

Bad Boy's Protection

Chapter 9

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School was unbelievably boring for me. Not only was my only friend suspended for a week, but Mr. Franklin decided to give me detention for the incident yesterday because he felt as if being kicked out of class wasn't punishment enough.

So here I was, in detention with most of the football team and cheerleaders. I had no idea what they did to get detention, but I did not want to know.

"Looks like we have a full house here," Mr. Pierce said as he was, once again, the teacher in charge of detention. "There hasn't been one of these for a while. Just in case some of you don't know, the rules to detention are simple. No talking and no texting. If I catch any of you doing either, you will be here tomorrow. Understood?" Everyone nodded. "Good."

I had nothing to do in detention. I finished all my work in class and I had no upcoming tests. I was even more bored because of it.

I was sitting at the back of the class so I could easily see Devon glare at me. I didn't glare at him back, but I was starting to feel uncomfortable.

And to make things worse, Mr. Pierce announced there was a quick meeting in the staff lounge. He had to leave for five minutes, leaving me with the people who hated me the most in the school.

It was when Mr. Pierce left that Devon decided to bug me. "So, Poppy," she said. "Where's your bodyguard?"

"Grayson isn't my bodyguard," I corrected him. "And obviously, he's not here."

"And why exactly is that?" Devon asked.

"None of your business," I muttered as I looked away from him. I had a little bit less than an hour to survive in detention. I didn't even think I could survive.

Devon stood up from his chair and walked over to me, glaring down at me. "You should be worried that nobody's here to protect you," he said in a threatening voice. "After all, everyone hates you after you ruined Belle's life."

I was getting so sick of everyone saying that I ruined Belle's life. I did no such thing. I was the one who was suffering from the incident. I was the one who had the horrible memories.

"I did not ruin her life," I said for what felt like the millionth time. "Why don't you ask her what happened?"

"Devon, sit down," Mr. Pierce said suddenly as he walked into the room. "And Poppy, your brother called saying you're needed at home. You're excused from detention. He's waiting for you in the parking lot."

I was a bit confused why I was needed at home. But I didn't question him as I grabbed my bag off of the floor.

I got outside of the school but I didn't see my brother's car. I thought he would have been late, but then Grayson's car parked by the curve I was on. "Hey, Flower!" he called. "Care to go for a ride?"

"My brother's coming to pick me up," I told him.

"No, he's not," Grayson said. "I'll explain it to you only if you get in the car."

I smiled as I got into the passenger seat of Grayson's car. "So, why is my brother not coming when Mr. Pierce told me he's here?"

Grayson drove out of the parking lot. "Simple. When you texted me saying you had detention, I didn't want you to be stuck in there, so I called your brother and asked if he could call the school to get you out."

"Well, thank you," I said. "Almost the whole football team and cheerleading squad was there. I doubt I would have survived in there."

"You're welcome," Grayson said. "So, where do you want to go?"

As much as I wanted to go somewhere, I couldn't. "Home," I said.

Grayson raised an eyebrow but kept his eyes on the road. "So I saved you from the hell hole called detention and you don't want to hang out with me?"

"Of course I want to hang out with you," I said, "but I'm still grounded. My mom just thinks I'm studying in the library for a biology test."

"There's still forty-five minutes until four," Grayson said. "I presume you told your mom that's when you'll be done in the library."

"I actually told her I'd be done at four thirty," I told him.

Grayson smiled. "Perfect. That gives us an hour and fifteen minutes. We are going to go to the beach and get some ice cream and you are not going to complain at all."

I sighed, knowing that nothing I would say would change Grayson's mind. He was quite stubborn at times.

Grayson started driving to the beach and I couldn't help thinking about how thankful I was to have him in my life. He defended me from Devon numerous of times, he made sure I didn't have to dissect a frog, and he got me out of detention. None of my friends, or ex-friends in my case, had ever done anything like that before.

"Lost in thought, Flower?" Grayson asked.

