

Chapter 25 Silence

This weekend went quickly. Granted, I stayed at home and avoided people, more while I debated what I was going to do now.

As I walk into the building, I see people turn and look at me. The whispers get louder as I pass by people. I find a seat and open my laptop.

I begin to do work, not missing the stares and constant whispers. Putting on headphones, I block out the noise and focus on the screen.

A few hours later, a tap has me turn. Taking off the headphones, I look at Oliver.

"Hey." He smiles at me and sits opposite me. "How are you?" He looks at me, then around the room.

"Fine, Oliver, honestly."

"So, you and Jake's dad?"

"Don't." I'm not wanting to talk about it.

He chuckles and nods. "Come on Ruby, you can't fuck his dad for revenge and expect no one to talk."

"I never fucked him for revenge. I kissed you for revenge. His dad was purely for me." He stills at my words. "Did you want something?"

"Well, yeah, there's a party tonight, why don't you come?"

"No." I'm not a fool.

"Ouch. I invited you to a party, and it's a no. I don't even get a maybe." He sits smirking.

"Oliver, I'm not going to a party where Jake is." No way, this is Jake trying to cause trouble.

"Jake won't be there. He hasn't been back since he left with his dad."

I look at him.

"Seriously, from what I heard, he's put in for a transfer and everything." Wait, so Jake is leaving? "You didn't know? He messaged this morning saying to pack his things, apparently he's moving back home and getting a spot local."

"No, I didn't know. Jake doesn't speak to me anymore, Oliver." He nods and smiles.

"Will you bring Ivy?"

I laugh slightly. "Ivy?"

He nods and smiles. "Come on, help me out, Ruby. She never comes, and when I was planning to speak to her, you fucking kissed me."

Oops. "I will invite her, and suggest it, I'm not sure she will agree though. They aren't her type of parties, Oliver."

"Try, you owe me. I let you use my mouth." I laugh at his words and he smirks.

"I will try a little harder, okay?" He nods and grins.

"Thanks, I'll text you the address." Standing he walks out, pulling on the headphones I go back to work. A short while later, I pack up and leave.

When I get back, I put the things in my room, go to Ivy's room, and know before I walk in.

"We're out tonight." She looks up at me, confused. "A party."

"Do I have to?" She sits waiting.

"Yes! How often have you spoken to Oliver?" I watch her cheeks flush. "Oh, you like him?" Moving, I sit down.

"Shh, we all know Bex and her loud mouth." I nod and laugh. "He never really notices me." She shrugs slightly.

"Really? As he invited me tonight, just so I could invite you." She stares at me.

"Oliver asked for me to go?"

"Yes, he likes you. So start getting ready. I'll torture myself for you." Smiling I walk out, knocking on Bex's door I walk in.

"Party tonight. Oliver invited us." She jumps up and smiles.

"Good. Now, have you messaged Alaric?"

"Not yet, I'm going to though." I can't keep avoiding it. "Get ready, and I will see you when we are." Walking back to my room, I take out my phone.

Hitting his number I type out the message.

Can we talk? I realise it sounded like I was saying I never wanted to see you again. I didn't mean that. I just thought your focus should be Jake until he knew everything.

I hit send and got ready, but no reply came through. In fact, it shows as undelivered. Pushing it to the back of my mind, I got ready and soon found myself at the party.

Walking through, I find Oliver. I give him a slight nod and pull Ivy through with me.

"Maybe I should just not?" She looks at me.

"Oh, you are. By the sounds of it, he's liked you for a while but keeps ducking out of making a move." I pull her along with me and stop at Oliver.

"Ivy, Oliver, say hi to each other." I push her to him and walk away. Bex stands laughing.

"Brutal, you could have given her a chance to walk to him." She continues to laugh.

"No, because that day I kissed him, he liked her. He has liked her for ages. We just didn't know. They both needed a push."

"And a push worked, really damn well." I turn and see Ivy kissing him.

"Well, my job is done, I'm going home." I turn to leave, and she stops me.

"If you run and hide from their assumptions, you may as well paint 'guilty' on yourself."

"I'm not running or hiding. I don't want the drama." Being here, surrounded by people who loved Jake, will be drama. She grips my hand and pulls me through.

Grabbing drinks, she hands me one. Yet the eyes are on me. I shouldn't be here.

"People will hate me for driving Jake away."

"Then let them. Come. Dance." Pulling me through, we dance, and I drink. Slowly, I feel myself relaxing while dancing. Ages pass us by, and we've not seen Ivy.

Walking through to the kitchen, I grab a drink.

"Ruby." Turning, I look at Max.

"Hey, Max." I go to leave and he stops me.

"So, Jake lied then, right?" I shrug and go to leave but he stops me.

"Keep me company, Ruby." I shake my head, and he moves to kiss me. I push him back.

"No, what the hell, Max?"

"Come on, Ruby. It's just fun." My hands push him back. "Wait." He laughs. "Do you only go for dads?"

"Screw you, Max." I push past him as Bex gets to the door.

"Having fun?" She looks at me, and I nod.

"Oh, things are amazing. Let's go. I have a drink." I walk back through to the other room and dance with Bex.

