

Read Untouchable (Unstoppable 1) by Danielle Hill

Chapter 7

Seven

Riley

"This is the worst idea, Liss."

"Oh, quit bitching." She gave my hand a tug. I shook my head, refusing to budge. Another tug.

"Fine. But he's still pissed as hell with me." Striding past her, I pushed through the tree line, heading for the now dead cornfield that served as the stomping ground for pretty much every teen in Claremont.

"So? Does that mean you have to sacrifice your social life? And still?" She paused, hands on her hips. "God, that guy! I mean, you ended things two weeks ago, and it's not like you were a married couple. You jerked him off behind a dumpster while he fondled your boob once a month. Get the fuck over it, dude. Move on with your life!"

I pulled up short, affronted. "Hey! That's... that's..." pretty accurate but come on. "Not exactly true."

"Yeah, yeah. Move your ass. It's your birthday weekend, and I'm done with your pity party. So quit sulking, start walking."

She criss-crossed her fingers in front of my face in the universal sign of walking. I resisted the urge to bite them.

"Whatever. But when it all goes to shit, don't say I didn't warn you. The guy has either outright ignored me or thrown sly digs at me for the past week. Ever since this mysterious fight that nobody can explain to me." Seriously, no one. Not Mack, Danny, or Jase. And I'd asked.

Rolling her eyes, she grabbed my hand and pulled me behind her, slim arm straining with the effort and my petulant resistance. Trailing her with lackluster steps, I deliberately dug the unfamiliar heels she'd forced on me into the mud. I wouldn't make this easy for her. Who even wore heels to a muddy field? People who would turn seventeen in two days... was the gist of how that conversation went down.

The bonfire came into view despite my attempt to walk slowly enough to go backward. And with it, Reno and Leon.

Urgh... and Raya, who glowered as we approached.

"Raya looks happy to see us, as always," Lis quipped.

I fought the urge to tuck tail and run.

Please God, don't let them be fighting over Raya Mitchell. They'd sorta patched things up, but there was still this weird tension between them. Like if I caught Le looking at Reno while he wasn't watching, he'd be glaring daggers at his face. But, like I said, if anyone knew what caused the rift, they weren't talking.

His eyes made a slow track over my body as he moved around me, leering in a way that wasn't like him. "Couldn't get you to."

I opened my mouth to speak, but a hard voice beat me to it.

"Le."

My eyes shifted to Reno. The subtle warning in his voice infuriated me more than Leon's insults. "And you." I jabbed a finger in his direction. "Stay out of it." His soft chuckle sent a shroud of red mist over me. "I mean it. Let him get it all out, then we can move the hell on."

Leon scoffed. "Move on? You really fucking think a lot of yourself!"

I turned back to him with a sigh. "Fine, you're good or over it, whatever. Can you stop being a dick now, go back to being friends?"

He took two steps toward me, stumbling a little, his eyes bloodshot and narrowed. "Yeah, we ain't fucking friends, Riley. I'll do and say whatever the fuck I want." His face twisted in confusion, before splitting with laughter.

I glanced sideways to Liss with a wtf look. She shrugged, raising her brows.

"Fucking friends! Fucking friends. Get it?" Leon's laughter subsided and all traces of humor vanished from his face as he pinned me with a bitter glare. "Well, that's a fucking joke, isn't it? You wouldn't fuck me if I paid you, would you, friend?"

Liss stepped in front of me. "Seriously, dude? You need to back the fuck off."

Wrapping my fingers around her forearm, I gently tugged. "Liss, leave it, it's fine—"

A deeper voice drifted over my head. "Yeah... it ain't fine."

I dropped my head, shoulders drooping. Shit. This was turning into a shit-show of epic proportions. The fabric of Reno's shirt brushed my arm as he moved past me, stopping in front of a barely standing Leon.

"Reno, I told you, don't get involved." He ignored me. Like I knew he would. Damn. "He's just drunk. He's talking out of his ass."

"He is an ass," Liss interjected, and I threw her a look that said seriously, wanna help me out here? She just raised her brows.

"Walk it off, Le. I'm not asking."

Leon rose as high as he could on legs that could barely hold his weight and snarled up at Reno. What the...? They didn't do this. Leon was a good little sidekick; he didn't rise up.

"Uh, Le," I started.

"You want to go there again, man?"

I almost gasped when Leon shoved his chest into Reno's. Reno rocked back on his heels, his jaw clenching.

"What? You wanna throw down again, Ren?"

"Christ! Leon, stop," I said, my eyes bouncing between them.

Reno's eyes darkened, his stance widening as he stared Leon down. This was crazy. "Throw down? I put you on your ass like a bitch. Walk. Away," he warned, voice eerily calm. "Now."

Leon held his nerve a while longer, before fixing his eyes on me. Every bit of frustration and rage he couldn't take out on Reno, he aimed directly at me instead. "You fucking happy? This what you wanted?"

"Are you whacked? What the hell are you talking about?" I asked, stunned. I'd never want this; we'd been a dysfunctional little group for as long as I'd lived here, all of us in the same trailer park. The last thing I wanted was any friction or rifts.

"Shut the fuck up, Leon!" Reno's voice rose. That wasn't the norm. He didn't have to raise his voice usually.

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Pushing past Reno, Leon took a stride toward me. "Congratulations. He wants to fuck you, too—"

And then he hit the deck like a sack of potatoes—courtesy of Reno's fist.

