

Educate you by xsparxflyx Chapter 25

/ Educate you by xsparxflyx

Twenty Five

"No, but seriously, when and where did you find the guts to throw a temper tantrum in your physics

professor's office?"

"This is probably the millionth time I'm being asked that! That is not my point!" I crossed my arms before my chest. "The problem's solved, so he should just shut up about it,"

"That's easy for you to say. You're still just a student. Your university is his workplace. Maintaining a spotless record matters big time!"

"But dude! He's treating me like I'm the only one at fault!" I whined.

"No, he isn't, he left you a mocha!"

"Come on, Maddie! That just means that he doesn't want me to lose consciousness in his vicinity again, only because it might get him into trouble once more,"

"If this guy is the best physics professor of the state, why doesn't he work as a theoretical physicist or something?" Maddie raises an eyebrow. "Why did he have to choose lecturing?"

"He studied at the university of Stonewall too. Our Dean, Professor Watson, was his lecturer in physics. That's probably why," I shrugged. "He'll get paid hella lot anyway, so why not go for the easier job?"

"Wait a minute," Madelyn muttered. "How do you know all this? I mean, you know so much about him,"

"They're only things I've heard from people... especially Abigail," I explained. "When it comes to gossip, she's the person to go to,"

"Yeah... well... all I have left to say is that he's super hot,"

"Ugh! Super not!" I rolled my eyes. "You should sit with us during one of his lectures," I said. "Trust me, you have never felt the actual gush of adrenaline until you start taking his classes,"

Madelyn chuckled under her breath, as if I was being overly dramatic.

"Dude! I'm dead serious! You have no idea about the level of agonizing tension that could build up in that room!" I shook my head, recalling the bitter feelings. "Trust me, it's traumatizing,"

"Pfft! Drama queen!"

"I mean it!"

"Sure sure! Whatever let's you sleep at night," She shrugged. "No matter what you say, I think taking the trouble to buy a white chocolate mocha and then leaving it on the counter before he left, means a lot more than 'I want to stay out of trouble,'" Madelyn said as she raised her eyebrows.

I rolled my eyes and looked away. "Stop assuming things, Maddie"

"We're supposed to hand out the invitations today," Bliss said.

"I'm not doing Decarlo," I said at once.

"But,"

"No!" I refused.

"Look," Vanille said. "There are four bundles of invitations, each has seven. I will hand these out randomly. and the four of us will do the distribution. Understood?"

"Fingers crossed, Aeliana," Bliss muttered to me.

I took the bundle in my hand, finger crossed on the other.

"Alright, now head out," Bliss said as she dragged Leah out of the classroom and Vanille followed closely.

"Guys, wait for me," I said, running after them.

"Aeliana, hurry up! We've got only twenty minutes until chemistry class starts!" Bliss yelled.

"Alright alright!" I said, and headed towards the business studies department after seeing Mrs. Lee's name on the cover of the top most envelope.

Four of the invitations I had, were addressed to lecturers of the business studies section. Thank goodness they're really chill people.

I didn't dare to look at the rest. My palms were sweaty and I was afraid that the ink on the envelopes would get smudged. So I squeezed them into the pocket of my sweater.

The next letter was addressed to Professor Watson. What!? Professor Watson!? Why the hell do I have to deliver the letter to the dean of the university!? Talk about hard luck!

Taking the invitation in my hands, I made my way towards his office. I gently knocked on his door after taking a deep breath.

"Yes? Come in,"

I wrapped my fingers around the handle and push the door open to reveal two men sitting at the desk facing each other.

Professor Watson was seated facing me but the other wasn't. But of course, I would know that silky brown hair anywhere.

"Ah! Miss Winslow, wasn't it?"

"Good morning, sir," I gulped. What is that beast doing here?

"Why don't you take a seat there? I'm in the middle of quite an important discussion,"

"Oh! Of course," I said immediately and took a seat on the black leather sofa.

"You were saying, Antonio?" Professor Watson looked back at the devil seated facing him.

"Yeah.... So that is all we have completed up to now from the entire syllabus and it was as I was instructed to do at the beginning of the year, by you. So this semester will end with an exam including all the completed lessons," he explained. "The issue is..." Mr. Decarlo shoved some papers into his file. "... the next year's batch..."

Oh my goodness that's our batch!! He's talking about us!!!

"... is not upto the standard,"

"Oh..." Professor Watson muttered. "That's rather... disappointing,"

"That goes without saying," Decarlo shook his big head. "They are not up to the level that they're supposed to be right now, when there's only 10 months remaining for the big exam,"

Damn! I wanna just... dig a hole and... bury my head in it right now...

"So, you have completed 75% of the content, but they're not thorough with it?" Professor Watson questioned.

"No, they're not," Decarlo replied immediately. "There are 40 students but only one of them is up to the standard,"

This is so disappointing...

"Antonio, I know very well that you are doing your part. The problem is that the students are not, am I right?"

"I cannot deny that argument, Mr. Watson," he replied.

Wow... subtle...

"I have thought about this and I am left with just two solutions," Decarlo explained. "Either we schedule extra classes during the summer vacation, or we extend the duration of the normal class,"

Classes during summer vacation? WTF!? That's gonna be my worst nightmare come true! I was eager to take a break from this devil, but now he's going to schedule more agonizing classes? Perfect! Just what I needed for a perfect summer vacation!!

"Well, my personal opinion is, it's best if you could schedule classes for the summer vacation, but only for about two weeks, every other day,"

Wow, Professor Watson. How kind of you... Every other day? Just wow...

"But Antonio, the question is, will the students agree?" Professor Watson rubbed his chin.

"If an opinion is what you are seeking, we have a student right here," Antonio said, probably picturing my painful death in his head.

"Oh! Miss Winslow!" The professor looked over at me. "Are you from the next year's batch?" He asked as M 1. Decarlo too, turned back.

"Yes, sir," I replied. "... unfortunately,"

Chuckling, he asked, "What do you think about scheduling extra classes during the summer holidays?"

"Um... Do you want to know if I would like it?" I was puzzled.

"Yes," The professor said, but all I could see was Antonio smirking devilishly.

"Well, Professor," I shifted in my seat. I looked over at the the devil. The look on his face was clear this time; agree or I will feed you to the kraken.

"I don't really think it's fair for me to answer that question since I will not be voicing the opinion of the . entire class," I said, feeling the halo shining above my head.

"Just spit it out, Winslow," Antonio said, raising his eyebrows.

"Antonio, be gentle with the girl!" the Dean said.

That's right, Antonio! Be gentle!

"Perhaps we should be a bit more democratic about this. What do you say, Antonio?"

After a few minutes of slow taps on the desk, he turned towards Professor Watson and crossed his arms

before his chest.

"All right then, let's introduce a condition,"

"What kind of condition?"

"At the end of this semester, they will be writing a test. From this test, if 50% or more succeed in obtaining an A grade, there will be no extra classes during the summer vacation; instead, the duration of the regular class will be extended by 30 minutes, for two months during the semester to come," he explained. "But if they fail; three hour long extra classes during the last two weeks of the summer vacation, on every other day,"

Oh my God... What is this guy thinking!? You have got to be kidding me!! Does he not have better things to do during the summer vacation!? UGH!!

"Oh! That sounds perfect," the dean agreed.

Oh poop... I totally see what Decarlo's trying to do here. He's giving us a challenge that we can't win; an unrealistic goal... that way, we would have to schedule extra classes anyway. Instead of telling us that directly, he's going to make us feel like it's our fault that we deserve extra classes. What an a**hole....

"Alright then," Decarlo said as he stood up. "Thank you for your time, Professor,"

"Sure," the Professor nodded. "Miss Winslow?"

"Yes!?" I stood up immediately.

"You are here for...?"

"Ah yes!" I raced up to the dean's desk, passing Mr. Decarlo.

And there it is, the intoxicating essence that I forced myself not to think about, each and every moment he was in my vicinity. The hint of mint leaves, lemon zest and bergamot hit my senses so hard, I didn't realize that I had been standing in the middle of the Dean's office until Decarlo had exited the room and even closed the door behind him.

"Miss Winslow?"

"Yes... Professor..." I grabbed the invitation from my pocket. "Professor Watson, you are hereby invited to the annual dinner dance of the University of Stonewall, organized by the Department of Science this year,"

"Oh! Yes! I was looking forward to visiting a dinner dance organized by my students," the Dean said, and ripped the envelope open. "Any dress-codes or anything or the sort?"

"No, sir," I rubbed the back of my neck. "It's going to be very normal,"

"That's good," he said. "Thank you for the invitation,"

As I stepped out of the dean's office, I let out a deep breath.

Muttering a prayer under my breath, I pulled out the next letter.

Dr. A. Decarlo

Hmmm... I wonder who that could be... I mean I have absolutely no idea...

Ugh! Pluck my life!

He must still be on his way to his office! He left the Dean's office like five minutes ago... So I can probably catch up to him before he gets to his lair. Standing between those four dreaded walls is the last thing I want to do.

And with that thought in mind, I began to run towards his office; across the corridor and down the stairs, past the intersection and along the next corridor. There he is! Just at his doorstep!!

"Mr. Decarlo!" I called out, reluctantly, and only since stopping him before he entered that taunting room, is the safest bet right now.

Locking his fingers around the handle of the door, he turned his head to face me. After staring at me running towards him for about two and half seconds, he pushed the door open and simply walked inside.

How rude... how very rude...

Since I didn't hear the door shut, I was wondering what he was up to.

Tiptoeing upto the door that read,

Dr. A. Decarlo

PhD Physics

I tried to peep inside.

What on earth are you doing, Aeliana? Peeping into this devil's lair?

"Umm..." I muttered and knocked on the door gently.

"Why do you think it's open?" I heard a growl from the inside.

