Family Portrait
by astarpen

Summary

Everyone thinks that the Fabray twins Charlie and Quinn have it all, that their family is perfect. It's the picture that Russell Fabray wants the world to believe in. He doesn't want you to know that Charlie is a freak and that Quinn used to be Lucy. He wants you to believe that everything is perfect even with all those cracks appearing in the picture frame. Charlie

G!P

Notes

Hello people, well since people wanted me to continue this. I'll try and finish it, I'm not pleased with this work though I know that some of you like it. So I'll try and post a chapter or two every day till we're all caught up, and I'll try and fix some errors as I do so. Please review, I mean it really does motivate me to some extent.
Chapter 1

Chapter Notes

Again for those people who seem to know better than me and for some reason think I misled them part of the reason I deleted the story to begin with as I’ve stated throughout this fic is that I felt like it was become about the original character. I took this down because I wasn't a fan of it, I stated that from the beginning, I also stated quite clearly throughout in the new chapters that I posted, for those of you who are from fanfiction, that fixing it requires time and effort that I'm not interested in doing. I shouldn't have to explain myself, but I'm doing it anyway.

Russell Fabray had always wanted the perfect family. He wanted the perfect life, with the big house and the fancy cars and most importantly a beautiful wife that knew her place. He was a good god-fearing man, who prayed every night and before every meal and went to church every Sunday. He deserved those things. It didn’t matter that Russell Fabray had been born with a silver spoon in his mouth or that he was a gifted and shrewd business man, who had turned his father’s business into a booming empire. Now all he needed was a son to take over the business and he would really have the perfect life.

Frannie was his first-born, and while he was disappointed that she wasn’t the son he wanted, he loved her. She was an obedient and respectful child, who seemed to want to do everything perfectly just for him. She was his perfect little angel and Russell didn’t mind not being able to do father-son activities since she was rather quite girly and didn’t really enjoy being taken to baseball games or football games. Perhaps it was a test, of sorts, from god. So Russell kept praying. His business kept expanding and he was becoming richer and richer.

It was when Frannie was seven years old when he found out that Judy was pregnant again. Twins this time, he remembered holding her hand and saying a prayer to god when they went in for the ultrasound that would determine the sex of the two new members of his family. He remembered the doctor, telling him that he was going to be the proud father to a son and a daughter. Russell’s face hurt from the smile that had seemed to take a permanent residence on his face.

Six months later he held his son in his arms with tears in his eyes and named him Charlie Reagan Fabray, after his father, and when he finally got around to holding his daughter, he named her Lucy Quinn Fabray. He had his perfect family now. A son to carry on the Fabray name and another daughter who he was sure would be just like Frannie who was a perfect student and a perfect daughter.

Charlie Reagan Fabray, was not the son that Russell had always envisioned. He wasn’t like the other boys his age, he wasn’t loud or boisterous. He didn’t like playing football, even though he did enjoy other sports. But it didn’t matter because Charlie was still his father’s favorite even with these flaws. He was the son that Russell Fabray took too baseball games, and showed off to his friends, much to Frannie’s ire. She wasn’t fond of the fact that her father’s attention was now split between the three of them, with Charlie getting the most attention.

It really wasn’t until Russell found Charlie playing with Lucy’s very girlish toys, did he begin to suspect that there was something wrong with his son. He wondered if his son was a homosexual,
the sinners that he had heard so much about. He had ranted and raved about it at the dinner table while Judy had listened, the entire time his eyes were on Charlie as he spoke, who didn’t really understand what was going on at the time.

The last straw had come when Charlie had wanted to dress up in a Sailor Moon costume like Lucy. He had made a scene at the store demanding to go as Sailor Jupiter, despite Judy telling him that the costume was for girls.

It was the first time that Russell took his belt to his son, an attempt to toughen him up. He immediately pulled Charlie and Lucy out of the school district, he had heard rumors that Lucy seemed to enjoy spending time with the faggot’s bastard child despite his harsh warnings. The last thing he wanted was for his children to grow up thinking it was okay. Frannie had quickly realized that the quickest way to being number one in her father’s heart was to tell on Lucy and Charlie every time they stepped out of line. The belt was becoming common in place in the Fabray household, with Charlie getting the brunt of it. There were times when Lucy shared his fate, but never Frannie who would watch on in glee at the sight of her two siblings getting punished.

The alcohol flowed in the house as Judy began to drink herself silly to numb out the pain of hearing her children’s screams of pain and the sobbing that took place. Russell would punish Charlie for every little thing, if his hair got too long, if he watched things that Russell considered to feminine.

It didn’t make Charlie manlier, he preferred playing soccer to playing football. He preferred to read with Lucy, and they shared a love of comic books. Lucy loved DC, and Charlie loved Marvel comics and they would bicker endlessly about it when Russell wasn’t around. He didn’t approve of Lucy reading comic books. Charlie was just Charlie, no matter how much his father beat him.

In fact the only real thing that made Russell proud of Charlie was his son always defended Lucy as they got older. The girl hadn’t been blessed with Judy’s good looks or metabolism and the other children were cruel to her. He threw Charlie into boxing as a way to keep him from getting to hurt. His son took his lumps like a man never complaining and Russell was actually quite pleased that his son didn’t seem to be one of those homosexuals that he had feared.

Everything changed when Charlie hit thirteen after a particularly nasty encounter which left Charlie with a broken wrist. It was then that the doctors realized that there was something off about Russell’s son. The x-ray revealed that there wasn’t much space left with his growth plates and he was already the tallest boy in his class, standing at 5’9. He was much taller than Lucy and nearly and nearly four inches shorter than Russell. But what stood out was that Charlie lacked an Adam’s apple and had begun to develop breasts. It was an oddity with a boy who was clearly athletic in nature.

Russell’s world came crashing down around him when the genetic analysis revealed that Charlie Reagan Fabray had a double X chromosome. It baffled the doctors that Charlie had fully functional male genitalia. It was the first of many cracks in Russell Fabray’s perfect family portrait.

Almost immediately Charlie was thrown into therapy, and it was quickly determined that Charlie identified with the female gender. It was something that completely destroyed Russell, his son was dead, the son that wasn’t perfect but it had been his son, had never existed. Russell had demanded that they do something that they fix her, if he couldn’t have a proper son than at least they could make her a proper woman. The doctor’s advised against it, saying that she was much too young to make the transition.

It was when Russell started to drink, his perfect family was ruined. He blamed Judy of course it was her fault and it wasn’t as if she could rectify her mistake, doctors said she couldn’t have any more children. He blamed Charlie for being born defected, he could have handled three perfect
daughters but Charlie was far from it, she was a freak. The more he drank the more he took it out on Charlie, the belt wasn’t good enough anymore.

It was the summer between middle school and high school that Russell Fabray decided to move his family from Toledo to Lima. Charlie was developing more female characteristics and the last thing Russell wanted was for people to find out that his wife had given birth to a freak of nature. He had hired a lawyer to change her documentation, Charlie Fabray was officially a girl now.

At least he had Lucy, who was going by Quinn now. After Charlie had broken her wrist, Lucy had decided to become perfect, he had given her permission for the nose job and had hired her a personal trainer and thrown her in dance class and gymnastics to help her shed all her excess weight. He had enrolled the twins into William McKinley high school giving them both a fresh start. Quinn was to be his new angel, she had become perfect just like Frannie and she seemed to want to follow in Frannie’s footsteps.

He would still have to pretend of course, that the Fabray’s were the perfect family. He couldn’t have anyone questioning his parenting techniques, and Charlie still pretended to be a boy when old family friends and coworkers would show up for dinners at the Fabray house or at least make herself scarce.

And like all cracks in glass, the crack slowly begins to grow and spread out, as the days go by. He still takes out his anger on Charlie who is trying desperately to win his affection back. He comes back home to an alcoholic wife who manages to pull it together for dinner parties and a few social gathering before she’s hitting the vodka again. Frannie, his perfect little angel, is now in some Ivy League school where she has met an acceptable man, who she is now engaged to. Quinn is desperately trying to follow in Frannie’s footsteps and is on her way to becoming the youngest head cheerleader and she’s already president of the celibacy club. She isn’t Frannie but Russell appreciates that she’s trying to be a good daughter unlike Charlie.

Russell starts the affair in the middle of Charlie and Quinn’s freshman year, she’s young and beautiful and willing and her tattoos make her look more exotic. She’s not perfect but she makes him feel like he’s the most important man in the universe. It gives him the excuse to not come home to his pretend perfect family. Maybe he can start a family with her, have the perfect son with her.

It’s not until sophomore year of Charlie and Lucy’s high school career that the perfect family portrait that Russell Fabray tried to pass off as reality is found out to be nothing than a farce.
“Charlie.”

“Quinn.”

It’s an odd sight at McKinley to see the two Fabray twins talking to each other. Its common knowledge that the two of them avoid each other like the plague. They don’t even arrive in the same car in the mornings. Quinn drives her white Lexus, while Charlie drives the black version of the same car, a gift from Russell Fabray for their sixteenth birthday.

In fact the last time the two of them had a public confrontation like this, a slushy war erupted between the Cheerios and the girls’ soccer team. No one had been safe, and many clothes were ruined before it came to an abrupt end in a weeks’ time. No one knew which Fabray started it, or which one of them ended it, but after that day in freshmen year they simply had ignored the other ones presence. It was easy when they didn’t even run in the same circles.

The youngest one Quinn Fabray was the head cheerleader, dating the quarterback of the football team and she was president of the celibacy club. While Charlie Fabray was simply captain of the girls’ soccer team, she had brought them to their first state championship the year prior. As the captain of McKinley’s only two championship level teams, they were afforded a level of popularity.

In terms of power, it was clear to everyone that Quinn was the Head Bitch in Charge and her rule was law. For the most part Charlie followed the rules, she was the only one who could openly defy Quinn’s law, and that was probably only because they were sisters, or because the two of them were avoiding another slushy war. Charlie had nearly as much pull in the school as Quinn did, but she unlike her sister mostly kept to herself, the only person she had ever ordered slushied was Jacob Ben Israel and it had been the consensus at the time that he had deserved it after he tried to take nude pictures of the girls’ soccer team.

“What do you want Quinn?” Charlie asked after a moment of strained silence between the two of them. There was an unimpressed tone in her voice, they were Fabray’s they didn’t do public confrontations with each other, especially when all eyes were on them.

“What do you mean what do I want? I saw you at the assembly. You saw what Man-hands did with my boyfriend. She was dry humping him for the world to see,” Quinn hisses taking a step forward and moving away from Santana and Brittany who are at their usual place beside her. “She’s your friend isn’t she? As in you put her on the no-slushy list?”

Charlie wishes she could forget the assembly all together, she’s sure she saw the front of Finn’s getting darker, a clear sign that the boy had blown in his pants. How her sister could be dating him is beyond her, “So what if she is,” Charlie shoots back.

This causes a rumble in their captive audience, as it explains why Rachel Berry hadn’t been slushied once since the new school year started. She is the least popular person in the school, but if Charlie is admitting their friendship in public, it would probably pull her up the hierarchy a bit.

“Really you’re friends with the hobbit?” Santana asks in disbelief and Charlie rolls her eyes in response.

“Tell her to stay away from my boyfriend,” Quinn says ignoring Santana and the crowd that is
currently muttering to itself about this new piece of gossip. “Or I make this week slushy the Berry week. We’ll make a whole event out of it.”

Charlie’s mouth twists into a grimace, they both know that once Quinn gives an order even Charlie can’t stop it. “Fine, but only because I think that Rachel can do better than Finn ‘quick draw’ Hudson,” Charlie spits back as the crowd goes silent. “Get your house in order before you start blaming other people.”

Quinn shoots her sister her patented HBIC glare, “You’re taking Man-hands side? You’re my sister and she is stalking my boyfriend.”

The crowd is deathly silent, it’s the first time that either one of them has even acknowledged that they are related and Charlie seems irritated at this turn of events, “I’ll talk to her.”

“You’ll do more than that you’ll slushy her,” Quinn orders and looks at one of the freshman who is holding a big gulp in his hand. Santana reacts and grabs the slushy from him and hands it to Quinn who holds it out for Charlie to take. “She humped my boyfriend.”

Charlie eyes the big gulp before her hazel eyes focus back on her sister, “I am not one of your idiotic lackeys Quinn, find someone else to do it.”

Quinn frowns and takes a step forward and stands on her toes so she can tilt the contents of the cup over her Charlie’s head. Once the contents of the massive cup are empty she lets the cup fall on her sister’s head. It bounces off the top of Charlie’s head harmlessly and falls to the ground.

The entire hallway is silent and riveted on the scene that’s playing out in front of them, all eyes were now on Charlie who hadn’t flinched away from the sudden attack.

It didn’t even seem as if the sudden coldness and the idea that the corn syrup that is going to stain her clothes phases her. She just stares at her sister that same bored look on her face. “I’ll talk to Rachel, but this whole thing is settled.” Charlie says simply after another long tense moment between them.

Quinn keeps her gaze firmly on her sister, watching as the red slushy drips down from her blonde hair and onto her face. She squashes the guilty feeling that runs through her gut and keeps her HBIC look firmly on her face. “Fine,” she says after a moment. “I’m glad we could reach an agreement.”

With that Quinn turns on her heels and walks in the opposite direction, Santana and Brittany flanking her perfectly as the crowd parts like the red sea for her and the Cheerios, leaving Charlie standing there still covered in slushy.

The crowd eyes the star player of their soccer team, they had certainly expected more fight from her, or at least a fight to break out after the disrespect that Quinn had showed her sibling, but she simply didn’t seem to care.

It’s not until Quinn has disappeared from her view that Charlie begins to walk away, running a hand through her hair to get out the major ice chunks that are still there. Quinn slushying her had surprised her, it’s been her first slushy since freshman year. It had most definitely surprised her, but it was just corn syrup and a bit of ice. It doesn’t take her long to find Rachel Berry who is being chewed out by Mr. Schue. She waits for him to finish before she catches the shorter girls attention.

“Who slushied you? Rachel asks immediately the moment she sees Charlie still covered in corn syrup, as she walks up to Charlie and grabs her arm pulling the taller girl into the girl’s restroom.
“Don’t struggle, you need to get yourself cleaned up and into fresh clothes or you’ll become sticky and possibly catch a cold or worse,” she reprimands Charlie gently as she goes to get some paper towel so she can help clean the taller girl up.

Charlie is quiet for a moment, as Rachel dabs the corn syrup that’s still on Charlie’s face away as best as she can. “Did you really have to hump Finn Hudson on stage in front of Quinn? It’s like throwing down the gauntlet publically. Even I can’t blame her for wanting retaliation.”

“So she retaliates against her own sister?” Rachel asks horrified.

“No I’m wearing the slushy that was meant for you,” Charlie says with a crooked grin lighting up her features, “She couldn’t lose face in front of that crowd and truthfully she didn’t even throw it in my face she just poured it on my head, so it didn’t get in my eyes. But seriously what is it about Finn ‘Quick Draw’ Hudson that has you dry humping him on stage. I saw the damp spot on his jeans from the bleachers. There is not enough mind bleach for me to erase that image from my mind.”

Rachel flushes, “Most adolescent males who are virgins have an issue with premature ejaculation. This is something I thought that you off all people would be intimately familiar with. There are many ways for a person to get over it, apart from practice like condoms or certain creams. It’s something that with a little practice I’m sure Finn will overcome, so it’s not certainly a deal breaker for me.”

Charlie winces at Rachel’s words, she’s one of the few people outside of the Fabray’s and the necessary doctors and lawyers that know her secret. It’s a very short list of people that include Santana Lopez, Brittany Pierce, Rachel Berry and her dads. She’s sure that her coach Roz Washington suspects that there is something up with her, but she’s never asked. “How about the fact that Finn Hudson is the quarterback of the football and is currently in a cliché relationship with my sister? Who has every right to retaliate against you after that display, everyone in the school knows that you have a crush on him. It is a bit disrespectful of their relationship.” Charlie points out calmly.

“You’ve seen the way your sister treats him, he’s not happy in that relationship –” Rachel begins stomping her foot.

Charlie interrupts Rachel before she goes on some tangent that tries to justify her actions, “There is no real justification for trying to get it on with a guy in a relationship. It makes you a bad guy, not Quinn. I don’t care how unhappy another person is, just let them break up on their own, without you being the reason. Truthfully I still don’t know what either of you see in Finn Hudson.”

“Finn is nice, and he listens to me, and he wanted to hear my idea about what we should perform for the assembly. He’s one of the only guys who pays me any attention at this school –”

“I don’t want to get involved in some silly love triangle between you and my sister over Hudson, so I’m going to tell you this once. Leave him alone, once the inevitable break up occurs feel free to purse him as much as you want but while he’s still Quinn’s boyfriend, leave him alone. Because Finn isn’t worth Quinn’s inevitable retaliation, that I’m sure is still heading your way.” Charlie interrupts again.

Rachel huffs, as Charlie straightens herself out, she hates when her friend is right but Finn Hudson is her leading man. She hadn’t expected the quarterback to join the New Directions and she still has no idea how Mr. Schuster managed to convince him to join. “I know he likes me,” she tries once more. “It’s not like I have a line of guys lining up to date me and Quinn can get any boy in the school. And—have you ever just loved someone so much that you just want to lock yourself in a
room and cry while you listen to sad love songs?”

Charlie blinks and the crooked smile is back on her face, she is more amused by Rachel’s diva antics than anything else, “No Rachel I haven’t, and please don’t tell me that’s how you feel about Hudson because you really don’t know the guy. He has the emotional depth of a kiddie pool.”

Rachel groans as she realizes that she isn’t going to manage to get Charlie onto her side about this, “Fine. I’ll leave him alone,” she finally manages to get out.

Charlie rolls her eyes, “I’m sure Quinn will be ecstatic.”

Rachel is quiet for a moment, as Charlie looks in the mirror and fixes her hair, “You know if you joined glee club, then Quinn might lay off. Our performance was received rather well, and I’ve heard you sing before and I know you can follow choreography. If someone as popular as you joins then we’re sure to get more members.”

Charlie sighs they’ve had this conversation before, “Answer is still no,” she needs the popularity that being captain of the girls soccer team brings. It offers her security and it makes her untouchable, people leave her alone and she doesn’t get hassled by anyone. The last thing she wants is for them to find out about what she has going on between her legs, because she knows the idiots at this school won’t just toss her in the dumpster. People like Karofsky and Azimio will go after her physically. “We both know why I can’t.”

Rachel nods, it doesn’t make any sense to her; there is more of a chance of people finding out because Charlie is on the soccer team, but she takes every precaution available especially when the team is away for overnight games. She gets her own room, and her own shower, which she pays for of course, and she doesn’t shower with the other girls or get changed in the same room as them. “Finn’s joined the glee club.”

“Yeah and the football players used him as target practice with their paintballs,” Charlie reminded her. “I’m sure you’ll get the right amount of people to join your club so you can compete at sectionals,” she offered, hoping that it would work.

Rachel rolls her eyes and changes the subject again hoping that she can find a topic any one that will end the way she wants it to with Charlie. “Are you coming over tonight?”

“Soccer practice, and then Russell Fabray is having co-workers over, you know old friends over. It requires my presence,” Charlie says and there is a hint of bitterness in her voice. It’s the first time Russell Fabray has been back for a weekend, he’s been taking a lot of business trips lately, which means that there is plenty of time in between punishments. She’s managed to time it perfectly so she’s never around when he’s around, and she hasn’t been beaten since the end of freshman year. Though she’s certain her luck is about to change.

Rachel winces, she’s heard some scathing commentary from Charlie about it, about Russell Fabray. He’s the reason why Charlie practically lived at the Berry house this summer. She knows she’s not getting anywhere near the full story and she believes that there is something more sinister going on in that house but Charlie always seems to be fine, whenever she visits. “Well we’ll talk this weekend then?”

“Yeah I think Russell leaves for another one of his ‘business trips’ on Saturday morning,” Charlie nods, “So we’ll figure something out.”

Rachel smiled and nodded, maybe she could convince Charlie to watch Funny Girl with her, and she could finally convince the meat-eater about the health wonders of veganism.
“You’re giving Quinn Fabray the solo? That’s my solo,” Rachel says a dejected look on her face as she looks up at Mr. Schue. She didn’t expect Quinn Fabray to strike so quickly, she certainly didn’t expect her nemesis to join her club. Glee club was supposed to be her sanctuary, filled with people who were like her.

“You made this happen, Rachel. You were the one who wanted to sell sex at the assembly. Quinn’s audition song was on Figgins’s approved list and, frankly, she did a heck of a job singing it.”

“You’re punishing me.” She’s sure that Mr. Schue is attempting to sink her career, she earned the solo she had the best voice in the school, this was something that she knew to be a fact, even if she hadn’t heard Quinn Fabray’s voice yet.

“Contrary to your beliefs, it’s not all about you. Or, I’ve realized, about me. Look, I screwed up too. I’m as responsible for what you did at the assembly as you are,” Mr. Schue begins but Rachel tunes him out, she doesn’t want to hear it.

She shoots a look at the clock that’s on the wall, Charlie would still be at practice at this time and she patiently waits for Mr. Schue to leave before she rushes to the soccer field, and takes a seat on the bleachers as she watches Charlie’s scrimmage watching as Charlie spins around a defender effortlessly before taking a shot at net. The ball curls around the goalie’s outstretched hand and hits the back of the net. Charlie pumps her fists in the air as her teammates swarm her.

Charlie gives them her trademark crooked grin and she turns her head and catches Rachel sitting in the stands, as their Coach the insane Roz Washington starts verbally beating down the defender that Charlie got past.

“Alright that’s enough, hit the showers. I need you fresh for the game on Monday, our game against Carmel High won’t win itself and I need you at a 100%” Coach Washington barks out.

Charlie grabs her duffel bag and climbs up the bleacher steps and dumps the bag beside Rachel as she grabs her water bottle and begins to drink it, before squirting the water on her head and shaking it away the sweat. “What did Quinn do this time?” Charlie asks finally as she cools down. She knows Rachel wouldn’t be here otherwise.

“She joined the glee club and took my solo,” Rachel answers back, “And I’m sure it’s just a way for her to take it away from me.”

“Probably,” Charlie replies simply, and Rachel shoots her a glare. Charlie sighs and continues. “I’ll talk to her, it might have nothing to do with you. Its common knowledge that Finn joining the glee club affects Quinn, and she might actually be trying to fix their relationship.”

“Even you think that this is her way off retaliating, “Rachel scoffs.

“No Quinn’s way of retaliating is you being slushied by everyone in this school, and then she’ll take the thing that you love most. Sure this probably has a tiny bit to do with your actions at the assembly today but at the very least you get three new members, and they’re all accomplished dancers. So even though Quinn is undoubtedly trying to screw you over in some way, just you know take this as a win for now.” It’s the best advice that Charlie can give, while she’s sure Quinn is up to something they both know that Quinn isn’t going to share it with her.

“You’re right of course, it’s best to look at these things in a positive light, and you’re right now all we need is three more people and we’ll be able to compete. Brittany and Santana joined with
Quinn, and I know that Brittany is a fantastic dancer. It’s imperative that we find a way to use everyone’s strengths to our advantage if we want to stand a chance of getting past sectionals. We should really focus on trying to recruit more men to help balance all the female voices. Or maybe you can recommend some of the girls on your team.”

Charlie nods only half paying attention to Rachel’s words as she looks at the time on her phone, she winces. “Rae I’ve got to go, or I’m going to be late for dinner,” she can already tell she’s going to be late no matter what she does. She wonders if she can just skip the dinner all together, but she knows that it’s impolite and she’s sure that whatever Russell plans on dishing out it’ll be doubled if she chooses to embarrass him by not showing up. She doesn’t wait for Rachel to acknowledge that and she doesn’t care how rude she seems to be as she grabs her bag and jogs down the steps before running to her car. She slips on her hoodie and fixes her hair in the car mirror, at stop signs. It doesn’t stop her from being late, but she still manages to slip on a pair of skinny jeans in the garage and take one last look at the mirror, she is a sweaty mess and her appearance is sure to draw the ire of Russell Fabray but it’s the best she can do given what she has to work with. She slips into the house as quietly as she can wondering if she has time to make herself semi-presentable, before Russell finds her.

She doesn’t and she can see the smile on his face fade as he and his friend stare at her. Charlie puts on a fake smile, “Practice got out late, sir,” she says trying to look as apologetic as she can. “Good evening Mr. Walton, I’m sorry about my appearance.”

Steven Walton turns to Russell, “You let him keep his hair long like that? He looks rather girly Russell. Careful now or you’ll have one of those homos on your hand.”

Charlie flushes as Steven chuckles at his own joke and she can see the vein in her father’s neck pop, she’s already pissed him off, and she’s only been home for under five minutes. Russell eventually joins in with the laughter, “That’s what I keep on telling him,” Russell finally says as he shoots Charlie a withering look. “Go make yourself presentable,” he says as he leads Steven out of the foyer.

Dinner is an awkward affair with Steven Walton being more interested in Quinn, and he leers at the young cheerleader, while constantly reminding Russell how perfect his son is. Charlie watches Russell pound back wine. She’s lost count of how many he’s had. But judging by the dark looks he keeps sending her, it’s clear that the fact that her streak is about to come to an end. She won’t be able to avoid a punishment from Russell not to tonight.

It’s an hour after dinner by the time Steve Walton leaves, Quinn shoots her an apologetic look but she quickly makes her excuses something about a project for the chastity club. Charlie doesn’t even look at Judy, she already knows that her mother is probably just as drunk as Russell is, and Russell doesn’t waste any time in removing his belt.

Russell slurs his word as he curses her out, and swings the belt wildly before ordering her into the position she’s so familiar with. Hands against the wall, to brace herself with only a thin shirt on. It’s the heavy leather belt this time and he brings it down on her back again and again. She’s used to the pain and doesn’t cry out, which makes Russell angrier.

He hits harder raising welt after welt on her back, till finally she cries out in pain after it’s the third time he’s managed to strike the same place, and the skin which is angry and inflamed breaks. At least this time he didn’t switch to the buckle of the belt, which generally tears her back up. It had taken weeks for her to be completely healed the last time he had. Her back is covered with the scars of the many other times he had lost control completely, of the times he wanted to see her a
bloody mess. Those times are the worst cause he sometimes just forgoes the belt and uses his hands and feet or anything else he can get his hands on.

Her entire back is a raw throbbing mess of pain and raised angry red welts by the time he’s done with her. She can feel dampness of her shirt through the pain and she knows he’s managed to break the skin a few times. She slumps over and she vaguely hears Russell screaming at her, but she ignores him playing dead and he eventually stumbles away leaving her to drag her body back to her own bedroom. It’s her sanctuary, Russell hasn’t the entered the room since she was thirteen and found out that the son that he thought he had never existed.

She doesn’t remember collapsing on her bed and falling asleep, but she is woken up at one am to a stinging sensation in her back. She nearly has a panic attack thinking that it’s Russell who has entered her sanctuary and wants to continue what he started, but it’s just Quinn who enters her field of vision quickly and speaks a few soothing words to her older sister.

“I’m fine Lucy, he didn’t use the buckle this time,” Charlie says, as Quinn places a bandage on one of the open wounds. She hisses at the stinging sensation as Quinn cleans another wound, and puts another bandage on her body.

Quinn gives her sister a noncommittal hum of acknowledgement but it doesn’t stop her from cleaning another cut and applying a bandage. She doesn’t say anything about the thick angry scars that cover her sisters back or the angry welts that are still emitting heat. Russell will be gone in the morning, two weeks on some business meeting and Charlie will be safe for two weeks before he comes back. She wonders how she can run interference for Charlie so she isn’t left with Russell for long periods of time. She hates that it was Charlie who pulled away first, that Charlie is the one still protecting her. Still being the screw-up so Russell doesn’t turn his attentions on her. He’d stopped hitting her once she became Quinn, once she became perfect.

“Why’d you join glee club?” Charlie asks finally, breaking the silence between them. They used to talk about everything, they used to bicker over silly things and tease each other mercilessly. They used to be happy. They were twins they had shared everything, and now they simply didn’t. At least they still loved each other.

Quinn freezes for a moment, her body tenses as she thinks of an excuse before finally replying. “I’m getting my house in order. Finn is my boyfriend and I should support him.”

Charlie snorts and then winces the sudden movement caused a fresh wave of pain, “Okay.”

Quinn nods, she knows that Charlie doesn’t believe her but there is very little that she can do about it. “I’m sorry about the slushy.”

Charlie shoots her that crooked grin of hers, “It’s fine,” and it is because the worst part of slushying is throwing it into someone’s face. Quinn had just poured it on her head, none of it got into her eyes and she wasn’t hit with flying ice. It didn’t cause her any pain just mild discomfort.

“It’s not,” Quinn says, she shouldn’t have done it. At least not to Charlie, but she needed to make a statement needed to show everyone in McKinley who was in charge. “I’m sorry,” she repeats again.

“I’m fine Lucy, I am. It’s just dyed corn syrup and some ice, it’s not like you did all this. It’s not like you’re him,” Charlie says her tone is fair. She understands why Quinn did it, she understands what it’s like to be Russell’s new favorite, to have all that pressure mounted on you. That need to be perfect. She was the boy that Russell thought he had but didn’t, she was the freak the crack in Russell’s delusions for perfection. She would never admit it but she was jealous of her sisters,
jealous of the affection that Russell held for them, jealous of the affection that Russell used to hold for her.

“I knew that he was coming home today, I left you here to deal with this. I slushied you knowing that it’d humiliate you and take you down a few notches –” Quinn begins.

“Justice League vs Avengers, who’s the better team to protect the planet.” Charlie interrupts. “Who wins that fight?” she asks and flashes that grin of hers.

Quinn blinks and smiles back, Charlie forgives her. “Full rosters?”

Charlie nods, “Full rosters,” it an old argument between them usually devolves into playful bickering and light teasing but it always works in cheering her younger sister up. “I say Avengers.”

Quinn lets out a scoff, “Justice League has Superman and Batman,” she begins as Charlie rolls her eyes and the two of them bicker.

The rumors begin to fly when Charlie steps out of Quinn’s white Lexus on Monday morning with the rest of the unholy trinity. They are so used to seeing Charlie arrive minutes after Quinn in her own car that it throws the school for a loop, especially after the incident on Friday. The rumors get worse when they enter the building side by side with Santana and Brittany flanking them.

Jacob Ben Israel is the first one that dares to ask the question stopping them in the hallway with his microphone and camera, “Is this a union between the Fabray twins? After what happened on Friday the school expected another slushy war to be declared. What happened to bring you two back together again? Does it have anything to do with you and the unholy trinity joining glee club?”

The Fabray twins glance at each other and Quinn smiles first, it’s a politician’s smile, fake but filled with charisma. “Friday incident was just a little argument between sisters, one that we’ve already worked out. We are family and most importantly we are twins, we thought it was best if we put our differences aside and put up a united front. Especially with the game against Carmel high tonight. The cheerios will be out there to support the girls’ soccer team tonight and I hope the rest of the school joins us. They can’t win another state championship without the schools support.”

“And the rumors about glee club?” Jacob prompts.

“I’m sure you’ve read about this in the school paper. Finn and I have been an item for a while now. So what kind of girlfriend would I be if I didn’t support him?” Quinn adds shooting the camera that fake politicians smile of hers.

Jacob nods and pushes the microphone into Charlie’s face, for a comment from her. “And how is our star striker feeling before the big game? Nervous? Rumor has it that the new freshman rookies Marley Rose and Kitty Wilde are going to give you a run for your money tonight.”

“Kitty Wilde sounds like the name of a porn star,” Santana comments looking at her nails.

Santana’s observation causes Charlie to bite back her laughter, but she smiles instead and leans into microphone a bit before she speaks. “Our team has only gotten better since last year, and we beat Carmel high last year and we’ll do it again this year.”

Santana steps forward and places one hand on Jacobs’s chest pushing him back as he opens his mouth to ask another question, “Interviews over Jewfro,” she tells him, scowling at the school gossip.
Quinn’s smiles disappears the moment that Jacob leaves them alone and it’s quickly replaced by the HBIC stare as they walk down the hall. She hadn’t heard anything about two new star players and Charlie still hasn’t completely recovered, her back is a mess of black and blue and she still has several bandages on her back.

The four of them walk down the halls quietly for a moment before Charlie begins to peel away, “I should check in with Coach Washington, I didn’t know that they had two new freshman stars, they haven’t played all season. Maybe she’s heard something about them.” she says breaking away from the unholy trinity and nodding once to her sister before she heads in the opposite direction towards the teachers’ lounge.

It’s perfect timing because they see Rachel walking down the hallway carrying her binders by herself. Quinn gives a brief nod to Santana and they break away from Brittany, “We’ll be right back,” Santana says to the taller blonde girl as they make their way towards Rachel Berry, stopping her in the hallway.

Quinn plasters on a fake smile as they make their approach and she watches the diva squirm under their gaze, “The choreography, well it sucks,” she begins watching the shorter girl squirm. They had thought up the plan over the weekend, after they had come in for a Saturday evening practice. Santana immediately jumps in, “It’s completely unoriginal.”

It’s an actual problem, Mr. Schuester isn’t a dancer. He doesn’t know the first thing about choreographing dance routines and they are basic at best and they look horrible. It’d be an embarrassment to perform them on any stage.

Rachel looks confused and looks around for a moment, thinking that they’re about to prank her. “Aren’t you guys going to get shunned by talking to me?” she asks. The only time that Quinn Fabray talk to her is when they’re hurling insults.

Quinn smiles at her, “Sweetie we’re a team now.” Rachel looks at her a look of disbelief on her face, “And Charlie asked me to play nice, so it’s a favor to her mostly,” Quinn continues and Rachel relaxes. Quinn almost feels bad for using Charlie to get to Rachel but it’s not exactly a lie, Charlie had asked her to lay off. “But you need to do something about Mr. Schue’s dance routines,” Quinn finishes.

Rachel nods and begins to walk to her next class, “I’ll think about it.”

Quinn shoots Santana a look and immediately they flank Rachel, “We need Dakota Stanley,” Quinn informs her. “He’s the best show choir choreographer in the Midwest. He works with Vocal Adrenaline.”

“We can’t take regionals without him. He was the understudy to the candelabra in Beauty and the Beast on Broadway,” Santana says with a smirk, as she sees Rachel lighting up at the word Broadway. It is incredibly easy to manipulate her.

“Is Charlie okay?” Rachel asks before they pull away from her, looking at Quinn. “She was meant to call me on Saturday but she never did, I haven’t heard from her all weekend.”

“She’s with Coach Washington right now, she wasn’t feeling well this weekend,” Quinn says with a shrug before she and Santana walk away, heading back to Brittany.

“Really?” Santana asks, there is a suspicious look on her face. “You never mentioned that this weekend when we hung out this weekend.”
“You never asked,” Quinn points out, and is glad when Santana accepts the answer.

“True but Britt’s totally would have wanted to like take care of Charlie, or like given her one of her stuffed ducks or something. She likes to take care of people when they’re sick.”

“She probably didn’t want you to get sick, you know how Coach Sylvester is,” Quinn continues, the lies are easy.

“Please, I don’t get sick,” Santana says dismissively. She’s quiet for a moment, “So what’s the real story? You and Charlie are never a united front publically, not at school anyway. Especially not after what happened on Friday. Did she kick your ass or something? Or is this some twisted plot to get back at the hobbit?”

Quinn smirks, she hadn’t thought about how their new relationship would affect Rachel, she just didn’t want Charlie behind the wheel of a car, especially when she’s taken half a tablet of Percocet to help with the pain. It’s overkill but she needs to be able to pretend that everything is fine, they are Fabray’s they don’t let others see the cracks in their perfect family. “The latter. Charlie does agree that what man-hands was doing wasn’t okay at. We talked about it, she said she’d show a united front so that Rachel would get the message that she’d back me if it came down to it.”

“I thought Charlie hated Finn,” Brittany said adding her two cents into the conversation.

“Yes but he’s my boyfriend, and you saw how it was making eyes at my boyfriend, there is something going on there,” Quinn says defensively.

Neither Santana or Brittany speak up, they aren’t really fans of Finn Hudson either but they’ve learned to leave it alone.
Chapter 3

The best moment of Quinn’s day is when her plans come to fruition and she watches Rachel telling off Mr. Schue. The curly-haired man looks rather distraught as people begin to criticize his dancing. Rachel is rather polite about it, and she’s trying to be delicate but it only seems to compound the problem and Mr. Schue leaves the group to do what they want. Killing the glee club will be a rather easy affair, if Mr. Schue continues to act like a petulant teenager.

The best part is that Charlie doesn’t seem to suspect that she’s up to anything with the glee club, and it seems that she’s avoiding Rachel. It’s probably not even intentional on Charlie’s part but with the match on tonight it seems all her attention is on the girls’ soccer team and she’s currently making the freshman watch clips of Carmel High’s soccer team.

It’s a good day one that can only get better if Charlie manages to help win the big game tonight. Unlike the McKinley’s football team, the girls’ soccer team also named the Titans is filled with winners. They are winners and Lima appreciates winners, the game is going to be packed, especially since they are going against their rivals at Carmel high.

Quinn catches Charlie in the girls locker-room, it’s nearly ten minutes before everyone else is supposed to arrive, but her sister is already dressed and is currently tying her laces. She knows that Charlie has done everything in her power to keep people from finding out, she doesn’t change in front of the other girls and she doesn’t watch them get changed. Everyone thinks she’s weird but the rumor at school is that Charlie is gay and she does it as to not make the other girls uncomfortable. It’s why Roz lets her have her own room when they go on overnight games. It irritates their father to no end to have to pay for the extra room. It’s necessary because Charlie can’t wear her special compression underwear to bed, and as Santana and Brittany had come to find out back in freshman year, Charlie has a daily morning erection.

“Are you ready for this?” Quinn asks keeping her voice low as she walks up to her sister and gently pulls the back of her shirt and undershirt up so she can see just how much Charlie is injured. It still looks awful, but the bruises have faded a bit and there isn’t as much swelling. Quinn gently presses her fingers against one of the bruises and Charlie hisses in pain, forcing Quinn to remove her hand quickly. “Do you need another one?”

“I can’t take something that strong right before a game, and I’ve already taken some ibuprofen,” Charlie informs her as she finishes tying her laces. “It doesn’t hurt as bad and I’ve had people smacking me on the back all day. So long as I play smart I should be fine so don’t worry, this isn’t the worst that Russell has given me before.”

Quinn nods, she remembers the times before Russell used to take long business trips, it was how Quinn had learned to give her sister stitches when she needed them. The two of them are quiet and Quinn gently touches a deep scar on Charlie’s back. She could remember all the blood and it had been the first time that Quinn had been forced to stitch someone closed, it had been with a needle and thread. She had made Charlie drink most of Judy’s gin before she had begun, watching a video on the internet as she copied their movements. Pulling herself from the dark thoughts she let Charlie’s shirt drop back down as the door swings open and the rest of the WMHS girls’ soccer team begins to trickle in, Quinn takes it as her cue to leave and quickly makes her way to the stands where she finds Santana and Brittany and takes a seat.

“I thought we had glee practice tonight?” Quinn asks.

“It got cancelled Mr. Schue never showed up,” Santa replies with a smirk, there plan is working
and they both know that Sue Sylvester will be pleased. “So do you think your sister is going to pull it off, it seems Jewfro was right about them getting two new stars and they seem to be really good. You know for a couple of porn stars.”

“Charlie is better,” Quinn says confidently, but she pays close attention to Carmel high who are already making use of the field.

“Charlie is hurt,” Brittany points out and Santana and Quinn turn to her, both in shock. “I saw her wincing when Finn slapped her on the back. She looked really angry for a moment and I thought she was going to jump him,” Brittany shrugs.

Santana turns back to Quinn and narrows her eyes, “Please don’t tell me your idiot boyfriend hurt one of the only talented athletes at this school. Finncompetent strikes again.”

“She’s fine,” Quinn responds quickly, “Besides Charlie hates Finn just as much as you do. That’s probably the anger you saw earlier,” She says the last part to Brittany who doesn’t respond. Quinn hates how good the other girl is at reading the situation.

Santana shoots her a look of disbelief, she’s learned to trust Brittany’s intuition and from the look on Brittany’s face it seems that Quinn Fabray is being selective with the truth. It’ll be something she’ll look into later as she watches as the WMHS soccer team takes the field. The bleachers are packed and they are lucky that they’ve managed to secure a good spot right behind the bench as they watch the girl’s team place their stuff down.

Almost immediately Charlie switches to Captain mode and the easy going Fabray is busy making sure that everyone is getting warmed up and stretching, before leading them in drills before the game starts. The last one being taking shots on the goalie to help warm her up. Charlie takes the last shot and it slams hard against the crossbar before flying upwards.

One of the freshman places another ball in front of Charlie who kicks the ball again and it hits the crossbar again, nearly in the same spot as the last one and there is a murmur that runs through the crowd as yet another ball is placed in front of Charlie and she runs up and kicks the ball again. The ball slams into the crossbar again and Charlie moves to the back of the line.

“What the hell,” Santana hisses at Quinn, “She missed three times,” Santana says, she’s never been to see one of Charlie’s soccer games as they usually coincide with Cheerios practice or one of the guy’s football games. “Are you sure she’s not injured? I know shit about soccer but I think I know the ball is supposed to go into the net.”

The ball bangs against the crossbar again with enough force to shake the net, but Charlie still doesn’t look perturbed by the fact that she’s missing as the referee blows his whistle signaling that they should get into position.

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“Coach Washington doesn’t seem to be worried San, maybe she was doing that on purpose?” Brittany suggested.

Quinn watches Charlie as she shakes the hand of Carmel’s captain and says a few words before returning to her position. She’s never been interested in the game and Russell had never bothered to bring anyone to Charlie’s games before but she had seen her sister practice whenever Russell wasn’t around. Using the garage door as a net. The dents that had been left behind had irritated Russell to no end and he had punished her. It had been a few weeks after they had found out that Charlie was a girl.

The whistle blew and immediately and Marissa passes the ball to Charlie who immediately passes
the ball backward as Carmel high begins to move, almost immediately Charlie is flanked by Kitty Wilde and Marley Rose who are clearly there to neutralize McKinley’s talented striker.

The game goes on, with Charlie keeping out of the fray and away from the ball, using her positioning to split the defense so that her teammates can find the correct position as they test Carmel’s defense. Charlie touches the ball three times each time she quickly passes the ball away. By half-time the game is still scoreless and there is a restlessness in the crowd, people are disappointed that Charlie seems to not be putting on her usual flair into the game.

Roz Washington still doesn’t seem bothered, by the way the game is turning out, “How good are they?” she asks her captain the moment she takes a seat on the bench.

“They’re decent, but they’re freshman and eager to prove their worth. I can maybe force a penalty shot, or if you want me to put on a show I can do that. They’ve gotten stronger since last year and they’ve learned to have someone on me all times, but they aren’t as fit and I’ve been running them ragged,” Charlie says. “They’re going to start attacking more now that they’ve got a feel for us, so instead of our usual 4-4-2 we bring Missy up and go 4-3-3,” Charlie suggests.

Coach Washington mulls this over for a moment before she nods, Missy is decent in front of the net and Charlie can trust her to put the soccer ball at the back of the net. “Missy you heard your captain, you’re going to be the left wing. Fabray, break their defense.”

Charlie grins and salutes Roz as she stands up and stretches her back out, her back doesn’t hurt with all the running that she’s been doing. The adrenaline runs through her veins and it makes it easier to forget that she hurts.

When the game starts off again the tension in the air is different and Charlie strikes first, intercepting a cross from Marley to Kitty. They’ve made the mistake of separating the two freshman and telling them to ease off Charlie who uses this to her advantage, as she targets the shorter girl using her height to her advantage. It’s almost immediate that she twists around a midfielder with practiced ease, clearing the space for a run to the net. She still has four defenders to get by but she doesn’t seem to stop running directly at one. Her control on the ball is tight and she executes a perfectly tight Marseille turn, leaving the defender standing there in shock. With just the goalie to beat Charlie takes her shot, and watches as the ball curls around their goalie’s fingers.

The crowd is silent for a split second before someone yells goal, and Charlie grins and does a quick backflip mostly for the crowd’s entertainment as her teammates swarm her. She’s broken through the Carmel defense.

Brittany claps a smile on her face, “It’s like she’s dancing with the ball. San we should try that it looks like fun. Do you think Charlie will teach us?”

Santana who is looking slightly impressed by Charlie’s quick footwork, “Well we can always ask.”

“She’d probably love to teach you guys, you know she coaches a kid’s team in the summer,” Quinn says proudly. Suddenly wishing she had been to more of these games, Charlie makes it out to most of her cheerleading competitions for support.

“How has Sue not tried to recruit your sister yet? You saw that backflip, she’d make an excellent cheerleader.”

Quinn shakes her head, “She has, and she’s still trying just less frequently. Charlie’s turned her down several times, for obvious reasons,” Quinn’s voice drops at that and Santana nods. The Cheerio’s uniforms don’t hide much especially when flips are involved. Spanks wouldn’t hide
“She could always wear the pants along with it, like the guys do,” Santana suggests.

“Or she can join glee with us, Charlie’s really fun, and she’s friends with Rachel so we can be friends with her too,” Brittany offers. “Rachel and Mike are in my dance class and we always have fun,” she adds when both Santana and Quinn give her a look.

“We’re trying to get rid of glee club remember?” Santana reminds Brittany.

“But I like dancing and even though Mr. Schue can’t dance, I might be able to choreograph some things,” Brittany explains.

Quinn and Santana shoot each other looks before the cheering from the crowd catches their attention, Charlie has the ball again and she’s gotten past Marley this time and has managed to pass the ball to Marissa who has managed to break through their midfield, before passing the ball up to Missy who dodges a defender and shoots. The ball is off and veers wide and Missy looks irritated at the missed opportunity.

“I want to get my boyfriend back,” Quinn points out, “We all know that Man-hands is up to something.”

“If the hobbit wants to have Frankenteen, then seriously let her have him. He’s a terrible football player and he has rather puffy nipples, and as Charlie pointed out in the middle of the hallway. The boy has an early arrival problem.”

Quinn flushes, “Most guys his age who are virgins have an early arrival problem.”

“Puck doesn’t,” Santana throws out.

Quinn pauses for a moment, “Puck isn’t a virgin,” she says finally. There is no point in telling them that she isn’t one either, and that she hasn’t been one for a few weeks now. “It’s sweet that Finn doesn’t go around sleeping with every woman in sight. It’ll be incredibly special when we do finally manage to do it,” she says. “No one has a good first time,” Quinn says confidently.

Santana smirks, “Speak for yourself, Charlie seemed to know what she was doing.” Her smirk widens as Quinn turns several shades redder.

“She didn’t have any early arrival problems like Finn,” Brittany adds.

Quinn stares at Brittany, she had walked in on Santana and Charlie last year post-coitus, and it’s what had started the last slushy war. She hadn’t known about Brittany and Charlie, “You both slept with her? But she’s a girl—and my sister.”

“It was fun and she was really nice about it, and she was gentle and loving. And she doesn’t go around bragging about it like Puck does or some of the other guys we’ve been with,” Brittany articulates.

Quinn turns to look at Charlie who is currently jockeying for position against Kitty and Marley as Missy prepares to take the corner shot. She would be annoyed with her sister, but she really should have expected it, Brittany and Santana seem to have zero issues with sharing a person.

“Don’t bother bringing it up with her, she hasn’t touched us since you determined that she can’t sleep with your friends. I’ve tried every time Puck’s busy. Imposing your nun-like lifestyle on Charlie seems a bit harsh, though,” Santana points out.
Quinn winces, Santana has a point it’s not like she can openly date anyone at this school. Santana and Brittany seem to be the most accepting people at school. She had suspected that there was something between Charlie and Rachel, but Rachel was so into her boyfriend that she doubted it. “Was she at least you know safe?” Quinn asks.

Charlie misses the header, Missy has overshot it and even Charlie can’t jump that high. It lands at Marissa’s feet and she shoots but the Carmel high goalie manages to stop it. The crowd boos at this but it doesn’t seem to affect Charlie who pats Marissa on the back and leans in and whispers something into her ear, causing the girl to smile and nod.

Santana shoots Quinn a puzzled look, “Of course she was, she told us that they did the test and she can have kids. Me and Britt’s have been on the pill since we were thirteen, but she still insisted on wearing a rubber. Charlie’s responsible like that.”

“Unlike Puck,” Brittany points out. “He never wears a condom, something about how it feels really gross to wear one.”

Quinn pales at this news, but neither Brittany nor Santana notice as they’ve gone back to watching the game, watching as Charlie is currently trying to shake Marley and Kitty who have taken to marking her furiously. The crooked smile is back as she looks at the two of them and fakes before kicking the ball back to De’Wanda letting her carry the ball forward as Charlie double backs, before cutting sharp and hard surprising the freshmen as she blows by them. De’Wanda passes the ball back, making sure that it lands in front of Charlie with military precision.

“He doesn’t use protection like at all? Hasn’t he slept like half the female population at the school?” Quinn asks. “How hasn’t he caught anything?”

“Most girls he sleeps with are virgins and they want Puck to take their virginity. It’s like a rite of passage, but I heard that he’s moving on to older women now, it’s why I broke up with him two days ago,” Santana says as she watches as Charlie kicks the ball in the air as she dodges the slide tackle from Marley Rose, she’s on the edge of her seat as Charlie manages to pass the ball to Marissa who is a few steps ahead of her on the left flank. “Damn she could have beat those defenders and scored. She should have gone for it. When they said that she was the star I didn’t think that everyone else on the team would suck this bad. They’ve had plenty of shots on goal.”

Quinn watches as the action becomes intense in front of the net as Charlie and Missy are currently pushing against the defense which is trying to keep them out. Marissa takes the shot but the goalie manages to bat the ball away poorly as it arches in the air, and doesn’t leave the box. Charlie pushes against Marley and Kitty, letting her back press against Marley’s chest as she keeps her eyes on the ball. Quinn stands up as does everyone in the audience they all know what’s coming, it’s the move that won them the state championship last year as Charlie throws herself in the air rotating her body as she pushes Marley and Kitty out of the way with the move clearing the space that she needs as her foot connects with the ball. It’s a perfectly executed bicycle kick and the ball sails into the upper right corner of the net as Charlie crashes back first onto the ground.

Charlie’s face twists into one of pain as she lands hard on the grassy pitch, and bites down on the inside of her cheek to keep from yelling out in pain. The sudden impact had winded her and she lies there for a moment while people are yelling about her goal. Her team dogpiles on her and she bites down harder on her cheek wondering what had possessed her to be that flashy when a simple header would have worked. She’s terrible with headers though. She feels the girls slowly get off her and she extends her arms out so that Marissa and Missy can help her up. Marissa pats her on the upper back affectionately and Charlie’s face twists again but she manages to put on a smile and plays it up for the crowd who are still cheering her name.
“How did she do that? How did she get the control to get the ball in?” Santana asks shaking Brittany, she hadn’t realized she had been holding her breath. “So this is what a winning team looks like, the cheerios should cheer for winning teams not just the football team.”

Brittany frowns and looks at Quinn, she had seen the look of pain on Charlie’s face as she ran by them. Even Quinn’s face looks tense and there is worry in her eyes and a flash of annoyance on her face. She had been lying about Charlie being hurt. She decides to bring it up with Santana later.

The game is almost over and Charlie has finally slowed down and moves back on defense, they are two goals ahead with two added minutes of over-time. McKinley plays defensively shutting down Carmel’s offense effectively. The final whistle blows and it’s two-nil for McKinley, the crowd goes wild and people are patting Charlie on the back as they line up to shake their opponents hand.

It’s another twenty minutes before Charlie is finally excused and she stands up on the bench and scans the crowds for a moment, when she doesn’t find the person she’s looking for she frowns for a moment before heading up to the unholy trinity, and smiles at them.

“You’re injured,” Brittany says plainly and Charlie’s eyes flick to the blonde.

“I know, I was running late this morning and socks and hardwood stairs don’t mix,” Charlie lies smoothly. “I’m a klutz before I’ve had my morning coffee. I know I shouldn’t have attempted the last goal, but it was an in the moment thing and it worked,” Charlie says and flashes Brittany a smile, she hates lying to Brittany but it needs to be done, the last thing she needs for them to do is get involved, and she knows that they will. “Quinn covered it up because I didn’t want word to get out, Coach would have murdered me or worse benched me, and we needed the win.”

Brittany nods understanding where Charlie is coming from, Sue has cut Cheerios for having the common cold before, and Roz Washington is equally as crazy as Sue Sylvester. “Next time you shouldn’t play, if you’re hurt. It’s risky.”

Charlie shoots Britt her crooked grin of hers, “I won’t,” it’s a lie, she’s used to playing through injury before. Russell had been around more during freshman year. Brittany nods and smiles at her, and Charlie glances over at Quinn who looks slightly ticked off at her.

Quinn waits of course till after they drop of Santana and Brittany at the Lopez residence before she explodes on Charlie. “You said you’d play smart. You landed on your back and I saw that it hurt. You went hard and I’m sure that if I check you’ll have opened up some of those cuts on your back, or aggravated the bruises. I’m sure Brittany wasn’t the only one who noticed. Brittany noticed.”

Charlie shrugs, “Brittany notices everything, but she believed it when I said I fell down the stairs. It’s not like she checked, and most other people chalked it up to my landing which was pretty rough. I’m fine, and the next game isn’t till next week Friday. I have plenty of time to heal before the next game. Which I might not play in, Coach Washington hasn’t decided if she wants our second string to play instead. We needed to win this game and I only went all out in the second half.” Charlie is quiet for a moment before she adds quietly, “We both know that I’ve played with worse than this before.”

Quinn sighs and rubs her face, she shouldn’t have to play injured, she watches as Charlie pulls out her phone and flicks through all the unread messages. Her phone has been vibrating the entire car ride back. An awkward silence fills the car as Charlie mostly ignores most of the texts, “He’s going to be around a lot more after he comes back from this trip, there’s going to be a chastity ball. He wants to do the father-daughter dance with me. He called earlier said he was extending his trip won’t be back for the rest of the month, but he promised he’d be around till Christmas, so we can practice the dance together.”
Charlie tenses for a moment and looks up at Quinn, she doesn’t want to have to dance with Russell, “I’m not going. I’m not a virgin and I don’t want to dance with him.”

“He’ll be angry, the entire church will be there. They’ll be giving us purity rings and everything,” Quinn says. “Mom wants us to go dress shopping this weekend.”

Charlie says nothing for a moment before she speaks, her voice filled with bitterness, “One, I’m not a virgin. Two, Russell doesn’t like me going to church. Something about how I’m a sinner and how I embarrass him. I’ll stay at Rachel’s for as long as I can before I wear out the Berry’s hospitality.”

Quinn bites her lip, “I’m not a –” Quinn begins and Charlie’s hazel eyes flick to her. “Faith is important, you should go back to church. Or at the very least pray, he listens, and he might answer our prayers.”

Charlie studies her for a minute and opens her mouth to say something before closing it, like she doesn’t know what to say for a moment but she looks back at her phone. “Is that what you prayed for? That Russell would love you more? That you’d be his perfect angel like Frannie?” her voice is quiet but it’s filled with hidden hurt.

“No. I don’t pray for that. I pray for you mostly, that you’ll be happy that he’ll stop drinking and realize that you’re still Charlie,” Quinn says, reaching over and grabbing her sister’s hand holding it. “That we can be a family again.”

Charlie pulls her hand away, irritated, “I don’t want to be a family again. Frannie hates us, Judy’s an alcoholic who likes to pretend that everything is fine, who isn’t there when we—I need her. And Russell despises me, he only puts up with me is because people know I exist and if he kicked me out he’d have to explain to everyone what I am. You and I? We’re family, I’ll always have your back Lucy.”

Quinn smiles at her as they pull up to the Fabray household and park in the driveway for a moment, “I’m not perfect. I know I’m supposed to be and I’m not. I’m not Frannie.”

Charlie who had been about to leave the car stops and closes the car door, “No you’re not,” she wants to add the fact that Frannie is a psychotic bitch who will probably end up like Judy. “You’re better than her,” she says instead.

“I’m not a virgin anymore,” Quinn blurts out and she feels Charlie freeze and she looks at her sister’s face hoping that she doesn’t judge her. That she doesn’t reject her like she knows Russell will. There is a look of disgust on Charlie’s features as her face twists into a frown and for one moment Quinn thinks that maybe Charlie has a little bit of Russell in her, that Charlie will use it against her.

Charlie doesn’t and wraps her arms around Quinn holding her, even though the position is awkward in the car as she pulls her younger sister to her.

“You’re disgusted with me,” Quinn accuses trying to pull away.

Charlie tightens her hold and pulls Quinn back into the awkward hug, “No, I’m not. I’m not upset with you. I just thought of Finn Hudson and I threw up a little in my mouth. I’m not going to tell anyone that you had sex, it’s none of their business.” Charlie says gently, but when Quinn begins to get her jersey wet with tears, Charlie realizes that there must be something more to the story. “He didn’t like pressure you into anything did he?” she asks gently.
“It wasn’t Finn,” Quinn says as Charlie begins to rub Quinn’s back, letting her speak. “Coach was yelling at me for gaining weight and I was upset and Puck was still around after school, Santana went to go feed ducks with B and he said he had some wine coolers that it helped when he had a crappy day. So I had like three of them and then we were kissing and well it happened. I thought it was going to be magical, I thought it was something special and I cheated on Finn. I cheated on my boyfriend.”

Charlie wonders if it’s what’s making Quinn so Finn-crazy lately, if she’s merely overcorrecting and trying to be the perfect girlfriend. She wants to make a joke about it but this isn’t the time and the place, so she makes a mental note to have a small chat with the schools resident player.

“Everything will be fine, I’m not going to tell anyone,” she repeats.

Quinn nods into Charlie’s shirt before pulling back a bit, her eyes are puffy from the tears that she shed and she wipes at her eyes. There is more but she doesn’t tell Charlie that Puck’s ‘Trust me’ didn’t mean that he used protection, and if Santana was right Puck might have left her something else. She is more surprised by how calm Charlie is about all of this. “Do you regret it? Your first time?”

Charlie flicked her eyes towards her sister, and paused for a moment before lying. “No, Brittany is my friend and she didn’t make me feel like an experiment or a freak, neither did Santana. Both were really cool about it,” Charlie says with a shrug. “Most people aren’t going to find my body attractive but Brittany did and Santana was cool with it as well, so as losing my virginity goes. Brittany was the perfect partner.”

Quinn nods and bites her lip, she hadn’t enjoyed it. Puck’s body had felt heavy and gross on top of her. She hadn’t found his grunts attractive or him, it had been painful and he hadn’t been particularly gentle. “Did you enjoy it?”

Charlie snorts, “I don’t have the same equipment that you do, so yes I enjoyed it,” Charlie points out with a smile on her face. “A lot of people don’t have a great first time,” Charlie says with a shrug. “I wouldn’t put too much worry in it.”

Quinn nods, she wants to ask more questions but she doesn’t, instead she wipes her face once more and looks at herself in the mirror trying to make herself look presentable.

Charlie takes the conversation as being done and she leaves the car grabbing her duffel bag. She pauses for a long moment watching Quinn fix her make-up before she gets out of the car.

Charlie is back to their old routine the next day and takes her car to school when Quinn informs her that she won’t pick up Man-hands on the way. It annoys Quinn that the two of them are so close, but it seems that Rachel has gotten the memo and finally backed up off Finn. She doesn’t catch Rachel shooting Finn those yearning looks anymore and Finn’s attention seem to be focused solely on her.

“Of course he doesn’t want anything to do with us after you kicked him in the nads,” Finn says throwing a tantrum at the fact that Mr. Schuester has left the glee club to start up with his middle aged men’s a cappella group. Quinn doesn’t understand why he idolizes the curly-haired man so much.

“Then why did he thank me?” Rachel points out calmly.

Santana takes the moment to interrupt, they’ve been at this for the past twenty minutes and her friend seems bored, “The goal is to win. And now that Mr Schuester has agreed to let us hire
Dakota Stanley, We can.” There is a murmur of agreement from the glee club and Quinn smiles.

“But he doesn't want us to. He just doesn't have the confidence to coach us anymore. Guys are real sensitive when it comes to this kind of stuff,” Finn says still desperately trying to defend Mr. Schue.

“And that's my fault?” Rachel asks him, there is a hint of exasperation in her voice and she seems ready to lose her temper.

“Do you see anyone else in here with a plate of ‘I’m sorry’ cookies?” Finn pushes and Rachel shoots him an irritated look.

Quinn rises immediately she needs to put an end to this ridiculous fight, “I don’t—just you. I’m bored. All those in favor of hiring Dakota Stanley?” she asks smiling when everyone but Finn raises their hand and Quinn smiles at the decisive victory. She watches Finn follow Rachel and she feels her jealousy surge, but she swallows it. Soon there won’t be a glee club anymore and Finn will go right back to being her boyfriend. She watches their argument in the hallway before she and Santana make their way to Sue’s office. Where they inform her of their progress.

“You know, ladies... I learned a lot in Special Forces. I was on the strike team in Panama when we extracted Noriega. We took out the shepherd... Then we went after the sheep. You need to go after these glee clubbers One by one. I want my full budget restored,” Sue orders and Quinn and Santana nod.

“I think we should target Aretha next,” Santana throws out. “She was always staring at me as I was getting my mack on with Puck. She does that a lot stare at the couples. I think she wants a boyfriend of her own. We can set her up with Lady Hummel.”

Quinn scoffs at the idea, “Kurt’s gay.”

“Not officially out of the closet, he keeps trying to pretend to be straight, badly” Santana reminds her, as they watch Mercedes staring at Missy Gunderson and Strando kissing in the hallway, a longing look on her face as she talks to Kurt Hummel.

When Kurt walks away, they rush to Mercedes side, Quinn puts that fake smile on her face as they flank the black diva, “You should totally scoop that.”

Mercedes looks puzzled for a moment, “Him? I don't think I’m his type,” Mercedes says with a nervous laugh, nervous in the presence of the two most popular girls in school.

Quinn smiles grows bigger and she leans in conspiratorially, “Oh we think you are,” Santana matches the smile on her face and nods. Breaking this glee club is definitely going to be easy, “Just follow our lead. We’ve got your back.”

“Why am I doing this again?” Charlie asks eyeing the two girls suspiciously as they stand outside Charlie’s car.

“Kurt doesn’t have enough room in his new Escalade for everyone, and you’re the one that picked up Man-hands this morning,” Quinn supplies with ease.

“Yes and there was no one else that you know could have driven the two of you?”

“Mercedes doesn’t have a car, Tina is too young to drive, and Santana and Brittany caught a ride with me this morning,” Quinn points out.
“So why didn’t you just drive her to Carmel?”

“I have never been in a car with Quinn, and given the state of our relationship we determined that it would be best if there was a third party involved, and since you’re my best friend and Quinn is your sister. We assumed that you’re the most likely person to keep us from killing each other, or getting into an accident in case we start another argument. As compensation, I offer you these I’m sorry cookies, they were made for Mr. Schue but he rejected them, and I promise to bring you a batch of your own tomorrow.”

Charlie stares at the sugar cookies for a moment, “Fine but I get to choose the radio station,” she says directing the comment to Rachel Berry who frowns at this. “And neither of you are allowed to talk about Finn Hudson,” this comment is directed mostly to Quinn who rolls her eyes.

“I find these terms agreeable,” Rachel says as she reaches for the door at the same time as Quinn.

“I get shotgun Man-hands. Besides don’t you have to be a certain height to get in the passenger’s seat?” Quinn snaps.

“You’re barely taller than me, Quinn. And I find your jokes about my height offensive, I am in a perfectly respectable range according to my pediatrician.”

“Yeah pretty sure it says that children under twelve shouldn’t sit in the front seat,” Quinn snaps back.

“Yes,” Charlie drawled as she opened the door to the driver’s seat. “It does state that children under twelve shouldn’t sit in the front seat and since you’re both acting like you’re under twelve. Back seat for the lot of you,” she snips, already regretting her decision to help them out. She should have negotiated with Rachel for a plate of brownies instead.

The two girls stared at each other tensely for a moment but it was Quinn who pulled away first walking around the car and opening the door and sliding into the seat behind Charlie, as Rachel got inside the car.

The ride to Carmel High was filled with silence and heated glares, but Charlie ignored them as she tapped on the steering wheel and hummed along to top forty hits as they followed Kurt’s escalade.

“The offer to join glee club is still available,” Rachel says finally, “You really do have a lovely contralto voice, and it’s a really rare voice type for female singers. We do need more people in glee if we’re ever going to hope to compete. And if the Fabray twins are working together, it might get more people to join.”

“The Fabray twins? Do you really think that our combined popularity will help make the glee club remotely cool? People already know that I’m not doing this because I like it. I’m only doing this to be a supportive girlfriend. He’s coming over this weekend you know, we have a hot tub~”

Charlie glances back at the two of them in the mirror, and sees the distraught look on Rachel’s face, “Enough Quinn, this car is a Finn Hudson free zone. You both agreed to it,” Charlie snaps, shutting Quinn up. It’s mostly for her benefit more than anything, she really dislikes the quarterback. Rachel shoots her an appreciative smile and Charlie shrugs. She really doesn’t want the picture of Finn Hudson in a bathing suit in her mind, and she makes a not to be out of the house all day.

Rachel is quiet for a moment before she looks over at Quinn, “I did some research on Dakota Stanley, and you were right about him being the best show choir choreographer in the Midwest.
Vocal Adrenaline looks fantastic and their dance numbers are just as strong as their singing. With Jesse St. James and his female lead Giselle and that waiter at Breadstix, we’re going to need the edge,” It’s an olive branch and everyone in the car knows it.

Quinn smiles, “Of course, we want to win and we can’t do that with Mr. Schue’s choreography.” Charlie lets out a breath when Quinn takes it, and the car ride is less tense. “Are we even sure they’re rehearsing today?” Quinn asks.

Rachel nods, “Vocal Adrenaline rehearses every day from 2:30 until midnight. I’ve done my research on them,” Rachel says enthusiastically. “If we want to win we need to learn everything about our enemy, and vocal Adrenaline has been one of the best show choirs for years,” Rachel looks out the window as Charlie parks the car. “Are you coming with us Charlie?”

“Might as well see what all this fuss is about,” Charlie declares with a bored yawn as she gets out of the car.

Mercedes and Kurt stare at the other Fabray, they certainly hadn’t believed the rumors when they said that Rachel was friends with one of the Fabray twins, yet here she was. “Charlie is it?” Kurt says extending his hand. It would totally explain why Rachel hasn’t had a slushy in weeks. It seems that Charlie would be a good friend to have, having the Cheerios in the club and the quarterback hasn’t made them any more popular and he still gets thrown in the dumpster every day.

Charlie looks at the offered limb and takes it, shaking it once, “Kid-who-gets-thrown-in-the-dumpsters-before-class-every-day,” she says, her eyebrow raised, it’s rare for her to use the Fabray stare on anyone but she generally does when she gets the air that someone wants something from her.

Rachel elbows her in the side frowning at her friend, “This is Kurt, Mercedes and Tina. They’re part of glee club with me. You already know Santana and Brittany,” she says smiling at the two of them who are watching the introductions.

Charlie rolls her eyes, but smiles anyway, “Hello, Kurt, Mercedes and Tina,” Charlie shakes their hand and looks at Kurt and shrugs at him, “I don’t control the football players so I can’t make it stop.” She informs him before he can ask. They’re in glee club, getting the hierarchy to back off would be near impossible and it took a lot of wrangling to get Rachel Berry on the no-slushy list.

Kurt nods it was worth a try, and he offers his arm to Mercedes who takes it. “I'm just so nervous these Vocal Adrenaline kids are gonna laugh at us. They're so cool and popular, and we look like we just stepped off the short bus,” Mercedes says as she leans into Kurt as they walk to the Carmel high’s auditorium.

“Those sweaty nazis have just had more time to practice. We have more heart. And you don't look touched in the head. That outfit is amazing,” Kurt says in a comforting tone, causing Mercedes to smile up at him.

Rachel and Tina shoot each other worried looks, but the unholy trinity smile at Mercedes, encouraging her to take the plunge.

“So, would you ever—you know, want to hang out?” Mercedes asks Kurt shyly.

“Come over. It's Liza Minnelli week on AMC!” Kurt says excitedly.

Charlie is about to make a comment but Rachel is suddenly vibrating in excitement, “Guys!
That’s Andrea Cohen. She won the outstanding Soloist last year at absolutely tampastic.”

Charlie glances over at her sister who shrugs, having no idea what Rachel is going on about, as they walk over to the girl who has her head in the trash can, filling it with the contents of her lunch. She’s sweaty and she looks absolutely exhausted, it looks like the results of Roz Washington and Sue Sylvester’s military like training to separate the strong from the weak. Most of the Cheerios and the Titans don’t make it.

“You can't leave rehearsals for any reason. That includes heat exhaustion or Cohn’s disease,” the girl beside her in a neck brace is saying as she pats the girl on the back.

Rachel doesn’t seem to care and approaches them anyway, “Are you guys Vocal Adrenaline?” She asks giving them their best disarming smile as she approaches them cautiously. “We'd like to talk to Dakota Stanley about choreography for our glee club.”

Andrea gives them a horrified look and shakes her head as she tries to warn the clearly naïve glee club in front of her. “Don't! He's a monster.”

Rachel frowns at this but Santana sees this and is quick to interrupt Rachel’s train of thought, “Please how bad can it be. Coach Washington and Sylvester have intense practices all the time right Charlie?”

Charlie nods, “They are however both clinically insane,” she points out cautiously. Roz Washington had made them suffer through Navy Seal training at the beginning of this year. Most of the girls quit halfway through.

“How many national championships has Sue won? Six consecutive championships. Coach Washington won a state championship last year and that was her first year at McKinley. If you want to win we’re going to need Dakota Stanley’s militant choreography,” Santana finishes. “You need a healthy dose of crazy if you want to get past regionals.”

Rachel nods, convinced by Santana’s argument, and they head into the theater where they watch Vocal Adrenaline perform Mercy. The choreography is tight and it’s amazing just like Rachel feared even Brittany looks impressed. “We need him to win, we can't compete with that,” she hisses as a very short man screams at them to get off his stage.

Rachel is up immediately and follows the short man, “Mr Stanley! We're the McKinley High Glee club.”

“No interviews.” The short man is rude and abrupt as he slides into his sports car with his model girlfriend, which makes Charlie snort as she leans into Santana and mumbles something under her breath about him compensating for his tiny dick, Santana smirks at the comment.

“We'd like you to choreograph for us,” Tina states, not stuttering as she looks at the short man.

Dakota Stanley looks at the group of girls and sighs, “Look, my fee is $8,000 per number, Plus a $10,000 bonus if you place in the top three. And with Dakota Stanley at the wheel, you will place at the top three. Now move it,” he says driving off leaving Rachel aghast at the price tag.

“How are we supposed to afford eight thousand dollars?” she asks looking at the group.

Quinn is stunned by the price tag as well, she hadn’t been expecting that but quickly comes to the rescue. “I’ll talk to Coach Sylvester, we’ll get the Cheerios to do a car wash. To at least pay for one number at least, the last time we had a carwash we raised like ten thousand dollars.” It’s
amazing what pervy guys are willing to pay for.

“That’s brilliant and of course the glee club will help wash those cars,” Rachel says smiling at Quinn, pleased that they seem to be getting along better.

Rachel glances over at Charlie who shrugs, “I’ll see about the girls’ soccer team, but if Quinn can convince Sue then it’ll be a lot easier. They’ll probably make it into a competition or something.” Charlie says dismissively, shooting a look at Quinn. She doesn’t take off her shirt in public, the scars on her back are sure to have people talking and neither one of them want that.

It’s one broken windshield and two carwashes later, when the Dakota Stanley thing blows up in their faces. Quinn is surprised to see that Rachel is the glue that holds the team together and brings back Mr. Schue. Sue has suspended her tanning privileges, she has no idea why Santana cried about this, she’s Mexican she’s tan enough. Charlie’s back is fully healed and she plays in two more games in the meantime. When she realizes that she is late. She’s used to her period being a bit unpredictable especially with Sue’s diet and exercise regime but before she’d never had unprotected sex. But it’s been a little over two months since she’s had her period. She stares at the nearly full tampon box that she’s forgotten about and gets up and quickly walks across the hall to Charlie’s room. She needs her sister to buy her the test, the head cheerleader can’t be seen walking into a pharmacy and buying a pregnancy test.

Charlie is sitting in her chair with her feet propped up reading How to Kill a Mockingbird. They’ve been closer, since Quinn admitted that she’d cheated on Finn, till Charlie had come home from practice and found Finn saying something about a mailman while in the hot tub with Quinn.

“Charlie?” Quinn voice is filled with dread and her sister looks up from the pages of her book, an irritated expression quickly fading to one of concern when she sees the look on Quinn’s face. “I think I’m pregnant,” her voice is above a whisper.

What am I going to do if it’s positive?” Quinn asks as her voice breaks. It has been the longest five minutes of Quinn’s life as she sat with her back against Charlie’s waiting for the timer on their phones to go off. Charlie doesn’t say anything, she’s just as numb as Quinn is. She wants to yell at her younger sister, ask her how she could have been so careless. Demand to know why she didn’t make sure that Noah Puckerman wear a condom, but she doesn’t say all that. Instead she listens to Quinn’s gentle sobs and takes her sister in her arms, and just holds her as the rest of Quinn’s walls tumble down. “What am I going to do? What would you do?” Quinn asks.

Charlie sighs and rubs Quinn’s back, “I’d get rid of it,” she says finally, much to Quinn’s horror. If she could get pregnant and she was in Quinn’s shoes at that moment in time, it’s what she’d do. Perhaps if their family was different, if she had grown up in a house filled with love instead of a world where Russell has openly stated that he wishes that she’d never been born.

“It’s a baby,” Quinn protests quickly. “I can’t kill an innocent baby because I made a mistake.”

“A baby is something that you can hold in your hand that gurgles and poops a lot and is sort of sticky and helpless. What you have growing inside you isn’t yet a baby,” Charlie answers defensively. “It’s not.” She sighs and looks at her sister pleading with her, “I can find a clinic maybe in one of the bigger cities we can skip a day and get it over with and no one will ever have to find out. Russell won’t find out.”

“It needs me to live and become a baby. I can’t kill it because I made a mistake, I can’t stop another person from coming into existence because I made a mistake.” Quinn whispers quietly,
Charlie frowns at this, she had been fifteen at the time and she had taken every precaution, even insisting on wearing the condom despite the fact that both Brittany and Santana had informed her that it was okay. Condoms break and birth control isn’t one-hundred percent effective, but at least she had minimized the risk. “I’m not the one who’s going to be an incubator for nine months. It wouldn’t be my decision to make,” she finishes lamely.

“And if they wanted to keep it?” Quinn pressures her.

Charlie frowns deeply, “I’d step up, and I’d make sure that I was with them every step of the way. I’d respect their decision whether they chose to keep it, or have someone adopt it.”

“And how would you feel if they got rid of it, of your child.”

Charlie looks at the time, they have under two minutes to go. She hadn’t thought of it in that way, “I’d respect any decision that they wanted to make. It’s their body, I can’t ask them to give up nine months of their life so I get to be selfish and have a kid. Which I can’t afford. Or have a kid just so I can give her away, to someone who could potentially be a parent like Russell. And you know it can’t grow up in this household, not with Russell, not with Judy being like she is.”

Quinn’s quiet for a moment, she truly hadn’t been expecting Charlie’s view to differ so radically from her own. It seems almost immoral to her, yet Charlie seems to be taking the pragmatic approach to the problem. Did Russell truly damage her to the point where she couldn’t see that it was a life? That there was a life growing inside of her, and getting rid of it would end that life before it could truly begin. “All I want is for you to respect whatever decision I make,” Quinn says finally as the timer on their phones flashes and a chime is heard.

Charlie finally nods before reaching for the stick and looking at the test, her mouth going dry as she looks back up at Quinn Fabray, she tries to put on a smile to at least ease Quinn into the knowledge. “You’re pregnant,” she says quietly as Quinn’s face drops, the last little bit of hope that her life would turn out just fine is gone. Charlie’s heart breaks for her sister, though there is a little part of her that is still angry at Quinn. She doesn’t know how Russell is going to react when he finds out, but she knows that he’s going to blame her. That this mess is somehow going to be her fault.

“I need to tell Finn,” Quinn says quietly.

Charlie nods not knowing what to say, at least with this news the quarterback will be gone. “I can be there when you tell him, and when you tell Puck,” she offers. The news will spread fast once Quinn and Finn break up and once the school knows the reason—There is no way that Coach Sylvester will allow a pregnant cheerleader on the team, she doesn’t even want to think of what Santana’s reaction is going to be when she finds out. Whatever happens it’s more important now than anything that she keeps her status in the school, Quinn has way too many enemies now and she’ll need to keep them in line to protect her sister.

Quinn shakes her head, “I can do it by myself.” Charlie wouldn’t approve of her plan, but there is no way that she’s going to hitch her ride to Noah Puckerman. She wants her child to have a future and stability, which is something that Finn Hudson can provide. It’ll at least by her time to figure out what her decision is going to be.

Charlie opens her mouth to say something but nods, perhaps it will be better for her to handle both boys. Even though she can’t imagine Finn reacting well to the news, his reaction would probably
be to go after Puck which means that she won’t have to. “I’ll protect you when the school finds out,” Charlie vows rubbing her arm absently. “We can make a doctor’s appointment in a few days for a confirmation.”

“We can’t use dad’s insurance, he’ll find out. They’ll call him and he’ll know, same with our credit cards. Dad pays the bills,” Quinn points out.

Charlie nods and bites her lip, she’s been saving every single dime that she could since she was thirteen and the beatings started getting bad. She wanted a nest egg so when that if the soccer scholarship didn’t pan out, she’d have something to help her live on her own till her trust fund kicked in at twenty-one and she could afford to go to school. She had managed to save nearly seven thousand dollars. It came from working to jobs in the summer, the summer league that she coached in paid relatively well and she worked at the local Walmart at night doing inventory. Russell still paid for mostly everything for appearances sake, and perhaps he felt a bit guilty but it allowed Charlie to save most of her money. “I’ll help, I’ve got some money saved up, just tell me what you need.”

“You don’t have to do that,” Quinn protested only to be stopped by Charlie putting a comforting arm on her shoulder.

“Puck lives just outside of Lima heights, he can’t afford it and I know that you don’t have much money saved up, so let me help you till Puck manages to get his act together.” Charlie rubs her jaw, at least Puck has his silly pool cleaning business. “I can make the money up later. I’ll get a job at breadstix or something, Santana will probably enjoy that,” Charlie says leaning back. It really would be cheaper to just get of it, but she’d support Quinn no matter what her sister chose to do.

Quinn opens her mouth to protest again but Charlie grins at her, and Quinn feels horrible about not telling Charlie that she plans to pass the baby off as Finn’s. She knows that Charlie hates him and she doesn’t want her sister to find out that she’s attaching her wagon to Finn. She wants to get out of Lima, and Finn is probably the best way to do it.
Chapter 4

Jacob Ben Israel is the first one to feel the cold sting of the slushy when Charlie gets to school the next day. She had grabbed the slushy from Azimio as she entered the school and had tipped it over Jacobs head, letting the cup bounce of his head as she walked by.

The busy hallway is stunned into silence, as Charlie walks by, ignoring the whispers that are starting to circulate. Most of the rumors have to do with what Jacob Ben Israel has done now to catch the ire of the captain of the soccer team. The only time that Charlie had slushed anyone was during hazing week when she got on the team and during the slushy wars in which she only slushed Cheerios and certain football players, mostly Finn Hudson. True she had ordered a hit on JBI before, but it was only after he had done something that deserved punishment like trying to take photos of the girls’ soccer team as they changed.

“Geez Charlie, what’s crawled up your ass?” Santana asks as Charlie tips the slushy that Puck is holding letting it spill all over the resident play boy.

The action stuns even Santana, Puck is a football player and is currently one of the most popular boys at McKinley. He doesn’t get bullied, he certainly doesn’t get the slushy treatment.

“Fuck! What the hell Fabray!” Puck yells turning on the soccer player who immediately stops and rotates stepping into his space. He’s met with a cold stare from Charlie that catches him off guard, it’s nowhere as practiced as Quinn’s HBIC stare but it gets the job done, and Puck takes a step back.

Charlie smiles and grabs Puck by the front of his letterman jacket and smiles, it’s a cold smile and she roughly flicks the jacket, getting some of the ice chunks off him. “Sorry Puckerman, accidents happen.”

Puck meets Charlie’s eyes, unlike most girls he doesn’t have to look down at her since she’s nearly as tall as he is. The cold look in her eye sends a shiver down Puck’s spine when he realizes that Charlie Fabray knows. He nods, hoping that this slushy is his punishment for sleeping with Quinn, but judging by the glint in Charlie’s eyes he knows he hasn’t heard the last of it. Noah nods, “Its cool, accidents happen,” he repeats, and Charlie lets him go.

Rachel who had seen both altercation’s latches onto Charlie’s arm and drags her into the girls’ bathroom, thankfully it’s empty and she locks the door, making sure that no one can enter the room. “What was that? You’re the last person in the school that I expected to be throwing slushies. This behavior is very similar to something that your sister would do, and I find it abhorrent, especially what happened with Noah just now. You know that I don’t approve of violence and it looked like you were a few seconds from attacking him. You may not know this but Noah attends temple with me and he’s one of my friends, even though he has given into peer pressure and slushed me several times. I’m sure whatever your issue is with him is, you can easily solve it if you have a calm rational conversation with him,” Rachel snaps at the taller girl.

Charlie mutters something under her breath, she wants to tell Rachel, but she knows that the girl can’t keep a secret like this. Especially not when Finn Hudson is involved, she knows that Rachel will do whatever it takes to get the quarterback to herself, and she refuses to be the one that gives Rachel that ammunition. “Puck deserves it,” she finally says. Rachel will find out soon enough, when Quinn and Finn break up and the news is out.

Rachel’s eyes widen, and her voice lowers, “Does it have something to do with,” she points at
Charlie’s crotch. “I can talk to him, if you’d like, especially if he plans to go to JBI with that information I can understand why you did that—”

Charlie glances down at her crotch for a moment before looking up, “No, Puck doesn’t know about that. Trust me when I say Puck deserves that slushy.” Charlie sighs and runs a hand through her hair, she doesn’t know how to tell Rachel without telling Rachel, “When Quinn gives an order or even when Santana gives an order, people follow through, and I’m just as popular and my word doesn’t carry nearly the same amount of weight.”