My shocked gaze jolted to Reno's, who scowled first at me then down at the best friend he'd just laid out in the mud. "Someone get him home."

Liss put an arm around my shoulder, and I glanced around, eyes wide with disbelief. Reno walked back to the fire and threw back a mouthful of whatever cheap booze was on offer. Raya stood with her eyes fixed on my face, white-hot fury dancing in them.

Just add it to the list, bitch.

I blew her a kiss before flipping her off and making my way to the alcohol with the grace of a baby giraffe and giving the minimum amount of fucks about that. I needed a longer hemline, less heels, and a boatload of cheap beer. Fucking now!

Before I could get my hands on the beer, though, I found myself inconveniently forced to detour and snatch a handful of Liss' shirt to halt her beeline for Raya.

"Leave it," I warned, flashing her a stern look.

"What? I was just gonna explain that she needs to keep her dirty, probably STD ridden eyes off my girl."

"And I love you for it. But let's just leave it for now. I've had all the drama I can take for one night." She huffed like I'd spoiled her fun, bloodthirsty little animal. "Liss."

"Fine. I need a drink."

Puffing my cheeks in a relieved sigh, I motioned to the drinks with an exaggerated flourish and waited for her to shift her ass.

I tried to sip my drink and act like nothing had happened, I really did, but the more I sipped, the more I thought about it. And the less sense it made.

Reno wanted me to think he wanted to fuck me. He did it to fuck with me. It was a control thing. I knew it; he knew it. He knew I knew it. I knew, he knew, I knew, he knew—wait, I couldn't figure out how far I'd gone with this. Screw it. Basically, we both knew he didn't want to go there. Didn't we? I mean, he revelled in assuming he could get me to drop my panties in a heartbeat, but we didn't even like each other. Sort of.

Maybe. God! I didn't know what to think anymore. But then why did Leon say he did? Aaaaaand, now I was reading way too much into things. And Liss was staring at me as if I was an ignorant asshole.

"Yes!" I blurted.

She scoffed. "Weren't fricking listening, were you?"

I scrunched my nose. "Was the answer no, then?"

"Oh, stuff it!"

I snorted. "You stuff it."

We both grinned. "Okay." I stood, giving an exaggerated yawn as I stretched my arms above my head. "I'm done."

"No way, pussy! You're seventeen tomorrow! You can't leave yet."

"Tomorrow?"

"It's after midnight." She shrugged... always with the shrug.

She didn't have a care in the world. She lived in a house with an actual roof. It wasn't a McMansion or anything, but her mom had a bed that didn't fold into a couch, and they had a kitchen big enough that the word didn't require an ette on the end. And I knew for a fact her mom didn't engage her, willingly or otherwise, in late night chats about her latest sexual conquest.

Dropping onto my ass, I looked around. "Party's over. Everyone's leaving."

I couldn't see Reno. In fact, I hadn't seen him for the last three hours. If I didn't know better, I'd say he was avoiding me. But he'd have to give a shit to bother.

"Arrrgghh!" I growled, falling onto my back. Seriously pissed that my thoughts had gone back there again.

Liss plonked herself down beside me. "What?"

"Nothing."

"Cool." She was a goddamn master.

I lifted onto my elbows to scowl at her. "If you dare say Leon, I swear I'll maim you."

She closed her eyes and swayed her head in a weird clumsy motion. “Nuh-uh-uuuh. Rhymes with,” she stopped, her eyes opening and her brows drawing down a little, “...meno.”

I frowned. “You’re loaded, and you need to switch to water. Better yet,” I hopped up, rubbing my hands together to shake off the dirt, “stop drinking. Up. Everyone’s heading out.”

“We’re still here,” she murmured, lowering her lids again.

“Fine... everyone but us is leaving.”

“Don’t care.”

Really with this? I parked my hands on my hips and tapped my foot. Seemed a parent-y thing to do, I wouldn’t know, my perma-fifteen-year-old would-be caregiver wasn’t big on discipline. I supposed I had to be grateful for that. “Get up!”

“Nope.”

“Liss!” I moaned, drawing out her name on a pitiful whine and reaching down to grab her arm. A few groups of stragglers giggled and shouted about fifty yards away, but other than that we were alone. “Come the fuck on, bee-yatch!”

Rustling behind me had me spinning round. “Shit! You scared the crap out of me, Mack!”

He grinned, hands up. Huge, black, and super easy on the eyes. Mackenzie Briggs, a senior like us, and a big softie. He was one of the certified good guys. No question his momma raised him right. Along with Jason Connolly and Daniel Greene, he was one of Ren and Le’s closest friends. “She staying?” He dipped his head with a grin.

I pursed my lips. “Looks like. Hey, can you sit with her a sec? I need to pee.”

He hit the deck. “Sure, I got her.”

“Bushes, bushes, everywhere,” I hummed while I skipped into the thick, avoiding the pathway through the trees that led to a clearing up ahead. Which was where Mack had come from, and probably meant Reno was there. But I didn’t need to think about that right now. I was just the right side of tipsy, the best frame of mind to be in. Nicely buzzed. Not quite coherent enough to think about the shit you couldn’t control but still with it enough to enjoy the mental break. Squatting beside a bush, I quickly peed and righted myself before turning and stumbling around for a bit, quickly realizing I had no idea which way was out. Great.

A hand came

from behind and covered my mouth, smothering my scream.