

## Truth or Dare

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](http://archiveofourown.org/works/21969643) at <http://archiveofourown.org/works/21969643>.

Rating:	<a href="#">Teen And Up Audiences</a>
Archive Warning:	<a href="#">No Archive Warnings Apply</a>
Category:	<a href="#">F/F</a>
Fandom:	<a href="#">Women's Soccer RPF</a>
Relationships:	<a href="#">Tobin Heath/Christen Press</a> , <a href="#">Lucy Bronze/Christen Press</a>
Characters:	<a href="#">Lucy Bronze</a> , <a href="#">Kelley O'Hara</a> , <a href="#">Tobin Heath</a> , <a href="#">Christen Press</a>
Additional Tags:	<a href="#">That absolutely insane 2009 NCAA Championship tournament</a> , <a href="#">Fluff</a> , <a href="#">My take on what happened in College</a> , <a href="#">College AU</a> , <a href="#">PREATH - Freeform</a> , <a href="#">With some fun stuff in the middle.</a> , <a href="#">I created a new ship that didn't exist before yay me</a>
Language:	English
Stats:	Published: 2019-12-26 Updated: 2019-12-28 Words: 5,757 Chapters: 3/?

# Truth or Dare

by [tangerinestars](#)

## Summary

It's December of 2009, and the regular NCAA season has just ended, with only the very best teams advancing towards the final. Among them, some of the very best players in the world-collegiate rivals, trophy winners, best friends, teammates, and... maybe something more?

or

a college!Preath origin story.

## Notes

Happy Holidays! I was given "Preath play Truth or Dare" as a prompt on Tumblr AGES ago, and it began to spin into something neat. I hope you enjoy! :)

# Spin

*There is an unspoken, fascinating phenomenon which many observe, but few discuss. And that is of the weekend relationship.*

*This happens in a few contexts, though they are fundamentally mostly the same. A bunch of horny strangers (mostly in their teens) thrown together around some kind of event or focus, happy to make out and sometimes a little more, before ending the weekend with an exchange of numbers, or sometimes not.*

*It happens in during competitions, of all variety; teams who couldn't risk the mess of hooking up with their own teammates suddenly find themselves with a group of new (or sometimes familiar) faces, ready to win, and also ready to get some.*

*Camps are good for this, though sometimes they are a little prolonged, and hearts get involved.*

*Debate or arts competitions are good, though sometimes stifled by the deep feels, confused sexualities, and/or inability to speak to one another outside of a faux courtroom.*

*But sports... sports are where it's at, and college soccer is no exception.*

\*\*\*\*\*

***December, 2009***

“Kelley, I really feel like we shouldn't be doing this.” Kelley just looks back at her, expression unchanging.

“No one is going to care. Live a little!”

Christen hated that phrase. *Live a little*. “I was living quite nicely with my laptop and no shoes on in our hotel room.”

“Yeah, but what’s the fun of that?” Kelley and Christen paused outside the door, and she surreptitiously sent a text before flipping the phone shut, and sliding it into the pocket of her hoodie.

“Um, it was lame and boring, and this is going to be much more fun. I promise if you’re miserable, we don’t have to stay long.”

Christen looked around her, warily, hoping someone on their staff didn’t have a window overlooking the outside entrance to the other hotel across the parking lot, where two Stanford Cardinals were attempting to sneak in, in order to hang out in the hotel room of one of their greatest rivals. Kelley was acting like it was a walk in the park, and Christen was sure she was going to get in trouble. *Absolutely positive*.

About a minute later, a door midway down the hall opens up, and Christen can see Tobin Heath padding towards them, oversized Carolina blue hoodie, messy bun, and basketball shorts.

*Why does she look good? **How** does she look hot? I don’t get it.*

“HEY!!” Tobin wrapped Kelley up in a hug like she was family, and Christen felt a pang of... what was it? Jealousy? She’d only really met Tobin a handful of times, and they’d been teammates that summer, but everyone was focused on a million other things, and Tobin had her friends, and Christen had hers... It didn’t help that Tobin and Kelley were close, having been on youth national teams together for years, at this point. Tobin and Christen had been friendly, but never especially *friends*.

