

Chapter 271

Ashley's pov

I opened the door slowly, anxiety crawling in my stomach. The house is oddly quiet which was weird. There should be shouts of anger from dad towards Arden. Telling him that what he had done was wrong and uncalled for. But there isn't. It's just silent.

I shut the door with a soft thud and readjusted the bag strap. Ryan had just dropped me off a few seconds ago. But someone was missing and that was Arden. It led me to believe that he hadn't gotten off the hook this time and he was probably at home.

I looked around the entire school for him with the help of Blake and a worried Rosalie. But we hadn't seen him or could get in touch since he wasn't picking up his phone. Liam hadn't been at school today because of suffering a broken ankle last night so there was no way he'd know where Arden was.

In Rosalie words 'the doofus tried to skate but ended up falling down on his ankle'. I promise to visit him when I got the chance. After all he's like a little brother and it would be nice to see Roro again and uncle Luke who forbade me to call him Lukey.

How am I supposed to ask dad to let me train with Blake? I told Blake earlier that I would ask my dad permission, I was still grounded after all. But hoped to at least make him agree. Though with the situation with Arden I doubted he would let me. Dad was too protective.

As I walk closer to the kitchen I could hear the faint sound of metal hitting metal. It's a very unpleasant sound and as I near the door way I could see mom frantically scraping a pan off of macaroni and cheese. Her hair is knotted as it falls over her shoulders.

She looked dazed and worried as she harshly scraped the pan. It was like she hadn't notice my presence. I chew on my lower lip and walk into the kitchen until I was opposite to her, a few feet away, only separated by the kitchen counter.

"Mom." I say softly watching her tuck a tendril behind her ear and go back to scraping. Her green eyes identical to mine is focused at her task which was form what I could tell make that pan spotless as possible.

"Mom." I say more loudly since she hadn't heard me the first time. She stops and her head slowly comes up. Her green eyes dotted with concern as she stares at me. She looked troubled.

"Oh honey, I didn't hear when you came in." She forces out a laugh but I could see the deep worry etched on her face.

"Clearly." I smiled. "Is Arden home?" I question. And that's when I understand why she was so worried because the next thing I know her eyes are filled with tears.

I drop the bag on the counter and run over to her side. "What's wrong mom?" I ask as I pulled her into my chest and hugged her. It's ironic since it's supposed to be the other way around.

"The principle called me today. Arden got into another fight." She snuffle and break from our embrace. She sighs and steps over to the sink to continue to scrub. "He got expelled." She says so lowly that I thought I heard something else.

When it finally sinks in I feel my face turn white as a ghost. I'm at lost for words, not expecting that kind of news. Sure Arden got suspended multiple times but I guess this one did it.

"So where's Arden?" I asked and looked around.

"He's in his room. The principle suggested that I should come pick him up, so I did." She sniffles again and stopped scraping the pan. She clutched the edge of the counter in a tight grip and sucked in some air.

She then turn to me. "Am I a bad mom? Did I fail him somehow? I-" Her voice cracks at the end.

I'm shocked beyond belief at her words. A bad mom? Fail him? I shook my head and rest my palm on top of her hand. "You're not a bad mom, never will be. You're the best mom anyone could ask for. You may not think it now but Arden looks up to you and dad, he loves you with everything inside of him. You've never failed him and will never." It was like I was pleading for her to understand.

Her eyes drop to my hand over hers and I could feel the tension leave her body. "You'll let me know if you have any trouble at school right? You'll let me know if something's wrong?"

Her questioned stunned me to a point that I couldn't properly think. I feel extremely guilty and it's eating me alive. Here she thought she was a bad mom because Arden and I never seek her or dad's guidance. In stead we gobble down our emotions and our secrets until it's to much to bare.

But that doesn't make mom and dad bad parents, they are the best. It's us who chose to keep things away from them because in our own way it's how we protect them. Protect them from knowing the truth.

So instead of telling mom everything I had gobbled down, I settle for a lie. "I'll always tell you if something's wrong mom."

She looks pleased and relieved at my response. Which makes me all the more swim with guilt. Might as well drink an entire bottle of lies. I'm sure I'd taste bitter."Does dad know about Arden?" I question, wanting to redirect the conversation.

She nods and smiles sadly. "He's really worried and mad. Not at Arden but the situation. He should be home any minute no-"

She didn't even get to finish the sentence before we hear the door being burst open. It hits the wall with an ear splitting thud before it's slammed shut. "Arden!" Dad's loud voice yells. "Get your ass down here!" He shout.

His voice is followed by the slam of a door upstairs. Knowing it's Arden, both mom and I wince. We walked in the living room area to see dad removing his tie. A grumbling Arden is stomping down the stairs and doesn't look the least bit pleased at being yelled at.

"What do I owe this pleasure of being summoned?" He questions and plumps down on the sofa. He kicks his leg up on the coffee table like he doesn't have a care in this world.

Dad's face is pinched in irritation and mom looks confused as to what to do. I'm glad I'm not a parent. Dad strides over to him and pushes his leg off the table and sits down on the same spot. He folds his arms across his chest and glares at Arden.

"Mind telling me why my son is expelled from school?" His tone has now turned down a notch. I could see the concern on his face as he regarded his son that was the replica of him.

Arden shrugs nonchalantly and pushes himself further into the sofa. "Don't act like principle William didn't give you all the itsy bitsy details." He rolls his eyes.

"He did and I'm not pleased. Arden you've been expelled and you're acting like you're okay with it." Dad states.

"I am okay with it. Dad stop worrying about me I can take care of myself-"

"This isn't your job!" Dad roars cutting off Arden. Mom and I jolt in shock not expecting his rage. Even Arden seems surprised. Dad sighs. "It's not your job Arden to take of yourself. This is mine and your mom's."

He looks at Arden for a second before nodding."I'll go have a word with your principle first thing tomorrow morning to see if he could change his decision."

"But don't you have an important meeting tomorrow morning?" Arden questions confused.

"Nothings more important than you and Ashley Arden. Y'all always come first. " He says honestly. "Let's just hope I'll be able to persuade him." He sighs.