

## Chapter 38 In Trouble

I walk through and explain who I am there to see. The woman guides me into a room, and I sit. Okay, why does this feel like I'm in trouble?

Waiting, I watch the door open, I see Jane walk in and four people follow her. Okay, this is bad. This isn't normal. I don't speak. I watch as they sit and get out pieces of paper.

"Okay, Ruby, there are a few matters we need to discuss. Many are linked, however. We understand that you were in a relationship with Jake Hendrix. Is that correct?"

"Yes. Why?" What does that have to do with things? I listen as she explains there have been complaints I slept with Jake's father and used them for money.

Sitting, I explained that it was a lie.

"My sex life has nothing to do with my course. Alaric isn't part of the university, so I can't be punished for that." Even I know I can't be.

"That is true. However, considering that your actions led to Jake withdrawing from university, it does become our issue."

Wait? Do they think he left because of me? "Jake didn't leave because of what I did. We still talk now."

"Jake has not spoken to us, however, after the video, which I showed you, it appears that the situation was the cause." She means the video of that night Jake found out.

I want to argue, but that would mean saying Jake got in trouble with a private club. I'm not entirely sure what sort of people they are or if it will go down well.

Still I know this alone can't give them a reason to remove me or anything.

"We will speak to Jake. However, this happened in university, so it will be considered. The next issue, Ruby, is that you accused a student of attempting to rape you, hitting you that resulted in this."

She turns the phone, and it's Alaric with Max. Shit.

"I had nothing to do with that. I wasn't even there." That's my excuse. She sighs and looks at me.

"We have no reports on file against Max, none at all. You're aware that these sorts of allegations are meant to be filed, as we have no evidence now of what happened, just a student being threatened and hurt." He wasn't fucking hurt. It was one hit. One!

"What is going to happen to Alaric and Oliver?" I'm more bothered about that right now.

"As far as I'm aware, Max is not taking action. Oliver has been given a warning regarding his involvement." I relax slightly. I don't understand why Max didn't press charges; he clearly told the university about this.

"Those two issues combined have caused a lot of issues. You appear to be a student that everyone is discussing; many parents have rang regarding your actions."

"So I'm getting a warning?"

"A warning would be given for one issue; this is two, but there is a bigger issue, Ruby. One that is serious."

Oh God, what can be worse than Alaric threatening Max with a knife?

"Someone has accused you of selling drugs."

I laugh too loud, and they stare at me. "Sorry." Okay, that was inappropriate, but me and drugs? I clamp my lips closed to stop myself from laughing or smiling.

"Whoever it is was lying. I've never done drugs or even handled them."

"So you won't mind us checking your bags and your personal locker here?" Jane looks at me.

"Go ahead." I lift my bag and place it on the table. I watch the security walk over and check it. I bite against my lip as he removes the pregnancy test. I forgot that was in there.

He steps back, seemingly satisfied that I didn't have drugs on me.

"We will escort you to your personal locker." They stand, and I walk out with them, following. Stopping by the locker, I look through my bag.

"I don't have the key. It's rare I used the locker."

"Convenient Miss Simmons." One of them looks at me.

"It's not convenient. I just said it's rare I use it. I also didn't know I would need the key." Had I known they needed access, I would have brought it.

"That's fine; we have copies." The security guy steps forward and unlocks it. I watch it open, and he searches. Glancing down the hall, I see Max smiling as he walks out the door. He's done it. Why do I feel this is his way of getting payback for what has happened?

"Miss Simmons." Turning I look at them, the security guy holding up a bag.

"That's not mine." Shit. I glance back to where Max was.

"We will need to review and discuss this. You will receive a call to confirm what action will be taken."

"I can't be removed for this, especially not when I know Max reported it. It's clearly a set-up!" I know Max reported it, so how can they just take his word for it?

"I assure you it was not Max who called. We got a call from a parent who confirmed you had sold the drugs to their child."

"So Max's parents called." That's what she is saying. Max got his parents to call.

"Miss Simmons, I suggest you leave. Email us with your side and any evidence that you have, and we will consider it while evaluating things. I suggest you take what is needed, as you won't be allowed back on campus until we have concluded this investigation."

Turning to leave, I stop. "And Max? Will you be investigating him and what he did?"

"You didn't report it." She looks at me.