“Hey Christen!” Tobin opened her arms, and Christen slid around for a side hug. Of course she felt like a *dork* afterwards. *Who gives side hugs anymore? SO middle school.*

Tobin held open the door and Kelley and Christen both ducked under her arm, and she indicated her room to the left. The Tar Heels had only arrived about an hour earlier, in comparison to the Cardinals, who'd touched down in Texas earlier that afternoon, and settled into their rooms. Kelley and Christen were roommates, and Christen had been both wary and grateful, not sure if she'd signed up to be in the party room.

Mercifully, instead, it seemed like the Heels were a tad more chaotic, and the moment Tobin and Kelley had figured out that their hotels were literally divided by a parking lot, they'd planned on partying in Tobin's room. She'd been put in a double suite, with her roommate Nikki, and a connecting door to Brit and Kling's room.

There was mess everywhere. It was as though all the local convenience stores had been raided of all their cheap beer, chips, and candy. Tobin laughed at Christen's face, pure shock crossing her features and a little bit of awe.

She smiled, and scratched the back of her neck, vaguely, sheepishly trying to justify- "We... pre plan. Win or lose, we still booze!" Christen heard a "Wooo!" from the adjoining room, and turned to see a few people bustling in the other room, among them Meghan Klingenberg, a teammate of Kelley and Tobin's.

"KLING!" Kelley shouted.

"Sup, dude! Ready to suck ass?" Kling stuck out her tongue.

"In your dreams!" Kelley replied, sliding off her shoes and yanking off her hoodie, tying it into a knot around her waist. She headed into the other room, leaving Tobin and Christen in the living area of the suite.

"You can... uh... sit down if you want." Tobin gestured towards the dark blue loveseat, where Christen sat, not realizing Tobin would join her in such close proximity and not take the chair.

“So how ya been?” Christen could smell her laundry detergent and was absolutely distracted by the long expanse of leg tucked under-

“Good! You know, we’re here. Trying to figure out what’s next-“

“OI!” There was a dull thudding on the other side of the suite door, and Tobin hopped up to answer, and striking brunette followed her in, clearly ecstatic. “Who would have thought this Texas grocery store would have such a great international section? I got some favorites, some Aero, a few Curly Wurlies, and they EVEN had some Fruit Pastilles, which I missed so much, let me tell you. Oh. Hello. I don’t believe we’ve met.”

“Oh, yeah, sorry- Christen, this is Lucy.”

“Bronze, Lucy Bronze.” She reached out and shook Christen’s hand, who looked at her, slightly startled. “Do Americans not do James Bond jokes? I feel like that one’s fallen short a few times.”

“No, it’s - uh, fine.” *God, she’s British .*

“Good, nice to meet the enemy. Well, which pile, Tobes?” Tobin gestured towards a growing mountain of Cheetos, gummy worms, Doritos, and family sized packs of M&Ms, Starburst, and Skittles. She added her additions, and plopped down into the seat Tobin had been previously occupying and then Tobin settled into the opposing chair. Christen could hear Kelley and some less identifiable voices chattering away, and she did her best to sit in the silence brewing between between the three of them. She nearly spoke up when more voices echoed through the hall, and even more players walked in; a tall blondish girl with a tight bun and dimpled smile, and some players she’d recognized from other games.

Pretty soon after, Tobin was distracted and chatting with friends, leaving the two of them alone, Christen, watching everyone get along, and Lucy on her phone. She flipped it closed and turned.

“So, what do you normally do at these kinds of parties?” Her fingers were interwoven and resting on her stomach, and Christen swallowed her distraction, though she considered

storing the image of her hands, strong but soft, with short nails and a black hairband around her wrist- for later. Maybe. Like, once they were home and not competing for a championship.