“This is about popularity?” Rachel hisses, and Charlie flushes. “I thought you were different than everyone else. Did Quinn put you up to this?” Rachel asks. “Because I was very grateful when you stood up to her, even though I think you should have let me take the slushy. Throwing slushies at people and picking on them is something that Quinn Fabray has done, you made more of an impact by letting Quinn slushy you.”

“I wouldn’t be doing this if it wasn’t for someone important to me. You know me Rae, there are very few people that I consider that important. I’d certainly do it for you, if I thought you needed it. You’ll find out why soon enough. JBI will probably break the story by lunch.” She’s trusting that Quinn deals with the situation in a way that is discrete but with Finn Hudson and Noah Puckerman involved she doubts it.

Rachel looks at her friend and finally notices the resigned look on her face. Charlie has never really been one for bullying, she certainly doesn’t stop it, but she has always seemed to protect the people that she cared about. “I’m not going to say that I agree with your actions, and I still firmly believe that whatever it is that you need weight for it would be better served as being a voice for those people who get bullied every day, I think you’d have more of an impact that way. But the choice is completely yours of course, I can only hope that you make the right decision,” with that Rachel brushes by Charlie and unlocks the door walking past Santana and Brittany who been waiting for Charlie.

Santana frowns Rachel and looks at Charlie who lets out a frustrated groan and wildly rubs her head messing up her hair. “I hear hobbits have that effect on people,” Santana jokes and Charlie snorts and visibly relaxes, Santana’s words have less of the bite that they normally do on it. “You going to tell us what the deal with Fuckerman is about?”

“No, but he deserves it,” Charlie says, she doesn’t add that she thinks that he deserves more, and that she wants Puckerman to be given a slushy bath and for him to be thrown into the dumpsters every day for the rest of the year. Brittany nods, agreeing with Charlie but she has that look in her eye and Charlie can tell that she suspects something. It’s almost impossible to keep anything from Brittany. “We’re going to be late for class,” Charlie finally mutters leaving with them as they walk to class together.

“Quinn! Quinn. Hey, what’s with the silent treatment? Whatever I did, I’m sorry,” Finn calls out to her as he follows her through the hallway. The head cheerleader had ignored all of his texts and phone calls last night. Maybe he had forgotten plans when he was busy playing call of duty last night or maybe it was an important anniversary that he had missed. The halls are rather empty by the time that Quinn finally slows down and lets Finn catch up with her.

Quinn looks around the hallway and leans back against the lockers, making sure that no one is listening. “I’m pregnant,” her voice is low hushed and she continues, despite the fact that Finn’s eyes have glazed over and she can tell that he’s not paying attention anymore. “Charlie went to get the test, I couldn’t do it by myself. She waited for me, and I’m sorry I didn’t call you and tell you when I found out,” she says quickly.
Finn is still confused and looks at Quinn confused, “Mine?” he asks finally, he has no idea how this happened, and he winces when Quinn shoots him his best HBIC stare.

“Yes. You. Who else’s would it be?” she questions him, lying to him, she is a Fabray and they are fantastic liars and actresses.

Finn scratches his head and bunches up in confusion, “But we—we never—you know?” he says helplessly.

Quinn is quiet for a moment, Charlie had always said that Finn Hudson was dumb as rocks and she is now about to test that theory, “Last month. In the hot tub.”

“But we were wearing our swimsuits!” Finn protests, he remembers that. Quinn had been all over him and even remembering mailman hadn’t helped with his problem. He had apologized profusely.

Quinn pushes a little harder, “Ask Jeeves said a hot tub is the perfect temperature for sperm. It, it helps it swim faster.” When the panic sets in on Finn’s face, Quinn is glad that Charlie was right about Finn’s intelligence level.

“Oh, my God. Oh, my God. Oh, my God. Are – are you gonna get a—?” he can’t even finish saying the word as he looks at Quinn helplessly not knowing how to make it better.

At this Quinn begins to cry and Finn takes her in his arms. This is where she belongs, even though he smells of too much axe, he’s much too tall and Charlie doesn’t like him, she belongs in Finn Hudson’s arms. She can decide what to do with the baby later. “I really thought I had a shot at getting out of here! No, I talked it over with Charlie, I can’t do that. I can’t kill an innocent life because we made a mistake,” she continues to cry on him and Finn looks around helplessly not knowing what to do.

It’s the second time that day that someone has pulled her into a room with them, she half expects it to be Rachel again. She had gotten a text at lunch that suggested that her life was over and that Mr. Schue was trying to ruin her career. Charlie had merely rolled her eyes at the message, Rachel had a tendency to overreact.

She’s more concerned that the latest news at the school is that Kurt Hummel is currently the new kicker for the guys’ football team. She had caught a look at Quinn who seemed less distraught that she had been and had a pleased look on her face. Judging by the fact that McKinley had come to a complete halt and there weren’t people lining up to slushy her sister, Charlie assumed that Quinn had done something to lessen the blow, or Finn had done.

It was why she wasn’t truly surprised that it was Noah Puckerman who had dragged her into an empty classroom and closed the door. “I really hate being man-handled Puck,” Charlie snips, as she jerks her arm away.

“Is it mine?”

“What do you mean is it yours, if you’re trying to duck responsibility for this Puck I will kick your ass,” Charlie hisses. “You’re the person who decided that it would be an excellent idea to get a girl drunk so you can slip your penis inside of her, the least you could have done is wrap it up.”

Puck raises his hands trying to calm Charlie down, “I’m not trying to duck responsibility, Finn told me that it was his. But he’s never mentioned getting it on with Quinn before and I remembered what you did this morning so I had to make sure.”
Charlie is at a loss for words, the only good thing about this entire situation was that Finn Hudson was going to be out of her life. “Finn told you what?” Charlie asks finally.

“That it’s his,” Puck repeats slowly and he watches the wheels turn in Charlie’s head. “Finn mentioned something about a hot-tub and how he hadn’t meant to—”

“It’s yours. We both know that Early Arrival Hudson can’t get it out of his pants before he blows, how in the world was he supposed to actually do anything with Quinn,” Charlie interrupts. She feels the pressure build up in her head and she knows that she is going to have a migraine later. Quinn has made the situation infinitely worse. Secrets like these are almost impossible to keep hidden especially with high school students.

“I’ll take responsibility of it,” Puck vows, “I’m not going to be like my dead beat dad. I’ll take responsibility for it, and I’ll help pay for medical bills and whatever she needs.”

Charlie ignores him for a moment as he continues to talk about his plans for Quinn and his child. She is busy trying to figure out what Quinn’s angle is, and kicks herself for not taking control of the situation and making sure that Quinn did the right thing. Even though she strongly dislikes Finn, he shouldn’t be held responsible for something that he had no part in making.

“She can break up with Finn and she can be with me now. I love her, you know I always have,” Puck finishes and it breaks Charlie out of her thoughts as she stares at the boy incredulously.

Charlie hand moves quickly and she smacks him hard upside the head, before grabbing the front of his collar and yanking him down so she can look at him face to face. There’s faces are almost touching as Charlie finally deals with a bit of her anger over the situation.

“You got my sister drunk on wine-coolers, and then proceeded to have sex with her, when you knew she was feeling vulnerable. Let’s pretend for a moment that I have a dick,” Charlie says her eyes cold as she keeps her focus on Puck. “And I decide to do the exact same thing to your sister, Sara. She’s still a girl isn’t she? She’s upset because daddy Puckerman isn’t around and I offer her a few drinks. She trusts me and comes back to my place. She has a few drinks, and when she finally says yes because she’s lost her inhibitions, I slide my dick raw into your sister. I fuck her,” her voice is cool and she sees the fear and disgust in Puck’s eyes, “I steal your sister’s virginity and at the same time get her pregnant. Luckily I’m not the school’s male whore so there isn’t a chance of me giving her a disease, not that Quinn has that luxury mind you. And then I come to you, like you idiotically came to me after you already know and I tell you that I love Sarah. What is it that you’ll do to me, for knocking up your sister, for deciding to prey on her when she’s vulnerable?” Charlie taps Puck’s face gently when he doesn’t answer the question. “Answer the question Puck.”

“I’d kill you,” Puck whispers finally finding his voice, “I’d never let you near my sister again.”

Charlie smiles at him and pats his cheek, before letting him go. “I should do that, you know. Kill you, but lucky for you I can’t get kicked off the team for fighting. I need my popularity to protect Quinn, not that I think I can make a difference now that she’s gone and made the situation infinitely worse for herself. So you’re going to do all that, Puck. I’m going to conveniently forget that you said you loved my sister, because what you did wasn’t love. You preyed on my sister, and while I doubt Quinn is completely innocent in this, she is still and always will be my sister.” Charlie said firmly, “You will man up and you will apologize. And you are going to be her attack dog when all this bullshit finally hits the fan. Oh, and you will keep whatever feelings that you have to yourself, cause if for some reason Quinn tells me that she’s dating you; I will find you and I will kill you. Do I make myself clear Puckerman?”

Noah nods and takes a step back as Charlie smiles at him and once again pats his cheek again hard,
“Crystal,” he mutters under his breath and Charlie nods at him and straightens out his letterman jacket before storming out of the room.

Charlie pinches the bridge of her nose and she rubs it trying to soothe the migraine that’s coming on. She’s not meant to deal with all this drama in one day, and tries to remember all the times that she and Quinn had shared recently. That Quinn was the same person as Lucy and that she’s just a scared little girl, who’s terrified of people bullying her like they did when they were kids. She fails, it’s to Machiavellian even for Charlie to understand. It’s something Russell would do in an attempt to keep the idea of a perfect family intact. No matter what happens Quinn is going to be humiliated, she’s going to be branded a hypocrite and she’s going to be removed from the Cheerios, and once people find out that the baby daddy is Noah Puckerman, she’s going to be labelled a slut and a cheating hoe.

Charlie wants to throw her hands up and say screw it, but she continues to move. She needs to deal with Finn first, and make sure that he stops telling everybody who will listen, Quinn was supposed to deal with Puck, Finn wasn’t supposed to tell him. She needs to contain the situation before the whole school knows.

She spots Finn standing by his locker sorting through it probably trying to get the books for his next class and she grabs him by the arm and spins him around. She hates that Finn Hudson towers over her, but she doesn’t let that stop her from placing a finger in his chest, and keeping her voice low, “Keep your mouth shut Hudson,” she hisses at him.

“What are you talking about?” he asks, before cringing. He didn’t know what it was about the Fabray’s but they were scary as hell when they were mad. He hadn’t minded Charlie, in fact he had thought she was rather cool.

Charlie wonders what her sister ever saw in him. “Don’t tell anyone else about Quinn,” Charlie says making sure that her voice is low, but loud enough for only Finn to hear her. It takes him a moment and Charlie feels the urge to bang her head against one of the lockers grow, until he finally nods in understanding. It finally dawns on Charlie that Quinn probably wanted some idiotic sap that was easy to control and it seems that Finn Hudson fits the bill. “Good, who else knows apart from Puck?” she asks finally before pulling away from him.

“Mr. Schue, but don’t worry I’m not going to be a Lima loser you know,” Finn says and opens his mouth to say more, but Charlie ignores him and moves on leaving him standing there with his mouth hanging open. She doesn’t have time to deal with whatever tangent he’s about to go on. It’s not her job to be Finn Hudson’s personal cheerleader and tell him that he can do it. She doesn’t even want the boy at the peripheries of her life, and she needs to talk some sense into Quinn because there is still time to control the situation.

“I have been trying to get ahold of you all day Charlie,” Rachel says as she nearly slams into the soccer player.

Charlie groans inwardly as Rachel begins to speak. “Rae, we’ll talk later, I have some business with Quinn that needs to be taken care of,” she says sending a pleading look to her friend. She knows she hasn’t been the best of friends lately, “Russell’s going to be home tomorrow and I’d rather not be there, so I’ll probably swing by tonight?”

Rachel lights up at this news, it’s been awhile since Charlie has been over to her house, and she enjoys having the Fabray living with her. “Of course, I understand the need, family is extremely important and you are looking rather stressed. Is Quinn alright?”

Charlie is surprised that Rachel even cares enough to ask about Quinn but she lets it go, there is a
time and a place to ask about it, and she still needs to find her sister so she can beat some sense into her. “She’ll live,” Charlie mutters under her breath.

“I saw her with Santana and Brittany near the Cheerios locker room,” Rachel says helpfully only to blink as Charlie takes off. Rachel’s face twists into a frown, Charlie has been acting odd all day and according to JBI she was seen entering a classroom with Puck. She makes a note to ask her about it tonight. She doubts that she will get anything out of Charlie, she rarely says anything about her life at home.

“What’s the deal with Charlie and Fuckerman? She looked ready to kill him before class started today. Did he try and get into her pants again?” Santana asks.

“And she slushied JBI, it wasn’t very nice of her,” Brittany adds.

Even though she hadn’t been there, it had been impossible not to hear about it. Everything that Charlie had done today was being dissected by the entire school. She knows that Charlie has probably figured it out that she hasn’t told Finn the truth and she’s been avoiding her as best as she can. “She’s probably all worked up because our dad is coming back from one of his business trips and she stays with man-hands.”

Santana frowns at this, “What is up with that anyway? Her being friends with the hobbit? She’s not boning her on the side is she?”

Quinn shakes her head and looks at Santana thoughtfully, there is something hidden in her voice that sounds suspiciously like jealousy. “No I don’t think so. Otherwise RuPaul wouldn’t be making eyes at my boyfriend. I don’t even know how she knows about Charlie. All I know is my sister enjoys crashing with the Berry’s instead of coming home when our father is here.”

Brittany pouts, “She can stay with me or San’s if she really doesn’t want to go home. I mean she can’t keep staying with the hobbit all the time. She’s our friend too, and she liked to feed the ducks with me and San.”

Quinn says nothing, at first, she had been the one to tell Charlie to stay away from Santana and Brittany that they were her friends. It was probably why Charlie had become such good friends with Rachel and kept the two of them separate. She almost felt guilty but swallowed it, it had been for the best after she had caught Santana and Charlie together. She had needed to put a stop to it before it went any further and it was easier to keep them separate than to deal with the fallout of a relationship ending between them. “You should let her know Britt’s, you know she can’t say no to you if you ask.”

“You can ask her now, she’s heading our way,” Santana points out and Quinn snaps her head to look at her sister, who looks irritated. Santana is looking at her curiously, “She looks like she’s about to go all Lima Heights on your ass. What did you do to piss her off?”

Quinn doesn’t answer the question as Charlie finally manages to confront her. The soccer player is about to say something but Quinn quickly beats her to the chase. “I made a decision, and you said you’d support me,” she says cutting her sister off before she can say anything. Charlie looks enraged by her words, “It’s the right decision.”

Charlie looks at her sister a look of disbelief plastered on her features and she ignores the curious looks that Santana and Brittany are shooting them, it’s not like they’re going to tell anyone anything. “You can’t do this. Just rip the Band-Aid off and get it over with, you know I’m going to have your back. You should know better, you can’t pretend that things are perfect and everything is
going to be fine when it isn’t,” her voice drops at the last part and she suddenly remembers that Britt and Santana are watching them. “This is something that he’d do and I thought you were better than that, I thought you were better than him.”

“I made my decision and you said you’d support me,” Quinn repeats after a tense moment of silence between them. She wasn’t going to lose control of everything and ruin her life just because she got pregnant. She could still make it work out, and maybe still get out of Lima.

Charlie exhales, Quinn is being very liberal with her interpretation of what she agreed to support. “I don’t support this, and you can’t expect that this will turn out well in your favor. If you’re going to insist on doing this then do it without my help. I’m not going to enable you,” Charlie says firmly. “You’re on your own. I’m not helping you with this.”

“I’m not on my own, I’m with Finn,” Quinn protests.

Charlie throws her hands up in frustration and rolls her eyes, “You might as well be on your own. The boy is dumb as a post.”

“Stop the fighting,” Brittany says and Santana immediately steps in between the two sisters pushing them apart.

“What the hell is going on? Please don’t tell me that you’re arguing about Frankenteen?” Santana asks looking between the two sisters.

Quinn is about to lie when Charlie rolls her eyes, “There is really no point in lying about it, Finn’s already told Puck and Mr. Schue, I had to make sure to shut it down before someone like JBI found out. It’s bound to come out sooner or later so it’s better to tell them sooner rather than later.”

Quinn frowns at this news, she hadn’t expected Finn to tell anybody, she had asked the boy specifically not to tell anyone earlier. She winces at Santana’s expectant look and turns to look at Brittany, “I’m pregnant,” she says quietly. Almost immediately Brittany wraps her arms around Quinn holding her while Santana just stares in shock.

Santana looks back at Charlie and then at Quinn, there is something more to the story and she can feel it but neither girl is coming forward with the details and she sighs, damn the Fabray’s and all their secrets. They had always been good at saying things without actually coming out and saying it when it mattered. Santana doesn’t know what to do and she looks at Brittany for help but the blonde girl is comforting Quinn and Charlie still looks like she wants to throttle her younger sibling. She quickly goes over the interaction she saw with Puck earlier and plays back the argument that she and Brittany just witnessed and the pieces fall into place and looks back at the conversation that they had at Charlie’s soccer game.

“It’s not Hudson’s is it?” Santana asks and neither girl answers her confirming her theory. “It’s Puck’s then.”

Charlie nods, “He dragged me into a classroom earlier and asked me if it was his. He also told me you that you wanted to pass it off as Finn’s baby. I have no idea what he told Mr. Schue, but someone is bound to point out whatever lie you told him about hot-tubs. Don’t give me that look, he mentioned it to Puck, and Puck mentioned it to me,” Charlie snaps when Quinn gives her a surprised look.

Santana’s jaw drops in disbelief, “Wait he believed that?”

“Apparently,” Charlie said dryly. “If you’re going to continue to insist on pretending that you are
carrying Finn Hudson’s love child, which won’t hold up because everyone in school has heard me commenting on his early arrival problem, not to mention they saw it up close at that assembly. People are going to suspect something that it’s not his.”

“They wouldn’t have if you had just left Puck alone this morning,” Quinn snaps.

“You’re pregnant, you’re going to start showing eventually, Sue will kick you off the team, and with this stunt I don’t think even Santana and I together can protect you, when you drop to the bottom of the food chain,” Charlie points out, this isn’t like her issue which she can hide with compression underwear, and baggy pants.

“You have to tell the truth,” Brittany says immediately agreeing with Charlie.

Quinn shakes her head, “I can’t lose Finn.”

Charlie groans, she’s tired of hearing about Finn Hudson. It’s like Betty and Veronica fighting over Archie, it’s old and played out and she doesn’t understand the appeal of the ginger boy. “Fine do whatever it is you want to do, but I don’t support it. I’m not going to help you in this crazy scheme of yours. It’s some Jerry springer type crap that I want nothing to do with.”

Quinn tears up as Charlie spins on her heel and storms away, suddenly realizing that the last bit of family that she has come to depend on, isn’t around anymore and she’s finally truly on her own. She briefly wonders if she’s made the right decision. She knows she belongs with Finn.

Brittany sighs, she really doesn’t like the negativity, and she knows that Quinn is to stubborn to admit that she’s making a mistake and has every intention of riding the mistake to the bitter end. “Charlie’s just mad, but she still loves you and she’ll be back,” Brittany says as she rubs Quinn’s back.

“Finn has been helping me run my lines,” Rachel mentions briefly as she sits with Charlie working on a history paper together.

“I thought this house was a Finn free zone,” Charlie responds bluntly. She doesn’t want to hear about Quinn and Finn. She hasn’t spoken to her sister since their blowout a week ago. She doesn’t want to get involved in some petty poorly thought out high-school drama. Puck and Santana have taken it upon themselves to keep her informed. She’s already aware that the entire glee club knows that Quinn is pregnant, now that the morning sickness has arrived.

“I am aware of our deal, however since you are my only girl who is also a friend, I’m in desperate need of your advice. And isn’t this what girls do at slumber parties, talk about their feelings, and boys—or girls respectively. It’s a form of bonding, and right now I really need your advice on Finn Hudson.”

“I’ve given you my advice on Finn Hudson, on many occasions,” Charlie points out, she wants to add more but Rachel is giving her a pouty look. “Fine but we’re totally going to watch something that doesn’t have anything to do with Barbra tonight.”

Rachel pauses and looks at Charlie, she’s been trying to make her sit through the complete works of Barbra Streisand, it hasn’t been going well much to the amusement of her fathers. Charlie had been living with them for a week now, and she generally didn’t stay for very long even though her father’s had insisted that they felt much safer with Rachel having a friend over, and that Charlie was allowed to stay as long as she wanted. “I agree, to your terms but starting tomorrow we’ll continue with Funny Lady.”
Charlie groans and crosses her legs, “Fine, but we’re not watching a musical tonight.”

“You need to expand your musical repertoire and I have the perfect musical just for you, I’m sure with your dark sense of humor and the fact that Nightmare before Christmas is one of your favorite movies, you’ll thoroughly enjoy Sweeney Todd.” Charlie is about to protest when Rachel continues, “Tim Burton, Johnny Depp and Helena Bonham.”

Charlie blinks at the name dropping and stares at Rachel, “And it’s a musical?” Rachel nods. “Fine, tell me about your boy problems.”

“It’s not really about Finn, not really I went bowling with him last night. You know while you were at soccer practice. And he was very much a gentleman, and he even knew that my favorite color was pink. I’m not having fun doing Cabaret, not with Sandy Ryerson, he’s trying to write himself in as Cleopatra. We kissed, it’s our second kiss and I think he really wants me to come back to glee club, and he said if I do he’ll join the musical with me.”

Charlie was quiet for a moment, so that’s why Rachel had totally allowed them to watch Fight Club last night without so much as an argument. “Second kiss?”

“Yes we kissed before our assembly performance,” Rachel informed her.

Charlie rubbed at her temples, wondering once again why Quinn had insisted on hitching her ride to Finn Hudson. “Rachel, I know that I haven’t talked to Quinn in a week, but she’s still my sister, and even though I’m your friend, we’ve talked about you putting me in this position before. You can’t kiss other people’s boyfriends.”

Rachel flushed, “Perhaps they’re on the outs. It’s possible you said it yourself they aren’t good together, why else would he be showing interest in me. I mean I know I’m not as pretty as Quinn is, and I talk a lot and I can be pretty abrasive, but Finn Hudson is showing an interest in me. I am aware of the position that this puts you in, and I will totally understand if you want to take her side in this, but I know that he has feelings for me. I felt it in that kiss, it helped make up my mind that maybe it’s best to go back to glee club, so I can be closer to Finn.”

“Finn and Quinn aren’t going to break up anytime soon, unfortunately.” Charlie replies calmly.

“You don’t know that,” Rachel protested. “I’ve seen you ignore her calls and you avoid her at school as well. It’s no secret that you aren’t Finn’s biggest supporter. Perhaps that’s what’s causing a schism in their relationship. Quinn has been very hard on Finn lately.”

Charlie frowns at this, she just didn’t think Finn Hudson was good enough for Rachel or Quinn and if he had no problems cheating on his sister, while he thought that the baby was his. Then he was a terrible person. “I’m surprised that Kurt and Mercedes haven’t told the whole school yet, next to JBI they are like the biggest gossips in this school.”

“Told the school what?”

“Quinn’s pregnant,” Charlie informed her bluntly watching as Rachel’s mouth dropped.

“Quinn’s pregnant?” Rachel repeated.

Charlie is quiet for a moment as she lets the news sink in, “I don’t know why Finn kissed you, he’s dating Quinn and that should tell you something about what type of person Finn Hudson is. He’s cheated on my sister twice with you.” Charlie points out. She’s smart enough not to add that Quinn cheated on Finn, she doesn’t add that the baby isn’t his. She expects Rachel to start going on a rant about what a terrible person that Finn is, to finally agree with her that Finn Hudson isn’t worth her
time and energy, she doesn’t expect Rachel’s reaction.

“Your sister is pregnant and you’ve been ignoring her for a week because she’s dating someone that you don’t approve of?” Rachel hisses at Charlie whose mouth dropped in surprise.

“That’s not—what? We’re talking about how Finn Hudson is a sneaky bastard who is using you for his own personal gain.” Charlie sputters.

“You were so set on protecting Quinn a few days ago, you were even going to use your position to get what you wanted and punish people if they dared to say anything about your sister. I simply don’t know what’s changed since then, is it because she plans to keep it? As a girl who does not have the right—equipment to carry a child, you cannot judge her for wanting to keep it, nor is it morally right to pressure her into getting rid of it. While I personally believe in a woman’s right to choose, I know myself that I could never bring myself to an abortion. I personally think that adoption would be best, because raising a baby while going to school will be difficult.”

“This coming from the person who decided to kiss my sister’s boyfriend twice.” Charlie frowned, “Why are you taking her side in this, you don’t even like Quinn. I’m not mad because Quinn didn’t get an abortion, though would make things remarkably easier,” Charlie muttered the last part and she winced when she saw Rachel’s look of annoyance. “It’s not why I’m mad at her, I promise. I can’t tell you why I’m mad at her because it’s not my place to tell you, or anyone.”

“I admit that my actions haven’t always been honorable when it comes to Finn and I may have let my desire for the perfect leading man blind me. But I assure you that if anything were to happen to the baby or to Quinn you were to never forgive yourself. Especially not when you were correct in your initial assessment that the school will be extremely unforgiving to Quinn. She’s going to need you to protect her, especially when she decides to tell your parents. From the little you have said about your parents, I don’t think they’re going to be supportive of your sister, and she will need you to lean on.”

“So what are you going to do about Finn?”

“You are the worst person at changing the subject,” Rachel comments before shrugging her shoulders, “I miss glee club, even without Finn’s interference I would have probably returned, but if Quinn is pregnant with Finn’s baby then I need to start focusing on my career. I can’t be tied down to a person who has a child, and will probably keep me in Lima,” With that Rachel goes back to writing her history paper, completely missing the pained look on Charlie’s face.

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Morning sickness as Quinn comes to find out isn’t something that happens only in the morning. She hates it of course, the rushing out of class so she can lose her lunch. Finn isn’t much help, he gets grossed out by the smell of vomit. She had gotten the first bill for the doctors and it was two hundred dollars, she didn’t have that type of money lying around. She hadn’t seen a need to save obsessively like Charlie did.

Quinn groaned as she hugged the toilet, she had expected Charlie to be there every step of the way and to support her decision to insist that Finn Hudson was the father of the child growing inside of her. She thought out of everyone that understood then it would be Charlie, appearance were important. It was one thing to be the pregnant girl at school, it was another to be girl who got knocked up by her boyfriend’s best friend. She’d be labeled a whore and a cheater and everything she had worked so hard for would come crashing down. It didn’t hurt that Russell actually liked Finn, at least the idea that his daughter was the head cheerleader and she was dating the quarterback of the football team.
Quinn groaned as her stomach heaved violently again, she had slowly begun to alienate everyone around her. Santana had finally realized that Puck had cheated on her with Quinn and the Latina had been furious with her. She had wanted to go all Lima Heights on her ass, but Brittany had calmly reminded her that she was having a baby.

Everyone was going to find out, even Rachel knew now and it crushed her to see that look of pity in Rachel’s eyes, but at least she was focusing on other things rather than stealing her boyfriend. The diva had admitted that Charlie had been the one to tell her and a part of Quinn felt betrayed that her sister had been so cavalier with the truth, even though she knew it was ridiculous. This wasn’t something that she could hide, this wasn’t like Charlie’s secret which needed baggy pants and compression underwear to keep under wraps. At least Charlie had kept the babies true paternity under wraps.

It certainly didn’t help matters that she was gaining weight quickly and Coach Sylvester had begun to make comments about her weight gain. Her Cheerio’s uniform had gotten tighter and she knew it wasn’t going to be long before she needed maternity clothes. Finn had been insisting that cheerleading was much too dangerous to do while she was pregnant but she ignored him, she was going to hold onto the power while she still could.

The dry heaves finally stopped and Quinn pushed herself to her feet and flushed the toilet before leaving the bathroom stall, she was surprised to see Charlie leaning against the sink with a small Ziploc bag that contained a toothbrush and some toothpaste as well as a pack of gum and some crackers. Charlie held the bag out to her and pulled out a bottle of water as well. Charlie’s hazel eyes met hers and Quinn felt her vision blur with tears. “I thought you said I was on my own,” Quinn said quietly as she wiped the unshed tears away and took the bag from Charlie. It had been nearly two weeks since she had seen her sister.

Charlie didn’t say anything for a moment, “I don’t agree with what you’re doing. Finn shouldn’t be on the hook financially for something he didn’t do.”

“It’s better if everyone just thinks that it’s his baby,” Quinn interrupts. “My reputation can handle that, it can’t handle being labeled cheater and a slut. I can come back from a mistake like having a baby, but once I get labelled a cheater—”

“Rachel told me that JBI knows, she gave him some underwear to keep him from posting it on his blog. It was brand new underwear and she forgot to take the tags off, and he’s demanding actual used underwear worn by her.” Charlie interrupts, watching as Quinn froze. “Santana, Puck and I will try and deal with him, but you know how sleazy he is. The story will probably break tomorrow at the end of the week at the latest. It’s going to be bad. Finn’s popularity is in the toilet with him in glee club, and once you’re no longer a Cheerio-”

“I know,” Quinn whispers and she feels the tears blurring her vision again. She doesn’t know if it’s the hormones or the feeling of helplessness that overwhelms her and the tears begin to fall. Everything is a mess and everything that she’s worked for is about to be ripped away from her. She had spent several months losing the weight to become Quinn Fabray, she’d put up with Sue Sylvester’s military like training and she’d excelled at it. She didn’t want to become Lucy Caboosey again, she didn’t want to be bullied again. The last time it had happened, Charlie had broken her wrist and everything at home had changed.

As it stood if the story was going to break soon then they had to get ahead of this with Russell. Whatever his reaction would be it would be infinitely worse if he found out through someone else, especially if it was someone who went to their church.

Charlie rubs at her temples, “I’m coming home tonight, and I know Russell is still around but you
need me there more than I hate being there. I’m not going to let you deal with this by yourself and I’ll be there when you tell them. I’ll make sure he doesn’t lay a hand on you.” Charlie says her voice strong as she rubs Quinn’s back. “Don’t worry I’ll stay out of his way but I’m going to be there for you. I have a game Saturday morning, it’s an away game but we can tell them when I get back?”

“Finn’s coming over for lunch on Saturday, dad wanted to meet the gentleman who was escorting me to the chastity ball. He likes Finn, so we should probably tell them when he’s around.” Quinn said, at least with Finn there then it might cause Russell to remember that appearances are important.

Charlie nods, it’s a lunch that she can skip then. Finn isn’t nearly important enough for Russell to insist on her presence. “I’ll try and be home around two. Since it’s the last game of the regular season, we’re having a team lunch afterwards.”

Quinn nods quietly, it’s the only plan they have. “What do you think he’ll say? When he finds out?”

Charlie shrugs, “He wants people to think that he’s the perfect father, so the worst that he’ll probably do to you is yell at you, maybe insist that it’s best that you get an abortion, he’ll of course drop that train of thought when he finds out the school knows. If it’s a boy, then you know he might choose to adopt it for himself. He can finally have the perfect son. What do you want to do with it?” Charlie asks as Quinn drinks some water.

“I still don’t know, I don’t want to be the type of person who gives my baby away, but I think that they’ll have a better life if I do. You were right when you said that daddy can’t be in their life. He’s never going to accept my child, his grandchild.”

“You can do one of those open adoption things and be a part of its life,” Charlie says with a nonchalant shrug when Quinn looks at her surprised. “I wanted to know what your options were and I thought about what you would want. It seems like the best option you know, you get to be a part of your kid’s life but you aren’t her parents. You get to watch her grow up and you’ll be her aunt or something. Something to think about at least.” It probably isn’t wise to mention that Rachel had made her sit through an hour long PowerPoint presentation the night before.

“I think I’d like that,” Quinn says and her day is finally looking up as Charlie walks her to class. Just like that they are back to being sisters again, and Charlie is back to protecting her sister.

Jacob Ben Israel posts the news that evening at the behest of Sue Sylvester and Quinn is no longer at the top of the food chain.
Chapter 5

It starts with Karofsky.

“Oh, I’ve wanted to do that ever since fifth grade... when you made fun of me for getting pubes. Now that you've joined Lullaby Lee's and inseminated the queen of the Chastity Ball... and dropped below us hockey dudes on the food chain? It's open season.”

It’s only after he says those words does Quinn realizes that all eyes in the hallway are on her and Finn and people are pointing and whispering at her. It’s a new world order, which means that a slushy war is imminent and every sports team is going to try and take the top spot in the school. She watches as Finn slams Karofsky into a locker before she finally speaks up. “Screw you Karofsky, you and the rest of your neanderthal puck-heads are nothing in this school.”

“What are you going to do about it? You don’t have the juice you once did,” he sneers at them.

“None of you losers in the Lullaby Lee’s have nearly the amount of juice as you once did. Even the Cheerios don’t have the juice they did, what when the head cheerio is a whore and the vice-captain is the town bicycle. Chastity club my ass.”

Quinn takes a step forward and slaps him hard across the cheek, the sound echoes in the hallway and the crowd holds its breath as Karofsky pushes Finn off him and stands to his full height as he glares at Quinn, “You will always be a nothing at this school Karofsky,” Quinn hisses at him and Dave raises his hand.

“Please don’t tell me you’re stupid enough to hit a pregnant woman,” Charlie says and the crowd parts as Dave freezes. “The hockey players aren’t a championship team, which means in the food chain you’re below the girls’ soccer team. Quinn is off limits,” Charlie says simply.

“You? Your reputation is no better, people say that you’re like the loser whisperer,” Dave spits, “Besides being some sort of whore probably runs in the family.”

Charlie’s eyes narrow, “What’s that supposed to mean.”

Dave smirks and takes a step closer, “You aren’t in the celibacy club. So the question and you don’t have a boyfriend. So the question is who are you spreading your legs for? Or are the rumors true and you’re just a dyke.”

There is a murmur that runs through the crowd, as Charlie raises a brow, it’s not as legendary as Quinn’s and Dave just smirks at her and takes another step closer. “Right now I have more juice at the school then you do. So I’m going to repeat myself slowly and clearly, so your ape like mind can keep up. Quinn. Is. Off. Limits. Now walk away before I decide to have you slushied en masse, or worse make today slushy the idiotic puck-head named Karofsky.”

Karofsky glares at Charlie who meets his gaze coolly but pushes Finn away and into a locker before storming off, the crowd parting for him.

Finn blinks and taps Charlie on the shoulder causing her to look at the boy, “What about me?” he asks.

“What about you?” Charlie asks confused by his question.

Quinn sighs, “He wants you to put him off limits as well.”
“He’s not pregnant,” Charlie points out but sighs when Quinn gives her a look, “Fine and Finn, he’s off-limits as well,” she says loudly and the crowd begins to dissipate. “He’ll be back you know, probably with reinforcements. But Coach Roz wants to see me. She’s giving us all an impromptu health class to make sure none of us get pregnant. Attendance is apparently mandatory,” she shoots Quinn a knowing smile and her sister rolls her eyes and Charlie she takes off. She’s already late and she’s not in the mood to run suicides till she can’t feel her legs anymore.

Quinn frowns as she watches her sister leave. “She can’t be everywhere. We need to become popular again.” She says this mostly to herself but she turns to look at Finn.

“Ms. Pillsbury can give us advice, she helped me get Rachel back to the glee club,” Finn offers.

“Ms. Pillsbury?” Quinn repeats. “We’re asking advice from Ms. Pillsbury?” Quinn resists the urge to smack her forehead, from the way she dresses and her general demeanor she can tell that Ms. Pillsbury was never cool. That she had never been one of the popular students back when she was in school.

Quinn can’t help wonder when her life became a tragic comedy, just yesterday she had the power to make or break a person with a look. Now people are vying to slushy her. Charlie might have the juice but Karofsky was right, Charlie was soft. She should have demanded that Karofsky be carted away and given a slushy bath, or arranged for her team to slushy the boy, or slushied him herself. She didn’t strike fear into people’s hearts, and if this continued Charlie would have anarchy on her hands. She wasn’t meant to be the HBIC.

“Rachel came back to the club didn’t she?” Finn points out and puffs out his chest, he had done that. She hadn’t even confronted him about it, she had just come back to the club.

Quinn doesn’t reply, as she lets Finn take her to see the guidance counselor. She’s not surprised when she gets terrible advice, but Finn wants to try it, since all the celebrities do it and he finds them these ugly sunglasses to wear. They look like something a blind person would walk around in. The only good thing about it is that it protects her from getting corn-syrup in her eyes when she gets slushied for the first time since freshman year. It’s a mass slushy and while she suspects Karofsky is behind the attack, its Azimio leading the charge with the other football players.

Quinn raids Charlie’s duffel bag in the girls’ locker room and slips on one of Charlie’s baggy hoodies and some sweat pants. They are to long since Charlie is taller and she has to roll them up, much to her chagrin. It’s already shaping up to be the worst day of her high-school life. Which is cemented when Sue Sylvester, who she’s been avoiding, kicks her off the squad in front of a crowded hallway. It caps off the day that’s filled with humiliation.

It hurts that Santana isn’t around still upset that Puck cheated on her with Quinn, who was supposed to be her best friend. It’s odd that Puck is being a gentleman with her, offering to help with the parental duties, since Finn hasn’t done anything to help out yet. She’s had to borrow money from Charlie to pay for the first doctor’s bill. Her life is a mess and all it took was one mistake, one drunken hook up. Charlie simply can’t control the masses and she knows from that moment on she’s going to have a slushy facial every morning.

Charlie’s losing control of the school, not that she ever had it to begin with. She wasn’t made to rule the school she hates playing politics with people and personally prefers the heavy-handed method. When Finn gets slushed again for the third time that day, Quinn isn’t surprised when he chooses football over glee. Popularity had always been important to him, to them.

“Why didn’t you go back?” Quinn asks Puck as they sit on the bleachers together, watching Finn
toss the ball around. “Choosing glee club over football, you’re going to have a slushy facial every
day.”

Puck grins at her, “They can bring it. I’m still the biggest bad ass in the school,” he says with a
grin and leans back watching the team. Quinn can tell that he misses playing. Football was
probably Puck’s ticket out of Lima and now that it’s gone he’ll probably be stuck here like the rest
of them. “You know, I never apologized.”

“For not using a condom?” Quinn asks raising a brow and looking at him.

Puck nods, “It was brought to my attention in graphic detail that what I did was wrong, that I
fucked up. I know it’s never going to make up for it, but I am sorry. For a lot of things, for not
putting on a condom, for getting you pregnant. For sleeping with you when you were vulnerable.
Take your pick.”

Quinn is quiet for a moment, “Charlie?”

Puck snorts, but nods, “Your sister is one badass chick,” he says quietly. He doesn’t mention that
he saw Charlie knee Karofsky in the balls after the mass slushy incident, and as the hockey player
was on his knees informed him that the next mass attack on Quinn would result in her actually
kicking him in the nads. The girl is terrifying when she’s protecting someone that she cares about.
He’s secretly glad that she had decided he wasn’t worth the effort to torment. “I think she was
ready to kill me.”

Quinn snorts, “You’re scared of her, shame she can’t channel that when she deals with the school.”

“You haven’t been slushied today,” Puck points out. “She’s doing fine, doesn’t help that she finally
got Santana on board in helping her. I think Finn is still getting it because she really doesn’t like
him.”

“I thought that was because Finn got back on the team,” Quinn says and she shoots him a puzzled
look. “What has she been doing?”

Puck shrugs, “I’m not sure but she has Santana by her side, so probably a lot of underhanded
dealings and a touch of blackmail, and when that doesn’t work she uses more heavy handed
methods. Wish I had family like that you know, I love my sister and would do anything for her, but
a twin that had my back. This place would have been a hell of a different if you and Charlie had
actually worked together from day one.”

They sit in a comfortable silence as they continue to watch the football team practice, “I’m going to
give her up for adoption.” Quinn says finally. “It’s a girl, I found out the other day after school. I
haven’t told Finn yet.”

Puck sighs but nods, he doesn’t know why he is going along with this plan but at least his child
isn’t going to call Finn daddy. That would kill him, and he knows that. “Do you have a name for
her yet?”

“Finn wants to call her Drizzle. I told him no. I haven’t given it much thought yet. Naming her
makes it seem more real and I haven’t even told my parents yet. I don’t know how they’re going to
react. Their perfect daughter getting herself knocked up. We’re going to do it this weekend though,
Charlie, Finn and I. After Charlie’s away game.”

“If you’re giving her up then can we tell Finn? He’s still my bro.”

“Do you generally sleep with your bro’s girlfriend?” Quinn snaps at him before sighing, “I will,
just after everything settles down. Finn hasn’t really helped with the bills or anything at all. I mean he tries to get jobs, but he never does.” Charlie was on point with Finn’s intelligence levels. “I’m sorry for snapping.”

Puck shrugs, “Its cool, you’re right though. I broke the code first,” Puck says simply.

“You’ve changed since the beginning of the year.”

Puck shoots her a smile, “Knocking a girl up will do that to a person. I want to be a better person you know. Want to be someone that my kid can look up to. I got a job at a bookstore, and I’ve got my first paycheck, and it’s not much but you can have it to help pay for things.” It’s a lie he’s taken to selling for Sandy Ryerson, it’s an easy gig he’s making more money than he would be working at a bookstore.

Quinn nods, “The adoption is going to be open. Charlie suggested it to me, so we can see her grow, and can be a part of her life. She’ll never call us mom or dad, but if we find the right family we can still be able to see her and still be part of her life.”

“Did you even think that we could do it? You know raise it together?” Puck asks her.

Quinn shakes her head, “We can’t afford a baby and neither one of us can afford to drop out of school either. We both want to get out of Lima and this is going to be one of the ways to do it.” It’s not the complete truth, Charlie’s valid point that they couldn’t raise a child with Russell anywhere in the picture.

Just the thought of telling Russell hurts, and she’s more scared than she’ll ever dare to admit. He had been in this good mood as of late, he had said that it had something to do with an acquisition for his company, he didn’t seem to care that Charlie was around, but Charlie had been careful. She never had dinner with the family, and she was generally back by nine pm each night, just as Russell was getting into bed. She was generally up and out of the house just as Russell was waking up.

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“Sweetie, I’m so proud of you. The Chastity Ball is so important to your father,” Judy isn’t drunk at the moment it’s one of her rare lucid moments and Quinn and she looks to be beaming with pride. She wonders why Judy hasn’t forced Charlie to attend the event but she knows why. Russell would have a fit about it, “That’s odd. We had this custom-made a month ago.” She adds after a moment her being lucid means she’s more aware of her surroundings.

“I had a really big lunch today at school. Really big tacos.” It’s a lie, a poorly thought out lie and she can see the look of disbelief cross Judy’s features.

“No worries, sweetie. I’ll just take it down to the tailor tomorrow. We’ll let it out a little bit. The problem here, honey, is, you know, I just don’t think you’ve been getting enough exercise ever since you quit the Cheerios. Am I right?” Judy doesn’t push the issue instead choosing to just move on. Telling them that she had quit the cheerios had been the only way to explain why she wasn’t wearing her uniform every day. Judy has never asked about Charlie, or what she’s up to. It seems that she operates on the same frequency as Russell. Out of sight and out of mind.

“Yeah. Yeah. That’s right,” Quinn nods, it’s the best she can do given the situation.

“I mean, you used to spend hours every day doing backflips and high kicks, and now, I mean, now you spend all your free time sitting on a stool in the dark singing show tunes. Do you know how many calories you burn singing? Hmmmm? Not very many. Charlie at least runs around chasing
after a ball. Is she still on the soccer team? I haven’t seen her in months.” Quinn pauses, ever since they had done the genetic analysis. Judy seemed to withdraw from Charlie’s life, and hers. Diving deeper into the bottle, as Russell spewed more venom and got more violent with her middle child.

“Judy! Glen Beck is on!” Russell’s voice is booming and it fills the house. Quinn can hear that slur in his voice and she knows he’s been drinking. “Oh! Wait. Hold on. Hold on.” Quinn can hear his footsteps.

“He’s so—” Judy pauses and there’s a look of disgust on her face, and Quinn can’t place why there is one.

He’s smiling as he knocks on the door, and there is that proud look on his face, “Oh, I don’t want to see!” he laughs and puts his hands over his eyes. And for a moment Quinn doesn’t see Russell Fabray she just sees her dad.

“Daddy, it’s not like we’re getting married,” Quinn laughs and she sees him peeking through his fingers.

“I don’t want…oh. Oh look at you. You look perfect,” he says and there is that pride in his voice, the one that he used with Frannie. The one that Quinn knows that Charlie would secretly kill to hear again. Charlie works just as hard as anyone to keep herself perfect, she has perfect grades, she’s got the soccer team. She may not be in the chastity club but she tries just as hard to make him proud. Even if she never refers to him as dad anymore and calls their parents by their given names. ”Speaking of getting married how’s that boy you’ve been dating?”

“Yeah. Yeah. He’s not, uh pressuring you at all, is he?” Judy asks, it’s nice that she still tries to act like a mother from time to time.

“No! No, he’s a gentleman,” she wants to laugh at this, now that she is pregnant, it’s not as if she can’t have sex with Finn. But they haven’t he hasn’t shown any interest in her, and she doesn’t particularly want to have sex with him either.

“I’m glad to hear that. Mm-hmm. That’s why I’m inviting him over for dinner tomorrow night.” Russell says with that proud smile still on his face. Quinn quickly realizes that she needs to inform Finn that Charlie is not a topic for discussion with Russell. He doesn’t want to be reminded of his other daughter, or as he sees it the son that he never had.

“Oh! Wonderful!” Quinn’s not sure if that’s real enthusiasm from her mother or not, but she can certainly act if it isn’t.

Russell glances at the near empty glass in his hands and stirs the scotch in it. ”Refresher?” he asks Judy smiling at her as she leans in to give him a kiss on his cheek

“Honey, I don’t want you to lift a finger for me. I’m your wife,” Quinn flinches as she watches the display of affection, as she watches her dad slap her mother’s ass in front of her. This is why Charlie stays away, it’s like living in a bad sitcom about the fifties.

“My little lemon drop. I gotta catch Glenn,” he says as he gets up and walks out of the room leaving Quinn alone. This is the perfect family. This is his perfect family and in it her sister, her twin doesn’t exist. She’s a freak an embarrassment to the Fabray name.

Charlie is still at her soccer match when the Fabray family finally sits down for lunch. She suddenly thinks that this is a horrible idea and she wishes that she had insisted that Charlie show up, even though she knows that will make the situation tenser than it has to be. That Russell will
send her heated looks of pure loathing throughout the lunch, but at least her sister would be there to protect her.

“It’s a lovely ham,” Finn is nervous even Quinn can see that and the whole lunch is starting to become awkward as her mother looks at him studying him. She’s not had a drop to drink, which is usually the case when it comes to having guests over, she starts drinking during the actual dinner, and she sees her mother bring the scotch glass to her lips.

“Thank you,” Judy isn’t impressed with Finn Hudson, from her thin smile to the look in her eyes. Quinn can sense it and she wonders if she sees what Charlie sees when she looks at Finn, even if she’s no longer sure what that is.

Russell laughs, “There is no beating Judy’s ham.” It’s a simple statement but the way he says it suggests that there is a double entendre hidden there and even Judy lets out a fake laugh.

“Well, I cure all my own meats,” Judy informs Finn, who nods at this. He doesn’t know what to say and he looks at Quinn helplessly. She doesn’t know what to say to that either, so instead she chooses to say nothing and Finn follows suit looking back down at his plate. He’s more nervous than usual.

“I’d like to propose a toast,” Russell says standing and he holds his scotch glass up, it’s his third today and it isn’t even one yet.

“Daddy. No.” Quinn pleads, she doesn’t know why she does. It’s embarrassing it’s so incredibly fake, he’s probably already drunk and he’s bound to say something that she’ll have to explain away later.

“Russell and his famous toasts,” Judy states and she holds up her scotch glass in the air, if Russell hears the bitterness in her voice he ignores it. But it only seems to make Finn Hudson more nervous and he’s fidgeting in his seat and Quinn is wishing that the whole lunch was over with. She can see that this lunch is a disaster.

“The Fabrays are a tight-knit family. I have been blessed with a loving wife, two remarkable daughters. My first married a wonderful Christian man who owns his own chain of UPS stores. My second daughter – little Quinnie – we are so proud of her. Captain of the Cheerios. President of the Celibacy Club.” Russell says and Finn looks at him confused.

“What about Charlie?” he asks and an uncomfortable silence fills the room as both Judy and Quinn look at Russell who flushes.

“Well,” he says, quickly recovering. “There is one in every family. You know a black sheep. Someone who really doesn’t belong. Charlie isn’t like the rest of us, she didn’t even show up here to support you and Quinn. She’s probably off doing god knows what right now. She’s the biggest disappointment in this family.” There is something cold and hard in his voice and Finn looks over at Quinn who is still staring at her father, a mixture of sadness and disgust on her face. This is who Russell Fabray is and Quinn turns to Finn and gives him a tense smile and wills for him to let it go.

She doesn’t know if he’s too much of an idiot or he’s a coward but he doesn’t say another word, and Russell continues with his toast. “I got a little peek at the dress. I’m certain she’s a shoo-in for princess of the –”

Judy interrupts him, “She is,” there is a proud look on her face as she looks at her youngest daughter and she smiles at her as Russell chuckles at this. It’s a fake sounding one and Quinn wonders if this is what her life is going to be when she gets older. She doesn’t want to be a
Stepford wife.

“But tonight we are very glad to welcome her new friend – quarterback, no less.” And there it is, the reason why Russell is so proud. Quinn is dating someone who is worth the effort, who is important in the grand scheme of things.

“I have to go to the bathroom. Uh – too much pop.” Finn says quickly standing up, and Quinn can’t help but stare at him confusion as does everyone else in the room.

Judy is quick to recover, always the perfect host, and she smiles at him and points to the kitchen, “It’s right through the kitchen, sweetheart.” Finn bolts and it leaves the Fabray family stunned for a moment at his rudeness, at the fact that he interrupted Russell.

“He wears a helmet when he plays, right?” Russell asks and Quinn has to bite the inside of her cheek to keep from laughing out loud. If he didn’t hate Charlie, if he wasn’t Russell Fabray, trying to be perfect, they probably would have gotten along.

“He’s just intimidated by you, Daddy.” She says finally and Russell nods and his chest puffs out a bit, glad that he still has that effect on people.

“No, I need to do this for both of us,” he says in a rather determined fashion, and Quinn really wishes that Charlie was here as Finn Hudson begins to sing You’re Having My Baby. Quinn wants to die of mortification.

It takes Russell a moment to finally get the gist of what’s going on and he immediately stops the CD. He doesn’t say anything at first and just looks between the two of them, before finally leaving to the living room, Judy following after him quickly. Finn doesn’t even bother to look at Quinn as he follows Judy and Quinn just stares at the entire mess, before she too follows after her family and Finn. This wasn’t supposed to happen. It wasn’t supposed to go down like this. She sits down beside Finn who is sitting across from her parents and they sit there in silence for a moment.

It’s Judy who breaks the silence first as she turns to her daughter, “There must be some sort of mistake here. Quinnie, we raised you right.”

It’s the first time Finn has ever rushed to her defense, “You… you did. We didn’t even have sex,” but at this point Quinn wishes that he would stop talking as Judy looks at the boy like he’s an idiot.

“I’m sorry. Can we just stop the lying, please?” Judy snips at him.

“But I-” Finn wants to defend himself but he doesn’t have the right words as he looks at Quinn hoping that she would jump in to help him. She doesn’t, she’s still mortified by what happened, she’s still wishing that Charlie would be there. She had promised to be there to help break the news to them.
“When you were about five years old, I took you and your brother down to an Indians game. All the other dads brought their sons, but I couldn’t leave my daughter behind, it was the two of you. You were a package deal, always so inseparable.”

Finn looks confused at the word brother and he looks at Quinn hoping that she would elaborate, she doesn’t. “Daddy,” she says and there’s a note of desperation on her face now. Finn may be dumb as a post but even he would be able to figure out Charlie’s secret.

Russell seems to ignore her and keeps on with his story, “Your brother made it through the whole game, but you fell asleep in my lap. I kept hoping nothing exciting would happen, ‘cause I didn’t want the crowd to get too loud --wake you up.” At this Quinn begins to cry, there is something in Russell’s voice, love and understanding. Like this is a cherished memory when everything was normal, when Charlie was still just a boy. “Didn’t matter. You stayed asleep in my arms till the game ended.” Russell pauses and he continues to look lost in the memory. “He was so happy back then, when he realized that you were sleeping he didn’t want to wake you and told other people to keep quiet when the cheering got to loud, that you were his baby sister. You know what he said to me that day? He said that he’d always protect you. I had never been more proud of him, he was a good son. He was the best son.”

“Daddy, I’m so sorry,” Quinn says begging him, Finn still seems to be looking for an explanation, but she ignores his confused look.

“You need to leave.” Russell says with finality, as he looks at Finn. The memory is gone and there is something dark and ugly on his face as the anger takes hold of him. His perfect son is gone, and all he’s been left with is some half-formed freak.

“Wait. Please, daddy can we talk about this? Finn is a good guy. He loves me,” Quinn says begging him. She hopes that the man who loved her that day is still in there. The one that took them to the baseball game the one that loved Charlie and was so proud to have her in his life.

Russell’s eyes are cold and unfeeling as he looks at her. His tone is as cold as his eyes are, “You too. Get out of my house.” Quinn stares at him stunned, even Charlie hadn’t predicted this, that he would kick her out. Neither of them had thought that he would kick her out.

“You can’t do that. She didn’t do anything wrong. Please, Mrs. Fabray, do something,” Finn says suddenly snapping back to his senses and trying to plead to Judy who is looking shocked at Russell’s reaction. She hadn’t been a mother to either of them.

“Don’t bother, Finn.” Quinn says as she stands up, and even though her vision blurs she decides to make her last stand. “My family isn’t made up of people like Charlie. If she wanted to do something, she would’ve when she found out that I was pregnant.” She doesn’t add that she would have stepped in when Charlie was being beaten or every time he called her a freak to Charlie’s face. Judy hadn’t been a mother to either of them.

Russell turns on his wife, a dark look on his face, “You knew?” he hisses at her, suddenly angry at being kept in the dark.

“I – no. She didn’t tell me anything.” Judy immediately says refusing to look Quinn in the eye as she grabs onto Russell’s arm. There is a pleading lilt in her voice but Russell doesn’t look at her, he looks disgusted by the whole thing.

“But you knew. And I needed you. I needed my mom. And you were so scared of what he would do if he found out you just pushed it aside like we do every bad feeling in this house. Just like you pushed Charlie away when we found out. Just like you looked the other way every single time
Charlie—” Quinn stops that train of thought, Charlie would never forgive her if she spills her secret to Finn Hudson. “We’re Fabray’s. If you don’t talk about it, it doesn’t exist,” she finishes strongly.

“Now do not turn this on us! You are the disappointment here!” Russell snaps standing up and taking a menacing step towards Quinn.

“Why? Because I’m not a little girl anymore? Because I made a mistake?” Quinn snaps back.

“Who are you? I don’t recognize you at all,” Russell says looking at his youngest child with contempt in his eyes, and shock. She had never spoken to him like that, none of his children had.

“I’m your daughter. Who loves you, and who knows this must be really hard for you, but I just need my daddy to hold me, and tell me that it’s going to be okay,” She suddenly knows what it feels to be Charlie what her sister must have felt when they told her that what she believed to be true wasn’t. The hurt that Charlie must have felt as the parents who she thought loved her rejected her. She wonders how Charlie could be so cavalier about this. It must have ripped her heart to shreds, because that’s how Quinn feels. Like her world is unravelling at the seams and her heart’s been eviscerated.

Charlie really was the perfect Fabray because she’s hidden her cracks perfectly. Enough to make sure that everyone thinks she’s okay even when she’s not. She’s played through the pain before, always with that crooked smile and a few wise words. Charlie’s been suffering to, but she’s hidden even her emotional anguish in her attempt to protect Lucy, and Quinn’s heart breaks when she realizes that her sister has kept the promise that she made to their father. She had always protected Quinn and if Finn hadn’t jumped the gun, then Charlie would be there like she promised, protecting her.

Russell doesn’t look back as he leaves the room, grabbing the decanter with the scotch in it and bringing it to his lips. He needs to drink, he needs to forget that all this happens and he wants to stay in his mind where his family was perfect. Where he had a son and he had a perfect daughter, who would marry a good Christian man. A man who could provide for her.

“Daddy. Please.” Quinn says and her voice breaks as she watches her father leave.

“Judy.” Russell calls and Judy shoots Quinn an apologetic look, as she leaves her daughter crying in the living room.

Quinn packs as much stuff as she can, and she leaves with Finn in his truck, leaving her car behind. She tries to text Charlie, but her sister doesn’t pick up. She doesn’t notice that they pass her on the road, as she’s heading back to the Fabray household.

Charlie arrives back at her home. It’s not a home though, it’s a house, a place where she can sleep at night and perhaps get some food. She’s not safe living here, it doesn’t bring her comfort to be in the Fabray Mansion but she’s here for Quinn. She spots Quinn’s car in the driveway, she doesn’t think anything of it as she locks the door to her own car and heads into the Fabray household.

She doesn’t notice her phone flashing. With missed text messages, and three missed calls, because her phone is on silent. Coach Roz hates when a phone rings during a game or even during a practice, and Charlie constantly forgets to switch the sound back on. So she doesn’t know that Quinn has already left to go live with Finn Hudson. She doesn’t know that Russell is drinking himself silly, she doesn’t know that Judy is trying to calm him down and talk some sense into him.
as he’s muttering under his breath.

She doesn’t expect the sharp blow to the face when she comes face to face with Russell and Judy who are back in their living room.

It’s Russell who backhands her. His ring cutting into her cheek, tearing into it, causing Charlie to stumble backwards and trip over her feet, landing on her ass in front of him. “You did this,” he hisses as he pulls off his belt before Charlie can recover from the blow to the face. Russell doesn’t tell her to get into position this time as he folds the belt, the metal buckle out and he begins to lay into her body. “You did this,” he repeats again and again as the metal buckle tears into flesh ripping her clothes and digging into her flesh.

Charlie struggles to get away, kicking at him wildly as she screams in pain. It hurts, each new blow brings a fresh wave of pain and from what she can feel by the slick feeling, blood. She misses his shins and instead curls up trying desperately to protect her face and her head, letting the belt hit her back and tearing at it, reopening old scars and turning them into fresh open wounds.

“You ruined everything. You killed my son, you took away my beautiful boy,” Russell screams at her as he drops the belt and begins to kick her body, catching her in the ribs. She feels her body crumple against him and a fresh wave of agony rips through her body as he grabs her by the hair and drags her past Judy who is standing there frozen in terror. “You ruined her. Made her into some slut.” Russell drops her onto the ground leaving her there stunned at the frenzy of his attack as he grabs a kitchen knife and grabs at Charlie’s shorts, pulling them off with, leaving her in her compression band underwear.

Charlie begins to struggle again, she can only see out of one eye, the belt had caught her in the face just below her left eye and her split lip is rapidly swelling and she starts to kick at him, her tongue feels heavy in her mouth as Russell begins to work on pulling down her underwear. She knows what he plans to do and she fights him as best as she could only for him to backhand her again.

“Please daddy, please,” she’s crying now as Russell grabs it with his free hand adjusting himself so he can get rid of it.

“You’re a girl, wearing the face of my son. You tranny freak, I’ll make you normal” Russell hisses and Charlie reacts violently the sudden space that he’s given her is enough for her to slam her knee between his legs. A strangled yelp escapes Russell’s lips and he drops the knife, which falls onto Charlie’s hip. The blade is sharp and when Charlie grabs at it to pull the knife away her hands are shaking violently, and she accidentally draws the blade across her skin as she’s pulling it away, cutting into her flesh. She brings her knee up again, once again nailing Russell where it hurts and the man finally rolls off her. His face is purple and there are tears in his eyes as he moves his hands down to protect himself.

Charlie glances at the knife in her hand and Russell, her mother is just standing there staring at the carnage and Charlie can see her blood on the floor, where Russell drags her. She wants to kill him, to kill the monster that’s haunted her since she was a child and Russell took a belt to her body for the first time. Instead she drops the knife and quickly pulls up her pants as best she can, and forces herself to stand. She tries to get away but Russell grabs her ankle.

“You took my son away from me,” it’s a sob now and Charlie looks at the man though she can barely see and her face hurts badly and she brings her foot hard Russell’s stomach. She’s a soccer player and even though the belt had cut into her thighs, she still has a powerful kick. Russell lets go, and clutches at his stomach.

She doesn’t look back as she stumbles out of the house and gets into her car. She starts it and looks up and sees Judy standing there, with that helpless expression on her face, and even though she’s
sure that she shouldn’t be driving she pulls out of the driveway, barely missing the mailbox with the words Fabray painted on it. She doesn’t care though. Her mind is fuzzy and she knows that the adrenaline is starting to wear off, that her flight and fight response has been exhausted. Her mind is racing as she starts to think of all the places that she can go, where she can be safe.

Rachel lives near the hospital and Charlie can already tell that she won’t make it to the diva’s house without passing out, so she drives to Santana’s place. The Latina lives in the neighborhood, they all live in Lima Heights adjacent, the rich part of Lima. She parks her car as best as she can, it’s terribly crooked and she’s sure she’s parked on the Lopez’s meticulous lawn. Her depth perception is off and her head is spinning now as she makes her way to the Lopez’s front door and keeps her finger pressed on the doorknob.

She doesn’t let go till she hears Santana’s voice from behind the doorway cursing out loud in both Spanish and English as she pulls the door open. “If you’re one of those—Charlie?” The stunned look on Santana’s face is replaced by horror as she sees the blood that is dripping down Charlie’s face and her ripped blue shirt is soaked with blood. “What the—”

“Quinn. We need to find Quinn. I don’t know where she is.” Charlie says her tone is panicked as she looks at Santana. She can’t go back there and she knows that Santana can’t go into the house alone. Russell will kill her.

Santana begins to move immediately and gently places an arm around Charlie’s body, holding her up. “Where are your keys?” Charlie slumps into the hold, her legs finally giving out a bit and Santana grunts, but she doesn’t complain. She needs to get Charlie to the hospital immediately, her eye is a mess and there is a lot of blood, and it looks like Charlie is barely awake.

“Quinn,” Charlie repeats slowly, her words are beginning to slur, probably due to the fact her lip is swollen and there is a huge gash in the middle. She’s stumbles forward and she feels Santana tighten her grip on Charlie’s waist holding her up, the girls arm pressing into the wounds on her lower back. The action makes Charlie let out a whimper of pain, it hurts badly. Santana pats at Charlie’s thighs and finds the keys in her pocket and gently pulls it out.

“She’s with Finn, don’t worry she texted me and Britts. She’s with Frankenteen. She just got kicked out,” Santana says in an attempt to calm Charlie down. Mentioning Finn’s nickname has the opposite affect and Charlie begins to struggle weakly against the girl. “I’ll get Britt to pick her up but we need to get you to the hospital.” Santana explains as she pulls Charlie to her car. “Fuck you Fabray’s weigh a ton.” It’s a joke meant to lighten the mood but it falls flat since no one is laughing.

She helps get Charlie into her car laying her on the back seat, but the girl hisses in pain and Santana immediately realizes that the wounds aren’t just in the front they’re everywhere. She can see some of the open wounds through the holes in the shirt and they look deep. She wonders what other damage she can’t see. Her white shirt is soaked with Charlie’s blood and she looks like she just murdered someone.

“Who the hell did this to you?” Santana asks again though she knows she doesn’t have to ask as all the evidence points to Russell Fabray. It would explain everything and it’s not like Quinn and Charlie have hid that Russell hates Charlie.

Charlie struggles to sit up but her body refuses to cooperate, as she stares at Santana. She can barely remember what the Latina just said, “Quinn we need to find Quinn,” she manages to get out and Santana just nods as she looks at her, which causes Charlie to relax a bit. She blinks a bit with her good eye as she fights exhaustion, suddenly realizing that Santana will probably take her to the hospital, “I don’t want them to find out,” she tries to explain but the words are muffled and she
doesn’t think that Santana who had closed the door and is currently getting into the driver’s seat heard her. She tries again, “They can’t find out,” she repeats as the darkness finally takes her.

Santana glances back at Charlie who is now quiet, her father is on-call today and she can make sure he keeps her secret under-wraps. She doesn’t know what Charlie means by they can’t find out, whether it has to do with what Russell did to her or if it had to do with her secret or if it was something else entirely. “Fucking Fabray’s and their secrets,” she repeats as she makes her decision. Not that there was much of a choice to begin with and Santana drives Charlie Fabray to the hospital.
Quinn ignores Santana the first time the girl calls her. She’s still waiting for Charlie to get back to her and she wonders if Charlie has forgotten to switch her phone off silent. She misses the next call that as well, it’s not until the third call three minutes later does Quinn finally pick up the phone. “What? I’m waiting from a call from Charlie,” Quinn hisses at her friend.

“It’s about Charlie,” Santana snaps back. She can do it, she can do anger it’s better than fear and that’s what she feels right now.

Her father hadn’t messed around and had immediately rushed her to have an x-ray and MRI. They needed to know how badly damaged she was. Her father was most concerned about her damaged eye and she heard them talking about surgery and possible head injuries since Charlie still hadn’t woken up as they moved her. Santana had barely enough time to pull her father away and quickly explain Charlie’s situation but she wasn’t sure that he heard her as he quickly brushed her off and went to work.

“We’re at the hospital,” Santana manages to spit out after there is silence on Quinn’s end. She doesn’t want to expose Brittany to this, she doesn’t want Britt to worry, or see Charlie like this. The anger she felt dissipates as she hears the rustling on the phone and she suspects its Quinn moving. “It’s bad. There was a lot of blood and did he do this to her? Where the hell were you?”

Quinn ignores Santana and suddenly she wishes that she had taken her car, she doesn’t want Finn around Charlie, he hadn’t asked yet but she knows he’ll soon remember her father’s comments. “I need to go to the hospital,” she informs Finn and the boy looks panicked.

“Is it the—baby is it coming early? Are you okay?” he asks dropping his video game controller.

Quinn resists the urge to roll her eyes, “No, just take me to the hospital,” Finn makes a face and looks back at his controller. “Now Finn,” she snaps and he finally gets up. Santana’s still on the phone and Quinn winces as the girl is now cursing at her in Spanish. “Which hospital?”

“Lima Memorial,” Santana snaps as she looks up to see if her dad has come out to give her some more information.

“Lima Memorial,” Quinn repeats as she gets into Finn’s truck with him and the boy begins to drive them to the hospital. “I’ll be there in ten minutes,” Quinn informs her. She wants to kill the boy beside her, he had ruined everything with his stupid plan. She should have stayed and waited for Charlie, made sure that she got out safely. There was a lot of things that she could have done. “What’s going on Santana?”

Santana lets out a frustrated noise, as she paces the in waiting room. “I don’t know, she’s been here for at least twenty minutes now. Papi’s taking care of her though, so she’ll be okay. She wanted to know if you were okay, all I’ve heard is a few words. There was a lot of blood, and her face is a mess. Their worried about her eye and some possible head injury and they took her to get some tests done, and no one has bothered to tell me anything.” She yells the last part and glares at a nurse who ignores her. Santana can’t pass herself off as family they know that she’s Dr. Lopez’s daughter. “I think I heard one of the medical residents mention something about broken ribs as well.”

Quinn listens intently as Santana describes the injuries the injuries that she saw only to try and listen in on conversations that the nurses are having. Quinn barely waits for Finn to make a
complete stop before she’s out of his truck, he clearly didn’t get the urgency of her wanting to go
to the hospital and she had sent him many glares his way. “I’ll get a ride from Santana,” she says
to him dismissing him and Finn gives her his dopey grin, before he pulls away from the hospital.
“I’m here. I’ll be right there,” she says and she asks the nurses station to point her in the right
direction.

Quinn spots Santana who is still pacing. She looks ready to rip someone a new one, as one of the
nurses tells her to calm down.

“I’ll calm down when you tell me what the hell is going on? And if my friend if she’s going to be
okay.” Santana snaps.

“We can’t release a patient’s information unless it’s to a family member,” the nurse says with an
exasperated sigh.

Quinn places a comforting hand on Santana’s shoulder and interrupts, “I’m her sister,” the nurse is
studying the girl with a critical eye and Quinn adds. “We’re twins,” she adds and the nurse’s eyes
soften. Quinn appears calm even on the inside she’s about to freak out.

The nurse looks back at Santana and then at Quinn, she still doesn’t believe her, but she sighs. “I
don’t know much. Dr. Berry or Lopez will be out as soon as they can and I’m sure they can give
you more information. But from the sounds of it, the most worrying thing is right eye. The orbital
bone is fractured and they aren’t sure if there is any damage to the eye itself, because it’s swollen
shut. They’ve called a plastic surgeon and an ophthalmologist down to take a look at it. She’s still
unconscious and the last time I checked they were both busy stitching up some of the deeper
wounds. Unfortunately if you want to know more you’re going to have to wait for one of the
doctors to give you more information.”

Quinn nods she feels feint but she still manages to mutter a small thank you which the nurse
accepts and walks away, leaving her and Santana alone. The Latina is quiet for only a few more
moments, “How long has this been going on?” Santana asks, because she knows that this wasn’t a
onetime thing. She had heard a nurse talking about scar tissue.

Quinn swallows, she can’t lie anymore to cover up Russell’s actions anymore. She realizes that she
doesn’t want to, “Since we were six or seven. Charlie was never manly enough for Russell, back
when we didn’t know that she was a girl. She really liked girly things, she wanted to be Sailor
Jupiter one year for Halloween and my dad just lost it, he made comments about her being a homo
and how she was a sinner, but it wasn’t this bad. Normal stuff I guess, never enough to cause any
real damage but a few bruises. It got worse as we got older to toughen her out, but again it didn’t
use to be this bad, and it wasn’t often enough. Maybe once a month, when Charlie started fighting
he stopped for a bit finally, Charlie was manly enough for him. He was proud up until she broke
her wrist, and the doctor noticed that there was something wrong. She was nearly finished growing
and she didn’t have an Adam’s apple and she was growing female—characteristics. When they did
the test and Russell found out that they couldn’t do the surgery until Charlie was finished growing
it got bad. He started drinking more and for a while it was like every other day that she would do
something and it would tick him off. It got better for her after he started to go on business trips, it
gave her more time to heal between beatings.”

Santana swallows, she doesn’t know what to say and thinks back to every single time she’s been
with Charlie why hadn’t she seen it before, “That soccer game?” she asks hesitantly. Brittany had
noticed, Brittany always noticed these things.

Quinn nods and looks away, suddenly ashamed that she had done nothing to stop the abuse.
“During the state championship as well. Part of the reason why she doesn’t change in front of the
others is because she has all those scars on her back and people would ask.”

“But I’ve—” Santana begins and forces herself to think back to the time that she and Charlie had done the deed before Quinn had interrupted them. Charlie had been in a shirt, it had been a button up one and while the shirt was unbuttoned, Charlie had never taken it off. Santana hadn’t pushed either she had thought that it made the soccer player look rather sexy. Even the times that they had gone swimming together Charlie had always been in one of those swim shirts. Santana had never given much thought about it before but it was all clicking into place. She had just assumed that Charlie had some hang up about her body. “Has he ever—with you?”

“When I was younger, but ever since I—” Quinn pauses, Santana doesn’t know about Lucy, about the girl she used to be. “Ever since we moved here, and I joined the team and became what he wanted me to be, he’s left me alone. He was proud of me. Captain of the cheerleading team, perfect grades, president of the celibacy club. I was perfect and he loved me for it.”

“Why didn’t you tell anyone?” Santana says after a moment, “Protect her like she’s protected you?” She’s starting to get angry again and she takes a step towards the pregnant ex-cheerleader. It was an intimidation tactic, Santana was a lot of things but she wasn’t going to hit someone who was pregnant.

“And do what call child protective services, they’d split us up? Do you honestly think that it will be any better for her? Not everyone is as understanding and there are more people who think like Russell and other people who would take advantage of her. Why do you think she spends a lot of time at the Berry’s house every time my father is in town? And don’t you dare say that I wasn’t there for her. I was the one who cleaned her up and stitched up her wounds, and talked to her when she was injured,” Quinn snaps back shoving Santana away from her. “You don’t get to judge me.”

“Charlie is laying there a mess because all she ever does these days is deal with your shit,” Santana snaps back. “You know what her first words were to me were. Quinn she wanted to find you because she thought that something terrible had happened to you. She cleans up after you and you knew and you couldn’t wait make sure that she was aware that you weren’t there.”

“It wasn’t my fault! Finn decided to sing a ballad to my parents to tell them that I was pregnant. He was supposed to wait for Charlie and the next thing I know my parents are kicking me out of my house and things are going so fast. I texted her, I called her, I tried to warn her not to go back home,” Quinn snapped back.

The nurse that had helped them was approaching them, their voices were getting louder and people were beginning to watch the argument with interest. “If you could please keep it down there are other people here and you’re creating a disturbance.” she says putting her hand on Quinn’s shoulder.

Santana wants to yell some more but the stares are starting to get to her and she snarls at them, “There is nothing to see here.” The reaction is immediate and everyone finally turns away from the two arguing teenagers. Santana exhales and is about to say something when Leroy Berry and her father walk into the waiting room. “Papi?”

Leroy spots Quinn and Santana and motions for them to follow them, as they leave the public waiting room and head into a more private hallway. Leroy has a grim look on his face, but there is sadness in his eyes. He had known that things were rough between Charlie and her father. An intersex child living with that bigot. He had heard of Russell Fabray he was one of the loudest voices in the anti-homosexual crowd men in the city always making waves. It had bothered him to learn that Rachel had been friends with Charlie, but Rachel had insisted that Leroy and Hiram needed to be in Charlie’s life. It had been Rachel who had pushed Charlie to tell them about it. It’s
why they had an open door policy with Charlie, she had always been allowed to stay as long as she wanted. In fact they had told her she could stay. She never did, at most she’d spend up to two weeks before going back home. She had been a good friend to Rachel, and Rachel had never been happier to have a friend.

“How is she papi?” Santana asks immediately and Dr. Miguel Lopez sighs as he looks at his only daughter.

“She still hasn’t woken up, we have two specialists looking over the scans of the orbital bone which is fractured. We’re not sure how extensive the damage is, or if she’ll need to have surgery on it to correct any problems with her vision,” Miguel begins.

Leroy immediately continues, “She has several hairline fractures in many of her ribs. She has one clean break on the eighth rib on the left side, we’re lucky it wasn’t more, or we might have an issue with flail chest which could be life-threatening. We’ve managed to stitch up some of the deeper wounds and we’ve cleaned and bandaged the ones that didn’t need sutures to try and prevent infection. We’ve also called a neuro-surgeon to check the CT scans, we didn’t see any fractures of the skull and there is no bleeds in the brain but we’re going to keep an eye on it. She’s on a morphine drip for the pain, and we’ll have people checking in on her condition.” He doesn’t add that it was rather impressive that she managed to drive from her place to Santana’s even if it was a short drive. “She’ll be fine, a lot of the damage was rather superficial. While there was a fair amount of blood lost, it was never life threatening. The only worrying we’re really worried about is her eye, but we don’t know how extensive the damage is like I said. She might not even need surgery. We’ll certainly know more after the swelling has gone done.”

Quinn swallows, and fights helpless tears. Crying will do nothing to help the situation. She takes a shaky breath, “Are you calling child protective services?” she asks and Santana turns to look at her, when the two men glance at each other she knows that they’ve already been called. “You can’t let them put her in a home, she’s—” Quinn can’t say the word even though she’s already sure that Leroy and Miguel know. “People won’t accept her.”

Leroy nods, he can see how Charlie’s condition could be problematic in placing her. Not everyone will be as understanding, and with what happened to her and the worrying cut mark on her hip, she needed to be in a safe environment. “Hiram and I will see if we can take custody of her, until she can figure out what she wants. She has always been welcome in our home,” he’s quiet for a moment as he studies Quinn, “I would advise you against going back to that house.”

Quinn gives him a bitter smile, “You don’t have to worry about me. They kicked me out earlier when they found out that I’m pregnant. I’m staying with Finn and his mother,” there’s a grimace as she says that. She’s begun to hate the boy. At least he hadn’t remembered to ask about Russell’s previous comments, because she wasn’t sure that she could think of a believable lie.

“Can we see her now?” Santana asks there is concern on her face and she’s been fidgeting and trying to look past them. “

Miguel raises a brow, he had nearly had a heart attack when he saw Santana covered in blood when she had walked into the ER to get some help to move Charlie. Her panicked words and her demanding that he do everything in his power to fix her. He had surprised that his usual crass daughter hadn’t used slang or anything to describe Charlie’s condition, instead conveying a certain care that he hadn’t seen his daughter exhibit with anyone since Brittany. He chalked it up to it simply being shock and concern over a friend. “You can, but like Leroy stated earlier she is unconscious, and this is a hospital,” he gives his daughter a look. “So keep your voice down and be respectful of the staff. I work with these people.”
Santana mutters something in Spanish under her breath but nods and Miguel glances at Quinn who also gives one brief nod of her head. It’s the best response he’s going to get and he sighs and leads them to Charlie’s hospital bed.

Quinn takes her sister’s hand gently, there are a few stitches on it, from where the belt had struck her hands as she protected herself. She’s in a white hospital gown and her face is a mess. “I’m sorry,” she mumbles and the hot tears begin to fall.

Santana watches the scene from the doorway and kicks at the ground as she lets Quinn have her moment. It only lasts thirty seconds before she takes the step into a room and takes a seat down in the chair beside the bed. “What are we going to tell Britt’s?” she asked after a long moment of silence. Even though Santana wanted to, this wasn’t something that she could hide from Brittany, it was hard enough getting anything past her to begin with.

“Did Britt suspect?” Quinn asks and Santana shakes her head.

“You think she wouldn’t do something, anything if she suspected that this was what was going on?” Santana snips. “Do you think I would? Or even the fucking hobbit? We would have taken her in a heartbeat, you too. No one deserves to live with an animal like that. You could have trusted us. You should have.”

“I know,” Quinn whispers, “But we’re Fabray’s if you don’t talk about it. The problem doesn’t exist and Charlie never talks about it. Ever. When she wakes up she’s not going to be happy and she’s not going to want to talk about it. All her problems, are easier to hide than most others. A simple shirt on her back and she can hide the scars, some decent compression underwear and baggy pants. She passes it off as being a tomboy and it’s easy for her to hide the damage. She would always just smile after and tell me she was fine even after a violent meeting with him. I knew she wasn’t fine, I mean I’ve given her stitches before with particularly deep wounds before, it’s why her back has that many scars on it. I could see the damage and yet she’d pretend that it was okay. She’d go play soccer or do something that was reckless just to prove to everyone that she was okay. That she could handle it.”

Santana didn’t know what to say to that, “So what she’s going to not talk and let him walk? Just pretend that it didn’t happen that he didn’t do this to her? What’s she going to say when the cops ask her questions? I fell?” Santana’s anger is spiking and her voice is rising. It takes all of her self-control to quiet down when a nurse pokes her head in and glares at her. “He needs to go away for this, he needs to be punished for what he did. I have half a mind to go over there and go all Lima Heights on his ass.”

Neither girls says something for a long time as the sounds of the hospital filter through the room. “You can live with me,” Santana says finally. She’s still angry with her best friend, still upset that Quinn didn’t feel like she could trust them. That Quinn never asked for her help, but if what she says it’s true it seems like it’s an impossibility for either sister. When Quinn looks at her ready to protest Santana gives her a look, “Living with Finnept is a punishment I wouldn’t even wish on the hobbit,” she explains.

Quinn shoots her a grateful smile, “Charlie was right about Finn. I can’t do this with him. You know he’s back at home playing video games right now. Didn’t even ask if he could stay, see what’s wrong. He sang to my parents, he went to the bathroom and came back with my mom’s ipod dock. Pushed play and just sang, said that he needed to do this for the two of us. I told him to wait till Charlie was back. He didn’t listen and he just sang the song.”

Santana snorts at this and the two of them fall into a comfortable silence.
Its early Sunday morning when Charlie finally opens her one good eye. Her left eye is still swollen shut and the sharp ache she feels radiates down to her jaw. She lets out a low groan and sticks her tongue out in an attempt to wet her lips which feel dry. She quickly regrets that course of action. Her lip pulses in pain, it’s still swollen and the huge gash in lower lip is a reminder of what happened last night.

Assessing the damage is the next step, and she brings her right hand up and looks at it seeing some neat sutures across the back of her hand. She wiggles her fingers experimentally only stopping when she feels the tight pull of the stitches. It doesn’t hurt, nearly as much as her ribs do, and she’s not sure if that’s because that’s because of the flayed flesh or possible broken bones. She moves to pull her left hand up and a groan of protest stops her. She freezes and tilts her head so she can see a mess of blonde hair and Quinn’s face and Charlie smiles despite the fact that her lip protests the action. Quinn looks fine which means that Russell didn’t get his hands on her. She lets out a breath and winces at the sharp pain that racks her chest, and she lays back down ignoring the pull of the stitches in her back, as she gently pokes her sister in the cheek.

“Lucy,” Charlie mumbles quietly, keeping her voice low, she doesn’t want to alert anyone to the fact that she’s awake and she doesn’t know if there is a nurse passing her by or not. When Quinn doesn’t respond, begins to tap her shoulder. “Lucy,” she repeats but still her sister doesn’t wake and Charlie rolls her one good eye, before trying one last thing. “They’re serving bacon in the cafeteria,” she says and immediately Quinn’s head snaps up and her sister is staring at her a look of surprise is on her face. “I don’t know if they are or not, but we can check if you want. On our way out.”

Quinn stares at her sister blankly for a moment, frowning when there isn’t any bacon to be found before the alertness comes back and she directs her frown at Charlie. “You aren’t going anywhere, you’ve got broken ribs and they need to make sure that you don’t need surgery on your eye.”