"No one fucking does! You can throw a knife and hit a woman who he has sexually assaulted, but they won't speak because of who his father is." Of course, no one will talk about Max.

"You can file a report against him if you wish. Now please leave." She stands waiting. Walking out, I try to calm down. Getting in the car, Alaric looks at me.

"Don't, just fucking don't." I should have known Max wouldn't let this go. He's not going for Alaric. He's coming for me.

"What happened?" He looks at me and begins driving. She said someone's parent called. It can't be Max's; his dad works closely with them. So, who else would do this with him? "Ruby?" My head shakes at him, and I try to piece together everything.

Max was smiling like he knew. Considering he does drugs, I can see him putting them in there. Alaric stops the car, and I walk in with him following.

"Ruby." Alaric grips my hand as I get to the stairs.

"You got kicked!" I look up at Bex. "Max has messaged saying you got found with drugs."

"I didn't get kicked yet. I'm pretty sure I will be, though."

"Can you explain, please?" Alaric looks at me, walking through I sit down.

"They started by discussing my behaviour. They explained that what I did with you made Jake withdraw from here, and they showed me the video of it, explaining that it's unacceptable behaviour. I was fine; I knew it didn't mean anything."

"Then how did it get to them searching you?" Bex looks at me.

"Because then they brought up Max. Saying that I accused him and never filed a report. They had the video of what happened after, stating it was down to me and that there was no proof anything happened. Apparently, Max is not taking action against what happened to him, but they are because it's down to me making an accusation."

Alaric stares at me.

"They had the video. Oliver is getting a warning, but to them, because I kept quiet about what happened, I made accusations against Max and caused it. Then they mentioned a put drugs in my locker."

Bex stares at me.

"This is my fault." I look at Alaric, my head shaking. "It is, and I will fix it." My hand stops him.

"No, Alaric, how will that look? My own parents were not willing to talk to them, and instead, my ex's dad, who I fucked showed up. The same guy who threatened a student."

"You can't just let this happen."

"I'm not. I'm going to file a report against Max and send in my own version. Max was there and smiling, he planned it." Even I know he did, everyone will know he did this.

"You know they won't believe you over the golden boy; that's why none of the women files reports against him." Bex laughs, and I nod.

"Who is he?" Alaric looks at her.

"Max's father is friends with the Dean, makes considerable donations, and has done so for a few years." Bex explains. "Four years ago, his older son was there. He was just as bad as Max, but nothing got done. He got warnings, verbal, not recorded so it appeared like he had a perfect record. People know, so no one even wastes time reporting Max and his behaviour."

"His last name, please, Bex?" Alaric looks at her.

"Alaric, leave it." He won't help things.

"I'm leaving it. I just want his name, please." Alaric looks at Bex, and she smiles.

"Richardson." My eyes roll at her. "What? He said please."

"Oh fuck off, he said, please?" I laugh, and she nods.

"It made you laugh, so it was worth it, even if you hate me a little bit." She moves and hugs me. "I'll give you two space; at least you don't have to go in until they decide your punishment." She walks out, and my head falls forward.

I was so sure it wouldn't be anything. It wasn't until the damn drugs.

"Hey, you did nothing wrong. They will see that." Alaric smiles and hugs me. "I'm sorry. I feel like that was the first time anyone has ever confronted Max, and because I did, he's taking it out on you."

"It's not your fault. Something tells me he would have done it anyway because I fought him and refused. Most don't refuse because they know he won't listen." It isn't his fault; he tried helping and sorting things out.

"Okay, well, let's work together to write this letter. Grab your laptop." He smiles at me, and I walk out. I go and grab the laptop before walking back down.

Sitting together, we wrote a report on what happened with Max. I wrote about the first time he tried stopping me from leaving, which brought up more questions from Alaric. I filled out that Bex was able to testify I was with Max when it happened and that Bex, Ivy, and Oliver were able to confirm the marks on my face.

After that, we spent over an hour writing a statement about things. Alaric messaged Jake to tell him to file a report about why he left, leaving out anything that could make him a target. This will at least make them aware he didn't leave over me.

After everything is sent in, I cuddle against him and try to forget about it. Which is not easy. I want to take Max down and get every student to submit reports, but I know nothing will happen.

Each one will get him a verbal warning, and he will just torture everyone who reports him more. So, while I want to ask others to report him, I won't, as they don't deserve his abuse.