Chapter 9: Bros Before Hoes

Remember when I told you I'm not much of a nighttime partier? I've known that about myself for a long time, and it still didn't stop me from trying. I think as men we're conditioned to believe the best place to meet women is a night out drinking with the boys. That might work for some people. It never worked for me. Most of my attempts ended with my friends and me trading wild stories about what happened the night before, almost always without any women.

Two besties were with me on most of these nights, [M] and [H]. [M] is my Ecuadorian friend. [H] and I share a birthday, a year apart, and I'm the oldest. I consider both of them my brothers. I've lived with both, and they're my ride-or-die homies. I'll tell one story about [M] and leave [H]'s to [H], because they're better told by him. They both deserve a place in this book.

[M] is one of my oldest friends. We went to college together, but we didn't get really close until we moved in together after uni. We've had countless adventures, but the ones that make me smile most are from our first trip to Ecuador.

As I mentioned earlier, that was one of the first group trips with the Carrollton Crew. Besides the countless wild nights out, what made it memorable was getting to see the country my best friend is from. We met his family. His cousin [F] was basically our tour guide the whole trip, taking us places most tourists never go. He even acted as my personal flirting translator when [M] got tired of his translating duties.

I want to take a moment to say how grateful I am to have [M] as a friend. He has always been loyal, even at my lowest moment. After my manic episode in Japan, our relationship changed. We aren't close right now, and we haven't spoken in almost a year. [M], I'm sending you this chapter hoping we can repair things. I honestly don't know everything you're upset about. When we fell out, I blocked you because I didn't want to hear it. I'm sorry for that, and for whatever part I played. I'd like to hear it now. The way I see it, brothers fight, and they always find their way back to each other. Okay, writing that line made me feel a little gay. (I say it that way because men always joke like that when we express love for another man.) It's definitely a defense mechanism, but I digress.

Anyyyy who, one night in Ecuador we went out drinking in Montañita, a small beach town. If you haven't been, I highly recommend it. We were all out trying to meet women. Like I said, that usually meant hanging out with each other and striking out with anyone we had the courage to approach. Ecuador is also where I fell in love with South American women. I forget the details, but I had [M] chat up a girl I thought was interested. I hadn't exchanged a single word with her, and she was veeeery interested. I thought, wow, that was too easy.

We kept dancing together. Later we saw a woman I'd talked to earlier that day. I said hello and carried on with the girl I'd met that night. Some time passed, and my friends were talking with the other girl and her friends. We were basically one big group by then. Forgive me for not remembering the exact point of escalation, but the two girls started fighting over me. I couldn't believe it. How many nights had we gone out with no prospects, and here were two beautiful women fighting over who got to take me home? I remember stepping out of the situation and telling my friends, "To the victor go the spoils." I took home the winner.

A quick aside to thank my friend [H]. One memory will always stick with me. After my Japan episode, [H] and I were supposed to be roommates in Medellín. I was afraid the stories our mutual friends told about how bad it had been would change his mind. [H]'s heart is huge. I often say he's nicer than me, and that's coming from someone who once got a sex worker a ride home after she verbally assaulted me.

When we talked about the arrangement, I fully expected him to back out. He basically said he wasn't worried and that shit happens. His seeming indifference came as a shock. I'll always remember that conversation. I've never felt such certain acceptance and comfort.

Okay, that's enough lovey-dovey feelings. I'll end the chapter on this note: if you ever get the chance to hang out with [H] and me on our birthdays, be sure to ask him about the girl who turned lesbian hours after meeting him.