

# Charlotte and the Seven Frat Brothers |

## Chapter 11

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CHARLOTTE

“Charlotte!” Chase calls my name for the third time.

Tristan has us out here playing Just Dance on the Xbox. I’m going against Chase, but failing miserably. Dancing is not for me. I literally have the rhythm of your typical white girl.

Don’t get me wrong, I can dance, but not like this. Routine dancing is where I look like a fish out of water. The guys, on the other hand, are like clones of JLo’s backup dancers. How?

“I’m sorry.” I’m breathless. “I can’t keep up. They’re changing the dance moves too quickly.”

I stick my arm out at the same time he turns towards me. *Crap*, I did it again. He turns right into my arm. The guys are snickering behind us, and I’m dying here.

My body is sore from moving at a rapid pace, and I can’t understand for the life of me why someone would invent a game like this.

“Sorry.” I place my hand on his chest. He stiffens under my hand. “Sorry again.” I turn to the guys and exhale deeply. “Thank you guys so much for today. It means the world to me that you guys would do this for me.”

“If we didn’t, Cha—”

“Let her talk.” He was closer. I could feel the bass of his voice on my back, his body heat wrapping around me too. Looking out my peripheral vision, he is that close.

If I took a tiny step back, he and I would be one and the same.

“Thanks.” I look up to him. His blue eyes, those eyes were pulling me again. Maybe he has a soft side because...because of the way he is looking down at me...

“We are just going to go. It looks like you two want to rip each other's clothes off. And I’m all for watching, but I prefer two girls going at it,” Everett says.

In a nanosecond, Chase's eyes were back to an icy stare.

*What is it with him?*

I don't wait for him to say or do anything.

"No, you guys can stay, I will go. I need to prepare for class tomorrow."

"What? What about dinner?" Vincent stops me from walking out.

"Didn't we just eat pizza not too long ago? You guys can't seriously be that hungry, again. Also, I have to drive home and that's three hours from here."

"We are football players. We eat a lot." Darren adds, hopping off the couch. "You know you can always stay here."

"Yeah, we have clean sheets, and I am sure we can find something to wear as well." Austin stands up stretching.

"I'd rather not wear something that one of you guys' fuck buddies wore over." I grab my phone off the table. Two missed calls from Wolf. Crap, I forgot to tell him what I got.

"Hey, guys, I am going to go."

"We insist that you stay—right, *Chase?*" Miguel looks at him.

"Right." He runs his fingers through his hair. "I have a shirt and sweatpants you can wear for the night."

"I'm okay."

"That wasn't up for discussion. I will leave it on your bed with clean sheets."

Here we go again.

"Seriously! I'm going to stay at Raven's tonight."

"Charles, wait," Darren huffs.

"Darren, don't." Chase raises his hand. "Charlotte, let me start over. It would mean a lot to the guys and me if you stay the night. This is just as much of your house as it is ours. So, would you mind staying the night?"

"I have some spare clothes for you if you like, and I can go grab some clean linen as well."

“Was that so hard for him?” Miguel muttered walking out the living room with Austin, Tristan, and Everett. I cover my mouth, hiding my smile.

Chase is different. Sort of. He reminds me of a moody Jughead, but then I get a glimpse of Archie in him.

“Since we can’t get dinner, can we at least get breakfast?” Vincent smiles.

“Sure,” I reply, and I guess there goes my answer for spending the night.

Chase tells me he will get the things and put them on the bed for me. I linger back in the living room with Vincent and Darren.

“Charles, just move back in officially. I know driving home every day from campus is tiring. Your room is in perfect condition and quite honestly—we miss having you around.

“We haven’t known you for a long time, but I guess it’s a connection thing we all have for you.” Darren sits back on the couch.

“Like a little sister vibe. Hence the overbearing you probably endured with us over the past weeks,” Vincent adds.

“Overbearing is an understatement.” I look over at Darren.

“Hey—in my defense, Wolf is bad news.”

“But—”

“No buts. He is—I’ve known him since grade school. Wolf isn’t the kind of guy who does things just because, remember that.”

“Will do. I think Chase has everything out for me already. I’ll see you guys in the morning bright and early—for breakfast. A thank you meal. Goodnight, boys.”

“Goodnight, Charley.”

“Goodnight, Charles—just remember what I told you about Wolf.”