“I’m fine Quinn. I’ve had a black eye before, all I need is a frozen bag of peas and some rest, as for broken ribs all you can do for that is rest. All of which I can do without the need of a hospital, now let’s go before someone realizes that I’m awake,” Charlie says as she places her hands on the bed and begins to push herself into a sitting position. She doesn’t want to be here when child services comes to ask her questions, she doesn’t want to be here when the police finally arrive either.

Quinn doesn’t move and she just watches her sister for a moment, “Don’t you want him to pay?” she asks and Charlie freezes for a moment and stares at her sister. “He deserves it after what he did.”

“What did he do to you?” Charlie asks her voice strained.

Quinn sighs, and she carefully leans back in the chair she was in, “All he did to me was kick me out and I’m going to be staying with the Lopez’s instead of Finn. I’m not talking about me though, I’m okay, or I will be. I’m asking you, after what he did to you.”

Charlie stares at her sister searching for a lie but she finds none. “What are you talking about?” she asks thoroughly confused. Quinn wasn’t there, yesterday she can’t know what Russell try to do and Charlie has no intention of telling her.

“He put you in the hospital. He could have blinded you or broken your ribs. Dr. Berry said that it was lucky you didn’t get something called flail-chest cause that’s life threatening. He hurt you,” Quinn says forcibly. “You lost consciousness yesterday and it scared Santana, it scared me. They had to make sure that you weren’t bleeding into your brain.”

“This is slightly worse than the time when I was fourteen and I dented the garage door because I
needed to work on my aim. I had got some of mom’s vodka and you got mom’s sewing kit and you stitched me up. I’m pretty sure that my ribs were fractured then as well. It hurt to breathe then just like it hurts to breathe now. Stop making this seem worse than it is, and let’s get out of here.”

Quinn sighs and takes Charlie’s hand, “We’re safe. You’re safe.”

“Right until they try and put me in some group home. I’m not going to a place that could be worse. I’m not you Quinn, I’m not normal. I am a girl who has a freakin dick, and I just happen to like girls. Who in their right minds will allow me to stay with them? Do you really think that what Russell did to me won’t happen somewhere else. That they won’t try to –” Charlie’s mouth snaps shut and she looks away. She’s suddenly aware of what she was about to share. “Let’s just go before they try and take me away, and more people find out what a freak I am.”

Quinn’s eyes narrow, she wants to pry but she knows Charlie and prying when she’s not ready to talk will only lead to more walls coming up. “You aren’t going to a group home, the Berry’s said that they’ll become your guardians until you can figure out what you want to do.”

Charlie doesn’t say anything and instead tries to swing her leg off the side of the bed as she begins to peel the heart monitors off her chest causing them to beep erratically. She needs to get out of the hospital, it smells like anti-septic and there is probably someone dying close by. Grabbing the IV in her hand she begins to pull it out roughly and Quinn catches her arm. “If you aren’t going to help then let me go,” Charlie snaps and yanks her arm away.

“You aren’t going anywhere, Dr. Berry is your new guardian; the paperwork was done last night when the child protective service person came to see you. I told them that you spent most of your time with Rachel anyway, and it’s where you’d feel comfortable. Which you would, they already know about you, and Dr. Berry hasn’t judged you and everyone was really nice. So for once just stop, punishing yourself for being different.” Charlie stops and stares at Quinn as a nurse finally enters the room to check on the patient.

The nurse purses her lips and glares at Charlie who is still busy staring at Quinn. The nurse looks between the two girls and shakes her head before walking over to the teen and gently manages to prod Charlie into lying back down, “I’ll get Dr. Berry he said to call him once you woke up,” her tone is sweet but she shoots Quinn a look, “If you’re going to upset her then I’m going to ask you wait outside.”

Quinn nods and leans back in her chair as she watches the Nurse fasten the heart monitors back into place. Charlie still hasn’t said anything as she just stares at Quinn, the only time her gaze is interrupted is when the nurse steps between them. Charlie smiles as best as she can at the nurse suddenly remembering her manners. “Thank you nurse-?”

“Janet,” the woman supplies.

“Thank you nurse Janet,” Charlie says as the woman fusses over her. It makes her uncomfortable and she wants to go back to planning her escape of leaving the hospital behind. All she really needs is the keys to her car and a pair of boxers. She can stay at one of the crappy hotels for a month and just let her body heal, until she’s at least back to sixty percent. She isn’t going to come out as the town freak just because Quinn wants Russell to pay, if this goes to court then her secret will come out. He has worse ways to hurt her and she knows he’ll throw her under the bus to save himself from jail. It’s not until she leaves that Charlie finally speaks. “People are going to find out.”

Quinn inhales deeply and exhales deeply, “People are going to find out anyway. Finn knows something is up. When he was kicking me out, he talked about a baseball game when we were younger. He referred to you as his son. That he had a dead son.” She watches as a nauseated look
appears on Charlie’s face, “He hasn’t told anyone, and I’ll tell him not to. Finn is a good guy he’s just a bit dense and sometimes he doesn’t think things through...”

“How did they find out?” Charlie’s voice is low and resigned.

Quinn sighs, “He sang it to them. You’re Having My Baby. I don’t think they knew what to do for the longest time they just kind of stared at him before the words clicked in. Congrats though. You were right every Fabray now agrees that Finn is a special kind of idiot.” It has taken disaster after disaster where Finn simply wasn’t the person she needed him to be. He hadn’t even called her to check if she was alright or if she was coming over. He was simply too busy pining over Rachel.

“I’m going to tell him,” Charlie’s eyes are on her. “That the baby isn’t his.”

“The baby isn’t Finn’s?” Quinn’s blood runs cold and she turns to look at Rachel Berry who is standing at the door. There is a plate of cookies in her hand with Leroy behind her looking between the girls as Charlie tilts her head to look at her best friend. There is a look of righteous indignation on her face and Quinn immediately looks away. Rachel turns to Charlie a look of hurt crossing her features. “You knew and you let him believe that he was the father?”

“It wasn’t any of your business,” Quinn snaps glaring at Rachel.

“He was going to be the father of your child. You’ve been pressuring him to pay for something that he didn’t do. He’s been so stressed out lately and you probably did it so you can keep him in some attempt to keep him from me,” Rachel snaps back. “Finn has feelings for me. You probably only did this so you could keep him!” Rachel says taking a step forward and Leroy moves to intervene. “He needs to be informed that you cheated on him and the baby isn’t his. What you did was wrong and—”

Charlie shoots the tall man a look pity, she’s heard this argument so many times and it’s getting old. She wants it to stop. It’s giving her a headache. “Once again can be the sole voice of reason in this room and point out that Finn Hudson is a terrible boyfriend and an idiot?” When she has both Quinn and Rachel’s attention.

“She cheated on him. She’s having a child and Finn is not the father, if anyone is a terrible person in that relationship. It’s Quinn.”

“Finn kissed you twice, once when he knew that Quinn was pregnant with a baby that he idiotically thinks is his,” Charlie points out and she feels Quinn stiffen with anger. “He took you out on a date so he could convince you to join glee club again so he can get a music scholarship, because you are basically the glue that holds that team together.”

“All this proves is that they’re terrible for each other and that Finn Hudson has feelings for me,” Rachel protests.

“He used you to get a scholarship?” Leroy asks a frown twisting on his face. He already didn’t like the sound of this boy.

“It wasn’t—I mean,” Rachel is at a loss for words and looks at Charlie for help.

“Don’t give me that look, I told you not to put me in this situation. I told you that she’s my sister and I’d take her side. And you gave me several insanely long PowerPoint presentations on why I should forgive Quinn, when you didn’t even know why I was mad at her to begin with.” Charlie tastes blood and winces her split lip has reopened.

Leroy instincts as physician take over, “Whatever issue you two have going on can wait. If you
Rachel sends one last look at Quinn before finally taking in Charlie’s appearance. She winces once she sees the stitches and swollen shut eye that is now a black and purple. The cut that was underneath her eye was neatly stitched, while the cut on her other cheek. “What happened?” She asked firmly, looking into Charlie’s hazel eye.

Charlie flicks her eye to Leroy and then to Quinn who gives her a nod. She can’t explain away her injuries with a simple I fell, and she has belt buckle shaped lacerations all over her body. It would be impossible to just tell them that this was mugging gone wrong. So instead Charlie smiles it’s a scary sight with her lip bleeding openly now, “You should see the other guy,” she says finally.

“You fought back?” Leroy asks there’s a hint of disbelief in his voice. He’s surprised by this. Apart from the few stitches that the back of her hands required, her knuckles aren’t bruised or scraped or damaged in any way.

Even the news seems to catch Quinn of guard, something happened yesterday afternoon, she had witnessed several of Russell’s sessions with Charlie and never had she fought back. She had been rather passive in her punishments; simply taking whatever Russell doled out. She needs to ask Leroy for a complete list of her injuries.

Charlie shrugs, pain flashing across her face as she once again feels a sharp pain in her ribs. With Quinn being in her blind spot she can’t see the look on her sisters’ face as she speaks. “I did, I just did enough to get away,” she doesn’t mention the fact that she had the opportunity to kill him, that she should have. She doesn’t know why she didn’t.

“Well normally I don’t condone violence,” Rachel begins. “He deserves more. He deserves whatever you gave him and certainly a lot more. If I thought that I’d be any use I’d certainly hit him myself,” Rachel observes.

“Get in line. I had to stop Santana from going to our house and going all Lima Heights adjacent on him.” Quinn says, and if she wasn’t pregnant she’d go back there herself just to face him. To scream at him to hit him just like he hurt them. To make him feel just like she had felt the day before, how he had made Charlie feel for years.

“You’re staying with us, my fathers have become your legal guardians and the moment you are released you are coming home with me. There will be no more of this hopping around you do. Once the police finally get there acts together and arrest the man who is simply your sperm donor, we will make sure that they are around so you can retrieve most of your things. I understand you just left and not just enough to fill a duffel bag and your backpack. You are staying because you are welcome.”

“That’s very generous of you Dr. Berry-”

“Leroy,” the man says promptly.

“That’s very generous of you Leroy, but I wouldn’t want to impose or put you out of your house. I have enough money saved up to——”

Rachel’s eyes narrow and she looks at Quinn who is surprised by the fire in Rachel’s eyes. She’s surprised that she truly cares about helping and being there for Charlie despite all the bullying that she’s done. “You will tell your sister that there will not be any arguments. The paperwork has already been signed by my daddy, and the moment that she is released from the hospital she will be moving into our spare guest room. You won’t have to pay room and board, because my father’s
enjoy having you around. They do, I like having you around. You are wanted in our house Charlie – I wish you’d tell me your middle name, because as dramatic moments go this calls for me to state your full name. Only so you can understand that I truly mean business.”

“Reagan,” Quinn supplies and Charlie is looking at her, in what she assumes is a glare. It doesn’t have the same bite that it normally does, probably because only one eye is open.

“Thank you Quinn. Charlie Reagan Fabray.” Rachel stops for a moment and peers at Charlie. “They named you after the 40th president of the United States?” She makes a face at this. “I can see why you hid it from me.”

“Thanks,” Charlie says dryly but neither Quinn nor Rachel know who she is referring to. She looks at Leroy, “When will I be released?” she asks him.

“The earliest that we can release you is Monday that is barring any complications. From the scans that we have of your orbital bone, we can tell that it is fractured but so far it looks like a simple fracture. We’ve booked an appointment for ophthalmologist. We need to check to see if you have any problems with double vision, or if there is indeed a retinal tear there due to the fracture. In fact the ophthalmologist might try and reduce the swelling later today so that a test can be performed. The sooner we find out the sooner we can determine what the next step is.”

Charlie swallows, she won’t be able to play soccer if she has a retinal tear. Her full peripheral vision is something that she needs, as well as her depth perception. The only good news is that the state championships take place in spring. “And how long till I can play again?” she asks.

Leroy frowns, he had seen her x-rays. “Four to six weeks, is a cautious estimate. However if I were you I’d take six-eight.”

Charlie begins to count mentally, it’s a week till December and the championship tournament doesn’t start until late March. Which means she has nearly fifteen weeks to heal and get back into some semblance of shape. That’s if Roz doesn’t kick her off the team.

“You aren’t going to rush back. I’m sure Coach Washington will fully understand when we inform her that you’ve got a severe rib injury. I can understand the drive and the need to get back into competitive form. I’ve had laryngitis many times and each time it is torture to wait before I can start practicing again.”

“She won’t kick you off the team. Not if she wants to rub Sue’s face in it.” Quinn points out. “You need to get better, you just don’t get to come back after this and pretend that you’re okay. Everyone can see that you’re hurt. So for once just accept that you’re safe. Well relatively safe, I’m sure Santana plans to kill you for causing her to worry and freak out.”

Charlie groans at this news, but she settles in. She has a feeling that Quinn isn’t going to leave her side any time soon and from the bag that Rachel has slung over her shoulder, the diva isn’t planning on leaving any time soon.
Quinn was sitting outside her twins’ hospital room, staring at the closed door with a glare on her face. She hoped that the wooden door would burn down or explode, so she could know what was going on. Charlie hadn’t looked comfortable when the police had come in, in fact she looked ready to get up and run. They had been in there for the last ten minutes and Quinn suspected that Charlie wasn’t making it easy on them. She and Santana had already given their statements the night before and Leroy had informed them that he had already handed in all of her documented injuries. Any worry for Charlie dissipated when Rachel Berry finally begun to talk.

“You need to tell Finn. You can’t expect him to take care of the baby.”

Quinn finally tore her eyes away from the door, she had seen the looks that Rachel had been shooting her all morning while they had been in Charlie’s room. They hadn’t mentioned the elephant in the room. Mostly for Charlie’s sanity and because the moment that Leroy had left she had informed them rather bluntly that if they were going to argue over Finn Hudson she was going to call the nurse to kick them out. Rachel had filled the silence with what was currently going on in glee club and her various classes.

“In case you haven’t noticed man-hands,” Quinn’s voice was cold and she slid on her perfected HBIC stare as she looked at Rachel who flinched, “I have other things to worry about then whether Finn should know or not.” The situation had become more complicated the last thing she wanted was Finn to find a song that basically outed Charlie. He hadn’t called yet and she doubted that he was even awake.

Rachel opened her mouth to protest but looked at the door to Charlie’s room and she closed her mouth. Quinn made a valid point, she certainly did have more things to worry about then the paternity of her baby. She wanted to ask the ex-Cheerio some questions but the tired look on Quinn’s face gave her pause, she was worried about Charlie and despite the usual tight grip that she kept on her emotions, it was beginning to show on her face. Rachel stared at Quinn for a moment before the other girl turned to her with a sharp glare, causing Rachel to swallow and look away.

“Do you want something? Or are you sitting there plotting how you can steal my boyfriend?” Quinn snapped at the shorter girl.

Rachel met her gaze a surge of confidence, “You’re the one who cheated on him. You’re jealous because he has feelings for me.”

Quinn snorted and pointed to the door, “This happened because of Finn, if he had just stuck with the plan she wouldn’t be in there. He cheated on me, twice apparently. I didn’t go after Puck with the intention of sleeping with him, we had some wine coolers. I made a bad decision. I regret my decision, I’ve made several bad decisions lately. So you don’t get to play the moral crusader and label me the villain in the little drama that’s going on in your head. You can’t use this to justify the fact that you went after Finn despite the fact that he was my boyfriend.”

“You can’t keep lying to him about this. He needs to know he needs to have all the facts before he makes a decision.”

“It’s not that simple anymore,” Quinn swallowed and looked at Rachel. Her sister trusted the diva
with her secret and the girl had never used it in an attempt to hurt Quinn. She had kept Charlie’s secret safe and hopefully she’d understand the direness of the situation. “Finn knows or at least he suspects. If I tell him now that I cheated on him. He’s not going to react well at all, and given the fact that he just blurted out, in song, to my parents that I was pregnant. I have to find out a way to control the situation before we tell him, which means you can’t go running off to tell him because that will hurt Charlie.”

Rachel doesn’t say anything. The very idea that Finn would be so callous as to out Charlie seems preposterous in her mind. Finn despite his past behaviors has always been honest with her, he had even admitted and apologized for attempting to use her. Charlie may not have been Finn’s biggest supporter and she may have been dismissive of the quarterback to Rachel’s knowledge she hadn’t said anything mean to the boy’s face. She was about to hand down an ultimatum to Quinn when the door to Charlie’s room was pulled open and the detectives walked out. The female detective had a grim look on her face while the male detective look annoyed.

Quinn watched as they approached her cautiously, and she prayed that Charlie had done the right thing, had told them what had happened. “Did she tell you what happened?”

Detective Lisa Hamilton sighed, Charlie hadn’t really said much she had just stared at the two of them with suspicion. “She managed to confirm what we already knew. She did say she couldn’t remember a lot of what went down last night.” Lisa could tell that Charlie had been lying through her teeth. She had seen the flicker of panic when they mentioned the laceration on her hip. It was clear that unlike all of her other external injuries this one was caused by something other than the belt buckle, it seemed to be a knife. There had been a brief moment of panic in the girls eyes when she mentioned it but had once again said nothing.

Detective Michael Fisher nodded at this, “Seemed like she was hiding something,” he added looking at the two girls, mostly at Quinn. “You’re her twin right? Do you know what she could be hiding? The more we know, the better our chances. We arrested him last night, he was loaded out of his mind. He’s been charged with second degree child endangerment, the maximum is eight years in prison. If we had more details we might be able to see if the prosecutor will charge him with first degree, which has a max of eleven years. With how this is going though he might plead to like third or fourth degree and the max jail terms for that is counted in months not years. So anything you could do to help would be most helpful.

“She is hiding something, but I don’t think she’s going to tell you unless there is someone familiar with her. It took nearly half a year for her to finally tell my fathers. Perhaps if Quinn was in the room with her she’d feel more comfortable to talk with you,” Rachel suggested. Quinn flashed Rachel a look, and the girl met her gaze, “I want him to have the maximum sentence, and I know that you do as well. I understand that these aren’t the best circumstances and I can understand Charlie’s reluctance to talk but she needs to talk. She needs to tell us what happened, and the only person who has an inkling of what it was like to live in that house is you.” Rachel said stomping her foot. “If I could help you know I’d be in there demanding answers from her.”

Quinn stared at Rachel for a moment and she nodded before biting her lip and looking at the detectives thoughtfully. “What did she tell you?”

“We merely asked her questions and she merely confirmed or denied things. We couldn’t really get her to talk about anything that happened. Every time we pried she basically informed us that things from last night were rather hazy,” Lisa said. She personally there had been a sexual assault of some kind.

Quinn looked over at Detective Lisa for a moment an idea forming. “We can both go in with you,”
she looked over at Rachel and sighed she might need Rachel to help her unlock Charlie. She knew that her twin would never forgive her if she just gave the information freely she was much too protective of it. “She needs to be the one to tell you, we can’t betray her like that.”

The detectives nodded and held the door open so Quinn and Rachel could walk into the room together, with the detectives hot on their heels.

Quinn stared at her sister who looked irritated that the cops her back as she forced herself to sit up again. “I told them everything that I was going to tell them,” Charlie said tersely sticking out her chin defiantly daring them to contradict her.

Rachel was about to say something but Quinn touched her arm, stopping her from going on a tangent and Rachel looked up at Quinn half expecting to see the cold look, the HBIC stare that was generally shot in her direction. But Quinn wasn’t looking at her and Rachel could see the concern for her sister etched on her face.

“Uncanny X-men issue number four hundred and ten,” Quinn said in a neutral tone as she took a seat beside Charlie.

Rachel blinked a confused look which matched the ones on the detective’s faces, swept across her face. She had expected Quinn to come in there with her HBIC attitude, to bully her sister into talking. She certainly didn’t expect this. She didn’t even know what that Quinn was referring to and for a moment Charlie just stared at her sister.

“You prefer DC,” Charlie stated immediately looking at her sister suspiciously.

“I do, but do you remember which character was introduced in that particular issue? He’s one of your favorites,” Quinn said calmly. “You should you wouldn’t leave me alone till I read it.”

Charlie was quiet for a moment as she wracked her brain, “Squidboy?”

Quinn nodded, “Squidboy, you went on about that character for ages. Especially after the later issues came out and he got sent back home because he befriended the Juggernaut. He had a visible mutation and he was bullied because he looked different. His father beat him and did terrible things to him because he wasn’t like everyone else, he didn’t look the same as everyone else. I don’t think his father cared that he was a mutant, there are a lot of mutants after all. I think his father cared because Squidboy had a fish head. He couldn’t hide his imperfections like Wolverine could. So he beat him, and he hurt him because his son wasn’t perfect. I’m pretty sure Squidboy felt like a freak too.”

“I don’t see what that has to do with anything. Juggernaut nearly killed his father in an attempt to protect him. He didn’t go find someone and tell them about it.”

“Man-hands, Santana, I’m sure even Britt would do what Juggernaut did. I would too, to protect you. You’ve protected me more than enough, it’s time that I started to pull my weight. We’re twins we’re supposed to have each other’s back and I haven’t had yours. Juggernaut was going to be sent to jail and Squidboy finally told someone that all Juggernaut had done was protect him, protect him from someone who was supposed to love him but didn’t. So tell them everything so we can help Santana avoid a prison term, we both know she lives in the good part of town and won’t fare well against actual people from Lima Heights.”

Charlie said nothing for a moment, “I’m not a mutant.”

“Yes but when you found out that was what you wanted right, you thought that Professor Xavier
would come in the X-jet and come take you to a school with people who were like you; different. You’d finally fit in.” Charlie glanced over at the detectives, before looking at Quinn again this time there was a pleading look in her eye. ‘I’m right here and man-hands is over there. You know her superpower is she can talk people to death, you’d hate for me to unleash that on you.”

Rachel bristled at the insult and opened her mouth to object but Charlie snorted at this and visibly relaxed. She certainly didn’t look like she was ready to try and bolt out of bed, or shut down emotionally. Rachel didn’t even know that Quinn read comic books, it seemed so out of place for someone who was so perfect. She was the head cheerleader, well ex-head cheerleader. She also hadn’t expected to see this side of Quinn, the one that was calmly talking to her sister to try and get her to speak about her secret.

It wasn’t as if she didn’t suspect that they were closer than they let on at school. Charlie had never really had anything bad to say about Quinn, but she had never seen either sister in such a vulnerable position before. Even though Charlie was her best friend, it wasn’t like she went around with her heart on her sleeve, in fact talking about feelings was like pulling teeth and Charlie was intelligent to never actually say anything that would allow people to see her, but she had let Quinn in emotionally in seconds. The price of course was that it allowed Rachel to get a glimpse of the real Quinn Fabray. She certainly didn’t know that Quinn like comic books and she certainly didn’t expect to see this kinder version of Quinn either. Even her usual insulting names seemed more like terms of endearment then anything.

Charlie looked between Rachel and Quinn for a moment and an internal debate went on in her head. She didn’t want to say anything, she didn’t want anyone to know about her she wanted to hide it even though she knew that she wouldn’t be able to hide it much longer. She knew Russell Fabray and he would sell her out to save his own skin. He would try and paint her like she was this freak of nature and he had just been trying to cure her.

Detective Lisa blinked mostly in surprise, and looked between Rachel and Quinn, there wasn’t any surprise on their faces. Michael opened his mouth to say something but Lisa elbowed him hard in the ribs, the kid was talking and Michael had a tendency to put his foot in his mouth and it was clear that Charlie finally talking and telling them was something that was rather big.

“We found out soon after our thirteenth birthday,” Quinn supplied immediately jumping in to help Charlie and her sister gave her a thankful look. “That’s why he did what he did. That’s why she was beaten every time he was around.”

There was a moment of silence as the detectives took it in. They could probably add a hate crime to his list of offenses which would keep him in jail for a longer period of time. They would have to discuss it with the prosecutor though. It was Michael who broke the silence with his comment. “Does it—does it work?”

Detective Lisa looked appalled and was about to apologize for his rude question when Charlie snorted before grimacing in pain. She didn’t mind the question, she was used to the question.
Everyone from Brittany to the Berry’s had asked the question. Curiosity was better than open disgust and hatred. It had been the look that Russell had given her over the many years. “Yes it’s fully functional.”

Mike was about to ask another question when Lisa elbowed him the ribs, they weren’t there to ask the teenager at what she had between her legs, and even though she herself was curious she wasn’t going to keep asking questions about it. Lisa was about to ask another question when she suddenly put two and two together and a cold feeling gripped her stomach, “So the laceration on your hip—”

Charlie’s muscles tensed again and a fleeting look of panic crossed her features as she looked at Detective Lisa and then to Quinn and Rachel who had turned to her surprise on their faces. Then it was suddenly like she was back there, with him on top of her. She could feel his hands on her again tugging at it as he prepared to – “I don’t—” Charlie’s voice cracked for a moment and she looked at Quinn helplessly. She didn’t want to remember.

“Laceration on your hip?” Rachel asked loudly looking at Charlie.

Lisa immediately realized that she had accidentally revealed more information than Charlie had freely given out and took a step toward the teenager who visibly flinched away from her.

“So can you get a girl pregnant?” Michael asked and all eyes turned to him. It was rude and inappropriate but Charlie was pulled out of her head for a moment as she stared at the man. Lisa looked livid at the tastelessness of the question. But her blunder was quickly forgotten as Charlie focused on Michael. She was studying him, looking for any sign of disgust or pity.

“Yes?” Charlie she said finally.

“This is highly inappropriate—” Lisa began to say, but Michael ignored her.

“I didn’t even ask if you were into girls, I’m sorry. I just assumed. It’s totally cool if you’re into guys to,” Michael said apologetically. “You know what they say about making assumptions.”

Charlie was quiet for another long minute she wasn’t. She had always liked girls to her knowledge, it made sense. “I do like girls,” Charlie responded eventually. She was still looking at Michael an introspective look on her face. She was extremely confused by this line of questioning, but he didn’t seem to mean her any harm. It was questions she had been asked before when she had come out to certain people. It wasn’t what she had been expecting. She had expected him to be as grossed out as Russell was. Or look at her with that mixture of revulsion and pity.

Michael smiled warmly at her, “Well I don’t think you’re a freak.” Lisa looked about ready to murder him.

“You don’t?” Charlie’s voice is smaller than she intended and she’s surprised by his acceptance more than anything. He doesn’t know who she is and she hadn’t expected this to be his reaction, even the doctor who had informed her father that she was female instead of the boy he had always longed for, had looked at her like she was a freak of nature.

“No, I think a father who can hurt his own child is a freak. I have a daughter you know, she’s only five years old. But I can’t imagine hating her for something she couldn’t help or being just a bit different from everyone else. So whatever you may think of yourself, you have to remember that you aren’t some freak of nature, he is,” he wants to add more but he doesn’t, he doesn’t want to come off as patronizing.

Charlie swallows and nods, and Michael smiles at her. “I’m going to do everything in my power to
make sure that he goes to prison for a very long time, and if you remember anything else you can call me at any time.” He pulls out one of his cards and offers it to her and Quinn takes it for her. “We’ll let you get some rest,” he says and he pulls Lisa out of the room with him. It’s not until they get outside the hospital does Lisa begin to rip into him for his inappropriate line of questioning, but Michael is sure that Charlie will call him.

“Do you think she’ll like the present?” Brittany asked Santana as they stood outside Charlie’s room. They had gotten her a stuffed duck and two pairs of boxers. There was a bit of guilt in her voice, she hadn’t seen it either. She always spotted when the soccer player was in pain, but she hadn’t exactly put all the clues together.

Santana nodded, Q had asked them to pick up the boxers for Charlie. And she knew for a fact that Charlie would love anything that Brittany got for her. Santana on the other hand wasn’t feeling nearly as forgiving or generous as Brittany was, she was still pissed that Charlie had made Brittany cry. Though in reality she was angrier at Russell Fabray since it was his fault. He had been arrested last night and all Santana could do was hope that he dropped the soap in the prison showers. That he got a taste of the terror that he had put Charlie and Quinn through.

Brittany had insisted on going to visit in the Charlie in the hospital as soon as she had heard the news. It had taken Santana nearly half an hour to convince Brittany that it would be better to wait before seeing Charlie. Quinn had informed her that people had been in and out of her room all day. First it had been the police officers followed by the ophthalmologist and then finally her new social worker had showed up. She had taken Brittany to the mall instead and they had spent hours just looking for things to pick up for Charlie. Linking pinkies with Brittany they walked into the room together and Santana’s face fell. “What’s the hobbit doing here?”

Rachel looked up from the sheet music she had been going through, “I’m not that much shorter than you,” she said huffily.

Santana rolled her eyes, she knew that Rachel was Charlie’s friend and that Charlie was now going to be Rachel’s new roommate but that didn’t mean she had to like it. She would have personally preferred it if Charlie and Quinn were living with her. “You’re still the shortest one in the room stubbles,” Santana sneered back.

Charlie let out a sigh and she opened her mouth to protest, but Brittany beat her to it. “She’s Charlie’s friend so be nice San. No name-calling today,” she said with a gentle nudge. Santana opened her mouth to protest but instead huffed, deciding to ignore Rachel instead. A frown crossed Brittany’s face as she looked at the soccer player, when Santana had said it was bad, she hadn’t truly expected this. Charlie had always been a lot harder to read than anyone else, but right now Brittany found it incredibly easy to read the teenager. She read it in Charlie’s posture, on her face. Charlie’s hazel eyes were focused on a piece of lint on the bed. She refused to meet the dancer’s gaze and she could feel Brittany’s blue eyes focused on her reading her like a book. Charlie had always been more careful around the dancer than anyone else. Brittany had been the only one to ever notice. She wanted to pass this off, to pretend that everything was alright. She wanted to be a Fabray again and not talk about this and pretend that it was normal. Because if Brittany believed that everything was okay then it just was. Charlie could get lost in the world that Brittany could paint with her unicorns and rainbows. She didn’t want the dancer to look at her and see how broken she was, how twisted and ugly the world was, to look at her differently. “I’m sorry,” she mumbled finally after a few long tense moments.

Brittany closed the gap between them and gently touched Charlie’s face guiding the teen so she was able to look into her one good eye. She gently tapped Charlie’s nose, making sure that she
didn’t hurt the soccer player. “Lord Tubbington told me that sometimes people are really scared so they lie and say that everything is okay when it’s not. Or they tell themselves that it’s okay and they hope that one day it will be. That’s why I’m not mad at you for lying, you were scared. I don’t know why you were scared though, you’re always going to be just Charlie to me. But you’re not allowed to be scared anymore coz you’ve got all these people who love you and want to protect you. Quinn will stare at them and its scary cause it’s Quinn and she’s totes the head bitch in charge. Santana will totally kick their ass or tear them apart with her vicious words.” Charlie nodded numbly, she could feel her vision getting blurry with unshed tears. “You’re not allowed to lie to me anymore. The truth is important.”

Charlie pulled her face away and quickly brushed the tears away before they could fall. At least Brittany wasn’t furious with her. At least she hadn’t seen just how damaged she was. “I promise,” she mumbled quietly. She meant it, she wouldn’t lie if Brittany asked her a direct question anymore. She doubted that she’d get away with it now.

Brittany clapped, pleased with Charlie’s answer. “Good, we got you some presents. You couldn’t come feed the ducks with us today we got you a stuffed duck to make you feel better. I named him Mr. Quackers, he can’t eat bread but he’ll be here till you can come with me and San to the pond again.”

Santana chose this moment to finally speak as she dumped the boxers onto Charlie’s lap, “Quinn informed us that you were complaining about it being drafty so we got you some boxers. Oh and you will be paying for my dry cleaning or a new outfit. I haven’t decided yet, next time don’t bleed all over me.”

Charlie held the duck that Brittany had given her before smiling as best she could at Santana. She probably wouldn’t kill her today, and if all she could afford Santana’s dry cleaning bill. It wasn’t like she was Sue Sylvester who insisted on it being shipped to Europe to be dry cleaned. “Fair enough.”

“Oh and before I forget, the only reason I haven’t gone all Lima Heights on your ass is because it will make Britt’s upset. But the next time that you make Britt’s cry or make her worry about your sorry ass I will ends you myself.”

Despite Santana’s harsh words and threat of death, there was none of the usual bite to it. The Latina had been worried sick about Charlie and had shed a few tears on Brittany herself. Charlie nodded and reached for Santana’s hand taking it in hers, “Thank you,” she muttered and the Latina’s eyes immediately welled with tears before she quickly brushed them away.

Brittany looked at Rachel, who looked ready to speak out against the threat that she just heard, and smiled, “Don’t worry she’s not actually mad she was worried about Charlie, she c-”

“Britt’s you can’t tell the hobbit that,” Santana protested, and Brittany shot Rachel a conspiratorial smile.

Rachel smiled, and leaned back watching the interaction between Charlie and Santana and Brittany. She was always so guarded around other people, and yet she seemed to trust Santana and Brittany implicitly, enough to relax completely around them. Charlie hadn’t mentioned that Santana and Brittany knew her secret, but Rachel wasn’t surprised, they were Quinn’s best friends and they had probably spent some time at the Fabray house. Rachel shot a quick glance at Quinn who looked a bit relieved that Charlie seemed to be back to some semblance of normal, but she could see that the ex-cheerleader was worried about something.

Quinn picked up the boxers that Santana and Brittany had picked out for Charlie, and raised a
brow, there seemed to be a duck theme going on. Both had pictures of cartoon ducks on it, one had Daffy Duck and the other had Donald Duck. She looked up at Brittany who smiled at her, “We thought she’d look hot in them.”

Rachel turned to Charlie who had turned a bright red by Brittany’s blunt words, this was something that she also hadn’t mentioned. She hadn’t know her best friend was sexually active.

Santana noticed the look and looked between the two of them and finally asked the question she had been wanting to ask since she got here. “So I gots to know. How did you find out about Charlie’s little friend?”

“So I gots to know. How did you find out about Charlie’s little friend?”

“Actually I want to know that as well. Charlie never told us and I want to know why you never told anyone or tried to blackmail me with that information,” Quinn said.

“Do we have to talk about this now? I’m sitting here in a hospital bed, and I would rather not be here while you have discussion.” Charlie asked looking at all of them, out of all the things she had expected Santana to ask Rachel it hadn’t been that.

“Shut it C, you owes me, and I wants to know,” Santana snapped at her and the injured soccer player groaned and leaned back into her pillow. “Well Berry?” Santana prompted.

Rachel narrowed her eyes at Quinn, choosing instead to focus on what Quinn had implied then what Santana wanted to know, “I am appalled that you would think so little of me, that I would out anyone like that. Not only do I have two gay fathers who would be incredibly disappointed in me for doing such an action, I would be incredibly disappointed in myself if I ever lowered myself to that level. Besides which we live in Lima, Ohio, this city isn’t the bastion for tolerance and acceptance.” Rachel stared at Quinn the implication was clear with her words, she would never lower herself down to Quinn’s level and the ex-cheerleader frowned at this. “Besides which, Charlie is my friend and I could never betray her confidence like that.”

Charlie intervened almost immediately, coming to Quinn’s aid and trying to put a stop to the incoming fight before it started. “Quinn wouldn’t out someone like that, and Rachel has known since freshman year she hasn’t told anybody, she gets it.” She turned back to Santana who was looking ready to defend Quinn with a little more force than was necessary, “Rachel found out the same way you found out. You know I only wear regular boxers to bed.”

“You need to invest in a lock for your door,” Santana stated dryly.

Rachel sniffed indignantly, “I assure you there is a lock on my guest room door. That’s not how I found out though, I didn’t enter Charlie’s room. She was asleep in my bed.”

Three sets of eyes turned to look at Charlie who flushed a deep red. “Wanky,” Santana said with a smirk. “Didn’t know you had it in you.”

“I didn’t…it wasn’t like that,” Charlie protested but Santana ignored her and prompted Rachel to keep talking.

“Despite your sexual implications, Charlie simply arrived at my place, after what I imagine was a brutal soccer practice. We were going to watch Yentl but the moment she only managed to last a few minutes.” Rachel suspected that it had more to do with the fact that it was Yentl than anything else, she would make Charlie watch the entirety of that movie. The soccer player fell asleep every single time.

Santana’s eyes widened at Rachel’s word choice and she spun around to look at Charlie a teasing
look on her face, “Pulled a Hudson did you?”

“I think that’s the most insulting thing that you’ve ever said to me in my entire life,” Charlie replied though there was a fake outrage in her voice, “It wasn’t like that Santana,” she shot looked at Rachel, “I fell asleep because Coach Washington decided that it would be the perfect day to do Navy Seal training. She was muttering something about how Sue wouldn’t show her up.”

“There is nothing explicit about our relationship. Charlie is just my friend, and as you may or may not know she’s also enjoys cuddling people in her sleep. I woke up at my usual time at six am to start my day and I found out about Charlie’s secret that way.”

Quinn turned on her sister, there was a flash of annoyance on her face. “How could you be so careless?”

“Navy SEAL training.” Charlie said defensively, she hadn’t meant to fall asleep on Rachel’s bed with her, she just had. She probably should have just gone home but Quinn had texted her that Russell was on the war path. “I doubt that you guys were any better after the Special Forces training that Sue put you through.”

There was a grunt of acknowledgement from the Cheerios past and present. It wasn’t some running joke between the two teams, Sue and Roz had put each team through some modified version of military training. It was how they separated the strong from the weak and it was usually followed by massive team cuts. Quinn shuddered, she could remember the last hell week that Sue had put them through while being on an only liquid diet, she was suddenly glad that she wasn’t on the Cheerios.

“You’re joking right?” All four athletes turned to Rachel who was staring at them in a mixture of disbelief and worry written on her face. “Wouldn’t the school board have something to say about it?”

“The only reason that they get away with it is because they win championships. Which brings in money which means that the school board doesn’t care. They turn a blind eye to what they do. Sue demands excellence and so does Roz,” Charlie explained.

“The school nurse is always around so no one gets hurt that badly,” Brittany adds dismissively with a shrug. She doesn’t add that the nurse’s office is filled by the end of the practice and a few students have been carted off by paramedics. “You’d make a perfect flyer, you’re tiny enough,” she adds thoughtfully, “And you can follow choreography. Coach will totally put you on the team.”

Santana looks horrified for a minutes but she stops to think about it looking Rachel over with a critical eye. The diva was certainly tiny enough and light enough to throw around and recruiting Berry would get Sue off her ass about destroying glee club. “You know B totally has a point and we are down one flyer since Q over here became preggo.”

“While I’m flattered that you think I could keep up with you. I am going to have to decline, Coach Sylvester is clearly insane and she terrifies me. I don’t think that I could keep up with what you do, let alone the training regime that you keep up with, it will take time away that form my dedication to my voice and my dance classes. Not to mention that cheerleading is a rather dangerous sport and I can’t risk any injuries,”

The rather light tone continued for a moment and Charlie watched her friends quietly before she picked up the Daffy Duck boxers and slowly inched her way off the bed, at least they had taken her off the annoying cardiac monitor. She felt Quinn shift beside her and place her hand under her shoulder helping her up. “I’m fine,” she said grumpily, as her body protested the action.
“You promised Brittany you wouldn’t lie,” Quinn said simply and Charlie gave her the dirtiest look she could but let Quinn help her into a fully seated position.

Charlie paused for a moment, the hospital gown had become undone at the back. She could feel the breeze on her skin and froze, she still didn’t want people to see the damage. She swallowed for a moment before looking at Quinn, “Can you?” she asked feeling a wave of helplessness consume her. She hated this, she hated having to depend on other people.

Quinn nodded and begun to snap the gown shut, she could feel everyone’s eyes on them but wisely no one said anything. Even Santana kept her comments to herself. She finished quickly working her way down Charlie’s back, snapping the metal fasteners closed. With a grunt she helped Charlie move her feet off the bed.

Charlie pushed herself off the bed without much fanfare, her feet hitting the cold floor, and one hand wrapped around her IV stand. She wiggled her toes experimentally before looking up and took in the stares, “What? I need to go to the bathroom,” she said with a huff, as she took a step forward.

“Do you need some help?” Rachel asked immediately standing up.

Charlie shoots Rachel a scandalized look, “I’m not invalid. I just really need to go to the bathroom.” With that said Charlie walked the short distance to the bathroom closing the door behind her with a bit more force than was necessary.

Rachel looked around the room, as the unholy trinity looked at her, “I was talking about helping her put on the boxers that you bought for her. I figured since she couldn’t bend over because of her ribs—” she said defensively.

It suddenly dawned on the rest of the girls that Rachel had been right and that Charlie probably couldn’t wear the boxers herself. “She’ll call me if she needs any help,” she said eying the door she was going to give her sister a minute before entered the room forcibly. She doesn’t even believe the line for a second, Charlie had barely wanted her help getting out of bed.

It took a minute and a half, before Quinn was about to go knock on the bathroom door and help Charlie, but there was a flush heard, followed by the sound of the tap running. It was another thirty before the door opened and Charlie walked out boxers no longer in hand.

Brittany frowned immediately as she looked at her friend. Charlie had probably put on the boxers herself. She had hurt herself again to prove to everyone that she didn’t need them, she could tell by the tight smile on her face and the pained expression in her eyes.

Santana broke the uneasy silence, “You’re an even bigger moron than Finn Hudson,” she snipped and Charlie turned to her. “You’re injured it’s okay for you to get help. We’re here to help you, so stop being stupid and let us help,” the urge to poke Charlie in the chest was high, but she didn’t want to hurt the teenager, so she used her words. “We could have helped you put them, it’s nothing we haven’t seen before.”

Charlie was about to say something in her defense but once she opened her mouth she couldn’t think of anything. She just felt bad for having worried them again, so she resorted to her usual defense. “I’m going to be okay.”

“Bullshit. You’re not if you’re going to keep acting like some idiotic dude who needs to prove his manliness. Your ass-hat of a father is gone, he’s in jail and he can’t hurt you anymore. You don’t have to act like all this is nothing because it isn’t. This isn’t nothing, you’re in the hospital you
have broken ribs, you could possibly have a really bad eye injury. So you’re going to let us help you, even if it’s embarrassing.” Santana snapped harshly taking a step forward so she was standing close to Charlie.

Charlie just stared at Santana, she wasn’t surprised at the outburst or the anger in her voice, and she just was at a loss for words. “I’m not an invalid,” she repeated again slowly. “I can wipe my own ass and put on a pair of boxers.”

Brittany stepped in quickly before Santana lost the little control she had over her temper, and started yelling. “Did it hurt?”

“Yes, but—”

“I don’t want to see you hurt anymore. It makes San worry and it makes me sad. So let us help you, till you get better. Cause if you don’t get better you can’t come to the park with me and San anymore.”

Charlie grunted and looked at Quinn for a bit of back up but her twin was currently giving her one of her patented looks, and Rachel looked about ready to create a PowerPoint presentation about the dangers of rib injuries and what could possibly go wrong if she reinjured them. “Okay,” she finally muttered.

Santana grumbled, “I’m not worried. I’m furious, the next time you try and be fucking ‘manly’ again I’ll totally castrate you,” she bitched not really looking at Charlie.

Charlie had gone rigid at the words, she knew it was Santana being Santana but she could feel her chest tightening, as her heart picked up speed, and she could feel it. Feel him on top of her, she could smell him, booze and sweat. *I’ll make you into a proper girl.* The words echoed in her head and she closed her eyes tightly trying to force the flash of stainless steel out of her eye, and the feeling of him pulling at her underwear and the his hands around it pulling it.

Quinn was up immediately when she saw her sister check out and she shoved Santana away, “What did you do?” She hissed at the Latina who was watching Charlie with shock written on her face. “Charlie, you’re safe. He’s not here,” she repeated gently over and over again as she made an attempt to grab Charlie’s hands which were shaking violently, her body was already tense and primed.

Rachel realized what was happening immediately and she reacted first grabbing onto Quinn and attempting to pull her back, the moment that Quinn grabbed onto Charlie’s wrists. “Don’t touch her! You can’t—”

Charlie opened her eye in a panic when Quinn grabbed her and reacted, her body was primed for an imminent attack and she kicked out with knee, barely missing Quinn as Rachel pulled her back in time. She didn’t see them though, she didn’t see Quinn or Rachel, or Santana and Brittany. She just saw him. “Please daddy, please no,” she whispered mostly to herself her voice cracking.

It was the sudden influx of pain in her ribs that brought her back to reality as her legs finally gave out and she slumped to the ground. The sudden jolt of movement sent shockwaves of agony through her body overcoming the adrenaline that was cursing through her veins. She didn’t say anything and instead just focused on her breathing forcing it to slow down, she could still feel her heart pumping in her ears and she stared at the floor as her vision cleared.

The room was deathly quiet, Rachel was still holding onto Quinn, who was straining against her grip to get to her sister and Santana had backed off, she was standing the farthest away from
Charlie a guilty look on her face. It was Brittany who walked up to the fallen teen who seemed to have returned back to a semblance of normal and kneeled down so that she was on level with Charlie and tapped her on the nose again. “Back to bed,” she said cheerfully and Charlie blinked but nodded letting the dancer help her up quietly.

She didn’t say a word and she didn’t look at any of them as she let Brittany take her hand and lead her to the bed. She didn’t protest when Brittany placed Mr. Quackers in her hand, nor did she notice when she pulled the stuffed animal closer to her. She was still lost in her own dark thoughts.

Rachel finally released Quinn who had frozen when Charlie collapsed, she was sure the pregnant teenager wasn’t going to crowd her twin. Quinn took a step forward slowly, she had been surprised by the nearly violent outburst. She hadn’t been expecting that and Rachel was certain that Quinn had never seen Charlie react that way before. She finally found her voice again and looked at Santana who seemed to be keeping a far distance from Charlie as if expecting her to freak out again. “Come on Santana, we should go find our respective fathers and inform that Charlie just had a panic attack, she might have reinjured herself.”

Santana turned to the diva and nodded mutely as she followed Rachel out of the room, “I didn’t mean to hurt her,” Santana said after a moment as they walked down the rather empty hallway. Her tone was defensive.

Rachel glanced at the Latina, she scared her nearly as much as Quinn did, well had. It was very hard to be scared of someone who had accidentally shown you a side of themselves that they probably didn’t want you to see, and Charlie had trusted her with her secret, and had seemed relatively at ease with her. “I know you didn’t mean to you were just worried,” she said calmly. Santana flashed her a look and Rachel resisted the temptation to take a step back. “I don’t think Quinn suspects, and I don’t think Charlie wants anyone to know. I think she’ll deny it if you bring it up. But I think he, Russell, tried to—” Rachel’s voice dropped. “Castrate her,” she whispered. “When the police were questioning her, they mentioned something specifically about lacerations on her hip and she begun to panic after you said it. I think it’s also why she decided to get dressed on her own, at least part of the reason.”

Santana’s face twisted into a cold grim look, if she ever saw Russell Fabray again she was going to make sure to do it to him, she was going to put him through hell for what he had done. She didn’t say anything to Rachel who continued talking, explaining what a trigger was. Santana ignored her, and instead focused on getting her hands on a one Russell Fabray so she could beat the crap out of him.
Chapter 8

Going back to school and pretending like nothing was more difficult than Quinn had expected. She hadn’t wanted to leave Charlie’s side especially after the girl had finally started taking again. It had been nearly an after Dr. Berry had checked her over, making sure that she hadn’t sustained another injury. Brittany had sat beside her rubbing Charlie’s arm as she talked to Santana who kept shooting furtive glances at the teenager. Rachel had gone back to looking over sheet music while she had just sat beside Charlie wondering what had set her off.

It had caught them all by surprise when Charlie had simply returned back to them and flashed that crooked smile of hers and bluntly said that she was hungry and was craving Breadstix. It was a lie, one that only she and it seemed Rachel had caught on to, Charlie hated Breadstix. But it had seemed to pull out of Santana out of whatever funk that she was in and they had ordered Breadstix. No one had asked, no one wanted to push and it was easy for Charlie to slip back into being a Fabray. If you didn’t talk about it then the problem simply didn’t exist.

Quinn slammed her locker shut harshly, she didn’t even want to be here. She had thought that the staring and the whispers that she had received were bad. People laughing at her behind her back, the humiliation of no longer being a Cheerio. Everyone had known, but at least the comments had died down as had the sneers. At least this time the information was contained with the faculty, and she didn’t know if that was worse. With their looks of pity, and hushed whispers. Ms. Pillsbury had even tried to hand her a few of her pamphlets and informed her that if Charlie ever needed to see anyone then her door was always open. Quinn knew for a fact that Charlie wasn’t going to see Ms. Pillsbury.

All this was compounded by the fact that the drama by the fact that she still had no idea what to do about the Finn situation, but at least Puck was finally giving her space to decide what to do. Though he had stolen a book from the bookstore for her. She had found the gesture sweet, but she didn’t know if that was the pregnancy hormones or the fact that within the last 72 hours her life was now a giant disaster. She wanted to tell Finn, she wanted to be done with him, but the fact that he knew that Charlie was different forced her to hesitate.

If she wasn’t pregnant she’d throw herself into being head Cheerleader and work out some of this pent out aggression, but she wasn’t and all she had going for her in her life was glee club. In which Finn had insisted that she stop dancing, the whole thing was rather demeaning to her. She had taken to watching Cheerios practices but that certainly too much, especially since it was clear that they didn’t need her to win. Santana was doing an excellent job as head cheerleader.

She didn’t know how to begin to decompress. Not with everything in her life changing so rapidly. 72 hours ago she had a home, the love and support of her parents, and her sister was healthy enough to score a hat trick in the final game of the regular season. She no longer had a home, even though the Lopez’ s were being really kind to her, it wasn’t home.

Home was a place where her father sat down and watched Glenn Beck and Bill O’Reilly while complaining about how the economy was going to the toilet because they had a black president. It was where Judy would make family dinners each night and then proceed to get herself thoroughly drunk by the end of each night, but she was always still sober enough to let her father demean her and slap her ass. Frannie only ever called once a week, usually while slightly inebriated, only to brag about how rich her husband was and how great her life was. It was a place where Charlie would show up every now and again skipping family dinners and hiding up in her room that was really just a time capsule of the son that Russell never had. Staying only to make sure that Russell
took his violent tendencies out on her.

Now the Fabray house was empty. She had been kicked out and her parents were currently sitting in a jail somewhere. Quinn personally didn’t understand why Judy had been arrested with Russell. Judy had never laid a hand on Charlie, she had never said anything particularly ugly to the teenager. She was just scared of Russell, not knowing how he’d react to things. It was probably safer for her to not say anything about Charlie, pretend that the problem didn’t exist.

Charlie was in the hospital, still trying to pretend that she was okay. It had taken Quinn forcing Charlie to swear to Brittany that she wouldn’t leave the hospital until she had been cleared to do so. She knew that if left to her own devices Charlie would totally attempt to sneak out of the hospital.

And to top it all off, she needed to deal with Rachel knowing the paternity of her baby. This information seemed to renew the girls’ obsession over Finn Hudson, she had seen her talking to him earlier, and they had been talking and laughing throughout glee together. Truthfully if Rachel wanted to anchor herself down to Finn Hudson, Quinn could personally care less. He was a terrible boyfriend, she doubted he had even noticed that she had been gone all weekend. He certainly hadn’t called her to check in on her, he hadn’t asked what she was doing in the hospital, he had just sat in front of the television playing call of duty. Finn had looked relieved when Santana and Brittany had showed up on Sunday night to help move her stuff out of his home. So had Carol Hudson. It was almost painful to admit that she’d be doing Rachel a favor by keeping her away from the terrible boyfriend that was Finn Hudson.

Quinn watched as Rachel attempted to flirt with him, rubbing his arm and laughing at something he said. Finn had his usual dopey expression on his face. She wondered what she saw in the boy, which was probably the problem. She had expected Finn to transform into something that she doubted that he was capable of being. Even Puck had changed and matured, and was trying to step up. He was still a man-whore of course, but at least he was trying to step up financially and do the right thing.

The only thing these past three days had shown her was that her life was a disaster, there was no way that she could deal with this and a child all at the same time. She couldn’t raise a child when she herself didn’t have a home.

Santana and Brittany were suddenly flanking her like they had used to in the old days and she relaxed at the familiarity of it all. At least she could cling to them to keep her from losing her sanity in the storm that was her life. Santana followed her gaze and her face twisted into a disgusted look, “She’s back trying to mount Frankenteen? She does know that he decided that it was a brilliant strategy to sing a song to your parents to announce that you were pregnant.”

Quinn watched Rachel smile at him and the annoyance built again, “She knows the baby is Pucks. She walked in on me and Charlie discussing it at the hospital.”

Santana blinked and looked back at Rachel and then at Finn, since she hadn’t heard anything about Puck and Finn going at it she was going to take the bet that Rachel hadn’t told Finn. “The hobbit can give you a run on being ruthless, why hasn’t she told him yet.”

“She’s giving me a chance to tell him. I just don’t know how to contain the situation since da- Russell, since Russell decided to get drunk and talk about my ‘brother’.”

“Frankenteen knows?” Santana hisses keeping her voice low as she looks around.

“He was going to ask but then my parents kicked me out and he helped me pack some of my things. I don’t know what he knows truthfully. I just know that we have to proceed with caution,”
Quinn replied simply.

“Finn is like the dumbest person in the school, he probably won’t figure it out,” Santana said confidently.

Quinn shook her head, “I can’t take that chance. All he needs to do is imply that there is something off about Charlie and Karofsky and Azimio will start circling. People will talk, people will wonder. JBI will start stalking her to get the picture that shows a thousand words. And we live in Lima Ohio, someone will pick a fight and right now Charlie can’t defend herself.”

“She has us,” Brittany said immediately. “Mostly Santana, she scares most people in this school.”

Quinn shook her head, she was already going through way to much change. She couldn’t deal with the added stress of having to worry about who would be coming after Charlie next. “Let’s just get to glee club.” There was also two more weeks to sectionals.

“No glee club today, Mr. Schue has gone to visit that Jane Addams Academy, he thinks that Sue is trying to steal the set list and is giving it to the competition.”

“Is she?” Quinn asked.

“No but now that he’s given her the idea –” Santana trailed off and shrugged. Mr. Schuester really didn’t know how to deal with Sue Sylvester.

“Has Charlie called yet?” Brittany asked.

“Man-” Quinn paused, she really needed to stop calling Rachel that. Especially since Leroy and Hiram were taking Charlie in, the last thing she needed was for Charlie to be kicked out of their home. She’d have to make an attempt to get along with the girl, if only for Charlie’s sake. “The screen on her phone was smashed, so she doesn’t have a phone right now. I said I’d swing by the mall and pick one up for her. But until then Rachel told me that her father would text her when she was released.” At least she was mobile for the time being, she was currently using Charlie’s car.

Santana grimaced, “We should probably get around to cleaning that up. The back seat looks like someone bled out on it.”

“It’s really creepy,” Brittany added.

Quinn nodded and added that to the list of things that she was going to do. Charlie’s social worker had mentioned having a police escort so they could get some of Charlie’s things, and she was planning to get her car as well and a few things she had forgotten, at least she could have some semblance of normal now. Her list of things to do seems to be getting increasingly bigger, and she still needs to start looking at prospective parents for her child.

The three girls walk down the hallway heading to the cafeteria when they are stopped by Missy and Marissa as well as half the girls’ soccer team.

Santana’s body immediately switches to high alert as she steps in front of Quinn and Brittany. It’s generally bad news at McKinley when there is a team gathering in the hallways, but at least the girls don’t have slushies in their hands. Not to mention the girls’ soccer team isn’t exactly filled up with the bitch-type people that the Cheerio’s seem to attract.

Missy Gunderson raises her hands, in a sign of peace, “We just got out of a team meeting,” she says explaining the numbers. “We were going to go looking for you. Coach Roz wants to see you Quinn.”
The last time she had talked to Coach Washington the woman had tried to recruit her, it was probably due to Sue’s many attempts to recruit Charlie. For some strange reason both coaches seemed to think that the Fabray twins would make this awesome team. Problem was, the Charlie wasn’t a cheerleader, and Quinn wasn’t a soccer player. Besides Quinn liked being at the top of the pyramid while Charlie enjoyed being the star striker, neither girl liked sharing the spotlight. “She isn’t trying to recruit me? Now that Sue has kicked me off the team.”

Marissa shakes her head, “I don’t think so. She’s in her office. Word of warning she went on a rampage this morning like a Sue Sylvester rampage, we sort of figured it had to do with Charlie. And since Charlie isn’t here we’ve sort of put two and two together and we’re making the assumption that she’s gone and gotten herself injured.” Quinn’s mind is racing but she nods slowly. Marissa winces, “How long?”

“Six to eight weeks.” Quinn replies and there is a murmur of discontentment that runs through the team. She doesn’t add that it might be more with Charlie’s affinity for ignoring doctor’s orders. She certainly doesn’t mention that her sister can’t do cardio exercises, to keep her fitness up without exacerbating the injury which means that she’ll probably lose quite a bit of her conditioning.

“Well tell her we hope that she gets better soon,” Missy says as the girls’ team begins to disperse.

Quinn nods and watches as they leave and groans, the last thing she wants to deal with is an irate Roz Washington.

“We should join the girls soccer team San,” Brittany says after a moment.

“Yeah how is no one vying for her spot as captain, I’d be all over that. I mean you getting preggers was like the best thing that could have happened to me, no offense.”

Quinn rolls her eyes, “They need Charlie to win another state championship. Just like Sue needs you two, to win a state championship.” It used to be the three of them, but if Santana and Brittany suddenly quit the team the Cheerios would collapse. “Charlie told me at least four girls have full ride scholarships riding on the outcome of the championships this year,” she adds. She doesn’t add that Charlie is relatively well liked on the team. She sighs it’s probably better to see Coach Roz now before the crazy coach finds her.

Roz Washington is on her way out of her office when they finally arrive and she studies the unholy trinity before looking at Quinn, “Do Hat Rack and Salsa Caliente know?” she asks Quinn.

Quinn blinks and looks at Santana who looks mildly offended by being called Salsa Caliente, before looking back at Roz, “They know.”

Roz frowns for a moment before stepping aside for the girls to enter her office as she goes to sit behind her desk. “Alright teen statistic, we have a problem with your baby daddy. I heard him discussing my captain with that vest-wearing curly haired butt chinned wonder asking him about transgendered kids. I managed to shut it down by threatening to join forces with my nemesis Sue Sylvester to shut that glee club down. But you need to get your baby daddy under control. This is Lima, Ohio and if the state and if the other schools find out that I being the accepting woman that I am allowed a transgendered athlete—”

Quinn pinched the bridge of her nose, she didn’t even want to know how Coach Roz found out. “She’s not transgendered.”

Roz Washington paused for a moment, “I can understand why you may be hesitant to trust me, but
I accept everyone. I don’t care if you’re an alien from outer space. I believe in loving everyone, ‘cept that she-beast Sue Sylvester.” Roz narrows her eyes at this.

Quinn sighed, she would need to deal with Finn Hudson sooner than later. Charlie was generally the one that answered the questions and there was certainly no point in hiding it. “She is genetically female. She has a double X chromosome. There is paperwork proving it.”

Santana chose this moment to lean back and crassly go, “She just has a dick.” Brittany smacks Santana’s arm, “What? Those are her words.”

“She’s intersexed, but genetically she’s female and she identifies as female. Legally she’s female. You can’t kick her off the team,” Quinn says firmly.

“I like you teen statistic, defending your family. I’m not Sue, I wouldn’t have removed you from the team for being pregnant. I would have benched you and then once you expelled your spawn from your teenage vagina, forever ruining it, I would have had you running suicides until you dropped dead from exhaustion.” All members of the unholy trinity just stared at the black woman, they could suddenly see why everyone called her a Black Sue Sylvester. But Roz ignored their probing looks, “You still need to deal with your baby daddy.”

Quinn nodded and began to get up, “If that’s all –”

“It isn’t. I know that my star player can be a bit thick-headed but you should let her know that my door is always open. I understand what she’s going through. So if she needs to talk about it, if any of you need to talk about it then my door is open.” Quinn swallowed, she sounded just like Ms. Pillsbury who had given her a few sheets of paper. The woman was a terrible guidance counselor. She didn’t need the pity anymore and she could see why Charlie would try and pass everything off as okay.

Roz Washington felt the hostility radiating off Quinn and sighed, “When I was growing up, my aunt married a man that was nice to everybody. And at first he used to bring us presents and candy and we thought he was the perfect man for her. That was his thing he portrayed himself as this big family man that never had an unkind word to say to anybody. But at home he had a temper, and he started beating her. She’d lie, much like well Charlie. Or she’d make a joke out of it, or she’d brush it off. She blamed herself, saying she’d done this or that wrong. She’d tell my momma that he was a good man and she had it coming. It took my aunt five years and a trip to the ICU to stop making excuses for that man and get a divorce. So when I say I understand I truly understand what you and Charlie are going through. I’m not a licensed psychologist, and I know it’s certainly not my place but she’s going to need someone to talk to, and judging from the look on your faces it’s not you. I suggest that she get someone to talk to as soon as possible.”

Quinn nods mutely and the unholy trinity get up to leave, “I’ll tell her,” she offers Coach Washington, she doubts that she’ll actually get through to her but it was worth a try.

Coach Washington nods, and since she’s ever so tired of being called the Black Sue, she can’t help but to put in her sales pitch if only so she can get one over on Sue Sylvester, “If you ever get tired of Sue’s craziness then there is always a spot on the soccer team for the three of you.”

The best part of her day was when she the final school bell rang and she’s quick to get out of her seat and exit the classroom. She has already made sure to get Charlie’s homework for the week, and all she wants to do now is go see her sister, if only to make sure that she hadn’t escaped. She’s not surprised to see Santana and Brittany waiting for her by her locker. But what she doesn’t expect is to see Rachel Berry standing by Charlie’s car waiting for them.
“I know this may be inconvenient but is it possible for you to give me a ride home. My fathers are just finishing the paperwork for Charlie’s release. The social worker was there earlier to make sure that everything was in order, so they are running a bit behind, but according to Daddy they should be home in an hour or two.”

“We were heading to the mall to get C a new phone, and a few new clothes and stuff,” Santana informs her looking over what the diva is wearing and frowning. “And while we’re at it, we’re going to give you a makeover because I can’t be seen with you at the mall looking like a cross between a grandma and a toddler. It’s embarrassing.”

Rachel shot an irritated look at Santana that was mixed with a bit of confusion. “What’s wrong with this outfit? Pantsuits are very professional looking.”

“We’re teenagers Rachel, we’re not joining the workforce,” Quinn says as she puts her bag in the trunk of the car.

“You look like my mom and she’s like super old,” Brittany adds.

“That color blue on you is totes not your color,” Santana throws in.

Rachel flushes and looks down at herself before looking back at them still suspicious of their motives, “Why are you three volunteering to give me a new look.”

“I already tolds you Berry, I can’t be seen at the mall with you dressed like that,” Santana snips as she pulls Brittany into the back seat letting Rachel have shotgun. She doesn’t add it’s because she feels thankful that Rachel and her fathers are looking after Charlie. She has a reputation to protect and she still doesn’t trust the diva entirely.

Quinn studies Rachel for a moment, the idea of actually helping the diva bothers her, not so much because it’s Rachel, but because she’s going to use whatever help that Santana and Brittany give her to try and win over the person of her obsession Finn. She assumes her discomfort at the idea is because Finn is still her boyfriend, and even though she wants to be rid of him, the idea of Rachel Berry all but dry humping him to get his attention irritates her.

Rachel is still looking at Santana suspiciously but finally acquiesces with a brief nod of her head, she doesn’t trust that this isn’t some elaborate prank. It is after all the unholy trinity and they have been nothing but cutting with their cruel remarks. She suspects that they might be making some sort of attempt to bridge the chasm for Charlie’s sake, she has noticed that Quinn has stopped calling her names.

An awkward and tense silence fills the air as they drive to the mall and Rachel finally speaks up still uncertain about their motives. “You don’t have to be nice because of Charlie, or stop treating me the way you normally do. Charlie is my friend, she has always been welcome at my house. This has never been contingent on whether you three were nice to me or not. I understand that you have an image to present to the whole school, and you will probably be shunned if they assume that we are friends. And while I understand that you are also Charlie’s friends, and her sister therefore you will probably be all but living in my house for the next two weeks. So I propose that at least while she is recovering and on mandatory bed rest, we act in a civil manner towards each other.”

Santana snorts, “We hang out with Quinn and she’s already being shunned. The whole ex-cheerleader and ex-president of the chastity club. So me and Britt’s will do whatever we want at school, if we want to be nice to you, we’ll be nice to you. If we want to slushy you, we will slushy you. Sure I may be helping you as some sort of thanks because your family is taking care of C, and keeping her safe. But you really do dress like a toddler and you talk too much and your weird
obsession with Frankenteen makes me want to puke. Let’s not even begin to talk about your personality. So I’m going to at least help you dress like a normal person, instead a hobbit living in a shire.”

“Hobbits live in hobbit holes in New Zealand,” Quinn says absentmindedly.

“Is being a nerd contagious?” She turns to Brittany, “If I ever catch the nerd, just ends me. Don’t let me infect you too.”

Rachel shoots a curious look at Quinn, who is focused on finding a parking spot so she doesn’t notice. She really doesn’t want someone who is just with her because she dresses a certain way. “Alright I’ll let you give me some advice on a few outfits,” she sighs reluctantly.

Santana smiles at this, “Good we’ll split up at the mall, you’re with me hobbit. Britt’s will totally help Q,” she announces. “By the time I’m through with you, every boy in school will definitely want to get with you.”

“I can put on my own shirt,” Charlie groused looking at Quinn, it’ll hurt but she doesn’t want Quinn to see all the sutures and all the bruises. While Quinn had seen a lot more damage to her body than most, she had stitched her up on more than one occasion, there had been many more times when she had been able to hide the damage from her sister. When Quinn had gone to cheer-camp the summer before freshman year, Russell had been particularly brutal with her. She had never depended on Quinn to take care of her, it was supposed to be the opposite way around and this change in dynamic bothered her to no end. It tore her apart to see the flash of guilt on Quinn’s face whenever she looked at Charlie. She didn’t blame Quinn, she never would blame her sister.

Quinn ignored Charlie, she’s come to realize that it’s really the best way to deal with her sister’s incessant need to protect her. She motions for her sister to pull her arms up which after a moment and a glare Charlie finally does as she is asked and Quinn slowly pulls up the shirt that she was given at the hospital. She can’t help but stare, it’s the first time she’s seen the damage completely. From the deep blue and black bruise on her stomach to the several patched up wounds. Some are stitched up, others aren’t. “I’m sorry,” Quinn says after a moment. “I should have -”

“Lucy,” Charlie said quietly, “You didn’t do this, Russell did, and I’m never going to blame you for this,” She stated. “So don’t blame yourself for this.”

Quinn nodded and motioned for Charlie to raise her arms again. She doesn’t know what to say to Charlie because it’s clear her sister won’t allow her to apologize. “Finn thinks you’re a transgendered student.” Charlie doesn’t say anything as Quinn helps her pull on a black t-shirt, and Quinn has to wonder what’s going on through her sister’s head. “I want to tell him that Puck’s the father, but I can’t. I want to break up with him but I can’t do that with him holding that information over your head. Coach Washington knows by the way, she thought you were a transgendered student as well, but your position is safe. She doesn’t care and she says that you can see her anytime because she’s been there.”

Charlie nods quietly for a moment, “I don’t think I have a choice anyway,” she finally says. “Everyone will know about this situation soon enough. If they don’t already know.” Charlie says with a small grunt as she adjusts on the bed.

“What are you talking about?” Quinn asks confused.

“I’m not surprised you don’t know; after all we’re teenagers, we don’t read newspapers. Russell and Judy made page six. Not front page but still page six, if there’s a trial I’m sure that will be
front page worthy,” Charlie informs her. They don’t mention either of them by name but anyone can put two and two together. She doesn’t tell Quinn about her freak out this morning when she had found out that their parents had been in the paper accused of child abuse.

She’d been given the day to think about it. The thought of everyone knowing about her secret terrifies her to her core. They’re teenagers, and McKinley isn’t exactly a bastion of tolerance. It’s not like she could transfer schools either, short of her leaving Lima behind and leaving Quinn and everyone else she’s stuck to deal with the fallout of Russell’s actions. “I’m actually sort of surprised it didn’t make the front page, two prominent ‘moral’ members of the community get caught for child abuse. Screams front page to me. But then again with the amount of money Russell is paying to his defense attorneys, this isn’t all that surprising at all.”

Quinn gives Charlie a sharp look, “How are you so calm? Everyone will know about you, and what he did to you. You couldn’t even tell the police why he targeted you. You can’t just be okay with it.”

Charlie takes Quinn’s hand in her own. Freaking out wasn’t going to solve anything, “I don’t have a choice, if they don’t hear it from me they’re going to hear it from someone else, and I’d rather be the one controlling the information. I mean that Detective Michaels took it relatively well, maybe the people at McKinley will take it well.” When Quinn gives her an incredulous look Charlie’s smile fades a little. She knows it’s highly unlikely, Kurt gets bullied for being gay and she’s pretty sure the boy isn’t out yet.

“I’m pregnant,” Quinn points out, “After they found out I had the words hypocrite and slut, spray painted onto my locker.”

“Whether or not it was a mistake or not, you were the president of the celibacy club when this whole thing went down,” Charlie points out immediately.

Quinn looks at her sister dully, “My point is that they will be harsh with you, they will say nasty things behind your back. They will say them to your face, they will slushy you. Some of them might even attack you. We live in Lima, you should be worried.”

Charlie is quiet for a moment, “I’ll be fine.”

“Charlie,” Quinn says giving her the best HBIC stare.

“I dealt with Russell’s abuse for three years, without anyone to help me, or try and protect me. I stopped caring about what he said about me ages ago. Besides I’ve got Santana and Brittany and maybe most of the girls on the soccer team. I’ve also got Rachel and you ready to try and protect me.”

Quinn stares at her sister, it’s like after everything that happened this past three days she can tell when Charlie is trying to feed her a line. She knows her sister, she knows that Charlie has this idiotic hero complex. That she’ll insist on doing it alone and things will spiral out of control while she pretends that everything is fine. “You promised Brittany that you wouldn’t lie to her anymore. You’re going to promise me the exact same thing. You can’t lie to me about it anymore. You can’t tell me it’s okay when it isn’t. So promise me that you won’t.” Charlie doesn’t say anything right away instead choosing to look away. So Quinn continues. “Clearly your attempts to protect me blew up in your face the moment I made a mistake.”

Charlie frowns, if Quinn had just listened to her about taking care of the problem to begin with, then none of this would have happened. She didn’t doubt that Russell would have eventually put her in the hospital probably with more severe injuries at a later date, but she’d all but perfected a
“Charlie,” Quinn prompts.

“Fine,” Charlie says after another moment of tense silence. “I won’t lie to you anymore.”

Quinn stares at Charlie for a moment it’s the best that she’s going to get, and Coach Roz’s words come back to her. “You need to see someone a therapist or something. Because even though you say that, I know you’re going to find a loophole in what you promised.”

Charlie grunts at this, the Berry’s had already booked an appointment for her. She was seeing someone who specialized in cases like this, it seemed expensive and unnecessary to her but the Berry’s had insisted and acted offended when she said she’d pay them back. “I have an appointment next week,” she says tersely.

“The Berry’s?” Quinn asks and Charlie rolls her one good eye and leans back against her pillow huffing at the indignity of it all. Quinn relaxes for a moment and for once believes that her sister will be fine. “Good,” she says mostly to herself, and Charlie grunts at this again.

They sit in silence for a moment, there’s been a lot of that between them lately. Silence neither one of them knowing what to say to each other. They used to be closer, they used to be inseparable. They used to be Charlie and Lucy, but things changed. Russell changed, Lucy became Quinn, Charlie became a girl or she had always been a girl, and now things were different.

“Is Santana really giving Rachel a make-over?” Charlie asks breaking the silence as she looks at Quinn.

“The question is, as her friend how have you not tried to give her one?” Santana asks as she struts into the room.

“Friends don’t let friends walk around looking like a hybrid between a toddler and a grandma,” Brittany adds.

Santana and Brittany move from the doorway so that Rachel Berry can enter the room, wearing a pair of skinny jeans that hug her body perfectly and a very revealing corset top that seemed to increase Rachel’s breast size drastically.

The Fabray twins stare at the diva in silence, two pairs of hazel eyes roaming over her body. The sudden attention makes Rachel feel a bit self-conscious and she moves to cover herself up as she turns red. “See I told you that—”

Charlie recovers first interrupting the diva, “You look amazing Rachel. Like really, really, really good.” Charlie turns to Santana who is currently sporting a smug smile. She wonders for a brief second how Santana managed to get Rachel into the clothes, but she imagines that there was mostly threats of violence and a bit of blackmail, or that Rachel had fallen victim to Brittany. There were very few people who could say no to the girl.

Brittany smiles at Quinn, “Doesn’t she look hot Quinn?” she asks at the other Fabray who was still staring at Rachel.

Quinn’s eyes flick to Brittany for a moment and she sees that knowing look on her face and quickly snaps back to reality. “You don’t look that bad man-hands,” she says quickly making sure to keep her eyes off Rachel. She quickly blames the pregnancy hormones, she’d heard that they make you a bit loopy.
Rachel relaxes a bit at this, “I still think that this is much to revealing and it—”

Santana snaps, “Can it hobbit. I dids you a favor. I told you I’d make every guy in school wants you and that’s what I did. But that look won’t work if you don’t have the confidence to pull it off.”

“Well like I was saying, I do feel that I am revealing too much skin and I do feel much more comfortable in my other clothes, and much more confident,” Rachel protested at Santana who ignored her.

“Because I’m feeling nice today, I’m going to also give you a lesson on confidence and sex appeal,” she states and Brittany claps at this idea. Quinn is giving her a suspicious look but she doesn’t say anything.

“You’re used to dressing in revealing clothing, the Cheerios uniforms—” Rachel tried to argue with Santana who was eying Charlie with a predatory smirk on her face.

“Shush hobbit, the clothes will do most of the work for you. The rest will have to be all you,” Santana says cutting her off as she saunters over to the bed and draws her finger up Charlie’s arm.

Charlie looks down at her arm and then at Santana, “What are you—” she begins as Santana leans in and begins to whisper something in her ear.

Rachel watches with some amusement as she sees her usually confident and relaxed friend begin to turn a deep shade of red, her eye widening. She briefly wonders what Santana is saying to the soccer player to get her to react this way.

“Charlie!” Quinn hisses suddenly. She sounds mortified, and Charlie pulls away from Santana to look over at her sister. Quinn’s eyes flick downward and Charlie tilts her head to follow Quinn’s gaze, before flushing an even deeper color and brings her hands down over her crotch. Santana bursts out into laughter.

“Everyone out,” Charlie snaps immediately her voice comes out huskier than normal and she resists the urge to cough and clear it out. Rachel and Quinn are the first ones out and Charlie looks over at Santana who shoots her a grin before walking out of the room leaving her with Brittany.

Brittany looks the least affected by what just happened and pats Charlie’s shoulder gently, before smiling at her friend and walking out of the room closing the door behind her, leaving Charlie to die of embarrassment alone.

Quinn turns on Santana who is still laughing immediately and smacks her friend hard against the arm. “Next time give me a bit of warning before trying to seduce my sister in front of me,” she snaps.

Rachel is more curious than anything else. “What did you say to her?” Rachel asks, looking at Santana in awe, she had never seen Charlie like that before. Whatever it was that Santana did, if she could copy that then she’d certainly be able to get Finn.

Santana rubs her arm as she looks at Rachel and smirks, “You can say anything you want. But if I were you, I’d keep it short and simple.”

Quinn watches Rachel watching as she takes in every word that Santana is telling her with eagerness now, and looks over at Brittany trying to get her to stop.

“You’ll thank her for it later,” the dancer whispers Quinn who looks back at her baffled as Brittany returns to the own world in her head. Quinn’s about to ask her what she means by this but Charlie’s
voice calls through the door informing them that they can enter the room again.

Quinn looks between her sister and Santana, wondering if there is something going on between them but Charlie ignores Santana for the rest of the evening refusing to even look at the Latina who keeps sending her smug smiles.

It’s only after the unholy trinity is packing up their stuff to return home, they had spent the rest of the afternoon doing homework in each other’s company, and Quinn is ready to chalk it up to Santana simply being Santana when Charlie chooses to address the issue.

“Promise?” she questions the Latina with that crooked grin of hers as she leans back against her pillows. She’s not blushing anymore as she stares at Santana.

Brittany’s face splits into a wide grin as Santana stares at the soccer player for a moment, she seems surprised before she flicks her eyes over to Quinn and then to Rachel before smirking at Charlie. “Promise,” she says simply.

Quinn looks between the two of them and narrows her eyes at Charlie, she wonders if she wants to know what her sister is up to. She decides that she really doesn’t, she’s got more than enough on her plate without having to worry about Santana corrupting her sister.

“Wait, stop, stop.” Finn says holding up his hands.

“What’s wrong?” Rachel frowns and she looks at the quarterback, they had just been practicing their hairography, which really was a terrible idea. Mr. Schue really was trying to sink them. Or he had lost faith in them as performers. The only positive to this was that Santana’s makeover had seemed to do the job correctly, she had Finn Hudson. He was in her room and he had been staring at her quite a bit. It also been a confidence boost when several other guys had given her their numbers. She smiled at the boy encouragingly, trying to copy the smile that she had seen Santana use on Charlie a few nights ago.

“I need to be honest with you. I’m-I’m really uncomfortable right now. I’m gonna say this as nicely as I possibly can, but you look like a sad clown hooker.” Finn states bluntly. He says this but he can’t take his eyes

“What? Rachel says, swallowing as she looks down at herself, suddenly feeling very self-conscious. She had thought that she looked good. She wonders if this was their plan all along, to get her to make a fool of herself in front of him.

“This look, it just isn’t you. I mean, maybe when I first saw it, I was caught off guard that you looked all adult and stuff, but it’s not what’s really great about you, Rachel. I actually like the way you usually dress, sequined leg warmers and stuff.” At least then he didn’t have to worry about other guys wanting her. He had heard that a few guys from the football team had asked her out, and he had felt jealous. Even he had thought that she had looked good, but this was a bit much.

“I thought this was what you liked.” She thought this is what boys in general liked, Noah had certainly voiced his appreciation when she had shown up dressed in the outfit that Santana had picked out.

“Oh, uh, I like it when they’re natural and stuff; Not a lot of makeup, not skintight clothes. That sort of thing, you know?” Finn says quickly making something up.

“I feel like an idiot,” Rachel mutters mostly to herself and bites down on her lip. She had felt so sure of herself and confident moments before.
“No, no, this is my fault. It isn’t right for me to be here anyway. But I really like you, Rachel. I gotta go,” Finn says before quickly walking out of the room and leaving the Berry house. It’s not until he’s clear of the house does he began to chant the words mailman over and over again.

Rachel stands there stunned for a moment before quickly making her way to Charlie’s room knocking on the door before and quickly entering the room when Charlie gives her permission. The teen is sitting on the bed with her history textbook on her lap. With the Unholy Trinity and the Berry men were currently back at the Fabray house with a police escort packing up the rest of Quinn and Charlie’s stuff.

Rachel stands at the doorway until Charlie finally looks up and frowns at seeing the distressed look on her face. “What’s wrong?” she asks tossing the history book aside.

“I look like a sad clown hooker,” Rachel wails as she sits down beside Charlie making sure not to jostle the bed too much. At least the girl could see out of both eyes now, though the right one was still a bit swollen.

Charlie stares at Rachel in confusion not sure if this is one of her more dramatic moments that Charlie had learned to simply take in stride or if it was something else entirely as she pats Rachel’s back gently, “What are you talking about?” She studies Rachel, she’s in another one of Santana’s pre-approved outfits, which means that the girl looks better than ever.

“He said that I looked like a sad clown hooker,” Rachel repeats again and Charlie is still utterly confused by her words. “Was this Santana’s plan all along to make me look like a fool in front of him? You said I looked good.”

“You do look good,” Charlie insists immediately because Rachel does. “You looked really hot then and you look really hot now.”

“Then why didn’t he say I looked like a sad clown hooker?” Rachel snaps at Charlie. “Was this one of Quinn’s ideas to make me look bad? I thought she said she was done with Finn.”

Charlie groans inwardly, of course this a Finn problem, “Well, now we know that Finn is blind as well as stupid. You look amazing Rachel, really you do. Like really hot, and you were telling me about all those numbers that you all those guys who were into you.”

Rachel frowns at this statement, “Random men giving me their number doesn’t mean that the statement about me looking like a hooker isn’t true. Finn says he prefers me in my old clothes, which is actually quite sweet. He’s probably right, I did feel rather exposed. The men who gave me there numbers are people who would never give me the time of day before and now that I’m wearing more revealing clothing they pay attention to me. Finn saw me for who I was." Charlie stared at the diva for a moment, “If a girl who I was into dressed like you did in order to impress me. I wouldn’t say that she looked like a sad clown hooker, I’d appreciate it. I’d appreciate her. I mean you look amazing Rachel you do, and if Finn can’t handle the fact that other guys are now seeing that you’re amazing on the inside and on the outside then that’s his problem. I am still of the firm opinion that Finn’s an idiot and doesn’t deserve you. Dress in whatever makes you happy don’t let Finn or anyone else make you feel terrible about yourself because of your clothes.”

Rachel nodded though she had already decided to go back to school wearing her argyle sweaters and her skirts. They were safe and people would focus on her personality instead of her body. She didn’t know what had possessed her to attempt to act like Santana or why she had listened to the girl’s advice. “I shouldn’t have done that, you know tried to pull of Santana. I thought I could do what she did to you to Finn.”
Charlie rolls her eyes, “I am pretty sure I mentioned that he has an early arrival problem. I’m pretty sure I’ve said this to you time and time again. If you attempted what Santana did to me, it would have ended with him making a mess in his pants the moment your breath hit is ear.” Rachel flushed at Charlie’s bluntness, “You’re right in saying that you’re not Santana. But you are just as beautiful as she is and just as sexy. So figure out what works for you and go with it. But please don’t be mad at her because Finn is a blind idiot. She really was just trying to help you. When she wants to sabotage a relationship trust me you’ll know.”

Rachel nods at Charlie’s words believing her friend when she says that Santana was just trying to help. She can’t help but wonder at that relationship. Charlie was supposed to talk about her relationships with her like she talked about Finn, that’s what girls who were also friends were supposed to do. At least according to all the movies that Rachel had watched back in middle school. “You lied to me you know.”

“About what?” Charlie asks as she flips the page in her history textbook. Every time she told Rachel she was fine when she wasn’t was a lie.

