

Chapter Forty-Eight

Recap

With that in mind, I brace my palms on the armrest and push myself up to my feet. "I'm going to get some coffee from that café down the street." She looks up then, a distracted look in her red-rimmed puffy eyes. "Do you want anything?"

"The truth." She answers fluidly.

I stare at her, warmth spreading from my ears, "What?"

"I want the truth." She sits up and nods, "Why did you really leave Boston?"

"You know why," I look around in confusion, "I left Boston because of my mother."

"You left things unresolved."

"To be honest Laura, I doubt our problems could have ever been resolved." I point out, feeling the need to defend myself.

"I welcomed you into our household because I thought you'd be a wonderful addition to the family!" She argues, her voice begins to grow in volume, "But ever since you've been here, all that I've invited in is trouble."

An exuberantly sharp pain travels through my veins as she stares at me with no remorse over her words. Yet, at the same time, I know she's right. Though her reasoning-my mother-is incorrect, she has the gist of it.

"I can't help but feel that all of this is because of you." As she says that, the waterworks she had been trying so hard to hold back begin to roll down her face.

I look down in haste, trying to shield the evident hurt I know is written all over my features. Meanwhile, she angrily wipes away her tears with the sleeve of her cardigan.

I begin to backtrack, and even as I do so, she doesn't look up-she's too angry to. I take one longing glance at the door where the server is still standing shamelessly, before turning on my heel.

"I'll get you a coffee." I say quietly, my voice almost breaking.

Chapter Forty Eight

I'll get you a coffee.

Of all the things I could've said, I chose to speak those words. I wouldn't have argued with her, especially because I know she's partially correct. I felt like crying, shouting, stomping my feet like a child, ripping my hair out-and just maybe, maybe amidst my gargantuan tantrum, Laura could've seen my point of view.

But I knew it wouldn't work.

So I left it.

As frustrated as it made me-to civilly walk out without a feeling of satisfaction and victory-I ran out before my tears of anger betrayed me in front of her.

I had run out of the building faster than I did when I first saw Travis deal a gun. I was grueling a race against my fast-pouring tears. If there is anything worse than public humiliation, it is, without a doubt, the beginning stages of an inevitable round of sobs. Subconsciously, I have always known it's true-what Laura said to me-but it still hurts to hear it aloud.

I begin to slow down into a light jog as I approach the café at the end of the rounded street. The wind, heavy with late evening humidity, had whipped against my face so that all traces of tearstains had vanished and had instead been replaced with a layer of sticky discomfort.

I push open the doors, the generally soothing aroma of coffee beans and earthly substances wafting past my nose. It occurs to me, somewhere in my wildly racing and bewildered mind, that I didn't even know what type of coffee Laura would want.

However, as soon as that thought registers, irritation seeps in and I frown. The best satisfaction I can receive at the moment is letting the coffee selection reside in my hands. With a hint of defiance, I walk up to the counter and order one normal coffee for me, and one unsweetened black coffee for Laura.

Immature? Probably.

Satisfying? Beyond.

I take a seat in one of the booths across from the barista center and look out the window to view individuals running across the streets. Occasionally, I spot a group walking around in their swimsuits and towels.

This girl in the center-she walks with a beautiful grace in her step-swipes a strand of her burgundy-red hair out of her face and grins at something another one of her friends had just said.

It's strange to envy someone you don't even know-but I feel it crawl up my veins in the slithering way my emotions always do. She reeks of freedom. Everything about her gives it away-her wide gestures, her grand smile, her boisterous laugh, and even her wild eyes.

In a sense, I've never had that euphoric sensation of liberty. Never in Boston, not with my mom around. Initially, I had a taste of it in Miami, but I danced too far along the edge. I skirted rebelliously and stubbornly around warning sparks. Perhaps, if I had been rational, sensibly, I could've pirouetted my way away from Travis-away from fire.

But I didn't.

A cough draws my attention back to my reality in the coffee shop. I snap out of my daze, my heart rate increasing in surprise, and turn to offer a smile and apologize.

"I knew you couldn't resist my charm."

I glance at the waiter, and instantly smile when I notice Chase standing in front of my booth with both of my coffees to go in his hands. He raises an eyebrow and wiggles it as if to provoke and sarcastic remark from me.

"You wish," I joke while transferring the cups from his hands to mine, "Since when did this happen?" I nod towards his purely brown café attire.

He furrows his brows, "What? Ashley didn't tell you yesterday?"

"No," I shake my head, "I had to leave early during lunch."

Suddenly, his face turns serious, "Oh crap, I heard about what happened. Are you okay?"

I grimace and nod, "Yeah-so, are the Williams the gossip of the century now at school?"

"Just a little bit," He says quickly, but when I shoot him a pointed look, he changes the course of his words, and adds in sympathetically, "Okay, you guys probably made it to the talk of the millennium."

I groan and repress the urge to faceplant.

Chase shoots me a concerned look before holding up a finger, "Do you mind waiting? I'll be on my shirt in two minutes and then I'm all yours to rant to."

"I'd really like that," I flash him a genuine smile.

Before he gets too far, I call out "Hey Chase?" He turns and glances at me when I get his attention, "Thanks."

In all honesty, I could use someone to talk to. He shoots me his trademark smirk before mouthing two minutes and pivoting on his heel to wrap up his end of the work.

