

THE BREAK 5: BFF

Written by

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On **KATIE CARTWRIGHT** (18, wry, direct, playful), talking straight to camera. We only see her from the waist up.

KATIE

I knew he was going to be trouble
the first time he shat on the
carpet.

Implausibly, a CGI goblin, **TURNIP**, is sitting on the side table. He's a mischievous, endearingly-grotesque creature. With no small effort, TURNIP shits on the floor.

KATIE (CONT'D)

You disgust me.
(grinning)
Want to do it again?

From over her shoulder, we see what's happening. She's holding her phone up, the camera displaying the room in front of her. It then superimposes TURNIP onto the live picture - he's grinning, rather proud of his effort.

KATIE (CONT'D)

They call it augmented-reality,
like what was missing from the
actual world was goblin shit. You'd
think it would get old, but...
(she sighs)
Hey, Turnip... Another poo please.

This time we just see the smile in KATIE's eyes as we hear TURNIP grunting and straining to produce seconds.

JUMP CUT TO:

A little later. KATIE is drinking a can of gin and tonic. She's wearing a sparkly top, ready for a night out.

KATIE

So, it's Jen's 18th. It's gonna be a legendary night. Shots, shagging and drunk-dialling guaranteed. Jen messaged to say the girls have been joking that I've had so much bed-action lately I can hardly walk.

We now see that she's in a wheelchair.

KATIE (CONT'D)
Which seems kind of harsh.

She takes a swig of drink.

KATIE (CONT'D)
Guess that's how you know who your real mates are though. Anyone who can take the piss out of you because a drunk-driver broke your back - that's a true friend.

She has another drink. Notices her hand is trembling.

KATIE (CONT'D)
There was a kid at school, Chris Henderson, who used to walk funny. Something he was born with. We'd joke about having to marry him if we got really desperate. God, we were wankers back then. Like that kind of shit couldn't happen to the beautiful people. I miss being invincible.

(beat)

The girls haven't seen me like this yet, not even Jen. She offered, of course. Pretended like everything was normal, but how can it be? Last year we stopped hanging around with Zoe Taylor because she grew a fringe, what are they going to make of this?

Anxious, she picks up her phone.

KATIE (CONT'D)
Turnip, wake up.

Sound of an exaggerated rasp of a yawn from the phone.

KATIE (CONT'D)
So while I've been holed up here sorting my shit out, this foul creature has been my bestest buddy.

We now see TURNIP, inspecting a steaming-great poo. He dips a curious finger into it.

KATIE (CONT'D)
I'd like to say that at least he's got a good personality, but he's actually got a fucking awful personality.

Approving of the taste, TURNIP shovels a handful of poo into his mouth.

KATIE (CONT'D)
 But at least with Turnip my expectations are so low he never lets me down. And sometimes bad company is better than no company.

TURNIP looks up, cute and loveable. Butter wouldn't melt. Then he hands out a poo-smeared finger, offering KATIE a taste.

KATIE smiles without humour, a hollow look in her eyes. Lacking the joy she had earlier.

CUT TO:

3 INT. KATIE'S HOUSE. KITCHEN - DUSK

3

Katie's phone buzzes. A text message alert, snapping her back to reality. She checks it.

KATIE
 That's the cab.

She pulls herself together.

KATIE (CONT'D)
 Alright, let's do this.

She spins to face the door.

CUT TO:

4 INT. KATIE'S HOUSE. HALLWAY - DUSK

4

There's a full-length mirror in the hallway. KATIE approaches from the kitchen. She checks her make up.

KATIE
 Looking good. If wheelchair-chic is a thing then I have got it.

But her confidence is knocked, seeing herself all dressed up like in the old days. She hesitates. Decides not to let self-doubt win.

She glides over to the front door...

And can't bring herself to open it.

She's there for what feels like ages. Frozen in time.

Then she turns and wheels back into the kitchen.

CUT TO:

5 INT. KATIE'S HOUSE. KITCHEN - DUSK 5

KATIE skulks back in, shrinking into herself.

KATIE

The thing is I'm knackered. And the pub they're meeting in, the bouncer there is a right weirdo. And...

A long silence. Tears sting KATIE's eyes.

KATIE (CONT'D)

And Turnip would miss me. It's nice that someone would. Everyone else's life has carried on as if nothing happened. The girls even let bloody Amy Pool start hanging around with them, like my place was suddenly available. At least with a goblin you always know who's in charge.

She fumbles with her phone to try and re-load him. But she's too nervy and she drops her phone on the floor.

KATIE (CONT'D)

Bollocks.

Her breath is shallow, she's worked up and on edge.

KATIE (CONT'D)

I got scared of seeing my own friends. How screwed up is that?

She reaches for her phone but she's wobbly and uncertain, her balance affected by her injury. She can only just get her fingertips against it, not close enough to get a grip. She howls with frustration then sits upright again.

KATIE (CONT'D)

Sod him, I don't need him. He's just an ugly, worthless freak. The punchline to a bad joke. No-one could ever love something broken and repulsive like that so... fuck off.

Her fury overwhelms her. She rolls back and forwards, grinding her phone beneath her wheels until the screen shatters.

And then the tears come.

CUT TO:

6 INT. KATIE'S HOUSE. KITCHEN - NIGHT 6

Later. It's darker outside. KATIE is all cried out. Even she doesn't know how long she's been there.

She looks down at her broken phone.

KATIE

That might not have been a classic decision. It's still in contract...

The doorbell goes. KATIE is startled, wasn't expecting it.

She goes to the window, peers through a crack in the curtains.

KATIE (CONT'D)

Jen. It's her eighteenth. She should be out making bad choices.

The doorbell goes again.

KATIE (CONT'D)

(to herself)

Please go away.

KATIE moves back to the centre of the room, hoping JEN doesn't know she's there. She closes her eyes, as if waiting for this to pass.

JUMP CUT TO:

7 INT. KATIE'S HOUSE. KITCHEN - NIGHT 7

KATIE's eyes flick open. She's in the same place, but now there's a tapping on her window.

KATIE

She's persistent. I'll give her that.

(beat)

We used to be the ones all the other girls wanted to be. We were equals.

(MORE)

KATIE (CONT'D)
Now I can't even face seeing her.
In case she thinks I'm... less.

Loud banging on the front door. KATIE flinches at the sound.

CUT TO:

8 INT. KATIE'S HOUSE. HALLWAY - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS) 8

KATIE comes into the hallway, rehearsing what she's going to say.

KATIE
Just leave me alone, will you? I'm
fine, I don't need you.

She opens the door. NSE JEN is standing outside, concerned.

For a split-second KATIE is taken aback. Vulnerable, afraid what her friend thinks. Then the armour comes back up.

KATIE (CONT'D)
Fuck off, Jen.

A surprised pause.

Then JEN dissolves into the laughter of an old friend. After a moment, KATIE joins in.

JEN glances down, takes in the wheelchair.

A brief moment's eye contact between them.

JEN smiles, warm and genuine. She comes in and hugs KATIE tightly.

KATIE is frozen, tense. Doesn't respond.

But still JEN keeps hugging her...

And then finally KATIE reciprocates. Hugs her friend oh-so-close.

JEN nods to the door. Ready?

KATIE nods and follows her outside.

FADE OUT.