

# Charlotte and the Seven Frat Brothers |

## Chapter 15

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CHARLOTTE

I glance down at the restaurant plan, unable to concentrate on the lines of numbers and letters. When Chase and I went to Raven's dorm room, my things were already placed outside the door in trash bags.

For someone who I called a best friend and sister to turn on me so easily, for whatever reason, I don't know if it hurts. Part of me wants to talk to her to figure this out, and the other wants nothing to do with such a vile human.

I stay in the dining room with the guys to go over their business. I'm not needed for the project, but I guess they are being nice and allowing me to look over some things for them.

I want nothing to do with the project—now knowing I have to betray them.

"Why do you do that?" I look up to see Tristan staring at me weirdly.

"Do what?"

"You chew on the end of your pen a lot. Are you hungry?" His top lip lifts in disgust. "There is pizza on the counter if you are."

I chew the pen, staring at him, wanting to annoy him. I chew on it a little too hard because the next thing you know, I taste the ink. The guys are laughing, and I'm rushing to the sink. Oh, my days!

"Good for you, smartass." Tristan laughs.

*Yuck.*

*Yuck.*

**YUCK!**

"Charles, don't rub your mouth like—holy shit. You're turning into a Smurf. Stop rubbing for crying out loud, woman." Darren grabs my hand mid-run and turns off the water. "One of you, give us a towel please."

They're all trying to contain their laughter as we continue to study. I haven't gone to the bathroom to look in the mirror since it happened.

Darren said he cleaned as much as he could get off, but the rest would go away over time. So, for the past hour, I'm sitting at the table with four of the most childish guys.

Darren occasionally calls me Smurfette. Everett and Tristan snicker every time they look my way. And the worst of all is Miguel, every blue ball joke he can tell, he does. He is indirectly making fun of me.

"You know what? I'm leaving. You guys are so immature for sure. Haven't I been through enough today?"

"Speaking of that, where did you run off to? You were gone, MIA, for almost two hours. It's like you disappeared." Tristan puts his pen down and stares at me.

"You know we could have caught you while running, but we knew you need time to cool off, but two hours?"

"Tristan, relax," says Everett. "She is home, and that's all that matters. So, Charles, wh—"

"Save it, Everett. I'm not playing good cop, bad cop with you two. I told you guys I just went walking around, bumped into Chase and he helped me get my things from Raven's.

"I've been outed as a fucking virgin by my best friend in front of other people on campus." I take a deep breath as I regain my composure. "I just needed time."

"Sorry, Charles, we didn't mean to push." Tristan shrugs. "I was really worried, that's all."

"It's okay, T. I just don't want to talk about it anymore."

They all nodded in agreement, and we continued to study. I look down at the papers, still not able to concentrate. What Chase told me hours ago is still fresh and vivid in my memory.

He liked me back in middle school, but Raven never told me. I guess she is a wolf in sheep's clothing. Speaking of Wolf, I need to text him.

I have to get fresh air and fast! I stand up too quickly, knocking my chair back. Their heads snap up, eyes trained on me.

"Everything aligns—"

"What the fuck is on your face, Charlotte? You look like a Smurf." Austin walks into the dining room wide-eyed. It's like I can't win. In walks Chase, too. He doesn't see me yet because he is looking at his phone.

I can probably make a run for it. "Earth to Smurfette, what happened? Did you face paint?"

*Just run or casually walk away, either would do.*

I storm out of the dining room, wishing I had one of those rubber stress balls.

"Charlotte."

*No. No. No.*

"Charlotte?" He calls out again.

I open my bedroom quickly, closing and locking it behind me. I can't hold a conversation with him right now. I am a Smurf, for crying out loud.

*Ping.*

Charlotte.Withers

I know. Your father will get what he asked for.

Candace.Grey

You will regret it if so.

Charlotte.Withers

Goodnight Candace.

"Charlotte, I am coming in," Chase says on the other side of the door.

I close my laptop, sliding it underneath my pillow. "Just come back tomorrow."

"No, I need to talk to you now."

"Whatever, Chase, the door is locked, and I'm not up for company."

I lie on the bed, staring at the ceiling. What am I going to do? I don't want to lose the trust I have gotten from the guys, but I also don't want to lose RCA. It has been my dream since I was a little girl.