“You told me that you never dated anyone,” Rachel says firmly. “As your best friend that’s something that you’re supposed to share with me. So share,” she demands bossily. “I should be helping you find the perfect leading lady, and I feel that I have been remiss in my duties as your best friend.”

Charlie slowly closes her textbook, knowing that she isn’t going to get any more work done until Rachel’s curiosity has been quenched. It seemed that these days everyone was trying to delve a bit deeper, and she had always been glad that Rachel preferred to talk about her problems rather than delve any deeper into her life. Rachel hadn’t seemed to mind that Charlie was closed off until after she had found out. Charlie turns to Rachel, “I haven’t dated anyone.”

“Why? I know that you’ve been asked by several men and I know that there are several girls in several of my classes who have asked me if you were a lesbian. You are quite popular and truthfully you are quite beautiful, it must be something that runs in your entire family,” Rachel says as Quinn pops up in her head. She knows that they have another sister and she wonders if she’s just as beautiful as the twins are.

Charlie’s face twists at her sentiment, “Dating someone inevitably means that they’ll want to meet my parents or something equally as horrible. Besides even if I wanted to, I don’t think I was allowed, because it would probably lead to more people finding out about me, which was unacceptable. If he even suspected that you knew or that Santana and Brittany knew,” Charlie trails off and shrugs. She doesn’t imagine it would have been pleasant. “I’m the reason we moved from Toledo, to many people knew me as a boy. So dating was never high on my list of priorities.”

Rachel stares at Charlie for a moment, it’s the most honest she’s ever been about her life. “He’s gone now. He doesn’t get to dictate your life and you’re free to do whatever it is you want. Live however you want. Quinn tells me that you were planning on telling people.”

“I don’t have a choice, it’s going to come out eventually it seems Russell isn’t going to plead out and this will go to trial. It will come out, so I can wait and have it blow up in my face or control the story. I choose the latter,” Charlie states, it’s the harsh reality of the situation but she still has time.

There is a cold sliver in Charlie’s voice and Rachel chooses that time to go back to the topic that she was curious about, “I was just sure there was something between you and Santana.”

Rachel stares at Charlie for a moment not believing her for a second, she had eyes and she had seen the look that Charlie had shot Santana, “She’s not dating Noah either,” Rachel points out and Charlie lips twitch, “You slept with her?” Charlie doesn’t confirm this and Rachel looks at her friend in shock. “You didn’t tell me you weren’t a virgin either!”

“You never asked,” Charlie said with a shrug.

“So Santana was your first?” Rachel asks now thoroughly interested.

“No,” Charlie answers simply.

Rachel’s eyes widen, and she suddenly feels a wave of guilt, she should already know this. Though Charlie rarely ever volunteered information out. “I feel I should apologize I have clearly been remiss in my best friend duties.”

Charlie wants to point out that Rachel was more interested in obsessing over Finn Hudson, then anything else and she loathed talking about herself. She already disliked where this conversation was going anyway.

Rachel thinks for a moment, and looks at Charlie for a moment, “Brittany?” she asks, she sees the way Charlie treats Brittany, and she’s nearly as gentle with the girl as Santana is.

Charlie’s hazel eyes flick towards Rachel and she doesn’t say anything for a moment and Rachel can all but hear the gears in her head turning. “Yes,” she states finally. It’s a lie. But, Rachel believes her and the diva goes on asking her question which she answers carefully while giving as little personal information as possible.

“I know you’re mad cause I can’t really help with the baby and I’ve not been as helpful as I should be,” Finn says and Quinn looks up at him from where she’s getting her notebooks for her next class. Truthfully she had been ignoring the quarterback. “I want to be in love again, but I have to tell you something first. I, uh…I want us to be honest with each other, no matter what,” he says and he looks at Quinn nervously.

Quinn frowns at his words, wondering if Finn’s finally going to be proper boyfriend now and step up. She doesn’t think he has it in him and she’s not sure that she wants him too, but at least she can keep an eye on him if he’s her boyfriend. “You can tell me anything,” she says.

Finn flashes that dopey smile of his before, “Cool. Uh…It… It’s not really even that big a deal. I mean, I didn’t actually do anything, But, the other night, when you were getting some of your stuff…I kind of went over to Rachel’s house. But nothing happened. I… Just was worked up about us fighting and then she had on those clothes that she was wearing a few days ago, and so I think something could have happened, but it didn’t. Because I only want to be with you,” he says and looks at Quinn nervously.

Quinn doesn’t inform Finn that she already knows about the visit. Charlie had bitched about it for a good solid twenty minutes when they had finally came back with most of her stuff. She found herself agreeing with her sister that Finn Hudson was an idiot and possibly blind as a bat, or gay. Even she could see that Rachel looked amazing in what Santana had picked out for her. She doesn’t say any of this, she doesn’t tell him that the baby isn’t his or anything about her life; surprisingly the news is holding that the Fabray’s have been arrested. She just smiles at him, “It’s all right. Thank you for being honest with me.”

Finn wraps his arms around Quinn, pulling her into a crushing hug. “I love you, Quinn.” He
mumbles.

Quinn freezes for a moment at the sudden bear hug she’s been pulled into. He smells like too much axe, it’s suffocating her as much as the hug is. But she hugs him back, and smiles at him, “I love you too,” she says, even though she knows it’s a lie. But she needs to lie, this won’t be like the disaster that was Finn singing to her parents. This time she’s going to be the one in control.

She doesn’t notice Rachel Berry who had been watching the events unfold, from down the hallway. She doesn’t see how hurt and betrayed the girl looks. Because Rachel Berry had believed her when she said that she was planning to tell Finn that the baby wasn’t his. Rachel had believed her when she told her that she didn’t love the quarterback anymore. And a part of Rachel Berry had believed that she and Quinn Fabray were becoming friends.
“Quinn Fabray, once head of the Cheerios and now fallen off the top of the pyramid to the bottom of the food chain. McKinley wants to know, where has the captain of the WMHS soccer team gone? With yearbook photos in a few days I have to ask. Does this have anything to do with the fact that your parents have both been arrested?” Jacob Israel asked sticking the mic in Quinn’s face.

Quinn stared at him for a moment, she had gone through all of last week without hearing about her parents from anyone. The story had been contained, and it still seemed to be as no one had begun treating her differently or pointing and staring at her again, but if Jacob Israel put the story on his blog the entire school would know about it by lunch. So she tried to do what she had seen the celebrities do nearly a hundred times and tried to brush past him.

Jacob Ben Israel was nothing if not persistent as he continued to move with Quinn trying to get her to answer questions. “Is the rumors about the abuse true? Is that the real reason you’ve had to live with Santana Lopez? Did your parents really kick you out?”

He was oddly informed for a little cretin and part of Quinn wanted to know where he got half his information from the other half wanted to slam that microphone up his ass. She didn’t have to as Noah Puckerman came to the rescue slipping in between them and smirking at JBI, who quickly looked between the two of them before wisely choosing to leave it alone for now.

Puck waited until he was gone before turning to Quinn, concern washed over his features as he looked her over. He had heard the last part of JBI’s questions, “Is the baby okay?” he asked. “Your parent’s they didn’t—”

“I’m fine they just kicked me out like I told you in glee,” Quinn said as she walked to her locker slamming it open.

Puck followed her still trying to check and see if he saw any bruises or not. He certainly hadn’t noticed any when she was wearing her cheerios uniform and he certainly didn’t see any now. “Is any of what he said true then? About the abuse and stuff?” He thought for a moment suddenly he hadn’t seen Charlie at all at school and that Quinn had been driving her car around last week, “Is it Charlie? Is she okay?”

Quinn glanced at him, his concern was touching and it was certainly more than Finn had done, she had thought that his renewed interest in making their relationship work would mean that he was finally ready to step up. He had gone right back to having Call of Duty with his friends and ignoring her existence except at school where he attempted somewhat to be a good boyfriend all while shooting yearning looks at Rachel. The whole thing was rather sickening.

She was actual grateful that Finn seemed to ignoring her. Rachel had been acting differently around her whenever they were together, their uneasy truce seemed to be coming apart. They were bickering more than usual. Never in front of Charlie who was either oblivious to the increased tension between the two of them or simply didn’t care enough to address it, because she probably correctly assumed that it had something to do with Finn. Even Santana and Brittany seemed to be avoiding entering the fray between the two of them.

She couldn’t wait till Charlie was finally of bed rest and could finally leave the house. Quinn knew she wouldn’t have to wait too long as Charlie was finally on the mend. The swelling had gone down and she was getting some of her stitches removed by the end of the week. The Berry’s had also allowed her to walk around the house a bit without being supervised. With Charlie being off
bed rest and being cleared to drive, it meant that she wouldn’t have to spend every day at the Berry household. Though she suspected she’d still be spending a fair time at the Berry household as Brittany had managed to grow fond of the diva.

Turning her attention back to Puck who still had this look of pity and concern on his face, causing Quinn to frown at him. She wanted to snap at him, and tell him to go read the newspaper. He probably would have made a decent father, or would have at least been there to help her. Unlike Finn, but Puck was still Puck. Still trying to score with some baby Cheerio or any female that would give him the time of day. He still offered to pay for the expenses but the Lopez’s were helping her with that, and she no longer needed to use Charlie’s money or take any money from him. Quinn sighed, “I thought you hated Charlie?” she asked him suspiciously. The last thing she needed was for him to start blabbing it to the entire school, like Jacob insisted on doing.

Puck shook his head, he didn’t hate the soccer player, though he suspected she wasn’t his favorite person. Truthfully she scared him, but that didn’t mean that she deserved whatever it was that Jacob had been implying. No one deserved that, “I don’t, I’m probably not her favorite person but I don’t hate her. So tell me was it Charlie? No one has seen her for a week now. I just thought she caught mono or something. You know out sick.”

“She’s out of the hospital now,” Quinn said after a moment, she didn’t know why she was trusting Noah Puckerman of all people with this information. Charlie would probably disapprove, but apart from the soccer team, Rachel, Santana and Brittany, there was shocking little support from anyone else. It was really then that Quinn realized that she really had no one else except for Santana and Brittany who were usually off in their own little world half the time. Which left her so very alone, at least when she had been on the Cheerios she had felt that she belonged to something bigger.

Puck’s jaw tensed and he stood up straight, “Is she staying with the Lopez’s?” he asked, already making plans to go visit her. His dad hadn’t been the greatest of father’s either but at least he had never done that.

Quinn stared at him briefly for a moment, “She’s living with Rachel for the moment. You should probably call before you show up. She’s not your biggest fan.” Quinn pointed out immediately, Charlie was finally off mandatory bed rest and had begun moving around the Berry house. Though Rachel had threatened to tell her fathers to put her back on the forced bed rest if she pushed herself. She wasn’t sure what Charlie’s relationship with Puck was like but she didn’t need Charlie attempting to kick his ass.

“I was going to skip today anyway,” Puck said with a shrug, “Wanted to work out my guns for the football team photo,” he said as he flexed, he shot her a grin, before getting Charlie’s number from her. Charlie was one of the few girls who hadn’t deigned to give him her number.

Quinn rolled her eyes at Puck’s ridiculousness, but gave him Charlie’s number with a bit of hesitance. They weren’t on the best of terms and while she was sure that Puck could keep the soccer player entertained for a few hours, there was also the off chance that Charlie would react badly. “If she asks you where you got her number, you got it off Missy Gunderson,” Quinn informs him, easily selling out Charlie’s teammate.

Puck nods at this and Quinn watches him as begin to text the injured teenager, there was a pause for a moment before his phone vibrates. Puck reads the message and his lips twitch upward at her response. Charlie still disliked him immensely, but at least it seemed that she was going to be okay. “When is she supposed to be back?”

“She’s back next Monday, but she will be going to sectionals,” Quinn stated, which meant she’d finally be done with Finn Hudson and his childish ways soon enough, at least that way even if Finn
flipped out about Puck being the father, he couldn’t destroy her life in the process again. The last thing Quinn wanted him to do was start singing to the school about Charlie in an attempt to get at her. And with Finn gone that was one less thing on her plate to worry about, she could start looking through all the booklets that the Lopez’s had given her about different agencies and start attempting to find a good set of parents for her child. She had put that off long enough and she’d rather have Puck’s help in deciding the future of baby then Finn’s, after all the quarterback had wanted to name her Drizzle.

She watched as Puck began to text Charlie, there was that irritating smile on his face. Which probably meant that he was going to annoy Charlie until she caved. She didn’t know if the two would ever become friends, but she hoped that they could get along enough to help her pick out a family for her child.

Quinn shoved those thoughts away for the moment, she was a teenager and she just wanted to have normal problems. So she decided to focus on the present more specifically the yearbook photo. She didn’t want to be in a glee club photo, she had seen some of the old ones. She had defaced some of the old ones with Brittany and Santana. The idea of some future generation Cheerio or some dumbass jock defacing her photo didn’t particularly appeal to her. Being at the bottom of the school hierarchy sucked.

And without Charlie or Brittany and Santana who were off doing god knows what. She felt alone, being at the top had been lonely but at least she had the Cheerios uniform and it made it seem that she had belonged somewhere. She doubted that Sue would allow her back on the team, or at least allow her to take the team photo. She knew she could still squeeze into the Cheerios outfit, all it would seem like was that she had a big lunch.

Charlie wasn’t exactly sure why she decided to let Puck into the Berry household. Though she suspected that he had gained entry because he had decided to bring gifts. From the smell of it, eggs, bacon, French toast, definitely some hash browns, and he was carrying one of those trays with two cups of coffee, and in the middle there was real cream. Rachel had insisted that to help Charlie remain in shape she’d refrain from baking for Charlie’s sake and somehow Charlie found herself eating mostly vegan for the past two weeks. Rachel’s insistence that it would help with her healing process and help keep the weight off so getting back into condition wouldn’t be so bad.

“Lumberjack breakfast,” Puck said as he followed Charlie into the kitchen taking a seat on the stool and putting the coffee and the bag of food on the counter, “Figured you were tired of the rabbit food.” He studied Charlie closely, she didn’t seem bothered by the bruises on her face, though they had faded over the week, and it was now just a swirl of black, yellow, and blue. He could see the stitches on her hands and he winced but didn’t say anything before opening the bag and pulling out two big white take-out containers filled with food. He slid one over to Charlie placing one of the plastic cutlery on it, before handing her over a coffee.

Charlie popped it open dug in, shoveling a fork full of eggs into her mouth, she let out a low groan as the taste of grease and eggs hit her taste buds. She flicked her eyes at Puck and narrowed them for a moment as if remembering why she hated him before taking another bite, chewing and swallowing before deciding to speak up. “I’m never going to forgive you for messing up Quinn’s life,” she said finally. “But I suppose as idiots go, you’re smarter than Finn Hudson which really isn’t saying all that much. Your peace offering has been accepted.”

Puck snorts and begins to dig into his food as well and the two teens ate in silence for a moment till Puck broke the silence. “My dad was never really around, took off when I was ten left me and my mom and sis to fend for themselves.” He finally looked up at Charlie who was cutting into the
French toast. “I’m not saying I get it cause he never laid a hand on me, but he would drink and gamble and he was a dick to my mom.”

Charlie didn’t say anything for a moment instead choosing to continue to eat, she looked at the newspaper that was left folded on the counter and pushed it to him. “Front page this time,” she said.

Puck picked it up and looked at the front page, where there was a picture of Russell Fabray’s mug shot, and a flashy headline. Child Abuse Scandal Rocks Lima. “So that’s how Jewfro found out,” he muttered mostly to himself.

“They can’t publish my name at least according to the social worker. Not that it isn’t obvious already. So if JBI does, he can probably be held in contempt of court or something,” Charlie said in a tired tone as she continued to eat her food still not looking at him.

“I managed to scare him off this morning, he was harassing Quinn,” Puck said tossing the newspaper down without reading it. Clearly there was more to the story then the papers would ever know and he didn’t need to read them to figure it out. Charlie gave a non-committal hum and took a bite of the French toast. “Well I have your back.” When Charlie finally looked up at him he smirked, “We’re like family now, and I’ve got your back,” he stated with conviction.

Charlie however was unimpressed by this declaration, “You bought me breakfast, let’s not get ahead of ourselves Puck,” the smile on his face dropped a bit as Charlie took a sip of the coffee. She studied the boy for a minute debating internally if she should tell him. “Why aren’t you in class?” she decided to ask instead.

“Haven’t been to a math class in years. I just go in take the tests and write the exam,” Puck answered with a shrug. It was a little known fact that math was his strongest subject. “I was going to go and work out buff up the Puckerones for the school photo but I heard Jewfro talking about you and decided to come bother you instead.”

Charlie was quiet once again as if taking that information in, “That’s not the reason why you’re here though. We weren’t friends and I barely tolerate your existence. You are the idiot who managed to knock up my sister. So I’m going to take a stab in the dark. You want to know if they ever hurt Quinn?”

Puck swallowed, “She said they only kicked her out and I didn’t see any marks on her. So I believe her, but I mean before? Did they ever do that?” He points at Charlie’s hands causing her to look down at them and gently run her finger over the stitches.

“No, he never did this to Quinn,” Charlie answered honestly. “He just kicked her out, though I’m not sure if he would have if Finn hadn’t decided to serenade him. It was probably a bit of a shock to learn that his baby girl got knocked up by the village idiot. Though I’m sure if Quinn got knocked up by some guy with pedigree or at least came from money, he wouldn’t have cared nearly as much,” she mused out loud, before looking at Puck. “He would have hated you too.”

“Because I’m poor?” Puck said defensively.

“And Jewish,” Charlie said taking another bite of her food before pushing the half eaten container away from her. When Puck gave her a look of surprise Charlie shrugged, “He was a racist and a homophobe as well. But it’s politically incorrect to be racist so he kept those views to himself but he was very vocal and donated a lot of money to politicians who were anti-gay.”

Puck stared at her for a moment confusion in his eyes, “So it was only you? Is it because you’re a
lesbian?”

“Are you asking if I’m gay, because you finally managed to put two and two together? Or are you asking because I turned you down?” Charlie asked taking another sip of her coffee.

“You’ve turned every guy in school down,” Puck pointed out in his defense.

Charlie shrugged, she wasn’t sure if her sexuality played a role in Russell’s hatred for her. She had never given it much thought, though when had bought her the black car to go with Quinn’s virginal white one, she knew it was a dig at her. Russell had always been more concerned about her gender than anything else. She studied Puck again the boy was an idiot and he certainly didn’t care about her sexuality, despite the fact she was sure he was going to make some lewd comment about. It was Puck after all.

“Barring the fact that you knocked up my sister, you slept with nearly every girl in school, without a condom. As someone with a letterman jacket I’m supposed to date someone with a letterman jacket and most of them are idiots or are otherwise attached. So even if I was straight I still wouldn’t have dated anyone in McKinley.”

Puck grinned slowly, “Well that’s something for my—”

“I have a dick,” Charlie stated bluntly interrupting him as she took another sip of her coffee as Puck’s eyes bulged and he stared at her in shock. “I mean I suppose if you want to add that to your spank bank you could, but that seems rather gay if you ask me.” It was reckless telling Puck, while she was alone in the house with him. She couldn’t tell how the boy would react, but she couldn’t predict how most people would react to the news. She needed to be able to tell people on her own terms and Puck was the perfect test subject. So she ignored the pounding in her heart, and the panic that was starting to set in and just kept her hazel eyes focused on Puck’s face.

Puck just stared at her in confusion, “You’re a—”

“No I’m not a boy, I’m intersexed. Which basically means that I am a girl who has boy parts, specifically a dick. I am genetically female. Yes it works. Yes I can have children. Yes it’s probably bigger than yours. No you can’t see it.” Charlie stated simply and picked up some bacon with her fingers and brought it to her lips chewing on it.

Puck just stared at her as he processed everything she said, he could see the panic setting in as Charlie tensed, as he thought about everything that she had said in the conversation and realized that she was basically telling him why Russell had targeted her. He didn’t really know what to say to the information that Charlie had just tossed at him. So he just shrugged his shoulders and kept eating his food, “Cool.”

Charlie blinked at him, “Cool?” It was a reaction she hadn’t been expecting from Puck. “Just like that you’re cool with it?”

Puck just stared at her as he processed everything she said, he could see the panic setting in as Charlie tensed, as he thought about everything that she had said in the conversation and realized that she was basically telling him why Russell had targeted her. He didn’t really know what to say to the information that Charlie had just tossed at him. So he just shrugged his shoulders and kept eating his food, “Cool.”

Charlie blinked at him, “Cool?” It was a reaction she hadn’t been expecting from Puck. “Just like that you’re cool with it?”

Puck looked at her and shrugged, he had already told her she was like family if only because he and Quinn were having a baby, Puck wasn’t Russell Fabray and he certainly wasn’t his father. “You aren’t actually going to get my sister pregnant you know for knocking up Quinn are you?”

Charlie snorted at this, “No.”

“Then, it’s whatever,” Puck said with another shrug as he finished up his meal. “You’re like my bro even though you’re a girl. You going to finish that?” He asked pointing to Charlie’s plate and she pushed it over to him still a bit stunned by his nonchalant attitude.
“You really don’t care?” She asked suspiciously, she half expected him to jump up and start screaming at her, but this was the second person she told who had taken the news relatively well.

“We’re like family now, and I told you, I have your back,” Puck stated again, and he saw Charlie’s lip twitch.

“I still hate you,” she said finally, but there was no bite to her words as she finally relaxed.

“I know,” Puck said not believing her for a second. A comfortable quiet filled the room and neither teenager said anything. Puck knew better than to pry and Charlie was going over what had just happened in her head, occasionally studying Puck. It wasn’t until Puck finished eating that he asked the question that was bothering him. “Why me?”

Charlie looks at him and shrugs, “I don’t know,” she answers truthfully and points to the paper, “I’ll come out eventually. If it isn’t some reporter who wants to make a name for themselves, it’ll be because Finn ‘Early Arrival’ Hudson has decided to sing Dude Looks Like a Lady by Aerosmith, in the cafeteria. I didn’t tell Hudson. My father all but told the idiot while drunk. Finn thinks I’m transgendered and while I’m sure I’ll still be called a tranny-freak and other such lovely terms of endearment. I want to get ahead of this before he decides to be an idiot, which is why Quinn hasn’t broken up with him yet.”

Puck looks surprised by the last bit of information but he doesn’t say anything, the topic is getting too heavy for him and he can tell that Charlie really doesn’t want to talk about it. So he goes back to something that he’s good at, “So how big is it?” He actually does want to know now. Charlie raises a brow at him giving him a look, but her lips twitch upward in a smile.

Rachel glanced over to where Finn was sitting by Quinn, it was three days out to sectionals and they were still together. She couldn’t keep using Charlie’s secret as an excuse to keep Finn from the truth. He looked miserable with her, Quinn was still sniping at him to get a job and she knew that he was probably trying his best. The charade had gone on long enough and she was tired of pretending for Quinn. Rachel focused on Mercedes who was trying out for a solo and smiled as she finished, listening to the rest of the club clap for her. “It’s clear the room adores you. And, although it wouldn’t be my first choice, well, I can’t wait to see you sing that song at sectionals. You’re amazing, Mercedes, and you deserve it. I’m going to hug you now.” She said getting up and hugging the other diva.

She had more important things to worry about then whether or not she’d be singing the solo or not, and Mercedes had a strong enough voice that Rachel was confident that everything would still work out in their favor. She left the room soon after deep in thought. Quinn had stated that she was waiting for Charlie to come back, but it didn’t seem like Finn was going to tell anyone about Charlie. It had been nearly two weeks now and she hadn’t heard any of the school rumors that indicated anything about Charlie. Kurt and Mercedes were sure to asked Quinn. In fact the Fabray name wasn’t even on Jacob’s blog. He had backed off the moment Quinn informed him that if he printed anything he’d be thrown in jail for contempt of court charges, which had gotten the boy to back off.

Besides Finn had no reason to be angry at Charlie, so Rachel couldn’t figure out why he would attempt to use the girls’ secret against Quinn. The argument didn’t make any sense to her, and she wondered if it was just Quinn trying to get her to lay off. Charlie was off getting her stitches removed and she couldn’t ask her best friend if Quinn was playing her. Charlie had all but said she was going to be Switzerland in their little spat over Finn Hudson. Charlie probably believed Quinn when the ex-cheerio had said that she didn’t love Finn anymore.
“That was pretty cool in there. I-I know that must have been hard for you,” Finn said dragging her from her thoughts and she looked up at him. She didn’t even know he had followed her.

“It was the right thing to do. I-I wanted to bring the team together.” Rachel said, he was smiling at her and he was being encouraging and nice. Charlie was wrong, sure he most certainly wasn’t sharpest person in the world and big words confused him, but everything else was there. He had a big heart and he was nice and he was sweet to her. He liked the way she looked and she didn’t have to be anyone else around him. Quinn didn’t deserve him.

“Yeah. You know, I got to be honest. I’m kind of pumped about sectionals. This has been a hard couple of months with Quinn and the baby and everything and–I don’t know. I really think that–winning could make everything good for a while. You know? Is that stupid?” Finn asks as he leans against a locker and looks at Rachel.

“It’s not stupid at all.” Rachel says quietly.

“Is something up with you?” He asks, there is concern on his face and he reaches out to touch Rachel’s arm.

Rachel smiles up at him, it’s a weak smile and her thoughts are still on how good Finn would be with her, she would never lie to him. She would never cheat on him. “I want you to be happy, Finn,” she says finally.

“Oh,” Finn says and he immediately moves to withdraw his hand away from her.

“And when you care about someone, you can’t sit around and watch them suffer when you know you can do something about it.” Rachel says, finally coming to a decision. She would make the right decision if Quinn couldn’t. He deserves to know, everyone deserves to be told the truth.

“What are you talking about?” Finn asked as confusion swept across his face.

Rachel exhaled the breath she had been holding as she quickly rethought over her decision, hoping that she was making the right decision. “I have to tell you something.” So she tells him, and she watches the emotions sweep across his face from confusion to shock, there was a hint of disbelief till it finally settled on anger. She closed her eyes when Finn slammed his hand against the locker and stormed off. Rachel immediately followed him as he reentered the choir room and launched himself at Puck who had been sitting beside Quinn talking to her.

The two boys tumbled to the ground and Quinn immediately backed off as Finn began to lay into Puck, punching him over and over again. The entire room was in shock for a moment, not knowing what to do as the two boys wrestled on the floor. Puck trying to get away from Finn, and Finn who had stopped hitting Puck was now trying to wrap his hands around his neck while Rachel watched what her actions had wrought.

“Hey, come on, come on. Get off him! Knock it off! Get off! Get off! Hey.” Will said as he entered the room moving to separate the two boys. Mike and Matt finally moved into help remove Finn off Puck, with Mike holding Puck back. Puck looked ready to pounce.

“Tell the truth!” Finn snarled staring at Puck before looking at Quinn.

“Punk just walked in and sucker punched me,” Puck spits and he gets ready to lunge at Finn only to be held back by Mike who tightened his grip on him tightly.

“Don’t play dumb—you’re too freaking dumb to play dumb!” Finn says as he struggles to get his hands on Puck again, even though Will Schuester has a very firm grip on him, with Matt moving to
Santana chooses this moment to finally speak up, “Pot meet kettle,” she says and everyone but Brittany shoot her dirty looks. She shrugs it off, but her focus moves past the boys and onto Rachel, and she narrows her eyes at the diva who doesn’t notice the Latina’s cold look. Even a comforting hand by Brittany isn’t enough to calm her down. She was already forming plans to torture the hobbit.

“Come on!” Will yells as he continues to try and calm everybody down.

“Who told you Finn?” Quinn asks but her eyes are already traveling to Rachel whose gaze is firmly on the ground.

“Obviously, it was Rachel,” Kurt says dryly before continuing to watch Mr. Schue attempt to regain control of the room.

“What? I didn’t do anything wrong.” Rachel protests looking at the rest of the room for the first time. She isn’t really surprised to see the look that is coming from Santana, or the looks of disappointment from everyone else. She knew she had done the right thing.

“Yeah, it was Rachel, but I want to hear it from you. I want to hear it from both of you.” Finn says selling her out immediately, which causes Rachel to go back to staring at the ground. She had definitely messed this one up.

“Finn, just calm down.” Will orders.

“No! They’re both lying to me! Is it true? Just tell me— is it true?” He breaks at this and he looks at Quinn, with a look that makes it seem like he’s begging her to lie to him and tell him that she didn’t do it.

Quinn stares at him for a moment and a part of her heart is broken by the hurt look on his face. She hadn’t really wanted to hurt him. “Yes. Puck is the father,” she says finally before looking away.

“So, all—all that stuff in the hot tub? You just made that up?” Finn asks her as he finally calms down, and he’s staring at her disbelief. He doesn’t see the rest of the glee club exchanging glances.

“You were stupid enough to buy it,” Puck snaps, saying what everyone in the room is thinking and Finn moves to lunge for him again.

“Hey, hey, hey, hey.” Will snaps and drags Finn back again.

Quinn doesn’t know what to do, and she feels a hot tear drip down her cheek, it wasn’t supposed to happen like this. “I am so sorry,” she repeats. She truly hadn’t meant to hurt him, and even though she knows that her feelings for Finn are gone, she hadn’t wanted to see him this badly hurt. Even though there is a huge part of her that is filled with relief that she doesn’t have to pretend anymore.

“Screw this. I’m done with you. I’m done with—I’m done with all of you!” He yells and pulls away from Mr. Schue and Matt as he turns around and slams his foot into a poor unsuspecting chair before he storms out.

Brittany tilts her head as the rest of the club just sits in silence, “That was a really good diva storm out,” she says but everyone ignores her.

Will immediately follows after Finn and the room begins to clear, Brittany is pulling Santana out, stopping her from ripping Rachel apart. Mercedes and Kurt have already begun to gossip about the
latest turn of events. Quinn leaves after the shock is gone and Rachel follows her.

“I’m so sorry. I fully understand if you want to beat me up. If you can, just try to avoid my nose,” Rachel says as she follows Quinn, the ex-Cheerio has finally turned to look at her. Rachel sees the hurt on Quinn’s face but the ex-cheerleader covers it up immediately.

Quinn studies Rachel for a moment and she sees actual regret on her face. She doesn’t have it in her to actually hit Rachel, she’ll be lucky if Santana doesn’t murder her in a fit of rage. She’s not even that mad at her, Finn hadn’t blurted out Charlie’s secret, he was too angry to remember. Though the problem lay with when the anger ended, Charlie would be back on Monday. If at any point Finn decided he wanted to hurt her like she had hurt him all he’d need to do is talk to JBI. It was a worst case scenario that hadn’t happened yet. “I’m not mad at you.” She paused for a moment, she wasn’t, and Charlie was fine. Her secret was still safe. “I should have done that to begin with, tell the truth.” Maybe things would be different if she had told Finn the truth from the beginning.

“Were you actually going to tell him?” She has to know, because she had been selfish. Incredibly selfish and she had just ended up hurting a lot of people.

Quinn nods once, “I was, by this time next week Finn and I would have been over,” she says simply and she turns to walk away, she doesn’t want to talk to Rachel Berry about it. It doesn’t hurt that they broke up, the relationship between them had been dead the moment that Finn Hudson decided it would be a good idea to sing to her parents.

Rachel’s heart drops at this statement, she had truly believed that Quinn had wanted him all to herself. Or she had convinced herself of that. Charlie’s safety seemed to be the forefront of Quinn’s mind and her waiting seemed to be tied to it. She hadn’t just ended up hurting Quinn, Finn and Puck. She had potentially screwed over her best friend. “I was selfish when I told him. I wanted to break you two up, so he would want to be with me,” she admits.

Quinn’s looks back at Rachel for a moment, “And now neither of us have him. This lie, has hurt so many people. I have hurt so many people. Can you go now? I just really want to be alone,” there is a finality to her words.

Rachel opens her mouth to try apologizing once more but she closes it, there is nothing more to be said here and she walks away.

Quinn rubs her forehead, she’s tired. She’s beyond tired of all this unnecessary drama. Charlie, Rachel, Finn, her parents, Puck. She looks up at the boy who is now standing beside her. Neither one of them says anything as they take in what their actions and dishonesty had wrought.

“Hey,” Puck says finally and looks at her, “I know you’re upset now, but I want to do this with you. Not like try to be together, but I you know be there for you. And I’m going to try and do everything I can to be a good dad to our baby,” he said looking at her. He wants her to say yes, he wants to show everyone that he isn’t like his father that he can be a good father.

Quinn smiles a bit at him and wonders why she wasn’t just honest sooner. Puck really was the better choice, “Thanks,” she says finally. “But I can’t handle any more stress in my life right now. I can’t deal with a baby on top of everything that is happening in my life. I can’t and I know you want to be a father, but neither of us are ready. I’m going to give this baby up for adoption, this entire mess has proven that I’m not ready to be a parent. I know that you don’t understand it, but please respect it. We aren’t ready for this responsibility. We aren’t,” Quinn says. If there had ever been any doubt in her mind it was clear now, they couldn’t raise this child. It would be selfish of both of them to think that they could handle it.
Charlie’s phone starts vibrating when she’s waiting to see Dr. Sandra Bennett, her new therapist. She ignores it for as long as she can, but it starts buzzing non-stop and the people in the waiting room are now looking at her in annoyance.

Hiram glances at her, “Someone is popular today,” he comments and Charlie grumbles as she finally pulls out her phone to check the messages.

**Santana: Finn knows.**

The first one is from Santana, and her heart rate doesn’t pick up at the words. Because Finn Hudson is an idiot and she doubts it’s about her. Santana would have probably called her in a panic if it’s about her.

**Kurt: Puck’s the baby daddy.**

She truly doesn’t know why Kurt is texting her of all people and she wonders how he even got her number.

**Santana: Finn flipped the fuck out.**

Another one from Santana, and Charlie decides to text her back, her fingers moving fast on her Iphone, but instead of texting back to Santana, for the details she really doesn’t care about, she decides to text Brittany. She had known that lying about the baby’s paternity was a bad idea. The whole situation sounded like it belonged on an episode of Maury or Jerry Springer. The ensuing drama was predictable and she really wants nothing to do with it.

**How’s Quinn?**

She gets two texts in quick succession.

**Britt: Sad :(**

**Santana: The hobbit told Finnept.**

Charlie’s face twists into a frown. The news isn’t really surprising, Rachel’s been obsessed with Finn since freshman year despite her very vocal insistence that Finn is an idiot and she can do much better. She’s already resigned herself to the fact that Rachel is going to have the Finn Hudson experience.

**Make sure she’s okay?**

At least her secret was safe for now, Santana was never one to bury the lead. Charlie probably would have received a call that involved some yelling and some cursing with Santana going in and out of Spanish.

**Britt: Okay, what about Rachel?**

**Puck: She wants to give my baby away**

**Santana: What should we do to her?**

**Rachel: I did something that was incredibly selfish and I regret it. I need to apologize to Quinn and Puck.**
Quinn: Finn knows.

Kurt: This is the biggest scandal to hit glee club in years.

Mercedes: I knew he wasn’t the baby daddy

Charlie stared at the messages she was getting right after the other. She really needed to change her number or something. She knew for a fact that she didn’t give Kurt or Mercedes her number.

Keep her away from Santana.

Britt: K J

Charlie’s face twists into a smile. Brittany will manage to contain Santana for now or at least stop her from killing Rachel. She suspects that Santana will hold onto the grudge and strike Rachel in a place where it hurts. She doesn’t have time to think of what the Latina has planned for Rachel and instead chooses to text her twin.

You okay?

Even with my fractured ribs

I can still totally kick his ass for you

Quinn: I didn’t really mean to hurt him

Quinn: He looked really crushed

Quinn: I just feel bad

Charlie wants to point out that the only real crime that only Quinn is guilty of, is poor judgment. Both of them had cheated on each other, both of them had constantly lied to the other. It was a terrible relationship, Finn was a terrible boyfriend. Really the relationship should have ended ages ago. Though she feels that she is grossly biased at the fact that she loathes Finn Hudson.

It’ll get better.

It’s what she sends instead. A lecture won’t help Quinn now. She’s not sure what the etiquette for this sort of thing is. She supposes that balloons that say ‘glad the idiot is gone’, with confetti cannons is a bit much. Rachel had mentioned something about ice cream and sad movies when a break up was involved.

You can pick up some ice cream

We can watch The Notebook

You can spend the entire movie talking about him

I promise I won’t roll my eyes or bitch about him

Quinn: Really?

At least she’ll be getting some free ice cream out of this. She’s about to text more when she hears her name being called and she looks over at Hiram, who nods at her. With a grimace she gets up
and switches off her phone and walks with the receptionist into the psychologist’s office. She’d rather be dealing with Finn drama.
I think I'll post bulk updates otherwise we'll be waiting forever to get caught up. Part of the problem is I changed some things live and never bothered to save them onto the originals. I'll figure it out I guess.

Judy Fabray needed a drink. Vodka seemed appropriate for this situation, but at this point anything would do. She just needed to get the edge off. She’d even settle for those fruity drinks that didn’t contain much alcohol, or even something pedestrian like beer. She hadn’t had a beer in years, Russell Fabray was a man with more refined tastes. Then again, Russell Fabray had thought that it was a brilliant idea to scream at the judge and the prosecutor during their bail hearing. He had threatened them with lawsuits, for prosecutorial misconduct. They probably still would have been fine if he hadn’t threatened to kill Charlie for embarrassing the Fabray name, the moment he was free. The judge had decided to revoke bail for the both of them and send them to a correctional facility.

Truthfully, Judy had never seen Russell like this. She had never seen him so angry, hurt and betrayed. He had thought that Lucy was just as pure as Frannie had been, even though Judy knew for a fact that Frannie had been sexually active before she had been married. She’d suspected that Quinn was pregnant but she’d hoped that Quinn had taken care of the problem before her father found out. It was probably because she had raised Quinn right. Quinn had gone to Sunday school every Sunday, and had been an active member in the church’s youth group. Quinn had read her bible actively and prayed every night. Quinn was a good girl, she had been raised right.

There had been a few years when Judy had worried about her Lucy, she wasn’t as pretty as Frannie and she had carried an awful amount of weight. But her daughter had blossomed. Captain of the Cheerios, President of the Celibacy club, she got straight A, and most importantly she was extremely popular. Judy had been sure that her daughter was going to follow in hers and Frannie’s footsteps and become Prom Queen.

But Quinn wasn’t the reason that Judy was currently sitting in a police station holding room, about to be questioned once again by those irritating judgmental detectives. No it was her middle child, Charlie Reagan Fabray that was the cause for this humiliation. All of her children had idolized their father, but out of the three of them Charlie had clearly favored Russell more. She even had Frannie beat in that regard.

Judy could remember when the twins were still infants, back when Russell was happy. Charlie had been a restless baby, so different from Lucy. No matter how many times Judy tried she couldn’t manage to comfort the infant, it was only Russell that managed to get her to calm down. It had continued into their early childhood, Charlie following Russell around, staying up till he got home just so he could read her a bed time story. Judy simply didn’t do the voices right. Charlie was Russell’s son, it had been made clear from the very beginning and so long as Charlie had Russell she didn’t need Judy.

It wasn’t as if she didn’t have her moments with Charlie when she was still thought to be a boy, but it was just that she had more readily bonded with Russell. She wanted to be just like him and
truthfully Russell made more time for Charlie even more than he had ever made time for Frannie. It had caused a rivalry between the two siblings each one of them vying for Russell’s affection. In fact the only other person that Charlie had formed a bond with was Lucy.

She smiled, even though it was a sad smile, one filled with memories of happier times. Charlie and Lucy. Lucy had always been the more reserved of the two. She had been shy and quick to hide behind Charlie who protected her. Charlie had been the headstrong one always quick to defend Lucy especially against Frannie who had targeted Lucy. It was the twins against the world, or at least mostly Frannie who had hated no longer being the center of Russell’s universe.

Judy loved Charlie, she loved all her children. But Russell had been the one to handle her upbringing especially after Charlie started showing signs that she preferred doing things that Russell viewed as feminine. He had accused her of coddling his son, and he wouldn’t have their named sullied by bring up a homosexual. She had been convinced that he was right, Charlie had insisted that she would rather be Sailor Jupiter than Tuxedo Mask. Russell had been right about many things before and after he had taken the belt to Charlie the first time, he had explained that was how his father had instilled into him the morals that he lived by today. Russell was a good man, a bit stubborn and hard-headed at times but he was a good man, and what did Judy know about raising little boys.

Charlie on the other hand had been utterly confused as to why Russell had taken a belt to her back. Russell would explain what Charlie had done wrong. Charlie would always apologize after and promise to never to do it again. And it worked, some of the time. Whatever behavior Russell deemed to be too feminine for his son, was quickly corrected with Charlie taking position and it being beaten out of her. It didn’t help that Charlie looked rather feminine even back when they still thought she was a boy. Even now Charlie seemed to have an aversion to wearing skirts or dresses and make-up, things that were deemed to be just for women. As Charlie grew the beatings grew more intense, but Charlie had learned to take a beating and had stopped crying and yelling through them.

At this point Charlie had never once cried out for Judy, never asked Judy to save her. She took the punishment like Russell wanted, like a man. Most of the time Charlie would even look up at Judy as she was punished focused on just bearing the pain until Russell would reward her with positive attention again. Charlie even refused for Judy to tend to her wounds, Charlie didn’t want or need her then. She had Russell. She was Russell’s son. Russell was trying to turn his son into a man. He had been obsessed with it but Charlie still liked playing with Lucy. She still liked pretending with her and no matter what it just seemed that Charlie saw herself as a girl, even if the girl fell into a more masculine gender role. Russell was so sure that Charlie was going to turn out to be gay.

Judy remembered the weekend right after Charlie had turned thirteen, Russell had taken his son to Chicago for the weekend. He had told her that he was talking down for some father-son bonding time. At the time Judy hadn’t given it much thought, Russell had always been dragging Charlie away for some event or another. Fishing with Charlie had been a disaster, as had hunting, Charlie had refused to shoot ‘Bambi’. Most of their father bonding trips ended with Charlie disappointing Russell in some way. But that didn’t seem to be the case after the Chicago trip. Russell and Charlie had never spoken about what they had done but Russell was now certain that his son was straight as an arrow.

Russell had returned to being proud of Charlie. Proudt that Charlie was defending his sister from the bullying, proud that his son was getting straight A’s just like Lucy, proud that Charlie was getting into fights. He had simply shrugged at Judy and informed her that boys would be boys. There was no more talk about Charlie being gay, Russell was still trying to convince his son to try out for the football team or at the very least basketball team at their middle school. But he had been
proud of Charlie. And Charlie was the favored child once again.

Two months later she broke her arm, a month later after many tests. They found out. Lucy had taken the news in stride, Charlie had been confused, Frannie had called Charlie a tranny-freak. Judy didn’t know what to believe, the son that she had given birth to was really a girl. She would never be normal like Frannie or Lucy. But it had been Russell’s reaction that had shattered Judy. As they drove home from the doctor’s office, she could see that his heart was broken. The idea of his perfect son was dead, even though Charlie was sitting right there chatting with Lucy like nothing had changed.

It wasn’t until they got home did Russell finally react. He got drunk, and then he got angry. It was the first time in their twenty-one years of marriage did Judy actually fear for her safety. She truly believed that he was going to beat her. But he didn’t, his rage focused on Charlie. She was a girl and she was wearing the face of his son, his perfect son that he had just lost. It was Charlie’s fault that Russell Fabray no longer had a son that he could mold into his own image. It had been the first time that the beating had drawn blood, it had been a brutal frenzy. Charlie had been left a sobbing mess on the ground, her body bloody and bruised with red angry welts covering her from head to toe. It had been just as violent as Charlie’s most recent beating.

Russell Fabray had just rejected his own child, his own flesh and blood; violently. That night was the first time that Russell had called her a freak, a crime against nature. An abomination. It had been the only night that Charlie had ever cried out for her mother, which had made the attack worse.

Judy had frozen, she had never seen her husband like this and she didn’t know what to do, she certainly didn’t want to get between Russell and Charlie. She didn’t want Russell to turn all that rage onto her. So she turned her back on her middle child and went to gather up Lucy who had been in another part of the house at the time and walked out of that house. She had taken Lucy to the spa, for a spa day.

Charlie had been out of school for a week, locked in her room until she no longer had visible bruises that people would see. It had nearly broken Judy’s heart to hear Charlie explaining to Lucy that she had deserved the beating. Maybe for a time Charlie believed that, her grades had never been better. She was a model student and was even going to try out for the football team. She was still trying to be the son her father wanted. But Russell ignored her, and when he didn’t he sadistically attacked her.

Judy had made a vow to keep Lucy safe, there was little to nothing she could do for Charlie. She couldn’t make Russell love her, she couldn’t make Charlie into a boy for Russell. But Lucy was still innocent and still pure. She was the only that had treated Charlie the same as she had always treated Charlie. Though Judy had tried to break the relationship, had tried to keep Lucy and Charlie apart. When Russell’s anger began to focus on Lucy, and he began to rant about how Lucy was going to be just as damaged as her twin, Charlie had immediately pulled away from Lucy in an attempt to save her from his wrath. Judy had intervened as well, and had helped mold Lucy into Quinn.

It was Judy that helped her daughter shed those few pounds, put her in dance classes and gymnastics, and casually suggested that she get a nose job to become prettier. It had worked and Lucy had become Quinn Fabray, someone worthy of the Fabray name. The new look had given Lucy confidence that she hadn’t had before and when she made the cheerleading team it seemed the transformation was complete.

She wasn’t a negligent parent. She had protected Lucy. Charlie had never needed her before, and if
she was the one that Russell was going to focus on, it was better for everyone involved. So Judy had ignored the problem, choosing to drink instead of listening to Russell’s vitriol. Choosing the glass of wine and some decent music instead of listening to the sound of leather hitting flesh and Charlie attempting not to cry out in pain. She wasn’t surprised when Charlie began to stay away from the house, only coming back to keep up appearances or when Russell summoned her. Charlie would never run away, she would never leave Lucy alone with him.

“I was a good mother,” Judy insists the moment Detective’s Hamilton and Fisher entered the room.

Her lawyer, Donna Woods, shushes her immediately and turns to the detectives with a frown. The judge had mandated that Russell and Judy get separate lawyer’s claiming a conflict of interest. “My client has done nothing wrong. She wasn’t even mentioned in any of the statements given to the police.”

Lisa Hamilton snorted, “We have more than enough evidence to convict your husband. The photos, the testimony from the doctors. Charlie,” Lisa turns to face Judy directly, “even told us that it was Russell. What we want is for your client to agree to testify against her husband.”

Donna glanced at Judy who shook her head immediately, “Spousal privilege, you can’t make her testify against her husband. Besides like you said you have more than enough to convict him without her testimony. So what exactly are you fishing for? If you want anybody’s testimony get the girl and put her on the stand.”

Detective Michael Fisher turned to Judy, “We’re going to get Charlie to testify. All we want is for your client to testify that she watched as her husband tried to castrate his daughter.” they had found the bloody knife, they had found the fibers of Charlie’s cut underwear on the knife as well, as well as the wound on the hip, it hadn’t been much of a leap.

Donna raised her hand, “Charlie is a—”

“Intersexed teenager, who is genetically female,” Michael finished for her and Donna turned to stare at her client. It was immediately clear to Michael that Judy hadn’t bothered to inform her lawyer of this, she was still busy trying to keep up appearances. Even Judy seemed stunned that they knew about her daughter. “The DA wants to make this a big deal, and since female genital mutilation on a minor is considered a federal offense,” Michael trailed off and shrugged.

Donna stared at the two detectives for a moment, it was a stretch, and a broad interpretation of the law. But if Charlie was genetically female then it was completely possible that someone would buy it. “So what are you offering?” she asks.

“She testifies on her husband,” Lisa begins her eyes flicking back to Donna.

“I won’t testify. He’s my husband,” Judy says firmly. Even though she may not love him as she once did, when things were different, she had made a vow to be by his side, and Russell loved her. Besides she knew Charlie, she knew her daughter would just want this whole thing to go away. “Charlie will never testify. I don’t know how you found out about her, but she won’t testify. I was a good mother to my children,” she repeated again. She was she had protected them to the best of her capabilities.

Donna wants to roll her eyes, it’s obvious that Judy is clearly delusional and she wonders if she can go with insanity if her client ever goes to trial. “What are you offering?” she repeats to the detectives.

“Two years, minimum security prison,” Lisa says answering the question. “If she testifies against
her husband.”

“No,” Judy says and Donna looks over at Judy in irritation. It’s a good deal, certainly a better deal than she deserves.

Michael Fisher finally snaps, “You weren’t a good mother. You were a god awful mother. She’s just a kid who had a near panic attack because of what your piece of shit husband did to her. How could you just stand there and let him do that? She is your child and she needed you. What type of mother watches someone pull a knife on their child, watches as he prepares to maim her and just stands there. You aren’t a mother, you’re just a vapid alcoholic gold digger, who would rather keep up appearances than actually save her child.”

It’s like a slap to the face, and Judy is craving another drink desperately now, but she schools her face. She has had twenty one years to perfect being a Fabray. “I protected Lucy, I kept her safe from him.”

Lisa frowns, she may not have any children of her own but the idea of choosing one child to save over the other is a situation that she never wants to be in. She never wants to find herself in any situation where you are forced to choose between your children, but this isn’t one of them. Judy could have left, she could have divorced him. Judy could have thrown her body into the line of fire to protect Charlie. Right now Russell’s lawyers were trying to plea down to a fourth-degree charge with a minimum sentence and a minimum security prison. Russell Fabray is a pillar of the community and he has an alcohol problem. He’d be out in six months. It didn’t seem like Charlie would testify against Russell and the only other person who knew what had happened was Judy Fabray.

“This loyalty that you have to your husband, is it because you think he’ll wait for you if you get the maximum sentence cause that’s what the DA will push for. Do you truly think that Russell Fabray is going to visit you in prison? Eight years without your spas and your expensive soaps and fancy lotions?”

“He loves me,” Judy says mostly to herself, but she’s sure of it. Immediately Donna rests a placating hand on her clients shoulder.

Michael snorts at this, “Is that why he’s been cheating on you for about two years now?” Michael opens the folder in front of him and pushes it to Judy to read. There had been some sexy photos exchanged as well. “He’s got a place up in Toledo, bought her a nice apartment from the looks of it, all those business trips of his—well he was getting pretty busy up there.”

Judy looks over the evidence in disbelief and flips the page, only to slam it back down, as she sees a nude photo of her husband’s lower half. Quietly she passes the page without looking at it and she sees a photo of the woman Russell has been having an affair with. She knew she was definitely prettier and she was covered in all these tattoos, she looked like a hooker. A cheap hooker. After all the hours that she had spent in the gym for him and after everything that she’d had to put up with. “What’s her name?”

Lisa smirks, there is nothing more powerful than a wife scorned. “All we know is her stripper name and that’s Candi, with an ‘I’. The police in Toledo are currently looking for her so we can question her of course.”

Donna who is reading the print-out of all the messages exchanged between the two flinches, and looks at Judy. “Immunity,” she counter-offers. “She’ll talk for immunity.”

“Fuck no, she deserves jail time. She let her abusive husband sadistically beat down one of his
children. For what? At any time she could have packed up her kids and left him, she would have gotten half in a divorce anyway. You put this in front of a jury and they will see this for what it is. A vapid blonde who is just a trophy to her husband, letting her jackass of a husband abuse one of her children so she can keep living in luxury. You’ll get the max. Besides there is still a chance that we can get Quinn to convince Charlie to testify against you and your husband and if she can do that then we don’t need you and it won’t be eight years you’re going to be looking at twelve possibly more.”

Judy’s hands began to shake at the idea. She doesn’t want to go to prison. Not because of Russell, “I love all my children,” she says because she does. She did what she thought was best and Charlie never needed her. Charlie barely acknowledged her presence. She was strong in ways that Lucy just wasn’t.

“Probation with mandatory rehab and parenting classes. With a thousand hours of community service,” Donna tries again, it’ll be better to deal now then risk going to trial.

“I think you missed what he just said, we don’t really need your client at all. Charlie has been through enough without the added stress of testifying against her sperm donor. We’re trying to make sure we put that animal in jail for as long as we can. He deserves to rot in there,” Michael snaps at Donna. “Two years, means that she’ll be out in time to see her kids graduate if they even want her around. Two years means that they might give you another chance, if you do the right thing now. If for once in your life you do the right thing.”

The words are like a life-line to Judy whose mind has begun to reel with shock. A second chance, to be a mother again. To rebuild the trust that was shattered when Russell kicked Quinn out of the house. A second chance to be a mother to Charlie, the child that she had turned her back on so she could keep her normal child safe. A life without Russell Fabray, the man that she had been with for the past twenty-one years. A man who she had thought loved her but was currently fucking a stripper, one with various tattoos and possibly all sorts of diseases. She had no reason to stand by him anymore, no reason to pretend that he was a good man. If he was gone if he was in jail she would be given a second chance to be a good mother.

She didn’t want to go to prison she wants the happy memories with Lucy and Charlie laughing and bickering over who was a better superhero. Maybe it’s not too late to create that bond with Charlie. So Judy makes a choice and she leans into Donna and whispers something into her ear.

The two detectives frown at this, but they still wait hoping that Judy is agreeing to the terms that they’ve laid out. Hoping that this alcoholic woman who had let her husband abuse one of her children while she just drank and ignored the problem, makes the right decision. The offer is a gift to someone like her, she doesn’t deserve it. She deserves the maximum sentence available, she deserves to rot in prison right next to Russell Fabray. But the DA wants to make an example out of Russell, he wants to destroy the millionaire and show the people that the rich don’t play by different rules. Though the detectives suspect that he’s doing this because it’s an election year.

Donna closes the folder and pushed it back to the officers, “Probation, with a mandatory six month stint in rehab and parenting classes with a thousand hours of community service. No jail time will be served. That’s what we’re offering.”

Lisa rolled her eyes and picked up the folder, this had been a waste of their time. “You’re making the offers now? What could you possibly have to offer up? We have more than enough evidence to put you away and I’m sure someone can convince Charlie to testify.”

“Solicitation,” Donna says.
“We don’t care that he hired prostitutes,” Michael snaps, “We aren’t the vice unit.”

Donna tapped her fingers on the desk, “You just said you wanted to nail him and you wanted to put him away for a long time. My client knows all off the family secrets, we’re not talking about one of his whores. She’s already agreed to testify in court against him. So once again, that’s the offer. Your words inspired her Detectives. She wants a second chance.”

The two detectives turn to look at each other, and then turn to look at the one way mirror. The light flicks on a figure is revealed; District Attorney William Henderson. He nods once at the detectives, and pushes a button that activates the intercom in the room. “If what she has to say is worth it, then I’ll make that deal.”

Donna studies William Henderson for a moment, he rarely ever shows up to these things. It’s probably has more to do with the fact that the Fabray’s are synonymous with money in this town and Russell Fabray had donated thousands of dollars to his opponent, she bets that this is just a tiny bit personal for him. Not that it matters, she has what she wants, confirmation that her client won’t get jail time if she talks. She turns to Judy and nods and lets the woman begin telling the detectives everything.

“It happened in Chicago,” Judy says and she watches the detectives as they begin to scribble down everything Judy is saying.

“He didn’t love me did he?” Quinn questions her tone is flat, and her eyes still puffy from the crying. She would go to her grave swearing that it was from watching the movie. She finally pulls her head away from Charlie’s shoulder and she feels her sister adjust in the bed. There are two empty Ben & Jerry’s ice cream tubs sitting on the nightstand, one is Chocolate Therapy, the other is Triple Caramel Chunk.

Charlie glances at Quinn the movie is done and so is the time that she allotted to talking about Finn Hudson, but when she looks at her sister and sees her puffy eyes and the worry in her eyes, she lets it slide. “I think that maybe he did, once upon a time.”

It isn’t the answer that Quinn expects out of Charlie, then again she had expected Charlie to break out the champagne now that her relationship with Finn is over. She had been surprisingly supportive the entire night, and Charlie hated sappy movies that weren’t animated. She wonders if it’s the work of the therapist that Charlie saw earlier that afternoon, but she doesn’t ask not wanting her sister to pull away. “Since when did you become sappy?” she finally asks.

“Rachel,” Charlie answers and when Quinn gives her a look she clarifies. “In freshman year, when I would stay over we would go through her slumber party check-list, which included many romantic comedies.” Her romantic comedy DVDs rivalled all her Broadway and musical DVDs.

Quinn nods at this, and her thoughts filter back to the diva who had informed Finn of her transgression. She had been torn, Rachel and the Berry’s had taken her twin into their home and were taking care of her. But at the same time the diva, in a fit of selfish desire, had risked everything just so she could get Finn to be hers. She had risked outing Charlie, yet Charlie seemed rather indifferent to the situation. It baffled her, Charlie had the most to lose if Finn had let it slip. “Why aren’t you upset with her? She basically sold you out, in an attempt to get Finn all to herself.” If anything Charlie should be threatening the diva, on Quinn’s behalf.

“I’m surprised she lasted nearly two weeks,” Charlie responds because it’s true. She knows how
ruthless and selfish Rachel can be. Charlie was also aware that Rachel was incapable of keeping most secrets, it had been why she had decided to begin the process of coming out to begin with.

Quinn feels a bubble of anger rip through her, “He could have said something, anything that would have clued people in.”

“But he didn’t,” Charlie states bluntly. She already has enough on her plate than to worry about the ‘what ifs’, and ‘could haves’. “Wouldn’t be the end of the world if he did,” she adds.

“Two weeks ago, you needed me to prompt you to tell to tell the police and now you’re fine?” Quinn asks there is a hint of incredulity in her voice.

“I know but since then I’ve had to tell a lot of people, most of the time because I had too. I had to tell several nurses, I had to inform my social worker, my therapist, and you made me tell the police. Rachel, Brittany and Santana found out accidentally and Rachel harassed me until I told her fathers. Puck has been the only person I told because I wanted to. I got to make that decision on my own. He wasn’t grossed out he just wanted to compare dick sizes. From the people I was forced to tell too well Puck, no one has reacted like Russell did.” Charlie points out. She had expected them to react like Russell to recoil from her in shock and look at her as if she was some abomination that didn’t deserve to live, she hadn’t expected the vast majority of people to either not care or to be curious about her.

“I expect that my penis will be the topic of the rumor mill for like a week and then people will move on,” Charlie states scratching at her cheek where the scab is only to have Quinn smack her hand gently to stop her. “I’m not saying that there won’t be any problems, and that everyone will take it like Puck did,” Azimio Adams and Dave Karofsky come to mind. “But I think that in the long run I’ll be fine.”

Quinn thinks about what Charlie said only to realize that she’s right. There is a part of her that is a bit jealous that Charlie will get to have it all. That Charlie will still get to be popular even though she’s a misfit just like everyone in the rest of the glee club. Quinn may have been more popular, no one had really liked her. Charlie was well liked around the school, mostly because she really didn’t partake in any of the bullying. Charlie isn’t going to be kicked off the team, she isn’t going to be stripped off her captaincy like Quinn had been. It was unfair, but she supposed that it was probably the cosmos tipping the scales into her favor.

Charlie crosses her legs on the bed, “If you want to be back at the top of the pyramid then I can help you, get back in shape after you have the baby,” Charlie says already knowing what Quinn is thinking. When Quinn glances at her she smiles. “Twin telepathy?” she offers her sister as she leans back. “I know you miss it is all.”

“You forget that Sue Sylvester might not let me back on the team,” Quinn says. Sue Sylvester is not the forgiving type. She doesn’t forgive mistakes, mistakes in cheerleading can lead to injuries which is why perfection is necessary. There are no do-overs and she doubts that even if Sue put her back on the team, there is no way she will be head cheerleader again.

“So be Quinn Fabray the head cheerleader, come back better and stronger than ever and if all else fails, stir up her competitive spirit and say that you’re thinking about joining the soccer team. She’ll snap you up only so Roz can’t have you,” Charlie replies. “Then all you got to do is work your way back up to the top.”

Quinn nods it’s actually a pretty decent plan, but it would be difficult pairing the head Cheerio spot back from Santana, she was currently loving being in charge. She pushes the thought away for now, she has several months to deal with that situation, and she currently still needs to do with
more pressing matters. “I picked out an agency, they’re going to start sending me prospective parent brochures. I was planning to go over them with Puck. She’s going to be your niece as well and you should have a say in it as well.”

Charlie looks at Quinn’s stomach for a moment, as it suddenly clicks that she’s going to be an aunt soon. The idea that there will be some miniature version of Puck and Quinn around terrifies her. Especially the idea that the baby is half Puckerman. “You should ask Rachel for help too, and Britt and Santana,” she says finally.

“Rachel?” Quinn asks, she can understand why Charlie would suggest Brittany and Santana but Rachel Berry after what she had done today. “Why would I ever trust Rachel with something as important as this?”

“When does the baby start to kick?” she asks ignoring the question at first.

“In about a month’s time,” Quinn replies, she had asked Dr. Lopez the other day.

Charlie hums in response for a moment before flashing Quinn her crooked smile, “Because Rachel and Brittany are the only two people I know who are surrounded by unconditional love. You and me, we don’t know what it looks like, neither does Puck.” Charlie shrugs, she’s not one hundred percent sure about Santana’s home life, so she can’t make a comment on it.

Quinn opens her mouth to protest, to say something about how Rachel is obnoxious and selfish, about how she sabotaged her broken relationship with Finn just so she could be with him. But she doesn’t instead she looks around Charlie’s new bedroom and she realizes that her twin has a point. The Berry men have a lot of love in their hearts. Rachel was loved unconditionally and they seemed to support her unconditionally. If her child could live in a home had even half the love that this household held then she would have done her job as a mother. “I’ll think about it.”

Charlie nods, “I’m just holding out till she makes me brownies,” Charlie admits and Quinn rolls her eyes at her sister.

“You’re going to get fat,” Quinn warns poking Charlie’s stomach.

Charlie snorts, she isn’t particularly worried. Rachel’s still making her eat rabbit food and she’s sure she’s lost weight since she’s been at the Berry house. “I’ll burn it off when I get cleared to return to training. Coach Roz is already formulating my hell month, which will probably include a strict diet till my condition is back to where it was. So I’m going to enjoy the break while I can.”

Quinn smiles at this, she knows how it feels. Now that she’s off the Cheerios she can finally eat carbs again, and bacon. It’s like the baby growing inside her craves bacon. She glances at the time and winces, it’s time for her to finally get back to the Lopez’s and she pulls herself out of Charlie’s bed and grabs her school bag, “Thanks for this,” she throws over her shoulder as she grabs the empty ice cream containers and leaves Charlie’s room, closing the door behind her.

Quinn isn’t surprised to find Rachel Berry hard at work in the kitchen, whipping up a batch of I’m sorry cookies, and she watches the diva scurry around the kitchen setting the ingredients out. She can’t seem to reach something on the top shelf and Quinn can’t help but smile as the tiny diva stands on her tiptoes to reach for it. Quinn takes pity on her after a moment of watching, “Need some help?” she asks and Rachel jumps back in surprise.

“You’re going to get fat,” Rachel says, flushing at being caught trying desperately to reach something. Leroy had probably done it on purpose. He always did like laughing at her. “I can’t find reach the powdered sugar,” she admits after a moment. Quinn nods and walks over to the
cubby, she needs to stand on her tiptoes as well but she manages to snag it and hands it to Rachel. “Thank you.”

There is a moment of quiet between them and Quinn looks at the ingredients that have been neatly laid out, “Charlie isn’t mad at you. Finn didn’t actually say anything about her so she doesn’t care, and I don’t think she would have cared if he had,” Quinn says and she wonders if Charlie is just back to not talking about it, or pretending that it isn’t a problem and that she’ll be fine. She should probably ask Brittany to check in on Charlie just to make sure.

Rachel almost relaxes at the news, and her lips twitch upward for a moment before she stills her face. “Are you?” she asks, and her voice is small. She had really and truly messed up, and everyone had called her on it. If she ever told her fathers’ she knew they’d be so disappointed with her.

Quinn studies Rachel for a moment, “I am annoyed with you. But it’ll fade,” she answers truthfully. She couldn’t be upset on Charlie’s behalf when Charlie wasn’t even angry herself. And Rachel really had just saved her from a relationship she no longer wanted to be in. Rachel nods at this and Quinn nods at her, “I’ve got to get going now. Do try not to over feed my sister, she’s still got to keep her condition up.”

Rachel nods, she’s mostly confused. She had expected Quinn to break out a few choice words or take her up on the offer and beat her up. She hadn’t expected Quinn to be pleasant, she didn’t expect Quinn to be nice to help her.

Neither Quinn nor Rachel expect to see Finn at sectionals. Showing up just in time to help them choose a group song because Sue Sylvester sold them out.

He doesn’t look at Quinn, and when he looks at Rachel all she can see is hurt and a bit of contempt. But he takes charge handing out some sheet music, “I used the Cheerios’ copier to make copies and then I trashed the thing. Mike, Matt, Brittany, Santana, you’re our best dancers. Figure something out and we’ll all follow your lead.” Even though he’s angry his voice is calm and collected, and there isn’t a hint of that usually confused Finn.

Quinn stares at him for a moment, he still hasn’t looked her way yet, “Finn,” she prompts. She wants to apologize again.

Rachel winces at his harsh gaze, but she smiles anyway, “It’s good to have you back, Finn.” Because it is, it means that he might forgive her for interfering, which means there is hope that Finn will give her a chance. All she needs is that one shot.

Finn ignores Rachel as well for a moment and looks at Jacob Ben Israel, who was only there in an attempt to get into Rachel’s pants. “I’m taking my spot back now,” and Jacob nods and slinks away.

Puck walks up to him and holds his hand up, it’s his gesture of peace. “We cool?” He asks, he hasn’t apologized to Finn, it’s not really his thing to say sorry.

“No,” the tension in the room is rising and the rest of the glee club is suddenly moving to prevent another fight between Puck and Finn, but Finn doesn’t attack Puck again.

“Yes you okay?” Rachel asks breaking the awkward tension in the room.
Finn turns to her for a moment giving her an encouraging smile, though it doesn’t really meet his eyes. “Don’t worry about me. Okay, this is all up to you now. You wanted the solo, you wanted the chance to be the star. This is your chance. Don’t screw it up,” he says b

Rachel doesn’t say anything for a moment, the guilt bubbling in her gut. She suddenly understands why they wanted to at least wait after sectionals, it wasn’t just Finn she’d hurt. Her selfish actions had the potential to destroy their chances at sectionals. Even though everything looked fine on the outside, there was mistrust, anger and hurt just bubbling right below the surface. So Rachel does what she does best and when it’s finally for the New Directions to go out there she nails her solo. She can see tears in Hiram’s eyes as she sings, he’s sitting in the front with Leroy and Charlie who looks surprised by the turn of the events more than anything. All the emotions from the past few weeks finally finds a perfect outlet and you can hear it in her voice. It’s the best performance of the song she’s ever given.

Charlie is the first one to her feet ignoring the fact that her body still hurts, as Rachel hits that last note. Hiram and Leroy are milliseconds behind her as they clap and the audience breaks out into a standing ovation and Rachel smiles, basking in the applause for a moment. “Ladies and gentlemen, the New Directions,” she states after the applause begins to die down. Their performance is rough but the audience loves it.

With the performance done, Finn wants to just go home. It still hurts to be in a room with Quinn and he still really wants to punch Puck in the face. So he slips away after the performance and begins to walk the halls till he can find the exit. He doesn’t expect to bump into Charlie who has managed to ditch Leroy and Hiram so she can go tell Rachel and her friends how amazing they were.

The quarterback and the star soccer player stare at each other for a minute, before Charlie finally moves to walk past him. Finn swallows, he can all but hear her mocking tone in his head. She’s openly mocked him before telling everyone that he had an early arrival problem and she probably knew as well. Made him help take care of a baby that wasn’t even his to begin with. “Tranny,” he mutters but it’s loud enough for Charlie to hear and she freezes for a moment. The moment he says it, it’s like all the hurt and anger he feels starts and he opens his mouth to say more. “And your sister is a—”

Charlie turns before he can finish the statement, her right hand shooting out and grabbing Finn’s red tie. With a bit of force that surprises even Finn he hadn’t expected the soccer to be that strong, she forces his head down till he’s at eye level with her. If she’s offended by his words it doesn’t show on her face. “Don’t be a martyr Finn, you cheated on my sister twice with Rachel. So don’t pretend that you’re the innocent guy who did nothing wrong while his girlfriend was the one cheating. Stay away from my sister, and if I ever hear you saying a bad thing about Quinn I will make sure they don’t find your body.”

Finn stares at the twin and his face twists into a sneer as he tries to pull away but Charlie’s grip is tight and he keeps his eyes on her. “Whatever,” he manages and Charlie finally lets him go. The mask of fury is gone and Charlie has pulled away from him.

Charlie is about to say something else when she sees Brittany out of the corner of her eyes and she turns to smile at the rest of the glee club who are trying to find where the judges are located, so they can try and listen in. Charlie slaps on her trademark crooked grin, “You were all really good,” she says as the glee club approaches them. Quinn is looking between Charlie and Finn suspiciously but Charlie ignores the look as she talks to Rachel congratulating the diva on a job well done.
The anger on Finn’s face and his words had shaken her and she put him on the list of people that she needed to be wary of. Finn calling her a Tranny hadn’t hurt probably because she had zero respect for the boy and thought he was a moron. So despite Finn’s negative reaction to her she straightens her back and smiles at the glee club.

Rachel is positively bursting at all the positive comments and she keeps shooting looks over at Finn who was now talking with Artie and Matt. When he smiles at her a bit of her fears are put to bed and she knows that maybe that she’ll get her shot. “I’ve had that song perfected since I was five,” Rachel informs Charlie who believes her.

Charlie nods, she actually believes the diva, she is suddenly glad that the Berry’s had basically sound-proofed each room, because while she loves listening to Rachel sing, the constant practice would probably drive her nuts. She pulls the diva into a light hug, before she pulls away and wraps her arm around Quinn. “You were really good,” she says congratulating her. “You looked like you were having fun,” she adds, because despite the fact that Quinn loves the Cheerios, she has never looked like she was having fun.

“I was,” Quinn says simply and leans into her sister, “What did you say to him?” she asks keeping her voice low as she looks back at Finn.

Charlie pulls away from Quinn and shakes Mercedes’ hand, also congratulating her, before Santana and Brittany approach her. “Where’s my hug?” Brittany asks pouting and Charlie grins relaxing a bit as she opens her arms and lets Brittany hug her. She’s super gentle to not aggravate Charlie’s ribs and Charlie looks at Santana who is looking at her and then back at Finn, she suspects something is up well.

Charlie pulls away from Brittany a bit reluctantly, it isn’t the right time to tell them they’re all coming down from their high and she really doesn’t want to tell them because Finn’s words bothered her. But she needs to control the story and Finn is busy being a butt-hurt man-child and she doesn’t want to deal with those rumors later on. Charlie goes to stand by Santana and she nudges the shorter girl gently, and opens her mouth to speak. “This totally isn’t the right time for this but since you’re all here I’ve got to say something,” she announces and she sees Quinn and Rachel turn to her immediately.

Quinn is by her side immediately, and Charlie is slightly surprised at how fast her pregnant sister can move. She’s touched by the fact that Quinn has immediately taken her hand and she feels Santana stiffen beside her, getting ready to go all Lima Heights on anyone’s ass. Puck is taking a stand behind her and even Rachel is gravitating towards her. While Brittany lights up at the fact that she’s going to be honest. The whole thing is rather comforting in the suffocating sort of way.

“You’re coming out of the closet?” Kurt asks clapping his hands and Charlie turns to him blinking at this response. Kurt shrugs as everyone turns to him, “Oh come everyone at school already thinks it,” he says a bit defensively. At least he won’t be the sole out kid in McKinley anymore.

“It is sort of old news,” Mercedes agrees and there is a murmur of agreement from the rest of the glee club.

Charlie can’t help it and turns to Quinn, “Is it really that—no that’s not what I mean, it sort of is. Yes I’m a lesbian but that’s not what I wanted to say,” Charlie says suddenly stumbling over her words. The attention on her is a bit much for her and she feels Quinn squeeze her hand. She’d had this whole speech prepared in her head for when she told the school, but she can’t really remember the words anymore. “I’m intersexed,” she says after a long moment. It’s not how she wanted to say it, it’s certainly not how she wanted to come out but it’s what comes out of her mouth.
Her gaze flicks to Finn for a moment he looks confused by both the fact that Charlie is revealing it and possibly by the word intersexed. Charlie slowly glances around the rest of the glee club, “Truthfully I was going to tell the girls’ soccer team tomorrow but I mean it’s not like you won’t all hear about it by lunch anyway. I’d still like to you know tell them before the rumor mill starts so…” Charlie trails off and looks at Kurt and Mercedes who are just staring at her.

Santana snaps at them immediately, “She’s talking to you Wheezy and Lady Hummel,” and Kurt flushes for a moment but nods as does Mercedes.

Tina is the first to speak, “What do you mean intersexed?” she finally asks.

Curiosity is good, she can deal with curiosity. “I have a fully functioning dick. I’m genetically female though, like you know double x chromosomes. Doctors don’t really understand why but I was born with a dick.”

Kurt is the first to really recover and turns to Quinn, “You’re twins so does that mean?”

Quinn rolls her eyes, “We’re fraternal twins and no, I don’t. I’m also pregnant Kurt,” she hisses the last part out as if it’s the most obvious thing in the world.

Kurt glances over at Puck who nods at this assessment and turns back to Charlie, understanding flashing through his eyes but he can’t help himself and turns to Rachel who doesn’t seem surprised. He finds it more shocking that Rachel didn’t spill the beans, and from the looks of it Puck, Santana and Brittany knew. “Well I for one support you a hundred percent,” he says firmly.

Mercedes studied Charlie and shrugged following Kurt’s lead, she supported her friend and she had quickly learned not to judge. All it meant was that Charlie was sort of like them, misfits. Besides the news didn’t really affect her in anyway other than it was a piece of gossip that she knew about first, but she wasn’t going to out the girl but when it did pass through the school she could at least say she was one of the first to know.

Charlie relaxed as acceptance and nonchalance filled the air and she flicked her eyes back to Finn Hudson who still look confused and slightly annoyed at the acceptance that Charlie was getting. Yes she would definitely have to put Finn Hudson on the list.
“Fifty people came up to me and asked if they could see it. I was quite possibly sexually harassed by Suzy Pepper who came up to me and grabbed at it. I’ve had two people call me a tranny to my face. JBI wants pictures, or at least an expose. I’ve gotten a few weird stares and I got asked out by five different girls, three of which were skanks, the other two were baby Cheerios,” Charlie grumbles as she places her cafeteria tray in front of Quinn and takes a seat.

Quinn looks at the slop on Charlie’s plate and she crinkles her nose in disgust, “How can you—? No I really don’t want to know.” It was her sister’s first day back and already her news had spread through the halls of McKinley like wildfire. The reaction hadn’t been negative or positive, just somewhere in the middle. There had been no words spray painted on Charlie’s locker though she suspected that might come a bit later, and the girls’ soccer team didn’t really seem to care either, so long as Charlie could still play. Missy and Marissa had taken to flanking their captain, escorting Charlie to every class. “You dodged your two bodyguards?”

“I told them that if they didn’t leave me alone I’d make them run laps till I got bored.” Charlie said as she ran her spork through the undistinguishable slop and took a bite out of it. She’s overwhelmed and wants to just leave McKinley for the rest of the day, but she doesn’t. The last thing she needs is people calling her weak, or coming after her harder. The elite at McKinley weren’t taking the news well, and she knew she would get a slushy facial or bath sometime during the day. It’s not something she’s looking forward to and isn’t something that she’ll dwell on, “How’s life post-dumbass?”

“He still won’t talk to me,” Quinn admits and she looks at her sister thoughtfully. She could hear the thinly-veiled contempt in Charlie’s voice. She knew her sister had never approved of Finn Hudson, but it had because Charlie simply thought Quinn was too good for the quarterback. “What happened yesterday?”

Charlie’s eyes flicked to her, “I told him to stop being a martyr,” she said simply. There was no need to worry her, “He wasn’t pleased with that. I don’t know if it’s because he didn’t understand what the word martyr even meant.”

Quinn smiled at this statement, he probably didn’t. The list of things that she had to do, was slowly clearing. Quinn looked over her sister carefully, and wondered if anyone had asked about the visible scars that her sister now had. The stitches were out and there was some scarring and some scabbing still going on her hands, and there was still a scab on her cheek under her left eye where Russell’s wedding ring had cut her face. Charlie picked at it constantly, because it itched, at this point Quinn was sure it was going to leave a scar. Despite that Charlie seemed to be doing fine, and she was being more open and honest with her, with everyone. So Quinn believed her when she said she was going to be fine.

“I thought about what you said, about having Rachel help me look for my child’s family,” Quinn begins and watches as Charlie glances up at her, “You’re right about the unconditional love part. Brittany just gets people, and Rachel’s fathers love her despite the fact that she’s an irritating diva ninety-percent of the time. I want whoever ends up adopting her to love her and support her just like the Berry’s support in their daughter.”

Charlie’s face lights up at the information, she wanted her niece to be surrounded by love as well. The smile slowly dims after a moment after Charlie remembers why she asked about Finn to begin with, “Rachel is sort of seeing Finn. I think, she looked happy yesterday in the car and mentioned something about Finn asking sectionals and I tuned her out.”
Quinn is silent for a moment and she feels that jealousy bubbling up inside her for a moment, but she swallows it. Finn is her ex-boyfriend and while Finn finally acting like a leader and a man yesterday was surprising to say the least she didn’t have any feelings for him, so she didn’t understand why she was jealous. “She’s free to do whatever she wants. The most important thing right now is to find a home, the best home for this baby, and I think Rachel can help with that.”

Charlie nods, as her eyes flick over her sister carefully, it’s a rather mature position for Quinn to be taking and she had assumed that her sister still had some residual feelings for her ex-boyfriend, she had seen the jealousy flash across her face before it was replaced by Quinn’s mask. “I’ll let her know, she’ll probably do all the research for you and whittle it down to like five selections by the weekend if you let her.” Charlie is quiet for a moment, “Are you sure you’re going to be okay working with her, hopefully she won’t bring it up with you. I mean I can talk to her,” Charlie offers, Rachel was being way to overenthusiastic at the idea that Finn was her boyfriend.

“So that’s why Santana was going on about revenge on the hobbit,” Quinn said with a shake of her head. “I can handle it just fine. Let her enjoy the prize that is Finn,” Quinn said with a simple shrug.

Charlie nodded and was halfway to shoveling more of the slop that the school called food into her mouth when she paused, the name Santana and the word revenge didn’t really belong in the same sentence together. It usually sent up red flags in her mind, “Why? I still got to tell my secret the way I wanted to more or less,” Charlie said. “She doesn’t need to defend me. I don’t want her to avenge me for something that didn’t happen.”

“She was going between Spanish and English, but I know she said unholy trinity and I did hear the word hobbit a few times.” This information didn’t seem to put Charlie at ease so Quinn added. “Don’t worry. Brittany will make sure that Santana doesn’t go too far.” At least with Brittany around Santana wouldn’t touch Rachel in a violent way, the dancer hated violence.

Quinn watched Charlie mull it over and briefly wondered who Charlie was more concerned about in the situation. It must have been difficult for her to divide her loyalty between Rachel and herself. It probably helped that Charlie didn’t like Finn and was adamant that the two of them cut their losses. And while Rachel was most definitely Charlie’s best friend, she seemed to be the only one to be able to put up with Rachel neurosis for long periods of time, there was definitely something going on between Charlie and Santana. She wondered how Brittany would take it, Quinn knew for a fact that there was something going on between Santana and Brittany. Then again Charlie was soft on Brittany just like Santana was, Quinn had never known Charlie to refuse anything the dancer had asked. She certainly never argued with Brittany and the idea of breaking a promise to her was something Charlie just wouldn’t do.

Charlie’s love life was not something that was high on Quinn’s priorities. In fact if she hadn’t caught Charlie in bed with Santana she would just assume that her sister never had a love life to begin with. Charlie never talked about crushes or anything of the sort at least not with Quinn and from the looks of it not with Rachel either. Personally Quinn was done with love triangles. The end result of most love triangles was that someone was going to get hurt and Quinn really didn’t want to think of Charlie getting hurt emotionally, and she really didn’t want either of her best friends to get hurt either. It was part of the reason she had banned Charlie from sleeping with them to begin with.

“You can,” Quinn said after a moment, and Charlie looked at her sister confusion on her face at the simple statement. Quinn sighed, “Santana. You can. Just—you know there is something between the two of them. And I need both of them. I need Brittany and I need Santana. So make sure that you don’t hurt Brittany.”
Charlie slowly places her fork down and takes a sip of her water as she looks at her sister an unreadable expression on her face. “I would never hurt Brittany,” she states after a moment. She wouldn’t do anything that Brittany wasn’t okay with. She had refused to touch Santana last year until Brittany had informed her that it was okay to begin with.

Quinn looks her sister over for a moment, there is conviction behind her words and she looks a tad bit offended at the idea that she’d ever intentionally hurt Brittany. “Is that because you’re afraid of Santana?” she teases.

Charlie scoffs at the idea, “I’m not afraid of Santana,” because she isn’t scared of the Latina. “I just know that if push came to shove, Santana could totally kick my ass.”

Quinn snorts at this, she doesn’t believe her sister for a moment. Even she’s slightly afraid of Santana, everyone is. It probably has something to do with Santana yelling about razor blades in her hair. The only who simply wasn’t scared of Santana was Brittany. Quinn was about to say something more when she notices Karofsky and Rick carrying what looks like a cooler, “Incoming,” she says and moves to get up.

Charlie turns around and looks at them before reaching over and grabbing Quinn’s arm. “It’s a slushy I’ll be fine. I brought a change of clothes today.”

Quinn’s anger flares at this, but Charlie shoots her a crooked grin, before she gets up and steps into the middle of the cafeteria. The entire cafeteria is now quiet watching the scene that they know is about to unfold. Quinn briefly wonders where Santana is or even Puck but she ignores, and looks to the glee club table. No one is doing anything, even Missy and Marissa are just sitting there. “You have fractured ribs,” Quinn hisses at her sister.