“I... I mean, when I’m at parties I normally know people, but usually I’m just trying to avoid stupid games where I have to do something embarrassing. You’d be surprised how strategically I can take out the trash and need to wash my hands, and get a drink, and find a million other excuses not to play Spin the Bottle.”

Surprisingly, the cute British girl laughed.

“Not quite the answer I was expecting! Why do you hate games so much?”

Just in time, Kelley walked over and perched on the arm of Christen’s chair, nearly empty bottle of Corona in hand. She offered Christen a cold one with the top already popped off, and turned to the new face.

“Hi, I’m Kelley.”

“Lucy.”

Christen squirmed. “No thanks, I don’t want to drink this close to a game, plus I’m not legal yet..”

“Uh, not legal for.. What, three weeks? Plus, what did I say before? Liiiiive a little!”

Christen shook her head, crossed her arms, and offered a shiny grin. “Just say no, and all that, Kel.”

Kelley laughed, rolled her eyes, and shrugged, offering the beer to Lucy who took it gladly. “Alright, Miss D.A.R.E.” They clinked bottles, each taking a sip. “So whazzup?”

“Christen here was telling me of her love of party games.”

“Hey!-”

“You guys play UCLA tomorrow, right? Tobin asked, sliding onto the floor on the other side of the coffee table from Christen. She was grateful for the diversion.

“Yeah, I’m not looking forward to facing Cheney out there. I miss her!”

“Anyone want a soda? The machine gave me two.” Another Tarheel and Pali Blues teammate, Whitney walked into the room.

“Yes please!”

“Chriiiiiis!” She walked over and kissed the top of Christen’s head, while offering her the soda, and sitting down beside her.

Kelley piped up. “I texted Cheney and Syd to see if they could come hang out, but their coach is a bit of a bitch and they’re on full lockdown. No leaving, no parties, no junk food, no anything. Not even now, two days before the semis.”

“Yikes. Glad I avoided that situation!” Christen replied. The collected few raised their drinks, and cheered.

“Speaking of missing, where’s Ali?” Tobin asked.

“Phone call. I think it was the only good time to talk to her grandmother- time zones and everything. Not to fear, though- we can have fun without our Captain.” She dripped the final drops of beer onto her tongue, and placed the bottle down onto the coffee table, turning to her fellow Cardinal with a devilish grin, before spinning the bottle as the blood drained from Christen’s face.



It was as though she *knew*. She knew the bottle was going to stop in front of her, and she *knew* that Kelley knew, and -

“Ooooooh! Tobin and Christen!”

*fuck.*

## Swig

They locked eyes across the table, and Tobin gave her the sweetest smile, asking- “are you okay?” in this silent, wordless language that Christen could understand.

She tried to play it cool, nodding and averting her eyes, you know- whatever. *I had a crush on you this summer and think you're really cute and now you're asking me if you can kiss me in front of your friends and my friends and*

“Christen?”

She snapped out of her daze, and shifted forward onto her knees, leaning across the candy-strewn coffee table towards this chill weird cool girl who reached a gentle hand out to cup her face. She felt her breath, warm against her lips, and then the lightest peck, until Christen pushed forward because she wanted a little more and had lost all of her impulse control in the last 10 seconds.

Tobin's lips tasted like literal candy, and she wanted more.

Still, quite quickly, she pulled back and sat on her knees, ignoring the cheers and guffaws of their friends. She didn't mean to, but she caught Tobin's eye for a fleeting moment before Tobin was looking down at her phone again.

Probably texting a girlfriend or something to let her know what happened.

And so she did the best/worst thing she could think of, and made eye contact with Lucy, before reaching over to grab the beer she'd previously rejected and taking a sip. *If Tobin was going to have a distraction, then she would too.*

When Lucy got up to get another drink, she brought back two, and carefully nudged one into Christen's hand. She smiled at her again, taking the bottle between her lips, and letting the hard cider wash over her tongue.

