

Rewritten 61

Chapter 61

Madelyn continued, "You're aware of the situation I'm dealing with at school. I don't want to burden you with my problems."

Serena responded, slightly puzzled, "Why would you even go to Lorville? It's just a small town. on the outskirts. But that's not the main issue here. It's fine if you don't want to be my best friend, but at least don't ignore me when I try to approach you."

Madelyn agreed, nodding, "As long as you don't disrupt my studies, I won't ignore you."

Overjoyed, Serena exclaimed, "Madelyn, you're the best!" and hugged her tightly.

In reality, Madelyn couldn't quite comprehend Serena's sudden desire to be friends. They hadn't interacted much before, not even in her past life, and the people around them were mere acquaintances who exchanged polite nods and greetings. There was a chance they wouldn't even recognize each other one day.

As Madelyn continued on her way, she unexpectedly encountered Forrest walking ahead. He was donning a black denim jacket, and a cast on his left hand. When they were about five or six hundred meters away from each other, Madelyn stopped in her tracks.

To her surprise, another familiar face appeared before her-Jadie. Lately, it seemed that Jadie had been appearing in Madelyn's path all too frequently, making her efforts to avoid her feel

futile.

Serena noticed the girl up ahead and commented, "That's Jadie White, the stunning new transfer student at Ventropolis High School. She's only been there for less than a week, and word has it that Forrest has taken a liking to her. Now everyone's speculating they're dating."

Serena went on, "Forrest has a close-knit group of friends at Ventropolis High School, and not too long ago, they arranged a get-together where Jadie tagged along. I heard she has a brother who's well-connected, although they're not related by blood. However, her brother is quite strict and doesn't allow her to date. Perhaps he has no clue that she snuck out from

Ventropolis High School to come to our school."

The brother Serena referred to was Zach Jardin.

Madelyn asked curiously, "How did you come to know all of this?"

Serena responded, "I found out through our school forum. One night, there were even witnesses who claimed to have seen Forrest, slightly intoxicated, taking Jadie for a ride on his motorcycle. After an incident like that, students from both Ventrocloud High School and Ventropolis High School couldn't help but become aware of Jadie White's presence... The girl standing next to her is Claire Yelton."

Madelyn nodded, deep in thought. The truth was, she had no knowledge of the gossip Serena was referring to. She wasn't one to indulge in rumors or spend time browsing through online.

forums. Her days were typically filled with a demanding schedule of attending classes and participating in extracurricular activities. By the time she arrived home after school, it was already late, around eight or nine in the evening. She simply didn't have the time or

inclination to delve into other people's personal affairs.

As thoughts swirled in her mind, Madelyn contemplated, 'Jadie dating Forrest... that seems highly unlikely. If they were to end up together one day, it would either be a result of true love or because Zach had an affair first.'

Madelyn made her way back to her seat in the classroom. There was still around forty minutes remaining before class started, providing her with ample time to tackle a set of practice papers. Despite her confidence in being accepted into Lorville University based on her current academic performance, she understood the importance of not becoming complacent. It was her personal growth and the

knowledge she acquired independently that truly held significance, and she was determined to take full responsibility for it.

Resolutely, Madelyn retrieved a set of practice papers from her bag and immersed herself in solving them.

Suddenly, the leg of her chair was kicked near the back door, jolting her concentration. Without lifting her head, Madelyn spoke in a composed manner, "What's the matter? Do you have something to say?"

"Hey!" The person's voice held an air of impatience.

'Forrest?' Madelyn looked up and saw Forest's smiling face, knowing exactly what he wanted. Swiftly, she lowered her gaze again and continued working on the practice papers, asking, "Is there something you need?"

This marked the first time Forrest witnessed Madelyn not getting angry, and her tone was notably less harsh than before.

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Forrest kicked the overweight classmate who was sleeping next to Madelyn's seat. The sudden and powerful kick jolted the guy out of his doze, and he looked up with a bewildered

expression on his face.

"Get lost!" Forrest yelled.

The guy hailed from a nouveau riche family, their newfound wealth stemming from livestock farming. Lacking any notable interests or hobbies, he was often observed in a state of slumber. Even his practice papers bore the telltale marks of drool stains. When he saw Forrest, his head jolted. He promptly rose to his feet, clearing space for Forrest.

Forrest deftly moved the chair and settled beside Madelyn, his hand casually resting on the chair's back. His other hand, encased in a striking cast, stood out noticeably. Nonchalantly. swaying in his exclusive designer sneakers, he exuded the aura of an indulged playboy.

"You know Jadie White, right?" he asked.