Charlie ignores her and walks up to Karofsky, there is a smug smile on his face at the fact that he finally has something to use against the bane of his existence. The students at the table surrounding her immediately clear the area leaving Charlie standing alone. “Karofsky. Rick the Dick. Let’s get this over with so we can all move on with our lives,” her voice is calm and steady, there isn’t any fear on her face, as the two boys life the cooler with a bit of effort and dump the cold contents on Charlie’s head.

The slushy splatters everywhere, getting on the empty bench and the lunch tables, some of it even splashes on Karofsky and Rick the Stick. The entire room is quiet for a long moment before a hushed whisper’s begins to fill it the room as Charlie wipes the excess corn syrup from her eyes. She looks rather unperturbed by the turn of events even though she’s covered in slushy from head to toe.

Karofsky takes a step forward, “I know about you. Heard that you had a little something extra between your legs. Which means I don’t have to feel bad about whatever I dish out at you, after all you’re just a sissy boy pretending to be a girl,” he says coldly, that smug smile on his face. Charlie doesn’t back away she just meets his gaze, blinking a few times when some corn syrup gets in her eyes. “The reign of the Fabray’s is over,” he announces loudly. “The star of the soccer player is a tranny and from what I hear has been kicked off the team.” Quinn immediately gets up to defend her sister and Dave’s attention turns to her, and he gives her that smug grin. “And the queen of the chastity ball is the schools—”

“Are you still upset that I turned you down earlier Dave?” Charlie’s voice says and he turns to look at her. “I simply didn’t think you were into dicks. I mean if I had known that all you really wanted to do is get down on your knees and blow me then I would have let you. I mean I’d totally keep my eyes closed and pretend that you were a girl. An ugly girl but a girl none the less.” Charlie says cutting him off as she slowly drags her tongue along her lips. Cherry was her favorite.
Dave Karofsky flushes a deep red at this and takes a step forward to grab Charlie but his foot slips in the slushy that has pooled on the ground and he struggles to catch his balance. “Who’d ever be interested in you, you tranny freak,” he snarls at her.

“Charlie,” Quinn’s voice cuts through the air, trying to get her sister to stop talking, before Karofsky attacks her. “You can’t,” there’s a plea in her voice. There is still that unreadable expression on Charlie’s face and she notices her sister’s hands balling into fists.

Charlie shoots a quick glance at Quinn, and see’s the worry in her eyes and she relaxes herself. Punching Karofsky is a terrible idea. “Coach Washington hasn’t kicked me off the team. I’m genetically female Dave,” she explains calmly. “Even if she wanted to, she can’t. So I’m still the captain of the soccer team. I’m still last year’s MVP, I’m still a champion Karofsky. The hockey team hasn’t had a winning season in ages. So if you think this stunt negates the fact that I will lead the team to another state championship, or the fact that I am on a winning team then you’re sadly mistaken. I really don’t care if you slushy me a hundred times, I’m still not the loser in this equation.”

At this the cafeteria bursts into a whispered debate and Karofsky quickly realizes he’s losing control of the situation. “Loser? Fine but at least I’m not some fucking tranny. What’s the matter was being a man too difficult for you?” he sneers at her.

“You seem awfully interested in what I have between my legs. It’s either you’re jealous because my dick is probably bigger than yours. Or you really do want to get on your knees and give me a blow job. Or is it a bit of both?” Charlie responds coolly her anger spiking as she insults the hockey player. He reminds her of Russell, his words and the venom in his voice. But David Karofsky isn’t Russell Fabray, his words don’t mean anything to her, she was never his friend. He was nothing to her and she wasn’t afraid of him.

Quinn watches in horror as Dave Karofsky lunges at Charlie, slipping a bit but managing to catch her as she tries to twist around him. There is a grimace of pain on her face and Charlie lets out a grunt of pain as she slips in the slushy and her back crashes against the ground. Quinn immediately moves getting around the table in record speed as Karofsky pulls up and is about to slam his fist into her face. Karofsky is taller and bigger than Charlie and the last thing Quinn wants is to visit Charlie in the hospital again.

Karofsky doesn’t manage to hit Charlie as Puck and Mike are there almost immediately pulling him off her. Quinn hadn’t even seen him come enter the cafeteria, but the two football players are currently holding Dave down while Charlie pulls herself away from him. Quinn is by her side helping her sister up as best as she can while trying not to slip in the corn syrup.

“What were you thinking?” Quinn mutters and keeps a firm grip on Charlie who looks ready to lunge at Dave injuries aside. Quinn feels her sister’s muscles tensing and she sees that faraway look in Charlie’s eyes, like she had back in the hospital. “Charlie, let it go. Just let it go,” she mumbles again and again trying to bring Charlie back from the space she went to her in her head. Missy and Marissa are finally beside their captain and they make a move to touch Charlie but Quinn immediately shakes her head, motioning for them to step away. She can feel that her sister is still tense beside her and her focus is still on Dave who’s struggling against Puck and Mike.

It takes a long moment for Charlie to return back to normal but it’s clear she’s in a heightened state, it’s quicker than the time that she was in the hospital and she slowly relaxes against Quinn. She’s about to say something when a teacher finally intervenes. It’s Ms. Hagberg who had probably been betting with students as to who would win the fight. “Figgins office, the both of you.”

Karofsky pulls himself away from Puck and Mike and glares at Charlie who has finally pulled
away from Quinn. “Whatever,” he says as he storms off.

Charlie watches him go and takes a step forward as if to follow him as she tries to pull herself free from Quinn, but Quinn holds onto her arm tightly. Charlie looks about to protest but is silenced by a perfect HBIC glare from her sister. Her face twists at this but she allows Quinn to pull her in the opposite direction as they leave the cafeteria followed by Puck, Mike, Missy and Marissa.

Missy and Marissa finally pull away, and they take off to Coach Roz’s office immediately to inform Roz what happened. Quinn turns to look at Puck and Mike and shoots them a tight smile, “Don’t worry I have this. Thanks though for intervening before this was a disaster.” Her words are dismissive and Mike nods glancing at Charlie for a moment confused by her silence but he finally returns back to the lunchroom. Puck sticks around for a moment more, but finally realizes that it’s best to just leave. It’s not until they are alone in the hallway does Quinn finally speak, trying to keep her voice low. “You don’t have to keep running to my defense. He’s not the only one to call me a slut, what are you going to do fight every last one of them?”

Charlie who had been quiet for the entirety, is still coming down from the adrenaline high and slowly looks to her sister. For a moment Quinn is worried because it’s like Charlie is looking through her, but her sister blinks once and slowly smiles. A weak attempt to show that she’s okay. She still doesn’t reply but she’s finally managed to pull herself from Quinn’s grip. “I need to see Figgin’s and then I am going to go take a shower. I’ll see you in history,” her voice is slightly hollow as she’s still coming down from the adrenaline high. She can’t remember much from the last five minutes, and all she can remember is Karofsky on top of her. She squeezes her eyes shut as she feels her heart start to race, and calmly counts back down from twenty.

Quinn watches her sister who blinks once she’s done. The panic in her eyes and on her face is gone but there is still a hint of vacancy in her eyes, like Charlie hasn’t fully come back yet. “Are you —?”

“I will be, just got caught up in the moment,” Charlie says interrupting and looks at Quinn and winces, seeing that she has slushy covering her entire right side. “Sorry about the shirt, I’ve got like some extra clothes in my locker if you want them.” She offers but Quinn shakes her head.

“I have my own. Let’s get you to Figgin’s,” Quinn says making a mental note to tell the Berry’s that Charlie had another flashback. She disliked going behind Charlie’s back but it had become evident that Charlie wouldn’t talk about it or mention it. This had just been the second that Quinn had witnessed.

“I have my own. Let’s get you to Figgin’s,” Quinn says making a mental note to tell the Berry’s that Charlie had another flashback. It had been agreed upon that they’d keep each other in the loop since it had become obvious that Charlie wouldn’t talk about it or mention it. This had just been the second that Quinn had witnessed.

Charlie quietly accepts Quinn as an escort, and they walk to Figgins office in silence. It’s not until they are nearly at the door that Charlie finally speaks up, “Just like old times,” she says and runs her hand through her slushy drenched hair.

Quinn smiles at this, it was like old times. Charlie would defend her, she’d get into a fight and get sent to the principal’s office, with Lucy escorting her. “Mom really didn’t know what to do about you, and dad-” Quinn trails off and glances at Charlie who has stiffened. “Sorry.”

“Would say, boys would be boys.” Charlie finishes the statement anyway there is just a note of sadness in her voice, but she doesn’t say anything more on the subject and Quinn lets it drop. They haven’t talked about it not really neither knows what to say about it. So they ignore it and they don’t talk about it, because both girls are Fabray’s and if you don’t talk about it the problem
doesn’t exist.

The two of them finally separate when Charlie enters Figgin’s office and Quinn takes a seat outside in the waiting room. Karofsky is already in the room and so is Coach Roz. She can wait to change into something new. There are at least a hundred students who saw Karofsky start it so she’s not that worried that Charlie will get into trouble, but she keeps her eyes focused on the door and doesn’t notice Rachel Berry taking a seat beside her.

“Tina texted me what happened, I was in the—” Rachel trails off realizing that it’s probably not best to let Quinn know that she had been in the gym watching her new boyfriend try out for the basketball team. She knew nothing about the sport but she had cheered for him anyway even though it was highly probable that Finn Hudson sucked at basketball. “Is she going to get in trouble because, I can call my father’s and they can have an ACLU lawyer down here in seconds if you want.”

“Karofsky started it, there are witnesses and probably video,” Quinn said, but she’s not sure Figgin’s is unpredictable at times and he could just decide to punish both of them. “She had another one when he was on her but it wasn’t as bad as the first time, I don’t think. But if I hadn’t stopped her she might have attacked him.”

Rachel nods, “I’ll tell my dad, he’ll mention it to her therapist,” Rachel says quietly.

Quinn says nothing for a moment, “Congrats by the way, Charlie said that Finn finally asked you out,” there is just a hint of bitterness in her voice and Rachel flinches at it.

“I-it was right after sectionals, he called and asked. I said yes of course, we haven’t done anything yet he’s still in a bit of a mood over what happened, but I think that the win on Sectionals was a good thing. I understand that football season didn’t go as well as planned.” Rachel winces a bit, it comes out awkward and she started babbling again. She should feel triumphant that Finn chose her, instead of going back to Quinn but she doesn’t want to rub Quinn’s face in it. “I’m sorry, I shouldn’t have said anything. This must be hard for you, and I know we aren’t friends or anything. Why would we be I sort of stole your boyfriend even if you did cheat on him but Charlie pointed out that he cheated on you and—”

“Breathe man-hands,” Quinn says, she’s slightly amused by the diva’s babbling. That even now when she can still make Rachel nervous even though she’s not the head-cheerleader anymore. She listens as Rachel takes a breath and they sit in quiet, listening to Figgin’s secretary typing away on her computer. Quinn breaks the silence first, “I’d like to. Be friends I mean, I mean my sister is living with you right now. And I don’t really care if you’re dating Finn Hudson.”

Rachel turns to look at Quinn, she hadn’t expected this today, and she wonders if this has to do with Finn, if this is some plot by Quinn to steal Finn back. This was Quinn Fabray, the Quinn Fabray it didn’t matter if she was knocked up she still had that air around her, that sense of the head-bitch in charge. “I-I told you that you didn’t have to be nice to me because of Charlie. She is my friend and I care about her,” Rachel says finally.

Quinn nods, “It’s not about Charlie and she hasn’t really told me to make nice with you. She just mentioned that you of all people would know what unconditional love is. I have to start looking through prospective parents and while Charlie and Puck will be helping. Charlie pointed out that we didn’t know what unconditional love from a parent felt like and you might be able to, I don’t know see it. So there is a selfish component to me asking but—”

Rachel smiles at this and nods, “I understand, and of course I’d be happy to offer my services. Even though I don’t know what I can offer really,” she says, she’s surprised that Charlie mentioned it.
She’s more surprised that Quinn was even asking she had assumed that Quinn would ask someone like Brittany. “Do you have an agency you’re working with?”

Quinn shakes her head, “I still have to decide but with everything that’s been going on, but I planned to do my research this weekend, and call the agency by next Monday.”

“Of course you are welcome to come over, my daddy will be around and he might be able to offer some insight. There are some perfectly good agencies that are open to both gay and straight couples but that’s completely up to you. I know there are a few gay and lesbian families that are looking to adopt in Lima. Not everyone can afford a surrogate like my fathers.”

Quinn hadn’t even begun to think of the possibilities, but she was open to the idea. The Berry’s loved their daughter and truthfully even though Rachel was a bit spoiled she could see her daughter going to a good home. “I’d like that, or at least I’d like to look into that,” Quinn says and Rachel lights up at Quinn agreeing with her.

Rachel is about to say something when Santana enters the room like a hurricane. The Latina turns to look at both Quinn and Rachel who are just sitting there. Santana’s eyes meet Rachel’s for a moment and the Latina narrows her eyes at the diva. Rachel is suddenly sure that Santana is secretly plotting to murder her or something equally as horrible. She’s saved from the look when Brittany finally enters the room. “Hey Brittany,” Rachel says and the dancer smiles at her.

“Don’t mind San, she’s just worried,” Brittany says but both Rachel and Quinn can tell that she feels conflicted about something. Rachel chalks it up to Brittany being upset about Charlie. “Is Charlie okay?”

“You’re going to need to ask her Britt,” Quinn says, because Charlie won’t lie to Brittany, at least it wouldn’t be an outright lie, she’s just not mention it. Though it seemed the dancer was getting better at getting more information out of Charlie.

“Karofsky is a dead man,” Santana said looking at her. “We would have stopped it from happening but we had a meeting with Coach Sylvester.”

Quinn nods dismissively, “He slushied her and then was saying something and insulting her, Charlie took it till he began to say something about me then she kind of just implied that Karofsky was secretly gay. I tried to get her to you know calm down. He said something again and Charlie lost her temper and he attacked her. Puck and Mike had to pull Karofsky off her.”

Santana nodded and added Dave Karofsky to the list she was about to say something when the door to Figgin’s office flung open and Dave Karofsky stormed out muttering under his breath. He turned a hateful glare at the four girls but didn’t say anything to them and just left.

Coach Roz was out a few minutes later, a proud smile on her face, “Hat Rack, Teen Statistic, Salsa Caliente,” She looked at Rachel for a moment, “Jewish Dwarf,” she says after a moment and the diva sputters for a moment but Roz is already gone.

Charlie is the last one out and closes Figgin’s door behind her, “He’s off the hockey team, at least for the year. Roz had a fit and demanded something be done. My ribs are still healing and how I clearly didn’t start the fight and she went on about how outrageous it is for a boy to attack a girl. She mentioned criminal charges and Figgin’s caved immediately.” Coach Washington had just made her virtually untouchable. She doubted she’d be on the receiving end of another slushy.

“Karofsky is off the team,” Santana repeats and takes a good look at Charlie who is still covered in corn syrup and is still wet. She pulls out her phone and immediately texts all the Cheerios. “Well
then he’s no longer got the letterman jacket. Which means that he’s a loser. Which makes today and tomorrow and every day till I say otherwise Slushy Karofsky day.”

Charlie snorts at this, and winces at the sharp pain in her chest. “Did he hurt you,” Brittany asks a frown on her face and reaches to touch Charlie’s arm.

Charlie smiles at the dancer and nods a bit, “I think I just bruised them again, he didn’t get to hit me or anything. Puck stopped him so I think I’ll be fine. I know I’ll be fine I don’t think he like fractured anything again.”

Brittany nods at this and looks at Santana, “And a slushy bath,” she says simply before taking Charlie’s arm and walking the girl to the girls locker room. “You can use the Cheerios locker room, for privacy. Santana will grab your stuff. Then we can totally skip the rest of the day and go to the duck pond.”

“You can’t skip class, education is extremely important and you’ve missed two weeks already—” Rachel begins as Charlie gets led out of the waiting room by the hand. There is the fact that Charlie is her ride home.

Quinn gently puts a hand on Rachel’s arm, she hadn’t seen Brittany that serious in a long time, which meant that she knew. She probably knew that Charlie had another flashback and wanted to take her to a place where she felt safe, and was probably really quiet at the time. “Let them go. I can give you a lift home, that’s what friends do isn’t it.”

Rachel glances back at where Charlie was just standing, but nods, “Maybe I should go and make sure that Charlie’s okay I am her best—”

“Rachel, I understand that she’s your best friend but I don’t think Charlie would appreciate you looking over her shoulder right now,” Quinn says firmly. She had seen the smirk on Santana’s face, and while she doubts that anything will happen in the Cheerio’s locker room not while Charlie is still raw emotionally but she knows that Brittany wants to take care of her.

Rachel looks about to protest but her eyes widen and she looks scandalized for a moment. “They’re going to—? In the—?”

“No. No they aren’t going to do it in the Cheerios locker room. Brittany just wants to take care of Charlie and it is better that it’s just Brittany. Santana will probably just stand outside the Cheerios’ locker room and keep the Cheerios’ out. It’s more private and it’ll allow Charlie to unwind without have to worry about someone trying to like you know take a peek. So just let Brittany take care of her for a bit.”

Rachel nods she had noticed that Charlie was more relaxed around Brittany and she was a high-stress person in these types of situations. She casts one last look at the door and nods, “At least let me help you then. You’re covered in slushy as well,” she says. Quinn raises a brow at this, she plans to hit the showers really quick and get changed. Rachel flushes, “Well keep you company at the very least, it’s what friends do. I promise I won’t look.”

Quinn just rolls her eyes, “Fine, but if you start talking about Barbra Streisand, I’m totally not driving you home.”

Rachel gasps at this slightly offended, “I don’t talk about Barbra Streisand all the time,” she protests as she follows Quinn.

“I think, I had another one.” Charlie says as she sits on the ground watching the ducks at the duck
pond. She was leaning against the park bench between Santana and Brittany who were sitting on it. They’d been there for at least an hour, having left the school soon after Charlie had finished showering and putting on some clean clothes. They had stopped at a gas station on the way to pick up some bread at Brittany’s insistence before they had arrived at the pond.

Brittany had been the one to feed the ducks and now the bread was all gone and the three of them were just sitting in relative silence just watching the ducks paddle along and quack at each other. The whole thing is rather relaxing.

“You think?” Santana prompts gently, it’s an odd thing for the Latina and Charlie shrugs.

“I honestly can’t remember, all I remember is he’s on top of me and then, I don’t really know what happens between that time and when Quinn’s leading me out of the lunch room,” Charlie says she had promised to be honest to Brittany to not be afraid to talk. So she talks because she knows they want to know, but they don’t want to ask.

Brittany rests a hand on Charlie’s shoulder but the soccer player doesn’t look at her as she pulls her knees into her chest tightly. “Were you scared?” she asks gently.

“Not of Karofsky,” Charlie admits. She wasn’t scared of Karofsky, but him getting on top of her, with all that anger while trying to hit her. That had sent her on a tail spin and suddenly she was right back in that kitchen, with Russell on top of her. She wasn’t really scared of Finn Hudson or Azimio Adams either.

It’s easier to talk to Brittany and Santana. Rachel, while Charlie does really like her as a person would try and relate but she can’t or she’d have all these theories because she did some research and it doesn’t help, it’s a kind gesture but she doesn’t want to know about what the research says and she doesn’t want to have to deal with big words and Rachel talking a mile a minute. Rachel doesn’t give her time to sort through it all, and she really hates talking about herself.

Quinn worries and is trying to take on the protector role now, it doesn’t sit right with Charlie because Quinn was never her protector. Quinn had ignored the problem just like Judy had, pretended that it didn’t exist. Walked out when she knew that Charlie was going to get beaten, but Charlie didn’t blame her. She hadn’t wanted or needed Quinn to take that position back then, she certainly didn’t need it now. It doesn’t help matters that they are both Fabray’s. They don’t talk about things like this, and they never have before. It shouldn’t matter that Russell did what he did, she just wants Quinn to go back to pretending that everything is okay, because they are.

They are actually okay. She doesn’t have to go back to that house ever again. According to the Berry’s who are paying very close attention to the case, things are going well on that front and they are bringing more charges against him, and getting a bit creative with the law. So things were finally looking up, so when Charlie said that things were fine.

Santana and Brittany rarely ever pried, they just kind of understood that she’d talk about it when she wanted to. Brittany didn’t judge her, and she knew she could tell the girl anything. That didn’t mean that she did she had certainly kept things away from Brittany before, she still kept secrets from everyone. But she knew she could tell Brittany and the girl wouldn’t freak out on her.

Santana did judge, and she said vicious words to everyone. She pointed out people’s flaws with ruthless precision and knew exactly where to hurt a person. People were scared of her, afraid to catch her ire which really wasn’t all that difficult. Brittany was the exception and so was Charlie. Santana had never said anything mean to her, she had threatened to kick her ass several times. But Charlie never really put much stock in that threat. After all she was sitting there with Charlie and Brittany feeding the ducks. And with Santana around Charlie didn’t feel like she had to protect
everyone around her, she felt like she could share the load.

It was just different with them.

“Well I’m sure that by now the school will realize that you’re protected, and you’re still untouchable,” Santana says firmly. Fuck Karofsky. She wonders briefly if she can get him thrown in the dumpsters every day before school. It’s where he belonged.

“I’m not afraid of Karofsky, even when he was yelling at me I wasn’t scared. It’s just that I see him sometimes and I can smell him, and I can hear him and everything sort of goes dim and all I can see is him. I saw him today, I could smell him, and I just panicked,” Charlie explains slowly.

“You didn’t hurt anyone,” Brittany says quietly trying to comfort her.

“This time. I nearly hurt L—Quinn last time, but I think I wanted to hurt him. Like really hurt him,” Charlie says as she looks at her hand, the one that held the knife.

“But you didn’t and you haven’t,” Brittany repeats.

“Sometimes when I get really pissed, it feels like I’m taken over by something else. I call her Snix. It’s sort of like the incredible Hulk. You really can’t blame me for anything that Snix does,” Santana says and Charlie smiles at the reference. Santana relaxes at this, “But he’s a good guy right?”

“He is, just misunderstood,” Charlie answers.

“God are all you Fabray’s secret nerds,” Santana playfully groans.

“Don’t be silly San. It’s not a secret.” Brittany teases. She had seen Charlie’s room, the girl had Iron-Man sheets. It was the most obvious thing in the world.

Charlie just smiles, “I thought I was being subtle about it.”

“Subtle? You had on Spiderman boxers today,” Santana points out.

“They looked hot didn’t they San?” Brittany adds and Charlie flushes causing Brittany to snicker, it really was easy to wind Charlie up.

“They did,” Santana agrees as she stretches a bit, “Shame that Quinn still has that stick up her ass about us.”

There is quiet for a moment as all three girl’s go back to watching the ducks. Charlie is the one that speaks up again. “She said we could.”

Quinn looked at the pile of pamphlets and booklets that she and Rachel had gone through. She had expected Charlie to be at home by the time school ended. Clearly that wasn’t the case and she had decided to stay and keep the diva company as she waited for her sister. Somehow they had managed to start looking at all the adoption pamphlets together.

“I’ve narrowed it down to two possible agencies that seem to have generally good reviews as well as many different prospective parents. And most importantly there are a lot of prospective who are open to an open adoption which is very important. I know how much you and Puck want to be a part of her life,” Rachel says and she hands Quinn two large booklets. “I suggest that you get in touch with both for more information of course before making a final decision as well as running it
by Puck and Charlie if you wish. Once they start sending you information on prospective parents I will of course be willing to offer you my assistance.”

Quinn takes the booklets, it had been the two that she had finally narrowed it down to as well, “Thanks Rachel,” she said.

Rachel smiles and begins to clean up the mess that they made on her bed, “I can understand why you’re interested in keeping in contact with your kid. Even though my parents chose a surrogate, I still wonder you know about my mother. Don’t get me wrong I love my fathers they are my fathers, but sometimes a little girl wants her mother. You know to give me advice on things that my fathers despite their efforts don’t understand. I want to know who she is, what she’s like. If she misses me. It might not be what your daughter goes through, but at least she’ll know who you and Puck are. She’ll know that her birth parents loved her enough to want her to have the best chance to succeed.”

Quinn looks at Rachel for a moment, and nods. Charlie was right to suggest Rachel for the job, the diva was giving her plenty of things to think about. “I thought about raising her, with Puck. But we aren’t ready to raise children yet. I want to be selfish though sometimes, I know that I’ll have lots of help. Charlie would definitely take to being an aunt, and I would have Puck and the Lopez’s and the Pierce’s and—”

“You’d have me, and I’m sure my fathers would be more than happy to help as well. So why don’t you? You have more than enough love and support around you to get the job done. You know the saying. It takes a village,” Rachel interrupted. She smiled though and reached over to pat Quinn’s hand trying to comfort her.

Quinn lets out a bitter laugh, there are so many reasons why she can’t keep her child, no matter how much she wants to try. “My father and mother are currently locked away in prison. There is going to be a trial where I’m sure all the family secrets will come out and be made public. I don’t even know where Frannie, but I doubt she’ll help me. Charlie is just recently out of the hospital and she has flashbacks which could end up violently. Besides which I shouldn’t have to rely on everyone else to raise a child, and I’m already busy relying on people for everything else.” She didn’t have a home, she didn’t have any money or a job, and she still didn’t have her high school diploma. She couldn’t wait the five years that it would take to get her hands on her trust fund.

“Frannie?” Rachel prompts, she doesn’t know who that is.

Quinn raises a brow, “Our other sister?” When Rachel’s eyes widen it clicks and Quinn sighs, “She didn’t tell you about Frannie did she?”

Rachel doesn’t know whether to feel torn about being a terrible best friend or be annoyed at Charlie for keeping more things from her. “No, I assure you that she did not. I am coming to find that she doesn’t really like sharing as much as I do.”

“Frannie is our older sister, seven years older. They aren’t close. I think Charlie might actually hate Frannie as much as she hates our father. It’s an out of sight out of mind thing with her, she doesn’t see Frannie and Frannie doesn’t exist. She tormented us, mostly me and then when we found out, she focused on Charlie.” Quinn explains.

“So you’re the only one that Charlie doesn’t hate?” Rachel asks.

Quinn doesn’t answer because she doesn’t know how her sister feels about their mother. They were never really close to begin with, “Charlie is difficult to crack, but if she has a soft spot for you, then it’s remarkably easy to bend her to your will. If I were you I’d just give her an hour long lecture on
the importance of best friends telling each other things and hand her a best friend questionnaire. That should fill in all the gaps that you need.”

Rachel wonders if the same applies to Quinn, she had personally never imagined that Quinn Fabray of all people would be in her room, and they’d be having a rather heart-felt conversation. Or that Quinn Fabray would ever offer to be her friend. Or even that Quinn Fabray would ask for her help to find a healthy household for her child. She’s still a bit suspicious about that, like it might just be some long practical joke. This was the person who basically wrote mean comments on her myspace page and drew rather pornographic pictures of her on the walls of the girl’s bathroom stall. So her caution was a bit well placed. “Does that mean you as well? If we’re going to be friends that is.”

“You want to give me a friendship questionnaire?” Quinn asks there may be a confused look on her face but her voice is filled with amusement.

“I—well if you want. But that’s not what I meant. I mean you’re Quinn Fabray, I just don’t get why you’d want to be friends with me,” Rachel says and winces at how insecure that sounded.

Quinn thinks about the answer for a moment, “Because apart us fighting over the same boy, you’ve been extremely kind to me and you didn’t have to be. Especially since I didn’t deserve it. I’ve been a bitch to you and I guess I’m trying to make up for it now.”

Rachel is about to respond when the moment is ruined when Charlie knocks on the open door and walks in carrying two bags. “I picked up some food,” she announces and drops a bag containing a vegan burger and some fries on Rachel’s lap and hands the other to Quinn. “Vegan one for you, bacon double cheeseburger with extra bacon for you.”

Rachel’s nose crinkles in disgust as she sees the pleased look on Quinn’s face. “What’s with you Fabray’s and bacon? The amount of grease will probably clog your arteries and you’ll have a heart attack at age thirty because you have high cholesterol.”

Both twins give her an amused look before Quinn unwraps the burger and bites into it letting out a groan, she’d been craving bacon all day. “It will be incredibly worth it,” she says as the taste of bacon hits her taste buds.
“You did this,” Rachel snaps as she storms up to the twins who are currently sitting in the Quad. Quinn is reading and Charlie is currently laying down on the bench listening to some music and moving her head in time to the music.

It isn’t until Rachel reaches the foot of the bench do both Fabray’s turn to look at her, both with a perfectly raised eyebrow. Rachel takes a step back immediately, the twin looks were rather unnerving, especially since they had done it in unison. She wonders if twin telepathy is a real thing for fraternal twins or if it’s simply for identical ones.

“What did we do?” Charlie asks as she pulls out her headphones and Quinn closes the book she’s reading.

“Finn broke up with me!” Rachel says and almost immediately Charlie puts her headphones back in causing Rachel to stomp her feet some best friend she is.

“Was it the calendar?” Quinn asks seriously and Charlie snorts at this comment but takes out her headphones again and sits up. They had both told Rachel not to do it, but the girl had been adamant.

“I really don’t see how this has anything to do with us,” Charlie points out before tilting her head at her sister. “This isn’t like the start of another war over Finn Hudson is it?”

Quinn’s face twists into a grimace but she flicks her eyes towards Rachel and she wonders if that’s what the girl believes to be true. It was one step forward and three steps back in the already shaky friendship that Quinn was trying to forge with Rachel Berry. “No. I had nothing to do with this, and even if he asked me out. I would say no.”

Charlie seems to believe her and turns to Rachel, “So what did we do? And why does this have anything to do with us? I clearly remember telling you both that Finn was an idiot, so when he does something idiotic and foolish none of this should come as a surprise.”

“Because he’s taking Santana and Brittany out to Breadstix tonight and he said something about his inner rock-star. And how he can’t commit to just one girl.” Rachel says angrily and Quinn looks at her sister who simply shrugs. “Don’t tell me neither of you knew about this,” she points to Quinn, “You live with her and she’s your best friend and you-” she pointing at Charlie now, “I see the way she looks at you and how you look back at her.”

Quinn leans into Charlie and mumbles into her ear, “Is she always this neurotic?” she asks.

“This is a good day,” Charlie responds just as quietly as they pull apart.

“You don’t even look angry that Finn is out with Santana and Brittany,” Rachel said as if that proved anything.

Quinn blinks and looks over at Charlie who seems the least perturbed by this news, and realizes that Rachel may have a point. Charlie notices and rolls her eyes, “Two things. One. I’m not dating either of them so they are free to date and sleep with whoever they want.” Quinn immediately noted the slight irritation in Charlie’s voice, and wanted to call bullshit on that one. “Two. Finn Hudson doesn’t even know what to do with one girl, what does he hope to accomplish with two girls?”
Quinn’s eyes flick back to Rachel, while it’s true they had suspected that Santana was plotting some form of revenge against Rachel neither one of them thought that this would be it. “We didn’t have anything to do with it.”

Rachel deflated a bit at this she had been so sure of herself that the twins must have been involved somehow, even though it really wasn’t Charlie’s style to get involved and Quinn had actually been a decent friend. “Well can’t either one of you, tell them not to?”

Quinn actually laughed at this while Charlie snorted again, “The only person who can control Santana is Brittany and it seems that Santana got her to go along with it,” Quinn explained. “I’m not the head cheerleader anymore, I can’t make them do anything.”

Rachel winced at this, before turning on Charlie, “Well you have that causal relationship with them —”

“I haven’t had sex with either of them in nearly a year,” Charlie interrupts with a simple shrug. Quinn gives her a look and she simply shrugs again.

“Well you did enjoy it with them, and maybe that could be enough to convince them to lay off?” Rachel asks nervously, there had to be something that she could do.

Quinn stares at Rachel incredulously, “Please don’t tell me you’re suggesting that my sister should attempt to sleep with both Santana and Brittany to distract them so that you can have Finn all to yourself.”

“I’m not trying to pimp her out,” Rachel protests immediately, looking horrified at the thought. “It’s not pimping her out if she actually wants to do something.”

“Don’t you think that if she wanted to, she’d be more concerned that they’re going out with Finn Hudson?” Quinn points out.

“Well as her best friend I would find it incredibly negligent to not help her find her leading lady, and if this so happens to let me land my leading man, then it’s a win-win situation for all parties involved. It’s not like I’m asking her to date Karofsky, Charlie has already expressed interest and has a past history.”

“Do you hear yourself right now?” Quinn asks Rachel, slightly stunned at the diva’s attempt to justify what she just said.

Charlie who had been looking back and forth between the two girls as they discussed her as if she wasn’t there finally decided to intervene. “Look Rachel, I get it. You’ve had this obsessive crush on Finn for however long because he’s nice to you, he treats you slightly better than most other guys at this school. But I mean he dumped you after three days. Not for someone who he is madly in love with but for two people I know for a fact share my sentiments on Finn. We all know that this relationship won’t last more than five minutes so as flattering as it is for you to think that my dick is magic, even I can’t convince Santana to back off. Nor do I really want to. Even though we all know she’s probably doing this to screw with you, she’s doing you a favor.”

“It’s not this obsessive crush. Stop dismissing my feelings. I know you think that I’m silly for going after the quarterback, I don’t have the popularity that either of you have or in Quinn’s case had. But I know who he is and I accept him for all of this faults and all. I do love him, I’m in love with Finn Hudson.”

Charlie and Quinn exchanged looks and seemed to have a silent debate, before Quinn looked at
her, “Charlie’s right about one thing the relationship won’t last long. You’re not going to have to wait a year, so instead of starting a war with Santana over Finn, which will probably just make her hold on tighter it’s just best to let go for now. If Finn really wants you it’s about time that you started making him work for it. Maybe he’ll learn to appreciate you,” Quinn offers and Charlie grunts at the last part. Quinn quickly elbows her sister in the arm.

“Don’t you glee kids just know sing your feelings to each other? Usually at the most inappropriate times?” Charlie asks and Quinn shoots her a sharp look and Rachel turns to her. “Why don’t you just sing how you’re feeling? Or something ridiculous because clearly talking about your problems is clearly out of the question.”

“Pot. Kettle.” Quinn says sarcastically and Charlie responds to this by sticking out her tongue at Quinn.

Rachel blinks and mulls over what Charlie just said, she can tell that her best friend is just teasing. “I actually have the perfect song for such an occasion and it matches with Mr. Schue’s lesson plan for the week. Despite the fact that I believe you were mocking me, you really should try it. The singing ones emotion, it’s a rather cathartic, it might help you express some things you have trouble putting in words. Once again I offer you the chance to join glee club. Your popularity is holding and after the Karofsky incident and the subsequent various mas slushying you are untouchable. I keep telling you that you have a lovely contralto voice, and you’re not a terrible singer by any means. You actually have pretty good breath control and I can certainly give you lessons to improve your voice."

Charlie shakes her head, “I still have fractured ribs, and I’m not even cleared for light cardio yet. Not to mention if I join another club right now Coach Roz will murder me, because I’m not putting all my focus on getting better and getting back into condition.”

Rachel pouts for a moment but nods, as far as Charlie’s usual excuses go on not joining the glee club this one is considerably more legitimate. It doesn’t help that regionals are a few weeks before the state championships. “Well once we crush Vocal Adrenaline at regionals you won’t have an excuse next year,” she says confidently before leaving to go to the auditorium.

The twins watch her go and Quinn finally turns to Charlie, “You really want to crash that date don’t you?” there is a teasing tone in her voice.

“What is it about Finn Freaking Hudson that I’m missing?” Charlie bitches loudly letting the annoyance take over. Of course she wants to go crash that date, she also wants to kick Hudson in the face. “It can’t be because he’s the quarterback they won one game. One game. He isn’t going to get a division one football scholarship. It’s certainly not because he’s intelligent, he has the emotional depth of a kiddy pool. What’s there to understand and love? Get a god damn puppy, it’ll probably be more loyal, probably smarter as well.”

Quinn pats Charlie’s arm in comfort, and lets her bitch about her hatred of Finn Hudson till she tires herself out. Even though it hasn’t even yet been a week since she and Finn broke up, “At least I was never that bad,” Quinn says and Charlie stops mid-rant and looks at her sister.

“You lied to him and told him that the baby was his,” Charlie points out dryly. She pauses for a moment and when Quinn flushes because the words have finally sunk in, Charlie continues on with her rant. “My new working theory is that his dick is magical or he has this mutant power kind of like Spider-woman, where he secretes pheromones and that’s the reason why every girl wants him.”

Quinn just rolls her eyes and keeps patting Charlie on the arm.
Quinn hated Jesse St. James. With nearly the passion that Charlie hated Finn Hudson. There was just something about him which simply didn’t sit right with her. It was probably his fakeness. If there was something that Quinn knew anything about it was being fake. “I know you see it too,” Quinn whispered to Charlie as she watched the star of Vocal Adrenaline sing with Rachel.

Charlie just looked wholly unimpressed by the whole charade, “Does glee club make you incapable of just talking stuff out? Will I break out into song at dance in the most inappropriate of places? It’s like living in High-School Musical,” she deadpanned. It was official Show-Choir was most definitely a cult, she’d be avoiding the glee club for as long as she could.

Quinn ignored her sister, “He’s the star of Vocal Adrenaline, Carmel Highs glee club. You know they’re our rivals. What if he’s only using her to like scope out the competition? They’ve won nationals like three years in a row.” Carmel high was known for playing a bit fast and loose with the idea of good sportsmanship. “What if they’re trying to poach her?” They had on several occasions attempted to recruit Charlie for their soccer team.

Charlie still seemed unimpressed by the whole thing, “Well that might have been where it started, but they’re like having sex with their eyes right now. What’s the word Santana uses—oh right eye-fucking. That’s what they’re doing right now, and probably like the musical vocal equivalent of that,”

Quinn stared at her sister for a moment, she really needed to stop spending so much time around Santana. “What’s your point?”

Charlie shrugs, “You make it sound like that a decent looking guy who isn’t a complete idiot needs to have an ulterior motive for dating Rachel. Rachel is hot, we saw that a few weeks ago. You stared longer than was necessary, and you also know that under her abrasive and rather dramatic personality is someone who is kind and has a lot of love, you know kind of like Brittany.” Charlie says tilting her head a bit. If only the diva could learn to just relax and let it happen naturally instead of being neurotic about it. Or even obsessive with her love. She tilts her head back to Jesse and Rachel. “There is some chemistry there, it might just be possible that he likes someone that can challenge him vocally.”

Quinn gives her sister a look disbelief, “The very first day you met Finn Hudson you basically took me aside and told me that he was an idiot and that I could do so much better.”

“There was no chemistry between you and Finn. I noticed that from day one, and you weren’t challenged by him. Besides Finn has this weird vacant look on his baby face, and he was incredibly slow on the uptake,” Charlie replied defensively.

“And Jesse St. James looks like a douche-bag and is probably a giant fake asshole, and he’ll probably screw Rachel over and in the process hurt the New Directions, she is our best singer,” Quinn said ignoring the jab at Finn Hudson.

Charlie looked over at Quinn for a moment studying her sister before turning back to Rachel and Jesse who were walking over to them and she nudged Quinn, and almost immediately the two of them slipped smiles onto their faces. Charlie’s her trademark crooked grin, while Quinn had a tight-lipped smile on her face.

“Charlie Fabray right?” Jesse said smoothly introducing himself with an extended hand. Everyone at Carmel knew who Charlie was, she was a persona non grata at their school. Carmel High prided themselves on having winning teams. They had several winning teams, one of which included the girls’ soccer team until last year. He had heard that she’d turned down an offer from Carmel High.
during her freshman year instead choosing to stay at McKinley. “Jesse St. James, Captain of Vocal Adrenaline.”

Charlie looked at the offered hand unimpressed for a moment before finally taking it and shaking it. It was after all show-choir which she was rapidly suspecting was a cult. “Nice to meet you,” her tone was even and she looked at him.

Jesse turned to Quinn Fabray who had been glaring at him, he glanced down at her noting that she was pregnant and extended his hand as well. “Then you must be the twin, Quinn Fabray.”

There was something in his tone that Quinn caught and she bristled under, Charlie didn’t immediately get defensive and Rachel was busy shooting him those yearning looks that she used to send Finn Hudson. But Quinn was a Fabray and she took his hand in hers and gave it a quick shake. His hand was limp in hers but she had noticed that he had given Charlie a rather firm handshake. Quinn Fabray decided then and there that she really hated Jesse St. James. “It’s a pleasure,” she said after a moment.

Jesse looked over at Rachel, “I’ve got to get back to rehearsals. Are we still on for Friday?” he asks Rachel.

“Yes, of course,” Rachel responds immediately and he flashes her one last smile before he pulls away from the three of them, waving goodbye to Rachel once he reaches the door.

Rachel was all but vibrating with excitement, “Did you know he used to give impromptu performances to the homeless in his way to give back?”

Quinn swallowed her mini-rant on Jesse. Rachel looked really excited that she had been asked out. “How charming,” she said dryly but Rachel ignored the tone. The homeless didn’t really need to be sung to, they needed food and quite possibly shelter, and money.

Charlie listened as Rachel rambled on about him for a good five minutes, keeping that smile on her face till Rachel finally went to go look for some more sheet music. “Well,” she began slowly. “You were right he’s an asshole,” she said agreeing with Quinn.

Quinn let out a sigh of relief, at least Charlie would try and talk some sense into Rachel about this. “So you’ll talk to Rachel about why this isn’t a good idea?”

“Yes, Rachel isn’t going to defect to Vocal Adrenaline and she’s ever the professional. So even if he breaks her heart she’s only going to use it as fuel and keep moving forward,” Charlie points out. “So you’re going to let it go, because the more someone tells Rachel she can’t do something or it’s a terrible idea the more she thinks it’s a brilliant idea. Case in point Finn. Besides he might actually treat her better than Finn Hudson.”

“You’re just biased because you really hate Finn Hudson,” Quinn mutters to her sister.

“Damn straight I do,” Charlie says openly admitting her bias, but she’s chalking this relationship up to being another one of Rachel’s learning experiences. “But let it go, who knows this might just be a two week romance.”

Quinn Fabray didn’t let it go, she couldn’t. She didn’t even understand why she really cared, so she chalked it up to being cautious. Jesse was the lead of Vocal Adrenaline and everyone knew they didn’t play nice. There was no way that he wasn’t just using her to discard her later, after screwing over the New Directions. Charlie certainly wasn’t going to talk some sense into Rachel, and there was no way that Rachel would appreciate any of her advice. Not on this issue anyway, their
friendship was still to new and Rachel was still suspicious of her motives thinking that Quinn was going to try and go after Finn again.

Which left Quinn with very little options, especially after Rachel turned down Finn Hudson after his failure of a date with Santana and Brittany. Rachel had even thanked the two of them much to Santana’s annoyance, for helping her see that Finn didn’t truly appreciate her. So she decided to use everything she learned under the tutelage of Sue Sylvester, and informed Kurt and Mercedes about Rachel’s new romance.

So here she was sitting with her twin and Santana and Brittany, tuning the conversation out because Rachel was going on about Jesse St. James. Suddenly realizing that this was probably how Charlie felt when she had talked about Finn non-stop. She glanced at her sister, who was currently still pretending that she didn’t care that Santana and Brittany had been on a date with her nemesis. Though it probably helped that she was sitting in between them and Brittany had a hand on her arm, and Santana was sitting relatively close to her. Quinn was saved of having to take a further look into that relationship when Mercedes, Kurt, Tina and Artie walked towards their table.

“Hey, guys,” Rachel says brightly looking up at them, “Do you want to sit with us?” There is more than enough room and perhaps with a bit of pushing and getting Charlie used to the glee club she might feel inclined to join. She’s slightly surprised that Santana and Brittany haven’t asked her to join yet.

“Cut the butter, Benedict Arnold. We heard about your new boyfriend,” Kurt snaps as they reach the table. There is an irritated look on all their faces as they stare at the diva.

Charlie shoots a suspicious look at her sister, who merely shrugs in response. They were supposed to let this fizzle out on its own. Clearly Quinn had thought it best to interfere, they hadn’t even gone out on a date yet.

“Look, Rachel, we’re all happy that you’re happy, but we’ve worked too hard in Glee Club to let you throw it all away on a relationship that might not even be real,” Mercedes says trying to be diplomatic, she turns to Charlie, “How would you take it if one of your teammates was dating someone on the Carmel High team? Or one of the Cheerios?”

“If it didn’t affect their play, I really wouldn’t care,” Charlie responds easily. “Coach Roz on the other hand,” Charlie shrugs, there might be some issues there but who knew with what Coach Washington would do in that given situation, she did talk a lot about loyalty.

“Coach Sylvester would probably kick them off the team,” Santana adds. “Carmel High isn’t exactly known to play fair. There is a reason we’re rivals Hobbit.”

“I thought that was because they beat us at everything, except cheerleading and now soccer,” Brittany says and Santana nods.

Quinn takes this time to finally add her two cents, “You are our one of our best singers, and he might just be playing you in an attempt to mess with you,” she says keeping her voice calm as the glee club tries to talk Rachel out of it.

“Why? Cause he’s in Vocal Adrenaline?” Rachel says turning to Quinn a frown on her face.

“Their motto is “aut neca aut necatus eris,” which loosely translates to ”murder or be murdered.” Kurt says.

“It’s actually kill or be killed,” Charlie corrected, and everyone turned to her. “I taught myself
Latin in Spanish class because Mr. Schue is a horrid Spanish teacher,” she says dryly and Santana
laughs at this and nods. “As ruthless as show choir is, I don’t think Jesse St. James is going to kill
Rachel.”

Tina scoffed, “They give their dancers human growth hormone. I even hear that the server at
Breadstix is twenty-four and they’ve failed him several times, just because he can nail the
legendary triple flip. They will get what they want.”

Mercedes nodded she had heard that rumor as well she says still trying to keep things diplomatic,
“Look, we’re not saying the dude is playing you —“

“He’s playing you,” Kurt interrupts.

Mercedes shoots him a look, and he settles down, “We just think that until regionals are over, we
can’t risk the possibility that he is.”

“None of us wanna go through what happened at sectionals again.” Tina adds still trying to appeal
to Rachel’s better nature.

“Okay, look. Jesse and I might not be true love, but what if we are?” Rachel says looking at the
group. “I know who I am. And how many chances at this am I gonna get?” she adds the last part
and Charlie sighs.

“You’re hot,” Brittany says and Charlie and Santana look at her in surprise. “I’d do you.”

Quinn smiles, “What Brittany is trying to say is that I’m sure that there are plenty of people who
would find you attractive even with your abrasive personality. They just need to get to know you,”
Quinn says gently.

Both Mercedes and Kurt look at each other, neither of them believe that for a second, “If you don’t
break up with him, you’re out,” Kurt says with finality.

“But you can’t kick me out!” Rachel protested. “I am your best singer.”

“But we can all quit if Mr. Schue doesn’t.” Artie said crossing his arms over his chest.

“Well, good luck winning without her. It’s like Roz trying to win the state championships without
me. You don’t bench your star player for the final game, especially when you’re against a stronger
opponent,” Charlie says tapping her fingers on the table. “Besides what do you plan to do if you all
quit? You just have enough members as is to compete. Not to mention there isn’t a huge line up of
people willing to join the glee club.”

“Everyone is replaceable, even you,” Kurt snips at Charlie. He had heard the rumors the soccer
captain hadn’t shown up for practice for weeks.

“Please, no one at this school can do what she does on the soccer field. Have you seen her play?
It’s like poetry.” Santana says coming to Charlie’s defense. Not that she needed to, McKinley
didn’t have another player with Charlie’s caliber, and they didn’t have the money to recruit like
Carmel did.

“I’m not easily replaceable, and neither is Rachel. Which brings us back to the original problem,
glee club is by far the least popular club at McKinley. So who are you going to get to replace her
with?” Charlie asks. It wasn’t like the soccer team or the Cheerios, where they had to cut quite a
few players until they had the very best that McKinley had to offer. The New Directions didn’t
have that luxury, they barely had the twelve members required to compete, and an injury or
anything of the sort would leave them in a precarious position. It was a stupid threat and Rachel really just needed to call their bluff. It’s what Quinn would have done, it’s what Charlie would have done. It’s what any good leader would have done.

Rachel doesn’t and instead looks at Mercedes and Kurt and the rest of the group with a hurt expression. She finally found someone who respected her talent and seemed to like her despite her personality flaws. “How could you do this to me?” She asked finally her tone indicating the betrayal she felt. She thought that they would be happy for her. That they’d trust her, as their captain to not betray their confidence.

Mercedes rolls her eyes, of course it was all about Rachel. “How could you do this to us? We’re a team, and all you’ve ever wanted was for us to be great, and be a part of something special. Now, is that still true or not?” Mercedes asks, demanding an answer.

“So your solution is to kick off the person who save your collective asses. Saying that I’m the best player on the soccer team isn’t me being arrogant it’s me being factually correct. While I’m sure my team could in theory win without me it’d be a lot more difficult,” Charlie says calmly.

“You know as well as I do that Rachel can’t keep secret’s, she spilled the beans to Finn about Quinn’s baby,” Mercedes corrected, “And we all know that she gets boy crazy. We can’t risk it.”

Quinn grimaced, while it was scarily accurate, it wasn’t exactly true to say that Rachel couldn’t keep a secret at all. “She kept Charlie’s secret safe for a year and a half until she was ready to tell people. We don’t even have a set-list and Rachel wants to win, just like the rest of us. She knows how important this is, and besides you trusted Santana, Brittany and myself and we all know that Sue is actively trying to tear the glee club apart so she can get her funding back. As for the Finn situation, I’ve forgiven her for it. He needed to know, she did me a favor by doing something I was too scared to do.”

Quinn coming to the defense of Rachel managed to stun the rest of the glee club into silence. The two of them hated each other. Kurt looked between the two of them, Rachel was giving Quinn a grateful look and the ex-Cheerio looked torn on the issue. He was surprised that he hadn’t noticed the growing familiarity between the two of them. “When did you two get so close?” he asked looking between them. He still didn’t understand what Charlie saw in Rachel, she was rather obnoxious most of the time, but the soccer player seemed to have her back.

This time it was Santana who came to Rachel’s defense, “So they’re friends now, who cares? If the hobbit wants to get her mack on with this Jesse St. Jackass, then let her get her mack on. Who knows she might be able to use her special little hobbit powers and her freakishly short skirts to get some information that we can use.” The entire argument was completely ridiculous in her opinion. Sure Rachel was obnoxious and Santana really wanted to go all Lima Heights on her from time to time, but Quinn did have a point. Rachel wanted to win just as much as anyone else in the club.

A confused look spread across Brittany’s face, “I thought it was dwarves that had special powers. Like they live under rainbows and have the pot of gold.”

“That’s a leprechaun,” Santana corrected and smiled at Brittany.

Kurt ignored Brittany and Santana instead choosing to focus on Rachel Berry, who was rather upset by the turn of events. He didn’t really care, “No.” He said firmly, “She breaks up with him or we all quit. You won’t be able to win if you don’t have enough members.”

This argument wasn’t going anywhere, and while she was grateful to the twins and Santana for coming to her defense the team came first. It definitely sucked that she didn’t have their
confidence, and if they didn’t believe that she could be a professional then the diva doubted that they truly had confidence in her leadership abilities. “After careful consideration, I think that it would be best if I at least tabled the relationship with Jesse, until after regionals,” she said finally.

“Thank goodness you’ve seen reason,” Kurt says.

“Yeah Rachel, you’ll see it’s for the good of the team,” Mercedes says with a smile. Maybe she could go back to being obsessed over Finn Hudson. At least then things would be better for everyone that way.

Watching Rachel attempt to sneak back into her own house well after midnight on Friday is the highlight of Charlie’s week. It is her house after all, and Rachel attempting to be a ninja is rather ridiculous, especially since Hiram and Leroy aren’t even around. “I’m going to assume that the date went well?” Charlie asks from where she’s sitting in the dark.

Rachel jumps in the air and wheels around, she swallows nervously and looks at her best friend, there is no judgment on Charlie’s face, “After thinking about it, I’ve decided that the best thing to do is to continue my relationship with Jesse, in secret of course. You can’t tell anyone—not even Brittany.”

Charlie’s hazel eye flicked over Rachel for a moment. Charlie was hardly the person to give a lecture on the importance of telling the truth, and trusting in your teammates. She was still slightly irritated that Quinn had tried to manipulate the situation when Charlie had specifically said to leave it alone. Creating a Romeo and Juliet situation for a relationship that probably would have only lasted a few weeks without any interference seemed like way to much drama once again. Though maybe it was what was needed to help Rachel move on from Finn Hudson. It didn’t matter if Charlie had gotten the same vibe that her twin had. But from the glow on Rachel’s face, the date had been spectacular. “I won’t tell anyone,” Charlie said after a minute.

There was a flash of relief that crossed Rachel’s face, “Thank you, I understand that it may be selfish of me to pursue this relationship but, I really do like Jesse.” Rachel turned to head back upstairs, she wouldn’t be getting her eight hours of sleep but she couldn’t let her morning routine suffer.

“Where you going?” Charlie asks and Rachel turns back to her, a confused look on her face.

“To bed, getting my eight hours isn’t going to happen tonight but that doesn’t mean my morning routine should be compromised as well. Why do you ask?”

Charlie was quiet, Quinn had mentioned that she wasn’t really being a good best friend, and since it wasn’t Finn Hudson she actually did want to know how the night went. “As your—I want to know how it went. Your date, you look happy.”

Rachel grinned at this and took a seat on the couch beside Charlie. Charlie had shown very little interest in her love life when she was into Finn, then again she had never really been on a date before. “The date was amazing!” She gushed before excitedly continuing “We talked about Broadway productions. His dreams after school, and I told him about my dreams of playing in Funny Girl as Fanny Brice. He actually listened to me, and he didn’t think that I talked too much or my personality was abrasive. He knew that I was vegan, and we had a picnic on the Vocal Adrenaline stage and then we danced and sang show tunes. He’s just as dramatic as I am, and he’s funny and sweet.”
Charlie relaxed, realizing that she had made the right decision in not discouraging this romance. It seemed at least on the outset that he was treating Rachel right, or at least in a way that was positive. Though she really hoped that Rachel really would stop jumping into relationships just because that person was nice to her. She wasn’t going to tell anyone about it mostly because the ensuing drama wouldn’t be worth it, and she still couldn’t figure out Quinn’s angle in getting the glee club involved, she had thought that Lucy was past playing these games. “Sounds like you had fun,” Charlie says after Rachel finally finishes gushing over her date.

“I know he is certainly in the running for my leading man,” Rachel informs her. Perhaps that was the issue with Finn she just needed someone older than her and a bit more mature. Jesse didn’t think she talked too much and it really did seem like he listened when she talked.

Charlie nods, she still thinks the guy is a douchebag, but when Rachel turns Finn down again for the second time, Charlie hopes that Jesse St. James sticks around for a while. Just so she can take great pleasure in Rachel turning down Finn Hudson.
The beginning of the new semester, and minutes before the first glee club back is when Quinn feels the baby kick for the first time. The feeling is not exactly pleasant, in fact it is really uncomfortable but Quinn feels all sorts of emotions, it doesn’t matter that she’s gotten fatter, and she can’t see her toes and her once perfect body now has stretch marks all over it. It's the sudden maternal instinct that she feels, the idea that this is now real, so very real and if she ever had any doubts before she now recognizes that there is a life growing within her. It brings tears to her eyes, but she quickly wipes them away. It’s the perfect way to start off a new year.

The holidays had been difficult but at the same time relaxing, there had been no expectations, no one to impress. It had been the first their first Christmas without Judy and Russell Fabray. Both twin’s had been adamant to their new respective guardians that they not receive gifts, but neither the Lopez’s nor the Berry’s paid them any mind.

Rachel had insisted on making their first Hanukkah memorable and had taken great pleasure in sharing her faith with the twins. Going to temple with Rachel and her family had been strangely comforting to Quinn, it had been months since she had been in any sort of place of worship. It was so different from their old church, there was just so much more love in the air. No one judged her for being pregnant, no one stared and pointed, no one even batted an eye that there was a gay couple around.

Christmas had been split between the Lopez household and the Berry household. Charlie and Quinn had split the cost of presents, but no one seemed to mind. It was new, not waking up in a professionally decorated house with a massive tree. Christmas dinner, was not filled with Russell’s business partners and talk of mergers and acquisitions. It had been relatively peaceful, well as peaceful as Christmas usually is.

Today is a good day, even though her body aches and she feels a bit tired. Quinn Fabray is happy, Charlie has finally been cleared to resume light cardio, though she knows her sister doesn’t know what that means and is desperate to get back into condition. Her baby just kicked, they had managed to narrow it down to four prospective families and they were going to start meeting them in a few weeks. The holidays hadn’t been as rough as Quinn had thought they were going to be, everything was finally going right in the world and she was determined to try and remain positive.

All that good will and her happy mood suddenly evaporated when she saw Jesse St. James sitting in the choir room with his arm around Rachel’s shoulders a smug smile on his face. Rachel certainly looked uncomfortable as one by one every member of the glee club stopped at the doorway and stared at the two of them.

“What the hell?! It seems like now everybody’s doing things just to hurt my feelings.” Finn says storming up to Jesse and Rachel. Rachel flinches at his anger.

“What the fuck is Jesse St. Jackass doing here?” Santana mutters to Quinn, “I thought the hobbit threw his ass to the curb before Christmas.”

“So did I,” Quinn replies and her voice is calm and collected but she is seething on the inside, because she feels a bit betrayed there is no way that Charlie didn’t know about this, and she feels hurt that Rachel never mentioned it before now. They were supposed to be friends.

Jesse has that irritating smile on his face, like he’s better than all of them and he pulls Rachel a little bit closer. “I thought that you would all take this news a little bit better. I’m a star. You can
“We were already fighting for second leads. And now that you’ve shown up, I’ve lost all hope at ever getting a solo,” Kurt complains irritation in his voice as he shoots a nasty glare at Rachel. He should have known that she would be selfish and put her needs before the teams.

“Yeah, that’s right. And y’all just trot me out at the end of every number so I can wail on the last note. How is that okay?” Mercedes complains as Mr. Schue enters the room surprisingly a bit early this time and he looks at all the members.

“He’s a spy, Mr. Shue. I would know,” Santana informs him glaring at the boy, no one is even surprised by this tidbit of information.

Quinn is secretly comforted that Santana sees it too, that it really isn’t just her that thinks that Jesse St. James is a douchebag.

“Whoa, whoa, whoa, guys. I saw all the paperwork, I spoke with his parents—” Mr. Schue explains trying to keep the peace in the room.

“They winter in Bali. It’s a very expensive phone call,” Jesse interrupts and Quinn has to suppress the urge to get up and strangle him. She hated when Russell had brought home people like him, and tried to set them up. If he was still around he’d probably be pushing her to go after him.

“Jessie just moved in with his uncle, which is in our school district. It’s all above board, guys. He goes to this school now,” Mr. Schue says raising his hand.

“But this isn’t fair,” Artie says loudly and there is a murmur of agreement throughout the group.

“Exactly it doesn’t mean that we have to let him into the New Directions,” Quinn finds herself saying and Jesse turns to look at her. She sends him her best HBIC look but the boy just rolls his eyes at this, and he pulls Rachel just a bit closer. Quinn is stunned, there are only a few people who have been completely unfazed by her look, Brittany, Santana, Sue Sylvester, and Charlie.

“Guys! Everyone who’s ever auditioned for this group has gotten in. That’s how we do things here. Okay, to suddenly change the rules now, that would be unfair,” Mr. Schue is still trying to get control of the room and smiles at Brittany when she finally raises her hand, hoping that she has something positive to say. “Brittany.”

“Mr. Schue, is he your son?” She questions him and the Spanish teacher’s face falls at this statement.

Santana looks between Jesse and Mr. Schue, studying them both. “I can totally see it, so is he like your long lost illegitimate son or something?” She asks him.

“There is no relation between Jesse and I,” Mr. Schue denies immediately, he doesn’t even know why he’s defending himself.

Quinn ignores the exchange as she continues to glare at Jesse. “I don’t understand why he’s here or why he’s doing this.”

Jesse leans in and kisses Rachel on the temple before looking at her, “Because when you love something, you go for it. Rachel would never be with me completely if I were on the opposing team. And I care about her more than I care about winning another national title. So I left Vocal Adrenaline. For Rachel.”
Quinn gags at his display of affection and slips down her chair and just glares at his head, imagining that it explodes.

“All right, guys, we have got a lot of work to do. Jessie, great to have you here. Welcome aboard. Okay! From the top,” Mr. Schue says clapping his hands.

“The baby kicked today,” Quinn informs Charlie watching as her sister lights up and reaches for her still growing belly. Quinn gently smacks her hand away, “She’s not kicking now and I’m upset with you.” When Charlie gives her a puzzled look as she rubs her hand, Quinn rolls her eyes. “Jesse St. James transferred into McKinley.”

“The new transfer student?” There had been a bit of a buzz about him, until he had promptly joined the glee club, and by lunch time no one in McKinley cared about it. Charlie hadn’t really cared one way or another about the locker room gossip, and had stopped paying attention. She had been much too buzzed after her first practice in months to actually care. Even though Coach Washington hadn’t allowed her to join the scrimmage, at least she was finally able to get back to working out. With the field covered in snow they had to practice inside the gym.

“You didn’t tell me that Rachel was dating him,” Quinn accuses; smacking away Charlie’s hand again as she tries to rest it on her stomach. “She’s still not kicking.” Charlie’s face scrunches up as she looks at Quinn’s belly as if willing the baby to start kicking.

“What about Selina? You know for a baby name.” Charlie offers completely unconcerned about the information about Jesse St. James.

Quinn smiles at the idea for a moment before rolling her eyes, “We are not naming my child after a comic book character. Don’t try and distract me,” she complains as she finally lets Charlie place a hand on her stomach in the general area that the child had kicked before.

“I thought it was obvious that Rachel was dating someone, she was turning down Finn and for an actress she’s a really bad liar. Her excuses were really lame. Not to mention I’ve been spending most of my free time with you and Santana or you going on runs, or at therapy after school because Jesse is constantly over and they are constantly getting their mack on.” Charlie was kind of impressed of the Berry’s and their implicit trust of their daughter who was taking full advantage of her father’s not being around. “You weren’t paying attention and most importantly you didn’t ask, and Rachel asked me to keep it a secret.”

Quinn frowned if there was one thing that Charlie Fabray was good at was secrets. They still hadn’t talked about their parents, Charlie had been ignoring it letting both the Berry men talk with the detectives, she didn’t want to know how the case was developing and Quinn didn’t really want to ask them anything so she had begun to read the newspaper, but there hadn’t been any new developments lately. “He’s still a douchebag, and I think that he only moved to McKinley so he can you know, sleep with Rachel.”

This information finally caught Charlie’s attention and she finally pulled her eyes away from Quinn’s stomach just as the baby kicked again. Charlie blinked and looked back down, her hand pulling back immediately mostly in surprise. “It just…that felt really weird.”

“What’s weird?” Santana asked as she walked into Quinn’s bedroom and plopped down on the bed beside them, she was rapidly texting someone and Charlie assumed correctly that it was Brittany.
“Baby kicked,” Charlie said turning to her and grabbing her hand and placing it on Quinn’s stomach.

Quinn groaned and tilted her head back as she gently smacked Charlie again, “Focus.”

Charlie sighed but kept her hand on Santana’s hand, which was on Quinn’s belly hoping to feel the baby kick again. “What do you mean he transferred to McKinley just so he could sleep with Rachel?”

“Saint Jackass is a spy, meant to take out the Hobbit so she can’t sing as well. Probably plans to fuck her and throw her away,” Santana says absentmindedly. She’s about to pull her hand away when the baby kicks. “Holy fuck.”

“Language,” Quinn hisses. “I think my baby can hear you, I do not want her first words to be a curse word.”

Charlie grins and claps her hand, “See doesn’t that feel weird. How about Harley?” She asks and Quinn groans.

“We are not naming my child after Harley Quinn, or Ivy, or Pamela. No comic book names,” Quinn repeated

“What about Lizard?” Santana throws in and both twins look at her, each raising an eyebrow causing Santana to roll her eyes, “I was kidding, it would be like naming a dog, Dog.”

“My baby isn’t a lizard,” Quinn says pinching the bridge of her nose. She doesn’t even want to know why Santana has decided on that nickname for her child.

“Or is it,” Santana asks looking at her hand before back at Quinn’s stomach suspiciously.

“Will the both of you focus?” Quinn says. “He plans on using Rachel. For you know,” Quinn flushes.

“You know if you can’t even say the word sex you probably shouldn’t be having a baby,” Charlie comments smirking when Quinn glares at her. “Rachel doesn’t get lost in the heat of the moment she’s slightly neurotic about these things so before she actually has sex with him she’ll probably have a mini freak out and ask me or you know one of you.”

Quinn nodded, “And we’ll all tell her it’s a bad idea?”

Santana scoffed, “Or not, getting laid might actually be good for the girl,” she snickers as Charlie gives Santana an unamused look while Quinn’s is the perfect HBIC stare.

The three girls are quiet for a moment before Charlie speaks up. “What about Natasha?” Quinn can’t help but let out a loud groan before playfully swatting at Charlie.

It’s not until Quinn is sketching a picture of Rachel in her notebook, at the lunch table with Charlie and the rest of the glee girls, that Rachel finally broaches the topic. She’s sitting by Brittany who keeps glancing over at what she’s drawing a knowing smile on her face as Quinn absentmindedly draws some hearts around the picture.

“Can I ask you guys something private?” Rachel asks and looks around biting her lip, the last thing
she wants is for this to spread through the school like wildfire.

“Yes, you should move to Israel,” Santana says not looking up as Brittany playfully nudges her.

Rachel wisely chooses to ignore Santana, “It’s about dating, as you know I’m all dating Jesse,” There is a collective groan from everyone at the table except for Charlie who still looks rather unperturbed by the news. “Let’s just say, we went to a Wiggles concert last Friday night, and then because my dad’s weren’t home, we went up to my room and started making out. It was erotic and romantic.” She doesn’t notice that Finn is passing by and stops when he hears that, an irritated look on his face as he listens to their conversation. “And he wanted to you know do it, with me.”

“If you really can’t say the word sex,” Charlie begins in a mocking tone, “You probably shouldn’t be doing it.”

Rachel flushes, “Yes, sex. He wanted to have sex with me. I said no of course and he implied that it wasn’t a big deal and I said that to a girl that it was. What if then he got really crabby and left, and didn’t even take home the Care Bear I won him playing Skee Ball?”

Quinn grimaced, she didn’t want to think about Rachel having sex with Jesse, or her being on a date with him. He was a douchebag, “Would you please stop talking? You’re grossing out my baby,” she snaps closing her notebook.

Rachel shoots her an apologetic look, “I just want to be ready; I know I’m getting older, and these things are going to happen someday, but how do I stop a guy from getting mad at me for saying “no”?”

“Just do what I do. Never say ‘no’.” Santana supplies giving the worst advice ever causing Quinn to groan.

Brittany nods and smiles at Rachel, “Oh, totally. I mean, what’s the worst that can happen?” she pauses for a moment and glances at Quinn who is a prime example of the worst that can happen, “Sorry, Quinn,” she offers apologetically.

“Look, girl, don’t ask me. The last guy I liked was the mayor of gay-town. And I can’t wait to get a guy mad at me for saying no,” Mercedes says looking a bit hopeful at the prospect.

“We just have to accept that guys don’t care about our feelings. Like, the other day, I was walking with Artie and he basically told me that I needed to get a new look if I wanted to be with him. That the ‘Goth’ thing was two years ago and that I should wear some tighter fitting clothing,” Tina said and rubbed her arm.

“Ouch. That’s got to sting,” Rachel says sympathetically. Rachel looks at Charlie expecting her to chime in.

Russell was not a good role model, she had seen how he had treated Judy, more as an object for his pleasure than anything else. She had heard him and his rich friends talk about women, it bothered her in some ways to think that she could have ended up like him. She had seen the hypocrisy in the way that he had put so much pressure on Lucy to be pure to keep her virginity so she could be worth something. Charlie blinked forcing the thoughts away, she really didn’t want to think about it right now. “The guys—who get angry that you won’t give it up to them are idiots, and it’s probably a sign that you should dump them,” she says after a moment. “You should give it up to someone who will respect you afterwards.”

“It’s not exactly the same you are a girl, even if you have boy parts,” Mercedes points out. “Of
course you’ll be more sensitive to the needs of another girl. Or at least understand it better when a girl says no to you, because you understand how big a deal of it is.”

“No I really don’t understand how big of a deal it is,” Charlie states, there’s an edge to her voice which causes both Brittany and Quinn to turn to her, their eyes sweeping over her face as if looking for something there. “What I do understand is that not everyone is ready to take that step in a relationship, whether you’re male or female. If you don’t think you’re ready then no one should pressure you into thinking that you’re ready.”

“Wait, you’re not a virgin?” Tina asks there is surprise in her voice.

“No that it’s anyone’s business but no. I’m not a virgin,” Charlie replies slightly annoyed that people keep making the assumption. She doesn’t glance over at Brittany or Santana, but she feels Brittany’s hand, or at least she assumes its Brittany’s hand on her knee giving it a gentle squeeze. Charlie turns to Rachel, “So if Jesse, can’t take no for an answer and throws a temper tantrum like a child because he can’t get what he wants it’s time for you to move on.”

Rachel takes this into consideration, but like most of Charlie’s advice it falls to the wayside so when Jesse apologizes a few days later she tells him she’s ready even though she isn’t.

“Finn asked me to take his virginity, he says it’s the perfect plan to make Rachel jealous,” Santana informs Brittany absentmindedly, as she watches Charlie running around the gym, as the rest of the team scrimmages. Light exercise is not in Charlie’s vocabulary and this is her twelfth lap. “I didn’t say no,” Santana adds.

Brittany’s blue eyes flick to Santana, “Charlie was really mad the last time even if she didn’t say anything,” the dancer comments before going back to watching Charlie. There is mild concern in her eyes, while Charlie may not be going at her fastest speed, she’s completely disregarding the doctor’s orders and is pushing her body. “If you take his virginity he’ll like totally follow you around forever.”

“Well Charlie isn’t following us around. I thought she was going to make a move or something,” Santana says crossing her arms over her chest as she turns to look at Charlie’s new fan club. There were a few girls sitting at the top of the bleachers watching the soccer captain sweat. “You don’t think she’s been getting some from them do you?”

Brittany eyes flick upward at the fan club, there are some baby cheerios, as well as many girls who weren’t exactly popular. Some of them were actually interested in Charlie, others were curious, some simply wanted to be Charlie’s girlfriend for the perks that it would bring. “No,” Brittany says simply. They were the prettiest girls in school and Charlie who had always sort of had a fan club to begin with had never really shown a mild interest in any girl apart from them. Charlie as far as Brittany was concerned belonged to her and Santana, even if the soccer player didn’t know it yet.

Santana frowns, no one had really resisted them before and even after Charlie had said that Quinn had finally taken the stick out of her ass, she was sure that Charlie would make a move. But the girl hadn’t, despite both Santana’s attempts and Brittany’s. The soccer player seemed to be avoiding them. “Well then shouldn’t—”

“Charlie wasn’t a virgin,” Brittany interrupts, she had been with virgins before. Most of them fumbled around, otherwise tried to do what they had seen in pornos, some of them were surprisingly decent. Charlie had been better than Noah Puckerman.
“What do you mean she wasn’t a virgin?” Santana asks as she turns to Brittany. “I thought you were her first.”

“Nope,” Brittany said with a shrug. Charlie had never exactly lied about it. She had never claimed to be one, nor had she denied it either. Brittany had made the initial assumption, and had kept thinking that this was the case until after she had been with a few virgins, before realizing that there was no way that she had been Charlie’s first. The soccer player had definitely set an unrealistically high bar for everyone else that followed. “I never asked, Charlie gets like really weird about it, and she’ll tell us when she’s ready.”

Santana went back to looking at Charlie who was now working on her fourteenth lap, damn the Fabray’s and all their secrets. “Well then why hasn’t she?” She had thought that Charlie would have definitely made a move by now.

“Charlie is kind of slow at this kind of thing, it must be a twin thing.” Brittany says with a shrug, “Don’t worry she’ll get it eventually, so will Quinn.”

Santana nodded, though she had no idea what Brittany meant and went back to watching the soccer player, “I think I’m going to do it, besides coach said that I needed to land a younger man.”

“She’ll be really mad San, she hates Finn,” Brittany repeated turning to look at Santana.

“Mad, in the jealous way right?” Santana asked, already knowing the answer to her question, as she watched as Charlie took a seat on the bench and began to talk to Coach Washington.

“Yes but—” Brittany began, while it might work Charlie wouldn’t be pleased to be played like that, and she really didn’t want a fight to break out between the soccer player and the quarterback, because it would get ugly really fast. Brittany hated violence and with Charlie so close to the breaking point aggravating the situation.

“Then it’s perfect,” Santana interrupted already making up her mind as she got up to go find Finn and make a plan for the night.

“San,” Brittany repeated trying again, but it was already too late as Santana was gone. Brittany sighed and shook her head knowing that this wouldn’t end well, but making no effort to stop it. Santana was going to do what she wanted, to get who she desired. What she wanted from Charlie was a relationship without the strings attached. Charlie wouldn’t discard her afterwards like Puck or any of the other boys that Santana had been with would. Charlie also wasn’t scared of her. She wouldn’t talk about her behind her back and she wouldn’t demand things that Santana wasn’t ready to give.

With the amount of time that Rachel had spent literally attached to Saint Jackass’s lips; Quinn was surprised when the diva had called her and told her to come over immediately. She was more surprised that Rachel was still breathing the two of them had been going at it in the hallways like animals. It was disgusting, she wanted to tell them to get a room but she didn’t want it to be worse. According to Charlie who had seemed indifferent to the whole thing, Hiram and Leroy were back in town for a bit and they couldn’t go at it at home. Which probably meant that they hadn’t done it yet.

Quinn was sort of grateful that Rachel used her twin as her sounding board, because she really didn’t want to hear about her problems with Jesse, or if she had actually done it with the
douchebag. Even though Charlie’s nights were suddenly becoming busier with the amount of time that her sister was spending at the gym, trying to regain her conditioning before the state championship. So she wasn’t really surprised to see that Charlie’s car was gone. Parking on the side of the road, Quinn got out of her car and walked up to door only to have it open and to be ushered in to the living room by Rachel. “What’s going on, Rachel?” Quinn asked with a sigh, the diva seemed agitated and ready to burst. “If this is about Jesse—?”

“It isn’t, it’s about Charlie. My father’s wanted to talk to you before the detectives did,” Rachel informed her briskly, as she pulled Quinn into the living room where Hiram and Leroy sat, grim looks on their faces.

“Quinn,” Hiram greeted immediately getting up and Quinn’s blood ran cold, wondering if something had happened to her sister.

“Charlie?” She questioned immediately, her voice above a whisper.

“Is at the gym,” Rachel said immediately, “At least that’s where she told me she was going to, and it’s where she normally is at this time, and she’ll be there for at least another half-hour.”

Quinn relaxed immediately, but shot a glare to Rachel, “Lead with that, next time,” Rachel had the sense to look a bit abashed.

“Unfortunately time is a bit of the essence, as I got a call from Detective Fisher earlier today. Charlie needs to go in for questioning tomorrow after school. They’ve uncovered a bit more than we expected, after your mother finally started to cooperate,” Leroy said, they needed to get it out in the air before knowing how to proceed.

A lot of emotions flicked across Quinn’s face, surprise to hear that her mother was cooperating, and curiosity about what they had uncovered. “Questioning for what? She’s the victim,” she said coldly. Charlie hadn’t done anything illegal to her knowledge. She had just been brutalized by her father.

Hiram winced, he certainly didn’t know how to proceed with this especially since Detective Fisher had been rather vague with the details, and he couldn’t help but look to his husband.

“Yes she is, even if she refuses to admit it. She isn’t in any trouble, however from what I gathered the topic tomorrow will be one of those topics that Charlie will refuse to talk about. Or she’ll just bolt, so if you know something then it could be extremely helpful to the detectives.” Quinn nodded, not understanding where this was going. “Did your father ever abuse Charlie or you sexually?” Leroy grimaced as he said the last word.

A confused look crossed Quinn’s face, that was quickly replaced by indignation, “He never touched me,” Quinn snapped getting defensive immediately. Russell Fabray may have been a lot of things but he had never touched her in an appropriate way before, “I know that he didn’t touch her.” Quinn said confidently, she had no idea what game her mother was trying to do but pedophilia was one sin that Russell was not guilty of.

Hiram nodded, “Well according to Detective Fisher, they’ve managed to find some evidence that something did happen. They didn’t say what but they did mention that it was sometime after your thirteenth birthday.”

Quinn paused and thought back, “The only thing that I can remember is that Charlie went on one of dad’s business trips with him. Back when he thought that Charlie was a boy, they used to go on a lot of trips together. You know hunting, fishing, he called it father-son bonding time,” She frowned
as she saw Hiram and Leroy exchange looks. “He didn’t touch her,” Quinn said with conviction.

Leroy frowned and didn’t say anything, Quinn was being truthful, which meant that she couldn’t help, “Do you know about everything that Charlie went through Quinn? She keeps a lot of things under wraps and she is extraordinarily protective of you. Is it possible that she hid it from you?”

Quinn’s face twisted into a grimace and she glanced at Rachel who spoke up, “She didn’t even tell me that she had an older sister. If Charlie doesn’t want to talk about something then she won’t. When I asked her about her sexual history, she did pause before answering whether Brittany was her first. I thought at the time, that she was simply trying to protect Brittany but…” Rachel trailed off.

“I didn’t even know that she had been with Brittany until, Brittany confirmed it. I don’t even think that I would have known about Santana if I hadn’t caught them,” Quinn rubbed her head. Charlie didn’t talk about her sex-life, not with Quinn at least.

“So it’s possible that there was someone else?” Hiram prompted.

“My father was obsessed with making sure that Charlie wasn’t gay,” Quinn paused and looked at the Berry men and winced, “Ironically, Charlie has zero interest in men, but he never seemed upset about that. I don’t even think it registered with him Charlie’s gender was more of an issue than anything else. He wanted his son back. So I really don’t think he touched her.” Rachel reached for Quinn’s hand and took it, as she tried to calm the ex-cheerleader down.

“Maybe you should sit down,” Rachel suggested as she looked at Quinn’s stomach, the stress couldn’t be good for her child. “We can wait for Charlie to come back, and we can ask her then.”

Quinn nods mutely and takes a seat beside Rachel, leaning against the smaller girl for comfort and Rachel wrapped an arm around her.

They sat like that until Charlie finally came back home, and poked her head into the living room, “Quinn?” she asked frowning as she entered the room and looked between Hiram and Leroy before her eyes finally settled on Quinn who was quickly untangling herself from Rachel and was getting up and was standing in front of her.

“Tell them that he never touched you,” Quinn pleaded, she couldn’t deal with that knowledge. She couldn’t deal with that guilt that would accompany her if she found out that her twin had been sexually abused by Russell Fabray and she hadn’t done anything to stop it.

“Quinn,” Rachel said gently before the Berry men could intervene as she reached for the cheerleader.

Confusion washed over Charlie’s face, “Who never touched me?”

“Dad, tell them he never molested you. They think that he touched you, tell them that he didn’t,” Quinn said her voice breaking. “The detectives say that they have evidence.”

Charlie still look utterly confused as she looked between Leroy and Hiram, before she looked over at Rachel who was rubbing Quinn’s back in a soothing motion. “What are you talking about? Russell never did anything but beat the shit out of me. He didn’t touch me.” Charlie finally seemed to get what was going on, and gently nudged Quinn who was quickly calming down when she heard the words. “Quinn look at me, he really didn’t touch me.”

“Those trips that he took you on,” Quinn pushed as she finally managed to look at her sister in the eye. “Tell me nothing happened on any of them. That no none of his creepy friends touched you
either. I know you hated going on those trips.”

“I hated going on those trips because I hated fishing, and hunting and whatever else he had planned for me. I was never good enough and he generally ended up yelling at me for embarrassing him. Worst case scenario I’d get beaten when we got home,” Charlie said truthfully, even if she had enjoyed the attention that Russell was giving her, she hated doing the stupid activities and just wished they could have done something else. “What is this about?” Charlie asked finally looking at Leroy and Hiram.

Quinn who had been studying Charlie carefully, looking for any sign that her sister was being less than truthful, sighed in relief. “Mom made a deal,” Charlie immediately rolled her eyes at this statement. “The detectives are going to question you tomorrow about it.”

“Is that all?” Charlie said with a shrug. Russell had never touched her, she didn’t really care what Judy had told the detectives, she hadn’t been sexually abused as a child. “He never touched me, I don’t know what game Judy is playing but I suspect that she’s just trying to save herself.”

The tension in the room dissipated, Charlie hadn’t bolted she hadn’t shut down, she had just answered the questions truthfully. Quinn relaxed immediately and let Charlie and Rachel lead her back to the seat, as her legs shook the stress getting to her.

Rachel frowned at this, and turned to her fathers, “Perhaps next time we shouldn’t jump to conclusions, and involve Quinn, she is five months pregnant. Pregnant women shouldn’t get all worked up, stress isn’t good for the unborn child.”

“I’m fine Rachel,” Quinn said. The guilt would have torn her apart, if she had found out now that Charlie had been sexually abused, that it had gotten that bad and she hadn’t done anything about it. That the man who had raised her was more of a monster than even she was capable of imagining.

Rachel shook her head, “You’re not; this was unnecessary stress. We should have just waited for Charlie to come home, she was clearly capable of telling the truth. And we weren’t even sure that anything did happen. It was unnecessary to stress a pregnant woman. We should just let Detective Fisher do his job. The information wasn’t even complete to begin with.”

Charlie’s eyes flicked to Leroy, “Incomplete information?”

“Yes he mentioned something about how they’d uncovered evidence that something happened after your thirteenth birthday, “Leroy turned to Quinn, “Rachel is right we shouldn’t be so quick to involve you, I had forgotten that you were pregnant.”

All the attention was on Quinn now, and they didn’t notice the moment that it clicked in Charlie’s mind, what they were talking about. The shock quickly gave way to a panic, she didn’t know how Judy knew. Charlie certainly had never told anyone. Russell had made her promise not to tell anyone and she hadn’t. It was their secret, the last bond that they shared when she had been a bond, it was a bond that she had held onto. Because Charlie Fabray despite her posturing, despite the fact that she called him by his first name or that she avoided him like the plague, still loved Russell Fabray. Because it was hard to separate it sometimes, separate the man who had taken her to baseball games or read her bedtime stories, who had attempted to teach her how to play baseball to absolutely no success with the man who she had so bitterly disappointed, who had put her in the hospital because she was a freak.