I pushed the door open and entered. As the minty fragrance of the room enveloped my senses, I proceeded forward

Okay... Breathe in ... Breathe out... This is Antonio Decarlo's office... You're supposed to be in your best behavior.

"Is it... a good time to talk, Mr. Decarlo?" I sounded surprisingly timid.

Damn it! I hate this!!

"It is never a good time to talk, Winslow," he snapped in his heavy Spanish accent, as he took a sip of his

black coffee.

All he drinks is black coffee... Black like his soul...

"Oh.."

"Whatever you have to say, you have three solid minutes," He muttered, taking another sip of his coffee.

"Mr. Decarlo, I was threatened and I was forced, to find you and invite you to the annual Dinner Dance organized by the department of science this year," I said, smiling sweetly, but reluctantly. 1

After about five seconds of gawking, all he said was, "And?"

"And!" I said. "I... was asked to give you this," I pulled the envelope out of my pocket and placed it on his desk

"What is this?" He eyed the envelope as if it was a piece of garbage.

"The invitation,"

"You call this an invitation?" He sat back. "That is just a piece of crumpled paper!"

"Sir, it's just one crease,"

He eyed me, and then the envelope.

"That is... a big crease,"

"Aren't the contents what matter?" I asked.

"No," he shook his head. "The presentation is more important,"

And a second later, the bell rang.

"Sir, I really need to get to class,"

"Oh! Well, nothing's holding you back. Take that and go," He eyed the envelope.

"But sir, this is your invitation,"

"What makes you think I'm going to take it?"

"But you have to accept it!"

"It is my decision to accept or decline,"

"You can't decline the invitation for the Annual Dinner Dance!"

"Of course I can!" He smirked.

That's it... I have nothing more to say! I'm done with this guy!

"Winslow," he leaned forward and placed his elbows on the desk. "53 marks is not what I'm expecting from you. You have seem to have gotten your priorities mixed up. Go and work on your physics, or else," he sat back and smirked again, but this time even more devilishly. "You know what's coming your way,"

Seeing the sadistic smile on his face, I sighed.

"Three hour long classes; two weeks; Summer vacation... Exciting, isn't it?"

Recalling the remarks he made about our class at the Dean's office, I bit my lower lip.

"Exhilarating..."

"Right! That's the spirit!"

"Mm hmm," I nodded. "But I'm still gonna leave this here," I said, placing the envelope on the desk.

"Ugh!" He scoffed, rubbing his temples. "Fine..."

"Huh!? So that means... you will come?" I asked, smiling widely, as my subconscious self wondered why I wanted him to be there.

"Hmm... I will consider it," he muttered, looking out the window behind him.

"Great!" I exclaimed, grinning.

His eyes moved from the window and onto me. "Now scram,"

"Yes, sir," I turned around to walk out the door, but halted remembering something I had forgotten to do.

"Mr. Decarlo?"

Taking another sip of his coffee, he muttered, "What is it this time, Winslow?"

"Can I break the news to the class?"

"What news?" He raised a thick eyebrow.

"You know about the summer classes..."

"Winslow, you keep your mouth shut about that," he said sternly. "What are you some sort of spy? Agent undercover?"

"Alright, I get it!" I surrendered. "I won't tell anyone," and with that I turned around and paced towards the

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door.

Mr. Burke is going to hang me...

"Winslow,"

I turned around immediately, only to see him stand up from his seat. Shoving his hands in his pocket, he walked towards me. I gulped as he approached.

Damn... he holds himself with so much confidence that he literally radiates it; and it made my knees weak; weaker than the weakest on a dreadful Monday.

Slowing down his pace, he stopped about 10 inches from my nose, and started staring into my soul.

His piercing grey orbs looked even more striking, up this close.

The rays of light that poured in through the blinds drawn over the windows, enhanced the contours of his visage.

With the help of the shadows that fell on his face, I could make out that he clenched his jaw as he looked at the wall above me.

Gulping, I let out a breath that I had been holding unknowingly.

Immediately, his eyes moved onto mine as if I had just committed a crime.

"Winslow, you were not in my office, after that bell rang," he said, firmly.

"Mr. Burke is lecturing my class right now," I muttered.

"All the more reason for keeping your mouth shut," he snapped.

"Well, what am I supposed to say?" I asked.

A corner of his lips curled into a slight smile. "That is for you... to figure out," he said. "Just remember, you were not in my office, not even for a nanosecond, after that bell rang,"

Looking deeper into my eyes, he said, "Did I make myself clear?"

"Crystal," I managed to mutter, after a huge gulp.

"Good," he said, as he took a step back smoothly. In a split-second the curl on his lip straightened. "Now get out,"

I started to get even more nervous as I approached the class. I just hope he won't be going to the extent of

checking the CCTV footage.

"Ah! Miss Winslow!" Mr. Burke turned to me. "We have been wondering where you were,"

"Oh... is that so?"

"Without killing much time, why don't you proceed with your excuse?"

"I... was in the restroom, sir," I lied.

"Oh..." he raised his eyebrows.

"But your friends here told me that you were going around, distributing some invitations,"

"Yes, that's right," I said, cautiously. "That was before I went to the restroom,"

"What's that in your pocket, Miss Winslow?"

Gulping, I look down at the pocket of my sweater, and to my relief I could make out the letters, 'Mr. C. Bur...' on it.

"This, sir," I said, pulling out the invitation. "...is for you," I handed it to him, and smiled.

"We've put a lot of effort into this year's dinner dance, and we hope you could be a part of it,"

"Oh! Why, thank you very much," he said and accepted the invitation. "Now you may take a seat, Miss Winslow. You missed out on the first ten minutes of the lesson; why don't you explain it to her, Miss Seattle?"

"Yes, sir," Leah agreed.

Having said that, Mr. Burke exited the room.

"Restroom? Really?" Leah made a poker face.

"It's true, dude,"

"Dude, in all seriousness, what happened to you?"

"Do I have to repeat myself?"

"No, I heard you the first time, but dude, you were on your period two weeks ago,"

"What? No, I wasn't,"

"Yeah, you were," she said. "You were grabbing on to your stomach and whining and groaning like a walrus in labor," 1

"That was rotten yoghurt, my walls were fine,"

"Uh huh..."

"Yeah, now can you stop giving me that look?" I rolled my eyes.

"You were in Decarlo's office, weren't you?"

"Did you guys gang up on me?"

"Huh? For what?" Leah was confused.

"Don't tell me every bundle had an envelope that said 'Dr. A. Decarlo',"

"Dude, woah! What the hell are you talking about?"

"Silence!" Mr. Burke entered. "Let's get on with the lesson,"

As soon as Mr. Burke left the lecture room, I raced up to Bliss. She looked up at me and shot a questioning look.

"Don't tell me you did that on purpose," I said, shaking my head. "I told you that I didn't want to do it,"

"What are you talking about?"

Upon seeing her clueless expression, I raised an eyebrow.

"It was in your bundle?"

"Hell yeah, it was," I said.

"Look, Li," Bliss stood up. "I didn't do that on purpose. I just randomly put them in bundles because it was . faster and also helped to avoid having to deal with personal dislikes. None of us would be too thrilled to go into that monster's office,"

"Can I trust you?"

"Of course!" Bliss smiled, taking my hands in hers.

"Phew! Guys, chill," Leah said.

"Yeah! Cool off!" Vanille rubbed my back. "Let's go get lunch, hmm?"

"No, but seriously," Vanille interrupted the silence between the four of us, as she shoved a piece of broccoli in her mouth. "What happened in there?"

Noticing that Vanille's eyes were fixed on me, I asked, "Are you asking me?"

"Of course!" she said.

"Why me? Weren't you guys delivering letters as well?" I shrugged, a confused expression plastered forcefully on my face. "Don't you guys have interesting stories to share as well?"

"Come on," Leah sat back. "I'm sure we all agree that you're the one with the most interesting story here."

"Oh!" I chuckled. "You guys think so?" I took a sip of my canned coffee. "Well, sorry to disappoint you,"

"That's impossible!" Bliss muttered. "Are you sure you have absolutely nothing to rant about?"

"Yeah," I said. "I mean, Mr. Watson was really nice, and I'm pretty sure he's psyched about the fact that the event is being organized by the Department of Science," I took another sip of coffee. "Mr. Decarlo was awful. He-,"

"Details, please," Vanille leaned forward.

"Details?"

"Yeah! What exactly happened?" Her eyes gleamed with curiosity.

Ugh! Why am I making such an effort to obey his words!? This is not right!

Frowning, I managed to say, "Umm... what was supposed to happen, happened," I said, blankly.

"Did he accept it?" Bliss asked.

"I just left it on his table," I shrugged. "You guys are really interested in that monster, aren't you?"

"Sure, we are," Bliss chuckled and smirked at Vanille, who returned the gesture immediately.

"Uh huh..." I narrowed my eyes at them.

Weird... almost as if... they're upto something...

"Um... hey, are you Aeliana Winslow?" I heard a deep voice behind me.

I stood up from my seat to face a boy standing before me.

Piercings... tattoos... stay away from this guy...

"Hi," I said, carefully. "Yes, that's me,"

"I need you to come with me,"

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Twenty Six

I stood up and nudged Leah. "Come on! Come with me,"

"Err... yeah," she grabbed her purse. "Come on, guys," she instructed Bliss and Vanille to follow us.

I turned back as soon as the strange guy disappeared out the door of the cafeteria. "Guys, stay below the radar. This guy has tattoos and piercings, and I don't know what kind of surprise we're in for,"

"You think it's Brittany again?" Vanille asked.

"We'll have to find out," I shrugged and continued to walk towards the exit.

As I stepped out, I noticed that the guy from earlier, was standing there.

"Hey, um..."

"Ah!" He said. "Do you see the group of people standing by the fountain?"

"Near the B. S. Dep?" I spotted a group of people talking and laughing.