The game continued, with Kelley kissing the dimpled girl named Ashlyn, but she really noticed Tobin keeping her head down, and the occasional, casual, barely there grazes and kicks from Lucy, who was following her lead, and quite definitely flirting. More girls came over, and Kling, Nikki, Kelley and Ashlyn started playing poker.

Christen and Lucy had moved down to a spot in front of the hotel ac unit, squished together, hip to hip and knee to knee.

“So no drinking, no games, and then... yes games? And drinking?” Lucy had rested her arms on her knees, and turned her head to talk to Christen, quietly.

She tapped the almost empty bottle against her thigh, feeling the gentle splash of the liquid.

“Well, it.. yeah-sometimes.”

“So what’s going on with Tobin?”

“Nothing.”

“Are you sure?”

“Yeah, why?”

“Well... do you want to come get more ice with me?”

It hung in the air, a question beneath a question.

“Uh, yeah- sure.” She uncrossed her legs and pushed up from the ground, before grabbing at her cell phone and gingerly crossing in front of the Golden Girls re-run which was currently holding the attention of a decent portion of the room. Others were talking amongst themselves, cuddled in big cozy blue piles on beds, or, in the case of Tobin, gingerly balancing a ball on the top of her foot, extremely focused, not noticing anyone else.

She noticed her, though.

The door started to shut, and she asked if Lucy had brought the key, “yup” and let it close. It was nearing ten, and there weren’t many people around in the far corner of the hotel, rooms booked up by the team, two at a time.

The machine was a floor down, and she saw Lucy take a step down, and look as if to check for anyone coming, before reaching up to grab Christen’s hand, and she followed- down two steps, then a third and fourth, when she bumped into the girl who had paused on the midway landing.

Chlorine from the pool and cleaning supplies helped the hallway feel rather sterile, and she kind of liked it like that; expecting to keep going, she felt those fingers intertwine in hers, much more than a simple grasp. Lucy backed up into the corner of the landing, the smallest noises echoing through the stairwell.

“It was getting kind of crazy in there, you know?” She smiled down at Christen, who couldn’t help but grin back. Lucy was someone new and cute and flirty, and she liked it. Tobin clearly didn’t care. Her other hand found Lucy’s, and they smiled. She let their fingers drop, and felt gentle hands slide up her arms.

“Did you want to...?” Lucy let the question sit between the two of them lightly, gently.

*Yes.*

She bit her lip, and took a step down, one of Lucy’s hands now pressing into the wall beside Christen’s head, and she could feel her breath, taste it, like fruity alcohol and chocolate. Then

there was the lightest tap of her lips, then a gentle pressing, and she melted into it, suppressing her anxious girl energy because kissing is absolutely *wonderful* .

“Oh, I’m- god, I’m so sorry.”

They pull apart, and Christen is surprised- heart drumming in her throat- to see Tobin there, at the top of the stairs, bucket in hand.

“Neither of you brought a container for the ice, so I thought you might want it, and... Now I can see that was stupid, and I’ll leave this here and go now.” She set the bin on the ground near the door, and turned rapidly.

“No, Tobin-”

“Thank you!”

Christen paused. “I should... go talk to her.” She pushed away from Lucy.

“Christen, she’s fine, she just brought us the bucket and she’s headed back-”

“No, she’s my friend, and I don’t think she expected this to happen tonight.”

“What happened? We just kissed!”

“Yeah, well I don’t generally *just kiss* people.”

“Well.. you *just did*. ” Lucy crossed her arms, a confused look crossing her lips, reaching her eyes.

“Are you throwing this in my face?”

“No! I just... Sorry, I thought this was fun, but that’s it.”

She could see the frustration, and felt bad for running, but she’d met Tobin ages ago, and Lucy barely four hours before. She took a step back towards Lucy, kissing her cheek lightly before smiling, mostly to herself.