So she would protect their secret, because it was their last bond. The last time that Russell had been truly proud of her. So she makes a decision, and the next day instead of going to school she ditches after she drops Rachel off at school. She cancels her therapist appointment after school and she
drives to the bus picks up the people who are going to visit the prison and she gets on, and goes to see Russell Fabray.
Charlie skipping class when she isn’t injured is rare to the point that it’s almost non-existent but Quinn ignores it, and instead sends Charlie a text. But by lunch when no one has seen her and Charlie hasn’t texted back, Quinn finally begins to worry. She finds Rachel, in the choir room, glee will start soon but that doesn’t seem to stop her from being currently attached to Jesse’s lips. Just watching them go at it makes her sick when her baby kicks again she determines that even her baby is disgusted by their gross public displays of affection.

Quinn takes a tiny bit of pleasure in the fact that when she coughs to get their attention, Jesse looks irritated to being interrupted and shoots her a glare. She just smiles back him sweetly before turning to her attention to Rachel who is blushing brightly, “Have you seen Charlie?” she asks, “I haven’t seen her all day and she’s currently missing soccer practice,” she ignores the interested look on Jesse’s face at this news.

Rachel frowns a bit and shakes her head, “She dropped me off and came in with me, and I haven’t seen her either. She may be with Puck, despite her insistence that she hates him, they have grown rather close. Though I was sure that I saw Puck earlier talking to one of the baby Cheerios.”

Quinn shook her head, she had definitely seen Puck attempting to work his magic on some of the freshman earlier. “She’s not with Puck and I checked with Santana and Brittany they haven’t seen her either.” Charlie is her sister and she knows that the soccer player would have mentioned any follow-up appointments. She’d been rather good at sharing her schedule with her, so Quinn isn’t forced to wait around for her.

Rachel nodded, Charlie hadn’t mentally checked out in nearly two months. She hadn’t disappeared like this, “Perhaps she’s just sick, or maybe—” Rachel glances at Jesse who has been listening intently to their discussion, and she doesn’t know why but it makes her uncomfortable because she doesn’t trust Jesse with this information. He had been asking her all sorts of questions about Charlie once he found that she lived with the Berry’s. Rachel hadn’t told him anything of course, it wasn’t any of his business, and Charlie rarely ever stayed when they were together. “Last’s night conversation upset her,” she said simply.

“Last’s night conversation?” Jesse echoed, he had slept with half of the Carmel High girls’ soccer team, information about the captain of the McKinley team, would be rather valuable.

“We were discussing prospective birth parents for Quinn’s future child, and we got into a bit of a disagreement over some of the families,” Rachel lied easily, she only felt a tiny bit guilty for doing it, but that feeling disappeared when she noticed the relieved smile on Quinn’s face. It wasn’t even a complete lie they had gotten into some disagreements later on after cooler heads had prevailed. But she felt as if she had definitely done the right thing in lying to Jesse.

“She seemed –” Quinn paused for a long moment, Charlie seeming fine and actually being fine were two separate things. She knew when Charlie was lying outright, and she hadn’t sensed any deception, and none of Charlie’s usual tells had been on display. “She was fine. You don’t think Karofsky got his hands on her again?”

Rachel shakes her head quickly, “He learned his lesson after the slushy bath that Santana had the football players give him. Not to mention the numerous mass slushies, the sneak attack slushies. I believe he went through his whole wardrobe that day,” she smiles at the memory, though she abhorred violence of any kind and she hated slushying because she had been on the stinging end of many of slushies before Charlie had stepped in, Dave Karofsky had completely deserved every last
one. Not only for Charlie but he had been the school’s worst offender with Azimio, with him gone slushy attacks had gone down at least fifty percent.

Quinn was about to say something extra when the glee club members started to filter in, perhaps Charlie had simply gone to the police station in a rare moment of emotional maturity and—“When did Mercedes and Kurt join the Cheerios?” she asked staring at them in their Cheerios uniforms. Mercedes could barely dance either could Kurt. They didn’t belong on the Cheerios, and it hurt that Sue had decided to replace her with people who weren’t as good as she was.

Even Rachel seemed shocked by this turn of events, “What are you doing wearing that? Sue is the enemy. She actually gave the other teams our set-list in an attempt to sabotage us. She openly admits to sabotaging us and she does with little to no shame?”

“That’s rich Rachel, coming from someone who is dating a Vocal Adrenaline spy. Mercedes’ and myself have decided that our talents would be better served on a team that appreciates our talents. Sue has made us Cheerios and we will be performing a number later today at the school assembly, which we’ve been working on for the past few days, in a way to highlight our clearly under appreciated talents.”

“Yeah you aren’t the only stars on the team, and it’s about Kurt and I got some much deserved attention,” Mercedes agrees.

With that, they go and take a seat at the back just as Santana and Brittany walk in. Santana looks incredibly annoyed and shoots a glare over at Mercedes and Kurt. But she’s exhausted so the glare lacks its usual bite. With the two latest diva’s addition to the Cheerios. The entire squad had to learn brand new choreography in two days while Mercedes and Kurt just sang. They were a cheerleader’s not back up dancers for Beyoncé, even though that would have been really cool. She was the Head Cheerio most of the attention should be mostly focused on her, but instead she had been relegated to the background, and she knew she was just as good as singer as Mercedes.

“You should totes come to the assembly, it’s going to be really good,” Brittany informs the rest of the glee club, it was like what Glee club should be like, a proper show choir. If they had a routine like that they might even be able to beat Vocal Adrenaline. Unfortunately she doubted that Mr. Schue would have the sense to take a page out of Sue’s book and get the choreography down. Which was a shame because she could totally see herself choreographing something awesome for regionals with Mike Chang.

Quinn nodded, at least she knew that it would be good, even though she wasn’t on the team anymore she enjoyed cheerleading like Charlie enjoyed soccer. She wanted them to win and if this could give them the leg up in winning nationals then at the very least, she would be supportive. “Have you seen Charlie?”

Brittany shook her head no, “I asked if we could go feed the ducks after school. So I asked her to make sure she attended the assembly cause, it’s totes going to be like a glee performance. Except with better dancing and better dressed people. And it’ll totally look cool.”

There is a flash of hurt that goes through Santana’s eyes, she hadn’t been told that Charlie was going to the duck pond, the three of them usually went together. It was quickly followed by a bit of jealousy, as she looked at Brittany she hadn’t mentioned that, and she had to wonder if there was anything going on behind her back between the two of them. She wondered if Brittany liked Charlie more, or if Charlie liked Brittany more which was why she hadn’t invited her. Her night with Finn Hudson this Friday was looking more and more like a good idea.

Quinn nods, even though she has an upset look on her face. Charlie has a therapist appointment,
followed by an appointment at the police station to give her statement and tell them that—she’s about to ask Brittany the question when Mr. Schue walks into the room, and he focuses in on the Cheerios’ uniform that Kurt and Mercedes are wearing. So she pulls out her phone and decides to text the other blonde.

**Q: Did you take C’s v-card?**

It was something that she should have done last night, she should have double checked with Brittany. Charlie hadn’t volunteered any information she just insisted that Russell hadn’t touched her. Quinn believed that.

**Britt: Nope**

Quinn stared at the four letter word before looking over at Britt who shrugged easily.

**Q: Who was it?**

**Britt: Dunno, she never said**

**Britt: She never said she was a virgin either**

Quinn stares at the text messages and goes back over the conversation, trying to go over it again. Charlie was a Fabray, but she wasn’t that good. She wasn’t lying about Russell, or his creepy friends. So who was her first? Quinn glanced over at Rachel.

**Q: Did you ever sleep with my sister?**

Quinn watched as Rachel glanced down at her phone and read the text before swiveling around in her seat to look at Quinn, and gave her a look.

**Rachel: Of course not. I’m still a virgin.**

Quinn smiled at this and rubbed her arm, at least she wasn’t giving it up to Jesse and at least Charlie hadn’t been with Rachel. She doubted that Charlie and Rachel would make a good couple and Charlie seemed to show zero interest in dating her. Well there went everyone who knew her secret at McKinley. It was possible that it was someone at Carmel or another one of the schools. There were huge portions of time that Charlie wasn’t with either Rachel or any of her other friends, disappearing for hours on end till she had met Brittany and Santana. So what exactly was the secret that Charlie was trying so desperately to hide? And why was she hiding it?

The thing with McKinley is that news travelled fast. So when Charlie Fabray walks through the front doors of McKinley in something other than her usual attire, which generally consisted of sweatpants, or cargo pants with a simple shirt, usually with some simple design on it; people began to talk. Especially since Charlie Fabray was currently dressed in black skinny jeans, and a rather fitted white button-up shirt with a black skinny tie. She walked through the hallways on the way to the gym ignoring the whispers and stares that she was receiving, as she found an empty seat with her teammates.

Missy studied her captain’s attire and leaned in, “Coach is pissed that you didn’t show up to practice today. She says you have a better have a good reason. So tell me you had a good reason. In fact make up a good reason if you don’t have a good reason. Or we’re all going to be running laps until we puke.”
The crooked grin slowly appeared on Charlie’s face, and she leans into Missy, “I do have a good reason. Don’t worry I’ll explain it to Coach Washington tomorrow.” She doesn’t have a good reason but she can think of one.

Missy nods before studying her captain, “I like the new look,” she says after a moment before her eyes flick back to the front.

“Thanks.” Charlie says with a simple shrug as she leans back as much as she can. There hadn’t been time to change into her regular clothes. It was either go home and change or be late, as in miss the assembly late. She hoped it wasn’t another assembly where Rachel was humping someone. She couldn’t deal with another image of Finn with a damp spot on his crotch. And she didn’t really care to see her humping Saint Jackass either, thank god it wasn’t another glee assembly.

Marissa who was sitting above her captain smiled down at her, “I think you just got more girls for your fan club,” she teased and Charlie’s eyes flicked over to where there were now a few more girls watching her.


Marissa rolls her eyes, “Only you would find the fact that you have a fan club dreadful. One would think you’d be at least thinking of finally dating someone since you’re out of the closet now. Even though your sexuality was like an open secret. Especially since Santana is currently dating Finn.”

Charlie didn’t really partake in the rumor mill, seeing as she was the one that was talked about at least two percent of the time and no one ever really got it right, she had learned that it was best to mind your business most times. “Santana Lopez is the hottest girl in school, and straight. I don’t have a crush on her. She’s my friend.” Charlie says simply and adds for good measure. “I really couldn’t care less what she does in her spare time.” And normally she doesn’t, Santana has a reputation as does Brittany, and she sort of stopped caring at the beginning of the year.

Missy and Marissa glanced at each other exchanging a silent conversation that basically started with Bull, and ended with Shit. “Right—so you don’t want us to do anything about Finn? I mean some of the stuff he was saying was really disrespectful,” Missy said.

Charlie scoffed, “I’m not worried about Finn Hudson. I doubt he can manage to pull it out of his pants without having one of his little accidents,” she said calmly, even though she was mentally picturing all the ways she could kill Finn Hudson and get away with it.

Missy and Marissa didn’t say anything again having one of their weird silent mental conversations. “Or instead of picturing killing Finn Hudson,” Marissa began, patting Charlie on the knee, cause Charlie gets that strange faraway look in her eye when anyone mentions Finn, and they figured out she was plotting ways to kill the quarterback. “We could get you a date with one of the baby Cheerios. Gabrielle is totally into you, and she’s really cute.”

“She’s really nice too, you know for a Cheerio,” Missy added.

“Are you really trying to set me up with someone right now?” Charlie asked incredulously.
Because they couldn’t be serious, she didn’t date people. She hadn’t dated anyone, she’d never been on a date before.

“Yes. You’ve been spending too much time around the glee club. I get it your sister’s in it and Santana and Brittany are in—you have a crush on Brittany don’t you?” Marissa said in an excited tone as she looked at the blonde cheerleader who was warming up with Santana.

Charlie chose not to dignify that with an answer, and Missy nudged her Captain with her knee, “Brittany’s like one of the most popular girls in school. You two would totally make a power couple. She’s a Cheerio, and she leads the choreography for the Cheerios. You’re the soccer captain, makes sense.”

Charlie rolled her eyes, she wasn’t shallow enough to ask Brittany out for a small boost in popularity. She wasn’t going to ask Brittany out because, Brittany S. Pierce didn’t date. Well she didn’t date anyone but Santana. “I think I’ll be single for now,” Charlie said in a tone that indicated that the topic was finished. When Missy and Marissa turned to each other again, Charlie let out an exasperated sigh, “No weird telepathic conversations. I have a twin and even I can’t do that.” It was true, she and Quinn when they were oddly in sync could occasionally finish each other’s sentences but that was about it.

Missy gave her a mock salute and Charlie rolled her eyes and relaxed, school was easy. Being normal was easy. She tilted her head a bit and looked up to where Rachel was sitting with Jesse, and Quinn was sitting with Tina and Puck. Their eyes met for a moment and Quinn narrowed her eyes at her, and Charlie just shrugged her shoulders in response before turning back to the assembly that was just getting started. She blinked in surprise and turned to Missy, “When did that happen?” she asked nodding in the direction of Mercedes and Kurt.

Marissa who was moving in time to the music shrugged, ‘I heard that there were two new Cheerios’ didn’t know that Sue would get some glee kids. Isn’t she trying to you know destroy their club? I’ve seen her and Mr. Schue like screaming at each other.”

“She is,” Charlie mumbles as she watches the Cheerios perform and Missy and Marissa continue to have that weird telepathic conversation in their head behind their captains back. It’s only when the overproduced number ends does Charlie excuse herself, pausing for a moment to look at her teammates. “Give Gabrielle my number and I’ll totally sic Santana on you,” she said giving them a look before she walked out of the gymnasium, and headed to the Cheerio locker room. She doesn’t really have to wait for long, till the baby Cheerios start filtering out of, still in their uniforms, a few of them giving her odd looks as they pass by.

No one pays her much mind till one of them stops and looks at her, still standing in the doorway for a moment and shoots Charley a rather flirtatious smile, “Hey, Gabrielle Avery,” she says introducing herself. Because Charlie doesn’t have a girlfriend and the soccer captain is like the third most popular girl in school, right behind Santana and Brittany.

“Charlie,” Charlie says and rubs the back of her neck. Gabrielle’s eyes rake across her body and Charlie suddenly feels uncomfortable at the look. “Uh can you let Brittany know that I’m waiting for her?” she asks after a moment.

Gabrielle flushes, of course Charlie was here for her; they were really close friends after all. “Of course,” she tilts her head and calls for the dancer before she returns to looking at Charlie.

The silence is awkward for a moment and Charlie shifts her feet a bit, “You looked really good out there,” she offers Gabrielle who lights up at the compliment. It seemed like the right thing to say.
“Thanks,” the baby cheerio responds, at least the soccer star had noticed her enough to comment on her performance. “I really like your new look.”

Charlie glances down at herself, she really wants to go back to sweatpants and baggy shirts.

“Thanks.” She’s saved from attempting to make any more small conversation when Brittany walks out of the locker room with her duffel bag slung over her shoulder. Charlie immediately extends her hand out and Brittany hands it to her and the two of them turn to go, Charlie glancing back and nodding at Gabrielle. “I’ll talk to you later,” she said.

Brittany blinked and looked at Gabrielle for a moment before looking back at Charlie, Gabrielle took this moment to scamper off back inside the changing room. Brittany hummed drawing Charlie’s attention to her. “She really likes you.”

“I know,” Charlie says simply as she drops Brittany’s bag on the back seat of her vehicle and slides into the driver seat. She didn’t know how to proceed, all the sudden attention didn’t really suit her personality. The fan club just gave her this weird vibe.

Brittany looked over at Charlie and she finally noted that the crooked smile was gone and Charlie was gripping the wheel tighter than normal, she really was good at keeping anything under wraps. So Brittany smiles and gently nudges Charlie ever so gently, “Let’s go watch the ducks swimming,” she said in a gentle tone.

Charlie nods and starts the car and pulls out of her parking spot and drives to the nearby park. Neither girl says anything as they walk to the pond with the loaf of bread Charlie had picked up on the way back to McKinley. Brittany doesn’t push and Charlie doesn’t say anything as they tear the bread up into little pieces and feed the ducks. Charlie doesn’t know where to start, so she starts with the truth. Because she promised, and because, she needs to get it out. “I went to see him today. Russell. I went up to the prison to see him. They didn’t let me see him because I wasn’t on the list.”

There are a lot of things that Brittany had expected Charlie to say, but she doesn’t expect that. It’s also the fastest Charlie has ever spoken about anything before. There is relief in Charlie’s voice, she’s at least happy that she didn’t see him, but Brittany can feel the sadness as well, and the tinge of desperation. She had wanted to see him. “You’re not scared anymore?”

“Terrified,” Charlie admits. Her heart is still going at a pretty fast rhythm even hours after she left the correctional facility. “I just really needed to see him, not Russell Fabray. Just…my dad. I just really wanted my dad,” Charlie admits as she continues to toss the bread into the pond.

Brittany suddenly realizes why Charlie had requested that Santana not show up, the Latina would have gotten angry and judgmental. Quinn wouldn’t have understood or worse tried to get Charlie to forgive him, and Rachel, well actually Rachel probably would have understood, unfortunately Rachel was so attached to Jesse right now. Brittany tosses a piece of bread into the pond and watches as a duck chase after it. “Why?” Brittany says after a moment.

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Charlie doesn’t say anything at first, “Because I lied to you. I didn’t tell you that I had been with someone before you. Several people actually. And I think I’m going to have to talk about it with the cops and I don’t want to. I don’t want to tell anybody. It was my secret with my dad, even though I know what he did—what I did was messed up.”

“I knew that you weren’t a virgin,” Brittany says calmly, when Charlie glances at her she smiles. “You’re better than Puck and he’s been like with half the school.” This statement elicits a very brief look of pride, before it’s replaced. “I teach dance classes during the summers, to kids. You have to ask them if you can touch them first.”
Charlie’s face twitched, “He never touched me.” Charlie said simply and Brittany nodded and Charlie watched the ducks paddle around waiting for more bread. Charlie’s face twitched and she exhaled slowly, “It wasn’t just in Chicago, it was back in Toledo, every weekend until I broke my arm, until they found out that something was wrong with me. That I was you know,” Charlie waves her hand over her lower half of her body.

“There isn’t anything wrong with you, you’re just like a really special unicorn,” Brittany says gently.

Charlie doesn’t say anything, as she struggles to find the right words to say. “He wanted me to be a man and he didn’t want me to be a unicorn. So he hired people, women, to make sure I wasn’t.” Charlie is quiet for a long moment and she doesn’t look up. She can’t look up now and see Brittany’s face cause she wouldn’t be able to stand it if Brittany couldn’t look at her.

Brittany doesn’t say anything for a long time, before she sighs and gently reaches for Charlie’s hand only to have the soccer player flinch away. “Charlie,” she breathed.

“I’m clean. I checked. Russell spent a lot of money on it. Only the best for his son. But he didn’t want me to knock one of them up. So I always wore a condom. I always wore one.” Charlie says quietly there is some bitterness in her voice, but mostly there is desperation and fear. She keeps her eyes focused on the ducks and Brittany lets Charlie finish. “He never touched me. Russell never laid a hand on me in that way. But I think he watched at least the first time. Cause he knew things, critiqued me on my form. It only happened once.”

She doesn’t tell Brittany everything. She doesn’t tell Brittany how she enjoyed it, how the women who her father hired had given her tips and taught her how to please them. Yet she needs Brittany to understand, she needed to tell Brittany first because Brittany was her first. The first person who Russell hadn’t paid to be with her. The first person after she found out who accepted her body, and in the end her without Russell’s interference.

“I’m sorry I lied. And I get if you hate me and never want to speak to me. I wasn’t even supposed to tell but Judy knows, I don’t know how. I never told her. Quinn doesn’t know. She doesn’t cause he made me promise not to tell anyone. And I didn’t. I haven’t but the cops were going to question me and I don’t want them to know but they have evidence. So they might know and I didn’t want you to find out like—”

Brittany gently placed a finger on Charlie’s mouth silencing the girl, “You didn’t do anything wrong,” Brittany says after a moment, because she hadn’t. And Brittany wishes that Charlie had brought Santana with them because Santana would know how to handle the situation better. “You didn’t. I don’t hate you Charlie. I still really like you. No matter what.”

Charlie nodded against the finger on her lip, and her eyes water for just a minute but she blinks them back rapidly. Talking about it hadn’t helped. Charlie still feels dirty, she still feels ashamed. She still feels like she’s less, and it’s not because she has something against the women who had touched her, it’s because Russell stole something else from her, it hadn’t mattered at the time. She had made him proud, she had made her dad proud, and that’s what had mattered. But her father hated her, for something that she would change if she could.

“I’m going to hug you now,” Brittany said gently and Charlie nodded as Brittany enveloped the soccer player into a hug. “You’re going to need to be brave again and tell someone, an adult. That’s what Lord Tubbington says to do.”

“I—”
“Charlie,” Brittany says firmly, and Charlie tenses for a moment and Brittany can see that she wants to run but she doesn’t.

“Fine,” Charlie says after a moment. She’s going to have to tell the police anyway. “Can you come with me—I don’t think I can tell L-Quinn yet. She has the baby and this will just stress her out.”

“You can tell Santana,” it’s probably best that Charlie tells Santana so that she doesn’t go through with her half-thought out plan to bed Finn. It wasn’t as if Charlie didn’t want to, there was just so much turbulence going on that it really wasn’t the right time. “And of course I’ll come with you.”

“I don’t want to talk about Santana,” Charlie says as she finally pulls away from Brittany.

“You heard about Finn?” Brittany says with a sigh, she probably should have put a stop to Santana’s crazy plan. But Charlie is Charlie and even though she would be ticked now about it, she’d eventually forgive Santana.

“Yep,” Charlie replies, but she’s studying Brittany carefully. The girl is still treating her the same and it’s confusing to her because Brittany should be running. She should be looking at her differently, with pity or sadness, something. But it’s still Brittany who gets lost in her head a bit, and she doesn’t care. It’s the Brittany who accepted her body and every one of her faults. “Why me?” Charlie finally asks and Brittany turns to her again.

“Because you think you’re the ugly duckling, but when I look at you I see a full grown swan,” Brittany says with a smile.

Charlie doesn’t know what to say to that, so she leans in and kisses Brittany’s cheek. It’s gentle and touching and it’s another first for Charlie Fabray because she’s never done that before, and when the simple action is done she can feel her heating up despite the cold and she looks away. “Sorry,” she mumbles. “I should have asked.”

Brittany smiles because this was the push that Charlie needed, it was gentle and she hadn’t expected it. “Don’t be. When you’re ready. I’ll be ready.”

Charlie nods and doesn’t say anything. She wants to kiss her, but she doesn’t because her emotions are raw and they are barely controlled right now, and she doesn’t want to begin to sob all over Brittany. So they sit there and watch the ducks paddling by, until she has managed to coral her emotions and shove them back into its proper place. And then she takes Brittany and they head down to the police station, and Brittany rubs the small of her back as Charlie tells Detective Mike and Lisa exactly what they want to know. She gives them places, she gives them rough time periods. She tells them everything that she told Brittany.
Chapter 15

“How do I look,” Rachel asked as she entered Charlie’s bedroom and spun around in her outfit. There was a nervous edge in her voice. It was the first time she had said anything to the soccer player, she had been irritated that Charlie had lied to her, even though the girl had apologized. Charlie hadn’t told her anything more about the subject, she had just simply stated she really didn’t want to talk about it. So she didn’t, she didn’t tell anyone where she had disappeared to, or why she had taken Brittany with her to give the statement. Charlie also kept denying that Russell Fabray touched her. The whole thing was irritating and even trying to pull the best friend card hadn’t been enough to persuade Charlie to talk, so the diva had decided to give Charlie the silent treatment.

“I thought you weren’t talking to me,” Charlie said not looking up from the English Lit paper she was working on.

Rachel sniffed, “You’re the one who refuses to talk to me. Keeping secrets kept you in the hospital.”

“It’s not a secret, the police know, Brittany knows. I’m sure the District Attorney knows, and you know everyone else at that station. It’s like an open secret. I just don’t want to talk about it right now. I’m tired of people trying to force information out of me. Or having to make decisions on what to tell people because I need to get my story out first. I haven’t told my therapist, I suppose I need to. I don’t want to though,” Charlie said as she talked still not removing her eyes from the screen of her laptop.

Rachel paused so something had happened, something that required Charlie to have to tell people, it was clearly more information than she was willing to part with. But Charlie had been so adamant that Russell Fabray never touched her in an inappropriate way. But she understood Charlie’s need to exert some control over her life. “I understand, and I’m sorry for pressuring you into telling me information that you’re not ready to share.”

At this Charlie finally looked up to reply to what Rachel had said. But the words just didn’t come to her lips as she stared at Rachel, “What are you wearing?” she asked making a face.

Rachel flushed immediately, “You don’t like it.”

Charlie blinks and tears her eyes away from what Rachel is wearing and focuses on her face. “You’re planning to have sex with Jesse.”

Rachel nods and bites her lip suddenly feeling very self-conscious in front of Charlie, “Boys like the wholesome look, like Quinn’s, and I thought that this fit the bill perfectly.”

“You’re planning to have sex with Jesse St. James? You know the same guy who stormed off like a child because you said no?” Charlie said ignoring what Rachel was saying about the clothes, though she wanted to point out that Quinn was pregnant, she wasn’t exactly ‘wholesome’ like Rachel kept envisioning her to be.

“I’m ready now,” Rachel defensively replied, even though she wasn’t. Just the idea of being alone again, of being the girl without anybody bothered her.

Charlie glanced down at what Rachel was wearing again, “No, you’re really not, and that’s okay. If
he dumps you because you said no to him then good riddance.”

“I’m not you Charlie, this might be like my only chance at love, and if I don’t put out then I might lose him. Then who will want to be with me? I don’t have a fan club at school of people who want to be with me.”

“You’re being dramatic,” Charlie says dully.

“No I know who I am. I understand my personality can come off abrasive, and I’m selfish, and dramatic and sometimes I hurt people to get what I want. And that turns certain people off.”

Charlie crosses her leg on the bed, “Yes and? I like you just fine as a person, and I know you’re abrasive, selfish and dramatic. You hurt Quinn and Puck and Finn, so you could date Finn. I told you to stay out of it because it makes you look a bad guy, and you didn’t listen.”

“You’re my best friend. Besides you don’t want to date me.”

“I did at the beginning of freshman year,” Charlie admits honestly, causing Rachel to stare at her in shock. “It was a crush that lasted like five minutes. It dissipated the moment that we became friends and you stated that you thought Finn Hudson was a dreamboat. It really had nothing to do with your personality so much as me questioning your general intelligence.”

“You had a crush on me?” Because the news has come on a shock, and while Rachel is flattered, she can’t help but think that it’s the wrong Fabray.

“It lasted a week.”

“Why didn’t you say anything?” Rachel asks sitting down on the bed.

“Did we miss the part about everyone in school knowing about your weird obsession with Finn Hudson? That and you’re so clearly straight.” Charlie said dryly. “The reason that you don’t get more interest in you has little to do with your selfishness, or how abrasive you are. It’s because everyone knows that you’ve got this thing for Finn. It has nothing to do with your looks, because you are hot. And people who manage to stick around will realize that you really are a good person. A person who has a big heart and a lot of love to give.”

Rachel mulls over telling Charlie that she isn’t completely straight and that she has thought of other women, but the woman she wants is actually straight. So there was no point in actually pursuing a relationship with her. “I’m going to hug you now,” she says instead because what Charlie said was really nice, so she wraps her arm around the soccer player. “Thank you.”

Charlie wrapped an arm around Rachel and patted her on the back, “I still have no idea what you’re going for with what you’re wearing,” she said after a moment and Rachel pulled back and rolled her eyes.

Rachel looked down and studied what she was wearing, “Do you think that Santana could—”

“No. We’re not involving Santana,” Charlie said making a face at her name.

“You’re upset with her?”

“She’s going out with Hudson without Brittany tomorrow night. In an attempt to make me jealous or enrage me, or give me a reason to murder Hudson. I haven’t exactly determined which one it is,” Charlie informed Rachel, who froze at Charlie’s words.
“She’s going out with Finn?” Her voice was strained as jealousy flashed through

“To make me jealous. I imagine he’s doing this to make you jealous. He hates Jesse almost as much as Quinn hates Jesse.” Charlie responded.

“Quinn hates Jesse?” Rachel asked completely forgetting about Finn for a moment, she had made her choice on that matter and she had chosen Jesse, but this was news to her.

Charlie glanced at Rachel curiously, “That’s what you took away from what I said? That Quinn hates Jesse? No Finn’s an idiot. Or you know one of your crazy plans to separate Finn and Santana, which you know I’ll totally look the other way for.”

“I can understand why you think I should be jealous, but I have a perfect leading man in Jesse. He’s free to do whomever he wants. I am more concerned that a member of the club hates Jesse, I thought by now he would be accepted. He’s exactly what we need to get past Regionals this year, and maybe into Nationals.”

“Really, you’re sticking with that? Quinn hates Jesse and you suddenly care? Everyone hates Jesse. Finn hates him cause he wants you, probably cause you rejected him and no one really wants him at school. Mercedes and Kurt joined the Cheerios in a form of protest and probably to get back at you. Puck wants to punch Jesse for being a smug asshole. Brittany doesn’t really care but she doesn’t really like him, Santana wants to go all Lima Heights—adjacent on his ass. Even if he isn’t a spy and he really likes you, he totally is screwing with your team dynamic. If someone was messing with my team like that I’d cut them loose or bench them. Team unity is important for any team, but at the same time they’ll probably get used to it.”

Rachel nodded her brow furrowed for a minute as she thought about what Charlie just said, “And you?”

“I don’t hate him, I think that Jesse is an asshole, and could possibly be a spy, but I don’t hate him. If he makes you happy then do whatever you want to do. It’s no one’s business but your own, you don’t even have to tell anybody.”

Rachel shook her head, “I meant if you were in my shoes, would you sleep with Jesse?”

“Not now, if he’s already told you that he’d wait or you then it can wait till after regionals. I know a part of you thinks that he may be a spy, or that he’s with you to get into your head. So you know think about that before you actually do anything,” Charlie replied picking up her laptop again. She pauses and looks at Rachel again, “Plus it’ll give you a bit more time to rethink, whatever that is,” Charlie said waving at what Rachel was wearing.

“It’s supposed to be sexy,” Rachel insists.

“You’re wearing a cloak,” Charlie says with a snort, dodging the pillow Rachel threw at her head.

The night had been good, Jesse was quite the gentleman about the whole thing. He had made a picnic which they had laid out on the coffee table. They had danced, he had serenaded her. Jesse St. James was giving her an epic romance, he had transferred to McKinley, and he listened to her and never made her feel dramatic. He had appreciated the calendar that she had given him. He was older and certainly a lot more mature and appreciative than Finn.

She stared at herself in the mirror once more, everything did look perfect. She looked sexy even if
Charlie hadn’t appreciated the shawl, she was going with it. The point was to give him something to remove. He deserved something in return for being so understanding, and so loving. It was just sex. Everyone had done it. Charlie, Santana, Brittany didn’t really think it was a big deal to begin with. Quinn was pregnant.

Pregnancy. That was a pretty good reason to not go through with this. It didn’t matter if she was on birth control and Jesse wore a condom, there was always that chance. She didn’t think she could do what Quinn was doing, she’d been the most popular girl in school and her pregnancy had knocked her off the top of the pyramid and Rachel knew that she’d be able to claw her way back to the top. That she’d still be able to achieve her dreams, whatever that may be. It was admirable in its own way, and it only made Rachel admire the girl more.

This was the year, they had one opportunity to make glee club a thing at McKinley and the idea that Quinn and everyone else in the club hated him. That her relationship which might not even be completely real, could ruin any sense of unity and would just increase the drama to apocalyptic proportions wasn’t worth it. Glee club was her thing, it was her shot at glory, of being a star for now. Charlie had a point it wasn’t worth it, if Jesse really loved her then he would wait. He would wait until after regionals when everyone had calmed down enough.

She wasn’t ready for this, for what it meant to take her relationship to the next level. She couldn’t give herself to someone who had been so cavalier about sex, who had stormed out because she wouldn’t give herself to him.

The knock on the door breaks her from her thoughts, “Just come out so we can talk… or sing about it,” Jesse’s voice comes through the door.

Rachel swallows, she’s made up her mind she can’t go through with this, and if Jesse breaks up with her so be it. “Look, Jessie, I really like you, but—I can’t do it. It wouldn’t be right for— the team.” She manages to get out, after she leaves the bathroom.

Jesse frowns, he doesn’t really understand, “What does the team have to do with this? I’m part of the team, I’m part of the New Directions.”

Rachel swallows, he has a point he is a part of the team, but Jesse isn’t the entire team. “If I give myself to you, knowing that my teammates wouldn’t approve, it would be like I was sleeping with the enemy. Because that’s how they still see you. You’re the enemy and even though I really like you and I want this to work I’d be betraying them. And because I’m truly not ready to do this, I’d be betraying myself. I think they’ll stop caring if we manage to hold this part of our relationship until after we’ve secured a place at regionals.”

There is a flicker of something across Jesse’s face, it’s only for a split second but he nods and smiles at her, “I can wait,” he says, but it gives Rachel just a moment of pause because it sounded particularly fake.

But Rachel smiles at him and they kiss a bit more, but he soon leaves. At least this time he takes the care bear that she won him at the Wiggles concert with him, and there is still a smile on his face when he gives her a kiss at the door and waves to her right before he gets into his car.

There is a numb feeling in her heart, but she knows she made the right decision and she picks up the phone to text Charlie that it’s okay to come back.

Rachel: I couldn’t go through with it.

Charlie: Good
Rachel: When are you going to be back?

Charlie: Late. Something came up

Rachel frowns, she needs to have someone to talk to, because her head is racing just as fast as her heart is. She knows that she made the right decision, and she knew Charlie would agree. She just wants confirmation that she did the right thing.

Rachel: Can you come over?

Rachel: It’s not about Charlie

Rachel: I just need someone to talk to

She doesn’t really expect Quinn to say yes, or to even respond to her. They aren’t the best of friends, and there are times when she wonders if the only reason why Quinn is being nice to her is because of Charlie. But then there are times when she wonders if the former head cheerleader actually likes her. She seems to irritate Quinn a lot less these days. Five minutes pass and Rachel gives up on Quinn coming over, when her phone pings.

Quinn: Give me twenty minutes

Rachel stares at the message for a moment, she hadn’t truly expected Quinn to come over and she immediately sets on cleaning up her room which is already incredibly neat. She wonders what’s left, knowing she’s forgetting something but when the doorbell rings exactly seventeen minutes, Rachel opens the door and Quinn’s eyebrow quirks upward and she tilted her head as she looked at Rachel.

“What are you wearing Rachel?”

A confused look crossed Rachel’s face and she looked down at what she was wearing and flushed as she looked back at Quinn. She feels a bit of herself die in mortification, Quinn would never let her live this down.

Santana barely had time to finish doing her make up in the crappy mirror when she heard the knock on the door to the motel room that Finn had decided to get for the night. Finn’s words still echoing in her head. It didn’t mean anything. You didn’t mean anything. It had hurt, more so than when Puck simply got up and walked away right after they were finished or all the other guys who had kicked her out the moment that they were finished.

She wanted Brittany, but the dancer currently had family over visiting from the Netherlands or whatever, and hadn’t picked up when she had called. It had left the other option between Charlie and Quinn and she really didn’t want Quinn being all high and mighty with her, or seeing her in this state. So she had called Charlie who had ignored her call. But had called her back nearly ten minutes later. Santana could hear the irritation in her voice, but the soccer player had listened to her and had said she’d be there as soon as she could.

Santana opened the door to the motel room, and a small smile crossed her face as she saw Charlie standing there with a bag that the Breadstix logo on it, there was still an irritated look on her face but it didn’t reach her eyes. Santana grabbed Charlie by her arm and pulled her into the room closing the door behind her.
“I got you your favorite—” Charlie began as she turned around, only to have her words cut off as Santana kissed her, gripping onto her jacket firmly. The soccer player’s mind went blank for a moment as she kissed Santana back.

The contact was pure heat, it was just like it had been the last time they had been together, and Santana felt the sparks immediately. Charlie’s mouth was soft and yet firm, and it felt so good against hers. The soccer player gently dragging against Santana’s lower lip. The Latina couldn’t help the little groan that escaped from her lips, and she let the soccer player deepen the kiss, as she tugged on one of her hands through Charlie’s blonde hair, her other hand gripping the front of Charlie’s pants. The soccer player was an amazing kisser, and it felt just as good as her sweet lady kisses with Brittany.

It wasn’t until Santana slipped her hand down the front of Charlie’s pants, and gently run her fingers along her rapidly hardening member. The touch snapped Charlie out of her haze immediately as she felt the constraining fear grip her heart and she immediately reached down to grab Santana’s wrist, “Stop,” she managed to get out, but her voice was huskier than she wanted, and her hazel eyes met Santana’s brown ones.

“Why?” Santana asked as she kissed Charlie again, nipping on her bottom lip and gently tugging it. It came out as a gentle whine and she felt Charlie slowly pulling her hand out of the front of her pants.

“Cause you were just with Finn? And I’m still irritated at you.” Charlie responds, as she gently pulls away from Santana. She doesn’t want to tell the Latina that she had nearly flashed back. But just like that the mood is gone, and Santana lets her go so she can take a step back. Charlie studies the Latina for a moment noting that her shoulders have slumped and she looks slightly dejected. Charlie bites her lip wondering if she made the right choice but decides to stick with it as she places the bag on the desk. “I got you your favorite and I got extra breadsticks just like you like.”

“He said that it didn’t mean anything. That I didn’t mean anything,” Santana says, as the emotion begins to build. The Latina tries desperately to hold them back she doesn’t particularly want to cry in front of Charlie but, she can’t and the hot tears start to drip down her cheeks. “He’s right coz I’m a bitch, and people hate me and—”

Charlie freezes for a moment, as she turns and sees that Santana is crying, her whole body shaking as she begins to sob. Charlie takes the two steps that it takes to reach her pulling her into a tight hug. “Finn Hudson is a gigantic idiot,” she says keeping her voice soft as she rubs Santana’s back gently.

“You like Britts more than me,” Santana accuses as she pulls away a bit and gently but firmly hits Charlie in the chest.

Charlie just continues to hug Santana and let her cry it out for a few moments before she finally starts to calm down, her face still buried in Charlie’s chest and her tears have soaked through Charlie’s shirt. “I don’t like Brittany more than you,” she says after a moment as she pulls away and offers Santana a tissue.

“You took her to the duck pond without me,” Santana says as she gently wipes at the remaining tears as she takes a seat on the bed.

“I know,” Charlie replies simply, “I didn’t want you to get mad at me,” Charlie adds after a moment. “I did something that would piss you off.”

“Did you sleep with the Hobbit?” Santana asks seriously.
“No, the day of the assembly. I went to the prison to see Russell,” Charlie says calmly as she watches the gamut of emotions that cross Santana’s face. When it finally lands on anger, Charlie quickly adds, “I didn’t get to see him. I wasn’t on the list.” It doesn’t stop Santana from calling Charlie an idiot in both English and Spanish, and several other choice curse words that Charlie is sort of glad she doesn’t understand but she takes it, she can understand why Santana is upset with her.

“Why?” Santana finally spits after she’s once again run out of steam.

Charlie makes a face, and reaches for the bag from Breadstix and holds it up in front of Santana as if that’s going to distract her, “We should probably eat it before it gets cold.”

“Charlie,” Santana says grabbing the bag away from her. “Why did you go see that bastard?”

“My mother cut a deal to save her own skin. She’s out, but she’s been checked into a sixty-day rehab program. I haven’t told Quinn though. She gave the detectives information on something that quite frankly I didn’t know that she knew,” Charlie said.

“What information?” Santana pressed immediately, she could feel the anger spiking again. What else had Russell subjected Charlie too?

Charlie grimaced, Brittany was supposed to be here. Charlie couldn’t imagine how Santana was going to take the information, and they were alone in a motel room. She didn’t think that the Latina would actually murder her, or hurt her physically at least. “Brittany wasn’t my first,” Charlie says simply.

“I know she told me that a few days ago,” Santana calmly responds, she pauses for a moment and her mind begins to connect the dots. “Did that bastard—”

“No. No. He never touched me. He never, did that to me. But he hired people, women, to you know make me a man.” Charlie says as she traces the scar on her hand.

Santana’s mind reels for a moment, the idea that Charlie had been with whores had never crossed her mind. The idea that her friend had purchased woman to have sex with disgusted her. It made her wonder if that was how Charlie viewed them. Like all the other guys in school viewed her and Brittany. “You’ve been with prostitutes?”

Charlie winced at the accusatory tone of Santana’s voice, “Yes,” she said swallowing. It’s not like she had thought about it at the time, all she understood was that there were these beautiful women who wanted to do things to her. Sexual things. She had been thirteen and this had been like a dream come true. It wasn’t until she was a bit older that she had figured it out, that they weren’t there because they wanted her, even if they had made her feel like she was the most important person in the world. They were there because Russell had paid them. “I’m sorry. I was thirteen and—”

Santana began to curse in Spanish, cutting her off and Charlie shut her mouth. She doesn’t really understand what she’s saying: Mr. Schue was a terrible Spanish teacher. It’s become clear that she should have waited for Brittany.

“Is that what you think of us as?” Santana asks her voice is cold and she’s suddenly in Charlie’s face, forcing Charlie to take a step back. As she suddenly remembers that Charlie had all but refused to not be with them unless she was wearing a condom. Her face pales a bit and she suddenly feels unclean, “You didn’t tell Brittany beforehand. What if you had given her a disease or some shit? You could have given me something you son of a bitch.” Charlie purchased another human to have sex with, it’s fucked up and wrong, and there is no way that Charlie doesn’t think of
Britts and her as just whores that she doesn’t have to pay for. Charlie had never once wanted to make anything between them official. She had just used them for her own sexual needs.

“I’m clean. I checked months after the last time. I don’t have anything. I was safe every single time,” Charlie says immediately defending herself.

“It doesn’t matter that’s shit that you should have told us. You fucking Fabray’s and your god damn secrets. You think it’s okay just because you wore a fucking rubber? You didn’t think to warn us what we might be getting into?” There is hurt in Santana’s eyes but there is disgust on her face.

“I—wouldn’t have…I made sure that I was clean. I’m sorry,” Charlie repeats reaching for Santana to try and calm her down, to let her explain, but she twists out of Charlie’s reach.

“Don’t touch me. Did you compare us to them? Treat us like you treated those whores? Fuck I thought you were that good naturally, turns out you learned how to be that fucking good because you bought fucking humans to practice on. Fuck Charlie, that’s fucking disgusting. Just stay the fuck away from me,” Santana snaps.

Charlie stares for a moment and she feels sick, because Santana is revolted by her. “Santana, I didn’t—I never…” She can’t find the right words to explain to Santana who is lost in her righteous anger. She never compared them to who she had been with before. She didn’t see them as the school sluts like everyone else did. She liked both of them, because they were the first people who hadn’t cared what she was. She had never cared about how many boys they slept with, and Santana’s numbers rivaled Puck’s or who they were with. She had never thought of them as possessions that she owned. Sure she got jealous, and for a while she wasn’t a fan of Puck, but she hadn’t acted out on it. But this rejection hurt more than anything and she wanted to curl away and cry.

But Charlie was a Fabray, so she doesn’t run away. She just straightens her back and swallows the turbulent emotions that are threatening to spill over. “Okay,” she says after a moment. “I’ll take you home and I won’t bother you again. Just…I haven’t told Quinn so please don’t tell her.”

Santana stares at Charlie, her eyes narrowing even more, “And Brittany. Stay the fuck away from her,” Santana snaps.

Charlie wants to protest, but Santana looks about ready to kill her, so Charlie nods. She pulls away and moves to the door of the motel. “I’ll be at the car,” she says and her voice is low with a hollow ring to it, but she leaves the room without another word and enters her car and waits for Santana. It doesn’t take long for the Latina to join her, she's slightly calmer now and Charlie waits for her to say something. Anything.

“Just take me home,” Santana says and Charlie nods quietly.

No one speaks on the way back to the Lopez’s, and when Santana slams Charlie’s car door shut, before she marches into the house. The shame and self-loathing wash over Charlie and she desperately needs something to take her mind off things, but Quinn is probably at Rachel’s and she really doesn’t want to watch some Barbra musical that Rachel is forcing down Quinn’s throat, and it’s a Friday, which means there is probably a party somewhere. Which means that there will be cheap booze, which means for tonight she can forget. So Charlie texts Puck.

**Charlie: Where’s the party at?**

Charlie doesn’t have to wait long before Puck texts back.
Charlie stares at the message for a moment, it’s an odd thing when Noah Puckerman doesn’t know where a party is.

**Charlie: What do you mean you dunno?**

**Charlie: You know where all the parties are**

**Puck: We’ve got that meeting with the Griffins tomorrow**

Charlie throws her phone aside and it bounces onto the empty seat beside her, before she slams her hand against her steering wheel again and again. But she doesn’t scream and she doesn’t cry, she just inhales sharply forcing all the negative emotions back down, before she drives off and just goes home. Quinn’s car is there and she really doesn’t want to talk to her sister or Rachel so she Sneaks back in. But she doesn’t have to, they’re both asleep on the couch. Rachel’s head is on Quinn’s shoulder. Charlie stares for a moment before moving and grabbing the extra throw and draping it over the two of them. She looks at them for a moment before she goes upstairs to her room and closes the door quietly behind her.

And slowly repeats to herself that she’s fine, until she believes it.

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Quinn Fabray doesn’t freak out when she wakes up the next morning, cuddling with Rachel Berry. Well that’s the lie she tells everyone, because she had a mini freak out, not because she was cuddling with Rachel. Cuddling in your sleep is normal, but because she enjoyed it. She enjoyed having the slightly shorter girl pressed against her body, it fit. It’s made even better by the knowledge that Rachel didn’t give herself over to that jackass. Quinn Fabray freaks out and then decides to blame it on pregnancy brain and her raging hormones, because there is no way that she likes the obnoxious diva, who totally sold her out so she could have her ex-boyfriend.

Checking the time on her phone she winces, they slept in, and the Griffins are supposed to meet them at the Lopez’s in an hour and a half. She wonders why Charlie hadn’t bothered to wake them up.”Rachel,” Quinn says gently nudging the diva. Rachel mumbles in her sleep, but after a few moments finally wakes up. “We’ve got to get ready. We’re supposed to meet the Griffins today,” Quinn repeats gently to Rachel who blinks at her a few times.

“Quinn?” she mumbles, there is still sleep in her eyes. She hasn’t been getting her usual eight hours of sleep. “What time is it?” she asks, with a yawn.

“A little after eleven. The Griffins are supposed to be at Santana’s at half past noon,” Quinn repeats and suddenly Rachel is awake and alert.

“We’re running late, and you should probably head back to Santana’s place to get ready. First impressions are incredibly important and this might be your future child’s parents. You want to leave a good impression so you’ll be able to visit her whenever you want. Charlie can give me a ride over when I finish getting ready. I’ve prepared a series of questions for the Griffin’s to ascertain if they are indeed perfectly loving parents.”

Quinn stares at Rachel for a moment, mostly in surprise. It seems that Rachel doesn’t need coffee to be bursting with that much energy. She’s about to comment on it when a note on the coffee table with Charlie’s rather messy handwriting on it. Leaning over she picks it up and reads the message
out loud.

“You two are adorable, didn’t want to wake you up. Coach Washington sent out a text, I’ve got a full practice today. Couldn’t get out of it. Sorry.”

“You sister has atrocious handwriting,” Rachel comments looking over her shoulder, but she rests an arm on Quinn’s shoulder in an attempt to comfort her.

“This is more important than her kicking a ball around,” Quinn says crumpling the note up and tossing it back onto the table. Her anger spiking, clearly Charlie hadn’t tried hard enough. Coach Washington was reasonable at times. If Charlie had just explained the situation.

“It is. And I’ll be sure to give her a PowerPoint presentation on the importance of this,” Rachel said firmly. She doesn’t believe the note for a second, Charlie had no problem skipping practice before, especially when she had been looking forward to this meeting. She’d made several pages worth of intense questions just for the prospective parents. She wouldn’t just ditch at the last minute. But it’s not time to think about that. “I’ll pack some things and you can drive me over and I can get ready there?”

Quinn nods, “Puck said he’d be there around noon, and Brittany said she’ll be there late. She’s got some family thing, but she wants to meet them too,” she shoves aside her feelings on Charlie bailing. But she can yell at Charlie later for bailing, she’s been doing that a lot lately, avoiding her. “Mrs. Lopez said she’d be there as well, so she can ask a few questions as well.” Quinn glances at the time again and winces, “We really need to get moving Rachel.”

Rachel nods and she runs upstairs to her room only to find another some neatly typed papers on her bed, with a sticky-note with Charlie’s messy scrawl on it. She pulls the note off the pages and looks down on it. Charlie clearly needs a lesson in penmanship, because it’s practically impossible to read. She wonders how Quinn can do it so easily, but she looks at the notes that Charlie’s typed up. All of which are a series of questions and acceptable answers for Rachel to ask.

Rachel glances at the clock as she begins to put some of her clothes into an overnight bag, as she grabs her phone and dials Charlie’s number. When Charlie picks up on the first ring, Rachel knows that her best friend didn’t have soccer practice. Charlie never picks up at practice. “Where are you? Don’t lie I know you’re not at soccer practice.”

Charlie is quiet for a moment, “I messed up with Santana last night. She doesn’t want me around anymore. So I’m at the Lima Bean. I didn’t want to cause a scene and scare off any off the Griffins. Appearances are important.”

Rachel pauses, out of all the answers she’s expecting blunt truth isn’t one of them, the girl sounds tired on the other line. “What did you do?”

Charlie is quiet again, “Did you get the questions? I made sure to print them because you can’t read my writing. If Quinn asks, totally have soccer practice all day.” Charlie hangs up without bothering to wait to hear Rachel’s reply. It’s rude but she really doesn’t want to talk about it.

Rachel stares at the phone for a moment, Charlie’s hung up on her and even though she really wants to call her back she has places to be. She’d ask Santana what’s going on, but the Latina scares the crap out of her, so she made a note to talk to Brittany about it. She finishes packing and heads down the stairs where Quinn is waiting for her and she smiles and puts her mind on the task ahead of her. Quinn trusts her opinion on who will make excellent parents for her unborn child and she refuses to let that responsibility slide.
“What’s that?” Quinn nods to the papers in her hand.

“A series of questions to ask the prospective parents, it’s always good to have these things noted down so you don’t forget anything. I take my job very seriously,” Rachel says with a nod, it’s mostly the truth. She doesn’t mention that it was Charlie’s questions and she has her very own set of questions which have also been typed up in her bag.

There are at least ten pages in her hand, Rachel must really want to make sure that the Griffins are good parents. She smiles, glad that she made the decision to include Rachel in the process, and the two of them leave together, “What type of questions are you going to ask?”

“Mostly what their beliefs are, you can learn a lot about a person just by hearing in what they believe,” Rachel explains. “It will help me narrow the focus of my questions.”

Quinn nods, she has a few questions of her own, important to her, and she knows Puck has some. Most of them are trying to reach an agreement about how often they can see their child, because she really wants to be able to be a part of her child’s life.

Richard Griffin is a sociology professor at the University of Toledo, and his wife Karen is a psychologist. They are funny and kind and they want to know as much about Puck and Quinn as they do about the baby.

“How often can we see her?” It’s the only question that Puck has, he wants to be there for his child. He would rather help Quinn raise the baby but it seems that her mind is made up. He likes the Griffins just fine, they are stable and they seem to really love each other.

Richard looks at his wife, they haven’t decided but as they look at all the teens that are sitting there they realize that this child will be loved and protected. Both he and his wife were only children, it would be nice to have these teenagers act as guardians to the child. At the very least they’d have free babysitting on the weekends. The average visits that the agency advised was three times a year, “Once a month. You wouldn’t be her parents we would but we don’t have much extended family, and we understand that you want to be a big part of her life. You wouldn’t be able to tell her that you were her birth parents of course. Not until she was much older to understand that we’re her parents.”

It’s more than generous and Quinn knows this, the other families are offering less time. She wants to watch her daughter grow, even if she can’t be the actual parent. She gently places a hand on Puck’s arm, he looks dejected by this information. It’s clear that he would spend every minute if he could with his child.

“And how do you feel about the LGBT community?” Rachel asks, and it draws Quinn’s attention, she’s reading off the notes that she brought over. She’d been like that all day, asking questions about punishments, their personal views on religion, on politics. This was the first time that she had asked about this particular topic. “Quinn’s sister is a lesbian,” Rachel adds with a shrug.

Quinn immediately looks back to the Griffins who don’t look perturbed by this information at all, “We support LGBT rights, and if she grew up to be a lesbian, or transgendered or anything. We’d love her,” Karen says calmly.

“Where is your sister?” Richard asks.

Quinn is about to say something when she notices the look that passes over Santana’s face. She
knows her best friend and she knows Charlie, something must have happened between the two of them. “She has soccer practice. Her coach is probably a bit on the insane side, so they’re mandatory. They were state champions last year. She was MVP,” Quinn says. “She sends her regards, and I’m sure she’ll look forward to meeting you the next time we get together.”

There’s a flicker of hope that crosses over Karen and Richard’s face. They’d been with the agency for a few years now, and this might finally be their chance.

“We still have some other prospective parents to see,” Quinn admits, she doesn’t want to get their hope up to high. “But I do have a good feeling, we’ll be sure to call you and let you know when we decide.” She really doesn’t want to meet with the other families. She likes the Griffins, and from the looks of it so do Brittany and Rachel which are good signs.

So they talk and Quinn asks more questions, she wants to find out more about the Griffins, they don’t say anything that offends her and they seem to be open and honest as they can be. She knows that Charlie would like them, they aren’t Russell and Judy. They don’t drink, they don’t smoke and they don’t do any drugs of any sort. They don’t seem to be judgmental or care that she’s an unwed pregnant teen who made a drunk mistake. They seem offended that her parents would throw her out, and they promised to never ever do that. All they seem to want is what’s best for her child, and they want her to be a part of the baby’s life.

Quinn can’t help but wonder what life would have been like if the Griffins were her parents. It’s a nice thought, they don’t believe in corporal punishment. They don’t have any antiquated ideas of what a girl and a boy should be. They have good jobs and most importantly they seem to be in love. They were Quinn’s number one choice and Rachel had agreed with her decision.

Quinn paused wondering why Rachel’s opinion mattered more than Puck’s. Though it was obvious he was more interested in Robinson’s because they actually lived in Lima. But they had already stated in the emails that they would only allow them to see their child three times a year. They seemed stricter and more rigid than the Griffins. Puck would come around.

It’s not until Quinn and Puck are walking the Griffin’s out does Rachel finally turn to Santana, glad that Brittany is there to keep her calm. “I don’t know what happened between Charlie and you yesterday. But you need to fix it. She’s not here because she didn’t want to make a scene. It’s her niece, she should be here.” Rachel’s voice is neutral, and as calm as can be, because she doesn’t want to create a scene. The Griffin’s think they are reasonable teenagers and are willing to allow Quinn and Puck to see their child once a month, she isn’t going to blow it for them.

Brittany frowns, she had been wondering where Charlie was as well. They had planned to tell Santana today at the duck pond, but Charlie had cancelled saying that she had soccer practice. “She’s not at soccer practice?” when Rachel shakes her head no, Brittany turns to Santana who immediately looks away. She’s about to ask when Quinn and Puck return. “I really like them. I think they’d make good parents,” she says placing her hand on Santana’s thigh, letting her know that this isn’t over.

“They don’t live in Lima, if something happened we wouldn’t be able to get there for a few hours. They live in Toledo. The Robinson’s live right here in Lima, maybe when they see us they’ll think about letting us see her more,” Puck protests immediately.

“It’s less than a two hour trip,” Quinn says immediately. “We’ll still talk to the Robinson’s but I don’t think they’re going to let us see her that often. It’s really generous. We might be able to spend the weekend with her, or maybe a bit more time during the summers.”
“We’re her parents,” Puck protests, “We shouldn’t be there every now and again. We should keep her. I’ve been making good money we can afford to keep her. I can get us a little apartment and we can make this work. We can pay for babysitting, and clothes. We can do this,” there’s a plea in his voice. He wants his child, he wants Quinn to keep her.

“We can’t Puck, you said you’d respect my decision. We’re sixteen, we can’t afford her. We have school—”

“I’ll drop out and get a full time job, I’ll get one of those GED things, and I can be her dad.” Puck says immediately.

“You’d still need people to babysit her during the day, you can’t give up your entire life to be a father. She’ll have the best opportunities if we give her to the Griffin’s. They can afford to give her the best of everything, and we can still be in her life. We can watch her grow Puck,” Quinn was as gentle as she could be.

“But we aren’t going to be her parents! We’ll miss so much of her life. Her first step, her first words,” Puck snapped. “My dad missed a lot, Sara misses him. She wants to know who her father is, even if he is a bum. I’m not going to be like him.”

“I want to know who my mother is,” Rachel says calmly and Puck eyes her, she can see the hurt in his eyes, she understands. “I want a mother, because sometimes having two gay dads is really hard. Don’t get me wrong I love my dad’s and I wouldn’t trade them for anything in the world. But sometimes I wish that I had a mother to talk to about things my dad can’t really help me with, even though they try. You aren’t going to be like my mother, you can visit, she’ll be able to write to you or email you. You can be a part of her life. She’ll know that you loved her and you wanted to give her the best chance. Being a parent is about being selfless and making hard decisions. This is the hardest decision that you’ll have to make, but at least your child will know that you wanted her. I don’t even have that. So you aren’t going to be like your father, or my mother. Your child will grow up knowing that you both wanted the very best for her even, and you sacrificed a lot to make sure that happened.”

“Fuck.” That’s all Puck can say, Rachel is right and he knows it. It doesn’t make it hurt any less. It doesn’t mean that he wants to give away his child. He didn’t even know that he would feel this way about something that wasn’t yet there yet. But when Quinn had placed his hand on her stomach so that he could feel the baby kicking, it had awoken his paternal instincts.

This wasn’t easy for Quinn either, she wanted to keep her child. The moment that it became so very real when she had felt the baby kicking for the first time. It wasn’t as if she didn’t feel Puck’s pain but they needed to give their baby the best chance available.

Charlie was back home when Rachel finally gets Puck to drop her off, she had talked to him the entire car ride back. She hadn’t expected the badass to be hit so hard by the adoption process, she almost feared to see what he’d be like when the baby was born and they had to hand the baby away. Quinn was holding it together rather well but even Rachel could tell that it wouldn’t be easy. With their newly forged friendship she made a promise to herself to be there when it actually hit Quinn.

“So…were they good people?” Charlie asks the moment Rachel gets home, “Did you get through all my questions?”

Rachel smiles, “I got through most of them, and they said that Puck and Quinn can visit once a month. No I didn’t go through most of your questions, but I wrote down notes. Quinn of course
wants you to meet them, and I suggested my place because it seems to be neutral ground. Quinn is very upset with you, though I think she suspects that something happened between you and Santana, so expect her to start asking questions.”

Charlie makes a face at this, but takes the notes that Rachel made and sits down on the stairs and begins to go through them. Rachel has highlighted key points and her neat hand writing fills in the side of the pages. “Were they good people?” she asks again.

“I thought so and Brittany really seemed to like them,” Rachel said taking a seat by Charlie. “They don’t believe in corporal punishment, I know that was a big thing with you. It was one for Quinn it was like the third question she asked.”

Charlie nods and bites her lip as she reads some of the notes that Rachel wrote, “Do they know? About Russell?” she asks after a moment as she looks at the scars on her hands.

“If they did, they didn’t say anything but they seemed horrified that they kicked Quinn out for getting pregnant. Richard was sort of a nerd just like you and Quinn,” Rachel replied letting Charlie get comfortable as she continued to read the papers. “Are you going to talk about what happened between you and Santana? It must have been pretty bad if she doesn’t want you in her house anymore.”

Charlie was quiet for a moment, as she what Rachel had wrote about her question about what the Griffin’s considered a good punishment. Time out and taking away of toys seemed reasonable to her. “She was upset last night. I went over, I brought breadstix. She kissed me, I kissed back. She wanted to do more, I said no, because we needed to talk. She didn’t like what I had to say. She doesn’t want me talking to her or Brittany, so I’m going to stay away for a bit, as much as I can.” Charlie said giving the extremely cut down version of it.

“What didn’t she like about what you had to say?” Rachel questioned gently.

Charlie froze for a moment she really couldn’t go through what happened last night all over again. “I don’t want to talk about it,” she answered honestly, because the last thing she wanted to do was talk about it.

Rachel pouted for a moment, so it had something to do with Russell. It really was the only thing that was completely off the table with Charlie even though she talked about her mother less. “You don’t talk about your mother,” Rachel said quietly.

“She’s a drunk, who loved Quinn and Frannie more than she loved me. There isn’t much to say about it.” Charlie replied bluntly. She felt Rachel flinch against her arm and she paused what she was reading and looked at her friend searching her face for something. “I’m sure there is a reason why your mother isn’t in your life, maybe it’s a good reason. Maybe it isn’t a good reason, but you have two people who are there for you now. Two people who love you unconditionally, who would give their lives for you. So if you meet your mom and you find out that she’s not all that you’ve imagined in your head then that’s okay. Because you have Leroy and Hiram who are your real parents. Russell is my real father, Judy is my real mother both are really crappy parents. Sometimes birth parents aren’t everything that they are cracked up to be.”

“I’d still like to meet her one day,” she says after a moment.

Charlie looks at Rachel for a moment and nods, “There probably is a good reason why she isn’t in your life. Maybe she’s on Broadway.”

Rachel smiles at this, she likes that idea. “I used to imagine Idina Menzel, was my mother.”
When the weekend finally ends and Rachel is back to glee club, she doesn’t expect to run into Finn who was clearly waiting for her by the room.

“Hey!” he greets and he shoots her that smile of his, and Rachel smiles back hesitantly.

“Hi,” Rachel responds, as she looks at him. He’s been rather jealous as of late, and while it’s flattering she is with Jesse. But after Madonna week, he did seem to back off a bit and come to a sort of truce with her boyfriend so perhaps, he was at least trying to be friends.

“So how’d your date with Jessie go Friday night?”

Rachel pauses for a moment and she can’t help but smile a bit, even though the question was genuine even she can hear the hint of jealousy in his voice. “It—went wonderfully, he was such a gentlemen,” she says and she begins to walk into the choir room, she doesn’t notice that Finn is making a face at this. She doesn’t know why she lied to him, maybe it was to make him a bit jealous to make him realize that she was desirable at least to someone. “What about you? I heard you had a date with Santana on Friday night.”

“I couldn’t go through with it,” Finn lies, it’s a smart decision. None of the guys had been impressed that he had gotten it on with the school bicycle. Azimio had even pointed out that he seemed to like Puck’s sloppy seconds. First Quinn and now Santana, Rachel was one of the few girls in school that Noah Puckerman hadn’t gotten to.

Rachel pauses at this, and looks at him. Charlie hadn’t mentioned what happened with Finn, all that she had said was that Santana was upset. It was possible that she was upset because Finn had rejected her. “Why?”

“I guess I’m just waiting for the right person,” he says and he gives her a big smile before pulling away from her.

Rachel blinks and she feels her heart beat just a bit faster.
Chapter 16

Even though things had been going so well after they had met the Griffin’s things suddenly began to regress rapidly. Charlie began to pull away, avoiding the unholy trinity like the plague. She refused to sit with Quinn in the lunch room instead going to sit with the other members of her team. Even Brittany was getting the cold shoulder which only upset the dancer. Quinn had attempted to pressure Santana into spilling what went down, but the Latina was remaining tight lipped about the whole ordeal. Even Brittany wouldn’t tell her anything informing her that it was Charlie’s story to tell. Though it was clear that the fault lay directly with Santana, and when Brittany stopped talking to her, she ran directly back to Puck.

No one was talking. Even Rachel didn’t know the complete story, but she had explained as much as she knew. The situation became infinitely worse when Charlie began to show an interest in Gabrielle Avery, and Puck began to use Mercedes for her popularity. Santana became aggressively angry and about fifty-times bitchier. Without Charlie’s protection or even Santana’s, Quinn felt the commentary about her pregnancy rising once again. Azimio had called her a slut as he passed by her the other day in the hallway and it burned. She had made one mistake, and everything she had worked for was gone. She used to rule this school, she used to command the respect of her peers. She hadn’t needed Charlie’s protection since middle school, and now she was once again dependent on it and it bothered her a lot more than it should have.

She wrote the Glist as a way to make herself feel better, it had been something to keep her mind preoccupied. She hadn’t really meant for it to get it out. But JBI had posted the first page of the Glist on his blog and suddenly everyone in glee was at each other's throats. No one outside of Glee cared, it was the glee club they were the most unpopular club in school. Rachel was hurt that she was ranked so lowly on the list, but it wasn’t even that bad. She was ranked above both Finn and Jesse, who had been ranked eighth and ninth respectively.

It was only after the idea spread and someone began doing lists for every club in school, did Figgin’s make an issue out of it. The whole thing was a disaster, and now the entire school was fighting about their rankings. And now Figgins was hunting for the person who had started the anarchy at the school, he wanted to expel them. Quinn would have stepped forward but she’d already lost so much, she wasn’t going to get kicked out of school because of this. So she wisely kept her mouth shut, things would die down eventually. They always did.

Charlie was in a foul mood, she was off target. Horrendously so, every shot that she took never went where she wanted it to go. It had been two weeks, since Coach Roz had let her finally partake in the scrimmages. Two weeks of being off target. She had managed to pass it off as being rusty but it was clear that the team was getting anxious. It had gotten worse when Missy had mentioned the dreaded y-word. She slammed her locker shut, she didn’t have the yips. Her teammates were shooting each other glances but she ignored them as she stormed out.

It wasn’t until she was halfway down the hall did Charlie finally manage to calm down enough. She hadn’t hit the crossbar once. Everything else was working fine, everything else in her bag of tricks worked just fine, from her feints to her infamous roll, and it wasn’t as if she couldn’t score. She just wasn’t on target most of the time.

Arms circles around her waist and Charlie froze, and then there was that problem. “Gabrielle,” she said slapping a fake smile on her face. She didn’t even know how she had managed to get herself a
girlfriend, when she really didn’t want one. She blamed Marissa and Missy for this particular mess, and those stupid lists that were popping up every week. Once she found whoever had started the list, she was going to murder them.

Gabrielle leaned up and pressed her lips against Charlie’s, it was a chaste kiss. Which is all they’d done, despite Gabrielle’s many efforts to do more. “You were fantastic out there.”

“Thanks,” Charlie replied keeping that fake smile firmly on her face. No she was terrible, it had been all flash but if she couldn’t bury the ball at the back of the net, then it was all worth nothing. “How was Cheerios practice? Nationals are coming up aren’t they?”

Gabrielle made a face, Santana and Brittany had been rough on all the baby Cheerios lately, but they seemed to be targeting her more than anything. She spent more time running suicides than actually being with the team. But it was worth it she had the star soccer player on her arm, and it had rocketed her up the list, for the Cheerios. She now sat behind Santana and Brittany. It didn’t really matter if Charlie still seemed to be hung up on Brittany or Santana, no one was really sure which of the cheerleaders it was. It didn’t matter that Charlie never called her or texted her, or carried her books to class. People thought that Charlie was her girlfriend and the soccer player never seemed to push her away in public. “They are, it’s a lot of work. But you know how it is with the tournament coming up.”

Charlie winced the tournament to determine state championships begun two weeks after the Regionals for glee. “Tough draw this year,” Charlie said simply, because they had drawn Carmel High right off the bat, and there were rumors that they were doing some heavy recruiting again. Some hotshot girl from Los Angeles. Because her life couldn’t get any worse. She was wrong because a second later Gabrielle was back into her personal space, wrapping her arms around the soccer player’s neck and pressing her lips against Charlie’s quickly trying to deepen the kiss. Almost immediately Charlie reacted and gripped onto Gabrielle’s waist and pulled her off. “You need—” Charlie trailed off when she saw Santana’s look of irritation and a hurt look from Brittany.

“To meet you at Breadstix tonight? Deal.” Gabrielle finished, “I’ll be there,” with that she pressed her lips to Charlie’s cheek and sauntered off, leaving Charlie to deal with Brittany and Santana.

“At least you’re buying her dinner first,” Santana snipped and Charlie rubbed her head. It had been like this for two weeks, Santana would jab at her and she’d just take the abuse.

It was a combination of things that made Charlie snap back, her poor performance on the soccer pitch. The fact that she was currently being harassed because of those stupid lists. Gabrielle being in her personal space all the time. Santana’s constant abuse, Azimio’s constant abuse. The fact that her mother was out and in some rehab center somewhere, and she really didn’t want to deal with it. It was the perfect storm.

“Is this what this is about I didn’t buy you dinner before we had sex? You kissed me first. I made sure that it was okay with Brittany before I did anything else with you. I’m sorry that I didn’t tell you, maybe I should have said something but I didn’t. So I’m sorry.” Charlie snapped back causing Santana to take a step back, it had been the first time Charlie had said anything to defend herself. “I get it I’m filthy and disgusting, I already knew that. You think you’re the first person to tell me that to my face. You’re not. I know what I am, but I can’t deal with you making snide remarks. I have to deal with that shit from people like Azimio and his goons. So get it out of your system and leave me alone, like I’m trying to leave you and Brittany alone. If you going all Lima Heights on me is what it’s going to take, then do that. Just avoid the face like Russell did, and leave me alone.”

Santana stood there stunned for a moment and Brittany immediately moved in between them,
“You’re not filthy or disgusting Charlie,” she said gently trying to reach for Charlie who pulled away from her.

“Leave me alone, I already know what I am. And while you’re at it lay off Gabrielle. I know she’s only using me because of the stupid lists that are going around. I’m fine with that. Really I am, so just leave. Me. Alone. And I will stay out of your way.” With that said Charlie wheeled around and walked away from them leaving the two of them standing there.

Brittany turned to Santana who was still in a state of shock, “Fix it,” she ordered, there was something harsh in her voice.

“But she—” Santana protested weakly feeling a bit sick that Charlie had grouped her with Azimio and his goons.

“Fix it. You slept with Finn, knowing that Charlie hates him. She still brought you breadstix and tried to make you happy. So Fix it. Cause I want to go back to the duck pond and feed the ducks,” Brittany snapped at Santana before leaving her standing there.

“Fuck,” Santana snapped, and glared at a freshman who just happened to be wandering by, they stared at her for a moment before they scampered off.

Quinn knew there was a problem when Santana dumped her stuff in front of her, while Brittany sat with the Cheerios’. Brittany wasn’t even looking Santana’s way, and she seemed to be talking to Gabrielle Avery Charlie’s new—whatever. Quinn personally didn’t know what Charlie was thinking, and Charlie was barely talking to her. Her sister was not one for big public displays of affection but it seemed that every single time Gabrielle would be draped all over her, much to Charlie’s annoyance. “What do you want Santana?” Quinn asked without looking up.

“Britt’s is mad at me,” Santana said with a shrug.

“I don’t see how this is my problem,” Quinn tersely replied. Santana had been off with Puck for the past two weeks doing god knows what. She also seemed to be the reason that Quinn hardly saw her twin. “Everyone is mad at you. Charlie is avoiding you like you have the plague. Mercedes and you had that little spat over Puck. I’m mad at you, because this situation is exactly what I was trying to stop, when I told Charlie she couldn’t be with you or Britt’s anymore.”

Santana made a face, and looked over at where Charlie had Gabrielle sitting on her lap. The baby Cheerio currently had her hand tangled in Charlie’s hair, while Charlie had a look of irritation on her face. The idea that Charlie was going to take Gabrielle of all people out to dinner, pissed her off. It was the principal of the thing, so what if it had been Brittany to initiate contact with Charlie. Charlie despite her cool outward demeanor seemed was rather hopeless when it came to the whole romance department, getting all nervous with displays of affection, or rejecting it coldly like she was doing with Gabrielle. “Are you really saying I told you so right now?”

“Yes. I am. I told you so,” Quinn said firmly. “What exactly happened between the two of you?”

The not knowing what Charlie was hiding had been irritating her for weeks. They were twins, they were sisters. They had both survived being around Russell Fabray for better or worse. Charlie should be more comfortable talking about this with her then with Brittany and Santana.

Santana had an internal debate about whether to spill the beans to Quinn. Charlie had said not to tell her, and really at this point betraying Charlie’s confidence might put Charlie on the path of no
return. Which would mean she’d lose the soccer player, and if Charlie was gone because of something she had done. Britt would never forgive her. “I can’t, I promised Charlie that I wouldn’t tell you.”

“Charlie and I don’t really fight, we bicker, and if one of us does cross the line, we stay away from each other for a few days and then we start talking to each other like nothing happened. We don’t apologize to each other for anything. So unless I know exactly what you’ve done I can’t really help you,” Quinn informed Santana. Charlie rarely stayed upset with anyone for long periods of time. “Wait it out. Or you know get Rachel to bully her into forgiving you, like she did when I first told Finn that the baby was his.”

Ugh the last thing that Santana wanted to do was owe the Hobbit anything, “I was a judgmental bitch the way you are a judgmental bitch,” Santana said after a moment. When a puzzled look crossed Quinn’s face, Santana rolled her eyes, “I know you wrote the Glist. With all the sex me and Puck have had, there’s no way that he’d put you above me.”

“You didn’t make a comment about—”

“No, no of course not. I know she’s like sensitive about it. Dunno why it’s—” Santana trailed off when she noticed Quinn’s glare. She flashed the former head cheerleader a smirk, before she sighed. “Looks, I wants to apologize.”

“Not because you hurt Charlie, but because Britt wants you too. Right, not helping you,” Quinn said as she begun to pack her things to leave. If Santana wanted to apologize, then she’d have to do it because she didn’t feel pressured to do it from Brittany.

Santana swore internally, “I’ll tell everyone that you wrote it. That you wrote the original Glist,” she said leaning forward, she shot Quinn an external look of triumph, when the former HBIC paused.

“No you won’t,” Quinn said calmly, as she continued to pack up her stuff. It didn’t matter if she was no longer officially the HBIC, Santana was still too brash to try and bully her into anything. “I’ll get expelled, Brittany will be pissed at you, and Charlie will be pissed at you. You’re going to realize that you basically just threatened me with the worst possible thing, then you’re going to try and backpedal, and my answer will be go ahead. Do it.”

Santana scowled, fuck Quinn and her queen bitch mentality. “Fuck you,” she said waving her hand. “Just help me figure out a way that she’ll at least stay in a room with me long enough to talk to me.”

“You could always sing to her,” Quinn replies sarcastically. If there’s one thing that Charlie hated more than anything is the glee club breaking out into random song at the weirdest times. She glanced at Santana who seemed to be considering this idea seriously. “Don’t. Don’t do that. I was being sarcastic. It’s a terrible idea.”

Santana sighed and decided to talk she could of course always deny it later, “It’s not just for Britt,” she says after a moment as Quinn has begun to pull away from the table. “It isn’t just because Brittany is forcing me to fix it. I think I made her feel like your asshole father made her feel. I was a bitch, even when Charlie was really nice to me. I kind of just threw it back in her face. It’s why she didn’t show up to meet the Griffin’s. I may or may not have told her to stay the hell away from me and Britt.”

Quinn flicked her eyes to her sister who was trying to gently pull away from Gabrielle. She had said that she had soccer practice, which was probably a lie. She had just protected Santana’s
involvement in it and taken most of the blame for herself. Quinn felt her anger peak. It was why Charlie hadn’t shown up at the Lopez’s in two weeks, it was why she generally stayed away from her at lunch. All this over some secret that Charlie refused to tell her. All this started when she had asked Charlie if Russell had touched her. Brittany wasn’t budging but Santana was desperate, because apologies weren’t her thing, and both Britt and Charlie weren’t talking to her. So Quinn offered her best friend a deal. “I’ll help you. But you need to tell me exactly what my sister is hiding from me, in what I can only imagine is her way of protecting me.” She could handle herself, it didn’t matter that she was heavily pregnant.

Santana looked over at Charlie once more, it wasn’t as if she had promised Charlie anything. She had been upset and angry at the teenager, for stupid reasons. If Russell had touched Charlie, it would have been sick and completely on Russell. Him hiring other people to touch his son, still didn’t make Charlie the one at fault. It had been a lot to take in, and maybe her emotions were high because of Finn telling her that she meant nothing. Treating her like she was just a sex-toy to be used and thrown away when he was done, that had made her lash out Charlie. “Help me, and I’ll get her to tell you,” she tried to negotiate with Quinn. Charlie had a lot of secrets, she kept a lot of things trapped in her head. Santana wasn’t even sure that she knew just how extensive the damage Russell had done to his middle child was.

Quinn frowned, “You won’t be able to convince Charlie to tell me anything right now, she’s trying to create a stress free environment for me and the baby.”

“I don’t know all of it, she didn’t actually finish it before I lost my shit,” Santana said.

“Well what do you know?” Quinn asked.

Santana had an internal debate once more, she could definitely tell Quinn parts of it, not about the prostitutes, that was something she knew Quinn would flip her shit over. It was better to ask forgiveness then permission sometimes, “She went to go see your father, the day of the assembly. According to her she didn’t see him, wasn’t on the list.” Santana said after a long moment, it was a page directly from Charlie’s usual playbook. “I lost my shit.”

Quinn’s mind began to race, out of all the possible things that Charlie could have done—Charlie hated Russell Fabray, why would she go see him. “Did she tell you why?”

“No, I started yelling at her and threatening to kill her in Spanish,” Santana answered truthfully. “You can’t confront her about that information though. Or she’ll totally know that it was me that blabbed to you, or you could blame the Hobbit, if she knows. Now pay up. You said you’d help me.”

Quinn raises a brow. She didn’t plan to confront her sister on anything, she hadn’t actually seen their father. While she wanted to know why, Charlie probably wouldn’t tell her. “Charlie likes food and comic books, there’s a bakery downtown that makes these superhero cupcakes. Ask for a dozen of the Marvel classic ones. Leave an apology note or something. Then while she’s stuffing her face with them, which she will try and apologize. That should work, and if it doesn’t then you’ve really screwed up and you’re on your own.”

Santana took down the information for the bakery, she glanced over at Charlie once more and frowned as she watched Gabrielle who had a hand on Charlie’s thigh. Cupcakes and getting rid of Charlie’s pest problem. She could do that. Then everything would be right with the world, Britt would start talking to her again and they could continue having their lady-kisses with Charlie, which was what the dancer had been talking about.
“Seventh place is hardly a terrible thing. It doesn’t matter if you got a zero, at least someone agreed with me and gave Finn negative numbers for being what I can imagine is a colossal idiot. It’s a list that gives you points for your sexual debauchery, this isn’t something you should be offended by. You’re a virgin,” Charlie pointed out with a shrug. The fact that she was the only virgin on the list and had ranked higher than Jesse and Finn made Charlie realize who had created the Glist. She picked up her phone and immediately texted her twin.

**Charlie:** I know it was you who wrote the Glist

Rachel shook her head as she continued to edit the footage that she had shot of Puck, Jesse and Finn together. “I’m sure Puck did it because I refused to put out for him. Why else would Finn and Jesse be ranked so lowly on the list? The two men in the running to be my leading man.”

**Quinn:** I don’t know what you’re talking about

Bullshit, Quinn hated Jesse St. James more than she hated Finn and Charlie for the life of her couldn’t figure out why. She was still tempted to reach out to Karofsky and pull him back into the hierarchy just so he could slushy Finn whenever he said or did something to piss her off. It was now an open secret amongst the football players that Finn had lost his v-card to Santana. Hell everyone at school knew about it. Yet Rachel had seemed to take the news rather well, she wondered if it was because she had finally moved on. “So your solution to bump you up that asinine list is to create this video?”

**Charlie:** Bull. You created that stupid list

“This coming from the person who was ranked number one for the soccer team,” Rachel snaps back and there is just a hint of bitterness in her voice. “You don’t have to worry about being near the bottom of anything. Or whether people respect you or think that you’re desirable, you have a girlfriend—”Charlie snorted at this and it caused Rachel to turn to look at her, “And you have a fan club.”

**Quinn:** You can’t tell anyone

“Gabrielle Avery is not my girlfriend. She wanted to use me to bump her ranking for the Cheerios, which she did. I don’t want fans. I don’t want a girlfriend. I want things to go back to the way they were when no one knew about me, and even though I was ‘popular’ I was invisible. I don’t want people bragging about being with the school freak, which nets you ten points by the way. I haven’t slept with anyone in about a year. I don’t think I’ll be sleeping with anybody soon. Everyone seems to know my business and I hate it. You’re the one that wants to be in the spotlight not me.”

**Charlie:** Tell anyone? I’m not going to tell anyone

“That’s not exactly true, you’re the star striker on a soccer team. While I admit that I still don’t understand the positions. I have watched you play, and your name is generally the one the crowd cheers for, after you get a touchdown. You show off constantly, with your backflips, and your cartwheels, and your flashy and often unnecessary form of attack. You enjoy the spotlight just as much as I do,” Rachel pointed out calmly. It wasn’t fair that all her friend had to do was kick a ball around and throw in a few flashy moves and she was considered royalty at the school, while Rachel who had put in just as much work in her singing and dancing and in the performing arts was considered a loser.

**Quinn:** You aren’t?”
“It’s not called a touchdown,” Charlie says after a moment. Rachel has a point, but she didn’t sign up for people to start making rumors about her or making fun of her behind her back. She liked the positive attention, it had made her feel like she was worth something. “Just wait until you’re this huge A-list superstar and you have paparazzi all over you and spreading lies about you in every shady gossip magazine. If we’re still friends, you’re going to call me up and I’m totally going to say. Told you so.”

**Charlie:** No of course not.

This caused Rachel to light up for a moment even though there was that hint of self-deprecation that Charlie was known for. Rachel could never tell if Charlie truly believed that she was destined to be a Lima Loser, someone that Rachel would be embarrassed in the future to spend time with. “Why wouldn’t we be friends?”