"Yeah..." he muttered. "Someone from that clique wants to meet you,"

"For what?" I said, as I looked back at him.

"This is all I was told to say," he said. "You go there, and find out the rest,"

"Ugh! Seriously, dude?" I raised an eyebrow. "You sound like a strange wizard giving me a quest or something. Is it that difficult to tell me the reason?"

"Yeah..." he said. "Don't worry. You will know the reason as soon as you get there,"

"Fine," I said, and made my way towards the fountain.

As I approached the group of people, one by one, turned and noticed me, walking towards them.

Their blank expressions turned into smirks as I walked closer.

One by one, the boys stepped aside, revealing their 'alpha', standing in the centre.

What in the world does this jerk want from me?

Hands in his pockets, he flashed a smirk. "Hey, doll,"

"Oh! Nathan... right?"

The guys standing around him seemed to be shocked by my words.

"The name's Nate,"

"Ah, right," I said, as if I had actually forgotten his name. "Are you the one who wanted to meet me?"

"Of course," he said, eyeing me from head to toe.

"Why?"

"Why!?" He looked at me and scoffed. "What's the problem with wanting to meet my date for the dinner dance?"

"Oh! There's no problem at all, really!" I said, and faked a smile. "I should probably get going then. You should go meet her. Good luck!" I said, and waved slightly, already turning around to make a run for it.

As I took a step forward, one of the 'boys' stepped in my way. "Woah woah," he said.

"What's the rush?" Nate approached me.

"Rush!? No!" I said. "Not at all!"

"Good," he said, and shoved his hands in his pockets. "So, when do you wanna go out shopping? You know... for a dress or something?"

"What?"

"I'm a busy guy, so you'd better be free whenever I am," he said, blankly.

"What are you talking about, Nathan?"

"Friday, 5 o'clock," he said as he checked his phone.

"What are you even blabbering about?" I raised an eyebrow.

"He's asking you out for the dinner dance, genius," the guy standing behind me muttered.

"Is that what you guys call 'asking'?" I crossed my arms before my chest. "Look Nathan-,"

"It's Nate," the boy behind me interrupted again.

"Nuance," I rolled my eyes and focused on the tall human before me. "Look, I don't know what the hell you're talking about and I don't want anything to do with you,"

His lips were sealed and his jaw clenched.

"Please just don't cause any more problems," I said, trying to sound polite.

"Problems?" He scoffed as a corner of his lips curled.

"You don't understand and I don't expect you to, either," I said.

Nate chuckled under his breath. "You're still going to the dance with me, doll,"

"Am not,"

"What makes you think so?"

"I already have a date... for the dance," I smirked.

"Really?" Nate laughed. "And who might that be?"

"There is... someone," I said, starting to get nervous. "You don't know him,"

"That's fine," Nate smiled. "He knows me, so let me meet him,"

"He doesn't know you either,"

"Darling," he took a step closer. "Everyone knows me,"

Pfft! What a jerk! Narcissist! Self-absorbed prick!

I rolled my eyes, desperately wanting to punch him in the face and make a run for it.

"Show me him," he said confidently, almost as if he was sure that I didn't actually have a date for the dance

"Like... right now?"

"Yeah," he nodded. "Right now. I'm telling you he's got nothing on me,"

"I don't think he's in our vicinity at the moment," I made a lame excuse.

"That ain't my problem," Nate smirked for the hundred and second time. "Go find him from wherever the hell he is,"

This guy... ugh! I understand that Brittany's a bitch but how'd she last with this douchebag!?

Looking straight at him, I clenched my teeth. "And what if I don't?" I said, fuming through my ears.

"Don't?" He raises his eyebrows and chuckled. "You don't even wanna hear the consequences,"

I took a deep breath. "So you just wanna see who he is?" I asked, moving a strand of hair out of my face.

"Yeah, that'd be enough," he grinned.

"Fine!" I snapped. "I'll bring him here," I said, and turned around before he could stop me.

Thank goodness this guy was too dumb to tell me to call him then and there. If he said that, I would've been lost!

I rushed to Leah, Bliss and Vanille. As soon as I reached them, I blurted out, "Guys, help me find a date for

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the dance!"

"Woah woah woah!" Bliss said.

"Calm down, Li!" Vanille rubbed my shoulder. "What's going on?"

"There seriously is no time to explain! We have to hurry up before things get suspicious,"

"What are you blabbering about, Aeliana?" Leah questioned.

"Long story short, I have to find myself a date within one minute,"

"That's not very hard," Bliss said. "I mean, it's you,"

"What!?" I raised an eyebrow.

"Yeah, any guy would accept,"

"Seriously!?" Cue the poker face.

"How about Luke?" Bliss asked hurriedly.

"Luke?" I asked. "Your friend, Luke Whitley? From our class?"

"Yeah!" She said. "He's cute,"

"Exactly," I said. "I'm pretty sure he already has a date,"

"Dude, just ask him!" Vanille dragged me towards him.

As we approached Luke and his friends, Caleb and Jace, who Bliss and Vanille were pretty tight with, Vanille decided to be very direct about the situation.

"Luke,"

"Oh! Hey, Vanille,"

"Hey! She has something to ask you... privately,"

"Oh... um," Luke stood up. "Alright"

Vanille, taking a seat in Luke's chair, immediately started a conversation with Caleb and Jace, probably in hopes of distracting them.

As Luke and I walked over to a quiet corner, I was really beginning to worry. "Um Luke,"

"Yeah?"

"So, I'm not going to beat around the bush," I said, and took a deep breath. "Are you taking anyone to the dance?"

"Well, actually, I was planning on asking Vanille out to the dance," Luke whispered. "Does she have a date?"

"Um...no, not as far as I know,"

"I was hoping to ask her out to the dance tomorrow," he said, rubbing his neck.

"So, what the absolute hell are you waiting for?" I said. "Just ask her out already,"

"Tch! Easy for you to say!"

"Dude, trust me and just do it," I smiled.

"Alright," he said, and looked over at Vanille.

"Hey! Not now!" I said, pulling his sleeve. "Find me a date first!"

He looked at me and raised an eyebrow. "Anyone?"

"Just needs to be a male,"

"Woah... you're that desperate?"

"Actually, it's just for pretense," I explained.

"Oh! If that's the case, Caleb would be perfect!"

"Caleb?"

"Yeah! He's not interested in dating, so I don't think he would mind going to the dance with you," Luke explained. "He wasn't planning on going anyway,"

"Oh! Hey, that's great!!!" I said, smiling. I'm so f***ing lucky!

"Hey, Caleb," Luke called out. "I got you a date for the dance,"

"Bro, what?" He walked over to us.

"Aeliana needs a fake date for the dinner dance," Luke explained. "You would do it, right?"

"What's in it for me?" Caleb questioned looking at me and Luke.

"Umm.... well...." I muttered, looking at Caleb who was staring at me with a blank expression plastered on his face.

"Caleb likes coffee, painting, astronomy and rocket science," Luke blurted out, obviously trying to help get rid of the awkwardness.

"Woah... Is that why you're not interested in dating?" I looked at him, randomly noticing how thick his eyebrows were. "Are you busy with those things?"

"Erm...." he started to look very uncomfortable. "Yeah... yeah, that's why," he muttered, looking straight at Luke as if he was asking for some support.

"Okay! How about I treat you to Starbucks for two weeks after lectures?" I suggested.

"Ooh!" Caleb grinned. "It's a deal,"

"Great!" I said, happily. "Now come with me. There's something we need to do,"

"Woah!" Luke said. "Already? I think you guys should take it slow,"

"Luke, it's not even close to what you think it is," I said. "I'll explain everything later. For now, Caleb, can you come with me?"

"Sure, where are we going?" He asked, clearly confused.

"You'll see," I said, and headed towards the fountain with Caleb following me close behind.

I had my eyes set on Nate, who was chatting with his 'minions'. I wish I could just punch an eye out of that disgusting face!

Instinctively, I put my arm around Caleb's.

"What are you doing?" He flinched.

"You're supposed to be my date," I said. "We have to act like it,"

Sighing, Caleb agreed. "Alright,"

"Is that... Nate?" He asked, leaning towards me.

"Yup,"

"Why are we walking towards him?" Caleb didn't sound very calm.

"He's the one I'm pretending for,"

"He asked you out?"

"Unfortunately," I rolled my eyes.

"Damn... you must be quite popular among guys,"

"Yeah, I like to think so too," I muttered, sarcastically.

"Oh!" Nate stepped forward. "So, it's you,"

Caleb was silent. Phew...

"So, now you've seen him," I said. "It was nice talking to you, Nathan," I turned around, hoping to flee ASAP.

"Oi! What's your name, bro?"

Caleb turned back around to look at Nate. "Caleb... Caleb Garcia,"

"She asked you out?"

Caleb chuckled. "Actually, I asked her out,"

"Oh!" Nate was surprised. "So she said 'yes'?"

"Of course I did," I smiled at Caleb. Okay, this feels super weird...

"Well," Nate grinned. "Have fun then,"

"Thanks," I said, and dragged Caleb away from that scoundrel.

"You think he believed us?" Caleb asked, chuckling under his breath.

"I have no idea," I giggled. "Thank you so much, Caleb,"

"Aw! That was nothing!" He smiled. "So, am I your fake boyfriend now?"

"Looks like it,"

"Tch," he laughed.

"Oh god! You came back alive!" Bliss rushed towards us, Luke, Vanille, Leah and Jace following closely.

"Alright! Now it's story time" Vanille cheered.

"Guys," Bliss interrupted. "Let's go to the music room. I'm supposed to be there for the next few hours,"

Bliss turned the door knob and pushed the big doors open.

We stepped inside the unoccupied room and headed straight towards the seating area.

Taking our seats, we settled down, facing one another.

"Okay, so," Bliss initiated the conversation as usual. "What happened back there?"

"Well...."

