

PRT 355- "The Break Up Part 1"

"Do you really think that Michelle will buy out Mina?" Chad asked.

"I'm not sure. Mich is pretty upset at Mina." I said.

"Yeah, but they've fought before. Remember when Mina released that single without Michelle's consent?"

"Yeah, and from Mich's point of view this is the same type of thing. Mina makes decision without consulting her."

"Just to protect her."

"Yeah, but that isn't the point. I guess we'll find out more tonight." I sighed as I slipped my red high heels on.

I'm Raye Hino, one of the top-selling artist for Starlight Records...I'm also Sailor Mars, but at the moment that doesn't really matter. What matters at the moment is trying to keep Mina and Michelle, the two CEOs of Starlight Records, and two of my close friends, from ruining everything we've all worked for.

My boyfriend, Chad, and I were getting ready for the Starlight Now Gala. It was an event Mina had set up to recognize and showcase the talent and success of Starlight Artists. In the past year Starlight had been put on the map musically, after originally just being a side project. Being as Chad and I were both Starlight artists, we were expected to attend and perform. I really hoped this gala didn't turn in some press conference about a buyout.

"Ready?" Chad asked.

I nodded, "I guess so."

"It'll be fine. Let's go."

We headed out to the Beverly Hills Hotel, where the gala was being held. When we walked in the press was snapping pictures and so Chad and I stopped for a couple of pictures before walking in. The first people I saw when we walked in was Serena and Darien. We walked over to them.

"Serena, have you heard from Mina or Michelle? What's going down tonight?" I asked.

"I'm not sure. Last I heard Mina was still planning to sell her half of Starlight to Michelle. They just had to decide on a fair price." Serena replied.

"And the band?"

"Still looking for a new guitarist."

I sighed.

"Mich and Mina have fought before. Surely this will blow over." Darien said.

"That's what I said." Chad added.

"I don't know. Something tells me this is war." I said.

Michelle

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"Are you absolutely sure about this?" RJ asked.

"Yes. I'm done with Mina controlling my life. I want nothing more to do with her." I said.

"She only does it because she cares."

"She only does it because she has such a low opinion of me."

RJ sighed, "Sweetie, she's your best friend."

"No, she's not."

"MJ, I think if you thought about this rationally for just a second you'd..."

"I am thinking rationally!"

The limo pulled up to the BHH and RJ and I posed for some pictures before walking in. Once inside we made our way to the back room. Holly was waiting for me.

"Michelle, are you sure you want to do this?" Holly asked.

"Yes! Would everyone stop asking me that?!" I cried.

"You and Mina had a spat. I get it...but is it really worth throwing away so many years from friendship?"

“There is no friendship.” I growled.

“Mina went too far...I get that...but she also kept Starlight running while you were dealing with your personal life. No one faults you for backing away from business. You had to take care of yourself...anyone would have in your position...but someone did need to make sure Starlight didn’t sink and Mina stepped up.”

“Yeah, and I was mad about that, but what pushed it over the edge were her trying to tell Rocky not to be my friend.”

“OK, and I don’t get why she would have done that, but I’m sure that she wasn’t trying to be hurtful.”

“I’m just done with her. Seriously. I can write songs myself. I can hire a new guitar player. I don’t need Mina.” I said.

“No one said you needed Mina, but she’s your friend.”

“Fiend is more like it.”

Holly sighed.

Mina

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“You’re seriously buying out Mich?” Adam asked.

“We’ve discussed this. She’s a mess and one of these days she will drag me down with her if I don’t get out.” I said.

“Mina, I’ve known Mich a long time and while she’s not always the most stable person in the world, she is a good person and she does have a knack for pulling through the most unlikely of situations.”

“I’m sick of her drama Adam.”

“She’s your best friend.”

“No, she was my best friend.”

“Don’t you think you’re being a bit stubborn?”

“No, I think she’s being a stuck up little b...”

“Mina...”

“Adam, I’ve been putting up with crap from Michelle for years. I’m sick of it. She thinks I’ll just deal because I have no career with out her...except I do now! I don’t need her!”

We pulled up to the hotel and got out of the car. We let the press have their pictures then we went in. We went to the back room. Michelle, RJ, and Holly were already there.

“Ok, let’s get this done.” I said.

“Are you two sure about this?” Holly asked.

“Yes!” Michelle and I said.

“I’m done being controlled.” Michelle said.

“Controlled? You’re life would fall apart without someone watching your back!” I cried.

“You try losing a child then talk to me about falling apart!”

“You were a mess long before that. You’re life has always been messy drama since I met you!”

“For someone that hates my life so much you sure didn’t mind riding my coat tails to fame.”

“I got my career on my own, thanks.”

“You keep telling yourself that.”

“See! She’s impossible!” I cried.

“Me?! You’re the one that tries to run every aspect of my life, including who my friends are!”