**Quinn:** So you’re not mad?

Charlie shrugged, who would want to drag the school freak along into a bright future with them. So she changed the subject, “I don’t think I’ve mentioned to you that this video is really a terrible idea,” she commented as she watched Rachel do a quick playback.

**Charlie:** I’m not mad. Furious.

Rachel who had begun to figure out Charlie’s tells, glanced over at her best friend. “You aren’t destined to be a Lima Loser. You know I’m a tiny bit psychic so I can tell these sort of things.” Charlie snorted at this but didn’t say anything, “This is just the perfect video to show people that I’m incredibly desirable and the three hottest guys at McKinley who are also in the running to be my leading man are willing to fight over me. Finn and Jesse nearly had a sing-off for me near the flagpole.”

**Quinn:** Yeah well. I’m angry with you as well.

Charlie rolled her eyes, “Right, of course. Not that I would know better because I’ve never had a girlfriend or anything, but don’t you think that Jesse might be a tad bit upset by this. I mean he thinks he’s the child’s father only to find out that you’ve been cheating on him with two other guys.”

**Charlie:** What the hell did I do?

“Jesse is an artist, and even if he is a bit upset, I’m sure he’ll appreciate the drama of it all. He’s every bit as dramatic as I am,” Rachel informs her best friend.

“This particular bit of drama makes you look like you’re being unfaithful to him,” Charlie pointed out as her phone buzzed and she looked down at Quinn’s message.

**Quinn:** I know you went to go see dad

Charlie’s blood ran cold and she stopped paying attention to Rachel who was going on about Jesse.

**Quinn:** I’m coming over because we need to talk

Charlie smiled at Rachel, she hadn’t heard her last few words. “Well you know him better than I do, anyway I need to go for a run. So that’s what I’m going to do,” with that she was gone leaving Rachel alone with her video editing, and a baffled expression on her face.
If Quinn had actually wanted to talk to Charlie, then she would have texted Rachel and given her the heads up. The two of them had bonded over Charlie’s inability to deal with things in a healthy way. But she didn’t, text Rachel and she wasn’t surprised to see Charlie’s car missing when she arrived at the Berry household. This had been happening for the past two weeks, after she had ripped into the soccer player for not showing up at the adoption meeting. Quinn wasn’t even upset about Charlie wanting to go see Russell, it had taken her a day but she realized that her twin had probably felt the same way she did.

Rachel smiled brightly when she opened the door, before pausing. “She already went for a ‘run’, I thought we had worked up a system to keep her in place. I distract her and you show up so she has nowhere to escape to,” Rachel said as she took Quinn’s jacket. “People are going to assume that you actually enjoy spending time with me,” she teased the ex-cheerleader.

“I do,” Quinn replied bluntly causing Rachel’s eyes to widen at the statement. At least Rachel wasn’t treating her like a child, and despite the fact that Rachel had some very crazy and usually poorly thought-out plans that she would go on about. It was fun. They had fun, there was no drama between them. They just simply cuddled on the couch and watched movies together and talked about how Charlie’s antics drove them both insane. Rachel surprisingly was the only one who didn’t keep secrets from her, she didn’t know if it was out of guilt or if the diva simply was incapable of keeping secrets. “She went to go see our father, the day she decided to ditch. It’s part of the reason that she and Santana are fighting.”

The idea that Quinn Fabray actually enjoyed spending time with the diva was something that brought a smile to Rachel’s face. She enjoyed spending time with Quinn as well. It was different than hanging around Charlie, Quinn at least didn’t seem to mind the endless show tunes. She hadn’t complained as they made their way through the Barbra series. Rachel didn’t need to bribe Quinn with sugar cookies or vegan brownies to get the ex-cheerleader to do anything. And while she understood the why Charlie was more secretive in nature about things, Quinn hadn’t lied to her. “She visited a correctional facility? Without telling anyone? Why aren’t you furious with her? Doing something like that could jeopardize the case,” Rachel said, she had watched SVU, and various other legal dramas for research purposes of course.

“She didn’t actually see him. At least that’s what I gathered from Santana. All I want to know is why? Not why did she go visit him, I do understand that. But why then? Charlie isn’t really impulsive like that, not when it comes to him at least,” Quinn explained watching as Rachel looked through her rather expansive DVD collection.

“Have you watched the Breakfast Club?” Rachel asked and when Quinn shook her head, Rachel smiled. “I really think you’d enjoy it,” she popped the movie in the DVD player and took a seat beside Quinn. “It’s not as if Charlie hasn’t been better, she talks a bit more lately about things. She sort of talked about your mother the other day, when I asked. She might have blown it off, or there might be some unresolved feelings, but she didn’t just turn and run. And daddy says that she’s been doing really well with her therapist, or at least she’s talking. So just give it time, she probably just doesn’t want to stress you out. She does take her duties as an aunt very seriously. And we meet with the Griffin’s next week here, because it’s neutral ground.”

“Santana is trying to apologize,” Quinn said, “Which is good because her moping around the house, or having Puck over is driving me up the wall. Her rooms aren’t sound-proof,” Rachel made a face at that and Quinn smiled, it was another reason she was coming over to Rachel’s place a lot. Santana was rather vocal and it really grossed her out.
“Well you are free to seek refuge here, instead of going somewhere else. As you can see we have a rather extensive movie collection and even bigger board game collection. From Scrabble to Candyland.”

“You have Candy Land?” Quinn said perking up, she and Charlie had used to play that game all the time when they were children. For a game that had required absolutely no skill, they had been extremely competitive. Like crazy competitive over the game.

“Yes, I’m sure my fathers would always let me win of course,” there was a hint of sadness in Rachel’s voice. She’d never really had friends to play with growing up, being the child of two gay dads in Lima, Ohio hadn’t made her popular. People had rarely showed up to her parties, because their parents made it seem like her fathers were evil, wicked men. It wasn’t something that Quinn Fabray would ever have to worry about, she probably had always been popular. “Though our last game of Scrabble got pretty intense you know. You’re looking at the scrabble champion of the Berry household. I even managed to beat Charlie who has a relatively extensive vocabulary.”

“So you won’t mind if I take that crown from you? Beating Charlie is one thing, beating me on the other hand—” Quinn trailed off smirking as Rachel took the bait, looking huffy at the idea that someone could possibly challenge her for the crown.

Rachel scoffed, “You wish. I’ve got an extensive vocabulary, you could never beat me in it.”

“Care to make a wager then? You win and I’ll sing a duet with you in glee club, I win and you have to watch all the batman movies with me from classic batman to the new one.”

The idea of singing a duet with the cheerleader appealed to Rachel, it would be different and she had always wondered what their voices would sound like together. Besides she hadn’t lost a game of scrabble since she was twelve years old, this really no downside to this situation for her, even though she really didn’t appreciate violent movies. “Deal.”

Coach Washington was certain that she had the yips, and that it was progressively getting worse. She wasn’t hitting the back of the net anymore, all her shots were veering wide, or sailing over the net. She still wasn’t able of hitting the crossbar, and at this point it was getting embarrassing. The team was keeping it extremely quiet of course, the last thing they needed was that rumor flying around, but the downside was that once again Charlie was being dragged off to go back to work on the fundamentals. And the worst part of the entire situation, was being forced to give up her study-hall which she had always skipped anyway to have a meeting with the school guidance counselor. It was mandatory, as in Coach Roz had threatened to kick her off the team mandatory. Charlie hadn’t believed her for a moment, Carmel High had this new striker that was supposed to be every good as Charlie was.

So here she was in Ms. Pillsbury’s office with a pamphlet in hand. Performance Anxiety. Charlie looked at the picture on the cover and looked at the red-head with a dry look, “I don’t have performance anxiety. I’m just having an off couple of weeks, I’ll get back into form soon enough. And I already have a therapist so how about we just tell Coach Washington that we talked about it and we can both go back to enjoying our days.”

Emma adjusted the pens on her desk, she had been waiting for Charlie to come and see her, but the soccer player had never shown up. The papers had been a wealth of information and she could see the scars on soccer player’s hand. She had pamphlets on that of course, but she didn’t think that Charlie would appreciate it. “I know that you’re seeing a therapist. But how are you handling all
the change in your life?” With Charlie’s condition being common knowledge, the impending trial that was coming during the summer, her sister’s pregnancy, and whatever other changes, the girl probably didn’t have the razor focus that she’d had on the pitch before.

Charlie didn’t say anything for a moment, clearly Ms. Pillsbury wasn’t going to let her simply walk out of here. “I’m fine, all I need is more practice.”

Emma stared at the teen who shifted under her gaze. She was going to help the teenager whether she wanted to or not, “When you played before—your hospitalization what did you think of?”

“The game itself,” Charlie answered with a shrug on her shoulders. It was always active thinking, from the position of the girl’s on her team to the position of everyone on the opposing team. She was watching most of them picking out weaknesses and adjusting her play accordingly.

“And now after everything that’s happened to you.”

Charlie hesitated, “Still the game itself,” she answered honestly. Nothing had changed in her head, she still read the game just fine. Nothing had changed in any aspect of her play she could still read the defense rather well, none of her other skills had diminished she just couldn’t get the ball in the net.

It wasn’t really the answer Emma had been expecting, perhaps it was more emotional than anything else. “Emotionally how do you feel when you play now?”

“Mounting frustration,” just like she felt now. She didn’t want to be prodded any more than she already was. She really didn’t want more people finding different ways to tell her that she was slightly off balance. “Look despite all the flash that I throw in, my sole job is to get the ball and put it at the back of the net. I can’t do that, hence the frustration.”

“Before the coach cleared you for practice did you shoot the ball around when no one was looking? Don’t worry I’m not going to tell her,” She said when Charlie hesitated again, but the teenager didn’t say anything. “Were you on target then?”

“Yes,” Charlie replied, there was no point lying about it. The moment that the doctor’s had informed her that she could do light cardio, Charlie had immediately brought out her soccer ball and began to juggle it and kick it around going through her drills slowly. She had never pushed herself but she had been relatively on target. It wasn’t anywhere as precise or as accurate as she had wanted it to be, but she had hit that crossbar.

“Well then you have to figure out what’s changed since that time and now,” Emma said simply and she could see the gears turning in Charlie’s head. Sometimes all that was required was a gentle push in the right direction.

Charlie didn’t really wait to respond instead she got up and pocketed the pamphlet, “Thanks you’ve given me plenty of things to think about. I’m going to go—think about them,” Charlie said as she grabbed her bag and left. Ms. Pillsbury office.

Emma blinked and got up to adjust the chair that Charlie had just been sitting in, It seemed as if she had helped the teenager, hopefully just the push would make Charlie come back to see her to talk about other things.

For a woman who seemed to refuse to take steps to control her OCD, Ms. Pillsbury had at least put her on the right direction, maybe it was time for her to let Quinn know everything. It was exhausting finding new places to hide from her twin and she was sure that Quinn was just doing it
now to mess with her. She could only hope that her sister wouldn’t take it like Santana—Charlie stopped walking to her locker and turned around, planning to walk away. She didn’t have it in her right now to deal with Santana’s comments, or some half-ass apology so Brittany would talk to her again. It was the last thing that she wanted to deal with.

“I got you cupcakes from Cakes,” Santana said watching as Charlie stilled for a moment. The damn cupcakes were bloody expensive, especially since she’d had them rushed. The soccer player had better appreciate it. “They’ve got your nerdy little comic book characters on it,” this seemed to do the trick and Charlie finally turned around. Santana hadn’t expected Charlie to look as pissed as she did.

It was Santana who had told Quinn about her visit to the prison, “What else did you tell Quinn?” she said keeping her voice low.

The smile on Santana’s face faded. She had assumed that Quinn would have the sense to wait until Charlie at least told her. She should have known that the Quinn would totally sell her out. “That bitch,” when Quinn had said she was going to get her back for a particularly loud session with Puck, that hadn’t even been all that good, she hadn’t thought that Quinn would sell her out. “Look, I didn’t tell her about any of the other stuff. I just wanted help in apologizing to you, which I’d totally deny, coz I’m totally a bitch like that. But I wouldn’t tell her not about that.”

Charlie eyes flicked downward and saw the cupcakes in Santana’s hands before she looked back at Santana, she could feel her frustration mounting. She exhaled slowly, “You don’t need to apologize. You were right about me. I’ve come to accept that. You don’t need to offer me a peace offering just because Britt’s not talking to you. I’ll talk with and tell her that we worked it out or something. So please just leave me alone, and you know not tell Quinn anything else that we talked about.” With that Charlie opened her locker and grabbed her books and slammed her locker door shut, before leaving a stunned Santana standing there.

Quinn was the one that bought the vegan ice cream, as well as two tubs of Ben & Jerry’s ice cream, and it was Charlie who took Rachel home, the day that Jesse that broke up with her. It had forced the twins to work together or at least stay in a room long enough as they both attempted to cheer Rachel up. Quinn at least had the decency to keep the comments about Jesse to herself. Even if she was secretly quite pleased that the douchebag was out of Rachel’s life.

“Charlie can totally kick his ass for you,” Quinn said as she gently rubbed Rachel’s back, as she volunteered Charlie’s services.

Charlie nodded, “I could totally break his nose and make it look like an accident,” she never pointed out that she had been right again, but truthfully breaking up with Rachel seemed a bit excessive to her. She wondered if he was just doing it for the dramatic flair of it all.

“I can get Santana to get some of the football guys to give him a slushy bath,” Quinn offered. She would have ordered the hit herself, if she was still the head cheerleader. “Or you know we could make it a slushy the Saint Jackass day, and make a whole event out of it.”

“Whoever slushies him the most totally gets an award,” Charlie said clapping her hands.

Rachel who had stopped crying, stared at the twins, dully, her lips twitching upwards, as they played off each other’s ideas. They had been like this all afternoon, Charlie hadn’t even complained when she had suggested that she watch Yentl. It truly didn’t seem like they had been fighting for nearly two weeks. “Don’t, you know I don’t approve of violence or slushies for that matter.”
“Slushies are a part of the natural order of things, and besides it could be worse. It’s just corn syrup and water and a bit of ice. Think of what McKinley would be without slushies?” Quinn said, she really wanted to watch Jesse get a slushy to the face.

Charlie immediately picked up on Quinn’s train of thought, “The Skanks give swirlies, the football meat-heads give wedgies and have no problem exerting their will through violent means. A slushy isn’t the worst thing that can happen in high school.”

Rachel was about to protest that neither had been on the receiving end of a slushy, but in reality they both had. Quinn had been caught in a mass slushy attack, Charlie had a massive amount of slushy dropped on her head. And while Rachel still wanted to protest, she hadn’t been on a receiving end in ages. “No, to any kind of slushy attack. Jesse is just angry, we might still get back together. All I have to do is wait and keep apologizing for hurting his feelings. We can still work this out.”

Quinn frowned, “He’s still in the running to be your leading man? He dumped you because you decided to make it look like there was three guys fighting over you. Are you sure he’s not doing this to be dramatic?” Quinn asked. It sounded like something that Saint Jackass would do, just to be in some ridiculous position of power over Rachel. The girl definitely deserved better than that.

“Jesse’s a jackass. Finn’s an idiot, and Puck is a man-whore. You really could do better than that Rachel,” Charlie added.

Rachel rolled her eyes, “It’s not like I have a lineup of people willing to date me.”

“Quinn doesn’t either. Something about being seven months pregnant,” Charlie said ignoring the look the dirty look was giving her. “She’s fine with it.”

Rachel looked over at Quinn who gave her a smile, “All it requires is a bit of patience and not dating idiotic high-school boys, who would much rather be playing Call of Duty, or in Jesse’s case singing to a mirror. You just need to find someone who has a bit more depth to them.”

Charlie nodded in agreement, “I’m sure there is someone who will make the perfect leading man. Who isn’t a—” Quinn smacked Charlie’s arm hard and shot her twin a dirty look. Charlie glared back at her and then smiled at Rachel who had looked at her, waiting for her to finish her sentence. “Afraid to get to know you for who you really are, someone you trust completely.”

“You shouldn’t settle for someone who doesn’t make you feel safe, and comforted. Someone that appreciates you for being you. Who listens to you and doesn’t make things out to be worse than they are. And when you kiss them it feels like—”

“Fireworks. Or you know like every cell in your body is alive,” Charlie finished and Quinn turned to her sibling who simply shrugged. “Everything feels better when you’re around them. I imagine that’s what love feels like.”

Rachel bit her lip, “Did you feel that with Finn?” she asked turning to Quinn, ignoring the fake gag noises that were coming from Charlie.

Quinn paused and went over her feelings for Finn, “No,” she answered honestly. “I think I was with him because that’s who I was supposed to be with. The head cheerleader with the quarterback it’s a—”

“Walking cliché,” Charlie finished with a shrug, at least Quinn finally admitted that Finn was a mistake.
It wasn’t the answer that Rachel was expecting from Quinn, she had expected Quinn to tell her that it was some sort of epic romance that was torn apart by lies and deceit but it seemed that she had used him and he had used her, because popularity had been popular to the both of them.

“Fireworks?” she said finally turning back to the soccer player. She wondered which girl the soccer player was talking about.

Charlie just shook her head, “That’s what I hear people say, I wouldn’t know. Never had a girlfriend remember?” Rachel just stared at Charlie, not believing her for a second and the soccer player squirmed after a moment, “Fine. With Santana.” There was always sparks with Santana, and liquid heat, and Charlie’s mind wandered back to the last time they kissed, and even though she was upset with the Latina she smiled a bit, it was only for a second before she was back to being angry with her.

“And Brittany,” Quinn supplied and this time it was Charlie’s turn to send Quinn a dirty look. “Charlie has a crush on the both of them,” she added as she continued to sell her twin out. She dodged the pillow that Charlie threw in retaliation.

Rachel ducked as Quinn retaliated immediately smacking Charlie in the face hard with a pillow, Charlie was about to smack Quinn back when Rachel picked up her pillow and hit Charlie square in the face. “What the hell, you’re supposed to be on my side, I’m your best friend,” she said with a dramatic pout before smacking the diva.

Rachel shook her head and laughed, before nudging Quinn with her shoulder. It was only fair Quinn was after all pregnant. It soon became a two on one, with Charlie mostly ducking out of the way and trying to throw the pillows back.

Santana found Charlie in the gym, with a row of five soccer balls in front of her, she watched silently from the bleachers as Charlie kicked one ball after the other, each missing the net. Some hitting the goal post. Charlie simply stood there in silence for a moment before jogging up and picking up the balls before setting them back down. It wasn’t until the last ball was placed did she notice the Latina watching her. Santana watched as the soccer player stiffened for a moment and eyed her before shaking her head and going back to focus on the net.

Santana didn’t say a word knowing that the soccer player would approach after a moment, so she just continued to watch as Charlie kicked the soccer ball. Though this time it hit its intended target, the crossbar, dead center. Charlie actually stopped for a moment, before repeating the same thing with the next ball and the next, until the last one. Which went into the right upper quadrant of the net. Still the Latina didn’t say anything until Charlie finally walked over to her.

“What do you want Santana?” Charlie said there was a tired look on her face, she had been doing that for the past hour or so, and she was wholly unimpressed with herself.

“The duck pond isn’t the same without you,” Santana said as she turned to Charlie who had frozen in response. “Look I’m a bitch sometimes,” Charlie quirked an eyebrow. “Most of the time,” Santana corrected. “And I shouldn’t have taken out my feelings about Frankenteen on you. You’ve never treated either of us like we were nothing, and I shouldn’t have accused you of treating use like well the prostitutes you’ve been with. You aren’t disgusting—”

Charlie rolled her eyes at this and began to move away from her, “Look, its fine if you think I am. Russell did, Judy did, Frannie did. I get more than a few comments about it at school. If enough people say it then it really must be true. I can’t be angry at you for telling the truth,” she said simply, there was no more anger just quiet resignation. “I need to get back to practice.”
“You’re shitty at pretending everything’s okay,” Santana said as she stood up and stepped in front of Charlie who looked annoyed now, “I’m a bitch. I admit that, and I get angry and it’s like the incredible hulk remember. You can’t blame me for anything that snix does.”

“The incredible hulk doesn’t hurt his friends,” Charlie immediately responded, but her lips twitched upward at this.

Santana noticed the slight change in mood, it was subtle but Charlie had relaxed and she pressed forward, “Sometimes he does when he gets really angry,” she personally had no idea if this was true or not, but she figured it was a safe bet. “I’m not like those idiots. I don’t really think you’re disgusting and I shouldn’t have said the shit that I said to you. Or you know tell Quinn about you going to visit him.”

Charlie sighed and rubbed her head as she studied the Latina, she really did miss going to the duck pond and feeding the ducks, and it was going to be spring soon and the baby ducks were adorable. “I’m still mad at you for sleeping with Finn fucking Hudson,” Charlie said after a moment crossing her arms over her chest. What Santana said still echoed in her mind, but unlike everyone else she had apologized.

“I’m upset with myself for fucking Hudson. It definitely comes in second on the list of the worst moments in my life. At least it was under five minutes, felt like an hour.”

Charlie frowned, “What was the worst moment in your life?”

“Finding you on my doorstep that day like that, not knowing if you were going to live or die,” Santana said without missing a beat. “That scared me.”

Charlie didn’t say anything for a moment and looked at the balls that were scattered around the net. “I’m not…I’m clean. I would never have done anything with you if I wasn’t. Or I would have told you, or something.”

“I know,” Santana replied. Truthfully she shouldn’t have even said anything Puck never wore a condom, and he got tested like twice a year. It had been unfair to hold Charlie to a different standard than Puck. Britt’s had slept with Puck and so had she. Neither girl said anything for a long moment as Charlie fidgeted suddenly uncomfortable by emotional awkwardness between them. Santana sighed, she wasn’t good at these sort of things. “Are we going to be okay?”

Charlie flashed that crooked smile of hers, and nodded, as she relaxed, because they were. They would get there, it still sort of hurt, Santana’s words had cut deeply, but the thing was she’d heard those words every single time she had stepped into the Fabray house, for the past three years. It certainly didn’t hurt nearly as bad as it did the first time.

“Good cause I totes told Avery that if she molested you one more time then I’d put her on the bottom of the pyramid,” Santana said with a sniff of indignation. “You can thank me by taking me and Britt’s to the duck pond. The little water rats are probably starving or something.”

Charlie was quiet for a moment, “How mad is she?”

“She hasn’t talked to me all week unless she absolutely had to,” Santana grumbled, grabbing Charlie by the arm and pulling her along. “Now that you’re finally back we can start having sweet lady kisses again.”

“I’m so glad that I could be of service getting you laid again Lopez,” Charlie said as she let Santana pull her out of the gym, grabbing her duffel bag on the way out.
“I said we Fabray,” Santana said without looking back at Charlie who blinked.

“Yes I know you said—oh. I don’t think that’s a good idea. You don’t need to—” Charlie sputtered as she tried to free herself from Santana’s grasp. “I already forgive you there’s no need to do that with me,” Charlie said as she turned a bright red.

“I know I don’t need to do anything, I wants to. And I always gets what I wants,” Santana responded, glancing back at the teenager. “I thought you said that if you couldn’t say the word you shouldn’t be doing it?”

Charlie swallowed, as she pulled away from Santana, wincing when she saw the hurt on Santana’s face. She had mentioned it to her therapist in passing who had insisted that Charlie be as honest with any potential partner. “I can’t—” Charlie said with a sigh and moved to pull her shorts aside revealing the white scar on her hip, “I can’t. It’s not that I don’t want to. I just can’t. He tried to… there was a knife and he grabbed me, and the last time you touched me, it nearly caused me to go back there again. It’s not you I swear it’s not you. I just can’t, not now,” she said as she tried to explain. “I’m sorry.”

Santana looked down at the scar and then back at Charlie, who quickly pulled her shorts back up. The girl looked panicked and Santana took her hand, “Have you—”

“I tried once, that didn’t go well. So I just take cold showers now,” Charlie cut her off.

Santana made up her mind that if she ever saw Russell Fabray again she was going to kill him, she’d plead temporary insanity and totally get off. “So you can’t like ever?”

Charlie looked away, “I don’t know, the doctor said that I should work on desensitizing myself, and I keep saying that I’m going to, but I haven’t really started. I’m still trying to figure out the signs to stop me from losing myself you know?” Charlie explained. She hadn’t expected to be dealing with the issue again so soon. “You can’t—”

“Berry already knows, but there is no way I can hide this shit from Britt,” Santana interrupted, she wasn’t going to play this game anymore with Charlie. She wasn’t surprised when Charlie shot her a puzzled look. “She figured it out back when you lost it at the hospital, when I said that I’d castrate— shit I’m sorry.”

“Its fine,” Charlie said immediately. The word didn’t affect her anymore, it had been one of the first thing that she had worked on. “I don’t want Quinn to know, she’s got the baby coming and I don’t want to stress her out with feeling guilty about this shit,” Charlie admitted.

Santana nodded, “But you’re going to be the ones to tell Britt’s, and even though it pains me to say it, you should tell the hobbit. She can keep this secret, she can keep all of them. She is your best friend, trust her. She isn’t going to have a reaction like mine.”

“No, she probably wouldn’t,” Charlie said agreeing with Santana, “She’ll just try and get me to open up to the entire world and I don’t want a PowerPoint presentation on how talking about it, or singing about it will help me.”

“Then tell her that,” Santana suggested, Rachel was a lot of things but even she understood that Charlie didn’t want to do a lot of talking.

“I’ll try, maybe after this Jesse St. Jackass thing has passed. She’s been busy moping around the house and looking at her phone hoping that he calls, and Quinn is there every day. If I didn’t know better, I’d say that my sister liked Rachel,” Charlie said snorting at the idea.
“He’s back in her life,” Quinn informed Charlie slamming her lunch tray on the table. “He’s gone for the entire week that she has laryngitis, while we took care of her—”

“What’s this we business, I took care of her, she wouldn’t let you near her in a mad attempt to make sure you didn’t get sick as well apparently it won’t be good for the baby. All you did was boss me around.” Charlie snipped crossing her arms over her chest. “And I know all this, I live with her remember,” Charlie added, it had been impossible to talk to Rachel at all what with Quinn over and now Jesse talking about her mother.

“Then you agree that he’s probably up to something,” Quinn said completely ignoring Charlie’s unnecessary commentary.

“Yes. Probably still trying to get into Rachel’s pants,” Charlie said dryly, when Quinn glared at her, Charlie immediately held up her hands. “Right I forgot your hormones are making you paranoid and possibly crazy.”

Quinn shot Charlie a sour look, “He’s been talking to her about dreams and—”

“As amusing as your hatred for Saint Jackass is; Jesse talking about dreams isn’t as nearly as bad as what Finnept did. Trying to show her that she’s more than just a voice by emotionally manipulating her and taking her to a quadriplegic in some silly attempt to make her feel better about her situation. I’m sure that if I got to some third-world country, I’ll learn that I didn’t have it so bad.” Charlie pointed out, she was annoyed now Rachel was on the Finn train once again.

“She isn’t just a voice,” Quinn said immediately frowning at Charlie, she hadn’t thought what Finn did was particularly egregious.

Charlie hummed in response, “I know she isn’t. She’s allowed to be worried, she’s allowed to freak out because her dreams might be in jeopardy. She is allowed to be in pain about it all. And since its Rachel we both know she’s going to be unnecessarily dramatic about the whole thing. This isn’t an after-school special, Rachel wasn’t ungrateful for everything that she had or was given to her. She was scared. It was a week of her worrying about her voice. If I lost my leg tomorrow, and couldn’t play soccer anymore, I’m allowed to be upset about it, without some insensitive moron trying to be like look this guy has it worse.”

“Is that why you gave Karofsky a slushy and told him to go nuts on Finn?” Quinn asked watching as Charlie’s lips slowly curled into a rather proud smirk.

“Well that and he called Santana a slut within earshot of Missy who casually mentioned it to me,” Charlie replied, watching in amusement as Karofsky threw another slushy at Finn. “We came to an agreement. He hates Finn nearly as much as I do. So all I had to do was call off the random slushy attacks on him and he gets to slushy Finn till I get bored. I’m not bored.” Charlie said with a smile, she had made sure to cover her tracks so she wouldn’t have to deal with Rachel asking her to stop. She wouldn’t ever get bored of seeing the man-child slushied.

“Rachel wouldn’t approve,” Quinn said absentmindedly, but she didn’t tell Charlie to knock it off. It wasn’t as if anyone was getting hurt except for Finn’s wardrobe. Though judging by the fact that Charlie had rushed to Santana’s defense, it was a safe bet that they had worked it out. “Do you think you can get him to do Jesse?”
“Rachel isn’t stupid, if someone starts slushying Saint Jackass, she’s going to know it was one of us. She’ll probably blame me, so think of something else,” Charlie pointed out.

“Regionals are just a few weeks away—”

“I have the State Tournament coming up, which means that I’m going to be busting my ass for the next month and a half. Santana and Brittany have nationals and regionals. So unless something catastrophic happens that requires my immediate attention, all my focus is going to be on ignoring the fact that the District Attorney somehow managed to get my number and wants me to testify, and making sure that my team is ready to take apart Carmel High and all the other schools that stand in our way till we bring home another shiny trophy.”

Quinn didn’t say that it had been her that had given the DA Charlie’s number in an attempt to get her to testify. Charlie just wanted to pretend that it wasn’t happening at all, but every other person in the immediate family was going to be on that witness stand. Frannie was coming in from Cleveland to make sure that she spoke up in defense of their father, and possibly to attack Charlie anyway that she could. It was probably an attempt to be the sole beneficiary of their father’s will. She hadn’t heard which side their mother was going to be on, but it would be weird if everyone in the family had something to say but the person he had abused. It wasn’t the time or the place to try and convince Charlie to speak out, she’d try after her sister was done with soccer for the year. “You say this but you’ve been spending a lot of time with Brittany and Santana,” Quinn pointed out.

Charlie didn’t say anything, she wasn’t really spending that much time with them. They were trying to help desensitize her, to mixed results. There hadn’t been any sex, just a lot of rather uncomfortable touching a few flashbacks and Charlie pulling her pants back up rather quickly. It was awkward and not fun, and she wanted to be normal again. Or at least as normal as she had been at the beginning of the year. “They’re helping me with something,” Charlie said after a moment. “With my flashbacks,” she added.

Quinn softened immediately, “Rachel and I could—”

“No. Trust me. No,” Charlie said interrupting her before shuddering. The last thing she wanted was for her sister to grab at her, if the situation wasn’t already awkward enough. “Thanks though, for offering. But you really can’t help me with this one,” Charlie said taking her sister’s hand.

Quinn glanced over at Santana and Brittany, “If this is about the baby—”

“You really need to start thinking of a name for that kid.”

“Puck suggested Jackie Daniels,” Quinn said with a roll of her eyes, “If I wasn’t going to name my child after a comic book character then I certainly wasn’t going to name her after an alcoholic beverage. But I told you that all because I’m pregnant—”

“I sometimes lash out and you’re pregnant,” Charlie said immediately. “I don’t want to hurt you on accident,” Charlie said telling a partial truth. This wasn’t a conversation that you had in the middle of the cafeteria. But it was noisy like usual and no one was paying attention. “You know. Harley is still the name I’d choose. She’d be Harley and you’re Quinn. It’s perfect.”

“I am not naming my child after a psychotic clown who is emotionally and physically abused by the Joker,” Quinn said for the umpteenth time. “Besides I promised Puck that he could give her a first name so long as I agreed to it. He’s been going through baby name books.”

“Then I should totally get to give her a middle name,” Charlie said in a fake outrage.
“No. You’d name her something silly like Storm, or Phoenix, or Hulk. Or you’d try and get me to agree to Harley,” Quinn said trying not to smile as Charlie grumped. “The Griffins are going to give her a middle name,” Quinn informed her sister who frowned at this idea.

Charlie looked over at Puck, she already knew he was going to be a mess, he wasn’t taking the whole impending separation well. Though it was hard to tell sometimes, he was still messing around with nearly every girl in school, but it was now a daily thing. Some new girl was on his arm nearly every day. Charlie wondered if he was trying to recreate what had happened with Quinn. It was almost enough to make her concerned enough to talk to him, almost, but she trusted him enough to not be stupid about it. “You think they’d go for Harley?” Charlie asked.

“No, they’ve already have a name picked out. I won’t know until after she’s born, they’ll be visiting this weekend again,” Charlie nodded at this making a mental note to get out of practice. “They’re really trying with Puck, they can see it’s bothering him.”

Charlie nodded and was about to say something when they were approached by JBI, Charlie’s eyes narrowed at him. “What do you want JBI?” she asked.

The creepy school stalker who Charlie had caught outside of Rachel’s house a few times over the Christmas holidays shifted, “I’ve got the information that Coach Roz wanted,” he said tossing her a pen drive. “So if you could tell her to not you know report me, or have me expelled that would be great.”

Charlie didn’t want to ask what perverted thing he had been caught doing this time, “If this is some of your creepy and probably illegal porn—” she said in a warning tone.

Jacob shook his head quickly, “It’s all the information on Dani Harper the new Carmel striker, I managed to sneak in get some footage of her practicing, and I did some digging and found some video of her playing. Plus I managed to rope Lauren into hacking into the computers to get me some information on her as well. That’s everything I could find. And she’s joining your nemesis,” he said turning to Quinn. “Please make sure that Rachel gets that information.”

“Ugh, she isn’t going to sleep with you just because you happened to grab some information that might be helpful to the glee club,” Quinn snapped at him.

Charlie looked at the pen drive and then back at Jacob, “You can go now,” she said dismissively and watched as he scampered away. She pocketed the pen-drive planning to look at it later.

“Dani Harper?”

“Carmel recruited her from LA, or something they’re always pulling crap like this, and playing fast and loose with the rules. Whatever, I’m back in form she can’t be that good, and we still have time to create a plan to neutralize her,” Charlie said dismissively.

She didn’t really know why she had followed Rachel and Mercedes to the Vocal Adrenaline rehearsal, mostly because she wanted to keep an eye on the diva. Jesse had apparently been messing with her head with all this talk about her mother and Quinn didn’t Charlie’s relaxed attitude on the boy, she knew that something was up. That tape hadn’t just appeared out of thin air. This was a terrible idea they were trespassing on private property. Charlie had declined to come with them this time, pointing out that this close to their big game she couldn’t be seen on the Carmel High campus.
“Do you think they can see us?” Mercedes whispers from where there all sitting in the upper level of the Carmel High auditorium.

“What happens if they catch us? Are we going to go to jail? This is trespassing,” Quinn whispers back keeping her voice as low as possible. She shouldn’t have come, there was no way that she could run away, she was heavily pregnant and she cursed Puck for knocking her up.

Rachel smiled and gently nudged Quinn, “Stealing their ideas is not a crime Quinn, besides everyone knows that Carmel High rarely ever plays fair. Think of this as scouting the competition,” she said before going back to writing down notes in her notebooks.

“You need to stop listening to Charlie,” Quinn said with a roll of her eyes. She needed to tell Charlie to stop giving Rachel crazy ideas.

“Quiet, your shoes are making noise,” Rachel snapped to Mercedes still whispering quietly as Mercedes shoes squeaked against the ground. Rachel watched as Shelby led the group through the Gaga number, “They really look amazing.”

Quinn watched the performance, it had the overproduction value of a Cheerios number with excellent singing. It was discouraging to see that this was what they were up against. To say they were the underdogs would be a lie, they weren’t prepared for this. They should have been working on preparing for regionals since they managed to get through Sectionals. They couldn’t be this close to regionals and still not have a set-list or any choreography. Sue Sylvester would have been working them to the bone at this point, even Roz Washington had the right idea and was currently running her team to the ground in preparation.

“Okay, okay, okay, just... enough. You guys aren’t getting it. You're letting the costumes do all the work. Theatricality isn’t about crazy outfits. It's not enough to douse yourselves with gasoline. You have to light yourselves on fire to make it work,” Shelby barks out to Vocal Adrenaline as she sighs dramatically and walks onto the stage.

“God, she's good,” Rachel said and Quinn turns to look at her, there’s this sound of pure admiration in Rachel’s voice.

Quinn pauses for a moment there is something so familiar about that voice, but she can’t place it. Rachel had played the tape for both Charlie and Quinn, several times. There was no way that Shelby could be Rachel’s mom though.

“But being theatrical doesn't mean you have to be a nuclear explosion. It can be like, like a quiet storm. You just have to radiate emotion, express what's deep inside you. That's what theatricality is truly about. Do I have to demonstrate? Funny Girl, E flat.” Shelby says to the piano player who nods and begins to play.

Rachel nearly squeals and Quinn is about to slap onto Rachel’s mouth so she doesn’t blow their cover even though they aren’t exactly well hidden. “Exactly what I would have done. I can do Barbra. I could do it in my sleep.” She says and leans back so she can hear Shelby sing. The smile on her face slowly begins to fade as Shelby continues to sing, and a there’s an almost wistful look on her face. It’s like she’s hypnotized as she gets up and begins to walk toward the stage.

Quinn had been lost in the music still trying to place the voice when Mercedes voice alerts her to the fact that there’s something wrong, “Where are you going?” She asks still trying to keep her voice low as she tries to pull Rachel back.

Quinn immediately makes a grab for Rachel but the diva pulls away from her, “Get back here,” she
Rachel ignores her order and walks down to the stage just as Shelby finishes singing.

Rachel is standing in front of the stage and Quinn has to strain to hear the usual loud diva, because her voice is uncharacteristically small and so unsure of herself. “Ms. Corcoran? I'm Rachel Berry, I'm your daughter.”

Quinn pales at the news and her mind runs through hundreds of scenarios, but she’s pregnant, very pregnant and her mind feels like it isn’t as sharp as it once was, and Charlie has mentioned that Quinn’s been acting crazy and paranoid because of all the hormones coursing through her system. Charlie would have the answer and this is something that would require Charlie’s immediate attention, so she pulls out her phone and dials Charlie’s number.

Charlie picks up after the first ring, she sounds out of breath, which makes sense because she’s just finished with soccer practice. “Quinn,” she greets her sister.

“Jesse St. James is a little shit,” Quinn informs Charlie as she watches the interaction between Shelby and Rachel, who are now sitting in the front row and are talking. She wants to know what they are saying.

“Language Quinn, you’re carrying a baby. If this is about your little vendetta on Jesse—” Charlie begins.

“The coach of Vocal Adrenaline is Rachel’s mom,” Quinn interrupts, and Charlie immediately shuts up, stunned into silence. “Rachel is talking to her now.”

“Jesse St. James is a little shit,” Charlie repeats, her voice tensing. “I can’t step foot on Carmel High soil, I’m still persona non grata around there, and I’m twenty minutes away. You need to pay attention to everything that’s going on and try and see if you can tell where this is going. I’ll meet you guys at home,” she said immediately dropping the phone.

Quinn feels a bit vindicated that Charlie had underestimated Jesse, but she immediately follows Charlie’s advice and even though she feels a bit awkward she sits down a couple of rows till she can hear Rachel and Shelby talking.

“Did you ever regret it? You know leaving me behind?” Rachel asks and Quinn is still surprised to see that Rachel’s nervous and unsure of herself than she has ever been. But it’s understandable, she hadn’t been expecting to meet her mother today, it was supposed to be a simple reconnaissance mission.

“W-When did you realize it was the right time for me to find you?” Rachel asked, hesitation in her voice.”

“I saw you sing at sectionals. You were extraordinary. You were me,” Shelby says and she chuckles as she takes Rachel’s hand in her own.

Rachel smiles at the action and looks up at the lights of the Carmel High auditorium, this wasn’t where she had expected her mother to be. She was good really good, she expected her to be singing on Broadway, tearing it apart. “Was it hard for you to not become a star? To not have your dreams come true?” it was her worst nightmare and part of her wondered if she’d end up like Shelby, stuck in Ohio directing a glee club.
“It felt like a broken promise. Like the Fisher King's wound - never heals,” Shelby says and Rachel brightens at this statement.

“Wow. Genetics really are amazing. You see the world with the same fierce theatricality as I do. Even the way we're sitting right now is so dramatic, and yet we feel so comfortable with it,” Rachel says and Quinn relaxes a bit, Rachel is back to being Rachel.

There’s a sorrow in Shelby’s eyes and she gently rubs Rachel’s hand with her thumb trying to comfort her. “I've missed so much. How do you feel?”

Rachel thinks for a moment, “Thirsty. When I was little and I used to get sad, my dad’s would bring me a glass of water. It got so I couldn't tell if I was sad or just thirsty.” It’s weird but true and it’s what makes Rachel well Rachel.

But Shelby frowns, taken aback by Rachel’s weirdness, and the story that she just told. There’s a flicker of sorrow and regret that cross her face and she pulls back. “I shouldn't have done this. This was supposed to feel good. W-We were supposed to have some kind of slow-motion run into each other's arms. This is all wrong.”

“Maybe we can just go to dinner or something just to get over the initial shock,” Rachel says hopefully, even though Quinn can see the disappointment on her face.

“I'm so sorry, Rachel. Uh... I'll... I'll call you,” Shelby says as she gets up and quickly exits the auditorium leaving Rachel stunned.

Quinn immediately goes and wraps an arm around Rachel in a protective manner, “Maybe she’s just in a bit of shock, it is something huge to take in,” She says and Rachel nods, still to stunned to speak. “Let’s get you home.”

Quinn stood with her sister as they watched Rachel flitting around, she had started to bake when she had come home while flipping through music. Charlie tilted her head as she watched Rachel humming to some song from Funny Girl. “How bad was it?”

“She’s going to be disappointed,” Quinn said as rested her hand on her stomach. “I didn’t have the stomach to tell her that Shelby might pull away from her. It’s like it hit her that Rachel wasn’t a little girl that needed her a mother.”

Charlie nodded and Quinn thought she saw a flash of something in her twin’s eyes but it was gone before she could place it. “She was going to be disappointed anyway. Rachel has imagined this moment for years. She expected her mother to be some Broadway legend. She didn’t expect to meet her mother in Lima, Ohio as a coach for Vocal Adrenaline.”

“I told you Jesse wasn’t to be trusted. He manipulated her, and I think that Shelby was behind it, just so she could meet her daughter,” Quinn said and Charlie raised a brow.

“I don’t think Shelby would have been all for Jesse screwing her daughter. Has she told her father’s, they might have something to say about this entire thing, there has to be a reason that Shelby stayed away for sixteen years,” Charlie pointed out, smiling when Rachel looked up at them a suspicious look on her face.

“Are you going to be the one to prep her for disappointment?” Quinn asked her sister quietly.
“No, like you said it was a shock. Give it time, but don’t get her too excited at the same time. She
does need to talk to Leroy and Hiram though,” Charlie said and rubs her head.

Quinn nods and goes to sit at the island, “How are you feeling?” she asks the diva carefully,
studying Rachel carefully. Charlie hadn’t been there, she hadn’t seen how disappointed Rachel had
looked when Shelby had pulled away.

Rachel smiles as she watches Charlie come in and grab the batter that she’s just finished spooning
into a baking pan. The soccer player pulls the used spatula and gets as much of the batter as she can
onto it and licks it. “Aren’t you on a diet? And what if Quinn wants to have some?” Rachel sad in
mock anger.

“What Roz doesn’t know won’t hurt her,” Charlie said with an indignant sniff as she continued to
lick the spatula, smacking Quinn’s hand away. “You get to actually eat the brownies, I’ll have to
survive on the smell for a few more months.”

Quinn raised a brow, “You didn’t answer the question,” Quinn said as she went back to focusing on
Rachel, a frown on her face.

Rachel looked at Quinn and frowned, “I don’t know how I feel, it’s a lot to process,” she answered
truthfully, “I guess that’s how she’s feeling, but I hope that we can forge a relationship. It’ll be a bit
of work but she wants me, I can just feel it. She can do all the things that your mother helped you
with, like what to wear and we can discuss things that I don’t feel comfortable talking about with
my fathers. And we can talk about Broadway, and most importantly we can sing duets together.”

Quinn looks at Charlie to say something discouraging but her twin is paying more attention to the
spatula that’s in front of her. “That’s going to take time, you two need to get to know each other
first,” Quinn says gently. “It’s going to take time, so you really need to be patient, she doesn’t
know how to be a mother so you can’t just expect her to know everything or do everything right.”

“Or—” Quinn recognized Charlie’s tone and immediately kicked her sister in the shin causing her
to make a face and look over at Quinn glaring at her; that had hurt. “She could love you and want
to spend some time with you. It’ll be hard right now because she’s the coach of Vocal Adrenaline,
but maybe after that’s done in the summer she can spend time with you.” Charlie said with a tense
smile but Rachel nodded.

“Of course, you raise a good point. I didn’t even think about the position I was putting her in. She
would have to give it her all, and so will I. As competitors, that’s for the best,” Rachel said
seriously. “We should begin to prepare for Regionals, we need to take this seriously. My mother
will be watching,” Rachel said and looked at Quinn. “I still have to get my Lady Gaga outfit ready.
Do either of you know how to sew?”

Charlie snorted and shook her head as she got up dropping the bowl into the sink. “Quinn doesn’t
either, she’s roped Santana’s Abuela into helping her.”

Quinn flushed, “She offered to help,” she protested, but Charlie was walking away and she looked
at Rachel. “She did. My mom did all the sewing that needed to be done,” Quinn explained.

Rachel gave Quinn a small smile and glanced at where Charlie had once been, “Charlie doesn’t
talk about your mother but you seem to love her a lot.”

“She loved us all of us, and she never touched a hair on Charlie’s head. I think she was just as
scared of my dad as we were,” Quinn explained. “I’m sure if she could do it again she would have
chosen differently,” Quinn said earnestly. She really did miss her mother. She understood where
Rachel was coming from, that wanting for something more. That feminine touch that helped shape her into Quinn Fabray. It didn't matter if her mother cared mostly about popularity and some rather superficial thing. Or that she drank too much, she had always been there for her up until the very end. Judy didn't deserve to rot in jail for the rest of her life. She wasn’t Russell, she wasn’t a bad person.

She had been spending too much time around the Fabray twins it’s the only way that Rachel had managed to get through singing a duet with her mother. It was the only way she had managed to get back to Quinn’s car without breaking down. She lasted halfway through the trip home before she finally broke down, hot tears splashed down her face. She didn’t expect Quinn to pull over to the side of the road and switch on the emergency lights and just wrap an arm around her. It was awkward with the arm rest in between them, but she couldn’t help but lean into Quinn as she sobbed. “She didn’t want me”

“Well she’s an idiot,” Quinn said calmly. “Not to want you, she’s an idiot,” Quinn said trying to find the right words to soothe Rachel. She didn’t really understand what had gone wrong, it had seemed that Shelby had been warming up to Rachel slowly, she had been hesitant but that had been expected. Shelby had never been a mother. She had helped Rachel with her Lady Gaga outfit. They had talked about Broadway together, they had even planned to get a coffee at the Lima Bean together.

“Is there something wrong with me?” Rachel asked quietly. It hadn’t been just her mom, Finn, Jesse, her own mother had rejected her. “There has to be something wrong with me if no one wants you.”

“Yes well they’re all idiots, to not see who you really are,” Quinn said with a frown. “There’s nothing wrong with you—”

“Yes there is, I’m obnoxious, I’m selfish and I know that I grate on people’s nerves. That’s probably why she rejected me. I was to needy much too fast and she realized that she had better things to do. I’m sure she wishes that I was someone else, someone like you or Charlie. You know prettier and more accomplished. Vocal Adrenaline is a beast, and she’s leading them.”

Quinn had to agree with Rachel’s assessment, of the skill of Vocal Adrenaline, “We have more heart,” Quinn said firmly, even if she didn’t really believe that line. “We won sectionals and we only had like twenty minutes practice. We’re going to kick Vocal Adrenaline’s ass and we’re going to show your mother just how special you are. Because you are a star, the brightest star in Lima, and people like Jesse and your mother and anyone else that rejects you for being a bit different are just jealous because their stars are going to fizzle and burn out by the end of high school. By the time they see it, just what makes you so special it’s going to be too late. I see it and I know that Charlie sees it, and even though you think that the entire glee club doesn’t like you, most of them are just jealous that you have more talent in your little finger than any of them, and you work harder than anyone else, to refine your natural talents.”

Rachel sniffed, and just curled up into Quinn, just listening to the youngest Fabray, comforting her. To think that this was the girl that had made her life hell throughout freshman year. She had never expected to become friends with Quinn Fabray, the former queen of McKinley. “Did you see it last year?”

Quinn nodded, “I was jealous, because I knew even back then that you were destined to be special, and I’m sorry for every mean thing that I said or did to you because I was jealous. You didn’t
deserve it.” Charlie had been right Rachel had a big heart, and all she needed was someone to match that love. No one would deserve having her. Quinn continued to rub Rachel’s back and handed her a box of tissue. “We can stop and pick up some vegan ice cream and a tub of Ben & Jerry’s. And we can watch Funny Girl. Then we can brainstorm set-list ideas, because we’re going to win regionals and then go onto nationals,” Quinn said.

Sneaking into the auditorium was easier than expected, all it took was a pair of sunglasses and a baseball cap. She simply strolled through Carmel High’s hallways without being noticed, until she reached the auditorium, where Shelby was going through some sheet music. Charlie studied Rachel’s mother for a moment before she walked up to the table and tapped it, causing the shelby to jump as she pulled of her glasses and hooked them on the front of her shirt and stuck out her hand, “Charlie Fabray, I’m Rachel’s best friend,” Charlie greeted as she plastered a fake smile on her face.

“Charlie Fab—you really aren’t supposed to be in here,” Shelby said with a frown, as she wondered how all these McKinley kids were getting into Carmel. The school really needed to invest in some better security. She would definitely bring it up in the next staff meeting. She reached for Charlie’s extended hand pausing for a moment as she saw the scars on Charlie’s hands, but she took it anyway and shook it.

Charlie pulled her hand back and looked at the scars on her hand for a moment before looking back at Shelby, “Truthfully. I just want to know why it wouldn’t work out.” Charlie said in a conversational tone as she looked around the auditorium. “They really spend money on the art’s here. Rachel really would love it here, she would thrive here,” Charlie said absentmindedly taking everything in. She had been in the auditorium before but she had been focused on the military precision of Vocal Adrenaline’s choreography.

Shelby studied Charlie for a moment, wondering if she should just be honest with someone other than Mr. Schue. “I talked to Mr. Schue and he helped me realize that what I wanted was my baby back, but Rachel’s an adult now and she doesn’t need me.”

Charlie’s eyes hardened for a moment, and she felt her body tense up but she exhaled slowly. “You’re wrong.” she said simply, before she flicked her eyes downward to meet Shelby’s green eyes. The idea that Rachel’s glee club teacher was somehow involved in this rejection was news to her. It wasn’t any of his business to intervene. It wasn’t any of Charlie’s either, but the damage had already been done. “And I’m wondering if that’s because you’re just really dense, or because this was all some plot to screw with my friend. If you didn’t know how you felt about her, then you shouldn’t have sent Saint Jackass to try and seduce her. You know he tried to have sex with her,” Charlie said ignoring the woman’s look of outrage. Whether it was because Charlie had called her dense or because she was offended that Jesse had tried to screw her daughter, Charlie would never know. She didn’t really care to know.

“That was not my intention, Jesse took things too far,” Shelby informed Charlie frowning a bit, she hadn’t been made aware of that fact. It was something that she would definitely be talking to Jesse about. “Rachel has to know that all I wanted to know was whether she wanted to meet me, and if she didn’t to maybe stoke the flames a bit. As for your previous statement, what do you know about raising children or how I’m feeling? Your sister, Quinn, she’ll know exactly what it feels like soon. Jesse told me that she was planning to give her baby up for adoption.”

Charlie hummed in response, “I don’t know what it’s like to be in your shoes, I’m never going to carry a child for nine-months. I can’t. But I do know how Rachel feels. I imagine my twin knows
how Rachel feels.” Because if anyone understood what it was like to be rejected by their mother it was the Fabray twins. “It’s unbelievable how much you’re exactly like Rachel. Selfish. Dramatic. Thinking of poorly thought out schemes. I bet you were obsessed with some idiotic football player, but I digress. That’s all of Rachel’s more…difficult personality traits. But this, I don’t even think this is something that Rachel is capable of, getting her child all worked up and then just deciding that she’s had enough after two days.” Charlie said with a wave of her hands.

Shelby frowned, Charlie was being awfully presumptuous to think that she understood how Rachel felt, or to even understand the situation at all. Though there was those scars that Charlie had all over her hands, and she wondered if it had been Charlie’s mother, or the soccer player was simply a klutz, but she noticed the faint scars under her left and right eye. “Do you?” Shelby’s tone was challenging.

“I imagine that my mother had a similar thought pattern to you, when she kicked my twin out of the house when she allowed my father to kick Quinn out of the house for getting pregnant,” Charlie said simply she could have gone with the more shocking display. “That we weren’t children anymore, that we no longer needed a mother. She was wrong, just like you’re wrong right now. Apparently every girl needs there mother.”

Shelby didn’t say anything for a moment, “So what’s your plan here, I don’t think Rachel would approve of you attempting to guilt me into being her mother.”

“I’m not trying to guilt you into anything really. I really came out here to find out what the real reason, because Quinn said that you were making strides. It wasn’t going to happen right away. I don’t really care what you do, talk to her, stay away, but pick one and stick with it. Rachel wants you in her life, she wants to be able to call you up. She probably needs your help with boys, and your opinion on what to wear, whatever else mother’s do for their daughters. So figure it out, stay out of her life, be a part of her life. The choice is yours, but don’t be cruel and jerk her around. Mr. Schuester doesn’t know who Rachel is, all he sees is someone who is a bit too intense and somewhat of a diva. But if you had gotten to know her you would have found that she was so much more than that.” Charlie shrugged as she finished her mini speech. Rachel really would be pissed at her for interfering, and she knew she had no business doing so.

“I—” Shelby began not exactly knowing what to say, to Charlie’s words, but at least it seemed like her daughter had good friends.

“Think about it figure it out. I’m going to stick by my friend regardless of what you do. Anyway, I really should be going now. Before your soccer team figures out I’m on campus and attempts to slushy me or whatever the Carmel High equivalent is. It was a pleasure meeting you Ms. Cochran,” Charlie said as she fixed her glasses and adjusted her baseball cap and began to walk out of the auditorium. She felt like a hypocrite, getting involved, stepping into Rachel’s life. But she didn’t really care. Shelby shouldn’t have sought Rachel out if she was just going to bail on her.

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Chapter 18

Tensions were generally always high between Carmel High and William McKinley High School. But with the big soccer game coming up, and the New Directions going against Vocal Adrenaline, tensions were at an all-time high. It was like a powder keg, that was set to blow, and when the New Directions walked into a choir room that was covered in toilet paper, it was the spark that was needed to cause everything to explode.

Rachel was withdrawn, despite both Fabray’s attempts to cheer her up. They had tried everything from Funny Girl, to baking. Quinn had even attempted to persuade the diva with promises of a duet, nothing worked. Her father’s had immediately thrown her into therapy, in a way to get over the rejection. But it was taking too long and the Diva hadn’t sung anything in glee club or any other club. It was one thing to be rejected by guys, but to have your mother reject you. It had been something that she’d been dreaming about since she was a little girl, it’s something that she had wanted since she was a little girl. Sure she had sung Poker Face with Shelby but she wanted more. Her father’s didn’t really understand and Quinn was trying, but it wasn’t the same. Not exactly, it’s not like Judy had just entered her life and disappeared. She had all these moments with her mother, the rejection was the same but Rachel didn’t have that, all she had were two days that were going well. Relatively speaking, sure there had been some awkwardness but they were making strides. Shelby had begun to tell her about her off-Broadway roles and her experiences. Her mother had so much knowledge that she could share with her and they were so similar, she had gotten her hopes up that someone would understand her. That her mother would just get it, get why she was so focused, understand her fears. Maybe be one of the few people who could see past her abrasive personality.

The knock on the door broke Rachel out of her dark thoughts, “Go away,” she said, but the door twisted open and Charlie walked in causing her to scowl. “I said go away,” she repeated but Charlie ignored her and took a seat on her bed beside her.

“Puck and Finn got caught slashing the tires of Vocal Adrenaline’s cars,” Charlie informed her friend.

Rachel frowned at this, but the anger quickly dissipated she didn’t have it in her to get angry, “Why does it matter?”

“Cause your co-captain is going to lead your team over a very large cliff. You can’t implode now, you still have so much work to do and regionals is only two weeks away. You should be getting a set-list together, having Brittany and Mike choreograph something amazing and fighting back instead of holed up in your room.”

“My mother—”

“Yes I know, Shelby pulled away from you after getting your hopes up,” Charlie said interrupting, as she held up her hands. “But it’s not like she’s gone completely, she will be at Regionals, she’ll have no choice but to watch you perform. So stop moping about and get going, you still have way too much work to do. And I’m not going to sit here and let you throw away everything you’ve worked for.”

Rachel frowned, Charlie’s attempt at tough love was touching if not a bit irritating. Her mother had just rejected her, she wasn’t even wanted by her mother. “She didn’t want me. And we’re not going to beat Vocal Adrenaline, Mr. Schue hasn’t even chosen a set-list, he’s too upset about his
impending divorce. Jesse all but ran back to Vocal Adrenaline and that Run, Joey, Run video may have ruined my chances with all my other leading men.”

Charlie rolled her eyes, “Look I get that you’re upset about your mother, but Shelby wasn’t even supposed to get into contact with you until you were eighteen, she broke the surrogacy agreement. She’s incredibly lucky that Leroy convinced Hiram that your emotional state was more important than a long legal battle with her. So you know all you need to do is find the right song that fits your mood sing it and feel better.”

“I don’t want to sing,” Rachel said huffily before pausing as she went over what Charlie just said, “It’s not magic, after I sing my feelings, it’s not like all the bad feeling’s go away. It’s not like Shelby is going to show up at my door and tell me she made a mistake, and that she wants to be in my life. That she doesn’t find my personality to be off-putting,” she can feel the hot tears welling up and she desperately tries to blink them away. She’s tired of the headache that comes after she cries, she’s tired of crying.

“I don’t know what it’s like to want a mother as badly as you do. I do know what it’s like to have her reject you when you need help,” Charlie said calmly as she placed a hand on Rachel’s shoulder.

“Quinn told me about how your mother would help pick out her clothes, and tell her how to be popular, because it was really important. How to use make-up properly. How to get a man to like you. She sounded like a good—”

“What my sister fails to mention is that Judy was an alcoholic, and watched while Russell beat the shit out of me. She’s also currently in rehab, and hasn’t made any attempt to get in touch with my sister,” Charlie replies dryly.

This puzzled Rachel to no end, both twins seemed to agree to a degree that there was a special place in hell for Russell, but they were split on the issue of their mother. They both seemed to have completely different views, “But if your mother showed up and wanted you to come home, wanted to be your mother. Don’t you want that? Don’t you want her at all?”

“No I don’t. My mother—she isn’t a good person. She chose to walk away from Quinn when she got pregnant. That’s what she does. She walks away when it gets a bit difficult or if her life isn’t going perfectly. If we happen to make her life just a tiny bit more difficult, then she’s gone,” Charlie explained. “I don’t have dreams of Judy walking back into my life and things being magically okay. Things won’t ever be okay.”

Rachel blinked for a moment, Quinn had never mentioned that Judy was out of prison, “Did you not tell her that Judy was out?” she asked. She was already annoyed on Quinn’s behalf.

“What good would it do my sister if she was agonizing whether our mother loved her or not?” Charlie asked, “Besides you didn’t tell her about what Russell did to me that night.”

“That was different she was worried about you and she looked really upset, and about ready to have a break down. You weren’t talking about it and—”

“I don’t talk about a lot of stuff, I don’t like to talk about Judy. I don’t like to talk about Russell, I don’t like to talk about the fact that I have flashbacks, at really awkward times. I don’t want to talk about the trial or Frannie, I just want to pretend that I’m a semi-normal teenager,” Charlie informed her.

“Talking about it makes you feel better,” Rachel immediately said as she finally moved off the spot on the bed that she’d been stuck to for the past few hours. “I mean the bad feelings don’t go
away but it feels as if there isn’t this crushing weight on you anymore.”

“Well, I’m sitting here and I’m willing to listen,” Charlie shrugged and flashed a small smile.

She was about to launch into another story about how her mother left her when she paused and studied Charlie for a moment. From what Charlie had said she hadn’t had much of a mother either and while it hurt she still had some good memories from Shelby. She had the cup with the star on it, she had sung Poker Face, her mother had helped her clothes. And it looked like Shelby had, well she had enjoyed herself. And Charlie didn’t look outraged on her behalf, she hadn’t offered to slushy her mother, or whatever went through Charlie’s mind at situations like this. It also seemed like Charlie knew that Shelby just needed some time. “What did you do?” she could hear the accusation in her tone.

“I went to Carmel High and I introduced myself,” Charlie answered honestly.

She didn’t believe Charlie for a moment and gently poked the teenager’s side causing her to jerk away immediately. There was no way Charlie just went to Carmel high and did nothing but introduce herself, that wasn’t worth the gas money. “What happened?”

Charlie shrugged, “Did you know you’re like the carbon copy of your mother? It’s actually sort of weird. I told your mother that you did need her and that she should stop being so dramatic and dense about it. I think she just feels guilty that she doesn’t have any memories to share with you. So really just give it time. Guilt is weird with people, so just you know just take a step back focus on your competition and kicking the ass of one Saint Jackass. You have two weeks to come up with a set-list, get your outfits ready, come up with some decent choreography and get your team back in order.”

She didn’t budge and just looked at her best friend, wondering what had possessed her to try and talk some sense into her mother. “When did you go?”

“To Carmel? The day after it happened I skipped the practice that we have at lunch to head over. It was Quinn’s idea but we figured one of us needed to stay with you, just to stop you from doing anything dramatic, and because we figured you’d notice if we both disappeared. That and my twin is absolutely crazy right now because of all the pregnancy hormones and would probably yell at your mother or worse. Apparently I’m the sane one, which is a terrifying thought.”

Rachel stared at Charlie, skipping practice was like suicide, and it explained why Charlie had been dead tired nearly every day last week. To hear that it was Quinn’s idea made her smile, both Fabray’s had that protective streak but when Quinn did it, it always put a smile on her face. She didn’t know why it was different they were both her friends, but lately it was Quinn who was doing the heavy lifting, emotionally. Probably because Charlie was always dead tired or killing herself at practice. “Thank you.”

Charlie tilted her head and was quiet for a moment, “When you’re up to it, and you’re focused we need to talk about something. But you can’t tell Quinn not yet. It’s about the information Judy gave to gain her freedom. I should have said something weeks ago but it never seemed to be the right time. This isn’t the right time either, cause right now you need to focus on regionals.”

Rachel tilted her head but nodded, from the look on her friends face, it wasn’t something she wanted to talk about. But it was clearly important, and even though she didn’t like keeping things from Quinn, she would especially if it would help Charlie in opening up more. Though Quinn would be irritated to be the last to know. So she stores that knowledge away for now and goes back to thanking Charlie who grumbles, and mutters something about how she occasionally, likes hearing Rachel burst into song at the weirdest times, and it’s been odd not hearing the diva talking.
They talk for a bit and catch up, with each other but Charlie heads back to her room soon after she’s behind on homework and Rachel picks up her phone to text Quinn.

**Rachel: We need to think of a set-list for Regionals. STAT.**

It’s dramatic and urgent, because they’re running out of time and even though she was ever a professional, she knew that it would take some time to get everyone else ready. Mercedes, Finn, Puck were not the best dancers and they’d have to pull overtime to get them ready.

**Quinn: Glad to see you’re back to your old self =)**

“Hello,” Rachel says into her phone as it rings, she half expects it to be Charlie telling her that she’ll have to grab another ride home with Quinn again, not that Rachel minds, Quinn actually allows her to listen to show-tunes. It’s becoming regular, she’s almost jealous that Roz Washington works the girls’ soccer team to the bone. Even Sue Sylvester has the right attitude compared to Will Schuester’s method of leaving everything to the last minute. Perfection required hours of practice, and with the monster that was Vocal Adrenaline they needed all the practice they could get. They couldn’t leave it to the last minute. She truly didn’t expect to hear Jessie’s voice on the other end of the phone.

“Meet me out in the parking lot,” he says and she can’t help but get hopeful. Maybe he realized that she was worth it, and he wasn’t guilty of trying to mess with her heart so close to the competition.

“I’ll be right back,” she says shooting a smile at Quinn who gives her a puzzled look. They had been working on set-list ideas together.

She knows that Jesse isn’t Quinn’s favorite person, and she doesn’t want the ex-cheerleader to worry. She slips out of the cafeteria and heads to the parking lot. She expects to see Jesse standing there, perhaps with a rose. Or something that’s equally as romantic. Maybe he plans to serenade her. She doesn’t expect to see Jesse surrounded by the rest of Vocal Adrenaline.

“I hear you’re a vegan, Berry,” Giselle yells and she’s the one that tosses the first egg. It hits Rachel directly on the chest. And soon everyone in Vocal Adrenaline is throwing eggs at her and she can’t help but look at Jesse, only closing her eyes when one egg whizzes by her face. It misses and lands harmlessly on the ground. She wishes that she could go back to when she was slushied.

“The souls of those poor egg fetuses are all on your conscience now,” she doesn’t recognize the person who says this to her as the empty all seven cartons of eggs on her. A few of the eggs miss, they don’t have the best aim, but the ground is littered with broken egg shells, and parts of the undead chicken fetuses. She can feel herself quaking but she forces the tears back and she keeps staring at Jesse. He looks conflicted, and hesitant.

“Do it, Jessie,” Its Giselle again and she has her arms around his waist, and she’s giving her this possessive look. Rachel can’t help but wonder if they were together at one point. It seems that Charlie was right about holding off, Jesse is the love them and then leave them type of person. She doesn’t get why she didn’t see it before.

“Are you with us or not? Do it,” another member says and Jesse walks up to her.

She keeps her head held high and she keeps her gaze focused on his eyes. “Break it like you broke
my heart,” its needlessly dramatic, but she did really like Jesse. She thought that he could have been the one, he had the voice, the looks and the determination to go far. But he was fake and he had probably planned this, planned to break her heart from the very beginning. But this wasn’t like having her mother rejecting her. Though she feels about nauseated that she’s currently wearing undead fetuses on her clothes.

“I loved you,” Jesse says as he cracks the head on her forehead.

She doesn’t believe him, he’s got that dramatic glint in his eyes, that fake look of hurt, and she wonders why she didn’t see it before. Jesse St. James is a terrible actor. He didn’t love her, because if he had, he would never have done this. He couldn’t have done this to her. She closes her eyes to keep the egg from falling into her eyes, and just stands there as they begin to walk away. She doesn’t move to wipe the egg off her, because she’s numb. She can’t feel anything and she hears the roar of their gas guzzling range rovers and the screech of tires as they begin to move, leaving her standing in the mess of egg and broken shells, and quite possibly a broken heart.

It’s only after she knows that they’re gone does Rachel finally start crying.

To say that Quinn Fabray is furious would be an understatement. She’s furious when she finally finds Rachel standing alone there. She doesn’t need to ask because it has his fingerprints all over it. If she didn’t have to take care of Rachel then she would have driven over there and broken his nose, or at the very least made sure that he would never be able to reproduce. But she’s forced to table it because Rachel is crying and she’s covered in egg.

“Do you have a change of clothes?” Quinn asks as she leads Rachel down the empty hallways and into the girl’s locker room. Rachel shakes her head and Quinn frowns and opens her sister’s locker. Charlie always kept a spare change of clothes in her duffel bag, and she pulls out Charlie’s spare shirt and a pair of shorts, and she also grabs one of Charlie’s towels, laying them down on the bench as she leads Rachel to the sink and grabs some paper towel and begins to gently dab away the egg yolk that’s around Rachel’s eyes. She’d gotten some slushy in her eyes before and that had burned. It had almost made her feel bad for ordering all those slushies. She works quietly but quickly, wiping away some of the rest. “Done,” she says quietly as she takes a step back.

Rachel sniffs and finally opens her eyes, “Jesse—” Rachel begins and her brow furrows a bit and for a moment she looks like she’s about to cry again but she doesn’t and exhales and meets Quinn’s gaze. “I shouldn’t have gone to see him,” Rachel she states and takes a look at the damage done to herself in the mirror. She has egg in her hair and all over her argyle sweater and on her skirt as well.

Quinn shoots her a worried smile, “No you really shouldn’t have,” she says keeping herself calm even though she really sort of wants to yell at Rachel and shake her and ask her why she could be so gullible. Ask her why she couldn’t see that Jesse wasn’t right for her. But instead she reaches for her cheek to wipe away some yolk that’s begun to dry on it. “I raided Charlie’s duffel bag.”

“I never expected this,” Rachel says after a moment, Quinn’s hand is still on her cheek and she smiles at ex-cheerleader.

“You never expected Jesse to egg you?” Quinn asks and she feels her anger bubbling, she can hardly believe it either. All this has done is vindicated her belief that Jesse was the biggest douchebag on the planet, and he would rue the day that he had tried to mess with Rachel.

“No I never expected that you’d be in here helping me get cleaned up,” Rachel says but she’s calm
and relaxed. “You know you were the first person ever to slushy me,” Rachel added in a conversational tone and Quinn pulls her hand away.

“I’m sorry,” it had been hazing, all of them had done it, well except Brittany. Santana had done it for Brittany. All she could remember from that day was looking at Rachel, it wasn’t as if there wasn’t plenty of other losers in the hall that day. “I shouldn’t have—I don’t think I’ve ever apologized for the slushies, or the name-calling, or the pornographic pictures in the bathroom stalls.”

Rachel blinks and quickly puts her hand on her arm, “I didn’t mean it as a way to make you feel guilty, it was merely an observation. If you had asked me a year ago if The Quinn Fabray would be helping me get cleaned up. I would have said something that they had the wrong Fabray or just laughed because it didn’t seem possible that we could be friends. But here you are, helping me.” Because it still baffles her, Quinn is by far the prettiest girl in school and a part of her wonders if this is all temporary. Because she doesn’t believe for a moment that Quinn won’t climb her way back into the elite. She knows the ex-cheerleader missed it. And Rachel can’t help but wonder if it’ll go back to the way it was then, with Quinn ruling the school with an iron fist. If the cheerleader would stop coming over and playing board games with her or watching musicals and helping her with glee club.

Quinn shoots the diva a small smile, “We’re friends Rachel, and it’s what friends do.” Because she knows if it had been her that was egged Rachel would be here trying to get her clean, while bemoaning the fact that she was wearing undead fetuses.

“I thought Jesse liked me, like actually liked me. Like he could have been my leading man, he certainly had the potential. But then he did this,” Rachel said and looked at Quinn, “I get that he was just using me, probably to break my heart, in order to try and break the team. He didn’t but I don’t think that I could handle it if you did it to me.”

Quinn had no intention of things returning to the way they were before, she didn’t want to leave the glee club. She belonged there, with Rachel and all of the other misfits. While it was true she wanted to go back to cheerleading, go back to being in charge. Back to being queen, but Rachel would be her friend, as would Mercedes, Kurt, Artie, heck even Puck. They were her friends, she actually had people who had her back now and she wouldn’t give that up for anything, she wouldn’t betray them even if Sue asked her. “I could never, not after everything I’ve been through,” Quinn admits and she suddenly realizes how close they’re standing and she immediately puts some distance between them, because it was scary how close they had been. Quinn flushes, because it’s really hot in the room and she wonders if these are the hot flashes she’s heard so much about. “You should take a shower,” she says after a moment and takes a seat on the wooden bench. She offers the clothes up to Rachel and smiles at her. “They’ll be big on you, Charlie’s freakishly tall. Sort of like Finn.”

Rachel giggles at this, but takes the clothes, “She’ll totally kill you if she hears you compare her to Finn.”

Quinn just rolls her eyes, and grins at Rachel, because the diva has a point. But Charlie’s not here, and Quinn waits for Rachel to quickly rinse the egg off her. She’s done in a few minutes and comes out wearing Charlie’s t-shirt which is long enough to be a dress on the diva, a rather short dress, but the shorts seem to fit rather well even though they go past her knees. It actually looks really adorable on Rachel. “See freakishly tall,” Quinn repeats again, but she feels hot again, stupid hot flashes.
It wasn’t just Puck who wanted to go over to Vocal Adrenaline and possibly assault, Jesse St. James. It was all of the guys on the team, if Mr. Schue hadn’t stepped in Jesse probably wouldn’t have made it to Regionals. It was probably for the best because they couldn’t afford to lose half of their team to a juvenile detention. Quinn didn’t personally notice that Finn was the last one out of his chair. Not that it mattered he was currently at Linen’s and Things trying to pay off the massive debt they had accrued by slashing Vocal Adrenaline’s tires.

It wasn’t until after he had left and Brittany had taken her cue to leave with Rachel, did Quinn finally waddle up to the front of the classroom. She hated being pregnant more than anything and at this point just wished that the baby was out of her. “So we’re going to do more than just sing a Funk song at them, they aren’t going to get away with this. So we need ideas.”

“We can kidnap him and shave his head,” Santana offered and there was a gasp and everyone looked at Kurt.

“Let’s not be that cruel, his hair is fantastic,” he said immediately moving a hand to his own hair, he would die if they shaved his head. He wasn’t Puck he couldn’t pull off a bald look.

“Let’s try and stay away from ideas that involve any one of us committing a felony, I’d rather not have Beth in a juvenile detention facility,” Quinn said immediately before Santana could argue her point.

“I still say we kick their asses,” Puck said and there was a general chorus from the guys.

“You can’t,” Charlie said immediately, as she appeared at the door, she was going to be late for practice and she was sure that Coach Washington would force her to do drills alone again instead of taking part of the scrimmage. It was mind-numbing torture, and Roz knew it. But she had promised to be here the moment she heard what had happened to Rachel. “Puck you can’t,” Charlie repeated. He had gotten lucky they hadn’t thrown his ass in juvie, which would have put a damper on things with the Griffin’s.

Finn sneered at her immediately, “What are you doing here—” he was about to say something but the last thing he wanted was for Kurt to tell Burt, “Meeting is for glee club member’s only.”

Charlie stared at him for a moment, she really hated Finn Hudson. She was about to start in on the quarterback when Santana stepped in.

“She’s friend with the hobbit,” she said in a bored tone. Charlie’s eyes flicked to Santana for a moment and the Latina smirked at her. As fun as it would be to watch Charlie go to town on Finn Hudson, they didn’t have time for that.

“Well, if we can’t beat the shit out of him what can we do,” Puck said after he realized what Charlie was talking about and settled back down in his seat.

“Well, if egging’s are a Carmel High thing. Then let’s give them a taste of how McKinley operates,” there was blank looks on the face of most of the glee club members and Charlie forgot that the vast majority of them were not popular enough to be the ones throwing a slushy at another person. “Slushies, you should slushy them. It doesn’t cross any lines at least lines that Carmel High hasn’t already crossed. It’s hardly a felony, just a harmless high-school prank. There is little to no violence involved, but it sends the message clearly.”

Quinn frowned it was a good idea but she didn’t feel as if a slushy was nowhere near the same level of cruelty that Jesse had subjected Rachel too. “That’s nowhere near enough of a punishment. They egged her, knowing that she was a vegan. She can’t even crack eggs to make an omelet.”
Kurt stared at Quinn for a moment, he still couldn’t believe that Quinn and Rachel were friends. It seemed having a Fabray as friends had made his vocal nemesis untouchable, his eyes flicked over to Charlie. It was probably only because of Charlie that Quinn was being nice to Rachel. The moment that Quinn went back to the elite, there would be no way that Quinn would remain friends with the obnoxious diva. Maybe he should make strides there, because all the attempts that he had made to befriend the other Fabray hadn’t gone anywhere. Though he supposed suggesting that she needed a make-over could have been seen as slightly hostile. But in his defense, Charlie couldn’t go through life wearing sweatpants, shorts or cargo pants. He could make her look fantastic if given the chance.

“So we do more, get some food coloring or some dye or some shit like that and add it to the mix and launch it at them. It’ll probably be out by regionals,” Santana said in a lazy tone. “Emphasis on the probably be out by regionals,” she said after a moment.

“If we do it with water balloons we can totally actually throw it at them, like they threw those eggs at Rachel,” Artie suggested.

Quinn pointed at him, “How long would it take for us to put it together?” Quinn asked Charlie who shrugged immediately.

“Karofsky has a bag of two hundred water balloons in his locker,” Charlie said, her eyes flicking towards Finn. They had been a target for Finn, but she’d just buy him more at a later.

“How do you know how Karofsky has two hundred water balloons in his locker,” Tina asked, but she didn’t get a verbal reply from the soccer player, who just shot her a small crooked smile.

Quinn looked at her sister for a moment, and shook her head because Charlie really needed to stop antagonizing Finn. “It doesn’t matter how Charlie knows we’re still going to need a dye of sorts. And where are we going to get enough slushy to fill two hundred water balloons?”

Puck shrugged, “I know a guy that can get us that much slushy for cheap. Better if you don’t ask any questions.” He added the last part when he saw that Quinn was indeed going to question him.

“We’re still going to need to fill 200 balloons and transport them to Carmel, and we need to figure out what dye to use,” Quinn pointed out, glad that everyone was helping out.

“All we need is some Kool-Aid and some food coloring,” Tina said and everyone looked at her. “We can get that at the nearest grocery store.”

“I’ll go pick some up,” Mike offered.

“I’ve got some coolers back at my place,” Matt added also trying to join in.

“We can transport them with my SUV,” Kurt offered immediately.

“What can I do?” Finn asked standing up, trying to fit in.

“Give a ride to Artie, and help him make a quick getaway,” Quinn said immediately.

“We should wear like masks or something, they caught us on video last time,” Puck said immediately and texted Mike to pick up some of those dollar store masks. He was totally going for the deniability in case they caught.

Charlie leaned in and bumped her sister gently, “You know I’d be there if I could, but I’m like fifteen minutes late to practice. And I really shouldn’t step foot on Carmel for the time being, so do
make sure that you actually manage to get away. You would look terrible in those orange jumpsuits.”

Quinn nodded, the last time Charlie had been on Carmel, Roz had of course found out about it. No one knew how but Roz had put Charlie through a workout from hell, and had threatened to bench her for half of the Carmel High game. She didn’t say which half and Charlie probably didn’t believe her but still. She glanced back at the club that had quickly mobilized into action. Singing Funky songs clearly hadn’t worked in bringing the team together but this certainly would.

It had been worth it. Pelting all of Vocal Adrenaline with two hundred slushy filled water balloons had been totally worth the twenty-five minute drive to Carmel, and the fifty dollars that they had all chipped in for the supplies, and the ridiculousness of wearing paper masks that Tina had made to protect their identities. It was so obviously the New Directions, who else had a kid in a wheelchair, but it had completely snapped them out of their funk and had brought the entire group together.

Shelby had of course filed an official complaint, not because she wanted to, but because Carmel high had wanted her to. They wanted to at least find the ring-leaders and punish them, but no one was talking, to Mr. Schue’s growing frustration. It was like the Glist all over again, he suspected that it was Quinn but when asked everyone had denied her involvement in it. It was eventually shelved mostly through Rachel’s insistence that they needed to focus on Regionals instead of going on a witch hunt, and she had reprimanded everyone because it had been her duty as Captain, but she was secretly touched that they had all risked everything to avenge her. It was rather dramatic after all, but the short war between the rival glee clubs was quickly put to rest with a resounding victory for McKinley, especially after they performed their funk number to a seething and multicolored Vocal Adrenaline.

“It was my idea,” Finn blurts out to Rachel when they are alone in the auditorium. Rachel is helping the quarterback with his vocals, it had been Finn’s idea.

Rachel pauses, “What was your idea?” she asks because she has no idea what he’s talking about.

“Getting back at Vocal Adrenaline. I did it for you,” Finn shoots her one of his dopey smiles.

Rachel smiles, because it’s probably the most romantic thing that anyone has ever done for her. Defending her honor like that. Plus it’s helped bring the team together, he was finally coming into his own as a leader, and maybe he was growing up just a bit. Maybe he wouldn’t get bored with her after three days. But she’s hesitant because she thought Jesse was the right guy as well and that had been a disaster, so this time she promises to not throw caution to the wind. “That was very sweet of you,” because it was.

Finn’s chest puffs just a bit, probably from pride but he nods, “You still can’t tell anyone because we took a vow of silence to you know not talk about it.”

“Like Fight Club?” Rachel asked, Charlie had made her watch that movie and she could understand why it was a cult classic, even if the amount of gratuitous violence made her queasy. She hadn’t seen the twist at the end coming. But Finn doesn’t get the reference and his face scrunches up, “The first rule of fight club is you do not talk about fight club,” Rachel said quoting the movie, this seems to resonate with Finn.

“Yeah like that,” he says with a dopey grin. “I’m still working at Linen’s and things and I can’t really afford to get into more trouble.”
Rachel nods, because that makes sense, and the realization that Finn Hudson risked getting into more trouble for her mind racing. “I lied, about sleeping with Jesse. I didn’t. I don’t know why I lied, I guess I just didn’t want to appear lame you know?”

Finn smiles brightly at this, because he really does like Rachel and he really does want to be with her. He had slashed Vocal Adrenaline’s tires in an attempt to impress her but that had failed horribly. “Waiting for the right person?” he asks.

Rachel smiles, because Finn is being understanding and he isn’t angry that she lied to him. “I am,” maybe Finn was the one after all.
Chapter 19

It had been the perfect rehab center, with its pool, spa, tennis courts, they’d even given her a personal trainer and they designed her meals based on her tastes. She of course had seen a therapist and had done group sessions, but it had been like a vacation, and she hadn’t had a drop to drink in two months, and five days. It was the first time Judy Fabray had felt this good in years. She had done the parenting classes and she felt ready. Ready to bring her children back into her life, she had served the divorce papers to Russell’s lawyers four days ago. It was time to go back to rebranding herself, she’d be the best mother.

She looked at the program again, she would finally get to see at least one of her daughters. Quinn had loved this glee club, whatever exactly show choir was. So she’d be here to support it and finally start taking the steps to getting her children back. Once they saw how much she had changed, that she had stopped drinking she knew that they’d be willing to come back. Russell was gone. He couldn’t make their lives difficult anymore.

