

Charlotte and the Seven Frat Brothers |

Chapter 54

“What did I do?” I ask, genuinely confused.

“Not you, Ember.” He glares at her.

“Me? I don’t even know you like that.” She gives him a nasty attitude. This is definitely a three-sixty from the last thirty minutes. What the hell just happened?

“Yes, you. Calling the paparazzi to tail you and my fiancé—what were you thinking?” I step in between them. I don’t want to believe what he is saying to be true. Ember and I had a lovely coffee run.

The paparazzi could have been outside for anyone. Yet, I don’t ever want to challenge him in front of people. As he said before, we need to be united in front of others.

“Is this true?” I look at Ember. Her face says it all. “Why?”

“I had to.” That is all she says and neither Chase nor I was happy with her answer. I honestly can’t believe her, but then again, I can.

She wasn’t the most welcoming when I first arrived, which makes me think she will change within two weeks or so.

Chase tells us to follow him to Jasper’s office and before he can push open the door, I knock. He and Skyla might still be rolling around on the desk.

Chase looks at me strangely, and I just shake my head. “It’s always nice to knock before entering. Unless you are the SWAT team, then break the damn door down,” I joke, but Chase doesn’t look too amused.

“Come in,” Jasper says, and we all walk in. I first spot Jasper behind his desk, but to the right on the very sleek black sofa is their dad.

Ember is the last one to walk in and both of their eyes cut to her. I would hate to be her. I don’t really get why they are mad she called the paparazzi. “Close the door,” Jasper adds.

“Ms. Cunningham, Ms. Withers, please have a seat.” Mr. Tucker says, gesturing to the two chairs in front across from Jasper’s desk.

We take our seats and now I feel like I am in the same boat as Ember. Seriously, I haven’t done anything wrong.

“How was the coffee run, ladies?” Jasper asks.

“Umm...fine.” What the hell is going on?

“Did you two share anything about Rebecca Michaels?”

“Actually, we really only went for coffee and started to talk about some new shoes Charlotte saw online,” Ember tells them truthfully.

We were going to talk about Rebecca on our walk back, but I just needed advice on a pair of heels I saw online—I needed another female’s opinion.

“Shoes?” Chase looks at me. “Are you sure?”

“Yes, shoes. I do happen to like them.” I tell him. Because I love to cook sometimes, I think he forgets I am into other things. I don’t wear heels everywhere. I am no Mariah Carey. “I am a woman, Chase.”

“That I do know, one hundred percent.” He winks and his father clears his throat. “Sorry,” he looks over at him. “So, you two didn’t speak about anything else?”

“No, and what’s with all these questions?” Ember pipes up.

“We received an email for us to check the blogs, and what do we see? My daughter-in-law and an employee splashed across several blogs.

“No one knew Charlotte was engaged to my son but close family and friends. So how did you find out?” Mr. Tucker starts to grill her.

“I thought we came in to talk about Rebecca.” I chime in.

“We are going to get to that,” Chase answers.

“Answer the question, Ms. Cunningham, and please answer truthfully. I would hate to let you go on this alone.” Mr. Tucker stands from the sofa and walks closer to the desk.

“Now, how did you find out?”

“I—I—”

“I told her,” I spoke up. “I didn’t think my engagement should be a secret. However, what she did with the information is unspeakable. I think she has a good explanation for it. Right?”

I look to Ember. She has to have a good one. I don’t think I can save her from it if it isn’t good enough.

“Babe, no one is saying we have to keep it a secret.” Chase walks to me, taking my hand into his. “I don’t ever want to keep you a secret. The more people know, the better. You are mine.” He winks.

“So why is Ember getting in trouble for saying something then?” I raise my eyebrows at him.

“She isn’t. Is she, Father?” he looks to Mr. Tucker, who lets out a deep sigh.

“Depends. So why did you tell the paparazzi about this?”

“Did you tell them?” She looks at me knowingly, and I nod my head. “I told them because my source is telling me Rebecca is calling for a vote on removing you, Mr. Tucker, in the next two weeks.”

Mr. Tucker nods his head. “That will explain Wilson coming into town.” He continues to nod his head and pulls out his cell phone, typing away. “Is there anything else you want to tell us?”

“No, there is nothing,” she says all but too quickly.

“Are you sure?” he says again. “This is your last and final warning.”

“No, sir, ther—”

“Dad, we all know she is sleeping with Xavier. What does that have to do with anything?” Jasper speaks up. We can all tell by Mr. Tucker’s tone and poking that Ember has more to tell. But this is news to me.

“Xavier?” I choke. “Really?”

Ember turns four shades of red and covers her face. Ember and Xavier, Skyla and Jasper—what is going on in here?

Xavier must really be trying to make his rounds in this building. I wonder if Ember knows her sleeping buddy is trying to be other people’s sleeping buddy too. I thought she was after Jasper.

“Ms. Cunningham, would you like to inform everyone of the plan you and Xavier had in mind? I believe you two wanted to take over not only my seat but his mother’s too.”

He glares at her. “Did you think I wouldn’t have found out?”

“Ember, this isn’t true, is it?” asks Jasper.

“Yes and no.” She drops her head in shame.

“But I am sure you—” Chase squeezes my hand gently and I look up at him. Shaking his head, he tells me to let it go.

“Care to elaborate?” Jasper says through gritted teeth. I’m not sure if he is upset that she’s sleeping with Xavier or planning to take over his father’s company.

I’m going to go with the latter, since he was just in here running skins with Skyla.

“Xavier wan—”

The room door burst open and a frantic Skyla appears. “There is a huge fight happening, and the board members are arriving out of the blue. Help me defuse this.”

She takes Jasper, Chase, and Mr. Tucker and quickly rushes out of the office, leaving Ember and me.

“Hey, I know how manipulative Xavier can be.” I clasp our hands together. “But if I find out in any way you are a part of this, I will make sure you never set foot back into this building.”

“Charlotte,” she winces in pain. “You’re squeezing my hand and your nails are digging in my skin.”

“I know. Just don’t underestimate the seriousness of what I just told you.” I let go of her hands. “Now, come let’s go. I don’t trust you in Jasper’s office alone anymore.”

She doesn’t protest, but gets up and quietly exits the office. I still can’t believe this is happening. What a shit show today is turning out to be, and it only just started.

Why put in all this work to take a company from the one who built it?

My phone pings.

To: Charlotte.Withers@Walsh.edu

From: NAdams@RCA.gov

Date: November 17, 2016 11:43 AM

Subject: RCA Program

Good morning, Charlotte,

My name is Nicole and I am one of the student coordinators at RCA. We unfortunately just received your email (computer technical difficulties) regarding your withdrawal from the school.

We are so sad to hear you won't be attending, but I was hoping to have a phone conversation with you to see if we can help out in any way to get you back on board.

We at RCA would be honored to have you come on board. From one chef-in-training to another, please come chop it up with us.

Best Regards,

Nicole Adams

They still want me?