to spend every second with Carter, to make up for lost time.

“I thought you hated wearing turtlenecks.” She
looked me up and down. “Did you not pack enough clothes or something?”

“Unfortunately.” I blushed, thinking about the bright red hickeys that Carter had placed all over my neck hours earlier. “So, you can guilt me into coming over but you don’t want to ride along to see me off at the airport?”

“The first time was traumatic enough,” she said. “I experienced enough
anxiety to last me a lifetime.
No, thank you. I love you all the same though.”

I laughed and handed her a printout of flight information for her sanity.
“You’ll get over your fears and fly to France someday.”

“No.” She kissed my forehead. “You’ll always come visit. Speaking of which, have you decided how often you’ll be seeing Carter?”
I shook my head. Originally, his intent of once a month sounded probable, but last night, when we’d discussed it, we realized that often would never work. Between his law requirements, and my weekends spent studying in restaurants, it was nearly impossible. The earliest I could see him again would be during the summer.

Six months from now.
“He’s going to come see me in June,” I said. “He already bought the ticket.”

“Good!” She hugged me again. “And when will you be coming back here?”

“August.”

“Even better.” She smiled. “Are you going to apologize to Sean when you get back?”

“Definitely,” I said. “I already sent him an email, but I’m going to do my best to
say sorry in person. If he doesn’t slam the door in my face, that is.”

“He won’t.” She looked as if she was going to say something else, but Nicole walked into the room.

“Hey there!” She rushed over, giving me a dramatic hug. “Were you going to leave without telling me goodbye?”

“I would’ve video-chatted with you tomorrow.”
“Well, then!” She laughed. “Good to know I’m back in second citizen territory since you’re back with Carter, huh?”
Two Weeks Gone
Two Weeks Gone.
Carter
Subject: Crack and Cream
Dear Arizona,
Thank you for sending me your recent concoction of dried waffle chips and buttercream in the mail. I can honestly say it’s just as good (if not better) than Gayle’s. (Josh says they were “just okay” although he fucking stole most of it.) However, I
have to be honest with you and tell you that Josh thinks your intent to call it “Sweet Cocaine” won’t be a good idea. He suggests “Sweet High.”

I personally think both are pretty terrible.

The opposite can be said of the pictures you included though. (Are you tempting me to come see you sooner?) I *did* send you a letter last week and I’m not sure why
you didn’t get it; check again tomorrow. Maybe it was delayed for the weather here. Thirty one days.

Sincerely,

Carter

Subject: Re: Crack and Cream.

Well, good thing I didn’t listen to Josh (or you). My teacher thought it was
brilliant and I won our class’s weekly challenge. (Thank you for keeping my supply of Gayle’s batter never-ending. )

Glad you appreciated the pictures. I’ve attached more, and yes, I am tempting you to come sooner. I actually just checked the mail and got TWO letters from you. I’ll open them after we Skype later tonight.
Thirty days, Carter. How many times do we have to go through this?

Off to eat more ‘sweet cocaine’,

Arizona

Dear Carter (Josh)

Do you really think I don’t know Carter’s handwriting? Do you really think he would EVER write,
“I’m so glad I listened to Josh about you. He was so right about fucking you one good time and [you] falling in love with [me]. That’s also why Josh will forever be my number one because you had a very long and selfish moment, but Josh has ALWAYS been loyal”??!!

Grow the hell up!

And learn how to write a proper sentence. (Aren’t you in law school?)
Dear Arizona (Pain in my ass)

Of course I’m aware that you know Carter’s handwriting, but since we shouldn’t waste time discussing things you know, here are some things you don’t: Your never-ending phone calls and Skype
sessions (mostly your loud ass laughter and incessant babbling about absolutely nothing: “Oh my god, Carter...I miss you so much, Carter...”This distance is killing me every day, carter”) have kept me up for WEEKS. Is it too much for the two of you to go back to strictly letter writing and emails?

I think I liked you better when you weren’t talking to each other.
You grow up first.
I will learn how to write a proper sentence...From someone who doesn’t start her own sentences with the word “And”.

Josh

Subject: Skype App.
Dear Arizona,
I’m not sure what could’ve happened to it
between last night and today, but it’s not working. At all. Even the volume looks as if it’s not working. I won’t be able to get it fixed until next week, but I’ll have to use Josh’s computer to reach you tonight so we may have to talk an hour later than usual.