I glance back down at the coffee cups, a small smile gracing my lips as I lean back against the booth chair. I trail my finger lightly along the swirly pattern of the coffee cup to pass the time. I know I'll get a call from someone when Layla gets out-and I most certainly do not want to be sitting anywhere near Laura when I know she's thinking I'm the reason Layla is behind that door in the first place.

Once again, my thoughts are interrupted by the rancorous sound of my ringing phone. I nearly jump in my seat before reaching into my pocket and pulling it out.

I answer the phone, suspicious immediately rising when I notice beforehand that the call is from Travis.

"Is everything okay?" I ask, completely skipping the introductions.

He sounds out of breath, "No. I um-"

"No?" I sit up, my palms instantly clamping in anticipation, "Why are you stuttering, you never stutter."

"Focus" He snaps across the line.

Normally, I would reply with a witty remark, but I simply remain silent. My eyes travel to Chase's approaching figure, and I subconsciously take in that he's no longer wearing his brown apron. Instead, he's dressed in his casual clothes and he is glancing at me with a worried expression on his features.

"Wes was the one who broke into your house." Travis's voice brings me back to him.

I freeze, "What?"

The sound of my low, sharp voice is barely recognizable to my own ears. Hot red incredulity courses through my slow boiling blood as I grip the edge of the table with my mouth ajar. The dreadful ringing in both of my ears begins to grow in volume at an incessantly constant rate.

Chase drops down in the booth seat opposite of me and braces his elbows on the table. He's staring at me intently, his eyes mirroring the tension apprehensiveness I'm sure is evident in mine.

"Are you sure?" I hesitate.

"Your dad and I had just parked outside my house, and we saw Wes sneaking out of your window." My heart drops in terror, and he continues, "Your dad and both ran to where he was trying to get down, and we got him before he could even make a move for it-that son of a-"

"Where is he now?" I interrupt him, my voice barely audible, "Do you still have him?"

"He's not leaving my sight, Faye." He nearly growls, "I won't let him."

"Okay-um-" I swallow slowly and place a hand on my temple as my mind begins to grow sluggish, "Did you call the cops?"

"They're on their way." He replies immediately. Then his voice grows soft, but firm, "Faye."

"Mm?" My voice is barely a mumble now, because I can barely muster a humane, coherent response as I am currently drowning in my confusion.

"Faye, listen to me." He begins lowly, "Just stay put at the station. You're safe there, okay?"

Although he can't see me, I'm already shaking my head before he can finish.

"I'm not at the station."

I hear him curse to himself, and then he bites out, "I'm sorry, I must have misheard something because I swear I heard you say you left the station when I specifically told you not to."

I begin, "That was the plan-"

"Faye, Williams' Travis's deadly tone interrupts me before I can even finish.

"Laura and I got in a fight and I had to leave," I hastily add, "I couldn't do it-I just needed air, so I am at the café around the corner."

"Okay." I hear him exhale impatiently, "Well, will you please go back now? Please?"

"Yeah," I nod my head in complete compliance, and then I listen to the sound of a dead line as he hangs up soon afterwards.

When I place the phone back down on my lap, I notice that my hands are shaking.

"Hey," I glance up as Chase says that, only to see him looking at me with a look of worry plastered on his face. "Talk to me."

I glance out the window momentarily and bite my lips as a frown accentuates my perplexed and bewildered features. When I bring my gaze back to Chase's I inhale slowly, as if I'm trying to mentally brace myself to accept the words that will fall out of my mouth when I tell him.

"I guess you have a valid reason to punch Wes this time," I halfheartedly joke while referring to the time Layla and I caught the two amidst a brawl. Chase raises his eyebrow to indicate that he's not understanding where I am headed with my statement. I sigh, all signs of humor gone, "Wes is the one who broke into our house."

"Shit," Chase's eyes go wide, "Wes?"

I nod, relieved to see that he's almost as shocked and speechless as I am about the news.

"Wh-How-When?" He stumbles over his words briefly before finally pausing to breathe. He breathes out through his nose and angrily rakes a hand through his hair, "I swear, next time I see him, I'm going to kill him."

Despite the situation, I feel the corners of my lips tug into a small smile as I observe, with admiration, a scale of his anger towards Wes.

As I look down at my lap to hide my smile, a notification alert appears on my phone, and I instantly hold it up to see if it's an update on Layla's status or from Travis.

Relief pours through me as I see that the text is from Layla, indicating that she has been released from the questioning room. My mind darts to Laura and I can't help but think how pleased she must be at this very moment.

I scroll through her text and nearly double as I read the words she has written in bold:

MOM TOLD ME YOU WENT TO GET COFFEE. LAYLA AND I GET BACK HERE NOW. I KNOW WHO IS WORKING FOR JAMES. IT'S CHASE!

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YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND HOW LONG I'VE WAITED TO WRITE THIS CHAPTER. I am literally so excited right now, that I my fingers are shaking and I seriously need to pee.

Update: ...for some reason, a lot of people have been asking me who Chase and Wes are?

Chase: One of Faye's 'bestfriends'-the other one being Ashley.

Wes: Their new neighbor who had a rivalry with Chase and a thing for Layla.

It wasn't that long ago...but I hope that rekindles your memories of them. Good.

I just have no words--if you don't love this chapter, then I will for your PERIOD.

PLEASE, especially leave comments. What do you think?

Can I get 90 comments?

COMMENT.

xxSummerxx

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