

Charlotte and the Seven Frat Brothers |

Chapter 23

Denver.Jones

Lies??!

Kyria.Jimenez

Yup. I saw them storming out of the old library—he was yelling at her.

Lakrisha.Hayes

Uh what did he say?

Denver.Jones

Holy shit! What the hell is going on at Croakington? It's like scandal after scandal with them.

Lakrisha.Hayes

UHHHH HELLO WHAT DID HE YELL AT HER?

Kyria.Jimenez

I don't know, but the veins popping out his neck and his face turning red—pretty sure he was yelling.

Lakrisha.Hayes

OMG Kyria you are a fucking dunce,

Denver.Jones

Sorry Ky I am siding with Risha on this one. You don't even have the proper receipts to be reporting this kind of news.

Kyria.Jimenez

I had my headphones in. Sorry.

Lakrisha.Hayes

So you couldn't take them out your ear for one minute? The hell is wrong with you.

Kyria.Jimenez

I was listening to JB and my favorite part was coming up. You guys know how I am about Justin.

Denver.Jones

Let me do some research and I'll get back to you bitches—with receipts.

CHASE

Chase.Tucker

She is fine. She is with me on our way to the house now. Make sure Tristan, Miguel and Everett are there too.

CHARLOTTE

I wanted him to yell, get mad, or do something once I told him what's been going on. Yet, he did none of the above. He was quiet and stared out the window.

My palms start to get sweaty as I stand in the room silently waiting and watching him. I don't attempt to speak because I don't know what else to say.

He turns his head slowly towards me and I watch him—he is contemplating what to say next.

“Chase, I am truly sorry,” I say what could be the millionth time.

“Did you ever find our business plan?” He calmly asked me.

“Yes.” I look at the floor.

“And what did you do?” He gently lifts my chin. “I’ll try not to be mad if you sent it off to Dean Grey.”

“I didn’t.” I look deeply into his eyes, hoping he can see the truth. “But I did take pictures of them on my phone.”

“And...”

“I will delete them when we get back to the house.”

He nods his head. “Did you tell your parents what the Dean is trying to do to you?”

I shake my head no and try to fight the tears from coming. Being able to speak about this with someone is a relief, but speaking about it to the person I was going to betray feels pretty shitty.

Chase seems so calm and level-headed throughout this whole conversation and once again, I am freaking out on the inside.

“Charles...why didn't you say something—at least to your parents?”

“I can't.”

“Why the hell not?”

“Because—”

“No, there is no because. What the dean is doing to you is fucking illegal, and Candance is probably behind it.”

He balls his fist at his sides. I know I should have told him sooner, because he is pissed off. I don't like to see him this way, but he is telling me what I need to hear.

“You're right.”

“And don’t tell me—wait, what? Did you just say I’m right?”

“Yes, I should have told you or at least my parents. But I didn’t and—”

“You are going to tell them tonight. Once we get back to the house you are going to call and tell them.”

He walks out of the room and I follow behind him. This is why he and I don’t get along very well, his demanding ways—it’s seriously a turnoff.

“You just can’t tell me what to do!”

“Really?”

“Yes, really.”

He stops and looks at me. I don’t think any human being should be turning red like he is right now. I take a step back as he slowly raises his hand, pointing his finger at me.

The look on his face tells me I am in for a stern Chase Tucker talk.

“You let the fucking dean and his whore of a daughter tell you what to do, which once again is all fucking illegal. Yet, all I tell you to do is call your parents—fuck it, Charlotte, let’s go,” he whisper-yells at me.

He storms off once again, and this time I take my time following behind him, leaving enough space between us.

My heart feels like it’s about to explode as we near the frat house. I’m breaking out into a cold sweat, and the pain in my side isn’t helping either.

Facing the other six guys is going to be harder than anything I’ve done before. They are like family to me, and I know how disappointed they will be with me.

“Charlotte?” I look up and see Chase walking back towards me. I didn’t know I stopped walking. “Are you okay?”

“Yeah, my side is—ooh, okay.” Chase lifts me into his arms and carries me the rest of the way to the house. “You don’t have to do this.”

“I do. I forgot you were hurt, and I am making matters worse by letting you walk all the way here. I am disappointed in you...but I don’t like to see you hurt.”

I wrap my arms around his neck tighter as he climbs up the stairs to the front door. The door opens as we reach the top step, and I bury my face in his chest.

“Holy shit! Guys, it’s Chase and Charles!” Austin yells.

“Chase, put me down...I don’t want everyone to see me like this,” I whisper on his neck.

“Not a chance.” I don’t have to look at him to know he has a smile on his stupid face. He walks through the door, and I bury my face deeper into his chest. I just don’t want the guys to see me like this.

Some girls would love to have a guy holding her like this—me not so much. I don’t like the whole damsel-in-distress vibe. The guys are all talking at once, asking if I’m okay.