A smile comes to my face as I think about my first time hearing about the school. Mom and Dad have the certificates on the wall in the family room, and I would always tell them I wanted mine up there too.

So, they had me make a bowl of cereal at the age of six, and when I did, they made a fake certificate for me and hung it up there, right between theirs.

"You do know we share a bathroom." He opens the door. "Are you trying to avoid me because of what happened earlier?"

“No.”

“What?”

“I said no.”

“Charlotte, move the pillow from your face.”

“Hey!” He takes it upon himself to move it. I grab the next one, covering my face. “Just go away.”

“I’ve already seen your blue face. There is no need to hide it.” He chuckles.

“Liar.”

“No, Darren sent me a picture. Just take a look for yourself.”

I raise my hand in the air, searching around for the phone.

“Remove the pillow, and then I’ll let you see.” He grabs my hand and the tiny lightning bolts shoot up my arm and throughout my body. “Come on, Cupcake, you know you want to see me.”

He probably is wearing that boyish grin right now.

“I don’t want to see you.” Lies, all lies. I couldn’t wait to see him tonight, but I went from blue tongue to blue face within a matter of seconds. “Can we talk tomorrow?”

“I’m not leaving until we talk. You have some explaining to do about Raven. What the hell happened with you and her? I heard what she was saying about you on campus today.”

I sat up, tossing the pillow to the side. I can’t care less about the blue face. The guys said they wouldn’t say a word, and they lied.

“Who told you? Was it the guys? I told those good-for-nothing shits not to say anything!” I don’t want to talk about Raven. I’d rather not think of her anymore. She basically destroyed a part of me.

It’s like everything was built on a lie. She mentioned I get everything because of my mom and dad, which she knows isn’t true. I’ve worked hard for everything.

Keeping my grades up, staying out of trouble, and even joining the stupid debate team in high school. I never flaunted my wealth. Not once.

My parents adored Raven. Whenever she came to spend the night, they would treat her like their own. She got everything I did when she was around.

My mother always wanted Raven over. She liked the thought of having two daughters, and Raven knew it.

I never complained when she got bold and asked my parents, specifically my mother, to buy her the latest shoes, purses, or clothes.

I never complained or got mad when my mother took Raven with her to fashion week in Paris and left me back home. I was always supportive of her and whatever she was pursuing.

I was and always will be an amazing friend. I just chose the wrong best friend to be loyal to.

"Whoa there, Cupcake, you are starting to cross over from a blue raspberry to tomato," he pulls me from the bed, his hand caressing my cheek, and that's when I get a good look at him.

"I like this color on you better than the green."

"What happened to your eye?" I reach up to touch the cut on his cheek. "What the hell happened to you?"

"Tell me what happened to you and Raven."

"It was nothing, just a little argument between us two. Nothing to worry about, trust me."

"Little? She talked about you being a virgin and then tries to pimp you out. I would say I have every right to be worried. I called dibs on you, Charlotte, which means you are mine.

"I don't like when people try to push up on what's mine."

"You went and fought Raven?" I gasp.

"No." He looks at me like I have three heads.

"I found out about your *little* argument from the asshole who thought he could buy you for twenty dollars. I just landed a few punches on him. His friends jumped in, good thing Vincent and Austin were with me. No biggie."

"No biggie? Chase, you are going to draw attention to me—to us, and I don't even know what we are doing here. What about Natalia?"

“What we are doing is finishing where we left off.” That loud cynical voice is back and setting off alarms.

“You just want me for sex, to be the first one to deflower me, huh? You don’t want me the way I want you. You have a girlfriend and yet you are pushing up on me. I am not one of these airhead college girls.”

I push him off me. A shadow comes over his face, and he swallows hard.

“Is that what you think?” His voice is sharp. “You think I just want to bang you and go about my day?”

“That’s what it seems like. You come in here bragging about defending me, and then you want to have sex. So yes, that’s what I think.”

His brow furrows. “Fuck you, Charlotte. You know what? You are just like all the other females here. You’re a judgmental b—I am going to leave before I say something I will regret.”

He shakes his head as he walks off, slamming the bathroom door.

Dropping to the bed, I bury my face in my hands.

Way to go, Charlotte.

*Ping.*

“What the hell now!” I open the laptop.

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