

Keily Book 2: Dating My Enemy |

The Secret I Must Keep

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Chad's words replayed in my head. "I don't know how a fat cow like you tricked James into dating you, but I'm going to fix that." And again: "I don't know how a fat cow like you tricked James into dating you, but I'm going to fix that." And again: "I don't know how a fat cow like you tricked James into dating you, but I'm going to fix that."

Chad's words from yesterday replayed in my mind like a broken record, each repetition digging deeper into my consciousness. I had tossed and turned all night because of them.

And now they continued to bother me the next day. I tried not to think about them again. But it was impossible.

As I navigated the crowded school hallways, my gaze darted anxiously from face to face, searching for a glimpse of James amidst the throng of students. I needed him.

There he was! But Chad was right there beside him, making my heart drop. "I don't know how a fat cow like you tricked James into dating you, but I'm going to fix that."

Fix that. Like I had somehow broken James. Like I'd made things go wrong for him. My vision became blurry but I quickly blinked the tears away.

I longed to confide in James. I had to tell him what Chad had said, but I didn't want to do it in front of Chad. I'll have to wait until we have some privacy.

Afraid to approach them, I considered turning away. But then James saw me and immediately headed over. Chad trailed closely behind.

My stomach churned with unease as I braced myself for their approach, unsure of what to expect. "Good morning," James greeted me with a warm smile and a quick kiss.

"Hi," I said. I forced a small smile in return, my voice betraying none of the turmoil raging within me.

“How’d you sleep?” Chad asked by way of greeting. He was nice enough with James around. Fake-ass-bitch.

“Okay,” I lied, mustering up all the composure I could manage. “And you?”

“I slept like a baby,” Chad replied.

Oh, I’m sure he did. I’m sure he didn’t give his nasty words any more thought. Although maybe he was thinking about how he would ‘fix’ his best friend dating a ‘fat cow’.

The bell rang. I was so grateful because it gave me the chance to get away from them.

As I checked my schedule for the day, a sinking feeling settled in the pit of my stomach. No English or Calculus meant no chance of seeing James in a classroom.

This realization left me feeling disappointed. I couldn't shake the nagging question of when I would have the opportunity to speak with him alone.

As first period came to an end, I caught a glimpse of James in the hallway, but my hopes were dashed as Chad appeared at his side once again. Why was he always there?

I hesitated, unsure of whether to approach them, and ultimately decided to keep my distance, unwilling to subject myself to Chad's presence.

Throughout the day, I saw James multiple times, always with Chad lingering nearby like a shadow. Was Chad doing this on purpose?

It certainly felt that way, especially when he shot me judgy glances. Whenever he could, he made subtle jabs at my appearance and weight.

At lunch, our group gathered together as usual. But he was there too. His proximity felt suffocating.

I couldn't bear the thought of spending another moment in Chad's company. So, I made my way to the library, seeking solace in the quiet solitude it offered.

But even there, I couldn't escape Chad's taunts. As I headed to my next class, he passed by me once more, his whispered insult cutting through the air like a knife.

"Fatty. Why weren't you at lunch? I thought it was your favorite part of school."

With each passing encounter, his words left me feeling smaller and more vulnerable. My phone vibrated, and I checked to see who it was.

James

Meet me at my car after school. I'll drive you home.

Yes! Finally I'd have some alone time with him, and I could tell him about Chad's bullying.

When the final bell rang, signaling the end of the school day, I instantly headed to the parking lot. I felt a surge of anticipation as I spotted James waiting for me by his car.

It was my chance to finally speak with him alone, to address the mounting tension fueled by Chad's malicious presence. But before I could make my way over to James, Chad intercepted me, his looming figure blocking my path.

I tried to sidestep him, but he moved to block me again, a smug smirk playing across his lips. "Where do you think you're going, fat pig?" Chad's voice dripped with disdain as he taunted me.

My heart sank as I realized that my moment with James was slipping away, overshadowed by Chad's relentless harassment.

"I'm going to my boyfriend," I don't know why I bothered to answer.

Chad looked over his shoulder and saw James. He was leaning against his car, watching us. Chad flashed him a smile.

"I know what you're trying to do," Chad said.

"And what is that?"

"You're trying to snitch," he said. "You're going to try and tell James about all the things I've said to you."

I pressed my lips together. There was no point in denying it.

“Do you really think James will take your side over mine?” he sneered. “We’ve been best friends since we were practically babies, you dumb fat bitch.”

I swallowed hard, feeling the sting of his words like a fresh wound.

“What do you want, Chad?” I demanded, my voice trembled.

His smirk widened into a malicious grin as he continued to taunt me. “I hate seeing James lower his standards for someone like you. You’re making him look bad, can’t you see?”

His accusation struck a nerve, igniting a surge of self-doubt within me. Despite James’s reassurances, the doubts and insecurities that had plagued me resurfaced with a vengeance.

I thought back to the whispers and glances, the rumors and judgments that had followed me around. I thought about the cute couple who got hot cocoa together. I thought about the girls in the bathroom gossiping about me and James. I thought about all the looks we got at the NYE party when we kissed.

I squared my shoulders, steeling myself against Chad’s onslaught of cruelty.

“Why do you even care, Chad?” I demanded. “James has his own life to live, his own choices to make.”

Chad’s facade of arrogance faltered for a moment, replaced by a fluster. Why was he flustered? What could he possibly be embarrassed about?

But he quickly regained his composure, his expression hardening. “I want to test your love for James,” he declared. “If you’re willing to put up with my little tests and keep it a secret from James, then maybe I’ll accept your relationship. But if you refuse, well...” His words trailed off ominously, leaving an unspoken threat hanging in the air.

He’ll convince James to leave me.

My heart pounded in my chest as I grappled with the weight of Chad’s ultimatum. The thought of betraying James’s trust filled me with a deep sense of dread, but the fear of losing him loomed even larger in my mind.

Chad's influence over James was undeniable, and the thought of him convincing James to break up with me sent a chill down my spine. I stepped around Chad. This time he didn't try to stop me.

As I walked toward James, my mind swirled with conflicting emotions. What should I do? Should I tell James about the bullying? Should I tell him all the horrible things Chad has said? Should I tell him about the game?

I feared that Chad was right and James would choose him above me. I feared that James would dump me.

When I reached James, he immediately sensed my troubled state.

"Hey, Keily, everything okay?" he asked, concern etched into his features.

I forced a smile, trying to push aside the turmoil raging inside me.

"Yeah," I replied, my voice faltering slightly. "It was just a long day."

James frowned, his brows furrowing with suspicion.

"What did Chad say to you?"

I hesitated, my heart pounding in my chest. Should I tell James the truth? But the fear of Chad's influence and the possibility of losing James clouded my judgment.

"Oh, nothing important," I deflected, forcing a nonchalant tone.

James regarded me for a moment, his expression unreadable. Then, with a shrug, he let the matter drop.

"Alright, if you say so," he said, though I could tell he wasn't entirely convinced.

He opened the car door for me, and I got in. And with each passing moment, the weight of my choices bore down on me. I wasn't going to tell James about Chad's bullying and threats. I was going to keep it a secret.

Next Chapter

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