“I was wrong about Rocky, ok? I was just concerned!”

“You had no right!”

“I know and I’m sorry about that. I was just trying to help! I won’t apologize for the work I did for Starlight though. I kept the company afloat and made a lot of good decisions that have made it thrive.”

“She’s right. Starlight is in a good place.” Holly said.

“It wasn’t your place to make those calls.” Michelle said.

“I own half the company!” I cried.

“And I own the other half!”

“Like you’ve never made decisions without me!”

“I know this business!”

“And you don’t think I do?!”

“Not like I do!”

“What do you think I am? Back up? Just a guitar player that is your right hand monkey?”

She didn't say anything.

“Oh my god, that's what you think! Let's get this deal over with. I never want to see you again!” I cried.

Raye

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“Any idea why we haven't started yet?” Lita asked as she walked over with Andrew.

“Nope, but it worries me.” I said.

“Hey guys.” Michele said as she and Amara walked over.

“Hi.”

“Have you guys talked to Michelle today?” Amara asked.

“No...but last any of us heard she was still splitting with Mina...in every way.” I said.

“She can't divide the Soldiers, we have to work together.” Serena said.

“It's not really a bad thing.” Amara said.

“Figures you would say that.” Lita replied.

“We're two different teams with different methods. It's about time Michelle realized that.”

“We're one team with one goal.” Serena said.

“If we wouldn't have been working with you Michelle never would have been kidnapped by Nemesis. We trusted you to help keep Michelle and the Amethyst safe and look what happened.” Amara said.

“You're seriously blaming us for that?” I asked.

“You're the one that wasn't even in the same ZIP code when that happened.” Lita said.

“Because I trusted you guys...that was my mistake.” Amara said.

“Fine, you want two teams, you got it.” I said.

“Amara, this isn't the time for this.” Michele said.

“You're right. Fine. Have a good night.” Amara said as she and Michele went to mingle.

“Ugh, how annoying!” I cried.

“Is now a bad time?” Mia asked, walking over to us.

“Hi Mia, no, it's not. How are you?”

“I'm alright. I don't think I've formally met all of you.”

“Oh, right. We've only met in passing. I'm Raye Hino and this is my boyfriend Chad Holdenford and our friends Lita Stevens, Andrew Foreman, and Serena and Darien Shields.” I said.

“Nice to meet you all. I'm Mia Blackwood.”

“Likewise. I love your music.” Serena said.

“Thanks. I've heard your new single. It's pretty good too.”

“Thank you.”

“So, is everything ok? Shouldn't things be starting soon?” Mia asked.

I nodded, “Yeah, hopefully. I have a feeling this isn't going to be a fun filled night though.”

“How come?”

“Inner band tension. It could get ugly.” Lita said.

“Really? That's too bad. Is Michelle ok?”

“We're not exactly sure.” Serena said.

“I'm sorry to hear that. I'll check on her later.”

I nodded, hoping that whatever the delay was, it wasn't more bad news.

Michelle

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“OK, sign here and it's finished.” Holly said.

I signed, “Great. It's done.”

“Good.” Mina said.

“I think we should announce this right away. Your presence isn't required here.”

“My friends are still on your label and I want to be here for them.”

“Fine. Whatever.”

“MJ, are you ok?” RJ asked.

“I’m fine, let’s get this party started.” I said as I headed out.

“I’m announcing this with you. I have something to say too.” Mina said as she followed me.

Mina and I walked onto the stage.

“Good evening everyone and thank you so much for coming to, what I hope will be, the first annual Starlight Records Gala. I’m CEO Michelle Morris-James and this is my partner Mina Gordon. We’re honored to have the chance to showcase the many amazing talents that Starlight Records has, but first we do have an announcement to make. Mina and I have worked together for many years as friends, band mates, and partners in many endeavors, but we now feel the time has come for us to take different paths. Effective immediately I will be taking over full responsibility of Starlight Records as the sole CEO and owner. Under this new arrangement Mina is free to seek other career opportunities, be it in music, cinema, television, or any other medium she wishes. I want to thank Mina for all her years of dedicated service. Now I believe she has some things she would like to say.” I said as I handed Mina the mic.

“Thank you very much Michelle. It has been an honor to work at Starlight. It started as nothing more as a side project so I could make my album under my own terms, but it turned into a cultivator of amazing talent and more importantly a family. I will miss working with my amazing friends on a daily basis but I look forward to the new opportunities that are sure to present themselves. I want to thank everyone for their support and I wish everyone at Starlight Records the very best. Thank you.” Mina said as she handed me the mic back and left the stage.