“This was lovely, and I’m gonna go talk to my friend now. Have a good tournament. Er, maybe not, actually.” The other girl laughed, amused at her competitor's politeness.

“I think I’ll actually get some ice, now.” She leaned towards the top of the stairs, collecting the empty container.

“Sounds like a plan.” Christen’s lips twisted and she turned, heading up the stairs and down the hall. She paused outside the door and reached for her phone, sliding it open to type out a message on the tiny keyboard.

**Hey where are you? Can we chat? :)**

She got a reply pretty quickly, which felt surprising.

**Yeah sure where do you wanna go?**

Definitely hadn’t thought that far.

**Uh, idk I’m outside the door tho. Haha**

Moments later the door swung open, and Tobin stepped out, closing it behind her quickly. She had a ball under her arm, hair down around her shoulders unlike most of the other times Christen had seen her.

“Hi.”

“Hi.”

Christen smiled, eyes flickering down to the deep red and blue carpet. They started to walk down the hall,

“Where’s Lucy?”

“She went to get ice.”

“You didn’t want to go with her?”

“Nah, I wanted to hang out with you.”

Tobin was quiet, but Christen could see a small smile, and the briefest glimmer of hope rose in her chest. Tobin was in flip flops, kicking the ball carefully in front of her as though she was in boots.

They’d maintained a generally comfortable silence, until Christen decided to cut to it.

“Sorry about the kiss thing.”

“Why sorry?”

“I mean, you could have a girlfriend. You could have not wanted to.”

“I wanted to, and.. I don’t.”

“Don’t what?”

“Have a girlfriend.”

“Oh.”

“Yeah. I actually haven’t really dated girls much.”

Christen felt her heart racing as the elevator doors opened to the lobby, and they stepped out, Tobin directing them past the front desk towards the doors.

“I haven’t really either. I’ve actually only kissed one other girl. Well, I guess two, now.”

The temperature had dropped once the sun had gone down, and cool breezes circled the two of them, who headed towards the pool area outside.

“I’ve only kissed one other girl besides you, so I get it.”

“Really? That’s uh... an interesting fact.”

They sat down in two chairs, illuminated by the glowing pool with bright stars dotting the expansive sky above them.



“Do you wanna know a secret?” Christen wasn’t sure if the alcohol had fueled her desire to share, or the company.

“I guess so, if you wanna tell me.” She was running a fingertip over the ball, feeling the seams as though it were a sacred object which needed to be memorized.

“The only other girl I’ve kissed was Kelley.” She braced for laughter, and got it.

“Wait, you too?”

“You kissed *Kelley*?!”

“Yep. First kiss with another girl until tonight. I dated a guy in high school, but it didn’t last very long, and then I committed to soccer through college, and that I wouldn’t get distracted, you know?”

Christen *did* know. She saw the way that Tobin played, and saw the desire for excellence in every flick of her ankle or delicately curved spin of the ball.

They’d played each other many times, and had been teammates during the summer, but the girl in front of her was still *Tobin Heath*. She carried a big reputation, and was expected to be a top WPS draft pick, if not *the* top. Christen had sort of unintentionally followed her career, though youth national teams, and then the senior team, and then in college.

“It’s still kinda funny.”

“Oh, absolutely.”

“Did you two ever think about something more?”

“Who, me and Kelley?” Tobin laughed. “Nope. Never. We’re much better off as friends. What about you?”

“Pretty much the same. Kelley needs the right kind of girl-someone just as opinionated who can keep up with that energy.”

“Definitely. I’m not the girl for her, that’s for sure.”

“Same!” They shared a smile, wrapped in their secret.

Christen felt a buzz in her pocket, among a series she’d ignored.

“Speaking of, it’s nearly 11, which is our curfew tonight. Kelley’s already back in the room, and I should head back over.” She could have sworn that she saw Tobin’s face fall just a bit, at the thought of Christen leaving, and it gave her a feeling of unspeakable joy.