"Nate asked her out," Caleb said before I could. "Right, Aeliana?"

"He was being very persistent and I needed a way to reject him," I explained. "So I told him that I already have a date," I shrugged.

"Wow..." Vanille raised her eyebrows. "Nate asked you out?" She looked more impressed than shocked.

"More importantly, you rejected him?" Bliss interrupted. "Aeliana, do you realize what this means?"

"Um..." I muttered, looking at Bliss with my eyes narrowed. "I don't have to... go to the dance... with him?"

"Let's all pray that he leaves you alone," she said, appearing to be a bit perplexed.

"He probably already has something up his sleeve," Jace, who was as silent as a wall all this time, decided to speak.

"Why do you say so?" I asked.

"Jace used to be friends with Nate," Luke said, looking at the honey-brown haired boy. "He knows him more than any of us do,"

With that jerk!? Ew... I really hope this guy's different.

"Why did he ask you to show the guy to him?" Jace looked straight at me.

"I don't know. When I asked him if I just have to show my date to him, he said that just seeing him would be enough... which now, is making me think that he is upto something,"

"I'd better be alive in one piece after the dinner dance," Caleb chuckled.

"Yeah, Caleb's the one I'm worried about," Jace rubbed his chin.

"Caleb, I'm so sorry," I whined. "I didn't mean to-,"

"Hey, I'm kidding! It's fine!" He laughed. "We boys know what kind of a douche Nate Harold can be. It's my pleasure helping you escape," he flashed a dorky smile, as his dark grey eyes shone.

"Aeliana," Jace looked directly at me. "You should be worried about yourself first,"

"Okay, but what can he do to me!?" I asked. "He wouldn't assault me!"

"Nate is very popular among both girls and guys," Jace explained.

"Yeah?" I said. "And?" I was a bit confused, hearing the random remark.

"You remember how Decarlo had to carry you to the infirmary?"

"Umm... No... I was unconscious,"

"Exactly. You don't know a thing that happened while he carried you down the hallway. People saw. I'm not telling you that they're saying things; they don't have enough facts for that. But it was quite the topic in places like the B.S Dep, where the drama is quite intense. The nerds in our class don't care about gossip, but people like Nate and Brittany do,"

"So are you telling me that Nate or Brittany will use that against me?" I asked.

"I'm telling you that if there were to be at least one more unusual encounter with Decarlo, there might be bullshit about you spreading like wildfire," Jace said. "You have no idea how the girls on that side are drooling over Decarlo,"

"Ew," Leah spoke her first word.

"Ew?" Luke chuckled. "He's like a celebrity on that side,"

"Yeah," Jace nodded. "I'm actually very surprised that no one grabbed a phone out and took a snap of Decarlo carrying you bridal style,"

"Even if they did, that situation was explained and is of no suspicion," I pointed out feeling my cheeks heat up. "So I guess I'm safe,"

Damn it... Mr. Burke was right...

"You know I could just flunk," I shrugged.

"No!" Bliss protested. "You can't let Nate decide if you're going to the dance or not! You can't let him change anything!"

"You're right..." I muttered halfheartedly.

"Besides, you're in the organizing committee," Vanille pointed out. "You have to come,"

"Alright," I surrendered. "I'll go,"

"Guys, make it a point not to isolate anyone on the day of the event," Jace said, very seriously. "Especially these two," he pointed at Caleb and me. Sighing he continued, "Let's just hope that Brittany will be able to distract Nate on that day."

"You know Maddie," I said, as I walked with her gazing at the gorgeous dresses in the cute shops on either

sides. "I would really love a black dress,"

"Why black?"

"Because it's a dinner dance, duh!" I rolled my eyes. "Everyone's gonna be wearing black,"

"That's my point!" She snapped. "How are you supposed to stand out, if you wear the same thing that the others do?"

"Standing out of the crowd is the last thing I want to do on that day," I rubbed my temples.

"Why!?"

"I need to stay below the radar!" I exclaimed.

"How's that going to get that hunk to fall for you!?" Maddie snapped.

"What hunk?"

"Obviously Antonio!!"

"Now why the absolute hell would I want to do that!?" I asked in disbelief.

"Look, Winslow," she said, pointing a finger at me. "You will seduce him, even if it's the last thing you do!!!"

"But why!? Tell me why!!!"

"I can't have him! So you definitely will!" She looked straight at me. "Is that understood?"

"I don't understand why I have to agree," 1

"Come here," Madelyn wrapped her fingers around my wrist and pulled me towards a store named 'Senorita'.

"Good evening ma'am," the woman inside, walked towards us. "How may I help you?"

VON

Nm

"What's your name?" Maddie asked looking at her.

"Chrissy,"

"Okay, Chrissy, we need to seduce a man," Madelyn snapped. "Twenty nine; 6'2"; taken, Spanish and hot,"

"Oh," Chrissy seemed to be baffled. "How hot exactly?" She furrowed her eyebrows in confusion.

"Total daddy. Anyone would bend over for him,"

"Maddie! What the hell!?" I tugged on her sleeve.

"Shut up and let me do the talking," Maddie gritted her teeth and pulled her hand away. 1

"Is it for you?" Chrissy looked at me intently.

"Ugh... yeah," I muttered. "It's for... me,"

She looked at me from top to bottom and smiled as she said, "I think I've got just the right dress," With that, she walked deeper into the store.

"Maddie," I tapped on her shoulder. "He has a girlfriend,"

"See? You do want him," She wiggled her eyebrows.

"That's not what I'm saying!" I whined, feeling mentally drained. "You shouldn't make such an effort for something that's never going to happen,"

"Darling, you know nothing," Maddie smirked. "You know that my predictions are never wrong."

"Ugh!" I groaned. "Fine! Let's see who's right,"

Chrissy walked back towards us, a black dress in her hands. "Please try this on,"

I looked at Maddie, searching for some kind of expression. She gave me a reassuring smile and squeezed my hand.

I stepped into the room and pulled the curtains. As soon as I turned around, I met myself in the mirror Getting closer to take a better look, I noticed the freckles that spread on my nose and cheeks.

Freckles... I wonder if he prefers clear skin...

I looked deep into my round, azure eyes, suddenly flooded with euphoria.

I would fall for blue eyes...

Would he?

I took off my sweater and jeans, and pulled on the silk dress gently.

Wow... the spaghetti straps and deep cut neck, really showed off my chest.

Why do I feel rather uncomfortable?

The tight dress enhanced my hourglass figure, which I preferred not to show off much. The dress had a train that joined the shorter part at the front. The slit on the dress came up to the upper area of my right thigh.

Okay, this... is too much.

"Aeliana!" Maddie knocked on the door. "You alright?"

"Err... yeah!" I said hurriedly, and opened the door.

"Woah," Maddie's eyes looked like bowling balls. "I might turn gay now,"

"Shut up!" I laughed.

"You look gorgeous," Maddie smiled at me like a proud mom. "Honestly, I don't even care if it's black,"

"Is it alright?" I asked, still unsure if it showed off too much of my skin. "Isn't it too revealing?"

"Are you crazy!?" Maddie raised an eyebrow. "You wait and see what that diva's gonna wear,"

"Brittany?"

"Yeah," Maddie nodded. "She's gonna dress in a way that she'll get back the guy she lost,"

"So I won't have to worry about Nate?"

"I don't think so," Maddie said. "According to what you have told me, Nate is a f*** boy. He likes faces and bodies. Not a girl as a whole,"

Damn... you're right....

Sometimes I seriously start wondering if Madelyn's secretly a clairvoyant. She's never wrong about something that is about to happen.

Okay... does that mean... me... Decarlo... no...

Never...

"Chrissy!" Maddie called out. "Do you have a pair of shoes that goes with this dress?"

"Of course!" She said, and ran into the store room and returned with a gold coloured box.

Making me sit down on a chair nearby, she handed me the golden stilettos. As I put them on, Madelyn pulled my hair tie off.

"Oi!" I cried.

"Shh!" She slapped my cheek gently. "Now stand up,"

"Damn..." she looked stunned.

"Ma'am," Chrissy leaned over to Maddie. "She's ready,"

"Like hell, she is!"

I giggled, seeing their reactions.

"If this works, Chrissy," Maddie turned towards her. "You're choosing her wedding dress,"

"I will looking forward to that!" She grinned.

"Well then, too bad it's never going to happen," I said, and went back into the dressing room.

Before taking the dress off, I took a second to take a good look at myself in the mirror once more.

Well... I have to admit, the dress is quite stunning. Chrissy has such great taste...

Okay, I've got to snap back into reality.

Mr. Decarlo and I, being together?

Just the thought sends chills down my spine.

How could anyone live with a man like him? He's so stiff and- and blank! The only expressions he ever shows, are annoyance and anger.

I don't understand how someone could love a cold hearted human like him...

"Page 45. 17th question. 100 seconds. Start!"

Go go go go! Okay, found that... now I just need to

"50 seconds,"

Leah's pen landed on the desk, signaling that she had finished the sum.

Okay focus!

After a little bit of scribbling, I got a final answer. Placing the pen on my desk, I leaned back on my chair." 0.75 mt?" I whispered to Leah.

"Mm hmm," she nodded.

From my paper, I looked up at Mr. Decarlo, staring out the window. He should stop standing in front of light sources. I mean, that jawline... it could impregnate someone...

"Time's up," he snapped, not even budging from his position. "Let's see how many of you did it."

Ten students raised their hands, including me, Leah, Jace and Bliss.

"Carter, what's the answer?"

"0.75mT,"

"Hernandez?"

"0.75mt,"

"Seattle?"

"0.75mT,"

His eyes moved from Leah to me. Raising his eyebrows, he looked at me intently.

"Umm..."

"What about you, Winslow?"

"0.75mt,"

"Hmm," he muttered and looked back at his book.