Madelyn paused her pen. "Yes, I'm familiar with her. She's my father's adopted daughter. The guy she calls her brother is also my father's godson, but none of them are blood-related to me.

Timothy smirked and playfully taunted, "So they're all adopted. Madelyn, you're not secretly adopted too, right?"

Madelyn chose to ignore his comment.

Forrest lowered his gaze, lost in thought. He lightly kicked Madelyn's leg and muttered, "I did not ask you about that."

Madelyn furrowed her brow. "You don't want to know about that? Well, then what do you want? If you're asking me to help you pursue Jadie, Forrest, I'm sorry, but I can't do that. Your relationship with her is your own business and doesn't concern me. I'm not obligated to assist. you... With the college entrance exams approaching, you should focus on studying."

Madelyn hit the nail on the head with Forrest. He indeed had his sights set on Jadie.

However, Madelyn hadn't anticipated Forrest seeking her help, leaving her to wonder what was going on in his mind.

Forrest chuckled, his tone turning icy as he licked his back teeth. "Now it's your turn to boss. me around? Who do you think you are, huh?"

He forcefully kicked the leg of her desk once more. "I'm asking you; will you help or not?"

Madelyn frowned, looking directly at him. "I don't have the time, so no, I won't help!"

That was her answer. She contemplated silently, realizing that assisting Forrest would mean

meddling in Zach and Jadie's relationship yet again, possibly provoking Zach's anger. She thought to herself, "I finally have a chance to start anew. Am I out of my mind? Helping Forrest could put me in a dangerous position."

Timothy walked over. "Madelyn, this is a rare chance to prove yourself. Don't underestimate it. Wasn't the lesson from last time enough?"

Adrian stepped forward and placed a hand on Timothy's shoulder, shaking his head.

Madelyn organized the papers on her desk, silently cursing. These troublemakers... I can't mess with them, but I can steer clear.' Then she spoke up, "I made a promise to my father to get into college. Failing to do so would ruin my future..."

Rising to her feet, Madelyn shouldered her backpack and continued. "Forrest... While I can't offer my assistance, I can tell you that Jadie's ultimate goal is Ventropolis University. If you manage to get accepted there, you'll have the opportunity to pursue her and even date without any interference."

Dating was strictly prohibited at their school, but for Forrest, those rules seemed utterly absurd!

Just as Madelyn prepared to make her exit, Forrest abruptly blocked her path, pressing his foot against the wall behind her waist. He leaned in slightly, a half-smile playing on his lips. His narrow, upturned eyes fixated on her. "Madelyn..."

Trapped in the confined space, Madelyn had nowhere to retreat. She asked, her voice filled with unease. "What are you trying to do?"

"Do you have feelings for me?" Forrest inquired.

‘What?!’ Madelyn silently exclaimed.

Forrest’s words caught the attention of everyone who had previously been too afraid to witness the confrontation. Now, all eyes turned toward the two of them in the corner of the

classroom.

Madelyn swiftly exited the classroom, determined to distance herself from Forrest. She resolved that she couldn’t bear to be in his presence any longer. With that in mind, she sought solace in focusing on a few sets of practice papers, hoping to regain her composure.

Chapter 63

Madelyn had just finished her final set of chemistry practice papers, but her mind couldn’t find any peace. She furrowed her brow, unable to comprehend Forrest’s behavior. ‘What on earth is Forrest’s problem? Is he completely out of his mind, or did I unknowingly do something to make him believe I have feelings for him? Could it be because I helped him pick up his belongings the other day, and someone snapped a photo of us, making him think I’m pursuing him?’

Feeling a sense of urgency, Madelyn snatched her phone and quickly accessed the school’s online forum where the photo secretly taken had been shared. She hadn’t yet thoroughly read the comments on that particular thread, but she was eager to see what people were saying. As she opened the forum and located the thread, her heart sank when she realized it had been subjected to hacking. Clicking on the link only led her to a frustrating 404 error page, rendering the content completely inaccessible.

Just then, a text message appeared, and it was from Serena.

Serena: [Madelyn, you were so brave. That punch you just threw left Forrest pale and in pain. After you left, he was taken to the infirmary. But you need to be careful because Forrest is the type who seeks revenge... Actually, I think you hit him pretty hard. I just saw him bleeding.]

Madelyn: (Well, he shouldn’t have been spouting nonsense. If word gets out and my father finds out, I’ll be in big trouble!)

Serena: [Do you really not like Forrest?]

Madelyn: [Why does everyone think I like him? What misled everyone to believe that?]

Serena: [News spread throughout the entire school that you visited Forrest at the hospital and even bought him flowers. Didn't you know?]