“Let’s hear it for Mina Gordon.” I said. After everyone clapped I continued, “Now, let’s get to the real reason you’re here. The amazing talent! Starlight Records’ current line up consists of Raye Hino, Serena Shields, Chad Holdenford, and the newest addition to the Starlight family, Michele Waters. Tonight we will hear from each of these amazing artists and get the chance to experience the various, but amazing talents of each. Thank you and enjoy the show.” I finished as I left the stage. When I did I was mobbed by my band.

“This is for real?!” Raye asked.

“Are you serious about not having anything to do with us?” Serena asked.

“Hey, stop. Yes this is for real. And it’s not you guys I have a problem with. It’s Mina. So that does mean we fight as separate teams, but we’re still a band and you all still have record deals. We’re family.” I said.

“Family doesn’t turn their back over a fight.” Lita said.

“Sometimes people just have to go their own ways. That’s what happened with Mina and I.”

“I signed a deal with you and Mina. If one of you goes I go. I’m not going on stage.” Raye said.

“You have to.” I said.

“No. I’m done.”

“Raye, think about this...don’t try to pull a power play.” Chad said.

“No power play. I’m serious.”

“You’re contractually obligated to go on stage tonight.” I said.

“She’s right. When we signed solo deals we signed on for events like this.” Serena said.

“Fine. That’s what you want, fine.” Raye said as she stormed off.

Raye

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Michelle wanted me on stage. Fine. I’d go on stage. I went back stage and changed into my stage clothes and waited for Michelle to announce me.

“First up we have an amazing young woman. She’s scored various top ten hits on the pop and country charts, both as a solo artist and as one half of the Wreakers. She’s a great keyboardist, guitarist, song writer, singer, and anything else she sets out to do. Please help me welcome Starlight’s own Raye Hino.” Michelle said.

I went out on stage, “Thank you Michelle. You truly are the mother of Starlight. It’s an honor to be here tonight to share my new music with everyone but before I begin I just want to say, Starlight truly is like a family and watching the partnership between Michelle and Mina dissolve is much like watching your parents divorce. And, much like a divorce, this dissolution is due to stubborn pride and ego. Starlight is the combination of Michelle and Mina, without them there is no Starlight. While Michelle may retain the Starlight name, Starlight is dead with the departure of Mina. And for those of you that buy that crap about Mina seeking other ‘opportunities’, let me set it straight. Michelle and Mina had an

argument and instead of realizing they were both wrong and making up, they decided to dissolve their partnership and end a friendship. I will perform my new song out of contractual obligation but I assure you, my loyalty to Starlight is gone because Starlight is gone. That being said, here is a new song from my upcoming solo album, “Everything Comes and Goes”. This song is the first single from the album and it’s called ‘This Way’.”

As I started the song I looked the crowd over. There were a lot of shocked faces in that crowd.

After I finished my song I looked at the crowd. Everyone was still shocked by my speech, although my performance went well too. I left the stage and went to change back into my dress. I think I made my point.

Michelle

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To say I was shocked by Raye’s speech is a bit of an understatement. I was floored. After she finished her performance I went back on stage. Damage control time.

“Thank you Raye. I just want to clarify some of the statements Raye made a moment ago. She is right that the break up of my partnership with Mina is somewhat like a divorce and unfortunately our artists are somewhat like children caught in the middle of it. In essence I got custody and that is going to take some getting used to. And if you want to compare this to a divorce, yes, I suppose you could cite irreconcilable differences. People grow and sometimes they grow apart... as was the case here. I do truly wish Mina all the best and I hope that my artists will support Starlight as we will continue to support them. Now, without further ado, please welcome our next performer. This man is Starlight’s first and only male artist and is an amazing talent. He’s been at this for years and has honed his craft to perfection. Look for his newest album “Growing Up is Getting Old” in stores now. Please help me welcome Chad Holdenford!” I said as I handed Chad the mic, “Be nice” I whispered as I left the stage.

“Thank you everyone for coming out. Words truly cannot begin to describe the honor I feel right now. I never dreamed of the amazing success I’ve achieved. It’s beyond words. I want to take a moment to address the news of the night. Starlight is truly a family and tonight we are losing a member of that family but, as with any strong family, I hope we will band together and get through this stronger and more solid than ever. I love my Starlight family and I know that we will continue to prosper and be successful if we continue to stand together. This last year has been a whirlwind for me and through it all I’ve always tried to remember who I am and where I come from. That is the meaning behind my newest single, “Where I’m From”. I’d like to share that song with you now and I hope it means something to you too.” Chad said as he started his performance.

“You got my boyfriend trained. Congratulations Michelle.” Raye snarked as she joined me beside the stage.

“Trained? Seriously? My god, chill out.” I said.

“This whole break up is ridiculous and you know it.”

“I love how you put all the blame on me.”

“Oh I don’t. Believe me, there is enough blame and anger for Mina too.”

“Then go find her. I’m busy watching your boyfriend perform.”

Raye rolled her eyes and headed back into the main room.

Chad finished his performance and I went back on-stage.