

Chapter Eight



Later that afternoon, Kiara and Pope joined us. Kie was playing on a set of bongo drums, Pope was reading a book, JJ and I were having a rock throwing competition, and John B was staring off into the distance.

"Look, I'm calling it off."

Everyone paused and turned to look at my brother.

"Peterkin said if we stay out of the marsh, she'll help Jo and I with DSC."

JJ scooped from next to me.

"And you believed her?"

"Yeah, JJ. We believe her," I said, crossing my arms over my chest.

JJ turned his incredulous gaze to me.

"An actual cop, Jo. You believed a cop."

The blond threw the rock he was holding as hard as he could, easily passing the last one I threw.

"All we gotta do is stay out of the marsh for a couple days, and she'll help us out. It doesn't help that your ass was the one shooting a gun."

I sighed.

Here we go.

"You know what I should have done? Just let Topper drown your ass."

"Yeah, Topper was gonna drown me," John B scooped.

"Sure looked like it. Then, he was gonna drown Jo, too."

"Funny."

"Bro, have you looked at Josephine lately? Or in the mirror for that matter?"

"Guys, stop," I tried to interfere, but the testosterone battle had already begun.

"Tell me some more. Come on."

JJ marched up to my brother and voiced his frustration.

"They always win, don't they, man. Kooks versus Pogues. They always, always win! Goddamn!"

"JJ, calm down, it's okay," I said, placing a hand on his shoulder as he turned away from my brother.

He turned to me with a fire burning in his blue eyes. He grabbed my wrist, pulling my hand off his shoulder but kept it in his grasp.

"No, it's not okay! It is not! They don't want us to go down to the marsh. That means there's something valuable down there, and you know it, man. I know you do."

JJ used his free hand to point at my brother.

"And I understand why you don't wanna go," JJ continued, motioning to Pope. "You're the golden boy. You got way too much to risk."

"And you," he turned to Kiara. "I mean, you're already rich as fuck anyway. Why would you bother?"

He looked down at me, and I found myself avoiding his intense gaze.

"But us, we got nothin' to lose! We really don't, all right?"

"JJ," John B tried to interrupt, but JJ just kept going.

"And I know it didn't use to be that way for you two."

"I don't want to talk about this."

John B's words made JJ finally stop for a moment.

"I don't want to talk about it."

JJ dropped my wrist.

"So that's it?"

"Just get out of my way, bro," John B yelled, shoving JJ out of his way when the blond didn't move.

"John B, listen to me. I have a plan."

Kiara and I shared a worried look, and I walked up to my brother and JJ.

"You got the key to Cameron's big boat, right?"

"No," John B lied.

"There's scuba gear inside there."

"How do you even know that?" I asked but get ignored.

"We borrow that, and then we go down to the wreck this afternoon, and that is what's gonna save you and Jo, man. You don't see rich kids going into foster care, do you?"

I knew from JJ's last statement that John B was going to agree. Neither of us want to go into foster care, especially since there is like a ninety-nine percent chance that we won't even be together.

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