“Mentally noted.” I smile, leaving the living room.

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This morning I wake up with a pep in my step. I’m able to cook for a large group again. Being back home I was only cooking for myself, since my parents are always working.

Raven didn't want to leave campus to visit me, complaining the drive was too long, and she had to do wardrobe fittings at five in the evening for the last two weeks. So, I was only cooking for one, and that's not fun.

After showering, I put back on Chase's shirt and sweatpants and head downstairs to make breakfast. I am just finishing up with the last of the scrambled eggs when I hear the footsteps. They are moving quickly too.

"I washed my hands before coming down here." Austin grabs bacon off the plate.

"I hope so, I heard you beating the hell out of your meat this morning. What video did you do it to?" Everett carries the plate of pancakes to the table.

"Probably, a BBW video," Tristan chimes in.

"That's right I like my girls BBW, yeah. Type to want to suck you dry and then eat some lunch with you. So thick that everyone else in the room is so uncomfortable.

"Ass in Houston Texas, but the face looks just like Claire Huxtable," Miguel raps.

"You're not Drake bro, give it up." Chase walks in, and I forget how to breathe.

Holy shit. Is he eating breakfast with us? He hasn't had breakfast with us before—when I was living here. Their group project always had him on the go.

Meeting with investors or checking out the site for the hotel and restaurant. The group project I am no longer a part of, by the way.

Last night I finally read all my emails and the guys decided mutually not to have me on board due to me being MIA. I blame no one because I honestly don't think I would have the time to help. Back to Chase...

He licks his lips, staring at me as he takes his seat. I tighten my hold on the plate of eggs and walk to the table, breathing in and out slowly.

I try to look anywhere but him, but those eyes are just drawing me in. I am doomed for sure. He is channeling every emotion in me with that one look.

My phone rings, snapping me out of the trance. Quickly putting the plate on the table, I reach inside my back pocket. It's Raven. Excusing myself, I walk into the living room.

"Hello?"

"Hey Charlotte, did you leave the frat house?"

"Umm no. You are bringing me some spare clothes. So why would I leave?"

Beep. Beep.

The call ends and there is a knock at the door. I shout "I'll get it," and it's none other than Raven. Dolled up too, a white sundress and gladiator sandals. Her hair cascades down into perfect curled beach waves.

"I brought pie and some clothes." She smiles.

"Are you here to see the guys or bring me clothes?" I let her in.

"Lower your voice. Where are they?" She shoves the pie and bag into my arms.

"Dining room, go in through the kitchen." I watch as she smooths the nonexistent wrinkles from her dress and disappears into the kitchen.

This will be one long breakfast. Raven is good at dragging something out.

"So, what are your plans after college?" Raven shifts her body so she's facing Darren.

"If I don't make it pro, I'll be running some businesses with the fellas full time. What about you?" He leans back in his chair and scratches the back of his neck. I've learned that is a pattern of his when he isn't interested.

Yet, Raven is so smitten by him. Raven tells him what she will do and that seems to bore all the guys. Modeling, she wants to become a model, fashion designer, or cook.

Which was news to me. I know she doesn't hate cooking, but it wasn't something I thought she was thrilled about either.

"Hey, Chase, how was the food?" he cuts Raven off as she was telling everyone her favorite designers. I didn't need to hear it because I know her top favorites.

Knew that since freshman year of college, one of the first things she has told me about herself. For once I welcome Darren's rudeness because I want to know what Chase thought.

He stayed quiet the entire time, answering questions here and there. It is like I am yearning for and needing his approval.

"Charlotte, your face," Austin looks at me with concern, and next thing you know everyone's eyes are on me. "What the hell?"

"Huh?" I stand up, feeling dizzy.

"Whoa there," Vincent and Tristan are at my side instantly. "Are you alright?" They ask in unison, helping me back to my seat.

Then it hits me.

I hear chairs scraping against the floor and they are in panic mode.

“What the fuck? Is she allergic to anything?” Chase shouts. “Hey Cupcake, are you allergic to something? Food-related?”

I feel his warmth next to me, his voice is gentle, but I can hear the underlying worry too. I nod my head.

Peanuts—all types of nuts. I want to say, but my throat feels like it’s closing fast. But there aren’t any peanuts in anything I made.

