

Keily | Those Jerks from Westview

Those Jerks from Westview

The whole week had gone by in a haze, and Saturday was here.

Right now, us girls were driving to the town's outskirts for the fall carnival. We'd made plans to visit as early as possible before all the good stuff got sold out.

Certainly, my social life had gotten a big boost in Bradford. There was always something new to do on weekends.

Today, I was wearing skinny jeans and a denim jacket with a yellow T-shirt underneath.

When I'd glanced at myself in the mirror at home, my mind had immediately picked up on how wide my thighs looked in the jeans. However, I'd squashed down my insecurities and left the house in them. The girls complimenting my outfit also helped.

Addison wore a summer dress with a light-brown cardigan over it. Sadhvi was in jeans and a black over-jacket, and Lola was in an orange sweater and a mid-thigh denim skirt.

They all looked beautiful and prepped.

"Cell phone coverage won't be good in the area, so try not to wander too far from the group," Addison said from behind the wheel of her Volkswagen.

Sadhvi was riding shotgun, and Lola and I were in the back.

"Yeah," Sadhvi said, "last time we were here with the squad, Cindy and Emma got separated from us. It took us hours to find them. We got back late that night, and my mom was really mad."

"How about this time we hold hands like good girls?" Lola looked up from her phone and smiled teasingly. "I'm sure you guys won't mind."

"Oh, there will be handholding, but too bad we won't be part of it, Lola," I added, grinning at Sadhvi's bashful face. It was fun to tease them sometimes.

Addison rolled her eyes. “No wonder gays are afraid to come out.”

“Every couple has to deal with their friends’ obnoxious jokes,” Lola muttered, her eyes fixed on her cell phone and fingers typing away. “I remember each of you poking fun at Matt and me, so don’t pin this on gay oppression.”

“I’ll pin this on whatever I want. Go nag your nerdy boyfriend.” Addison stuck her tongue out in the rearview mirror, and I chuckled.

Lola didn’t even glance up, too busy glaring at her screen.

“Now that we’re on the topic of love...,” Sadhvi drawled, turning back to look at me. “Keily, what’s going on between you and James?”

My cheeks tinted lightly when I felt the attention shift to me. Lola’s fingers stopped, Addison’s eyes peered at me in the rearview, and Sadhvi just stared curiously.

I hadn’t discussed a whole lot about James with them. It wasn’t like I didn’t want to, but I was kind of scared to. I was afraid of their judgment.

James hadn’t been so kind to me in the beginning, so I expected the girls to criticize whatever was blooming between us. I’d already gotten a preview when Addison had gone off on me after I kissed James at the party.

Granted, she’d been dealing with her own stuff and had lashed out, but the judgment had still been there.

Another reason was I didn’t know what was going on between James and me.

I knew he was trying to woo me or something. But I also knew that I was already wooed; he didn’t need to put in much effort.

However, I was frightened to move things forward. Despite everything, I was still skeptical of him and everything between us.

“We’re sort of friends,” I answered.

“Friends?” Addison repeated, her brows rising in the mirror.

“Yeah, I guess,” I mumbled, unsure. “His behavior has changed a lot recently. He admitted to being wrong and is sorry.” *And we’ve kissed several more times.* “So, I see no point in holding grudges.”

My cousin nodded. "Well, it's about time he apologized."

"I agree," Sadhvi chimed in, "but to be honest, we all kind of saw it coming. Everyone can see he's *crazy* about you."

"But don't stop holding grudges, Keily. Make him repent more." Addison huffed.

"It's hard to hold grudges when he's being so sweet," I said, blushing. I was relieved they weren't being too harsh on James or me. "He can be really gentle and considerate when he wants to be."

"Sweet? Gentle? Considerate? Are we really using those adjectives for that bastard?"

Sadhvi shook her head. "Come on, Addy, he's not that bad."

"I agree," Lola finally said. "If he was such a bad person, he wouldn't have Matt and the other guys as his friends. He's got to have some redeeming qualities for the boys to stick with him."

"Yeah, yeah...", Addison muttered sullenly. "He's great!"

"You're hard to please, Addy," Sadhvi sighed before she looked at me. "Don't think I haven't noticed you and James giving each other gooey eyes."

"We already knew he was into you, and it seems you're noticing him a lot too. You guys are definitely more than friends."

I blushed hard. She was right. James and I *were* more than friends. Since he came to my place on Wednesday, we'd been texting regularly, and the messages were quite flirty.

"I don't know what we are," I replied honestly, "but we're not boyfriend and girlfriend, if that's what you're suggesting."

"Do you want to be boyfriend and girlfriend?" Lola asked.

I looked outside, seeing the long trail of trees passing by. "I don't know." I sucked in my breath. "I mean, I like him, and he kinda admitted that he likes me too. But I don't want to give in too easily."

"I don't want to give him the impression that if he insults or disrespects me, I'll just let it go without a second thought."

Addison cheered. "Atta girl!"

"So, for now, you guys are taking it slow?" Lola asked.

"Or maybe we're at a standstill." I shrugged and gave her a half smile.

"It's all right. People have their own pace when it comes to relationships."