Sincerely,
Carter

Subject: Re: Skype Camera.
LOLOLOL!
Arizona
I closed Ari’s latest email and clicked on my latest term paper. On nights like tonight, it was if she’d never left, as if she was still minutes away from being picked up at her house.

Over the past few weeks, a new sort of routine had developed between us. Instead of weekend meet ups at Gayle’s there were early
morning emails: She traded me her rainy coasts in exchange for white sanded beaches, and I gave her glimpses of moments at Gayle’s while she showed me her concoctions inside the cooking school.

At night, we talked for hours—despite the fact that we both had tons of work to do. We video-chatted whenever our roommates
were asleep, and of course, there were still letters.

I didn’t think it was possible for either of us to ever let that go. [...] When I’d reached the eighth page of my assignment, I realized it was midnight so I headed downstairs.

“Have you talked to your wife tonight?” Josh asked as I stepped in front of the TV. “If
so, bravo. I barely heard your conversation this time.”

“You’ve moved Ari from girlfriend to wife now?”

“Might as well.” He groaned, handing me his laptop. “And I swear I wasn’t trying to kill your Skype app. I was just trying to ruin it so you’d never be able to use it again.”

“Did you actually hear what the fuck you just said?”
“I did.” He laughed. “Wait, before you go. I need to ask for your advice on something.”

“Yes, your taste in clothes is absolutely terrible. Was that your question?”

“No.” He rolled his eyes. “I think—” He paused. “I think I might actually like someone. More than just a normal like...”

“I’m sorry to hear that,” I said. “You’re not my type.”
“What the fuck, Carter?” He grabbed his beer. “Did I get sarcastic with you when you were moping about Arizona for months? When you were crying like a seven year old when every woman on this beach was willing to give her pussy to you and you were too blind to see it?”

I shook my head, refusing to entertain his warded memories. “Okay, fine. You
like someone. Does this someone have a name?"

"She doesn’t. That’s actually her best quality," he said. "But I don’t think she’s aware that I actually like her beyond what’s currently happening. There’s only so much more of this ‘just friends’ shit I can take, you know? I’m not you."

"Is there’s a question coming?" I asked. "Or is this a venting session?"
“I need your advice on helping me figure out how to get out of the friend zone. Preferably by the end of the week. We can discuss it on Saturday.” He grabbed a pair of earplugs and stuck one in his ear. “Okay. I’ve told you, so you can go now.”
A Sneak peek of RESENTMENT by Nicole London

To be the first to get the release date for Resentment and information on all upcoming releases by Nicole London, join her Mailing List > http://eepurl.com/bkhKNX

Resentment Coming Soon TBR Link on Goodreads: http://bit.ly/1AiY5e7
Dean Collins is the most irresistible asshole at Central High School.

He’s your typical cliché, Mr. Popular. The “guy’s guy” who’s been voted “Homecoming King” two times in a row (minus my vote); the sexy star quarterback who’s capable of making grown women swoon
from the sidelines (it really is sad), and the guy who can charm the hell out of any admiring girl with a simple smile, and a “Hey...What’s up?” in five seconds flat.

His face is the object of sculptures—hard and strong jawline, deep and piercing green eyes and dimples that show even when he’s not smiling. And, as if that wasn’t enough for the gods to endow him with, he has a six pack of
abs that he always shows off, and full and defined lips that sometimes even make me wonder what they would feel like.

Nonetheless, I always do my best to avoid Dean Collins like the plague: I leave the four classes we take together early, never go to pep rallies to cheer on the team (Dean is the team), and the few times that he’s attempted that “Hey...What’s
“Up?” thing on me, I’ve offered a blank stare and walked away.

Today my usual avoidance routine seems to be getting tested. Especially since he’s currently standing five feet away from me.

“Yes?” I look up from my canvas and stare at him from across the classroom. “May I help you with something? You’re not in art club.”
“I’m aware.” He smirks, looking around the empty classroom. “But it doesn’t look like anyone is in art club...”

That part is true. There’s actually no such thing as “art club” at Central High. It’s just me taking over whatever classroom I can find to paint for a few hours.

“We’re currently accepting applications for membership,” I say, setting
my paintbrush down in the easel tray. “What can I help you with?”

“I did come here for something...” He steps into the room and pulls the door closed. “But, now that you claim that you’re accepting applications for your club, can I fill one out?”