Or if they need to send some girls over to Raven’s dorm room.

“No—please don’t send anyone to hurt her.” I look up quickly, scared that they just might do something like that. She may not be my best friend anymore, but she was like family to me, and I don’t want to see her hurt.

“Just leave it alone, you guys...umm Chase, can you put me down now?” I look at him and he nods his head. Slowly he puts me down, and they all watch as I try not to limp to the couch.

“Why are you walking like that, Charles?” Everett puts his hands on his hips.

“That jog I took was a killer.”

“So, you are going to lie or tell them the truth—because they know you fought Raven.” Chase just had to say something. I swear he must love to see me suffer in awkward situations. “Hell, the whole campus knows.”

“Yeah, Charles, we do know and probably the whole campus.” Austin stuffs his hands into his pocket, shrugging his shoulders.

“There is a picture circulating around the students.” Darren walks to me, showing me his phone.

“You see, Charles, or should I call you Charlotte Ali? You did a pretty number on Raven. I don’t think anyone will be bothering you for the rest of your time here.” He chuckles.

“OMG did I really do that to her?” Raven’s face is swollen, her right eye is shut, and her lip is busted. I couldn’t have possibly done that. The fight was no more than five minutes...I think.

“Charlotte Ali, we are scared of you.” Tristan plops down on the couch next to me. “So, Chase, is this why you wanted us here, or is there something else? I feel like there is something else.”

“Charlotte?”

“Chase...”

We say in unison.

The guys look at us both, confused.

“You want me to tell them?” Chase tilts his head, and I nod my head yes. I can’t stomach telling them the story, and I don’t think they are going to be happy with me either.

“Tell us what?” Vincent sits on the armrest of the couch across from me.

“I know all of you might want to take a seat for this one.” Chase scratches the back of his head.

I hid behind my hair as he told them what has been going on and what I’ve done. At first, it was quiet, too quiet, and then there was a lot of yelling. Not at me but in general.

Also, there were a lot of texting and phone calls happening. The guys were in their own little circle of trust, and here I was sitting on the couch not to be noticed. Tristan got up and never sat back down next to me.

Maybe I am overthinking it because he is still standing, pacing back and forth.

I tried to catch Vincent or Darren’s eye, but they never looked my way.

“Miguel? Can I speak to you?” Everyone stops what they are doing and stares at me. “In private.”

“Uh sure, Charles.” He seems unsure about why I want to talk to him and not someone else. “You want to go to the dining room or...”

“No worries, we are going to head out.” Chase clears his throat, eyeing me.

“Out? Like out where?” I ask.

“We have something to do—I guess Miguel can stay here until we get back,” he replies.

“And Charles, I know this might be too much to ask, but can you cook dinner?”

“Everett,” everyone says his name at once.

“What? I am going to be hungry by the time we get back, damn!” He rolls his eyes, walking out of the living room.

“Sure, Everett, I can manage that.” I wanted to make things right again, and my cooking is one way to get the guys to like me again—if they hate me for what I did.

Granted, they aren’t acting differently towards me now, but later on, they might. Once everything sinks in on what I did or was going to do.

“But where exactly are you guys going?” I ask again. Chase didn’t give me a clear answer the first time.

“We are heading down to the lot. We have to check on a few things with the contractor. We won’t be long, maybe two, three hours, tops.” Vincent smiles at me.

“Ok, dinner should be ready by then.” I smile back.

“Guys, we should get going.” Austin looks at his watch. “We don’t want to leave them waiting too long.”

“Right.” Chase looks at me once more before following the guys out of the living room and house. Miguel and I look out the window and watch the guys climb into the cars.

I can feel my heart beating in my ears, and my palms are getting all sweaty as I watch them drive down the street.

I turn to Miguel. “Did you get it?”

He walks to his backpack, pulling out a Manila envelope.

“If the guys find out I did this—after all that just happened, I am going to get my ass kicked and maybe lose some friendships. Put this in a safe place now.” He hands me the envelope.

“I’m sorry—”

“Don’t say it. Just don’t fuck up. I did owe you one, remember? Look, put it somewhere safe and make sure none of the guys will find it.”

“Right. So, are you going to help me with dinner?” I stand slowly. The pain in my side has subsided, but it’s still sore like hell.

“I’m actually going to meet up with Valerie for a couple of hours, but I’ll be back before the guys get home.”

He heads out of the living room. “Wait,” he pops his head around the corner. “Envelope in a safe place, Charlotte. I am serious about this.”

“I am going to put it up right now.” I smile, waving it.

“Good. Check you later.”

“Later.” I don’t think before I do anything...obviously. I hope when everything comes full circle, the guys will understand my true intentions.

Next Chapter

Continue to the next chapter of Charlotte and the Seven Frat Brothers