“See you tomorrow, maybe?” There was the tiniest sliver of hope in her eyes, and Christen’s, “Yeah, of course.” Left her with a smile on her face.

“Good.”

“Good.”

# Dare

## Chapter Notes

I realized I should have coordinated the release better, in some kind of "Merry Christenmas" leading up to her birthday on the 29th. Ah, well! :)

Christen had sort of hoped to find a text from Tobin when she woke up, but remembered the midfielder's aversion to technology, and tried not think too much about it. She showered and got some meditation in before breakfast, and woke up Kelley in time for her to get food before practice.

Each team had arrived with a day before games, giving everyone the same chance to adjust to the new time zone and weather. The fields were too far apart to hear or notice anything, but the mass of Carolina blue one field over was impossible to miss. They'd had lunch and a tactical meeting going over (again) some of UCLA's strongest players and consistent strategies, developing a cohesive plan and backup plan, and a backup to the backups. She was proud to wear red. It was then back to the field for one more scrimmage game, before a night of recovery, team dinner, and early bedtimes.

This time, there *was* a text from Tobin,

**Wanna hang after dinner?**

Which she absolutely did.

She erased her response three times, ultimately deciding on **Sure! :)**

**Neat. Ill text u**

And then, later,

### **Wanna come over?**

So she headed back towards the suite, texting Tobin when she arrived. The door between the rooms was still open, and while she was waiting for Tobin to grab her stuff, she couldn't help but notice Lucy and another girl curled up, watching something on the tv. They looked particularly cozy, and if they noticed Christen coming in, they didn't say anything.

"Ready to go?" She turned to number 98, who was dribbling the soccer ball again, like she couldn't be still in the presence of something so filled with potential motion. They headed downstairs again, chatting about practice and Lauren Cheney, who was one of Tobin's best friends, and someone who'd taken Christen under her wing over the summer.

The sun had nearly set again by the time they were outside. There was a decently large patch of grass outside of the two hotels, just behind the parking lot, on the other side of a highway.

"So, Lucy looked cozy back there..."

"With Merritt? Yeah, they've had kind of an on again off again thing all year. I try and ignore most of it. It helps that I'm gone a lot."

"Ahh. I see."

They starting kicking the ball around, each showing off just a little bit, each enjoying the chance to play with no pressure to do anything special or even specific.

"Where's home for you, again?" She tried to ask like she didn't definitely, already know.

"Jersey. I mean, as much as it can be home."

“What makes you say that?”

“I dunno, I’ve never been in Jersey long enough for it to be everything to me, you know? I started traveling with the National Team when I was fourteen. New Jersey is where my parents live, but not me.”

“So where do you live?”

“I guess all over, really. UNC has been awesome, and then there’s couches all over, and random hotel rooms. I mean, I live here, right now.” She shrugged. “What about you?”

“L.A.”

“Ah.”

“You should totally come visit sometime.”

“Oh that’d be dope.”

“Say the word.”

“I might do that one day.”

Christen beamed at the thought, kicking the ball back to Tobin, who swiftly megged her in return. Christen caught the ball, and turned, dribbling it past a particularly defensive opponent, before kicking it towards some sticks they’d set up as a goal line, and raised her hands in victory, as she jogged over to fetch the ball again. Meanwhile, Tobin settled down into the crunchy grass. It had reached a point where they couldn’t really see much anymore beyond the impression of each other’s faces, but the dark was wonderful..

She returned, kicking the ball back towards her friend, and settling down beside her.

“Do you think there’s snakes in this grass?”

“Nah. Too many cars and people. But either way, we’ll find out if we’re bitten!” Christen did her best to swallow the horrific thought, before noticing Tobin grinning at her. “Wanna play a game?”

“Sure...? Christen started to get up again, before a warm hand was on her wrist, keeping her on the ground.

“No, let’s play Truth or Dare.”

“Okay... Truth or Dare?” Christen wasn't exactly sure how this would go, but she also didn't want to do anything else.