Madelyn: [What does that have to do with whether I like him or not?]

Serena: [Regarding what happened to you last time, Forrest wasn't the one responsible, but it's somewhat connected to him. We all thought you and Forrest would never interact again, and some even bet that you would drop out or transfer schools... But you surprised us by sending flowers to Forrest. Your willingness to overlook the assault and visit him at the hospital made us think that you must have developed feelings for him.]

Soon, Serena sent another message: [Do you really not have feelings for Forrest?]

Madelyn stared at the phone screen, took a deep breath, and finally understood how the misunderstanding had come about. She quickly began typing: [I sent him the flowers because I thought my father...]

But halfway through her message, she hesitated and decided to delete it.

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After all, Madelyn didn't fully trust Serena. She chose not to share her true thoughts or provide further explanation. She couldn't bring herself to disclose her initial suspicions about her father's potential involvement in Forrest's assault. If her father had indeed been responsible, it would not only be dishonorable but also a criminal act. Believing it was prudent to keep certain secrets concealed, Madelyn opted to withhold such information.

Madelyn closed her phone screen and picked up her pen, ready to divert her attention back to studying chemistry formulas. However, Forrest's words continued to echo in her mind.

'Do you have feelings for me?'

Forrest, much like Zach, had a distinct tobacco scent about him, mingled with the fragrance of camellia perfume and other brands.

Earlier on, when Forrest was blocking Madelyn's way, she had instinctively reacted without much thought. She was adamant about protecting her personal space and felt increasingly anxious as Forrest invaded it. In response, she exerted force to push him away, muttering, "You're insane," before leaving. Little did she expect Forrest had to go to the infirmary because his wound had reopened. However, this time, to avoid gossip, Madelyn had chosen not to check on him. Instead, she sought solace in the solitude of the library, remaining alone until the end of the school day.

Meanwhile, at Ventropolis High School, Jadie found her desk filled with love letters from admirers, a regular occurrence for her. The love letters kept piling up on her desk. Her drawer overflowed with treats, far surpassing her capacity to consume them all on her own.

Jadie enjoyed a close bond with her desk mate and dorm mate, Claire.

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Ventropolis High School turned out to be less rigid in its rules than Jadie had initially anticipated. While the school permitted students to bring snacks, consuming them inside the classrooms was strictly forbidden.

Jadie had no idea who had left those snacks, so she didn't know whom to return them to. Consequently, she would either distribute them among her classmates or bring them back to her dorm room to share with her roommates.

Jadie possessed an amiable nature, perpetually adorned with a smile, and she excelled in her academic pursuits. Despite being a recent transfer student, she had managed to keep up with the knowledge she had acquired during her time studying abroad. In fact, she had achieved the

top rank in her class and the second position among all students in her grade on the most.

recent test.

Whenever Jadie's classmates sought her assistance with their studies, Jadie would patiently lend a helping hand, readily showcasing her notes and study materials. Her peers regarded her as their favorite classmate, while the teachers held her in high esteem as an exemplary student.

As the evening study session drew to a close, the clock already displaying nine forty, Jadie began organizing her desk. She turned to her friend Claire and suggested, "Hey, Claire, I need to use the restroom. Would you like to come with me?"

"Sure, I'll come with you," Claire readily agreed, gently taking hold of Jadie's hand.

The hour grew late, and most of the students had already left the school. The corridor was equipped with motion sensor lights that automatically illuminated the path as someone

walked by.

When they were about to reach the restroom, Claire said, "I'll wait for you outside."

"Thank you," Jadie replied.

Jadie hadn't been in the restroom for long when Claire noticed a group of girls approaching from the opposite end of the hallway. Among them, Claire recognized the girl with a tall ponytail who led the group. It was Lindsay Fawley, renowned as the leader of an athletic girl group within their school. Lindsay was particularly acclaimed for her volleyball prowess and received specialized training owing to her height advantage.

Claire couldn't help but wonder about the purpose behind the girls' presence. She knew that these athletic students, apart from attending a few classes, dedicated the majority of their time to rigorous training. As she watched them approach with an intimidating demeanor, she had a bad feeling.

Linsay, towering over Claire with her height of 1.76 meters, strode forward and fixed her gaze downward, addressing Claire with a condescending tone. "Shorty, where's Jadie White?"

"I-I-I don't know," Claire stammered, caught off guard by Linsay's intimidating presence. Sensing Linsay's hostile intentions toward Jadie, Claire made the decision not to divulge her friend's whereabouts.

"Don't know? I saw her come in with you!" Linsay bellowed.