"Page 47. Question 32. 75 seconds,"

Alright! OK! Now focus!

After what felt like 60 or 65 seconds, I managed to get an answer.

Gently letting my pen down on the desk, I looked up. He was looking around at the class, observing how the students were making an attempt to solve the problem.

"Time's up," he snapped. "Come on, hands up,"

This time, about seven raised their hands including Leah and me.

"Chambers, what's the answer?"

"680 pF" Dylan said, confidently.

Why did I get 6.8×10^{-4} ???

"Who got the same answer as Chambers?" He asked the class.

Damn it! What's wrong with me!? My answer's the same as 680 uF! I'm such a dimwit!

Immediately, I raised my hand, but was a bit behind when compared to Leah and the others.

"Winslow, why are you late??" He looked directly at me. "If you got the answer, why are you not confident enough to raise your hand?"

"Well," I muttered.

He walked up to me and took my book in his hands. I looked up at him, reading my sloppy handwriting. Well, he should understand. I couldn't help it since I was in a hurry to get the answer.

After reading my answer he looked down at me, without moving my book; which probably looked like he was still reading it, to the others.

Feeling uncomfortable, I gulped as I could make out a slight smile tug at his lips.

After five seconds which felt more like five decades, he dropped the book on my desk and muttered a 'Good', before walking off.

Educate you by xsparxflyx Chapter 27

/ [Educate you by xsparxflyx](#)
Twenty Seven

Why'd he have to smile like that? Did I make a stupid mistake!? I mean, of course I got the powers mixed up, but that's not a big deal!

I didn't want to admit it, but I was constantly searching for his approval. If I felt like I let him down, I'd feel awful until he did something like this; until he did something that reassured me.

Staring at my self in the mirror on the wall of the girls' restroom, thousands of thoughts crossed my mind.

Ugh! Stop being a worry wart!

"Aeliana!" Bliss rushed into the restroom, Vanille following her close behind.

"Woah! Bliss!" I said, turning to look at them. "What's going on!?"

"Luke just asked Vanille out," Bliss was grinning from ear to ear.

"For the dance?"

"No, dude! On an actual date!"

"Bliss! Stop screaming! Geez!" Vanille facepalmed.

"What did you say?" I gaped at Vanille, who was blushing like crazy.

"It was an obvious yes! Vanille has been crushing on the guy for months now!" Bliss giggled.

"Well," Vanille smiled. "I guess the dinner dance tomorrow, is going to be our first date," she laughed nervously.

"It was so obvious that he was crushing on her too! Right, Aeliana?" Bliss beamed at me.

It's really sweet how one of these two are overjoyed when something good happens to the other... almost like Madelyn and I.

"Like hell, it was!" I said, making up my mind not to tell them that I already knew about it.

"Bliss is going with Jace," Vanille said.

"Oh my goodness, really!?" I was overexcited at this point.

"It's just for the dance," she shrugged. "Jace has a girlfriend. She doesn't study here,"

"Oh...", I was rather disappointed. "What about Leah, guys?"

"Oh no! She don't date!" Bliss chuckled. "And she's fine with that!"

"Maybe Leah, Caleb and I could hang out together," I suggested. "I don't want her to be all alone,"

"How's that gonna work for you and Caleb?" Vanille asked, clearly puzzled.

"I'm going with him, only to avoid Nate. We're not in love, guys," I chuckled. "God! I really hope Brittany shows up half naked!"

"Why's that!?"

"So that she could seduce Nate,"

"Speaking of seduction," Bliss wiggled her eyebrows. "How do you think Senōr Decarlo is going to show up?"

What's that!?

Why'd my heart skip a beat!?

"As hot as hell in flames?" Vanille said, completely casually. "I just hope I won't lose the spark I've got for Luke, after seeing him,"

"Ugh! I hope he shows up in his pajamas," I rolled my eyes.

"Damn..." Vanille took a deep breath. "That's probably just grey sweatpants,"

"Mm mm," Bliss sounded as she was having an erotic fantasy.

"You guys are gross," I said. "Why am I the only sane one here?"

"Stop pretending to be an angel, Aeliana!" Bliss snapped. "I'm sure he's sick and tired of running through your mind every single night!"

"Ugh!" I rolled my eyes. "I don't fantasize over him like you just did, Bliss,"

"You'd be lying right through your teeth if you said that you don't think that he's smoking hot," Vanille tapped my chin.

What are they doing to me!? These two are like the masters of persuasion. Shut them out! F*****g shut them out!!

But I must confess, I was being totally honest when I said that his jawline could get someone pregnant.

I won't even mention the bottomless orbs.

Or the silky brown hair which I could just run my fi

"Snap out of it!" Bliss clicked her fingers in front of my face.

"Huh!? What!?"

Widening her eyes, Vanille gasped. "I was right!"

"Shut up, Vanille," I snapped. "What's the point of this conversation anyway?"

"Teasing you, duh!"

"Ugh!" I smiled as I rolled my eyes. "You guys are annoying," I said and exited the restroom.

Oh phew! That's great! This means I don't have to deal with Mr. Decarlo and his good for nothing attitude today!

He hasn't been coming to the coffeehouse lately. Probably because he doesn't want to cross paths with me... which is actually great! Or maybe he has some other work to do.... who cares? As long as he doesn't show up, I'll have a great day at work!

Now that I have more time, I might as well hide myself in the library. I've got to pass the goal he has set for us! I just cannot deal with summer classes! I'd rather make Decarlo's coffee every morning!!

Grabbing my pile of books, I rushed to the library, hoping to sit at my usual corner by the window. Thankfully there was no soul inside except for the librarian Mrs. Pamela Green and me.

"Hello!" I greeted her. The middle aged woman returned the gesture.

As I approached the brightly lit area, I took a deep breath and set my books down!

Let's do this!

I sat down and began turning the pages of my text book on physics. I have got to revise the sections we did five or six months ago, or else I might get out of touch and that demon is going to eat me up!

Speaking of the demon, here he is, right now; walking towards the table beside the window on the opposite side of the room.

What a pleasant surprise...

This is where he's been all these days!? Instead of grabbing a cup of coffee and going home!?

And I thought we wouldn't cross paths... perfect!

I watched him carefully as he clicked open a file and pulled out some papers. Clicking his pen, he started jotting down something. Suddenly, he looked up from his writing, which made me turn my head around, pretending to be concentrating on something else.

I looked down through the window. The football court was crowded with boys in tank tops and shorts.

Resting my chin on my palm, I observed the interesting activity going on.

My goodness... is that Nate? Why the hell is he shirtless?

Ew...

I never understood what all those girls saw in him. I mean, he's just another guy, who's way too full of himself.

Rubbing my temples, I decided to concentrate. I really should get this done.

concei

I started solving the problems on magnetic fields that we had been told to do as homework.

Homework... in university?

Typical Mr. Decarlo... torturing us in every possible way...

Just look at him, sitting still and looking pretty. He is completely unaffected by the agony he puts us through

What is he writing anyway? He seems so... focused... Turning through the pages of a huge book, muttering things to himself...

Abruptly, he put his pen down and started looking around... he was searching for something... pretty obviously, a book. His eyes wandered around until he was looking in my direction.

What the... heck... I should've dived under the table when I had the chance! What am I doing!? Ugh! Now he's going to walk up to me, and say something extremely sarcastic, which will make me want to slit my wrist and put salt in it.

Standing up from his seat, he proceeded towards me.

Oh my god, what do I do? What do I do!?

This is awful! Just horrible!! I never asked for this! I'm ready to fly out the window right now... I can't deal with this... this is too much pressure... I'm still nineteen...

As he approached me, his eyes were entirely fixed on the shelf beside me.

What a waste of adrenaline...

Crossing his arms before his chest he took a good look at the books resting on the shelves.

He's so... damn... tall...

Rubbing his chin, he muttered something to himself and picked out a book. As soon as I realized that he was turning around to sit at my table, I felt a chill down my spine.

Resting a hand on the chair opposite to mine, he halted and looked up from the book to meet my eyes.

Gulp...

A gentle smile tugged at the corners of his lips.

"Well, what have we got here?" He said in his deep husky voice.

I gulped again, looking at him, wide eyed.

"Finally made up your mind to concentrate on what you should?" Smirking he said, "Bueno!" as his eyes moved to my book.

His eyes returned to me, and his now blank face formed a faint smile, making my heart skip two or three beats.

Pulling out the chair opposite to me, he turned it around to face the shelf. He sat down and started flipping through the pages of the thick book.

I stared at his back as he was busy going through the contents of it.

Weirdly, I was exceedingly nervous than scared. Normally, I would just wish for him to get out of a 100m radius from me.

This is strange... Where'd all the repulsive feelings go?

Mr. Decarlo stood up and shoved the book back into the shelf, clearly unsatisfied with it. He placed a hand on his hip as he took a long look at the books deposited on the shelf above his eye level.

Jawline...

Why is my ... stomach tingling!?

This is scary... horrifying to be precise...

"Winslow,"

"Yes!?" I replied unconsciously.

"Come over here," he muttered, not even moving his eyes from the books.

I stood up immediately and rushed to his side. 1

Picking out a big book from the shelf, he handed it to me. "Find the sections on Leptons or Quarks,"

"Umm," I muttered. "Yes, sir," walking upto the table, I placed the book on it. Immediately, I turned to the index and started searching for 'leptons' or 'quarks'

Failing to find it there, I turned to the contents and located the section on 'Matter'.

Still no...

"Not here, sir," I said.

He turned to look at me. "Then put that back,"

Put it back!? Are you kidding me!? Up there!?

I'll need two me's!

Since it was clearly impossible that I couldn't reach the level which he got the book from, I placed it on a level below that.

"That is not where it was," he mumbled, flipping through the pages of a book.

Dammit! How the hell can you even see!?

Since he was standing, I decided to grab the chair he used before. If I get on this, I might be able to reach it."