“Shit! Man, she is going to die.” Miguel punches the wall.

“Call 911, Raven!” Everett snaps at her.

Yes! Raven actually knows what to do in this situation. She has given me my EpiPen before. I always carry it in my bag.

I make eye contact with her and get the word countertop out, and maybe I saw hesitation before she flew into action.

“Get a pen and a straw. I’ll punch a hole in her throat; stick the straw in so she can breathe,” Everett says as if he’s come up with some bright idea.

“Are you fucking crazy?” Chase sends him a death glare before looking back at me. “We need to get you to a hospital, and fast.”

“Everett, you are a fucking idiot.” Vincent throws a fork at him.

“Seriously dude, a fucking straw in her throat?” Austin snaps.

Raven is by my side with the EpiPen. “Blue to the sky, orange to the thigh,” she says, counts to three, and injects the pen to my outer thigh. “Chase, rub that spot for ten seconds, I have to sit.”

Raven collapses back into her chair. Raven hates giving me the shot; anything with a needle makes her squeamish. Granted, she can’t see the needle, but knowing that it’s in there always gets her.

My throat opens up, and the itchy feeling goes away.

“Hey, Charlotte?” Chase is kneeling beside me, still rubbing my thigh. Sure, it’s past the ten seconds. “I am still going to take you to the hospital or at least the school medical center.” He stands.

"I promise I will go after my cooking class."

Tristan sits on the edge of the table. "You almost died. Are you fucking insane? We are taking you to the hospital now."

"Come on guys, I am fine, really. I just hav—"

"Not happening."

"Yeah, Charley, just go to the medical center and relax. I am sure Professor Duggan will understand why you didn't make it to today's class," Raven chimes in.

"But we have the test. And I can't miss it." I must keep my grades up; that's what the dean told me yesterday. Why is the universe doing this now? Out of all days, this one.

"I will explain everything to her. Trust me, you will be fine. You are her top student anyway, and she admires your dishes. Just go and rest, and I will handle everything."

"Thanks, Rave." I feel so defeated. Raven says her goodbyes quickly. This is not happening. Why is this happening?

"No crying, Charles. If you do, I'm out." Darren runs his fingers through his hair. "Just please don't cry."

"Bro, look, it's about to happen." Tristan's eyes widen slightly.

They can't fear a girl crying, can they? Austin counts to three and shouts "Not it," and soon after, the guys are all yelling. I take a few seconds to make out their words, and I am appalled at them.

One minute they want to stay home with me and now, now, they are trying to ditch me. Moving away to the other side of the kitchen, they huddle together and speak in hushed voices.

*Seriously?*

I watch on, rolling my eyes. This would be comical if I wasn't just about to die a few minutes ago.

"So, Charles," Darren and the rest of the guys are now staring at me. "Crying is a huge no-go for us, seeing that we aren't good with that. Some of us are going to have to bail..."

"Are you *serious*? It's just tears." My eyebrows bunched together. "It's emotions and feelings."

“See, we don’t do the whole girlfriend thing like that because of the crying and how you girls can make something so small so big when it comes to crying and shit,” Tristan says. “Well, some of us do.”

He looks from Everett to Chase to Austin.

“Making a big deal about crying? Sorry that we have feelings and wa—”

“See? That right there.” Everett points at me. “We think it’s best if you stay here today with Chase. You know, get to know each other more, and you seem pretty much taken by h—”

Austin elbows him in the side, shutting him up.

“What Evie here was trying to say is that it would be best if you and Chase got to know each other more. You pretty much know all of us to a certain extent, why not Chase?”

Guys are the worst.

“Is this some sort of matchmaking here? If so, you guys are barking up the wrong tree.” I wipe a lone tear from my cheek.

“Charles, no one was thinking that.” Darren raises his eyebrows at me. “We genuinely want you two to get to know each other.”

“Oh. Okay.”

“Great. We’re leaving.” Miguel is the first one out the front door, the rest following.

“Wait,” I call out. “You guys are leaving now, like *right now*?” Vincent nods his head, pats Chase on the shoulder before heading out. The door closes, and Chase just stands there quietly.

“So?” I say.

He looks at me, his eyes are icy again. “If you need me, I’ll be in my room.” He snaps and storms off.

Great. My life has gone from *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* to *Beauty and the Beast*.

Next Chapter

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