Just then, the sound of a toilet flushing echoed through the restroom.

"Claire, I'm done... Do you happen to have any sanitary pads? I think I need..." Jadie emerged from one of the stalls, immediately spotting the group of girls outside, their expressions rife with hostility. "Wh-Wh-Who are you?" she questioned, her voice trembling with unease.

"So, you're the new transfer student, the one who's trying to snatch Forrest away?" Linsay sneered, critically assessing Jadie's appearance. "You do have some looks; I'll give you that. I heard Forrest took you for a ride on his motorcycle. You may not look like a promiscuous girl, but you certainly know how to work your charm on a guy!"

Jadie watched as Linsay approached, instinctively taking a step back. "Wh-What do you want from me?" she stammered.

"You'll find out soon enough!" Linsay retorted, closing the distance between them. At that moment, Claire sprang into action, swiftly wrapping her arms around Linsay's waist. "Jadie, run... run away!" she urged, her voice filled with determination.

Jadie turned to flee, but her path was blocked by another group of girls, leaving her trapped.

With little effort, Linsay shoved Claire aside. "I was going to go easy on you, but now... none of you are getting away," she declared, her tone dripping with malice.

Jadie and Claire were forcefully dragged into the restroom by several tall and imposing girls.

Fifteen minutes later, Linsay gripped a handful of Jadie's hair, forcing her to lift her head. Retrieving her phone, Linsay callously snapped a few pictures of Jadie's injured, yet still striking, face. Additionally, she saved several more humiliating images of Jadie on her device.

Once the ordeal came to an end, Jadie swiftly checked on Claire's well-being. "Claire... are you. okay? Wake up, Claire, you're alright!" Her voice brimmed with concern.

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Claire lay unconscious, completely unresponsive despite Jadie's desperate attempts to wake her.

With a satisfied smirk, Linsay sent one of the photos to a contact on her phone and swiftly departed. Casting a disdainful glance at Claire, she exchanged knowing looks with a girl standing nearby. Acting without delay, the other girl fetched a basin of cold water and poured it over Claire, causing her to jolt awake in an instant. Shivering from the icy shock and coughing repeatedly, Claire struggled to regain her bearings.

Linsay gazed down at Jadie, taking in the sight of her disheveled clothes and scratched face. With an air of superiority, she said, "Jadie White, don't blame us. If anyone should be blamed, it's the one who said things they shouldn't have and did things they shouldn't have. But your biggest mistake was trying to seduce Forrest! He happens to be my friend's crush. If you dare to mess around with him again or flirt with his friends, don't come crying to me if one day I unintentionally expose these intriguing photos from my phone." She shook her phone. boastfully, emphasizing her warning.

Jadie had just been insulted and exposed in a compromising position, and these girls had captured it all on camera. The thought of those photos being leaked online was enough to crush Jadie's spirit and leave her questioning the will to live.

As Linsay and her gang prepared to depart, she suddenly halted at the doorway, turning her attention back to Jadie. "Oh, I almost forgot. My friend wanted me to deliver a message to you, "she sneered. "She said, 'We may not be able to touch Madelyn Jent, but if she does anything to anger us, we'll unleash our frustrations on you... You'll bear the consequences of what she should have faced. And don't even think about involving the police or telling the teachers... It won't do you any good!'"

Jadie stared at Linsay's sinister countenance, her eyes reflecting inner turmoil. Thoughts raced through her mind, 'M-Madelyn... Could it be that the so-called friend she mentioned is someone from Ventrocloud High School?"

Meanwhile, Claire clung to Jadie, tears streaming down her face, consumed by fear. "Jadie, what are we going to do? If my parents come across those photos, they'll think I've caused trouble at school, and they'll surely punish me."

Jadie straightened her clothes and embraced Claire tightly, offering solace. "It's alright, it's alright. Don't be afraid... I'll find a solution. I-I'm sorry... It's my fault for getting you involved!

Amidst her tears, Claire's voice quivered as she spoke, "W-W-We're good friends. It's my duty to protect you... But... Jadie, I'm really scared."

"Don't be scared... I'm here," Jadie reassured her, her words carrying the utmost gentleness. However, hidden beneath her calm gaze, there lay a faint trace of resentment, directed at the

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white tiled wall before her.

Unaware of the resentment lurking in Jadie's eyes, Claire wiped her tears and listened attentively.

Jadie continued, her voice soothing, "Alright, stop crying. Let me help you up. We'll return to the dormitory and get some rest. Tomorrow, I'll find a solution."

Nodding amidst her tears, Claire replied, "Okay." Aside from the two handprints on her face, she didn't seem to have any major injuries elsewhere.

