

## The Joy of Revenge by Sheila Chapter 12

### CHAPTER 12 Joy's Story: A Tragedy

Cristos

The start of the next school year was near and for Joy's twenty-first birthday, we decided to go to Sebastian's lakehouse at Lake Tahoe.

After finding Sebastian drowning his sorrows at De Luca's club, all three of us now knew we were in love with the same woman. While Sebastian was pessimistic, Xavier and I, on the other hand, were optimistic we would find some sort of compromise. As Xavier put it, "maybe loving the same woman will make the bond permanent.

First, we agreed to confess our feelings. It will allow Joy to choose. Second, we agreed to accept whatever she decides. If she will choose one of us, reject all of us, or hopefully choose all of us, we will abide by her decision. It was risky, but all is fair in love and war.

Luckily, Joy's parents trusted us enough to allow her to travel and stay with us without a chaperone. To put their mind at ease, I told them my sister would be coming with us. Actually, Cassandra would be staying over her friend's place which was near Sebastian's lakehouse, so it wasn't entirely a lie. I really hated lying to the Taylors. After what they've been through.

Sebastian's family's lakehouse is a two-storey, six bedroom mansion made of wood and glass fronting the lake with its own dock. It was hardly ever used, but since the house was built by Sebastian's grandfather, the Domenico's could never sell it.

When we arrived, Joy was amazed. She was like a little girl, running through the wide living room, running her hands over the the granite countertops, jumping on top of her bed.

While Xavier started a fire outside in one of the fireplaces at the expansive outdoor terrace of the mansion, Sebastian raided the winery and I stocked the kitchen with the groceries we purchased on our way here.

"What can I do?" Joy asked, plopping herself on top of a stool and watching me. I was preparing the ingredients for smores and had already popped in a couple of frozen pizzas in the oven. Mama Rose had made us some pizza sauce which I only needed to reheat.

"You're the birthday girl," I said. "You do nothing."

"I can make a salad," Joy offered.

"Actually, Mama Rose prepared everything, so all you need to do is sit." She sighed, watching

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the sky turn to dusk.

"It's so beautiful here. I used to live in a house surrounded by nature. I miss it," she murmured. It was the first time she ever mentioned her previous residence.

"Yeah? Where's that?" I asked coyly.

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silly. New Salem, North Dakota," she answered. "I've told you that, right?" ever mentioning it," I said. "Did you live there long?"

in high school, right before I was-" She stopped abruptly, hearing Ter and Sebastian sing. They both appeared from outside; Sebastian was holding a cake while Xavier had a couple of bottles of champagne.

"Happy Birthday to you. Happy Birthday to you. Happy Birthday dear Joy. Happy Birthday to you.

She blew out the candles and clapped happily like a young girl. She unexpectedly stood up and kissed us each on the cheek. If she ever rejects us later, I vowed to never wash my cheek again.

We all had dinner at the terrace. It was a magnificent starlit night. After dinner, the party began.

"No more fake ID's for me!" Joy exclaimed as we raised our glasses to her name.

"To Joy!" We downed our glasses of Jagermeister, already tipsy from the bottles of wine and champagne.

"You know guys, I never thought I'd have friends like you. I actually thought I'd never be happy again. Toy said, beginning to be talkative. She was like that when she was tipsy. Some men would think it annoying, but we found it adorable.

"Why do you say that, Joy?" Sebastian asked. I glanced at him. He was manipulating her to talk.

"You know why. Sebastian," Joy mumbled. "Remember the first day you guys saw me... scars on my face, a limp in my step. These boys I was in high school with... they tied me up on the boy's vertical bench press, tore this beautiful white gown I made myself, raped me then beat me to a pulp. After that, they went back to the spring formal like nothing ever happened and left me in the boy's gym room to die. It was all a big mess." Joy took another shot while the

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three of us stared at her, shocked to hear her talk about her assault. After two years, none of us knew she had been sexually assaulted.

I walked to where she sat and hugged her. She patted my arms like I was the one who needed comforting. Xavier, I noticed, was furious. Sebastian, for the

first time, I was speechless. I was mad mainly at myself for not finding anything about her and giving up. I should have done more digging.

“Honey, sssshhhh. Everything is okay,” I said, rocking her in my arms.

“No. You deserve to know. You told me the truth about yourselves, so I should tell you my story,” she said. “Right, Sebastian?”

I looked at him from above Joy’s head and shook my head. But he nodded his head instead, agreeing with Joy. I wanted to punch him in the face.

It was her birthday and this was supposed to be a happy occasion. I moved a chair to sit next to her just in case she needed my strength to help her.

