

## A Life Beyond Limits

### Chapter 2

After lunch, Jack and Jeffrey took the bus to Crestfield High School.

Jeffrey tightened his grip on the cigarettes and liquor as they arrived at Arthur's office door. Inside, a balding man was sipping tea and humming a tune. That could only be Arthur.

"Hey, darling, don't worry. I'll handle the kid's situation. Once the college entrance exam is over, I'll take you on vacation. I'll talk to you later. Love you!" Arthur's chubby face broke into a lewd grin.

Jeffrey gently knocked on the door, startling Arthur into quickly hiding his phone and adopting a serious expression. "Come in."

As they entered, Arthur's demeanor changed instantly upon seeing Jack. "What are you doing here? Get out!"

Jeffrey hurriedly placed the cigarettes and liquor on the table. "Mr. Bratford, I've brought my son here to apologize. Please—"

Arthur glanced disdainfully at the cheap cigarettes and liquor on the table. "What? Do you think you can bribe a respectable teacher?"

Jeffrey pleaded, "Mr. Bratford, I'm begging you. The college entrance exam is coming up. Expelling him now will ruin everything!"

In response, Arthur slammed the bottle of alcohol to the ground, shattering it into pieces.

"Get out! Your child's future is none of my concern. If you don't leave right now, I'll call security."

Upon seeing the shattered bottle of alcohol and Arthur's menacing expression, Jeffrey's face turned pale. Trembling, he picked up the cigarettes and the remaining liquor from the broken bottle.

As they were about to leave, they saw a young girl standing at the door, looking at Jack with a mixture of shock and sadness.

Her name was Phoebe Bailey, and she was the former class monitor of Jack's class.

She was the epitome of a model student. She was academically excellent, gentle in nature, and strikingly beautiful. She was undoubtedly the school's belle.

Phoebe was well aware of Jack's expulsion, and she had witnessed the earlier scene unfold. A soft sigh escaped her lips as she felt a pang of sympathy for him.

Being expelled right before the college entrance exam was a devastating blow for anyone.

To be honest, she had a slight crush on Jack. Despite his poor grades, he had athletic talent and a charming bad-boy appeal. But he was always willing to lend a hand to others.

Sometimes, when Phoebe felt overwhelmed by her studies, she would go to the basketball court just to watch Jack play and cheer for him every time he scored under the sun.

In addition to his athletic skills, Jack had many other talents and hobbies. He played the guitar exceptionally well and was quite good at billiards.

Most importantly, he was loyal. He had once stood up for a classmate who was being bullied by some local thugs outside the school.

Unfortunately, these qualities were seen as rebellious by the school administration that only cared about maintaining high graduation rates. It was clear that his expulsion was inevitable.

In contrast, Phoebe was destined for greatness. Her outstanding performance would surely lead her to one of the top five colleges in the country.

On the other hand, Jack could only rely on a stroke of luck to get into a decent college.

Maybe he would end up at a vocational school or work on a construction site to contribute to the country's real estate industry. However, the quality of the college he attended wouldn't determine his future.

Phoebe firmly believed that gold would shine no matter where it was found. Yet, she couldn't help but feel a twinge of sadness. At this crossroads in their lives, she and Jack were about to go their separate ways, likely never to meet again.

After Jeffrey and Jack left, Arthur's mood seemed to improve significantly. He waved Phoebe in with a beaming smile. She was undoubtedly his source of pride.

According to the rules of Crestfield High School, if a student managed to enter one of the top five colleges in the country, the homeroom teacher would receive a bonus of up to 50 thousand dollars. Hence, Phoebe was a golden opportunity for Arthur.

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On the way home, Jeffrey furrowed his brows and sighed repeatedly. Jack remained silent, but inside, he was feeling a storm of emotions.

After dinner, Jeffrey encouraged Jack to focus on his studies and told him that he had to participate in the college entrance exam no matter what. Meanwhile, Helena had noticed that Jack's clothes had become noticeably shorter, so she decided to go out to buy him a couple of new outfits.

Once his parents left, Jack seized the opportunity to return to his room and study. The events of the day had given him a tremendous jolt, but what hurt him most was the sight of his father picking up the scattered cigarettes and liquor, which was an image of humility, as well as Arthur's malicious demeanor.

And what pained him most was Phoebe's sympathetic gaze as she had looked at him. Jack admitted that he had fantasies about girls like her, but he understood the gap between them both all too well.

However, things were different now, and he felt empowered to change his fate.

The afternoon passed as Jack immersed himself in his studies. Every difficult problem transformed into something manageable.

The next morning, Jeffrey once again brought cigarettes and liquor as they set out together. Their destination was a private high school called Seaton High School. It was located diagonally across from Crestfield High School.

Compared to the top students at Crestfield High School, Seaton High School was known as a gathering place for underachievers.

Jeffrey and Jack soon arrived at the school's office, where they were greeted by a young teacher.

Jeffrey placed the cigarettes and liquor on the table and exchanged a few words before introducing Jack to Marcus Hampton.

After Jack politely greeted Marcus, the latter quickly opened a pack of the cigarettes that Jeffrey had brought and leisurely lit one.

"So, you're Jack, huh? I'll accept you for your father's sake. But let me be clear. You'd better behave yourself this month. Don't cause me any trouble, or I won't hesitate to kick you out!"

Marcus had already looked over Jack's records. He didn't expect much from him, given his usual low scores. As long as Jack didn't create chaos, that would be enough.

Once Jeffrey left, Marcus led Jack to the classroom for his first official lesson.

Inside, the classroom was chaotic. Some students were playing cards, others were gaming, and a few were napping with their shirts off. A small group had even skipped class.

When Jack entered as a transfer student, it stirred up some commotion among the students, but he paid little attention to it.

The month in Seaton High School was merely a stepping stone toward the college entrance exam. He needed this opportunity to launch himself toward success.

The day passed quickly, and as the bell rang to signal the end of class, Jack packed his bag and headed outside.

The sky was a brilliant blue, reflecting his upbeat mood. After two days of intensive review and self-testing, his grades were steadily improving.

Once, he was someone who couldn't even dream of attending a third-tier college, but now, he felt like he was on the cusp of reaching for a top-tier school.

His confidence soared.

The future was uncertain, but he felt like an underdog, ready to surprise everyone.

Meanwhile, at Crestfield High School across the street, the school bell rang like a refreshing breeze, lifting the fatigue from the students' shoulders.

In contrast to the proud students of Crestfield High School, those from Seaton High School paled in comparison.

Students from Crestfield High School were like shining stars in Perth City. Both their academic achievements and family backgrounds illuminated their futures.

Even the most notable figures in Seaton High School paled in comparison to the ordinary students at Crestfield.

For Jack, the once-glorious school had become just a fleeting chapter in his life.

"Jack!"

A voice suddenly interrupted his thoughts.