Jadie, on the other hand, bore more severe wounds. Numerous scratches marred her face, with blood trickling from a torn eyelid.

As Jadie supported Claire to her feet, a sudden, intense pain seared through her lower abdomen. Her grip weakened, and she crumpled to the ground, clutching her stomach in agony.

Claire noticed Jadie's distress. Ignoring her own throbbing headache, she hurriedly checked on Jadie. "Ja-Jadie... What's happening? Don't scare me like this. Are you feeling unwell?"

Jadie was in too much pain to utter a single word. It took a while for a pool of crimson blood to seep through her thin summer school pants.

Claire's eyes widened in an instant. "Y-Y-You're bleeding? Jadie! You're bleeding? What should we do?"

Just then, a teacher, holding a flashlight, heard the commotion and hurried over. "What's going on? Are you still in the restroom? What class and grade are you from?"

Hearing the teacher's voice and seeing the beam of light in the hallway, Claire felt a glimmer. of hope. "Please wait here, I'll go find a teacher right away. Just hold on..."

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In the infirmary of Ventropolis High School, the doctor reassured everyone, "Fortunately, it's nothing serious. Her menses came. She's perfectly fine. There's no major health issue, but she does have some injuries on her face..." The doctor glanced at the teacher on duty.

The teacher stood up and reassured the doctor, "You can go back now, Dr. Cavil. I'll take care of them."

"Alright, Mr. Wahey. I'll head back then. I've already prescribed the medication; it's on the table. Don't forget to take it with you," Dr. Cavil replied.

Today, the teacher on duty was Richard Wahey, the head of the Character Education Department. He was a middle-aged man in his forties, with a protruding belly and glasses. At first glance, he seemed honest. He had carried Jadie on his back all the way to the medical office, leaving bloodstains on the back of his shirt.

The first day of Jadie's period could be quite uncomfortable. She usually carried painkillers with her, but that day, they were still in her backpack, and she hadn't had a chance to take

them out.

Richard couldn't tear his eyes away from Jadie, who kept her gaze fixed downward, clutching a cup of warm water in her hands, lost in her thoughts.

The condition on Claire's face had shown significant improvement after the application of the medication, but she wore a deep expression of concern as she looked at Jadie. "Jadie, do you feel any better? It's all my fault that you got hurt. I couldn't protect you."

Jadie's voice was barely audible as she responded, "It's not your fault. It was my own mistake that put you in this situation."

Glancing at his watch, Richard noted, "It's almost eleven now. You should go back and rest. Tomorrow, I'll inform your homeroom teacher about what happened." He walked over to Jadie's resting bed and crouched halfway down. "Jadie, let me carry you back to the dorm."

Jadie tightly clutched her water cup and reassured, "Don't worry, Mr. Wahey. I'm feeling much better now. I can walk by myself."

Richard insisted, "I can't let you do that. I'm worried! If you think it's inconvenient for me to carry you, I can hold you instead." He extended his lecherous hand to Jadie.

Jadie's tone suddenly turned cold. She repeated, "Mr. Wahey, I said I can walk by myself!"

Jadie's reaction caught Claire off guard, freezing her for a moment. This wasn't the Jadie she knew; she seemed like an entirely different person.

However, in a fleeting moment, Jadie's tone softened, and a faint smile graced her lips as she said, "Claire, could you lend me a hand, please?" It was as if what Claire had just seen had been

a mere illusion.

Claire hesitated briefly before quickly responding, "Ah... sure..."

Jadie tossed aside the blanket, emerged from the bed, and slipped on her shoes. Richard, on the other hand, cleared his throat, feeling awkward...

As they made their way past the classrooms on their path out of the infirmary, Claire headed upstairs to retrieve Jadie's painkillers. Richard promptly notified the dorm staff, and they swiftly opened the door to their dormitory for them to enter.

As Jadie and Claire entered their dormitory room, they discovered the lights had already been switched off. The room was shared among six students, with two of them peacefully asleep and two others engrossed in their studies, so there was a faint glow to emanate from their beds.

The two awake dorm mates promptly illuminated the room with the help of a small desk lamp. "Where were you

two?" Sheena exclaimed, visibly surprised. "Oh my gosh, Jadie, what happened to your face?"

Jadie made her way to the wardrobe, in search of her nightgown. At that moment, she noticed that the skincare product Zach had given her was only half full. It was a bottle of Lancome serum he had brought back from his recent business trip to France, Jadie rarely used it, even though its price wasn't too steep for her...

Without uttering a word, Jadie simply cast a fleeting glance at the bottle. As she continued rummaging through the wardrobe, she soon realized that her favorite nightgown was nowhere to be found.