"Don't use that, it's wonky," he muttered, concentrating deeply on something in the book he had been holding all this time.

Well, why don't you keep it back, since you're the one who took it?

This is getting really annoying. This guy never fails to ruin my day!

Okay, that's it! I'm getting on the shelf!

I took a long, deep breath and placed a foot on the first level, pushing it down to check if it was strong enough.... satisfactory I guess...

As soon as I lifted my weight off the ground, the last thing I heard was a crack before falling safely onto a pair of sturdy arms.

I grabbed onto his shirt, crushing it.

My eyes still shut tightly, I let out the breath I had been holding.

Breathing heavily, I opened my eyes slowly. Upon seeing the concerned look in his flawless visage, millimeters away from me, my breathing stopped once more.
2

"Dios mío! Are you on an empty stomach?"

Gulping, I shook my head.

"Good," he said, and let me down gently.

God! I feel awful!

After giving me one more concerned look, he bent down to pick up the book on the ground.

He threw the book away... to catch me?

The Decarlo I know, would have let me drop to the floor. What's gotten into him?

"I'm sorry," I muttered hastily, as he stood back up.

He stood up straight, hovering over me. Looking straight into my eyes for about two and half seconds, he muttered, "Qué? What are you sorry about?" With that, he let the book down on the table.

Thank goodness our location wasn't in the librarian's vicinity. But soon enough, she ran towards us.

"My word! What happened?" She rushed over.

"Nothing much, Mrs. Green," Mr. Decarlo spoke up. "My student climbed onto a shelf to get a book, since she can't reach it," he explained. "As you can see, she's a... midget,"

Hey! How dare you!?

"Oh my," the librarian was worried. "Did you take a fall, dear?"

"I'm fine, Mrs. Green," I said hurriedly. "I held onto a chair,"

"Oh, that's good," she said and looked over at the shelf. "Oh... it's broken,"

"Yeah, there's no need to report about this," Mr. Decarlo said, before she could get any ideas. "I'll replace the shelf by tomorrow,"

"Alright," she smiled. "I see no reason to report it, then," and with that, she walked off.

"Phew," buried my face in my hands.

"Held onto chair?" He chuckled. "Course you did,"

"What else was I supposed to say!?" I shrugged. "I'd rather lie to her than be dragged into the discipline council again,"

Looking over at me, he let out a small laugh.

Oh my god what the hell he laughed.

"You did good," he turned around to walk to his table.

"Mr. Decarlo," I said, making him turn around to face me.

"I'm not a midget," I said after gathering up all my courage.

Having observed me for few seconds, he walked closer, and this time, maybe a bit too close.

I didn't budge. My nose was inches away from his chest.

I felt his warm breath on my forehead. Minty...

Standing there, I held my breath before I looked up at him, only to see him gazing down at me.

A mischievous smile tugged at the corners of his lips once again.

"I'm not the one looking up 90 degrees above my eye level, am I?"

Breathe out...gulp...

He walked away abruptly, without another word.

"Hey, dear," Mrs. Green walked up to me. "We're closing now,"

"Oh! Of course!" I stood up immediately and started packing up.

I watched Mr. Decarlo as he arranged the papers neatly and put them in the file.

He seems like a perfectionist... he needs everything neat and spotless.

Gathering up my books, I stalled until Mr. Decarlo left the library, and rushed out afterwards.

He walked down the stairs and onto the ground floor, proceeded towards the basketball court and then past it, towards the gate.

I was taking the exact same route towards Starbucks. It was 5.05 p.m.

He must be heading there too. God! I hope he won't see me.

As I walked forward, I texted Madelyn to tell her that I was on my way. *Few* seconds later, she replied to me, saying that she had already gotten there. Of course... she just wanted to be alone with Eric...

Thump!

Oh no... this scent is a bit too familiar... mint leaves... bergamot...

This is bad...

I looked up slowly as I pursed my lips tight, to meet a familiar pair of smoky grey eyes.

Sighing, he muttered, "It's a red light, Winslow," he turned around and flicked my forehead. "You're supposed to stop,"

My mouth agape, I stared at him and wondered what the hell to say. "Err... um..."

Seeing my reaction, he smiled faintly and shook his head. He looked away, at the road.

Wow.... that's an extremely unusual reaction coming from him... I mean, he's all poker faces and deadly sarcasm... why is he being so nice all of a sudden?

Well, to be honest, flicking my forehead wasn't a very gentlemanly action, but this is not the usual cranky Decarlo I know.... he seems... warmer....

"Hey, girl!" Madelyn smirked, noticing that I had entered right behind Mr. Decarlo. "Did daddy give you a ride here?"

"I swear Maddie I will sew your mouth!" I said, gripping her wrist as I looked around to confirm that Mr. Decarlo wasn't in our vicinity.

Maddie laughed and bit her lip. "Go get changed, Princess. He's waiting for you,"

"Shut up!" I said, gritting my teeth.

"Pfft!" She laughed and slapped my shoulder.

I changed my clothes in less than three minutes and stepped outside. Maddie was nowhere to be found and all I met was a fuming Spaniard, tapping his fingers on the counter.

"How hard is it to get a barista here?" He said, his grey orbs gleaming.

"I'm really sorry, sir," I said, and grabbed a notebook.

"Winslow, give me my usual. Hazlo rápido,"

"Pumpkin cold brew?"

"No, the other usual,"

"Green tea Frappuccino, Grande?" I asked.

"SI,"

"Coming right up," I said, trying to sound cheerful.

As I grabbed a cup and a sharpie, Mr. Decarlo eyed me closely.

"You're not going to do that, Winslow," he said, in his husky voice.

Taking a deep breath, I focused on the cup.

I'm sorry sir... it's part of my job....

"Winslow, I said no!" He said, louder this time.

Wow... all this protesting just makes me wanna... write something silly.

Angry face... yes.... that's pretty silly...

Biting my lower lip, I landed the tip of the sharpie on the cup. 'A-,"

"AELIANA!"

Dropping the sharpie and the cup, I gasped.

I've never heard my name being said in such a seductive accent...

"You don't have to scribble anything, just give me the goddamned coffee," he yelled.

Wait a second... he remembers my name, but still chooses to call me 'Winslow'?

Hastily, I prepared the coffee and handed it over to him. "\$3.95, sir,"

He pulled out his wallet and shoved his card towards me. Taking it, I swiped it, completing the payment.

Handing it back, I said, "Thank you! Have a great day,"

"Gracias... but not you..." he said, holding the tray up. "You go home and study,"

"I will, sir,"

After giving me a three second long stare, he turned around leave.

"Mr. Decarlo," I gathered up my courage.

Stopping in his tracks, he turned to look at me.

"You are... coming tomorrow, aren't you?"

"So did he carry you bridal style and let you down on a bed covered with rose petals?"

"Is that what Eric does to you when I'm not around?" I made a poker face. "And then you make sweet love to each other?"

"Ehh!?" Madelyn blushed like crazy. "Shh! This is about you and your daddy,"

"He's not my... Ugh... that's so gross, Madelyn!!!" I screamed. "Can you stop saying that?"

"It's the truth, darling,"

"Is not," I rolled my eyes. "Dude! He knows my name! He called me 'Aeliana'! I never thought he would," I muttered.

"Girl, he's into you," Maddie smirked. "You have to look bomb for him tomorrow," she grinned.

"Maddie! Please!"

"How far apart were your faces when he caught you?" She leaned towards me. "Micrometers? Nanometers!?"

"Centimeters," I burst her bubble.

"Ugh!" She groaned. "You've gotta make it nanometers tomorrow,"

"Nothing of the sort is going to happen tomorrow, Madelyn," I said. "I'm going with Caleb. I'm hanging out with Caleb. And I will be dancing with Caleb,"

"Don't complain to me later, that your life is uninteresting," Madelyn said. "You turned down the most famous guy in school and asked out a guy who isn't even interested in dating,"

"I had no choice,"

"You have to make a choice! You're always the one to shy away from an opportunity," Madelyn complained, sounding really concerned. "You have to take some risk, Aeliana! What's the point of a boring life with no risks!?"

"Well, what do you want me to, Maddie?"

"I don't know, okay!" Madelyn snapped. "What I do know, is that you're so crazy for him, but you're still in denial,"

"He has a girlfriend," I said. "You know I don't do pointless things like falling for people who are taken!"

"You don't do that? Is that what you're telling me?" She smirked, sarcastically.

"Mm hmm," I crossed my arms before my chest.

"That... is not a choice that you can make!" she yelled, smiling as if she thought I was crazy. "When you fall

for someone, you just fall!" she shrugged. "You won't have any control over it,"

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Twenty Eight

4.45 p.m

Friday

"I think the wedges are fine," I said, pointing at a pair of shoes at the bottom of my wardrobe.

"No!" Madelyn protested. "We bought the stilettos for this dress. You're wearing this tonight," Madelyn

announced.

'Ugh! Fine!' I surrendered. Madelyn, being the persistent one, always got her ways with me.

"Hurry up! I need to do your makeup!" She whined. "I don't want to do it in a hurry, because you're not just going to any dinner dance today,"

I raised an eyebrow. "Well, then, where exactly am I going?"

"On a mission,"

"Pfft! What mission?" I chuckled, already knowing what she was talking about.

"Mission: Seduce the Professor, of course," Madelyn said as if it was really obvious.

"I don't even know if he's going to be there," I said, picking up the pair of shoes that lay on the ground.

"He will," Madelyn gave me a reassuring smile.

I put on the silk black dress and looked at myself in the mirror. The fabric hugged my body, making my curves and contours visible.

Eyes fixed on my reflection, I turned around.

"Maddie," I called out. "Don't you think the train is a bit too long?" I asked, waving the long black part flowing down my legs and resting on the floor.

"Put your shoes on, it'll be fine," she yelled from inside the bathroom.