“We don’t accept douchebags,” I say flatly. “Your application wouldn’t make it past round one.”
“Douchebag?”
“Yes, douchebag. Would you like me to give you the definition?”

Laughing, he tilts his head to the side. “I’m well versed on the definition, Mia Gray...” He stares at me for a long time, looking right into my eyes, giving me his usual charm.

I immediately break our gaze and clear my throat.
“You said you came here for
something? Can you hurry up and tell me what it is so I can get back to addressing my art club? Today is a very important day for us.”

“I can see that...” He pulls his backpack off his shoulder and opens it, pulling out a black notebook. *My black notebook.*

“I found your notebook this morning,” he says, “so I wanted to find you and give it back. I tried to give it to you
after Physics class but I couldn’t get your attention.”

I reach out for it, but then I stop. “Where exactly did you find it?”

“It was in the Lost and Found. I just saw it on top of everything in there when I got to school.”

“You know, that’s funny,” I say, crossing my arms. “Because I’ve been checking Lost and Found every day and in between
every class for *weeks* and it was never there...”

“Maybe you just didn’t look hard enough.”

“I even checked it *this morning*, and it wasn’t there. It. Was. Not. There.”

He smiles and flips through the pages. “You have a very pretty handwriting...”

“Where did you really find it, Dean?”
“You take pretty detailed notes, too.”

“Did you steal my fucking notebook?”

“Maybe.” His lips curve into a smirk.

*WHAT?!* I nearly scream, knowing that that’s exactly what has happened. “I had to rewrite the entire thing in one night! The night before our midterm!”

Still smiling, he walks over and sets it on my easel.
“Well, good thing you somehow managed to still get an A, right? If it wasn’t for me, you probably wouldn’t have known that you were capable of rewriting a notebook in a night. I helped you push your boundaries, so I think I deserve a thank you.”

It takes everything in me not to pick up my canvas and knock him out with it, but I remain calm-kind of. I stand
up from my chair and push the easel by the window. Then I pick up my backpack and storm out of the room, biting my lip to prevent myself from screaming.

I make it to the parking lot and head straight for the after-school bus stop, muttering and cursing under my breath.

“Mia?” Dean calls my name from behind. “Mia?”
I say nothing. My mind is still stuck on the fact that he stole my notebook; that he was in class the day I pleaded for everyone to keep a look out for it and let me know if they knew anything.

Asshole...

“Mia...” His hand suddenly grabs my elbow and he turns me around to face him. “Mia, I know you can hear me.”
“I really can’t. I’m completely deaf to assholes who steal things, assholes who steal things on purpose.”

He gives me that gorgeous trademark grin and I almost smile back—that’s how charming he is. I quickly come to my senses, though, and snatch my arm away.

“Thank you for stealing my notebook and having the decency to give it back,” I say. “Now, if you would
please continue to leave me the hell alone for the rest of the day—No, the rest of the year, I’d gladly appreciate it.” I don’t give him a chance to respond. I rush to the bus stop and lean against one of the posts.

A slight drizzle begins to fall and I look down the street, hoping that the headlights of a yellow bus appear soon.
I take out my earbuds and turn my music up loudly. It’s going to take me a minute to get back into my original happy mood.

Just as I’m starting to calm down, I see a black Camaro stop in front of me. It’s Dean - again.

I turn around and give him a great view of my back. I turn my music up louder, just in case he tries to talk to me, but my headphones are
the cheap, flimsy kind and they don’t have outside sound block.

“Let me take you home to make up for stealing your notebook, Mia,” Dean says, actually sounding sincere.

I ignore him and start nodding to my music, hoping he’ll just go away.

*I knew I was right for hating him...*

“Mia...” He speaks again. “Mia, have you noticed
you’re the only one at the bus stop? The last one left ten minutes ago.”

Discreetly, I glance at the watch on my wrist and groan. I’ve forgotten that the first day of the new after-school bus schedule starts this week.

Shaking my head, I turn around and start to walk. There’s a city bus stop about six blocks down.

I expect Dean to go away, but he doesn't. He stays on
pace with me in his car, driving alongside me as I stroll on the sidewalk.

When I speed up, he speeds up. When I cross streets, he makes a U-turn and does the same. And when I reach a crosswalk with a pedestrian stoplight, he tries his luck again.

