

Chapter Forty-Seven



We all got very little sleep in the car that night. Pope had moved up to the front seat, and JJ took his, leaving me in the trunk by myself.

"Good news for residents of the Outer Banks. Dominion Power says their underwater transmission line, which will restore power to ninety percent of the area should be functional with twenty-four hours."

I sat up from my curled up position on the floor of the trunk and peeked out the front window as two cop cars blew past us.

"And still, no arrest in the shooting death of Sheri Susan Peterkin. The state police have issued a statement regarding a local person of interest, a juvenile from—"

Kie shut the radio off, and I laid back down and closed my eyes, trying to get a little bit more sleep.

"Let's game this out," JJ said, and my eyes shot open. "Maybe you guys can help, being the smart ones and all, but, who are the cops going to believe? Ward Cameron or us? So, the accuser is a big developer, kind of lord of the island, got the governor on speed dial kind of person, and the accused is John B, who is pretty much a homeless sixteen-year-old boy at the moment."

"Thanks."

"Yeah, that was very comforting."

JJ looked over his shoulder at me as I sat up and leaned against the back window.

"Shit," Pope murmured from up front.

"Alright, man. Yucatan, alright? I'm saying that's the only option. What other option do you have?"

"Enough with the Mexico bullshit. Sarah's gonna bail me out."

"She did witness the whole thing," Kie agreed.

"Thank you."

"And she's gonna snitch on her brother?" Pope asked, and JJ sat up in his seat.

"Not happening, bro. Okay? We've gotta get you off the island."

"What about the ferry?"

Heads swiveled towards me.

"That would be the only way," Pope said.

"Yeah," JJ added, "exit stage left while you still can, before the entire island is on lockdown."

"Guys, just get down."

Another cop car blew past us with sirens blaring.

"As much as I like Sarah, she's not a Pogue, man," I said, reaching forward to place a hand on his shoulder.

"Yeah, you can't stay here, man."

JJ laid back down in his seat as Kie started up the car.

We got to the ferry, and Pope got out to go buy John B a ticket.

"Okay, alright. Okay."

"Oh shit, something's wrong," I whispered to JJ as Pope walked way too fast back to the car.

"Pope, can you act normal?" Kie chastised him as he got in the driver's seat.

"So, uh, okay, so bad news. The ferry's closed, and there is this."

Pope handed Kiara a piece of paper, and she cursed as she passed it back.

"What is that? What is this?"

I looked over JJ's shoulder at the wanted poster in his hands.

"Well, John B, uh, this is a good framer of you."

"Okay, so the whole island's lookin' for John B right now."

"That's a lot of money."

"Congratulations, John B. You're now famous."

"Okay guys, we got to get to the HMS. We need small, no running lights."

I shook my head at Kiara.

"It's at the Chateau."

"And I wonder if the cops got the entire place staked out. Let me think. Oh, yeah. No. They definitely have that place locked down."

"Yeah, copy that."

"Let me think. Just give me a second," Pope muttered, but I interrupted him as I poked JJ.

"Dude!"

"What?"

"Does your dad still have that boat?"

"Of course! The cigarette boat, the Phantom!" Pope added, probably getting a little too excited.

"Yeah, the one he used to race."

"Maybe," JJ answered, not sounding overly excited about where this was going.

I grabbed onto his shoulder as Pope turned to John B.

"You could get right up the coast, no problem."

"It's not going to be easy, Pope," JJ said, talking over Kie. "Pope, I don't know where the keys are."

"Well, find them!" Pope argued, starting the car.

"Okay, I'm thinking!"

"Why is nobody moving forward? What's going on here?" Pope asked, waving his hands in frustration.

"Can you relax? JJ, how much weed did you give him?"

"Can you all shut up? You're gonna draw attention to us," I whispered-yelled, glancing around as heads began turning our way.

"Kie, your car's on here. It's on the poster."

Pope honked the horn.

"Can we move it?"

People started shouting and pointing at us.

I jumped as a dude came up and pounded on the back window.

"He's right there!"