“Dare!” Tobin sat up straight, ready for whatever horror would be suggested.

“Uh... I’m really bad at this. Maybe... balance the ball on your head for a minute?”

“Psh. That’s easy.” Tobin placed the ball atop her forehead and balanced it carefully, until Christen had proclaimed her victorious. She tossed the ball back, and it was her turn to ask.

“Okay, Christen Press. Truth or dare?”

“Hmm. Truth.” Christen stretched her legs out, and leaned back onto her palms, looking up at the cloudy night sky.

“Mmmm... What are you most afraid of?” Tobin looked at her, like there was no one else in the world.

“Letting people down.”

“Okay, tell me more.” Tobin sat up, genuinely looking for more insight into how Christen's mind worked.

“I just... You know, my teammates count on me to score, and my parents and sisters have spent so much time and energy to get me where I am. I’m afraid it’s not going to be worth it. I never got called up to youth national programs, and so I doubt I’ll ever make it to the senior national team...”

“You know you’re *really* good, right? Like, scary good?”

She could tell that Tobin meant what she was saying, and after a brief glance over at the other girl, she smiled. Their faces were illuminated just barely by the open curtains of hotel rooms towering above them, and she mustered up the courage to reply.

“Thank you. That means a lot, coming from you.”

“Well, I mean it. I’m almost positive that your time will come. Just keep doing what you’re doing, and people won’t help but take notice. Also, I can’t believe that we basically had all summer together, and didn’t even talk.” Tobin picked at some patchy weeds growing around them, and Christen’s heart beat a bit faster thinking about what could have been that summer, and the possibility of them becoming real friends.

“Yeah, well you were busy, and you had your people... I’m surprised I’ve seen you so much this weekend.” Christen certainly didn't expect to see her much at all, let alone... *all this*.

“Well, I like talking to you, and I basically live with all of them, so...” Tobin looked up at Christen, whose curly ponytail was loose, and they smiled at each other.

“I like talking to you, too.” Christen beamed, and wanted so desperately for them to be at the beginning of summer with months ahead of them, instead of at the end of the year with two new paths ahead.

“Maybe we just had to have the right timing?” Tobin stretched out on her side, supporting her head in her palm.

“That’s fair. I mean, timing is everything, I guess.”

“Exactly. Some people have a knack for jumping on things at just the right moment. Like, Lucy’s hooked up with at least three other people on the team this year, and nobody’s mad about it. She just has that kind of energy, and it’s all cool. Sometimes I feel like I should ask for lessons.” They chuckled, and Christen was grateful that she’d only very briefly kissed Lucy, and hadn’t spent more time only to have her heart broken, or possibly worse—nonchalantly dumped at the end of the weekend. At least Tobin would still be her friend, later.

“Wait, so not only have I gone from kissing KELLEY who’s apparently kissed EVERYONE ELSE but now I’ve kissed the one person who’s like, just MAKING HER WAY through the team?! Have you kissed her?” Christen felt like the world was spinning.

“No! I’ve kissed Kelley and that’s it.” Her eyes widened as she looked at Christen.

“Look, Kelley doesn’t even count.”

“Yeah, we can just wipe her off our records.” Tobin grinned.

“Clean slate.”

“So.. that means... yesterday.” Christen wondered if...



“Ha. Yeah. I guess you’re my first real girl kiss, Pressi.”

She blushed and did everything she knew to fight the smile, but it was already there. Her cheeks were burning.

“Okay,” Tobin said. “Your turn. Truth or dare?”

*No time but the present.*

“Hmm.” She held her breath, mustering up the courage. “Dare.”

She finally looked Tobin in the eye, and swallowed, hoping that maybe they could possibly be on the same page, and it wasn’t just her...

“I dare you to kiss me.”

It was as though every nerve was set on fire, as she shifted onto her knees. Inching closer, she noticed Tobin’s incredibly long eyelashes, and the tiny freckles on her face, and let a hand reach up to push the hair out of her eyes, before leaning in carefully.

