



Chapter 7

Waffles. I smell delicious fluffy waffles and can hear sizzling. It must be Amber, because neither me nor Luca can cook to save our fucking lives. As I walk around the corner I was right, Amber is flipping Bacon and Luca has his arms wrapped around her and his face buried in her neck.

Awww, they look cute. Not even Ja- nope.

"Morning." I say trying to not show how nervous I am.

Luca lets go of Amber and they both throw back a good morning as he makes his coffee and she tends to the bacon.

"So, you ready for school, Lee-Lee?" Luca asks. God that nickname still makes me cringe.

"Nope. Not even close, by hey I managed to get out of bed, so thats a win." I say while grabbing a waffle off of the big plate in front of me.

He gives me the whole you will be fine, behave, and call if you need me pitch that my mom used to give. I agree and eat breakfast, even though I want to throw up. Then, they both wish me good luck, I grab my keys, phone, and backpack and leave.

When I get in the car, I plug my phone into the aux and start my "Car" playlist.

When I first started seeing Francesca, she had me pick and album that I could sing anytime I need. It was supposed to help me get my feelings out since I didn't really like talking



about them. She said it could be about my mom or not, it was up to me.

My album that I chose was Sour by Olivia Rodrigo. It fits perfect because of my horrible, toxic, trash of an ex boyfriend. I really didn't want one that reminded me of my mom, so I chose one that reminded me why I needed to hate him.

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At School

I can feel the waffles coming up. I have got to pull it together. So, I do my breathes, turn off my car, get my stuff, and get out. I am here a little bit early, but then again so is everyone else because it is the first day. I can feel people looking at me and I hear them whispering, but I just keep walking until I reach the admin building where I can get my schedule and a few books I needed for my classes. Everyone picked theirs up last week, but I couldn't because I was scared. So I am picking it up today.

I walk into the office and gave the secretary lady my name and student ID number. She then prints and hands me my schedule and two books. I put the books in my bag, and I start to look at my schedule as I walk out the door. Then, as I turn the corner, I bump into someone... again.

"Shit. I am so sor-"

"Lee Rex?" The person I bumped into asks. I look up because only two people ever called me that. And I see him.

"Blakey Bear?" I ask as I look at one of my childhood best friends. He looks the same, just a little bit older, DEFINITELY

more muscular, and super tall. But, I could tell it was him.

"Oh my God!" he says as he pulls me into a hug, lifts me off the ground and twirls me.

"You are back. I missed you so much," he still hasn't let go and I don't want him to. He was always a constant in my life till I moved away and I really could use someone I could depend on. Then, I hear a squeal.

"LEE REX!" Another voice yells. This time, its a girl and I am praying it is who I think it is. Blake finally lets me go and I look to my left and see, Kasey.

"KOALA KASEY!" I run and hug her as we rock back and forth and hug the life out of each other.

"I missed you both so much!" I say to them as I let Kasey go.

"We missed you too. Why didn't you tell us you were coming back?" Kasey asks a little hurt. Damn, now I feel like shit. I didn't know if they still lived here, and honestly I didn't think about it. That sounds horrible.

"I'm sorry. I didn't tell anyone. I just got back a week ago."

Blake says, "Well, now you are back and we are together again. Thats all that matters."

"Yup, the zoo is back is business. Who is our first target?" We all laugh our asses off.

I continue, "Kidding. We are well behaved teenagers now." We all laugh again because we know we are any thing but well behaved, if anything we're worse.

I should probably explain the zoo thing. When we were younger we were kind of trouble makers and we all have an animal attached to our name as nicknames for each other. I'm Lee Rex, Kasey is Koala Kasey, and Blake is Blakey Bear. So everyone called us the zoo. I know, weird, but it worked.

"Sooooo, do you want to talk about everything at lunch?" Kasey asks hesitantly with he eyes filled with hope. I know they are both dying to know. I am not comfortable with telling them, but I want them to know everything... almost everything. Plus, Francesa said it is important to talk about what happened with people I trust.

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