Sheena spoke up, "Jadie, I completely forgot to mention earlier. When I came back to the room. today, the lights were already off, just as I was about to take a shower. It was so dark that I mistakenly grabbed your nightgown instead of mine. I'm really sorry about that. And as for your skincare product, Yasmin and the girls used it. It's been working miracles for us. Since we started using it, our skin hasn't had any breakouts. I hope you don't mind."

Claire voiced her discontent, "You girls have gone too far. Jadie already shares snacks with

you, which is already quite generous. But using her belongings without her permission? That's not right!"

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Kristeen, who was on the top bunk next to Sheena, chimed in, "We're not even using your stuff."

"What's with all the noise? Can't you let me sleep?" One of the girls woke up and rolled over, covering her head with a blanket.

Jadie reassured, "It's fine, Claire, really. They've already used it. Let it go. Don't get upset. My brother will buy me more when they run out."

In the dim light, it was difficult to discern Jadie's expression. Judging by her tone, there didn't seem to be any discontent, so the issue was dropped. Everyone knew Jadie for her good-natured temperament and her rare involvement in arguments.

Jadie retrieved a few brand-new skincare products from under the cabinet and handed them to Claire. "You can have these. Consider these a gift. Don't be mad anymore."

"I can't accept them. They're too expensive!"

"Shh, let's not wake them up again."

Jadie grabbed her clothes and headed to the bathroom. After a quick shower, she put on her pajamas and applied a heating pad. She even placed a hot water bag on her bed. By the time Claire returned from brushing her teeth, Jadie was already fast asleep.

The next day, Jadie didn't join the morning run because of her period. When Claire came back from the run, she gently touched Jadie's forehead while Jadie was still sound asleep and noticed Jadie's body temperature was low. Something was not wrong.

"Jadie, are you okay? I'll go find the dorm staff."

"No... there's no need. I'm just in a lot of pain. I'll take some painkillers." Jadie propped herself up in bed and noticed her nightgown, the one Sheena had worn, lying on her blanket. She frowned at it but kept her thoughts to herself.

After taking the painkillers, Jadie asked, "Could you do me a favor? Since we'll only have a self-study session today, could you apply for leave on my behalf?"

Claire asked, "What about breakfast? Aren't you going to eat?"

Jadie shook her head. "I'm not hungry. Thank you, Claire. If it weren't for you, I wouldn't

know what to do."

"It's okay. Just rest well," Claire replied.

In the bathroom, two dorm mates who had just returned from the morning run were brushing their teeth. One of them commented, "Claire acts like a complete pushover. Jadie gave her a few gifts, and now she's acting like Jadie's personal servant."

The other person sneered, "What a joke. She sold herself for some skincare products, Who knows if they're even genuine? She might end up damaging her face."

The bathroom door was left ajar, and it seemed like they purposely spoke loudly enough for Jadie and Claire to overhear. Claire felt the urge to confront them, but Jadie intervened. "Don't bother. The exams are approaching. It's not worth it."

Ventropolis High School strictly enforced a rule that any student involved in a fight would face immediate expulsion. Now, they were in the most critical phase of their academic journey, and they couldn't afford to let this minor incident disrupt their progress.

The news of Jadie being assaulted spread like wildfire throughout the entire grade in less than a day. If it had been someone else, the students at Ventropolis High School might not have paid much attention. However, the victim in this case happened to be the stunning and accomplished Jadie White. After all, she had recently been selected as the student representative to deliver a speech, making it difficult for people to forget her.

Madelyn only learned about Jadie's mistreatment when Forrest confronted her. And there went her lunch and practice papers once again...

Chapter 68

Madelyn surveyed the scattered food strewn across the floor, her brow furrowing in confusion. Thoughts raced through her mind, 'What is he up to now?' She cast a reproachful glance at Forrest and questioned, "Forrest, what on earth are you doing?" As she crouched down to retrieve the lunchbox from the ground, Forrest kicked it once more, causing it to slip from her grasp.

In a swift motion, Forrest seized Madelyn by the collar, hoisting her up and forcefully pinning her against the wall. His intense gaze locked with hers, his grip tightening around her collar as he angrily exclaimed, "What the hell did you say?"

The jutting corner of the windowsill dug into Madelyn's back, causing her discomfort, but her impassive stare remained fixed on Forrest. She asked, "What exactly are you trying to say?"