"Yeah," I said. "I was just thinking about things."

"Like what?" Grayson asked.

"Things," I replied simply. "It doesn't really matter. I have been wondering one thing, though. Why do you keep calling me Flower?"

Grayson shrugged. "I have my reasons. Very obvious reasons that I'm surprised you haven't figured out yet, *Flower*." His smile suddenly turned into a serious line. "I'm about to ask you something that I know you don't want to answer, but it's been bugging me since yesterday. Who's Ben?"

I sighed. He was right. I didn't want to answer, but Grayson did deserve to know. I didn't have to say what happened with Ben, only who he is. "Ben is Belle's older brother," I said. "Something happened and she hates me because of it." I looked down at my hands, once again having memories flood through my mind. I shook my head, trying to clear the memories.

"I'm sorry for asking," Grayson said, seeing how much it affected me.

"Don't be," I said. "You wanted to know who he was. That's it."

"You know, I really want to know what happened," Grayson said, "but I'll wait for you to be ready to tell me."

"Thanks for not pressuring me into telling you," I said. "Even though it happened a while ago, I'm still not ready to talk about it."

"I understand," Grayson said as he parked in the parking lot of the beach. "There's some things I don't want to talk about either. But soon, I'm probably going to have to tell you a few things about me." He turned off his car and faced me. "Some of those things might scare you a bit, but I hope that won't change your impression on me."

"Trust me, it won't," I said, but it did make me a bit curious. Things that can scare me? What could possibly scare me and change my mind about Grayson?

Grayson and I got out of the car and walked to the small ice cream stand. Grayson offered to pay for me, claiming that it was because he was the one who technically made me get detention. I got peanut butter ice cream and Grayson got the plain old vanilla.

While we were walking down the beach, something made me stop in my tracks. Well, more like someone.

"What is it?" Grayson asked.

I couldn't answer. The person who I wanted to stay away from, the one who ruined my life, was at the beach.

"Poppy?" Grayson asked. "Are you okay?"

"He's here," I said.

"Who?" Grayson asked.

I pointed to the people a few feet ahead of us, the people walking in our direction.

"Belle?" Grayson asked. "And... who's that?"

"Ben," I told him. How was Ben here? "Can we... Can we leave?"

Grayson nodded. "Yeah." The only problem was that the parking lot was in the direction we were walking, which was the way Ben and Belle were coming from.

"What are you doing here?" Belle suddenly snapped once Grayson and I were by them.

Grayson must have known I couldn't speak in front of Ben because he answered for me. "It's not like you own the beach," he said.

"I wasn't talking to you," Belle said. "Stop defending her."

"I could defend her if I want," Grayson said. "Someone has to after you turned her life into a living hell."

"I turned her life into a living hell?" Belle asked, crossing her arms. "Really? Well then, how about you tell us what my brother had to go through? The pain he went through?!"

"I didn't do anything," I said quietly. I needed her to know that it wasn't my fault.

"Nothing?" Ben asked. "Funny. Real funny, Poppy."

Seeing Ben after all those months was bringing back the memories even more, as if I was re-living what happened.

"Then what did she do?" Grayson asked, standing between me and the other two.

"I thought she told you," Belle said.

"I lied," Grayson said. "I do that a lot."

"What a coincidence, so does Poppy," Belle said with a smirk.

Grayson seemed to be getting very irritated with Belle. "You are so lucky you're a girl and I don't hit girls," Grayson said.

"Are you threatening my sister?" Ben asked.

"No, not at all," Grayson said. "But I am threatening you. Stay away from Poppy. I don't know exactly what happened, but I do know that if you ever go near her again, you'll regret it."

"I'm not scared of some guy I never met before," Ben said. "What's the worst you can do?"

"Why don't you ask your sister's boyfriend?" Grayson asked before he gestured for us to leave. I was more than happy to leave the beach. I didn't want to see Ben and Belle ever again. Unfortunately, I knew that was never going to happen.