It was everything the other kisses weren’t, the lightest graze, stretching into this other world where no one else existed. Just the two of them, working slowly, breathing each other in, and then it began to build. At one point, Tobin pulled away to breathe, before sliding her fingers into Christen’s hair pulling her closer- and Christen happily complied. They were both absolutely sure they could stay right there in that moment. Christen didn’t really need to breathe ever again, and Tobin just needed *more*. She leaned into it, and slowed down, waiting for Christen to ask for it- and she did. Pulling Tobin even closer to her on the grass by her shirt, legs opening to make room for the hips slotting between.

They stretched out, and Christen could feel a familiar burn begin to build; she was caught up in the moment, though, and let her arms start to wander onto Tobin's back, feeling each muscle twist and flex as she pressed her to the ground.

They weren't sure how long they'd been there, before Tobin was kissing down her neck, catching her breath, and feeling Christen's heart race. They naturally shifted apart, before she reached towards Tobin's hand, intertwining their fingers.

"I hope I can see you again before we leave... I mean, not on the field." They chuckled, as they sat up, and Tobin helped pick little pieces of grass out of her hair.

"I hope I can see you again for *real* . Not just little moments here and there."

Tobin's eyes widened a bit, before admitting the same. "I hope so too." She popped up from the ground, and offered Christen a hand to get up, and it was gladly taken.

Tobin wrapped her arms around Christen's neck, and held her tightly. Christen buried her face in Tobin's sweatshirt, and let the moment wash over her. It felt like years had been building up to the two of them really knowing each other, but all of the time was squished into the last 24 hours. It had become this concentrated, delicious *something*, and she knew somewhere deep down that this was bigger than either of them would be able to articulate right now.

Plus, Tobin was a really great hugger, and she absolutely kicked herself for not taking advantage sooner. It felt like a piece of home.

They walked back up to the sidewalk bordering the two hotels, and each checked the time. It was later than they'd planned, and their semi-final games were the following afternoon. Carolina would be going up against Notre Dame, while Stanford was playing UCLA. Tobin pulled Christen back into her arms, and they waited there for just a moment, enjoying the calm.

Christen's phone pinged.

“Alright, we should definitely get some rest.” Christen admitted it reluctantly, desperate to stay in their bubble.

“Ugh. Rest is annoying.” She felt Tobin’s chest vibrate as she laughed, and always wanted to remember that feeling.

“I’d say good luck tomorrow, but I *really* don’t want to face you in the final on Sunday.”

“Oh, you’re planning on going to the final, too? What a coincidence.” Christen shoved Tobin gently in response, before Tobin laughed, fell backwards, and then gingerly grabbed Christen’s face for one more kiss, and neither could get enough.

Eventually, her hands covered Tobin’s on either side of her face, feeling their warmth, and her heart felt like it was about to burst. She slowly pulled away, not because she wanted to stop, but because she knew they wouldn’t ever be able to, if they actually got started.

“Okay, goodnight. Seriously though, good luck tomorrow.” Their foreheads touched, and noses, and then Tobin stepped away.

She couldn’t help but smile and chuckle to herself as Tobin gave her one last beaming grin and a haka, before turning around and heading back to her hotel, kicking her soccer ball all the way.

Christen could still feel the breathy blushy feeling of Tobin’s tongue inside her mouth, the warmth of her hands, the feeling of her hair, little moans and gasps as they’d spent the better part of an hour quite literally rolling around in the grass.

*She’d kissed Tobin Heath.*

*And Tobin Heath had kissed her back.*

Kelley, mercifully, didn't ask her much when she got back to the room, already in bed, texting someone, probably. They said goodnight, and it was all Christen could do not to roll over and spill every detail, while also wanting to hold on to the memories like this magical little gift.

She noticed her phone light up with a new text, and she pulled it off the night stand.

**You're really pretty.**

**Sweet dreams.**

She could feel herself beaming.

**You too. xox**

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