Forrest's narrow, upturned eyes exuded a bone-chilling coldness, colder than ice itself. He seethed, "Jadie got beaten up because of your damn big mouth. She's in the hospital now. Didn't you claim she was your sister? Is this how you treat your siblings, Madelyn Jent? You don't have the balls to confront

me directly. If you have something to say, say it to my face instead of scheming behind my back! If anything happens to Jadie, I swear I'll break the same damn bones of yours!

Madelyn observed the prominent veins bulging on his hand. If it weren't for the presence of others, she believed Forrest would actually strangle her right there. She remained calm, her breathing steady. She had faced much greater storms, the immature Forrest standing before her couldn't intimidate her. Besides, she had already experienced death once before, so why would she fear it a second time?

Gasping for air under his grip, Madelyn grabbed onto his increasingly tightened hand. "Forrest... calm down!"

Adrian stepped in, his voice firm, "Forrest, that's enough. Madelyn would never be foolish enough to harm Jadie. They're family. There's no reason for her to do something like that."

Madelyn's face flushed crimson, acutely aware of the terrifying hostility emanating from Forrest. "Forrest... It hurts... You've hurt me! Let... Let go!"

Adrian interjected, "That's it, enough. Do you really want to escalate this situation? Have you forgotten what happened the last time you got injured?"

The animosity in Forrest's eyes gradually subsided, though the coldness remained. Finally, he released his grip.

Madelyn clutched her neck, coughing several times as she tried to regain her breath.

"Don't think Ethan's protection makes you untouchable! I still have ways to deal with you!" Forrest spat out those words before storming out.

Madelyn felt bewildered, her mind racing, 'Did he mention Ethan? Does Forrest know Ethan?' She yearned to confront him and uncover the truth, but given his current state of anger, approaching him now would be akin to walking into a deadly trap.

Inhaling the fresh air deeply, Madelyn began to feel more composed. She straightened herself up and expressed her gratitude to Adrian, saying, "Thank you."

Adrian glanced at her and uttered five piercing words, "You brought this upon yourself."

Timothy chimed in, "Serves you right!"

After Jadie was bullied, Forrest was the first one pointing the finger at Madelyn, holding her accountable. Madelyn couldn't shake off the thought that Zach would be next in line, ready to inflict

similar harm upon her. The bone-chilling realization of what Zach could potentially do sent a wave of shivers down her spine.

Chapter 69

The first people that came to Madelyn's mind were Michelle, Jenny, and Lorrie. She could not think of anyone other than them since she had argued with them before.

The three girls were touching up their makeup in the women's restroom. They straightened their tie as their red lips turned into smirks. At the same time, Michelle was humming a cheerful song.

"You seem to be in a good mood today," said Lorrie.

"I am," Michelle raised her skirt and uttered with a smile.

Following that, Jenny asked, "Did you guys see the pictures I posted in the group?"

"Yeah. I'm delighted with the outcome. Keep up the hard work, Jenny," said Michelle.

Jenny wiped off the excess lipstick from the corners of her mouth and continued, "I've been annoyed with Madelyn from the start. I would've had someone beat her up that day if it weren't for the fact that her brother is handsome."

Michelle turned around and leaned against the sink as she said, "You mean that cold, handsome guy at the charity event? That's her brother?!"

Jenny nodded in response. "My dad said that the guy is Hayson Jent's lackey. He spent a lot of money just to find him, but he didn't want the money. Mr. Jent then sent a woman over, but the

guy kicked her out before the night ended. I've never met a man like him. What's more, he didn't even shoot a glance at me when I invited him for drinks last time."

"Pfft. Why is he acting so cocky when he's just a lackey?"

"I heard that Zach cares more about Jadie than Madelyn. They grew up together in the orphanage and even collected food from the garbage to eat. My dad did warn me not to get close to him, but I'm not sure why..." Lorrie shrugged and continued, "I saw him at the bar last time. There's no denying that the man's good-looking, but he's a little too old for my liking... I prefer guys who are younger than me!"

Michelle was suddenly interested in this man. She always liked a challenge. Once she knew he

was unavailable, she wanted him even more. "Do you think that he'd be mad at us if something happened to Jadie?"

"I don't think Zach can do anything about it, though. I've talked to my dad, and he said he'll take care of it for me if Hayson shows up at our doorstep," said Jenny.

At that moment, someone kicked open the door to the restroom. "I knew it! I knew it was you Buys who did it!

The three looked over to the door and saw that it was Madelyn. Michelle played with her hair between her fingers and laughed disdainfully, "You scared me, Madelyn. I guess there's no use

In denying it since you've already heard everything. Yes, Madelyn. We're the ones who did it. We're the ones who had people beat Jadie up. What are you going to do about it, huh?"

"Are you gonna call the police? Sue the teachers or our parents?"

