

Dating 52

Chapter 52

The next day, I found Ella under her tree on the campus lawn. Even though this place had started out as Ella's place, Ella's tree, in a way, it had become our tree. It was a place that we could just escape the chaos of the world that we were constantly having to face.

Ella was reading a book, a pen between her mouth as she marked passages. She frowned and shook her head as if she didn't agree with what she was reading. Then, as if she could feel my presence, Ella looked up.

Ella's eyes lit up when she saw me, and she grinned.

"Hi" she said, almost shyly

"Hey, writing superstar," I said and smiled.

Ella leaned over and wrapped her arms around me. She leaned into me and I couldn't get enough of her body pressed against mine. I held her tightly, feeling the weight of the last few days lift slightly. That's all I ever wanted to do. To take away her pain and worry.

"I heard what you did," she said, her voice muffled against my chest.

I pulled back slightly, looking down at her. "You mean kicking Noah off the team

She nodded, her eyes wide with a mix of surprise and admiration. "Yeah. I can't believe you did that. I know that he had been totally wild at the last game against Arthur Winslow's team but he's a good player most times. That must have been a hard decision" *W̵w.N0v6()w0rM.c0M*

"It was, I admitted brushing a strand of hair from her face. "But I had to do what I had to do. He was a threat to you and a menace to the team. I couldn't let him get away with it. He needed to reminded of which one of us was in charge."

Ella's expression softened, and she hugged me hard. I know that she was trying to show her support through how hard she held me, "I'm proud of you, Liam You know that?"

I smiled.

I wished that everybody had seen things my way like Ella had. For a couple of days, different members of the team tried to convince me to reconsider my decision. They came up with various arguments: Noah was an asset to the team, we needed his skills for the upcoming games, maybe he deserved another chance.

But there was no way in hell that I was about to budge on my decision. Noah's actions had consequences, and he needed to face them.

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was in the locker room, lacing up my determined

skates for practice when Jason, one of our top defens players, came up to me. He looked hesitant, but

"Hey, Liam," Jason started, scratching the back of his head. "Can we talk for a sec

I nodded, focusing on tying my laces tighter. "Sure, what's up?"

Jason took a deep breath. "Look, man, I know Noah messed up. But he's a damn good player, and we need him for the upcoming games. The team isn't the same without him,"

I glanced up, meeting his eyes. "Noah crossed a line. He was harassing Ella and sabotaging our games. I can't just let that slide."

Jason frowned, frustration written all over his face. "But suspending him? Isn't that too harsh? Maybe just hench him for a couple practices of something"

I stood up, facing him squarely. "Noah needs to understand that his actions have real consequences. He's been way out of line the way he's treated Ella and he's put the whole team at risk. I can't let him back on until he shows that he's genuinely changed."

Jason sighed, shaking his head. "Alright, man. I just hope you know what you're doing."

Later that day, I was walking across campus when I spotted Ryan, another guy on the team, heading towards me. He looked serious, and I practically knew exactly what he was going to say.

"Liam," Ryan called out, jogging up to me.

"We need to talk."

I stopped, crossing my arms. "Yeah, I figured"

Ryan's brow furrowed. "Look, everybody is on edge. Losing Noah is going to completely throw off our dynamics. He's a key player, we need him to

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beat Arthur's team. I mean, I know he fucked up last time bar you know he usually isn't like that."

I shook my head. "Shit, Ryan, I get why you're concerned, okay. But Noah was our of control. If we let him back on the team without any consequences, what message does that send?"

Ryan sighed, rubbing his temples. I get it, I do. That is there any way we can work this out? Maybe have him apologize and commit to changing or something?"

I considered his words, feeling the weight of the decision pressing down on me. "If Noah comes to me, genuinely remorseful and willing to make amends, I'll consider it. But until then, he's off the team

Ryan nodded slowly, a hint of relief in his eyes. "Fair enough. I'll talk to him. Maybe he just needs a push in the right direction. *W̵w.N()v6()w0rM.c0M*

I looked at Ryan, knowing that it was going to take more than one conversation from him to get Noah to start acting right

After practice, one of Noah's teachers called me into his office as I was walking by. He was pacing back and forth, clearly in his feelings. *W̵w.N()v6()w0rM.c0M*

"Liam, sit down," he said, gesturing to a chair.

I sat, bracing myself for another argument. "What's this about, Prof?"

Prof stopped pacing and looked at me, his expression serious. "Tve heard about what you did with Noah. And while I understand your reasons, we need to think about the team's future. We can't afford to lose a player like him. That's why I give him so much leeway during class."

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Prof. sighed, sitting across from me. I know, son. But maybe there's a way to handle this without losing him entirely?"

1 shook my head, "I did what I did because I meant it. There's no going back"

One evening, Ella and I met again under our tree. We had both been through so much and all we wanted was to be in each other's arms. She looked worried, her eyes scanning the campus nervously.

I haven't seen Noah around school in a while, she said, bating her lip. "It's like he's disappeared"

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Ella sighed, leaning into me. "It's not just him I'm worried about. Remember what he said about your birth family, the Winslows?"

I tensed at the mention of my biological family. The Winslows were powerful and influential. I still really didn't know everything that they were capable of The thought of what they could do to Ella made my blood run cold

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