

Charlotte and the Seven Frat Brothers |

Chapter 50

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DARREN

Someone is banging on the door like a madman. I look over to the guys, and they share the same confusing look as me. It's three in the morning. Who the hell is this? I put the TV on mute, and we get quiet.

"You're closer, Vinny, go get it," I say.

"Do we have a bat or something?" he asks, standing up.

"Dude, it's seven of us in here." Austin puts down his beer bottle.

"Just let me be the one to die first. I get it," Vincent mutters, heading to the door, the banging still continuing.

"Charles?" He looks through the peephole before opening the door quickly.

We look at Chase, and all the color drains from his face. Ah, shit, what the hell really happened up there? Charles walks in wearing those ridiculous rainbow pajamas and Homer Simpson slippers.

"Charles, why are you walking around like that? Jeez, woman have som—"

"Shut up!" she snaps. I place my hand on my chest, appalled, and some of the guys snicker. Damn, what the hell did I do?

She walks to Chase and slaps him right across the face. Damn, damn, damn.

"Whoa there, firecracker." Vincent pulls her back. "What is going on?"

She looks around the room, and we see her eyes are red and puffy.

"Oh, don't act like you don't know what happened." She paces back and forth in front of the TV silently.

"Charles, let's go talk in my room," Chase speaks up, and she laughs.

What the hell is going on? Nope, I've seen the scary movies, and she definitely is giving off that vibe right now. She is about to kill Chase, or all of us.

“Oh no. We can talk out here. In front of everybody because they all played a part in why you broke up with me.”

The guys and I start to protest because we definitely had no part in that shit.

During our little get-together, Chase was contemplating if he should break up with her, and we told him no. I should have known the asshole would drag us into this mess.

“Fuck’s sake, Chase, what did you do?” Tristan threw a pillow at him. “We said talk to her and clear the air, *not ~break up with her.*”

“Charles, can we talk in the room?” he says again, and we all say no.

“We are all a part of this shit now so you can talk in front of all of us.” Miguel takes a sip of his beer, his hands clenching the bottle.

“It’s none of your business what I say to my fiancé.” He says through gritted teeth.

“You broke up with me, so me being your fiancé is dead.” Looks at him briefly and then around the room. “Austin told me that all of you had a problem with me and wanted nothing to do with me anymore.”

“Come the fuck on!” I look at Austin. “What the fuck?!”

“Charles, it wasn’t like that. Austin probably didn’t deliver the message of our conversation properly. We said we were done with your lies and Nancy Drew shit.

“We are supposed to be a family, but you are picking and choosing what to tell us,” Vincent explains.

“So whatever other bullshit you heard from him—”

“That’s exactly what I fucking told her.” He throws his hands in the air.

“He did and I took it the same way I’m doing now. You guys are done.”

“How are you getting that out of what we are telling you? Unless you plan on keeping up with the lies, Nancy Drew,” Everett leans back against the chair.

“No, I was coming back to come clean about everything. I wanted to start over new.” She looks at Chase, eyes watering.

“But you decided to break up with me because...you’re a dickhead and coward.” She stops pacing. “Every relationship has its ups and downs.”

“Amen.” I clap my hands. Finally, the backbone of Charlotte Withers is starting to blossom. “You tell him, girl.”

“Dude, shut the fuck up.” Austin chucks a pillow in my face.

“You tell me this relationship is toxic, but the only toxic person I see in this room is you. You have anger problems, you have control issues, you keep people at a distance until you are ready to let them in.

“You think you’re this fantastic person and people are just supposed to just listen to what you say and deal with it. You think I’m going to mope about this, ha!

“Chase, you have taught me many lessons, and I thank you, but I won’t be a fool waiting around for you.” She is yelling at this point.

The room gets silent and we all look at Chase. He sits there and just stares at her. What a fool. Charlotte storms out of the apartment.

“My guy, go after her.” Vincent pulls him off the couch. “You are about to lose a good one if you don’t.”

“I’ll screenshot my messages with Juju and send them to you. It should help.” Everett pulls out his phone.

Chase grabs his phone and keys off the coffee table and exits the apartment.

“Alright, how much you guys want to bet they are going to fuck like wild rabbits tonight?” Tristan grabs a slice of pizza.

“Have you no respect?” I look at him. “But I’m betting ten,” I add.

“You two have a special seat in hell just waiting for you.” Austin shakes his head, snatching the remote from me.

CHARLOTTE

“Charlotte,” Chase calls after me and I don’t stop. “Are you going to really act like this?”

I stop.

“Like what?”

“This.” He gestures towards me. “You always run away.”

“You call this running away? Chase, are you insane? For once I am not running away. You did this, Chase.”

He gives me a look as if I lost my mind. "I did this? Charlotte, you lie every chance you get!"

"You are a real fucking ball of sunshine." I start walking. I need to get back to my apartment before I burst with anger. He wants to bring up lying like both haven't done that.

I enter the apartment leaving the door open for Chase. We are going to hash everything out right here, right now. I grab a bottle of water, chugging it down.

My emotions are all over the place and nothing and I mean nothing, but getting everything off my chest will help me calm down.

"Are you happy?"

"Happy?" I scoff. "You think I wanted to go there acting like a crazy person? No, I wanted answers not only from you, but from the guys."

"Answers? Really? So, enlighten me on what answers you got?" He walks into the kitchen.

"That the guys are not assholes like you. You bitched at Austin the entire plane ride because I got into an altercation with Juju and her friends."

