

# Charlotte and the Seven Frat Brothers |

## Chapter 30

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#### CHARLOTTE

He watches me intensely for a brief moment and stands up. I don't take my eyes off of him—I can't take my eyes off of him. This is all so bizarre to me.

There is really no way Chase could have gotten here before me. I left the house and he was still sleeping, and yet here he is.

"Sorry to disappoint, but I am Jasper, Chase's older brother."

He comes around the desk, and then I start to see him for real.

A little taller than Chase, voice deeper, I can see he is more muscular even with the suit he is wearing, and now that I really look at him, his hair is at least a shade darker.

"Did you apply for this position thinking you would be working for him?"

"Umm..."

"She was asking to see your father." Ember replies for me. Jasper looks to Ember. She blushes under his gaze and I want to puke. All of this Jasper talk is making sense.

She doesn't want another female working closely beside him, because she wants him all to herself. I only want one Tucker brother, and it's not Jasper.

"Right, thank you for going to get..."

"Charlotte Withers," I help him out.

"Thank you for getting Charlotte. You two are free to go back to work."

"Actually, I finished all my projects for today. I can help you with anything you may need." Ember smiles at Jasper. Can she be any more obvious?

"Then, in that case, I need you to go to Ophelia's office and help her out with the next issue layouts. She has been asking for help. Do you need work too, Matthew?"

"Uhm no, I have a ton waiting for me," he says walking out of the office.

“Are you sure you don’t need anything? Ophelia likes her space, so I don’t want to intrude.” Ember wasn’t budging, and I think she was actually pissed off. The tips of her ears were turning red.

Jasper slightly turns to look at the phone on his desk. “I can give Stuart a call in finance and see if he needs help today. I know he is always looking.”

“You’re right, I’ll go help Ophelia.” She stumbles over her words while exiting the room, closing the door behind. Now I’m intrigued to meet this Stuart guy.

“Where are my manners? Take a seat,” he says walking around the desk and taking his seat.

“So, Charlotte, you’re the new editorial intern. Tell me how you came to find this job. We only sent out emails to family and very close friends.

“We try to keep positions at Paperlove Publishing House under wraps so to speak.”

“Paperlove? As in the Paperlove? Wow, all my favorite books are published by you guys. There is this one cookbook by Julia Mitchell that was published two years ago and it has been my cooking bible ever since.”

The corners of his mouth turn up slightly. “Thank you. I picked that one myself. But you didn’t answer the question of how you came to find the position.”

I can’t tell him the truth because I never told the truth in the beginning. “Chase—”

“Let me stop you right there. If my little brother sent you as some joke... you can leave.”

He tries to control his anger, but after living with his brother for some time, I notice the signs. There is bad blood between the two because I’ve never even heard Chase had a brother...

I think he only mentioned having a sister or sisters, maybe even being the only child.

“No. I was saying Chase’s frat brother Everett is my cousin and he mentioned it to me. I’m guessing Chase told him about it.”

I practiced this lie all morning, hoping for the time I had to say it to someone. It sounds believable and the look on Jasper’s face says he does.

“Ahh, Everett Sawyer. His family is practically *our family*. So let me get right into it then...”

He talks to me about what my expectations are and where my cubicle will be located. I don’t know half of the things he is talking about.

I don't know anything about publishing or editing. I don't even edit my papers for school. Raven used to help me with that one.

I try to look other places than Jasper's face. It's a bit frightening how much he and Chase look alike.

"How old are you?" There goes the word vomit again. I just can never think before I speak sometimes. "Sorry, you don't have to answer that... it was so unprofessional of me to ask that."

"It's alright. I am twenty-nine, just six years older than Chase. Anything else you would like to know about me? This will be your only chance to find out." He smiles at me and I can't help smiling back.

"No that was it—wait... you and Chase, are you two close?" Now I am making it obvious. He probably thinks I want his brother—granted I do, but he doesn't have to know that. "Sorry, I shouldn't have asked that, either."

"You are a very sorry person. Do you always ask questions and then apologize? If so, we need to work on how to fix that.

"Working here at Paperlove we don't have time for the faint-hearted ones. Apologizing so much will only get you so far."

"Right, sorry... I just did it again. Crap—sorr—I'm just going to be quiet now." I press my lips tightly together. He chuckles at me and shakes his head slightly.

"You know, Charlotte you are going to be a breath of fresh air around here. To answer your question, my brother and I aren't on good terms—that's all you need to know.

"Have you settled into your apartment yet? I know my father has mentioned to me that you will be staying at one of the company's apartment buildings."

"No, I just came straight here from the airport. I got an email saying to be here at two."

The phone rings, interrupting us. He asks me to give him a minute while he takes the call. To give him some space, I walk towards the large floor-to-ceiling windows, checking out the view.

Gosh, it is so beautiful he has the perfect view of Central Park. From up here, you can see the snow covering most of the park, and even so it still looks breathtaking.

"...Everett's cousin is here right now. Yes, father... Well, I was going to send her to Parris Towers to get settled in... Have her back here first thing tomorrow morning... Okay."

He hangs up the phone, and I continue to stare out the window, waiting for him to acknowledge me, and he does.

“My father would like to see you, but I told him that I would like you to be settled in before he speaks to you. Between you and me, my father can be a bit aggressive. If you mention it to anyone, I’ll deny it,” he jokes.

“So, I’ll call a car to take you to Parris Towers. Do you have any luggage?”

“Uh, yes, it’s downstairs with Meredith. Could I get a brief tour of the floor?” I ask.

“I don’t think anyone is available to show you, so I can do it if you like.”

“Sure, that would be amazing. I mean if it’s putting you out of your way then never mind, I can wait until tomorrow.”

My palms are getting sweaty, and I’m having a hard time convincing myself that taking the internship is a good idea. The way Jasper looks at me is the same way Chase does when he is trying to figure me out.

I pray he believes the whole I-am-Everett’s-cousin thing. I would hate waking up tomorrow and finding out I’ve been fired for lying.

“Come on, I’ll show you around.” He stands heading to the door. I follow behind him, but keep my distance—he might not be Chase, but there are similarities they share and that can mean trouble for me.

Speaking of Chase, I need to call him back immediately. I don’t know what he is thinking or worse what he may be doing.

“Umm...Jasper, do you mind if I use the ladies’ room before we take the tour? Long flight, and I hate using the restrooms on the plane,” I explain.

“I have a private bathroom over in the corner if you would like to use that one.” He points.

“Yes, thank you. I’ll be right back...it will only take a few minutes. Thank you.” I quickly walk into the bathroom, powering on my phone.

Thirty-two missed calls from Chase and the guys collectively. My parents called four times and each time they left a voicemail. I don’t think about writing my parents back as much as Chase.

I can deal with my parents later on tonight.

Charlotte

I'll call you later on tonight and explain everything. Please don't worry about me.

I power off my phone and flush the toilet. While running the water, I look at myself in the mirror and wonder how long I can keep this lie going before the truth comes out.

Next Chapter

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