I sat down on the side of the bed and slid my feet into the shoes.

Standing up, I observed myself in the mirror once more. "It's still touching the damn ground!"

"It doesn't matter!" Madelyn said, as she walked towards me. "You look perfect," she smiled.

"Thanks," I said, feeling flattered.

"Now sit down," she ordered. "Imma get you dolled up,"

"Okay," I chuckled and sat before the mirror.

"Any preferences?"

"Nothing heavy, anything light," I replied.

"Smoky eye?"

"I said 'light',"

"Alright! Alright!!"

"We're right here,"

"Ah! Yes! I see you!" I said, rushing towards the red sedan as I disconnected the call.

"Hi girl!" Bliss cheered.

"You. Look. Gorgeous.," Vanille squealed.

"Thank you," Leaning forward I checked both of them out. "So do both of you! Angels!!"

"I called Damon," Bliss said. "Everything is going smoothly. He told us not to worry, so we can just go and have some fun,"

"That's great" I grinned.

Bliss, Vanille and I proceeded towards the building. There were people storming in already.

It's still 6.05... they sure were excited about the dance...

"So, let's try to find Caleb before we find Nate," I reminded Bliss and Vanille.

"Yeah, definitely,"

As we walked in through the doors, the music filled my ears. They were playing 'Tequila' by Dan + Shay.

There were students seated at tables, standing in cliques, chatting and also some couples on the dancing floor, moving to the rhythm as they held onto each other.

"Vanille!" Luke ran towards us, a huge smile plastered on his face.

"Hi," Vanille exhaled, as she gazed at Luke, who looked pretty good in his suit.

Caleb and Jace followed closely behind.

Caleb flashed a sweet smile as he approached me. "Hello, ma'am,"

"Hi, Caleb," I gave him a genuine smile.

"You look pretty," he said, clearly a bit nervous.

"Thanks," I chuckled nervously, probably blushing as well. "And you look charming."

"Aeliana," Bliss whispered. "Nate,"

Instinctively, I grabbed Caleb's arm and stood close to him.

"Is he coming this way?" Caleb asked me.

"Apparently in the vicinity," I said, scanning the area cautiously

"Guys," I tapped Vanille's shoulder, my other arm still around Caleb's. "Where's Leah?"

"She's supposed to be here right now," Bliss said, checking her phone.

Seconds later, Nate passed by with his gang, taking a good look at Caleb and me. I scooted closer to Caleb, my grip on his arm, tightening.

"He's gone," Caleb said. "You can relax now,"

"Oh! Good!" I chuckled, embarrassed. Letting go of his arm, I apologized. "Sorry, I just really don't want any

trouble.

"I know," Caleb said. "I totally understand,"

"Thanks, Caleb" I smiled.

"And, here comes Leah!" Vanille announced.

"Leah!" I squealed and hugged her. "You actually decided to show up!"

"Of course!" she grinned. "Couldn't let you guys have fun on your own,"

"Love the outfit!" Bliss said.

"Took me three solid hours to find this shit,"

"Well, it was totally worth it," I said.

"Guys, we're gonna go get some drinks," Vanille said, grabbing Luke's arm. "Care to join?"

"Sure," Bliss said as we followed them.

As we proceeded to the area where the beverages were served, I spotted Professor Watson mid conversation with Mr. Burke.

So that's where the Professors decided to sit... why don't I see a grumpy tall giant seated anywhere nearby?

"Coke for me," Leah muttered.

"Yeah, me too," Caleb said. "Would've loved to have some cocktail, but apparently the alcohol's for the Professors only,"

"That's so unfair, dude" Luke pointed out. "Do the professors only come here to get wasted? I mean, it should either be alcohol for everybody or alcohol for nobody,"

"Agreed!" Caleb said, taking a sip of his coke.

"Yeah, man!" Jace agreed and placed his mojito aside. "We have to watch them rub it in our faces as they get wasted,"

"Guys!" I chuckled. "I don't think anyone's gonna get 'wasted'. I'm pretty sure they know how to behave around the students,"

"You never know," Luke said. "I heard that last year, Mr. Reynolds got so drunk, he was performing CPR on a rubber dinghy,"

"What the hell?" Vanille yelled as all the others laughed.

"I swear," Luke said. "After that he crashed his car into the toolshed,"

"Toolshed?"

"Yeah, the garden toolshed at the back," he chuckled.

"The night's still young," Jace said. "You never know what kind of crazy shit's coming your way,"

As I nodded in agreement, I noticed a familiar tall figure enter through the doors. He stepped inside, looked around and proceeded forward.

All the girls within a ten meter radius, stopped whatever they were doing and turned around to steal a glance; most of them bringing their fingers to their lips as they gasped.

Damon rushed towards him, making him stop. He greeted *Mr. Decarlo* and ushered him towards the Professors' table.

Unfortunately, the route that Damon had decided to use, required them to go through the area that we were hanging around.

Damn... he was gonna flunk, but look at him now... he'd probably win Best Dressed if we chose one. He actually bothered and right now he looks nothing less than a runway model...

"Oh my god!" Bliss' jaw dropped. "Move, Jace," she said. "I need to get a load of Señor Decarlo,"

"Ah! There goes our spotlight," Jace said, moving away.

"Damn..." Bliss exhaled heavily. "You guys have no idea how I wish that the Professors wore a tux everyday," she muttered never moving her eyes from Mr. Decarlo.

I could tell that Vanille was holding it in, and she was handling this like a pro. If not Luke would've been : very upset.

"You're exaggerating," Luke said. "He doesn't look that good!"

"Listen to yourself, Luke! You sound ridiculous!" Bliss scoffed. "He's so hot," she murmured.

Meanwhile, I stood there, unconsciously admiring every inch of him.

As usual, his silky hair wasn't styled. It just stood by itself, refusing to give two shits about gravity. White shirt, black necktie...

As he approached us, I jerked my hand away from Caleb's.

Caleb looked at me, clearly perplexed. "What's the matter?"

"Huh!?" I asked. "No! Nothing at all!" I said, looking back at Mr. Decarlo, to confirm that he hadn't seen my am around Caleb's.

Why am I even doing this?

And at that moment, his eyes locked with mine.

My heart skipped a beat. I gulped, looking at him directly.

Staring blankly for a few seconds, he was interrupted by a question by Damon. Nodding in response to whatever was asked, his eyes moved back onto me for a second. Soon, he focused on the direction in which they were heading, which also meant that he was drawing nearer to us.

Feeling my heart thumping in my chest, I set my glass down. I took a deep breath and looked up at him, who was now only a few feet away from me. He approached me, his eyes never landed once on me. As if he was completely uninterested, he turned to his right, inches before me.

His intoxicating fragrance enveloped my senses. Mint... was all I felt...

"Aeliana," Caleb looked at me, concerned. "You alright?"

"Huh!? Yeah! Totally!" I faked a smile.

"Vanille and I are gonna take it to the dance floor," Luke made an announcement.

"We are?" She looked up at him.

"We are,"

"We are," Vanille giggled, looking at us.

"Great!" Bliss grinned. "Jace! Prove to me that you've got jams,"

Jace chuckled. "You think challenging me is wise?"

"Well, we'll see about that in a minute," Bliss grinned as Jace followed her to the dance floor.

"I take it you're not into dancing?" I asked Caleb.

"Not at all," Caleb chuckled nervously.

I shot Leah a surprised look, impressed by Caleb's response.

"I like this guy," Leah smiled. "So let's go hangout," "Yes!" Caleb agreed.

"Guys, have you seen Brittany?"

"Aeliana, why the hell are you even looking for that witch?" Leah gave me a questioning look.

"I just wanna make sure that she turns up half naked and makes Nate shower her with attention, so that I can relax and have some fun,"

"Why don't we go out to the garden?" Caleb suggested.

"Great idea!"

"So we have term ends in three weeks," I said. "Are you guys prepared?"

"Pfft! Are you crazy!?" Leah chuckled. "I'm just gonna doodle on the paper,"

"Why would the class topper say that?" Caleb asked, laughing at Leah's response.

"Don't mind her, Caleb. She's always like this," I told him.

"I'm serious, okay!?" Leah leaned forward.

"Okay okay!" Caleb chuckled.

My phone began to ring, showing Madelyn's caller ID on the screen.

She wants updates...

"Guys, I have to take this call," I said, standing up. "I'll be in the restroom and nowhere else, okay?"

Caleb and Leah nodded.

I rushed into the building, bumping into a few people and apologizing. I made my way towards the girls' restroom as soon as possible.

Ah... this is better... away from all the sound... and all alone...

"Hello," I said, answering the call.

"TELL ME *WHAT* HAPPENED!!!"

"Dammit Madelyn, my ear." I yelled back.

"Hurry up and tell me what happened," she screamed. "I need to know, woman!"

"Nothing! Okay?" I said. "Nothing happened,"

"Is he there?"

"Yeah, he is... In a suit..."

"Damn... did your eyes feel blessed?" She asked dreamily.

"I'd be lying if I said 'no'," I said, reluctantly.

"Dang... you're finally admitting..."

"No! No, I'm not!" I defended myself. "Just because I think that he looks good, it doesn't mean that I want to get in his pants, okay? Stop exaggerating,"

"You don't want to... you need to... I know you do..."

I swear I could feel Madelyn wiggle her eyebrows, through the phone.

"You're gross," I said, bluntly.

"Look babe," Madelyn said. "I know you more than anyone, and I know that you want this,"

I don't know what to say... I don't even know if what she said is true...

"Aeliana?"

"Yeah!?" I snapped back into my senses.

"Are you that dumbfounded?" Madelyn chuckled.

"No... I was just... thinking..."

