

Chapter 7

Jayde Rosario's mind went completely blank.

This was the scene she had dreamed of countless times, but now it was happening, real and overwhelming. A rough hand moved over her chest, sending a jolt through her body that made her pull back, struggling against him.

"Brendan..."

Her struggle only seemed to make him more forceful.

"Chloie, be good..." Brendan's passion-filled murmur exploded next to her ear like a clap of thunder.

In a daze, she felt herself being lifted. The man carried her into the bedroom and pushed her onto the bed.

It was only then, as she landed on the soft mattress, that she truly woke up from the intoxicating kiss.

"Brendan Maynard, look closely! I'm Jayde Rosario! I am not Chloie Ellis!"

Jayde's voice trembled with a pain that was sharp and heartbreaking.

Brendan stopped. His eyes, clouded with drunkenness, glanced at her. Then he simply pulled her into his arms and held her, doing nothing else.

Jayde tried to get up, but Brendan's hoarse voice whispered in her ear.

"Don't go."

Her body went stiff. Her hands clenched into fists at her sides. Was he asking her to stay? Or did he still think she was Chloie Ellis?

Deep, even breathing sounds came from beside her. Brendan had closed his eyes and fallen asleep.

A sudden, suffocating feeling of powerlessness washed over her. She tried to break free from his arms, but his grip was too strong. She couldn't escape.

Her head felt heavy, and the lingering smell of alcohol on his breath

made her even dizzier. An overwhelming fatigue washed over her, and she fell into a dazed sleep.

The next morning, the first thing Jayde saw when she opened her eyes was Brendan. He was standing by the bed, looking down at her with an unreadable expression.

"Jayde Rosario, why are you in my bed?"

The events of last night flooded her mind, and her face flushed with heat. She instinctively opened her mouth to speak, but Brendan cut her off.

"If this happens again, you'll move to the school dorms. And you will never enter my room again!"

The man's reprimand was mixed with disappointment and disgust. It made Jayde swallow any explanation she might have had.

"I'm sorry," she said quietly. "It won't happen again."

She knew that even if she told him the truth, he wouldn't believe her. In his eyes, she was just his stepsister who had inappropriate feelings for him.

It didn't matter. Only five days left. In five days, she would be in California. From now on, she wouldn't just avoid his room; she would disappear from his world forever.

Jayde got out of bed, pulling her messy clothes together, and walked out of the room.

Just as she stepped into the hallway, she ran into Chloe Ellis coming up the stairs.

"Jayde, why are you coming out of your brother's room so early in the morning?!" Chloe's voice was sharp with shock.

Jayde's face turned pale. She was flustered and didn't know what to say. She avoided Chloe's gaze and fled back to her own room.

But as soon as she entered, Chloe followed her in, slamming the door shut behind her.

"You were in your brother's room all night. What did you do?" Chloe stared at her, her eyes filled with a dark, scrutinizing light.

"We're both women. I've always known how you feel about your brother.

I thought you knew your place, but I never expected you to be so shameless. You took advantage of him when he was drunk and climbed into his bed!"

Chloie's words were filled with blatant disgust.

Jayde lowered her head. She knew any explanation would be useless. "Last night, he and I didn't..."

Before she could finish, Chloie interrupted her sharply. "He and I had a fight yesterday, and that gave you an opportunity. But we are getting married soon. If you pull another disgusting stunt like this, I will make sure you leave the Maynard family forever!"

After her threat, Chloie glared at Jayde one last time, then turned and slammed the door as she left.

Jayde slowly slid down the wall to the floor. She felt as if all her strength had been drained from her body, leaving her weak and helpless.

Brendan's reprimand and Chloie's warning were like an invisible hand, gripping her heart and squeezing tight.

Large tears rolled down her face uncontrollably. The emotions she had suppressed for so long finally shattered.

Jayde covered her mouth with her hands, letting the tears flow silently through her fingers.

