

Bullied By The Badboy By Maramartha Chapter 10

Give it back

I skip the second and third period. When the bell rings to signify the start of fourth period, I am feeling much better. AP Calculus class is empty, I take my place beside the window and plug in my earpiece. Maria's voice floats into my ears, my head bobs to her cover of Beyonce's solo. She has a whole album dedicated to covers. I chuckle at the reminder of this morning incident, she slapped Ben on my behalf. She has never slapped anyone in her life, not even a fly, she's all bark and no bite, a total sweetheart.

On instinct, my eyes lower to the seat I occupied on Friday. Will he come? If he will, I hope he trips on his way in and breaks his neck. Pressing the can of coke I snuck into class to my stomach, I drag down my shirt as the door opens. Abigail, a redhead with hot brains troops in. I know her name because she answers almost all of Mr Sam's questions. She doesn't say a word to me, no surprises there, we are not friends but her furious glare has me squirming. Okay, that's new. She tucks her phone away, I grab mine.

"How did it feel?" I point a finger to my chest, is she talking to me? What's she talking about? "Yes, you Tessa." Rude much? I increase the volume of the song but I still hear her question above the music. "How did it feel to have Ben's hands all over you? He touched you." She lets out a dreamy sigh, I swallow my reply. If she wants to know how it felt, she can continue this chit chat with his fist. "Lucky you, Tessa."

Foolish you, Abigail.

One by one, students begin to stagger in and our one-sided conversation comes to an end. If she thinks I enjoyed him punching me, she's nuts. Mr Sam comes in last, he mutters his apologies for being late and introduces a new topic. I try to focus but my eyes keep darting to the seat beside me. Maria sends a message to check in on me, I promise to meet them for lunch, resisting the temptation to see what video is on the site. I am certain clips of me will be all over the blog, they will use the best part, when he almost punched me into unconsciousness. New memes will be out soon, if it already hasn't happened.

The door opens ten minutes into the class, everyone stops what they are doing and our heads snap to the entrance where Ben is standing with a black eye. Did Daniel give him that? The thought brings a smile to my lips. I dump the can by my foot, sending a smug smile in the asshole direction. How does it feel to be punched on a Monday morning?

"You're late," Mr Sam says.

"I know." His eyes find mine, I avert my gaze and pretend to copy the notes on the board.

Ben gives Mr Sam a note that earns him a nod and a dismissal. The girls in the class ogle him, all of them but me. Abigail is braver, she taps the empty seat by her right and I snicker when he walks past her. Good job. I can't wait until he punches her, she will never willingly look his way again. My anxiety hits the roof as he approaches my desk, Abigail gives me a sly smile with a wink and I gag in my brain. I am still avoiding Ben's gaze when he plops into the seat beside me, Mr Sam resumes his teaching and I lose focus.

How can I not when Ben keeps gawking at me. I don't look at him, instead I place my backpack on my desk to avoid those intense hateful eyes. He hit me in the corridor yet he's acting like I am the guilty one.

“Benjamin, read out the question on page ten.”

“I don’t have the textbook.”

Truly, he doesn’t. His desk has only a jotter he doodles on, his drawing is pretty sick but I’ll never admit it to him. Why does he have to be in this class if he doesn’t care about it? Mr Sam does not take kindly to Ben’s answer, he walks between the middle row and stops a few metres from him. I flip to page ten, prepared to read out the question should he call on me while half-hoping he sends Ben to detention. I don’t want to see him again. Whatever crush I used to have on him is dead after today. He’s a sore loser.

“Theresa has a textbook, share with her.” Mr Sam doesn’t notice the discomfort his words cause me, I blink and my head slowly rotates in Ben’s direction. They glare at each other for a strained minute, I hope Ben refuses so he can get into trouble with him. My dreams of seeing him in detention fades when he drags his seat closer to mine, his arm brushes mine and I jump. Ben hisses, I grunt. “Now, read the question.”

And he does. I hate myself for this but I swoon over the sound of his voice. Mr Sam walks back to the board to write out the equation. Placing one hand on his waist, he points at me. “Yes, what’s the answer?”

The answer?

“Theresa.” I wipe my sweaty palms on my shirt, staring at the question in the textbook like the answer will appear. “Yes, Theresa?” I gulp. “You will have no choice but to leave my class if you don’t get it.”

“54,” Ben says. He stares straight ahead at Mr Sam, explaining how he came about his answer. A smile lights Mr Sam’s face, he shoots me a disappointed look and a proud one at Ben. I shrink. Usually, I study over

the weekend since I have a hard time concentrating in class but I haven't had a chance to do so.

The rest of the lesson progresses without any hiccups, he doesn't ask me any questions and I never volunteer to answer the ones he throws open to the class. Ben continues doodling in his jotter but never misses a question directed to him, once, I almost reach over to his side and rip the page out. Counting the seconds until the bell rings, I stiffen when Ben leans over his desk and his pendant dangles into my view. I feel my neck where my necklace should be and my insides begin to boil. Who does he think he is?

"Give it back," I whisper.

He ignores me and slides his phone out of his bag, hiding it under his desk so he can use it without being caught. Sighing, I pull my textbook out of his sight but he doesn't protest. How I want to slap him!

"Give it back."

Abigail's head jerks my way, she gives me a pointed look. I don't care that I might have distracted her, maybe if she was really focused, she wouldn't have heard me but I raise my middle finger in response. She can kiss my ass. Ben has my necklace and he's acting like he has no idea what I am talking about. I bring out my phone without pressing it, he adjusts in his seat, curling his fingers around the pendant.

I hate him.

"Theresa, no phone in class."

Ben chuckles beside me, I mutter a string of apologies and return my phone to my bag.

“Ben, please give it back,” I ask nicely. He tugs on it, the necklace comes off and goes flying right above my head. Outside the window. I cover my mouth to muffle my gasp. My voice breaks when I say, “Ben.”

He didn't have to do that. A sane person would have ignored me.

Trying to locate the necklace with my eyes, I don't see anything in the thick shrubbery and my insides quake with anger. I'll kill him if I lose that necklace. I request permission to use the bathroom, Mr Sam denies me with the excuse that his class is almost over and my eyes sting with tears. The necklace is one of the biggest ways I can be close to Hayden. We might call each other frequently but it's not the same as having something from him close to my heart. I glance at Ben. His hands are shoved into the pockets of the hoodie he pulls over his head, he stares at the board like the most interesting lecture is going on.

“Why are you such a jerk?” I whisper loud enough for him to hear.

This behaviour can't be as a result of Saturday night alone. Would he have preferred an opponent who didn't fight back? He doesn't react to my question. I release a shaky breath, exhaling slowly until I feel the tears rushing to my eyes dry up. I won't let him get to me. I won, he will have to deal with that.

“Why are you such a liar?” he says at last and I roll my eyes. Real mature.

The bell finally goes off, everyone leaves except for Ben and I. I ignore him as I pack up, my movements are a bit slow due to the mild throbbing in my stomach. Ben's gaze follows my every move, I might have seen remorse in his eyes but it's gone before I can confirm. He exits the class silently, leaving me alone to sort out the mess he created and I collapse to my chair. I can't continue the rest of the semester that has barely begun

this way. I deserve better, we need to talk this out but first, I need to find my necklace.