"Pope, do something!"

The car lurched forward, smashing into the bumper of the person in front of us. I slammed into the seats in front of me, and JJ was quick to grab me and pull me into the seat with him. Pope continued to go forward, simply moving the other car out of the way, before taking Kiara's car off-roading.

"What are you doing?" She shouted, obviously stressed.

"We'll bump out!"

I held tightly onto JJ as Pope took a sharp turn onto an actual road. I screamed as he ran into a mailbox.

"I'm livin' my best life now!"

"My mom'll kill me."

I tried to catch my breath as I felt panic building up in my chest as JJ sat up a little.

"Pope, I should be the last one to tell you this, but you are not okay to drive, dude. Stop!"

He stopped.

I nearly flew out of JJ's lap as he slammed on the breaks, squealing the tires.

"John B, get out."

"What?"

"Jo, he's right. We'll draw the cops, you run. I'll get the rig, and I'll meet you in the dump tomorrow, okay? Three o'clock, okay?"

John B nodded as he got out of the car.

"Three o'clock tomorrow at the dump!" JJ yelled at my brother as he sprinted away.

Pope kept driving, and I folded the seat back up that John B was sitting in and quickly buckled my seat belt. I did not feel like dying today.

"Pope, you clocked that car, man. Like, that was so bad!" I couldn't help but chuckle with JJ.

Pope turned around and grinned at us.

"I'm just glad I'm not driving now."

Despite how I should have been terrified at those words, they sent me into giggles along with JJ. I've never experienced Pope high, or even really drunk, before. He was quite entertaining.

"Really? Pull over!"

Pope did, making an exaggerated left turn. Kiara kicked her door open.

"Jo, JJ, it's not funny. He shouldn't be driving."

Kie slammed her door shut, and I pursed my lips.

"Mama's mad."

I covered my mouth with my hand to try and muffle my laughter as I JJ tries to cover his own smile.

My whole world was going to shit, but there I was, laughing in the backseat of Kiara's car with JJ. I smiled and reached over, taking the hand he wasn't holding a blunt with as Kiara got into the driver's seat.

"Where are we going?" JJ asked, offering the blunt to me.

I took it, taking a drag as Kiara turned around.

"The last place they're gonna look."

I exhaled the smoke before handing it back to JJ. I leaned back in my seat, letting my eyes close as I waited for myself to relax. I felt JJ squeeze my hand.

About ten minutes later, we pulled up in front of a giant house.

"Fuck," I muttered when I opened my eyes.

"You sure this is a good idea?" JJ asked.

"She's the only one who can clear John B."

"The last place they'll look because of how stupid it is!"

Kiara and Pope jumped the stone wall that surrounded Tannyhill, leaving JJ and I in the car. JJ offered me the blunt again. I didn't hesitate to take it.

"How you holding up?"

I let out a humorless laugh and let my head hang.

"Oh, you know. My dad is dead, and my brother is on the run because he's been framed for murder, the usual."

I began fiddling with the blunt in my fingers. JJ took the stub and caressed my face.

"I'm here for you, sweetheart."

My eyes fluttered closed as he kissed me. I unbuckled my seatbelt and scooted closer to him, but that wasn't enough for him. He grabbed my hips and pulled me into his lap, and his hands settled on my waist.

Our lips moved in sync as I removed his hat and circled my fingers into his hair. His fingers slipped under the hem of my shirt. He sat up and began pressing kisses against my neck, and I let out a sigh as he kissed right below my ear. He hummed against my neck, making a shiver run up my spine.

His hands slid further up my back, stopping at my bra strap, but before anything else could happen, we heard Pope and Kiara jump back over the wall. We jumped apart, and I quickly settled back into my seat, and JJ reached into the trunk to grab his hat and stuck it back on his head.

"How'd it go?" I asked as the two got back in the car.

"Sarah wasn't in on it, and now she's with us."

"Great."

"Now what?" JJ asked.

"Now, we go to The Wreck, get some rest, and come up with a plan."

"Sounds good to me."