"I don't know if we'll ever get to the point where we have a relationship." Saying that aloud really hurt.

Maybe it was my hormonal teenage self, but I didn't like the picture of my future without James. *Sometimes, I'm scared by how strong this attraction is.*

"But it's okay. Him going from name-calling me to treating me like an actual person with feelings is enough for now."

It was enough, but I wanted more, and it looked like so did he.

Lola smiled before darting her eyes to her cell phone when it pinged. Her smile dropped, and she looked back up.

"So, you won't mind if I tell you that Matt invited him and the other guys to meet us at the carnival? Right?"

My jaw slacked. *Ugh...*

Sadhvi chuckled. "This is going to be fun."

Colorful stalls, different rides, and a big crowd of people greeted our eyes as we walked through the entrance of the town's fall carnival. It occupied a pretty large area.

Festivity and joy surrounded us, which was enough to uplift anyone's mood.

Kids and adults alike were walking with stuffed toys or big candies in their hands, loud hoorahs were echoing from the rides, and the smell of hot food was wafting in the air.

“Matt said to wait for them near the main entrance,” Lola told us as we shuffled to the side to avoid bumping into others who were entering. We stood near a hot dog stall.

“We drove for like an hour...,” Addison said, eyeing the menu displayed on the stall. “I only ate breakfast this morning. And I skipped lunch because I had to rush to pick you all up—”

“Stop explaining yourself; just buy what you want to eat.” Sadhvi rolled her eyes. “And get something for me too.”

So, Addison bought hot dogs for Sadhvi and herself. I declined her offer to grab me one too; I was already full from my lunch. Lola didn’t want anything either.

“Aw, these hot dogs aren’t as delicious as last time,” Sadhvi complained, taking another big bite of her bread.

“I can give you a better hot dog, babe,” someone commented.

A group of four guys were leering at us from a few feet away. My stomach twisted when I recognized two of them: Collin and Ryan from Westview High.

I hid my face quickly, hoping neither of them would recognize me.

The two with them—one blond, the other with black hair—I didn’t know. They appeared older, maybe in their early twenties. Probably former teammates, judging by their equally toned physiques.

“It even tastes better,” the blond one said and pointed at his crotch. His friends laughed like hyenas.

“Come with us. We promise you a good time,” Black Hair added. “You’ll be screaming for more.”

My skin crawled. These guys were disgusting.

“How about I promise you my knee in your tiny dicks if you don’t get lost right now?!” Addison barked and glared at them.

“Or maybe a good night in jail for soliciting sexual favors from minors,” Lola threatened, pointing her chin at the cops that were outside, patrolling the area. Lola and Sadhvi weren’t eighteen yet.

People had started looking at us because of how the girls were shouting.

The boys realized the attention they were getting, so with glares that depicted their injured masculinity, they walked away without making any more fuss.

“Those shits ruined this for me.” Sadhvi scrunched her face at her hot dog, then walked away to throw it in the trash.

Meanwhile, Addison chewed her hot dog aggressively. “I want to stab those dickheads!”

“Let’s not ruin our mood because of them,” Lola pacified her. “We’re here to have fun.”

Sadhvi returned with a frown on her face. I nudged her shoulder and promised to get her cotton candy later. She laughed and said that it would only remind her of pubes.

Oh God! Now she’d ruined it for me too.

Our company finally walked in ten minutes later.

My eyes instantly found James among them. He was in a black undershirt and black jeans, complementing both with a dark-brown leather jacket. He looked like a heavenly sinner.

I felt conscious of my clothing and big thighs when he looked at me.

“You guys took your time,” Lola said when they reached us. Matt had come along with James, Lucas, Keith, and Axel.

“Sorry for making you wait,” Matt said as he threw his arm around his girlfriend’s shoulder and kissed her.

“You know, those jerks from Westview...” Addison began narrating the incident that had happened with the perverts while the nine of us walked.

James moved next to me, and our fingers brushed as we fell into step. A light blush coated my cheeks as I wondered if I could just hold his hand.

I’d taken it at the game, but that had only been to stop him from jumping into a fight.

He was so close. I could feel his body heat enveloping my side.

“Why didn’t you punch them, Addison?” Keith asked once Addison and Sadhvi had finished with their story. “You pack a mean punch.” It didn’t look like he was joking.

“I would have, but they left before I got the chance. They were wimps.”

“Those poor chaps were spared,” Lucas said.

We chuckled. He was right.

“Are you okay?” James asked me quietly. His breath brushed against my cheek, and I felt butterflies in my stomach. “They didn’t say or do anything else, did they?”

“No. And I’m fine,” I whispered back. Inside, I melted at his concern for me.

I looked at him and found him already looking back. He was breathtaking. Sparks sizzled between us, and I let go of the restraint holding me back.

I didn’t stop myself from reaching out to hold his hand. Our fingers curled around each other. My whole body tingled with his simple touch.

Soon, others noticed. Addison rolled her eyes. Sadhvi gushed. Lola smiled. Lucas smirked. Keith, Axel, and Matt looked amused. But it didn’t matter.

We kept holding each other’s hands and walked through the crowd.

Next Chapter

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