"What was happening?"

"Max made a move, twice, just forget it. Where is Ivy?"

"Left with Oliver." My eyes widen. "She said she would see us tomorrow."

"Then let's get out of here!" I place down the drink and leave with her following.

"Alaric?" Clearly, that is her questioning how things went.

"Didn't answer, the message is undelivered."

She stops walking. "He blocked you?"

I shrug. "No idea." We get back and go to our rooms. Taking out my phone, I look at the message, still undelivered. Giving up, I go to sleep.

Throwing the clothes into the case, I grab the shoes.

"I'm back!" I hear Bex and watch her walk in. "Why are you packing!" She moves and pulls the shoes out of my hand.

"Did you have fun?" I smile at her.

"Great, amazing. My parents were annoyingly frustrating, like my brother. Now, why are you packing?" She glares at me.

"I figured I would go to see my parents." She moves, and I dodge the shoe she throws at me.

"No!"

I laugh and pick the shoe up. "Bex, I'm coming back." She relaxes slightly.

"Okay, good. That doesn't mean you should go, though. You owe them nothing."

She's right. "I know I owe them nothing; things need sorting, though. In-person, not over the phone." At least this way, I know I tried.

"Well...I'm coming."

Standing, I hug Bex. "Thank you for the support, but no. If I go with anyone, I will use them as a shield. Depending on how it goes, I might be back tonight."

"You realise running won't help?" I look at Ivy as she stands by the door.

"I'm not running." Running wouldn't change anything.

"Wait, you've still not spoken to Alaric?" Bex stands shocked.

"No, I tried calling, but it won't go through. I went to the house, and no one answered at the gate. I even went to his business and spent every afternoon there, but nothing."

Bex nods. "And Jake?"

I shrug slightly.

"Ask Oliver." I look at Ivy, and she walks out, coming back with Oliver. Of course, he stayed again last night. It's been a week and he's pretty much moved in.

"I spoke to Jake three days ago, and he called off an unknown number. He sounded genuinely sorry, and like he realised, he messed up. I asked, and he said he wasn't coming back, this place and people here seemed to make him worse, he's got a job as well."

Jake has a job? This, though, doesn't help with Alaric at all.

"He's still a jerk." Bex laughs, and I smile.

"Don't guys, there are things you don't know. It's also not my place to tell you." Oliver smiles at us.

"You're going to stick up for him as his best friend." Bex is right.

"No, what he did was shit, but you don't know everything. Anyway, that's all I know." He shrugs and walks out. Zipping up my case, I grab my jacket.

"Ruby, are you really leaving?" Ivy stands in my way.

"I'm coming back." Laughing, I hug her. "You two need to calm it; if anything, I'm gone for the weekend, that's it." Hugging them both, I say goodbye and leave.

An hour later, I'm sat in the car outside the house. I feel like I should have called before coming, but they don't answer when I do.

Getting out, I grab my bag and walk to the door, knocking I stand and wait, watching as the door opens.

"Hi, Mum." I smile at her.

"Roy!" No hi? I stand shocked and watch my dad show up.

"Ruby, you shouldn't be here."

"I came to sort things." Sure I tried calling and sorting it, but that was my way to avoid everything.

"You best come in then." I watch them move out of the way. Walking in, I sit down. "You brought a bag?" My dad looks at me.

"I didn't want to rush to get it sorted." It's been over a year since I saw them.

"So you wanted to hide here."

"I'm not hiding, Mum. I came to visit and sort things out." Why would I be hiding?

"Ruby, we know you were sleeping with a married man." I laugh at my dad's words.

"I've not slept with anyone who is married!" That's a lie.

"He may as well be from his age alone." He looks at me, and I don't reply. "We got the video, Jake's father?"

That won't help with fixing things. I don't even reply because I'm stuck on what to say.

"You can stay tonight as it's late, but you need to leave in the morning." My dad stands.

"I made one mistake!" Just one.

"Sleeping with Jake was one thing, sleeping with his father was another, and using them for money was another."

"Sleeping with Jake wasn't a mistake. We were in a relationship, and I didn't use them for money. I got nothing from either of them." I will accept Alaric that was a mistake. I don't regret it, but yeah, it was foolish.

"Are you staying the night or not? I'm not discussing this anymore, Ruby; what you did was wrong. Then you continued and did even worse, again and again."

"Fine, I'll stay and leave in the morning." I watch as he begins walking out.

"You destroyed their relationship, Ruby, that's caused by you."

"I know that already. I also needed to let you know that I might be dropping classes." I haven't decided entirely yet, but if I do, that's nearly three years wasted.

"Acting up won't make things better." My dad shouts, and I laugh.

"I'm not. I never enjoyed it, and it was your choice what I did when I left school. It's not a way of acting up. I just realised I hate it." The only reason I am debating it so much is because there are only months left, and then I am done. So, should I wait until I have completed it?

"Do what you wanted, Ruby, you will anyway. Just keep your behaviour away from us. After you leave tomorrow, don't come back." My dad walks out, and I watch my Mum follow.

I guess there is no fixing things.