“Look, Mia,” he says leaning over the passenger seat. “Let me take you home.”
“Not interested.”
“Well, at least let me take you to the next bus stop.”
“A four block ride? No thanks.”
“So, you’re really going to walk all the way home in the rain?”

I hesitate, now realizing that the slight drizzle has turned into actual rain, and that by the look of the skies above, it’s about to fall even harder.
“Yes,” I say. “Yes, I guess I am really going to walk all the way home in the rain.”

He parks the car and gets out, walking over to me. Without saying anything else, he puts his arm around my shoulder and leads me to his car, opening the passenger door.

“Get in, Mia.”

The pedestrian light turns green, and I want to back
away, but hatred of Dean or not, I’m not going to last four more blocks in the rain.

I slip inside, and he shuts the door behind me. He returns to his place behind the wheel and drives through the light.

“Where do you live?” he asks, looking over at me.

“The corner of Seventh and Broadway.”

“Okay...” He turns on the radio, and I’m surprised to
hear my favorite band blasting through the speakers. I almost compliment him on his good taste, but then I remember he’s a thief.

Thieves do not have good taste.

Neither of us speaks as he coasts through the suburbs and onto the backstreets, but I can feel tension between us; I even feel butterflies in my stomach.
As we approach Seventh and Broadway, he shakes his head and slows his speed. “Mia, you do not live here...This is just the entrance to your subdivision.”

“Okay, and do you really think I would give you my real address? I’ll walk the rest of the way. The rain isn’t that bad now.”

Smiling, he drives past the entrance, far down the
street, and parks the car in an abandoned lot.

“What are you doing?” I ask. “Go back. Go back right now.”

“I need your help with AP English.

“I need your help with learning directions...My neighborhood is back there.”

He ignores my comment. “AP English is the only class I don’t have an A in.”

“You make A’s?”
“Yes.” He smirks. “I make A’s, except for English. I have a C plus and I need at least a B minus if I’m going to look appealing to colleges.”

“Wait a minute, what?” I try to temporarily put my annoyances aside. “You’re the star football player. You don’t need to make good grades to get an athletic scholarship; you just need to
keep playing football. Isn’t that what you want?”

He doesn’t answer that. Instead he sighs. “I need you to help me with the literature components and help me strengthen some of my essays.”

“Why do you want me to help you?”

“Why wouldn’t I? You have the best grade in the class and I’m pretty sure being a smart ass, which you
clearly are, requires quite a few brain cells, so I figure there’s no one better to ask.”

“Maybe, but I’m not interested.”

“I’ll pay you.”

I look at him for a second to see if he’s being serious.

“Is that how you get what you want?”

“No, that’s not my usual method, but I figure you won’t go for that.” That
stupid grin is on his face again.

“My services don’t come cheap,” I say. “They’re not cheap at all.”

“Honestly, I’d be disappointed if they were.”

“Then in that case, I’m sure you can’t afford me.”

“Try me.” He cranks the engine and starts to drive, heading toward my neighborhood again.
I think for a moment, unsure of what tutors usually charge. I come up with a number I know he won’t agree to. “Twenty dollars an hour.”

“Deal,” he says smoothly. “Deal? Just like that?”

“Why not?”

“Because that’s a lot of money.”

“I’m sure you’ll be worth every penny.”
“Fine. We’ll start next week.” I wait for him to drop me off at the corner, where I told him I stayed, but he drives into the neighborhood instead.

Looking over at me, he warns, “I’m not letting you out of the car until you tell me which of these houses is yours? I need to make sure you get home safe.”

“So, now you’re a gentleman?”
“Only for some girls.” He smiles and I roll my eyes, deciding to give in so I can get this ride over with.

“5632...Down a few more houses and on your left.”

He nods and speeds up a little, eventually pulling right in front of my mailbox.

I immediately unbuckle my seatbelt and collect my bag from the floor. Thanks for the ride.”
“Wait a minute,” he says. “I need your phone number...for tutoring purposes of course,” he adds with a sly smile.

He hands me his phone and I reluctantly type in my number. I save it under “For Tutoring Purposes of Course” and give it back to him before getting out and rushing inside my house.

As soon as I make it upstairs to my room, my cell
phone buzzes with a text notification. It’s an unknown number.

This is Dean. Here’s my number, you can save it under “For ANY Purposes Of Course...”

I should’ve known to stay away from him that very day...