"I am glad that Austin took me there because if it was up to you, I would never be able to be in the same vicinity as her. You lied to me that day."

He slams his hand on the countertop. "Are you seriously bringing this up again?"

"Yes, Chase I am! You said it was some chick flick—do you think I am stupid?"

Our eyes connect and we are sharing one common emotion at the moment...anger. I can't back down now. Chase might be taller than me and a bit intimidating. However, I am very passionate and won't stop until I get the truth.

"I told you I didn't sleep with her. I never cheated on you." he takes a step closer and I take one back. We need distance.

"Then why not tell the truth, Chase? Why not just tell me what really happened that night. Huh? Did you think I wouldn't believe you? By not speaking up when it happened, that made me question you." I take a deep breath.

"Nothing happened. I swear. It was all some little twisted joke to get back at Everett. Here, look at the messages she sent E." He sticks his hand out trying to give me the phone. I shake my head no.

“Just look at it,” he says with more bass in his voice.

“I don’t need to see it.” I place one hand on my hip and the other on the countertop.

“So, you want to keep thinking I slept with her?”

“No, I know you didn’t sleep with her. I already saw those messages.”

“What? How?”

“The night before we had brunch with your parents, Miguel stopped by to convince me to cook dinner for you guys. However, we talked instead and ate pizza. You see, Miguel is your left-hand man, but he is my right.”

He looks at me confused. “So, you knew all this time?”

“Yes, and I would rather have heard it from you instead of him. Chase, my feelings are on the line just like yours. You keep things hidden or somewhat tell me the truth and I am a naturally nosy person.

“So, of course, I am going to go behind your back to find the truth. You can’t even be man enough to tell me yourself.”

I don’t want to take jabs at his manliness, but there is no other way to put it. Chase and I are very much alike and then different in so many ways.

“Why didn’t you tell me?”

“Chase...” I have to take another deep breath.

“You should have told me. I didn’t think you deserve to know that I already knew. So, if your next question is why did I go to the campus and fight her...she needed to be taught a lesson.

“One, don’t ever try to turn my guys against one another, and two, my man is off-limits. Anything else?”

“Come here.” He reaches out for me and I take another step back, telling him to stop it. Raven always told me never to let a guy think he got off scot-free after causing such a ruckus.

Because that is exactly what Chase must be thinking right now.

“And another thing. That agreement paper your family wants my dad to sign is outrageous. Limiting and monitoring when he can see Autumn. Are you guys insane? My dad is such a good person, he would never—”

“Charles, I know. Austin told me what happened. I reached out to Jasper and told him everything. Your dad doesn’t need a piece of paper to see his granddaughter. I am sorry about all of this.

“You’re right, I should have told you about Juju and about Lily. I want to keep you away from all the drama, but by doing so I am only hurting us in the process. I finally got you and all I keep doing is pushing you away.

“I don’t like when we fight. I don’t like when we take turns in this blame game.”

“You have to let me in, Chase. We were supposed to get married, and you couldn’t let me in.”

“Not supposed to—we are going to get married.” He pulls out the ring, placing it on the countertop and I pick it up. It is beautiful, just like I remembered it to be.

He isn’t playing fair.

“It doesn’t work that way, Chase. You broke up with me without hearing me out, or hearing anything for that matter.

“The space between us just keeps getting deeper and more lies and secrets will only fill that up until we hate each other. I love you so much, but what you did shows that when times are tough you will walk away.”

“No, I won’t. I am here to stay.” He runs his fingers through his hair. “What are you saying? You don’t want to get back together?”

I clear my throat. “Not right now.”

“So, what, you are going to walk out of my life?” His voice cracks and he looks away.

“Never. I can never walk out of your life. We will always be connected in more ways than one. I just need time to think about this and just think. I will never be too far from you.”

Whew, this actually feels like a breakup that we won’t recover from.

He opens and closes his mouth. I watch as his mouth twists, and he screws up his face. Oh, God, he is about to cry. Oh, no, no, no. I can’t look. I hear a soft sob before he says he needs to go.

“Chase,” I run after him. “Stay the night—well, morning.”

He finally looks me in the face, and I am questioning everything. I know there is still so much he isn't telling me, and I know I should be patient, but I feel like his secrets are only going to hurt us more.

"I want to keep what we have and not destroy it. I can't," he says, reaching for the doorknob.

"Please, I don't want us to leave everything like this."

"Cupcake," he clears his throat. "We are fine. You're fine and I am fine. We're fine," he repeats, but I don't let him go. "Charlotte, let me go."

"No, not like this."

"I am fine," he whispers.

"You're not," I whisper back.

He loosens my grip on him. His teary-eyed face looks down at me. "I am fine."

"You're crying." I bite down on my bottom lip.

He shakes his head no. "Something just flew in my eyes. I just got to go, Charles."

He opens the door and stops. Tristan and Darren are outside the door and look like two deer caught in headlights. Chase doesn't say anything and walks past them.

"Chase." Tristan runs after him.

"Charlotte." Darren looks torn between me and Chase.

"Go after him, he needs you guys more than me at the moment." I wipe my face. "I will be fine, promise."

He pulls me in for a quick hug and a kiss to the forehead before taking off down the hallway. I close the door and drag myself to the bedroom.

A loud boom sound comes from outside my window and it begins to rain. I look at the engagement ring once more.

What am I doing? What am I going to do? I ask myself over and over until I fall asleep. I don't know why, but I feel like this is the end for Chase and me.

Next Chapter

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