"Thinking about what?" She asked, sneakily. "How he's going to bend you over and-," 1

"No!" I cut her off. "Maddie, tell Adrian that I'll get late today and that one of my 'girl'friends will drop me off,"

"Alright, I will," she agreed. "Man! I thought you'd be staying at daddy's place,"

"No! He is not 'daddy'!" I yelled, doing my best to hold my laugh in.

"He totally is! Youuu just don't see it yet," Maddie sang.

"Okay okay!" I said, hurriedly. "I have to go now! I'll talk to you when I get home,"

"Mm hmm! Have fun!"

"I'll try," I giggled and disconnected the line.

Shoving the phone in my purse, I rushed out of the restroom. As I stepped out, I ran into Serena Waters.

"Oh! Hey, Aeliana!"

"Hi, Serena," I smiled. "What's going on?"

"Having fun," she replied. "Actually, I was searching for you,"

"Oh!? And why is that?"

"Professor Watson asked me to get some files from his office," she explained. "He told me that he needs them over the weekend, and that he forgot to take them yesterday. Since you've been to his office, can you

come with me to get them?"

"Oh," I was slightly confused. He asked US to go to his office and get some files? That's quite unusual.

"Does he need them now?"

"Apparently, he does," Serena said. "He's leaving early and he wants us to bring them as soon as possible,"

"Is that so?" I said, rubbing my chin. "Um, can you wait until I call Leah?"

"Leah?" She looked confused. "Why is that?"

"Well, you know, just..." 1

"But I'm here," Serena chuckled. "We don't need three people,"

I pursed my lips. "Alright then," I gave in.

Why can't he send a guy on the errand!? Why would he send a girl this late at night!?

As we exited the building, I got a bad feeling. As if I was digging my own grave...

But then again, it's Serena... she's not a very suspicious person.... knowing her, she wouldn't do anything nasty... besides, I don't think she knows Nate all that well...

Seconds later, I received a text message from Bliss.

Bliss:

Where are you? Why are you not with Leah?

Aeliana:

I came to the science dep with Serena to get some files. Will be back in 5

"What about the keys?" I asked Serena.

"I have 'em,"

"How did you get them?"

"Professor Watson, of course," she said as if it was *really* obvious.

"I thought the security personnel kept the keys somewhere else," I said, looking at her, walking beside me.

"Not Professor Watson's," she replied. "He has his own key as well. Otherwise he wouldn't have told me to go and fetch the files, would he?"

"Hmm yeah" I nodded in agreement.

We entered the dimly lit building and proceeded towards the elevator.

"Which floor is it?" Serena asked me.

Why am I doing this? Why am I even following this girl!?

"Hey, um," I said, stopping in my tracks. "Can I stay down here? It's the second floor. You just have to turn to your left and go forward. There's a name plaque on the door,"

"You're telling me to go up there all by myself?" Serena looked horrified. "I've heard too many ghost stories to do that, Aeliana," she said. "You have to come with me,"

Sighing, I felt really bad for her. "If you give me a minute I could just call Caleb and tell him to come with us,"

"Caleb?" Serena said. "Alright,"

I dialed Caleb's number and placed my phone close to my ear.

No answer

"Let's just go, Aeliana!" Serena said, grabbing my hand. "Sooner the better,"

I sighed. "Alright, fine! But if something happens-,"

"Nothing's going to happen! What are you so scared of!?" Serena chuckled, pressing the button that had a number 2 engraved on it, as the doors of the elevator closed.

The bell dinged as we reached the second floor. As soon as I stepped out of the elevator, Serena received a call.

"Hello?" She said. "Yeah, I came to the Dean's office to get some files," she spoke to whoever was on the other line, and handed me the key, signaling to move forward.

I walked towards the Dean's office, making sure that Serena was always close behind. Thankfully, the lights along the corridor were switched on. It managed to somewhat lighten the tension.

As I approached the door to the Dean's office, I turned around to face Serena. She was still on the call. While muttering something into her phone, she signaled me to open the door.

I sighed and pushed the key into the keyhole. Unlocking it, I pulled out the key.

I turned the doorknob and pushed the door open to reveal the dark, spacious room.

I ain't going in there first. She wanted the files, she can get them, I'm staying right here.

Crossing my arms before my chest, I waited for Serena to finish her call.

Disconnecting the call, Serena smiled, "Sorry about that. Let's go inside,"

"Alright,"

As I turned around, I felt fingers wrap around my arm, pulling me inside the dark room. The door shut with a loud bang and all I could see was darkness, until the lights were switched on, one by one. I heard the door lock behind me.

I looked around, breathing heavily.

A girl stood beside me. It wasn't Serena. It was someone I'd never seen before.

"Well well,"

I'd know that voice anywhere...

I'm in trouble... real bad...

"What happened, babe? Where are your pets? Aren't they here to scream for you from the sidelines?"

"Brittany," I exhaled. "What do you want?"

"What do YOU want, Aeliana?" She stepped closer.

"Nothing from you, that's for sure," I said, narrowing my eyes. Behind my back, I held my phone, the screen held to face the back of my thighs. Slowly, I clicked the bottom left corner, hoping to open the keypad.

I pressed just anywhere on the screen, thanking myself for deciding to assign speed dials.

I don't care who it is.... someone, please pick up...

"I've never seen you dressed like this," she scoffed. "Never thought you had a proper body to show off,"

"I'm not everything you expect me to be, Brittany," I said, relaxing a bit after realizing that whoever was on the other end had answered my call.

"Aeliana Winslow," Brittany growled. "I told you once, I told you twice, I told you a million times to stay away from Nate,"

"And I told you a billion times that I'm way more than just 'away' from him," I said. "I don't want anything to do with him! Why can't you just understand that!?"

"Then how the fuck are you going to explain this?" She yelled, shoving a phone in my face.

It was a photo of me talking to Nate by the fountain... it was that day... the day he asked me out... of course, Brittany knew nothing about that.

"You want me to explain that?"

"Yeah," she said. Leaning in, she growled, "and don't even think of lying,"

If I tell her that Nate asked me out, she won't let me live it down. Telling her that would just make things a

lot more worse.

"Hello!?"

Damn it! Shut up!

"What was that!?" Brittany looked around.

Quickly, I disconnected the call.

"You have a phone on you?" Brittany looked at me suspiciously.

Ugh! I have no way of hiding it! I've gotta admit...

"Of course, I do,"

Looking over at the girl behind me, Brittany demanded, "Get rid of it,"

"Hey! This is too much," I protested. "You can't do this!"

"Watch me," Brittany smirked as the girl grabbed my phone. I got a grip on the keys in my hand that were also about to fall off.

After taking my phone from the girl, she threw it onto the floor, making a loud crash.

"Hey!" I yelled. "Replace that!"

Brittany scoffed. "Darling, you were saying?"

"Look Brittany, we are not having this conversation! If you are so suspicious about Nate, just go ask him! Why do you even keep clinging onto him if you can't trust a guy like that!?"

"How dare you say that to me!?"

"Oh I did," I snapped. "To be honest I would love to tell you the story behind that photo. I just don't want you rampaging here and I don't want to get into any trouble,"

Brittany glared at me as her eyes shone with anger.

"I'm leaving," I said, and turned back, walking towards the door.

"Where do you think you're going, bitch?" I could feel Brittany rushing towards me.

I quickened my pace but was stopped by a pull on the train on my dress. Losing my balance, I fell onto the ground, banging my head on the brick wall in the process.

Argh! That hurt... real bad...

Brittany chuckled. "You're very good at stumbling, aren't you?"

I was at the door! I couldn't reach it.

I tightened my grip on the key in one hand and reached for the doorknob in the other, as I breathed heavily.

Suddenly, I felt a stinging pain on my wrist. Brittany had wacked my hand with a cane. *My* heart was thumping in my chest. I was so angry; to the point that I would've stabbed every single one in this room, if I had a knife.

Tears streamed down my face.

They weren't tears of sorrow, but of anger.

Oh god, I feel dizzy...

No! Nooo! Fight it! I can't go down like this! This is pathetic!!!

"Winslow!"

Huh? Is that...?

"Winslow!"

I've never felt this blissful hearing that voice calling my name in a heavy Spanish accent like that...

"Open this door!" There were continuous loud bangs on the thick wood.

"Oh no..." Brittany looked up at the door that was now about to come off its hinges. "Eva, escape plan,"

"Everything's ready, Brittany."

"Let's go," she said, and walked towards the window at the very back of the room.

"We're not done, darling," Brittany smirked. "You've got many more exciting things coming your way," and with that, she disappeared out the window after the other girls.

Grabbing the door knob, I raised myself up and on to my knees.

"Winslow?"

"Aeliana!"

Bliss... I think it's her... I'm not really sure... I'm just so dizzy...

Inserting the key into the hole, I unlocked the door. I crawled back and fell on the floor, feeling way too uncomfortable to hold myself up anymore.

The door flew open, revealing a tall figure. I could make out his features... it was so obviously familiar.

knelt down beside me.

"Winslow?"

I was beginning to calm down...

"My goodness, Aeliana," Bliss cried as she fell onto the floor beside me.

"Mr. Decarlo..." I muttered.

"Qué, what is it!?" He looked at me intently.

"I... feel light-headed..."

Mumbling something in Spanish, he said, "Hemandez, somewhere in here, there is a refrigerator. Go find some ice,"

"Yes, sir," Bliss stood up and rushed deeper into the room.

Sliding an arm under my neck, Mr. Decarlo pulled me up.

Groaning, I shook my head. I can't sit up straight. I'm too exhausted for this...

"Sit up and put your weight on me," he said. "Try to keep your head upright,"

Preferring that idea, I cooperated. With his support, I managed to sit up. Feeling faint, I breathed heavily.

"Estúpida... why would you come into an empty building at a time like this?" He said, resting my head against his chest.

Gritting my teeth, I gasped, trying to stay awake.

"Stop fighting it. Close your eyes and relax. Estarás bien," 1.