"Oh no, we're so scared!" The other two girls teased.

Madelyn stepped forward and raised her hands. Before the other party could react, she slapped her in the face, saying, "Come at me if you have a problem with me. Don't take your anger out on Jadie."

Michelle returned to her senses when she fell to the ground. "How dare you hit me?! Do you know who I am? Do you wanna die?!" Her mind was in a blur after being struck. "What are you two doing?! Grab her!"

Jenny and Lorrie were about to step forward, but Madelyn turned around and kicked them in the shin. She then rolled her sleeves up, faced Michelle, and began to beat her up. However, there were three of them and only one of her. Her previous injuries were also not fully healed yet, so she was immediately defeated.

Madelyn's short nails were also a disadvantage at that time. She had cut them because she wanted to learn to play the piano.

Chapter 70

Zach had received a call from the school and learned that Jadie was at the hospital. Halfway through his meeting, he asked Kevin to take over for him as he rushed to the scene.

Jadie was lying on the bed at SereneCare Hospital with an IV tube in her hand, her face pale. When she saw Zach, she looked like a little girl who had done something wrong, not knowing how to face him. She lowered her head and said, "Z-Zach... I'm sorry for causing you trouble again."

Zach saw the injury on Jadie's face, and an unnoticeable hint of coldness flashed across his eyes. "What did the doctors say?" He asked.

"The doctors said I'm fine. It's just some abrasions. They told me to drink some warm water if I feel any physical discomfort and I'll be fine."

At that moment a middle-aged woman, in her thirties, walked in through the doorway. "You must be Jadie's brother," she said while holding a medical chart.

Zach recognized the woman. They met during the school registration day. "Yeah, I am," he replied.

"Come with me, young man. I have something to tell you."

Outside the ward, Marissa told Zach everything that happened last night. She also informed him that they would be contacting the students' parents, including those from Ventrcloud High School.

Marissa told him that something similar had happened before, but due to some extenuating circumstances, they had not been able to settle the matter. Zach knew what she meant. Things could get complicated if they made a big deal out of the situation.

Suddenly, Zach's gaze turned cold. "So what you're saying is that we should just let go of this issue? Is this what you're taught to do as a teacher?"

"I've contacted the other party's parents and they said they were willing to bear the cost of Jadie's medical bill. Ms. Fawley has also sincerely apologized to Jadie. If you're not satisfied with this outcome, we may talk about another solution at the school," said Marissa, neither angry or annoyed.

Zach raised wrist to look at the time and said in a cold tone, "I've gotten a pretty clear understanding of what happened after our conversation, Ms. Selman. I will do my own investigation regarding the reason for the assault. Jadie is still not feeling well. We can end the conversation here for today, and I will make time tomorrow to discuss the most reasonable solution. I'm a businessman, Ms. Selman. I pay attention to the efficiency and quality of things. I don't like to do anything unnecessary. If I'm not satisfied with how the school carries out their procedures, I will come up with my own means to achieve a desirable result."

His words were sharp and decisive, and his intentions were clear.

After that, Zach nodded respectfully at Marissa, turned around, and went back into ward. Marissa stood outside, unable to move. She had felt a cold wind and gotten goosebumps when Zach was speaking to her earlier.

“How was the talk with Ms. Selman, Zach? I didn’t do anything wrong. I don’t know why they beat me up. I didn’t even do anything to them. Please don’t be mad.”

“I’m not mad, Jadie. Have you taken your pain meds?” Zach asked as he stroked Jadie’s hair. His demeanor was different now.

“Yeah. I feel much better now.”

Zach did not know that Jadie’s period pain had been so severe before this.

‘She’s been receiving treatment abroad for all these years, and I never once flew out to see her. It seems like I’ve been neglecting her,’ he thought.

“I’ve gotten you a medical leave so just rest up.”

“I’ll go back to school after I’m done with this IV drip, Zach. You don’t have to worry about me anymore after that.”

Zach grabbed her hand and could feel that it was cold. He looked at the IV bag, adjusted the drip rate, and said, “Let’s bring you home.”

“That’s okay, Zach. I don’t want to keep you from work. I have school tomorrow. I promise I’m okay enough to attend my classes.”

“You’re not going back to school. I’ll have Rosario come over and take care of

you.”

“But what about Madelyn? Rosario’s the closest person to her in the Jent residence.”

“There are other housemaids in the Jent residence who can take care of her. If she doesn’t agree to let Rosario take care of you, I’ll figure something out,” Zach said.

Marissa had left that point, and Zach fell asleep while waiting for Jadie to be done with the IV

drip.