I actually wanted to run to the lake and scream, but Joy needed me and by her side I’ll be.

“Alright then,” Joy took another shot, rubbed her hands together and began to tell her story. She sounded like she was telling us a horrifying ghost story.

“It was the most anticipated event of junior high... The Spring Formal. Months before it, I designed and made this white backless dress. I wanted Noah, my bestfriend, to be my date, but his friend Liam asked me first. What’s funny was, I agreed to be Liam’s date minutes before Noah asked me.”

“At the night of the spring formal, I was alone at the auditorium, waiting for Liam to get back from the washroom, when my friend Lisa and Liam’s ex-girlfriend, Nicole, told me Noah was waiting for me at the boy’s gym.” Joy placed her hands on her chest and we instantly knew, once upon a time, this Noah was special to her. “I thought finally... finally... he was going to confess he had feelings for me, because ever since our freshman year, I developed feelings for him. I didn’t want Liam or any other boy. I just wanted Noah. Since Liam had been away for so long, I thought he wouldn’t mind if I snuck out for a bit to talk to Noah.”

“When I got to the boy’s gym, the door was open. I was expecting to see Noah standing in the middle of the gym, you know, with some flowers in his hand, kneeling down, so handsome in his tuxedo.” She laughed at herself “I had a very vivid imagination back then.” She suddenly shook her head and closed her eyes. She was quietly beating herself up for being so naive. I took her hand in mine and held it tightly. She gazed at me with unsure

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eyes, inhaling deeply, mustering enough courage to continue. The tragedy was coming.

There was a single light on, but no Noah. I even called out to him, but there was no answer. Thinking it was another of Nicole’s pranks, I turned around to leave, but the doors suddenly closed. There stood Liam and his three bestfriends, Cris, Jack and Dan, who were waiting for me with these evil grins on their faces.”

Her face suddenly changed from confident to frightened. Her hand was shaking and a cold sweat appeared above her brow.

"I tried to run away, I did, but I tripped on my dress and fell. They picked me up from the floor and threw me against the vertical bench press. While Liam and Cris held me down, Dan tied my wrists and ankles down. Then, he ripped my dress apart, ripped my underwear and shoved it in my mouth."

"Cris was first. He couldn't get it up for whatever reason, so he started punching me. Every time his fist connected, he became hard. He did a nal first, thrusting so hard while beating my face. Then, when he was about to come, he stuck his penis into my vagina, pumping until he came while he grabbed my head with his two hands, hitting my head against the bench press.

"After Cris, Liam raped me then Jack. Liam smashed my face with a barbell when he came, screaming "Death to all Taylors" while Jack strangled me so hard, I almost died."

"Dan, instead of using his di ck, used the end of a mop instead and inserted it all the way in. After that, he took a baseball bat, broke my arm my leg, and some of my ribs.

"When he was done with the bat, Dan told the others to fix up so they could go back to the spring formal before everyone noticed they were gone. He said to leave me there. The janitor will surely find me dead in the morning. I remember the sounds of their laughter before they left the gym. Whatever they did to me, they clearly enjoyed it."

"And no, the janitor didn't find me. A girl did. I couldn't see who she was because both of my eyes were closed shut from the beatings and sadly, I didn't recognize her voice. She said she would call Noah to take me home."

"Once I heard my parents' voices, I tried to tell them who hurt me, but my jaw was broken, so I wasn't sure if they heard me. I passed out on our way to the hospital. When I woke up, was lying in a hospital bed being treated for my injuries.

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"I expected to hear Liam and his posse were already behind bars, but I overheard the Sheriff telling my father that they found the boy's gym clean... that no one was talking. I also

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overheard him say evidence had gone missing, including my gown. With no evidence and no eye witnesses, the Sheriff told my dad if we decided to file charges, it would be a case of "he id, she said." We would definitely lose and I would be labeled as the town's w h ore. All the sin our school were already gossiping about the dress I wore, saying it left nothing to the magination."

“After I was discharged from the hospital, my dad would go to the local pub and drown his sorrows in alcohol. One night, instead of my dad coming to the pub, Old Man Eugene brought a bottle of his finest bourbon to our house and told him nothing was going to happen if my father kept drinking.

“The next day, my dad said it was time to move on. We would sell everything even the grocery store that has been in his family for three generations and fix my face. I told him we shouldn’t, but he said nothing is as important to him than me. He said it was a small sacrifice for my future. And he was right. If it weren’t for his decision, I wouldn’t have met you guys and I wouldn’t be this happy.”

“I really love you three. You guys mean the world to me.”

Chapter Comments

Luna-Mom

yay it’s finally out there that the trio love her WWI