Her hands shook and she exhaled slowly, she could do that. There were a million things that Quinn could say to her. But the first thing she had to do was ask her daughter for forgiveness. Remind her how much fun they had together, how she had been a good mother to her. How she had protected her from Russell’s madness, and she would promise not to drink anymore. She had even had some contractors come in and start to change the guest room into a nursery. She would show that she could be supportive of her daughter. She would be supportive of Quinn.

A flash of shaggy blonde hair caught Judy’s attention forcing her to tilt her head, as she watched her middle child run a hand through it as she walked by. Charlie hadn’t noticed her, she was busy saying something to the tall black gentleman that she was with. She had heard from Charlie’s social worker that her middle child was currently staying with two gay men. She was disgusted by this. What did two gay men know about raising a proper daughter? It at least made sense that Charlie was the way she was. Russell had practically forced her into the lifestyle, and her parts were supposed to be with a females. It wasn’t Charlie’s fault, but once she was finally back home where she belonged Judy would fix her daughter right back up. She would start by revisiting the topic of gender reassignment surgery with the soccer player. Then perhaps there would be those camps that Charlie could go to, that would help undo the damage that Russell had caused her daughter.

Then they could be the perfect family again with three daughters. Quinn would of course need her help to rebrand her image, so she could still find a decent husband. She’d need to get a personal trainer to help her lose all that baby weight, and perhaps this time she could stand to find a boy that was more worth her time. Josh Coleman was in her year, and she knew the Coleman’s came from a good decently wealthy Christian family.

Judy watched Charlie for a moment as she stood up for a woman who was trying to get to her seat, and she opened her mouth to call to her middle child but nothing came out. She didn’t know what to say to her. But she didn’t have to worry once Lucy came home, Charlie would follow her.

The lights dim and Judy adjusts in her seat, her eyes flicking to Charlie who is sitting beside both Leroy and Hiram, she looks happy well as happy as Charlie could be living with two gay men. But it probably has more to do with the fact that Charlie was away from Russell, she didn’t know any better.

She finally drags her eyes to the stage, it’s Aural Intensity and they sing and dance and it seems like they’re sucking up to the judges because she recognizes Magic which was one of her favorite
songs back in the 80s, and they seem to be rather good and she starts to get into it. It’s catchy, the
dancing isn’t all that great but at least the singing is semi-decent.

When New Directions comes on, Judy is just a bit disappointed to see that Quinn doesn’t have the
lead, and that the idiot Finn Hudson who ruined everything does. He’s not that great of a singer but
the shorter one is, and Rachel blows her away. Because the girl is good, and her eyes flick to
Charlie who is the first one to her feet, quickly followed by the Berry men and she wonders if it’s
their daughter. But Charlie is clapping loudly and Judy has to wonder if this Rachel girl was
Charlie’s girlfriend because she’s never seen Charlie this enthusiastic about anything before. It’s
something to mention to the social worker at least maybe they can put a rush on Charlie’s file so
she would become her daughters legal guardian. When the rest of the New Directions is out Judy
finally sees her youngest daughter who is heavily pregnant, and she wonders what she’s doing on
stage. She calculates the time in her head, Quinn should be due any day now but she’s managing to
keep up with the rest of them and there are parts when she can hear Quinn’s voice a bit more than
the others.

Her heart swells with pride, because despite all the adversity Quinn is pushing through. She looks
happy, she looks proud of herself but Judy frowns because she sees her youngest shooting glances
at the Rachel girl and she’s forced to wonder again if there is something going on between this
Rachel and both of her girls. She can’t see Charlie’s face so she’s not sure. So all Judy can do is
wonder, she’ll have to bring it up in due time, and the moment that they’re done singing, Judy slips
out of her seat so she can finally go talk to Quinn, tell her how much she’s changed, and how she
promises to be there from now on.

Brittany’s vibrating and bouncing up and down, they nailed their performance they definitely were
better than Aural Intensity, “Oh, my God!” She has an arm around Santana who is grinning from
ear to ear.

“We’ve got second place in the bag,” Tina says clapping her hands as she gets off stage.

Rachel shakes her head as she helps Quinn get down the stairs, she’s impressed that Quinn had
managed to keep up with the choreography that she had refused to bring the team down, by just
standing in the back and swaying. “Screw that. We are going to win this!”

Quinn smiles and is about to say something to Rachel when she hears a voice and she freezes, the
smile on her face quickly disappearing.

“Quinnie,” Judy’s voice is soft and almost pleading and Quinn’s head snaps to look at the woman
she hasn’t seen in more than five months. Not since the day that she kicked Quinn out.

She doesn’t even know what Judy is doing out of prison, and she pulls away from Rachel who is
stunned and the rest of the group and gently grabs her mother’s arm and pulls her into a corner.
They aren’t going to have this conversation within earshot of the glee club, but she sees Santana
and Brittany on their phones immediately which mean’s Charlie will probably show up in a few
minutes. Even Rachel’s on her phone, but she ignores it for now. “Mom? What are you doing
here? I thought you were in—prison? Did something happen with the case?”

“I cut a deal, and I got out a few months ago but I had to enter a rehab program which is why I
didn’t get in contact with you. I came here to hear you sing. You were wonderful. I’m—I’m so sorry
I missed all the other times you performed. Were there a lot? I left your father. Well—I handed his
divorce papers to his lawyers actually. He was having an affair with some, freakish tattooed
stripper.” Judy reached for Quinn who was frowning as she took in all the information that Judy had just said, “Quinnie, I want you to come home with me. I hired some contractors to change the guest room into a nursery. Oh, sweetie, say something.”

Charlie enters the backstage place as Quinn looks at her mother. Judy had prepared different scenarios for how this would go, and as she sees Charlie walking up to them an unreadable expression on her face, she prepares for some yelling and she gets ready to shed some tears.

“My water just broke,” Quinn announces and Charlie’s face twists into one of panic as Quinn looks down at the water that is currently on the floor.

“Puck,” Charlie snaps at the bald boy and almost immediately he’s at Quinn’s side followed by Charlie who is currently standing on Quinn’s left side. Charlie doesn’t look at Judy instead she focuses on her sister. They hadn’t prepared for this, being at Regionals, they both had worked out that they’d take either Quinn’s car or Charlie’s cause Puck’s was a hunk of junk and at best unreliable. But Charlie’s quick to take charge and turns to Rachel, “You need to call the Griffins,” she says immediately before turning to Santana, “I need you to get Mr. Schue we need to use the —”

“We can take my car,” Judy interrupts and Charlie turns to finally look at her mother for a moment. There’s a flash of something dark and ugly in Charlie’s eyes and Judy see’s just a bit of him when she looks at her like that. Judy blinks and looks at this Puck fellow, he wasn’t Finn, but the boy just hangs back and it dawns on Judy that Quinn had cheated on Finn. At least this Puck was infinitely more handsome, in the rugged sort of way.

“Charlie,” Brittany says gently and almost immediately Charlie’s turned her attention back to the task at hand.

“We’ll take Jud-our mother’s car. See if you guys can get a ride to the hospital somehow. The Berry’s brought their car which can hold three more people. I’ll text you guys with the hospital we’re going too.”

Rachel froze, “Charlie someone needs to stay behind or we’re all going to be disqualified.”

It’s Quinn who intervenes because even though Charlie’s taken charge, she’s tense and panicked and will probably chew out Rachel because she thinks that Beth is more important. “Stay. We all worked too hard.”

“I want to—” Rachel begins.

“Stay,” Quinn orders in her best HBIC voice and Rachel’s mouth twitches into a smile but she nods.

“The Griffin’s will text you,” Rachel says to Charlie who nods at the diva as she keeps her hand on firmly on Quinn’s arm and is currently following their mother out of the backstage area. Charlie raises her hand at Rachel to let her know that she’s got it.

“I can carry her,” Puck offers and before Quinn can protest, Charlie nods and Puck scoops her up and picks Quinn up bridal style as he follows Judy.

Brittany turns to Rachel, “Can we get a ride with your fathers?” she asks her immediately, she had seen Charlie’s back tense up, and while she doubted that Charlie would lose it while Quinn was in labor, she would need someone to bring her back once this was all over.

Rachel nods and texts her father’s as Mr. Schue rushes in. “What hospital are they going to?” he
asks, “Everyone get on the bus we’ll follow them.”

“Never mind Rachel,” Brittany says as she and Santana follow the rest of the glee club leaving Rachel behind to make sure that they don’t get disqualified.

But Rachel wishes someone else would stay, she would rather be there for the birth of Quinn’s child, but it’s her duty as captain to be there. She wishes that Finn would switch places with her, he did after all tell her that he loved her right before they went on, and despite her not planning to rush into anything all that had done was reawakened her feelings for the quarterback. But right now she wished he would stay so she could go with Quinn.

By the time that they’ve reached the hospital the contractions have already started and Quinn’s crying now as Charlie pushes the wheelchair. “Mom, it hurts so bad!” She’s scared because it hurts, and it’s too soon and she’s suddenly glad to have her mother here.

Charlie’s face twists into one of annoyance, but it’s gone the second Quinn tilts her head up as Judy pulls away to get the nurse that’s at the front desk.

“My daughter is having a baby,” Judy says with as much authority as she can muster before she rushes back to Quinn’s side and takes her hand, and whispers comforting things into her ear. She’s had three children, she knows exactly how badly it hurts, and she knows that her daughter is in a lot of pain right now. She knows that Quinn needs to just breathe through it.

The nurse looks at the four people and frowns a bit, “Uh right this way,” she says and stops Charlie taking over for her. “Family?”

“She’s my twin,” Charlie says, like hell she’s going to stay in the waiting room and leave Quinn in a vulnerable state with Judy.

Quinn looks back at her sister, there is no way she’s doing this without her, “I want Charlie with me too,” she tells the nurse who looks at Charlie once more and nods as she pushes Quinn through the hallways and into an empty hospital room, and motions for Puck to help her onto the bed, which he does with ease. “The obstetricians has already been paged and is on his way,” she says as she moves around the room handing gowns to everyone.

Charlie elbows Puck, “Turn around,” she snips at him as the nurse begins to remove the outfit that Quinn had on for regionals. Puck covers his eyes and waits till the nurse is done, he doesn’t even try and sneak a peek. But he puts on the surgical gloves, he has no idea what he’s doing but he plans to be as useful as possible.

Quinn squeezes Charlie’s hand and her sister’s eyes water but she doesn’t say anything, she doesn’t complain even though she’s sure she hears a bone cracking. She’s been spending too much time around Rachel she’s getting way to dramatic for her own good. “Ooh! It’s never coming, ever!”

“Breathe—?” Puck begins, he doesn’t really know if that’s what she should be doing but it’s what he’s seen on the TV.

Quinn turns to him and glares at him, and he shrinks back because she looks like she’s about ready to get up and murder him. “Shut up!”

The obstetrician is there a few seconds later and he’s got his gloves on and is looking down to see how far along she is.
Quinn’s focus is still on Puck and in that moment she loathes him, she hates him with every fiber of her being. It was all his fault, “Ooh, you suck! You suck! You suck! You suck!” she screams at him as another contraction hits her and she yells in pain and squeezes Charlie’s hand tighter. Charlie is sure she definitely heard a bone snap that time.

“Come on Quinny,” Judy says as she rubs her daughter’s shoulders gently. “You can do it.”

Quinn tries to pull away from Judy and she wonders why she isn’t on some cocktail of drugs by now, but it wasn’t offered to her, she must be way to far a long and she had thought it was going to be one of those long labors that she had heard so much about. “Let me go! No! No! No! No!” she screams this as another contraction hits her.

“Okay she’s crowning,” the doctor yells up and there is a flurry of activity with the nurses. Puck’s just standing there helpless but he watches, because he’s the one that did this. He did this to her.

Charlie’s voice is calm, and low in an attempt to be soothing, “Come on Lucy,” she murmurs into her sister’s ear. “Push.”

Judy’s rubbing Quinn’s shoulder more, “Push, baby. It’s almost over,” she says because it is and Quinn pushes one more time, and there’s crying heard, and Quinn finally lets go of her death grip on Charlie’s hand.

The doctor cuts the umbilical cord and the nurse gently wipes the amniotic fluid off Beth, “She’s beautiful,” the nurse says genuinely, as she gently hands Beth to Quinn, who is shocked to see the life that just came out of her.

She was beautiful, and Quinn feels the love almost instantaneously and she no longer hates Puck, because together they created something perfect. “Hi Beth,” Quinn whispers to the newborn who has stopped screaming and is just staring at her.

Puck approaches the bed quietly and leans in, there are tears in his eyes and he doesn’t bother to wipe them away. It’s his baby. She’s his daughter and all he wants to do is take her and run away with her and protect her because he’s not his father. “Hi, Beth, I’m your dad,” he says but his voice is thick with the raw emotion, because he thinks she’s perfect as well.

Charlie lets Puck have his moment and she pats the guy on the back, and smiles at her sister, she refuses to look at Judy. It’s when Puck finally steps back because he needs a moment, does Charlie take a step forward before Judy can touch the child and gently picks her up. She’s an aunt. She truthfully thought that Frannie was going to be the first one to pop out children but it was Quinn. “Hey there,” she murmured quietly. “I’m like your cool aunt. And I’m always going to be there if you ever need me,” she promises. It’s the same promise that she made to Lucy, because she would. She’d give her kidney to this kid if she needed it.

Judy extends her hands, and Charlie stares at Judy dully but finally and reluctantly hands Beth over. “You need to call Rachel and tell everyone,” Quinn says in a tired voice. She can feel the tension in the room and she doesn’t like it, and she hasn’t seen her mother in months. So she ignores the look Charlie gives her, “Please?”

Charlie sighs for a moment and she walks out of the room, leaving Quinn with Judy and Puck.

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“She’s beautiful and she seems healthy. Quinn’s fine, tired but fine.” Charlie informs Rachel as she heads back out to the waiting room. “Are the results out yet?”
Not yet, but Vocal Adrenaline just performed. They were good but Jesse probably sold his soul to the devil or something. There was no heart to the performance. None at all. We could take this,” Rachel informs her and Charlie can hear the giddiness in her voice.

“Good, I thought you were great out there. Look I got to go, I need to tell the others what’s going on,” she said and she listened to Rachel say bye before she hung up just as she got into the waiting room, where there were a lot of people, including the Griffins. She grinned, “Quinn’s fine and so is Beth,” she said as the New Directions erupted in cheers. Charlie turned to the Griffins, and points with her thumb, “Down the hall take a left, third door down,” she says to them and they’re off ready to see the child that they would be adopting.

Charlie watches the New Directions for a moment and she tries to forget that Quinn would rather have Judy by her side than her. She feels a gentle tug of her shirt and smiles at Brittany.

“Let’s get some air,” The dancer says simply as she pulls Charlie out of the hospital followed by Santana. No one notices them leave the hospital and walk a bit from the main entrance. Brittany slips her hand into Charlie’s the moment that they’re clear and away from any one.

“Fuck,” Charlie said after a moment as they stood just soaking in the silence. She’s torn, torn between being happy for her twin or furious at her mother.

“Quinn comes first,” Brittany said and Charlie nodded, because Brittany was right and Quinn did come first.

“I can always go all Lima Heights on her, later,” Santana added and Charlie smiles at this.

“You were both great out there,” Charlie says after she breaks away from them. Because right now she doesn’t want to think about Judy, and she really doesn’t want to think about the fact that Beth will be going home with the Griffins. And they both really were, it had heart, lots of it. But they could have done something more with the choreography. Will had definitely taken a risk with the complete lack of choreography. But she doesn’t say that, because she’s a soccer player and what does she know.

They’re quiet for a moment before Santana asks, because she really can’t help herself, “So if we place you promised to take us both out to Breadstix,” Santana reminded Charlie who snorted at this.

Brittany grinned, “Where we can totes make out with each other in front of you while you watch,” she added.

Charlie laughed at this, and she hopes that they aren’t really being serious. She doesn’t want to get the Santana and Brittany experience that they had given to so many other guys before her. She knows she shouldn’t be jealous because unlike the vast majority of them, she’s probably going to be one of the few people who would take them both back home. But the idea of her being in the same category as Puck irritates her as well. “Let’s head back,” she announces after a moment, she needs to make sure that Judy hasn’t completely scared away the Griffins and that Puck hasn’t lost it yet.

She watches as Santana and Brittany link pinkies as they walk and Charlie slides her hands into her pocket as she walks beside them. She wants to tell them that they look nice but she doesn’t and that she really liked hearing the small solo that Santana got, even if it was just one line. But she doesn’t say any of that because Brittany and Santana aren’t hers. She’s just the tag-along sometimes. And even though she’s trusted Santana to touch her a part of her still wonders if the Latina finds her disgusting. But they were the first ones that had shown an interest in her. They were the first
people who liked her despite her condition.

But Santana and Brittany are known to get bored, and they just move on. And she knows she’ll be upset when they do finally do. She knows that she’ll be alone when they finally do, they aren’t her girlfriends. At best they’re fuck buddies without any actual fucking. But all it’s been for the past few weeks with a single minded focus is to get her ready again, for sex. She can’t remember the last time they went to the duck pond, or they just sat around and talked about anything. It’s not like she’s not grateful, she likes sex just as much as Puck, but she doesn’t just want to be another notch on the list of people Brittany and Santana have slept with.

“I—think I’m ready again,” she blurts out and they both turn to look at her in surprise. “I haven’t had one in a while,” she says, because it’s true. She can touch herself now, and while it still makes her feel uneasy, and her heart rate picks up a little, she hasn’t had a full blown panic attack. She might not be completely ready, but it’s a dammed if you and dammed if you don’t situation. They’ll get bored of her if she doesn’t perform, and they’ll get bored with her if she does. At least if she does she can keep them around longer.

Seeing Shelby again is hard, she’s avoided Vocal Adrenaline for this very reason. But she’s not going to let Shelby see how much she was rattled by her rejection, “Congratulations,” she says smiling at her mother.

“Thanks, Rachel,” Shelby says and she smiles at her, her mind racing as she looks at the girl that she rejected. It had taken a few weeks but she had missed Rachel randomly showing up and asking her for help. Asking her for advice. She wants to have this relationship with her daughter but she doesn’t even know how to begin with her.

Rachel takes a deep breath, she’s given it time and even though she knows she’s pushing it she wants her mother back. “But we beat you today. Jesse’s a good singer, but you and I both know he doesn’t have much heart, and with him graduating this year, Vocal Adrenaline’s best days are behind it. So, I have a proposition for you. Come teach at McKinley.” she had given this plenty of thought. McKinley was going to need a new English teacher in the fall, and if she applied now maybe she’d get the job.

Out of all the things Shelby expects Rachel to say this isn’t one of them, but she realizes that Rachel does really want her in her life. “Excuse me?”

“You and-and Mr. Schuester could be co-directors. We’d be unstoppable. There’s so much that you can teach me. So much only you can teach me,” there was a plea in her voice and even though she promised herself she wouldn’t cry, she feels the tears welling up.

Shelby gently touches Rachel’s arm, “Oh, Rachel, I can’t do this anymore. I’m tired of coaching glee club. Coaching Vocal Adrenaline took up so much of my life. Insanely long practices, and so much pressure to do well. I want a life, outside of the cut throat world of show-choir. I want a life.”

Rachel inhales, this isn’t how she expected it to go. This isn’t how she wanted it to go. Charlie had said that all Shelby needed was a little time. But it was clear that Shelby wanted a life that didn’t include her.

Shelby continued, as she gently rubbed Rachel’s arm. “You have some really good friends you know. Charlie was it? The balls on that kid, lecturing me, insulting me.” Rachel looked surprised, because Charlie had never mentioned that she had insulted her mother. “She told me about how
much you wanted me in your life, how much you needed me. I need some balance in my life you know, I want a house and a garden and a dog and a f—family. I know I missed out on so much with you, and that kills me. It truthfully hurts, but you’re still young and we can still make memories. I’m not going to waste any more time, I can’t let that happen. So if I do come to McKinley, it’s not going to be as a co-director of Glee, but just as a teacher, and after hours we can try to make up for lost time.”

Shelby is nearly knocked off her feet when Rachel tackle hugs her, and she realizes that her daughter has a very strong grip, but she smiles and wraps her arms around Rachel, who is crying now, but Shelby assumes and hopes that it’s happy tears. “Where’s the rest of your team?” Shelby asks after realizing that green room is devoid of any other member of the New Directions.

“They’re, uh—they’re at the hospital. Quinn had her baby,” Rachel says softly, feeling that pang of guilt because she really wants to be there for Quinn, and part of her really wants to know how Judy got out. She had gotten so busy with preparations or regionals that she forgot to ask Charlie. She doubted the soccer player was ready.

“Is she okay?” Shelby asks.

Rachel smiles and nods, “Charlie called, and told me that she was fine. That Quinn had a very beautiful baby girl. They named her Beth,” Rachel begins and she pauses for a moment because she doesn’t want to overwhelm her mother, but Shelby gives an encouraging nod and Rachel begins to tell her all about how they found a name for Beth about the impending adoption. Everything.

They don’t win. They don’t even place. Some of them cry, others are much to stunned to do anything. They were better than Aural Intensity. Will Schuester suspects that it had something to do with Sue Sylvester. But for once Sue had been on his side. She would of course never admit to it, even if she was being tortured and threatened with her life.

Glee Club is over.

“You’ve got to convince her to keep her,” Puck says to Charlie. “You’re mother said that she could turn the guest room into a nursery and your family is like Bill Gates rich so your mother doesn’t have to work and she can look after Beth when we’re at school.” The Griffins have all the right paperwork but he hasn’t signed any of them yet. All he needed to do was get someone on his side, and Charlie was his bro. Sure they didn’t hang out, and Charlie still constantly pointed out that she hated him for knocking up her sister. But she was his bro, and truthfully the only thing he had to a friend right now. He might be patching up his relationship with Finn but there was just something off about his former best friend, and Charlie was probably the only one who could convince Quinn to keep her. “She’ll be surrounded by love, Santana, Brittany, Rachel, you, your mother, hell the entire glee club.”

Charlie looked up at him from where she was sitting in the hallway, Puck was inches away from sobbing and she patted the cold ground beside her, and he took a seat. Charlie sighs, “Judy is an alcoholic. Judy watched as he beat me, she watched as he tried to—” she looks at Puck for a moment. The only person she’s said the words to, were Santana and Brittany. “Russell tried to you know cut it off,” Puck eyes widen, and he winces and then scowls he’s getting angry.
Quinn can’t keep Beth because I won’t allow for my niece to be anywhere near the toxicity that is being a Fabray. I’m sorry Puck. But I’m doing this to protect her. Because I want to be there in her life and spoil the shit out of her and protect her just as much as you do, but to protect her, we both need to let her go. It’s not like you won’t see her ever again. You aren’t your father because I don’t think for a moment that Beth will ever wonder if you love her or not. You get to see her on her birthdays, you get to spend weekends with her. Hell the Griffins even said that if they ever needed babysitting they’d call you or Quinn first, and if you need to borrow my car to drive up there so you can see your daughter it’s yours. Cause even though I really don’t like you,” Charlie says but her tone is light and lacks the bite in it. “We’re bros. And I do have your back Puck—so long as you aren’t do anything stupid.”

Puck swallows and nods, she’s right of course. “I should go sign the documents,” he says after a long moment of quiet between the two of them. He doesn’t make a move to get up though, but Charlie doesn’t rush him and the two of them just sit in quiet. “Your parents are really fucked up” Puck says looking at her.

“Yeah, they really are,” Charlie agrees.

Rachel is holding Beth in her arms rocking her as she sits on the bed beside Quinn, her mother had excused herself to find something to eat the moment she had walked in. Rachel had frowned at that, she didn’t know what to make of Judy Fabray. “She’s beautiful Quinn,” Rachel says quietly so not to wake the sleeping infant. Because she’s perfect in every way and she has Quinn’s eyes. At least something perfect came out on this day, holding Beth almost made up for the loss that they had suffered.

Quinn shoots a tired smile as she watches Rachel sing to her daughter softly. “I’m sorry that we didn’t place,” Quinn says, “I know how important it was to you. It was important to me too.” To all of them because Quinn is no longer the head cheerleader and if Sue doesn’t give her a spot on the team she’ll have nothing.

Rachel ignores the pang, it hurts that they didn’t even place. She had thought they were fantastic, but Shelby had told her that the judges were looking for production value, not having choreography had hurt them badly. “We did everything we could, maybe Mr. Schue can appeal to Figgins again,” she said but she doubted that he would, she looks at the papers that are on the bed. “Are those the —?” she asks nodding towards it.

Quinn looks down at the papers that are at her feet, “Puck needs to sign them,” she says after a moment. So does she but she needs Puck to do it first, “My mom—she says that Beth can stay with us, that we can build a nursery and she can take care of Beth during the day,” Quinn says after a moment.

“Are you going to keep her?” Rachel asks gently. She’s heard what Charlie’s said about Judy and she’s heard Quinn’s version of things.

“She also told me that I could move back in,” Quinn says not answering the question. She has a home now, she has her mother who has promised to help her, and Beth is perfect. She could raise Beth with her mother’s help. “I can’t keep Beth, I want to so badly. But I can’t keep her,” she can’t trust her mom yet. She’d seen unconditional love and Judy had just gotten out of rehab.

“Sometimes, being a parent means doing things that are really hard. And I know that giving her up is the right decision.” Because it is, the Griffins will take care of her and she could still be a part of her life.
Rachel nods, it’s probably the right decision but she can see the pain on Quinn’s face, and she wants to hug her, so she puts Beth back into the carrier the nurses had brought in, and wraps her arms around the ex-cheerleader who doesn’t cry, because she’s a Fabray and they don’t really cry in front of anyone, but she just melts a bit in Rachel’s arms. “I’ll support whatever decision you choose to make,” Rachel says quietly as she continues to hug Quinn.

So they sit in silence, while Quinn looks at her choices. “Everyone deserves a second chance don’t they?” Quinn asks after a moment.

“They do,” Rachel says without hesitation, because she gave Quinn Fabray the person who used to make her life miserable a second chance. Nearly everyone deserves a second chance. They continue to sit there in silence and Puck finally comes in, by himself and he looks at them. His eyes are red and Rachel thinks that he might have been crying, but he takes the papers and signs them silently. He doesn’t look at Quinn, and he doesn’t look at Rachel but he stares at the papers for a moment before placing it down and walking out of the room.

Quinn stares at the papers, like it’s a contract made by the devil himself. Judy may deserve another chance but she wasn’t going to have Beth pay the price if she was wrong. She wanted her to be raised right, to be raised in a situation with love. So she reaches over and grabs the papers and picks up the pen, her hand is shaky but she signs her name down as well, and just like that Beth Fabray is Beth Laurel Griffin. Her eyes well with tears and she pushes the papers away and begins to cry.

She’s a mother who has just given up her child, Beth won’t be coming home with her. She’ll be going home with the Griffins. But at least she’ll get to see her daughter again.

Rachel had stayed with her till Sunday night, only leaving because Quinn insisted that she go back to school. That her mother would be there for her. This had the opposite effect on Charlie who insisted on staying until she was discharged early Monday morning, and even then Charlie stayed with her while she was at the Lopez’s and Judy had gone home.

“Shouldn’t you be in practice right now,” Quinn says as Charlie flips through the channels aimlessly. It’s her third missed practice in a row but Charlie refuses to budge, it doesn’t matter if the game is on Saturday.

“Roz said to take as much time as needed,” Charlie responds simply, because the Black Sue had been incredibly sympathetic. Which could only mean bad things in the future for her, she had missed a lot of practice this season.

Quinn hummed for a moment, she needed something to keep her mind off the fact that Beth was with someone else. That she didn’t have her baby. “The giant elephant in the room,” she said softly and Charlie’s eyes darted to her. “Mom asked me to move back in with her. I told her I’d think about it.”

Charlie said nothing for a moment, “You’ve got a good thing with the Lopez’s. Santana bitches about how her mom likes you better because you have manners or something.”

“This wasn’t supposed to be a permanent thing, living with the Lopez’s,” Quinn admits. It beat living with Puck and certainly living Finn Hudson. “I want my old life back,” she says after a moment’s pause. “Everyone deserves a second chance,” she says quietly. “And she’s two months clean, and she’s going to regular AA meetings and she’s divorcing him, and she’s testifying against
him. She wants a chance to be a good mother.”

Charlie doesn’t say anything she doesn’t want to argue with Quinn, and she doesn’t want to upset her either. Judy hadn’t said one word to her, not a thing. Which she was secretly thankful for, she hadn’t wanted to make a scene. “I’d stay with the Lopez’s,” Charlie says gently, because she’s gotten used to having a place to stay, to come home to. She enjoyed not having to figure out a place to stay because she couldn’t go back to that house while he was there. She had slept in her car a few times just to avoid him. She was going to have to talk to the Berry men and ask if she could stay with them.

“Everyone deserves a second chance,” Quinn says firmly because she truly believes that, because Rachel gave her a second chance when she didn’t deserve it. Judy had talked with her on how to approach Charlie, because she wasn’t stupid. She had asked if Charlie wanted to be a family again, and Quinn had said yes, because she knew her twin. Charlie would come back even if it was just because she believed that Quinn needed to be protected from Judy.

“Not everyone,” Charlie says firmly as she finally settles down to watch Super Friends with her sister, and they don’t talk about it anymore because they’re both Fabray’s. Quinn doesn’t mention that Judy plans to come to Charlie’s soccer game. Charlie doesn’t mention that Judy’s only back because she was willing to do anything to not be someone’s prison bitch. She doesn’t want to start an argument right now, not with Quinn in her post-Beth state. She wants to yell at her sister, or smack her or do something that tells her that she can’t go back to Judy. She wants to tell Quinn that she’s on her own.

It’s Tuesday afternoon when they find out that Glee lives.
Chapter 20

Nearly every member of the New Directions is there to support Charlie, though she suspects they just really want to watch her kick Carmel High’s ass all over the field. She doesn’t see Finn which is good because she hates him and she’d probably ‘accidentally’ lose control of a ball and make sure it hit him in the face. But she also doesn’t see her sister, Judy’s been very involved lately and it irritates her. Quinn still hasn’t made up her mind but she’s been trying to get Santana to convince her to stay by being nice to her. It had come at a cost of course.

“Is that a hickey on your neck?” Missy asks her captain and Charlie immediately brings her hand over the bruise on her neck. “OMG it is.” Her tone causes a few of her teammates to look at their captain curiously.

Charlie glares at her co-captain, “Shut up,” she hisses at her. She glances to the crowd where she sees Santana smirking. So maybe she had liked convincing Santana to be nice to Quinn. And maybe she had tried to convince Brittany to force Santana to be nice, and maybe she had another one on just above her collar bone. A present from Brittany, a good luck charm. “It’s nothing,” she says dismissively, but Missy isn’t about to let it go. “Go get the balls out,” Charlie orders, switching to being a captain. “And then lead the girls through some stretches.”

Missy grumbles at this but pulls away and Charlie continues her light jog before running up to Coach Washington who has been watching the Carmel High practice. They look better than they did in the fall but Coach Washington had been working hard on their defensive line and the midfield to shut them down. She had made McKinley into a shield and was putting most of her trust in Charlie to pierce their defense. “Strike first, strike fast.” Roz says turning to Charlie, she had missed a lot of practice and she was currently dismissing Carmel’s new striker.

“Do you want me to put on a show?” Charlie asks as she looks at the filled bleachers. Soccer was a performance to her, and she loved showing off her skills. She liked being the best, she loved hearing them chant her name.

Roz studies her Captain, and can see that Charlie’s mind is elsewhere, she lacks her usual razor focus. Perhaps she’s gotten used to being the best. They had won every game this season. Mostly due to Charlie’s skill to put the ball at the back of the net, and to break through the defense. But it’s different now, Charlie hadn’t watched the video of Dani Harper. She had never faced someone who was just as good as she was on the field. Though it wasn’t time for Charlie to get a reality check, she needed her star to have all the confidence going into it. “Not yet, I might need to pull you back to midfield.”

Charlie’s hazel eyes flicked to Roz, she didn’t play midfield. She was somewhat adequate when it came to defending, she was either on the wings or dead center, depending on the team. Charlie rarely ever commented on Coach Washington’s decisions but she didn’t play midfield ever, it didn’t suit her style of play. “Why?” she asked immediately.


Charlie’s face twisted, she didn’t even know who this Dani Harper was, but her girls had been whispering about her for weeks. She had missed a lot of practices, but if Roz was dragging her back to the wasteland that was midfield and forcing her to play defensively. “Now?”

“Second half,” Roz said before turning to Charlie, a frown on her face. “That she-devil named Sue Sylvester won yet another championship. I’m not going to stand for that. So you better win.”
Charlie mock saluted Roz and jogged back onto the pitch where Missy had lined up five balls for her, she nodded her head in gratitude, and looked at the net, forcing herself to clear her mind. The last thing she needed was a reappearance of the yips. The first ball banged against the crossbar with deadly accuracy, dead center. The second and third hit the crossbar but they were slightly off, not enough for her to worry about it. The fourth one skimmed the top of the crossbar, and the fifth one hit the target again. She was off, she could feel it but at this moment she didn’t care. It had been months since she had played in a match. Months since she had people other than her teammates in a scrimmage, where it was almost impossible to be completely free. Especially not in the gym. She eyed the crossbar again, most importantly she didn’t have the yips.

Charlie turned to look at her teammates the crooked grin on her when she heard the clang of a soccer ball hitting the goalpost. Her eyes drifted to the other side where Carmel High was practicing, she saw the freshmen, where there was another clang and Charlie watched the ball hit the crossbar again. She frowned at this. That was two, and she saw the Name on the back of the uniform, Harper. Another bang, and then another and finally another. Charlie frowned, Dani had hit all her shots and she had only just hit four. It didn’t really bother her till Dani Harper turned around. Their eyes met briefly and Dani smiled at her, or maybe it was a smirk.

Charlie snorted for a moment before turning around, and began yelling orders at her team. She tossed one last look at Dani Harper, before flicking her eyes back to the ball that was coming at her feet. She kicked it and it smashed against the crossbar with a loud clang, and she knew that it had forced Dani to look back at her. Today was going to be a good day, she could feel it. And even though Roz wanted her to stick to the fundamentals, she was definitely going to put on a show. She wanted another MVP plaque with her name on it.

She wasn’t hiding from Charlie, but she wasn’t currently in the stands either. She needed to show Charlie that she deserved a second chance, she had tried a few times in the hospital to talk to the soccer player who had just ignored her. It was disrespectful and rude, something that she probably picked up from the Berry’s. She had gotten in touch with them a few times and Leroy had come off as rather hostile, but he had said that he’d talk with Charlie about coming back home. So here she was at a silly soccer game, come to ask her daughter to come home. At least Quinn had decided to move back.

Quinn watched as Charlie adjusted the red armband on her arm and looked at her mother, who was watching the warm-up and she realized that Judy knew nothing about Charlie’s life at all, she didn’t know about her accomplishments or her grades or anything about her. But she was trying to get to know her better, “Charlie’s captain of the squad. She won the MVP last year and state championships,” Quinn explained gently. “It’s probably why Coach Washington made her captain.” That and it was probably to copy Sue Sylvester, neither twin was exactly sure which.

Judy turned to Quinn and gave her a tight smile, as she gripped the steering wheel. The look of pure loathing that Charlie had given her when Quinn was pregnant stuck with her. She hadn’t seen it since but she couldn’t imagine that her middle daughter would be thrilled that she was here. She watched as the ball banged against the crossbar, and frowned a bit, “Is she good at it?”

Quinn nodded a pleased smile on her face, “Best striker in the state, just wait until the game starts,” which would be any moment now. The smile faded a bit, she didn’t know how Charlie would react to seeing Judy there, and Brittany had basically told her that it was a bad idea, “I’m going to go sit with Santana and Brittany, and they’re right behind the bench.”

If it was possible Judy’s smile got tighter, but she nodded. “Of course, go sit with your friends,”
she said and Quinn hesitated.

“I’m sure Charlie wouldn’t mind,” Quinn offered and winced, this game was much too important for Charlie to be even slightly distracted by the presence of her mother.

Judy shook her head, “No I can see the field from right here, I think I’ll just wait in the car. I wouldn’t want to be a distraction. She has every right to be disappointed in me, I just hope that she can give me another chance.”

It seemed to be the right thing to say because Quinn gently touched her mother’s arm, “She’ll come home. We can be a family again, a proper family again.” A family without Russell Fabray determining who was worthy and who wasn’t. Where they could just be a normal family, at least for a few more years. Judy wasn’t drinking and even though it was court mandated, she was going to regular AA meetings every Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sunday evenings. Judy deserved another chance. The shrill whistle from the referee brought Quinn back to reality and she gave one last smile at her mother before exiting the car.

Judy watched Quinn leave before she turned her eyes back to the field, the sport looked rugged, and the field was slightly wet from the rain the night before. Even though Judy personally didn’t see the appeal of running after a ball in what she could only imagine was muddy ground, at least Charlie had decided to play with other women and had dropped the notion of playing football. With a bit of suggestion, maybe it was possible for Charlie to join the cheerleading team, she could still manage to turn it around. Get rid of all those baggy pants, sweat pants, and those comic book shirts, and she was sure that Charlie would clean up well.

She had replayed the conversation she would have with her daughter over and over again. She would start with an apology, for not protecting her. For leaving her to face Russell’s wrath alone. She’d inform her that she had a problem with alcohol and she was working on getting clean for the both of them. That she wanted to be a family again. That she was going to testify against Russell, that he was a hypocrite, and that she was so sorry for failing to protect her. She’d of course ask for another chance. She deserved another chance, she had given birth to Charlie. It wasn’t her fault that her daughter wanted to spend every day trying to impress Russell. It wasn’t her fault that Charlie came out the way that she did.

Judy watched in mild interest as the kick-off happened, Carmel High was starting off slow and her daughter didn’t look bothered by this or anxious but she did seem focused, but there was that crooked grin of hers on her face as some girl with blue hair approached her with the ball. She watched as Charlie tensed for a moment she was still waiting but the blue haired girl just smiled and passed the ball away. She was too far away to see what Charlie’s expression was, but she saw her lips moving and she imagined that she was saying something to the blue-haired girl. The blue-haired girl turned and Judy saw the name on the back of her jersey, Harper. D. Harper.

She watched for a bit more she didn’t see what the big deal was, it just seemed like a game of keep away where you could only use your feet. Nothing seemed to be happening. At least with cheerleading there was always a lot of flash, and she’d come to a few of Quinn’s routines back when they were still freshmen. They seemed overproduced, but at least something was happening.

Quinn slipped onto the bench beside Rachel who turned to smile at her, Quinn smiled back, before flicking her eyes to the movement that was going on the pitch. “Have I missed anything?” she asked Rachel.
Rachel bit her lip, truly she had no idea if Quinn had missed anything, though she did know that Charlie hadn’t touched the ball yet. She probably should have asked Charlie to explain the rules to her one more time, but truthfully every time Charlie started talking she zoned out. “I’m not sure. Charlie hasn’t touched the ball yet, but I think she’s doing that trash-talking to the blue-haired girl.”

Quinn turned to the pitch for a moment, “That must be Dani Harper. Carmel High went all the way to LA to pick her up according to Charlie, is she as good as they make her out to be?”

“I don’t know, no one has really done anything y—” Rachel began to say when Missy finally managed to steal the ball away from Marley. Almost immediately the pressure in the air changed as she passed it to Marissa. Almost immediately Charlie found herself being guarded by Kitty and Dani.

“Didn’t they try this last time?” Santana grumbled already bored, and it wasn’t even five minutes into the game. Charlie wasn’t really doing anything, as the ball was passed around the McKinley High team, they kept the ball in the midfield.

“Wait for it,” Brittany said confidently, and the moment the words were out of her mouth Charlie began to move, twisting her body to lose her defenders as Marissa passed the ball to her. The ball bounced on Charlie’s chest and landed neatly at her feet and she paused for a split second and grinned before she took off.

It was just like last time, Charlie pierced the Carmel high defense with ease, using her roll to get past the last defender, leaving her with just the goalie who moved the second Charlie’s foot connected with the ball, but it was a fake and as the goalie sailed to the right, Charlie simply passed the ball back to Missy who booted the ball in, before the goalie could recover. McKinley High had scored first blood, and the crowd erupted.

Charlie bumped fists with Missy, and grinned as she ran back to get into position passing by Dani Harper who smiled at her, Charlie shot her a lopsided grin. “Is Charlie flirting with her?” Rachel asked after a moment.

Quinn snorted, Charlie was like the least smooth person out there; she didn’t flirt. She just kind of went along with whatever Santana and Brittany suggested. “No it’s probably some more trash-talk she has been spending a lot of time with Santana after all.”

Santana rolled her eyes at this comment but caught the flash of worry on Brittany’s face. She didn’t say anything to address it though, because even she could admit that Dani was hot, but they were hotter and as Brittany had pointed out, Charlie had shown zero interest in anyone but them. But that wasn’t completely true, and Santana had to wonder if the sexual interest had waned. Charlie had said she was ready a few days ago, and there had been plenty of opportunities. Just last night, Charlie had been trying to convince her to be nicer to Quinn so that she would decide to continue living with her. Nothing had happened though, and it wasn’t as if there had been another flashback. Damn Fabray’s it was almost impossible to get into their heads. Even Brittany wasn’t sure why Charlie just wasn’t.

Rachel flicked her eyes over to the Latina for a moment. The Latina probably would have had some sarcastic or biting comment as to why Charlie wasn’t. But she seemed lost in thought as the match resumed play. She smiled and rested against Quinn’s shoulder. “Finn and I are dating.” She says after a moment. “He told me he loved me right before we went on at regionals,” they had kissed a few times since then, but Rachel hadn’t felt the fireworks, that Charlie had described. Maybe they would get there with time, it was a rather new relationship.
Quinn tenses up beside her, and turns to stare at Rachel, she really can’t be dating Finn Hudson. She feels a pang of jealousy run through her body and for a brief moment she wonders if she still has feelings for Finn, but she thinks it’s ridiculous. Cause Finn Hudson is an asshole, who slept with her best friend and then proceeded to tell her that she was nothing. He’s an idiot who decided that singing to her parents that she was pregnant was a good idea. So Quinn has to wonder why Rachel even wants to be with a person who called his brother a fag, and Santana a slut. “Why?” she can’t help but ask and she can feel her annoyance growing. Even Santana and Brittany are looking at her confused.

Rachel notices the fact that Quinn has pulled away from her a bit, and she frowns. Quinn had said that she didn’t really have deep feelings for him. But she sounds jealous and Rachel can’t for the life of her figure out why. “He did something really romantic for me, and he’s been really trying hard to make up for dumping me. So I gave him another chance. He really has grown into the perfect leading man. He’s really sweet when he isn’t trying to fit in with the popular crowd.”

Quinn doesn’t say anything, because she can’t. Because she knows how Rachel thinks, and if she says anything against him, Rachel will probably assume that she’s jealous and she’s trying to get back Finn freaking Hudson. She’s not. So she smiles, “Well I hope that he makes you happy,” even though she knows that Finn is like a wet blanket, all he’ll do is make you uncomfortable. But according to Charlie, Rachel is sure that she’s in love with him. She’s been obsessed with the boy since freshman year, and maybe Rachel can straighten him out.

Santana scoffs and opens her mouth, probably to insult Finn or to insult Rachel, it’s probably both, but Quinn shoots her a look and a quick shake of her head, so she drops it for now. If the Hobbit wants to have her sloppy seconds then she was more than welcome to. Her attention is turned back to the match that’s going on in front of her, watching as Kitty Wilde passes the ball to Dani, who’s a few feet away from Charlie who’s begun to move towards her, to cut her off.

The next few seconds shocks the crowd as Charlie who has managed to cut Dani off, is left standing there when Dani manages to pass her with a perfectly executed roll of her own. It’s a difficult move to master and while people have managed to do it before, usually it’s not as tight as Charlie’s. Dani’s shoulder grazing Charlie’s chest, and leaving her stunned as Dani runs past. It takes a moment but Charlie turns her head as she watches helplessly as Dani get past De’Wanda, with Kitty and Marley piercing the defense in a three-prong attack. Dani passes it to Marley who manages to fire a shot into the upper corner of the net, the ball passing by the goalie’s hands on the way in.

Carmel High has equalized the score. As Dani passes Charlie on her way back she says something to the still semi-shocked teenager. Charlie doesn’t say anything but the smile on her face is gone. The game is on now.

Santana speaks first, “Shit.” Dani Harper is just as good as Charlie is, and what’s worse is that Dani Harper seems to be mocking Charlie.

Rachel who is confused doesn’t understand, “Are they going to lose?” this isn’t a contest that is completely subjective, and she’s never actually made it to a game before. “Is she really that good?”

“You know how you go on about how you’re the best Hobbit?” Santana says.

“I am the best singer in the glee club,” Rachel points out, because she is, and she’s tired of other people saying that they’re just as good as she is when they don’t put in nearly the amount of effort she does.

Santana opens her mouth to argue but Quinn cuts her off, “Yes you are the best singer in glee club,
Charlie is the best striker in Ohio, or at least she was the best striker in Ohio. She might be sharing that title now, or she might lose it.”

Rachel looks horrified at the idea of meeting someone just as talented as she is. She doubt she would handle it well, but the moment Charlie’s feet touch the ball again, she’s off and there is no flashy spins, but it’s tight passing and quick movements. Once again Carmel High’s defense crumbles, but not because of Charlie’s flashy moves but because she’s picking her passes better, she’s stripped it down to the fundamentals. She’s working off Missy and Marissa, and when they finally manage to get through Carmel’s defense Charlie finally puts on a bit of a show, because the goal keeper is coming out to try and rip the ball from her feet so she flicks the ball over the keepers head and the ball floats and bounces past the goal line.

Santana grins at the play, Charlie’s being particularly brazen and she immediately pulls away from the Carmel High net, there is no backflip, or any of Charlie’s usual goal celebrations as she’s ordering her team to get back.

“You know she taught that move to my sister,” Brittany says with a smile, because her sister, Hailey, adores Charlie who always takes time to show her a few tricks, or gently correct some of her movements. This time when Charlie passes Dani she doesn’t say anything just flashes that crooked grin of hers and Brittany knows that there might be a problem. She only knows this because she’s scary good at reading people, and she can see it in Charlie’s eyes. It may be a problem, it might not because Charlie is Charlie and she is also scary good at hiding stuff from Brittany. It’s different than Santana, or anyone else for that matter. Because sometimes it’s really easy to read Charlie’s mood and other times it’s not. But Charlie’s never been attracted to anyone other than her and Santana mostly the Latina. But even though Charlie might be attracted to Dani, it doesn’t mean Charlie will actually do anything about it.

Rachel turns to Quinn, “Have you made up your mind about whether you want to move back home or not?”

Quinn nods and notices that both Santana and Brittany are looking at her, because they want to know as well. Santana attempting to be nice, had thrown her for a bit of a loop and she was still in the process of seeing how far she could go before the Latina snapped. “She’s really working hard for a second chance, and it’s not like it’s him. Mom never touched Charlie, she sort of ignored her. But she’s here, she’s come to see Charlie play and she’s never done that before. So it’s a start and I can give her the benefit of the doubt till then. So I’m moving back with my mom next week.”

“Wait what do you mean she’s here?” Santana asked, because Santana Lopez hates Judy Fabray. She wants to go all Lima Heights on her ass, because she had asked Charlie, asked her where her mother was when Russell was on top of her with a knife in his hands. There hadn’t been an ounce of emotion in Charlie’s voice when she had informed her, rather coldly, that Judy was right there watching with a drink in her hand. Last week totally wasn’t the perfect time to go after Judy Fabray, and since Russell Fabray was still rotting in prison where he belonged, Judy Fabray would make a perfect substitute. She couldn’t see why Quinn would want to go back, she was a mother even if she didn’t actually have her kid.

“Charlie’s not going to be happy,” the only thing that had stopped her from snapping before was the fact that Quinn was currently in labor. At least Charlie had her priorities all straightened out. “Plus it will distract her.”

Dani attempted the same thing that Charlie had done, but the keeper who was used to Charlie pulling the same move on her when she was feeling particularly lazy managed to tip the ball over the net. Dani frowned and as Charlie headed into the goalie box, she definitely said something to
Dani which caused her to scowl, but Charlie just grinned. The corner kick came and went with Charlie using her height to clear the ball, and once again McKinley went on the attack.

“She’s in the car so she won’t distract Charlie, she knows that it’s going to take a lot of work to earn Charlie’s trust again,” Quinn said immediately.

Rachel who had been rather quiet for the entirety of the conversation, frowned a bit. Leroy and her social worker had asked if she even wanted to go back to Judy, and Charlie had simply asked if she could stay with them. “I think it’s going to take more than a simple apology, but maybe we can have family dinners to sort of buffer the situation? Put Charlie in a situation where she can see that Judy’s trying. We can meet at my place or yours.”

Quinn frowns, because the only reason Charlie is with the Berry’s instead of living with Santana is because the Berry’s are her guardians. But she wonders if given the choice Charlie would want to live with her, she wasn’t Frannie and Charlie had this ridiculous notion that she needed to be defended. Maybe against Russell but Judy was harmless, it had been her mother who had helped her become Quinn, the head Cheerio, it was her mother who was going to help her become head Cheerio again. There was no way that Charlie wouldn’t want to go back home.

It’s a game that comes down to the wire, by half time the score is tied, but by the end of regulation time, it’s McKinley ahead four to three. She had bested Dani Harper but it had been sheer luck, and one poorly timed challenge which had led her to a hat trick in the final minutes. It wasn’t the trumping that they had given Carmel earlier in the year and Coach Roz isn’t pleased that they managed to give away three points but they’ve basically secured another state championship.

Charlie pulls Dani aside after the team is done shaking hands. “McKinley has a championship soccer team, and we have a glee cu-club,” is the first words out of her mouth and even she’s surprised at her forwardness. But she was sure that Dani was flirting with her throughout the game.

Dani’s lips twist into an amused smile, because it wasn’t what she had been expecting after Charlie pulled her away from her team. A phone number maybe, but certainly not a recruitment speech. Her eyes flick towards Charlie’s neck, it’s a shame that all the good ones are taken. “Afraid I’m going to kick your ass next year?” she taunts and Charlie shoots her that smile of hers.

“No, just thought you’d like to see a trophy in your senior year,” Charlie shoots back but she’s smiling, because even though Dani’s good and probably technically better than she is, she still has her height advantage and she’s certainly more athletic than Dani is, not that Dani doesn’t look plenty athletic.

“Maybe,” Dani says after a moment, because a state championship in her senior year would look fantastic when she’s applying for a division one scholarship, and the McKinley high team is better than their team, all they need is another proper striker for Charlie to be able to play off of. And even though she has the freshman team of Kitty and Marley, she doesn’t know good they’ll be next year or if they’d get their cardio up to decent levels. There was a rumor going around the team that they were thinking of moving over to Vocal Adrenaline. It’s not like she had any real ties to Carmel, she’d been recruited, and her dad was an actuary so he really could work anywhere. “I would if you were single,” she’s teasing of course. She wasn’t vapid enough to actually make a decision like that simply based on whether Charlie was single.

If Charlie had any doubt before that Dani had been flirting with her the entire game, they disappeared and she suddenly looked unsure of herself, “I am,” because Charlie doesn’t actually
have a girlfriend. Brittany doesn’t really date, and Santana is well Santana who she’s sure is still occasionally sleeping with Puck.

Dani frowns and her eyes flick to Charlie’s neck again, wondering if it’s just a ploy to get her to join over to McKinley, “Mark on your neck says otherwise.” It would be a shame if Charlie was a player, she’d had enough of those type of girls back in LA, the last thing she needed was that type of drama in her life.

Charlie’s hand slapped her neck again and she flushed and silently cursed Santana out in her head, “I don’t have a girlfriend,” she repeats again, and Dani snorts at this statement, because she has evidence on her neck that she’s attached. But Charlie doesn’t even know what she has with Santana and Brittany. So she grabs the pen that she totally swiped from Roz’s clipboard and writes down her number on Dani’s arm, which causes the girl to smile and Charlie finally heads back to her team.

“What was that?” Missy asks suspiciously, because Charlie has a pleased smile on her face.

“Recruiting,” Charlie answers honestly, because even though she thinks that Dani is hot, all she really wants to do is recruit her to McKinley, because playing on the same team with someone who is just as good as she is, is something that she wants. “She seems interested.”

Marissa snorts, “Yeah in getting in your pants.”

Charlie rolls her eyes “She’s graduating next year and we already have a championship team, so she said she’d call me, while I try and sell her on why she should move over to McKinley.” Missy and Marissa exchanged glances at each other and Charlie frowned, “It’s really creepy when you do that,” she stated.

“You have a date,” Missy says, her tone sing-song and an amused smile on her face. She had heard some of the comments that Charlie and Dani had been exchanging and the looks.

“It’s not a date,” Charlie immediately protests, “It’s recruiting,” she says immediately as she grabs her duffel bag. Though she’s not sure anymore because Missy and Marissa are giving her this weird look. So she ignores them because it’s a lot easier to do that and it generally involves less of them making fun of her. So she hops over the bench and walks over to where the unholy trinity are sitting with Rachel. She takes a mock bow, “And like that, your loss to Vocal Adrenaline has been sort of avenged,” because it really hasn’t but she has managed to strike a blow to Carmel High. But she flicks her eyes upward at Santana and Brittany, ‘Cheerios’ locker room?” she asks, because the last thing she wants to do after that win is share a locker room with Dani and the rest of the Carmel high team.

Santana shrugs, because it’s the Cheerios off season and Sue probably doesn’t care. She’d gotten chewed out when Sue had found out that Santana and Brittany were allowing their friend to use the Cheerios facilities. And she watches as Charlie takes off, before turning to Quinn and Rachel, “I’d totally go with the Finn news first,” she says, because Charlie will probably forget all about it after she meets Judy.

“Is this how you’ve managed to keep your secret?” Judy asks nodding towards the Cheerio locker room door when Charlie finally exits the Cheerios locker room. She’s expected a million responses from Charlie, but she doesn’t expect Charlie to immediately turn on her foot and begin walking away. “I watched you play, I didn’t understand much but you were really good.” But Charlie
doesn’t turn around and Judy realizes that she’s done this all wrong. She should have started with an apology. “I’m sorry,” she says and Charlie finally stops but she doesn’t turn around. “I’m sorry for everything. I haven’t had a drink in months, and I’m divorcing your father—” Judy pauses when Charlie begins to walk away again. “You can’t just—you can’t just walk away, we’re family.”

This finally elicits a strong response from Charlie who immediately turns around, and Judy is once again forced to take a step back, because Charlie is furious, “Why the fuck not? You did.” Her tone is low and cutting and Charlie runs a hand through her damp hair, struggling to keep a check on the rage that is bubbling. Judy wasn’t supposed to be here. She wasn’t supposed to be around, she was supposed to be in jail. Out of sight and out of mind.

“Language,” Judy says firmly, “I’m still your mother, and we’re going to be a family again. You’re going to come home. We’re going to be a proper family again.”

Charlie stares at Judy incredulously, because Judy has never given a rat’s ass about her before, and she wants to yell and scream at her, but she’s a Fabray, and they don’t do that. And she can see right through her mother, she’s always been able to see right through Judy, “What the fuck is a proper family? Are we still all about fucking appearances?” Charlie’s closer to her now, and she takes a step to enter her mother’s personal space.

Judy flinches, she’s never allowed crass language from her children and Charlie is being disrespectful. But her daughter is angry, and she has every right to be. “I’m divorcing your father, what he did to you was wrong. How he kicked out Quinn, and how he treated me—”

“Don’t you dare compare your pain with mine! He was fucking a stripper on the side, he wasn’t beating you, and he wasn’t calling you an abomination. You never had to fucking sleep in a car just to stay away from him.” Charlie snapped at her mother. It wasn’t like she was brutalized by Russell, it’s not like he ever threatened to kill her.

“Are you speaking from experience?” Judy says as her anger peaks, and it’s managed to stun Charlie for a moment, and Judy firmly grips her daughters chin and forces it upward, revealing the hickey on her neck, Charlie almost immediately smacks her hand away.

Charlie inhales sharply because how dare her mother pass judgment on her, how dare she pretend that what happened to the both of them was equal. “I was thirteen,” she says and she flicks her eyes over at Judy’s expensive jewelry, shoes and clothes. “But if Russell taught me anything is that you don’t marry the whore. Shame he was such a fucking—” Charlie’s head snapped to the side forcefully.

“I am your mother,” Judy’s beyond pissed at this point. How dare Charlie imply that she was a whore; she hadn’t stayed with Russell because he was a millionaire. She had loved him at one point, the money was just a perk of the relationship.

Charlie touches her cheek where her mother had slapped her, and she inhales sharply, “The day I called out for you to save me, and you turned your back on me; is the day I stopped viewing you as my mother.” Charlie says and she’s deathly calm, and with that she turns on her heel and storms away because there is nothing more to say. She’s never going back to that house ever again. If she could burn it to the ground without being called an arsonist, she totally would. Maybe she could convince Puck to do it, he did like setting shit on fire.
The bond between Charlie and Quinn had grown over the year. Thought it wasn’t where it had been when they were children, when they had been so in sync when they had told each other everything. It had been what Quinn wanted, it was something that Charlie secretly wanted. It was supposed to be Charlie and Lucy, them against the world. It was getting there, even though Charlie still tried to protect her from the harsh reality that was the disappointment their parents were.

It wasn’t as if Charlie could blame Quinn for her blindness towards their mother, Judy had been a barely adequate mother. She had been an alcoholic for years, but she was functional, for the most part. It’s not like she was completely useless, but neither twin could remember a time when Judy didn’t have a glass in her hand. They at least agreed on the issue of Russell to a degree, he deserved to be where he was.

The issue of Judy however, was something that the twins wouldn’t agree on, “She’s our mother, and she deserves a second chance,” Quinn snapped. It was an odd thing for either twin to have such a public argument, especially in front of people, even if those people were their friends.

“No she was your mother, a piss poor one who let Russell kick you out of the house. She fucking slapped me,” Charlie retorted and she ignored the fact that Brittany currently had a death grip on Santana’s arm.

“You called her a whore,” Quinn said bluntly. Though even she knew that it wasn’t a reason, Judy shouldn’t have hit Charlie, it was the worst possible thing to do, but Judy was trying. “She’s our mother, and we should give her another chance. Everyone deserves another chance,” she added the last part quietly as her hazel eyes flicked to Rachel.

“Hitler doesn’t, Stalin doesn’t, Mao, fuck any bloody dictator doesn’t deserve a second chance. There are plenty of people who don’t deserve a second chance,” Charlie sneered.

Quinn rolled her eyes, Charlie was being dramatic. “She didn’t kill anyone, and our mother is really the farthest thing from a dictator, we both know who the dictator in our family was.”

“No she was like all those people who just stood by and watched, and let the abuse happen,” Charlie said, “It’s just as bad.”

“The people who just stood by and watched, were scared. They were scared that it would happen to them,” Quinn said as she tried to make Charlie see reason, she reached for her twin who immediately pulled back.

“Who the fuck cares if Judy was scared of him. I was fucking terrified. It’s not like he took a knife out and tried to—” Charlie froze as she realized what she was saying and stared at her twin, for a moment. Apparently anger was a good motivator to get things out in the open.

Quinn was shocked by the outburst and she stared at Charlie for a moment, and realized that she was the only who hadn’t known, because no one looked surprised by this information. Even Rachel seemed to have known about it, and she thought that they shared everything, it bothered her that Rachel had kept something this big from her. But it dawned on her and the horror and disgust settled in as what Charlie said sank in, “What happened. No more secrets. I’m not pregnant I can handle it,” she demanded.

Charlie exhaled, “She watched as Russell took a knife to me, as he pulled my pants down, as he cut them off me and then grabbed it. He was going to castrate me, he was going to fucking cut it off, and she just stood there and watched, she didn’t try to stop him. She just had a fucking drink in her hand. I don’t care if she was terrified. You’re a fucking mother, what would you have done?”
Quinn knew what she would have done, she would have stepped in front of the knife or tried to knock him out or something. But she could understand why her mother was terrified, Russell had a knife, he was much taller and bigger than she was. “She went to rehab,” Quinn said, “She took parenting classes, she’s trying Charlie, all she needs is another chance. We can give her a second chance. I’m not saying that it will be easy or that you have to forgive her but she was just as scared of him as you were. I never told anyone, you never let me tell anyone. But I could have stopped the abuse a long time ago, and you’ve forgiven me.”

Charlie couldn’t believe what she was hearing, she didn’t even know why Quinn was defending her. “I could write you a laundry list of all of her fucking sins. You know the real reasons she’s out and walking around like a free woman? Because she turned on Russell the moment she found out that he was out doing the horizontal tango with some stripper. Not because she felt guilty for what she had let happen to me, or for him kicking you out of the house. You know the information she gave to the fucking police? You know the deal she made. She told them about fucking Chicago.”

“Chicago?” Quinn echoed, they had never been to Chicago. At least Rachel seemed to be just as in the dark as she was.

“Charlie,” Brittany said as she gently placed a hand on Charlie’s shoulder. “You—”

“No, Britt. She wants to know everything. Fine. She can know exactly the type of woman Judy is,” Charlie said shrugging Brittany’s hand off her. “Chicago, two days after our fucking thirteenth birthday. He took me to fucking Chicago for the weekend. Where I lost my fucking virginity. Russell fucking paid someone to take it. He paid someone to fucking take my virginity, and all those times that I told you that I was going to those soccer workshops? I lied. Russell has a few condos all over Toledo. He made sure that I liked girls. Judy found out, and she did nothing to fucking stop it. She just ignored it like everything else and just drank herself silly. So she sold him out so she could walk. Judy Fabray doesn’t deserve another chance. This isn’t her throwing herself at the mercy of the court, she made a deal to save her own fucking skin. Something she’s always done, and the moment it gets hard with you she’ll sell you out to save her own skin, to save fucking face.”

Rachel was in shock as she stared at Charlie, this was clearly the news that Charlie had been meaning to tell her, and if she had known. She probably wouldn’t have advised Quinn to give her mother another chance. It didn’t matter how much she missed Judy, it didn’t matter how great their life was before. Judy Fabray was not a good mother. “Quinn maybe you shouldn’t go back, I can talk to my father’s maybe you can stay with us, we have the room. Or you can stay with Santana.”

“You’re lying. He wouldn’t do that,” Quinn said her voice breaking because it was prior to him finding out, when Russell was still a sort of adequate father. He wouldn’t pay to have Charlie assaulted like that, he had loved Charlie. But the look on Charlie’s face tells a different story and Quinn believes her, because Charlie wouldn’t lie about a thing like that. “That’s what he did—she didn’t tell him to do that—she’s changed. People change. She’s trying to get better, trying to be better. You don’t have to forgive her today or in the near future, but at least move back home and give her another chance. I gave my daughter up, I turned my back on her, and I hope that one day in the future she can give me a chance. She can understand why I did it.”

“You did it because raising her near an alcoholic, narcissistic, manipulative, vapid gold-digging whore is a fucking terrible idea. And she made you Quinn Fabray, that’s a good damn reason to stay the fuck away from her. Because the last thing your daughter needs in her fucking life is someone who is just as narcissistic, someone just as manipulative and shallow, and just as much as a gold-digger. Fuck if you had stayed with Finn fucking Hudson you probably would have become an alcoholic just to numb the fucking brain cells to put up with him. You’d be a fucking terrible
mother—” It’s the second time Charlie’s slapped that day and Quinn is surprisingly a good slapper, but Charlie had hit a raw spot. Because Quinn’s feelings about what she had just done are still raw, and she misses her baby. “Because you are just like her.” It wasn’t what she was planning to finish with, she had planned to finish with ‘but you made the ultimate sacrifice unlike her,’ but she’s angry and hurt because Quinn’s never hit her before. It’s probably a fucking Fabray thing.

A lot of things happened in that second, Santana immediately stepped between the two of them, Brittany twisted around to pull Quinn away and Rachel just stared in shock, because Charlie has never looked this angry before, but there is that flash of hurt on her face. Charlie shouldn’t have said what she had said, but Quinn shouldn’t have hit her. “Tensions are really high right now, Charlie—she’s not Judy.” Rachel said coming to Quinn’s defense, because she understood why Quinn had gotten angry, to have her motherhood called into question like that, but violence never solved anything.

Quinn stared at her hand for a moment and then looked at her sister, she had just reacted. It had just been a reaction, “I’m sorry—I didn’t mean.”

But Charlie’s angry, and she slipping deeper into that rage, that she manages to keep a tight rein on. “And if you’re just like her, then Beth will probably hate you just as much as I hate her.” She ignores the gasps from Rachel and the intake of breath from Santana, as she glares at her sister. Quinn looks sick now, like she’s physically been assaulted and Charlie knows she’s crossed a line that she probably shouldn’t have, but she really doesn’t care.

“Charlie,” Brittany’s voice is firm and reproachful. “Stop it.”

“No,” Charlie says, and it’s the second time she’s said no to Brittany, she’s not even looking at the dancer her focus is solely on her sister. “I’m not going home to play family with you and your alcoholic mother. If you want to be fucking stupid and go pretend that what Judy is a changed person, then you can do it without me. I’m not going to be a part of that delusion anymore. I’m done with the family drama, you’re on your fucking own.” She turns to Rachel, “Let’s go, I want to go home.” She doesn’t wait for an answer from Rachel, she just turns and begins to walk away.

Rachel can’t help but stare, she’s never seen Charlie this angry before and truthfully it scares her. She is about to follow in an attempt to get Charlie to calm down, to talk about her feelings like a calm rational person, but one look at Quinn nearly breaks her heart, because she looks about ready to cry. It’s probably because she hasn’t actually dealt with the fact that she gave away Beth, she pretended like she was okay, but Charlie’s words had cut deep. She flicks her brown eyes back at Charlie who hasn’t stopped and then back at Quinn and makes a decision, “I’m staying.” The words seem to get through to Charlie who turns for a moment at this statement and Rachel can see the look of hurt on Charlie’s face.

Charlie stares at Rachel for a moment, and the anger grows, because Rachel is her friend, her best friend, and she may not have been a decent best friend at times, but she didn’t expect Rachel to choose Quinn over her. She opens her mouth to say something harsh and cutting, but she doesn’t and finally manages to get a handle on her anger again, “Whatever.” It’s all she can manage, and she says it in a rather cold tone and she begins to walk to her car, adjusting her duffel bag on her shoulder.

Brittany is torn, because Charlie is hurting right now but so is Quinn, and even though she sort of knows that Rachel might be able to handle it, Charlie needs someone just as much as Quinn does. She’s about to run after Charlie, but Santana is already moving towards the two of them.

“I’ll go with her,” Santana says, “You stay here with Tubbers and the Hobbit.”
Brittany is surprised by this, because she wasn’t expecting Santana to take charge like that, or to offer to take care of Charlie. It’s usually her job to comfort Charlie, because Santana is notoriously bad at it, but at least she’s taking initiative, at least Santana is trying. So she watches Santana jog up to Charlie before she returns in trying to calm Quinn down. It was a mess. “She’s just angry, Quinn she didn’t mean it.”

Rachel nodded, she couldn’t believe that Charlie had thrown Beth into the mix. That she had decided to cut Quinn that deeply. Charlie didn’t get mad, irritated, annoyed, but never angry. “I think that you both just need to take a step back, and just calm down. Beth isn’t going to hate you. She’s going to understand that what you did was just for her. That you wanted to give her the best life.”

Quinn doesn’t say anything because part of the reason why she had given Beth away was to keep Judy away from her. “I’m a terrible mother. I walked away from my child. I—”

“You didn’t walk away, the Griffins said you could visit her next week. You will be a part of your child’s life, and she will know how much you wanted her. How much you wanted to keep her, and she’ll get free singing lessons and dancing lessons, and you can teach her how to be a cheerleader,” Rachel cuts her off, because she won’t let Quinn go to a place of self-loathing. She won’t allow it.

“Yeah she’ll be like the coolest kid in the world, and she’ll be happy that you’re in her life. And she’ll love you because you’ll be at all her birthdays, and you’ll give her Christmas presents. You’ll be like the cool mom. You’re not like your mom,” Brittany says in a comforting tone.

But Quinn has her secrets too, and a part of her wonders if Charlie was right. Or that her kid will grow up to call her a whore, or if Beth will look at her with the same loathing that she sees in Charlie’s eyes whenever she talks about Judy. But Judy had kept her safe, and had made her felt loved. And it wasn’t her fault, it was and it would always be Russell’s fault. It’s not like parenting came with a handbook, she had hopes and ambitions for Beth. She didn’t want her to end up like Stoner Brett. She didn’t want Beth to get pregnant at sixteen. “I just wanted to give her the best life that is humanly possible. I didn’t think—I would hope that she would understand that.”

“What you said was fucked up,” Santana says simply the moment that Charlie puts her car in park, she had chosen wisely not to say anything to Charlie who in return had said nothing back. Charlie doesn’t say anything right away she’s not even looking in Santana’s direction, and the Latina rolls her eyes. “My parents aren’t around, like usual. So we can get our talk on inside.” It’s not a request and she exits the car, and after a moment Charlie follows her.

Charlie doesn’t even know what she’s doing in Santana’s house, and her mind makes the logical jump. Her parents aren’t home, it’s Santana, and even though she really just wants to go to Puck’s house and get into his stash of Jack Daniels. She’s still angry she’s still hurt and she really doesn’t want to talk about it. So when she closes the door and Santana turns to look at her, not really knowing what to say, Charlie leans in and kisses her, because at this moment all she wants is to feel good.

It’s always been fireworks that transform into liquid heat whenever she kisses Santana, and it isn’t any different this time. Even though she caught Santana off guard, the Latina still responds favorably, kissing her back, but it’s only for a moment. Charlie feels a firm hand on her chest and a gentle but firm push, and she stumbles backwards, and she’s confused because Santana never says no, and she’s angry again. “Do I disgust you?” her tone is bitter, and filled with anger but Santana just rolls her eyes.
“Oh please, I’ve been trying to get you to fuck me for months now. You’re the one that keeps running off, or finding some excuse. Bout damn time you fucking realized how it feels,” Santana snaps at her easily meeting Charlie’s anger with some of her own. But her eyes soften after a moment and she grabs Charlie’s arm pulling her deeper into her house, leading the soccer player to her living room and shoving her onto the couch. “Trust me if this was any other day we’d totally be naked right now,” she smirks when she sees Charlie blush, but she continues instead. “But we’re not going to be doing the horizontal tango today. Coz once that’s over and you wake up, you’re going to feel hollow inside and then you’ll just hate yourself a bit more. Even though I will make you feel amazing in the short term, it’s only for a moment. And you still have some weird hang up about sleeping with me and Britt, which FYI, totes driving us insane. Speaking of which, I’m totes done with you hiding your feelings and shit, or hiding shit in general. I get it you’re a fucking Fabray you’ve got to be all mysterious and shit. It was sexy in freshman year, now it’s just exhausting. So you’re going to sit there and you’re going to spill, because you’re not going anywhere until you do.”

Charlie says nothing for a moment, and she still doesn’t want to talk but Santana is just standing there waiting for her to say something. So she decides to talk. “Judy was never really my mother. I mean we just had nothing in common and she was quite okay with letting Russell be the one to raise me. She was just there to sort of put food on the table for us and according to Russell spend all his money. So I was closer to him, and he beat me before he found out, but it wasn’t really that bad. Nothing like after we found out that I was you know a girl. The night that we found out, he got drunk and then he got angry. Like really angry. I mean they were both sort of drinkers before, I can’t remember a time when they didn’t have a glass of scotch in their hands,” she’s rambling now and she doesn’t care, because someone needs to understand why she can’t go back. Because Quinn is being stupid and she’s defending that woman. “But this time he was drunk, and angry and he took of his belt told me to take position, and he just—he didn’t stop. He wouldn’t stop, and she watched. She watched him and she didn’t do anything. I think I was begging and crying at this point, and that made him angrier, but it hurt so I remember calling for my mother, I remember begging for her for help. To just help me.”

Santana was sitting down on the coffee table in front of Charlie, and her heart tore as Charlie described what had happened to her, and she hated Judy Fabray just a bit more, because the very idea of a mother watching her child get beaten to an inch of her life. It wasn’t right, even she knew it wasn’t right. And she could understand Charlie’s anger towards her mother. What she didn’t understand was where the anger was when Charlie talked about Russell. “But she didn’t. Did she?”

Charlie let out a harsh laugh, “She walked away. She fucking walked away. I found after he had gotten tired of hitting me and I had escaped to my room that she had taken Luc—Quinn she had taken Quinn out on the town, on a spa day maybe some shopping. Retail fucking therapy. So yes I hate her, I fucking hate her. She shouldn’t have gotten out, she shouldn’t be allowed to walk around. Or talk to me. Quinn doesn’t get it. And I can’t deal with her not getting it, of her defending Judy like she’s some saint. No one deserves a second chance. It’s not something that they’re fucking entitled to.”

Santana can tell that Charlie’s getting agitated again, like being forced to talk about it is making her relive every last painful beating, all the betrayal, and she gets why Charlie doesn’t want to talk about it. Normally she would have distracted Charlie with sex at this point but she already told the soccer player not now, so she gets up and takes a seat on the couch beside Charlie. “You still went all incredible hulk on Quinn,” but she can understand why Charlie lashed out the way she did.

Charlie snorts and looks at Santana, “Is the Incredible Hulk, like the only Marvel superhero you know?”
“I know Spider-man, and The Wolverine.” cause after that it gets much too complicated and she doesn’t care enough, to know anymore. “Oh and Iron Man and Captain America and Thor,” but that’s only because Charlie’s dragged her and Britts to the comic book store, it’s the only way they can drag the soccer player shopping with them.

Charlie’s lips twist into a small smile, and she thinks, “Deadpool, I think you’ll really like Deadpool,” she informs Santana.

Santana lets out an exaggerated groan, “Pffft I don’t want to catch your nerd germs Fabray.” This doesn’t seem to dissuade Charlie who goes on about how great the character is for a solid five minutes, and Santana can’t help but smile because it’s sort of adorable, how Charlie can switch to something relatively innocent. “God you’re such a nerd,” she says but she’s teasing. Well at least she knows what to get Charlie for her birthday.

Charlie laughs, because she sort of is a nerd, but the smile fades after a moment, “I’m not going to apologize to Quinn,” but she feels guilty because what she said was really messed up, and she knows that Quinn is struggling with the fact that she gave up Beth, even though she keeps pretending to be fine. At least she knew where Puck was, at the end of a bottle.

“Even you thought it was the right decision to give away Beth,” Santana said calmly and Charlie sinks into the couch. “Trusts me, I know about saying shit that you don’t mean.” When Charlie just looks away, Santana continues. “The motel. Shouldn’t have happened. I shouldn’t have taken out how I was feeling about Finn, on you. I shouldn’t have made you feel like shit because I was hurting on the inside.”

Charlie frowns and makes a mental note to ask Karofsky to increase the slushies on Finn Hudson. “Why? Why were you hurting? Finn is a douchebag, and he’s not that smart. He’s nothing to you, just a way to get back at Rachel, and to make me jealous.”

Santana studies Charlie for a moment and she wonders out of all the things in the world, why Charlie is so comfortable with her sexuality. Like it’s the least offensive thing about her. “Because sometimes you wake up and you feel hollow on the inside and when that passes you hate yourself a bit more.”

And Charlie gets it. “You are the hottest girl in school,” Charlie says and looks at Santana with that crooked grin of hers. “You aren’t nothing. You are Santana fucking Lopez, and you’re currently the head bitch at McKinley. You are something, you are someone. And fuck whoever thinks otherwise right?”

Santana smiles cause Charlie’s attempting to make her feel better and that’s ridiculous cause she wasn’t the one upset in the first place. And she wants to kiss the soccer player but she promised herself that she wouldn’t. “You still need to apologize,” she says firmly.

Charlie’s smile fades just a bit, “I will,” she says after a moment. “But Quinn is on her own this time, I can’t go back there. Not for her. I don’t think I can keep—I want to be selfish a bit, and just stay with the Berry’s.”

“Then don’t go back, I think the Hobbits parents will understand when you actually explain it to them. I think that the Hobbit will understand if you explain it to her. And if they don’t you can totes move in here. Though I will protest if my mom loves you more than she loves me. God damn you Fabray’s always with your manners. You know if she hears you cursing like that she’ll totally blame me.”

Charlie grins at Santana and nods, but she really just wants to stay where she is, because the idea of
Rachel’s phone beeps, and she picks it up, “Charlie’s spending the night with Santana. She said you can sleep in her room.” Rachel shakes her head. “That won’t be necessary you can just share my bed with me. It’s got plenty of space,” she said dismissively, not seeing the weird look that crossed Quinn’s bed. They had dropped Brittany off at home.

Quinn swallows, suddenly nervous and she doesn’t really know why. “Has Charlie slept in your bed before?” she asks because she doesn’t really know what Rachel means.

“A few times, I don’t think she likes sharing with me, though. I have a strict schedule to keep and Charlie hates being woken up that early,” Rachel says with a shrug, she’s still upset with her best friend, because she’s never seen her friend like that.

Quinn nods, suddenly feeling a bit less nervous, and slightly disappointed. It almost makes her stop and go over her internal feelings, but she doesn’t because she doesn’t want to think about what they might mean. Rachel is with Finn now. “Maybe I should just stay with Santana,” Quinn muses, because she’s been thinking about it.

“Charlie once told me that, your mother favored you. So while I don’t condone what Charlie said, I can see why she’s reluctant to give your mother another chance. It might take a bit of time, but as you’ve said she was a decent mother to you. She did do some terrible things, and she hurt your twin, but family is important. And I can understand why you would seek that normalcy out, why you would seek your mother out,” Rachel finishes and looks at Quinn. She had spent the better part of her life wanting a mother, wanting to be with her mother, and now Shelby was in her life. They were still going slowly of course, and Shelby was getting ready to win her third national championship. They had all summer, to get to know each other.

Quinn frowns because that information doesn’t make her feel better, “I don’t want to talk about Charlie anymore.” Or Beth, or mothers or anything that currently made her chest hurt. “How are things with you and Finn? Is it everything you imagined it would be? Are there fireworks?”

Rachel smiles, but it’s not her brightest smile, because it’s not perfect. I think I’ve romanticized it a bit too much in my head. He’s really nice to me, and he tries to be charming and he tries really hard to pay attention, but as you know I ramble quite a bit. But at least he’s stopped saying that I talk too much. And I think that he’ll eventually understand that Breadstix is not the best place to take a vegan. But he’s making the effort and I think it’s the thought that counts.”

“I think it’s cute. When you ramble,” Quinn says without thinking, before she feels her ears heat up, because she realizes what he just said. She looks away and misses the way that Rachel’s face lights up when she says that. “And the fireworks?”

At this Rachel’s smile fades, “I think we’ll have to wait on that. I’m not worried. When it happens it will happen right? Maybe I’m still a bit upset about what happened with everything that went down. But he’s made some huge grand gestures for me, and he told me he loved me.”

Quinn frowns because this topic hurts as well, and she really has to consider if she’s still in love with Finn Hudson. Charlie might eventually forgive her for the issue with her mother, but dating Finn again seems like it would be the proverbial straw. It did seem that she at least knew about Santana and was appropriately angry about it. After all everyone knew about it, especially in the glee club. It wasn’t even like an open secret. It had been news for like ten seconds. “Well I’ve
never felt fireworks either, not with him, not with Puck.”

“Well even though I promised your sister I’d help her find a leading lady, it seems that she’s got that under control. She is staying with Santana after all,” Rachel says with a frown, because she doesn’t really approve of that relationship.

“They aren’t together, or even doing anything more than the occasional make-out session,” Quinn says, though she’s a bit reluctant because she really doesn’t want to talk about Charlie. Because that makes her think of Beth, and that hurts. “I’ve heard Santana bitching about it to Brittany,” she states, answering the unasked question.

Rachel sniffs, because she doesn’t understand how Charlie can give herself to other people without the commitment. So she makes a note to lecture her friend on life choices, and how important they are and she studies Quinn. She really is the prettiest girl in school, and it still baffles her mind that Quinn Fabray is her friend. “Well, that aside. We’re going to find you the perfect leading man,” Rachel’s voice drops at this, it’s not something that she really wants to do, because as Charlie pointed out the school pickings are slim and Quinn Fabray deserves the very best. Rachel wouldn’t just settle for anyone, because Quinn’s happiness was important to her. If Quinn weren’t straight—the thought stops there, because there is no point in thinking about what ifs, and she’s with Finn Hudson. Though it said something to her that she’d rather be with Quinn then listening to Finn go on about some silly video game. It was like she had told Kurt, there was no point in going after something she couldn’t have, and at least Finn wanted her.

There isn’t any crazy plan to get Quinn to fall in love with her, because she can’t turn someone who is straight gay. It was a shame that she had a crush on the wrong Fabray. So she buried her crush and focused on Finn, because he had all the leading qualities to make a strong leading man, so did Jesse and occasionally Puck showed the qualities. It wasn’t something that she could tell Charlie, How did you tell your best friend that you had a crush on her twin. Especially a person who had given Rachel her very first slushy. Charlie already thought she was slightly insane with her obsession over Finn Hudson, but this was a whole different ball game. “We can go on double dates,” she adds, because it’s the closest she’ll ever get to dating Quinn Fabray.

Quinn smiles a bit, “I just had a baby, I don’t think I’m ready to start dating again anytime soon,” she admits.

Rachel nods, “Of course, I’d still have to make a PowerPoint presentation on who the hottest guys in school were, and if they’d match you on a personal level. I’ve already begun. But there aren’t that many guys to choose from, that I think will be a good match for you.”

Quinn stares at Rachel, because she’s put a lot of thought into who she would be dating, and when she opens her mouth to point that out, her phone rings, and she looks at it and sees that it’s Charlie. She doesn’t want to talk to her sister, and she doesn’t even want to face her but she picks up the phone anyway because it’ll distract her from the fact that she really thinks that she’d make a better partner to Rachel than Finn Hudson. She doesn’t expect Rachel to pull the phone away from her and answer it for her.

“Charlie? Yes it’s Rachel. You are not going to apologize over the phone. Your behavior today was abhorrent, and if you think that you can just say sorry over the phone and things will be okay then you are sorely mistaken. You will apologize in person and if I even think that you’re not being sincere, there will be consequences.” Rachel was quiet for a moment and Quinn could hear Charlie’s voice filter through her speakers. “Goodbye Charlie. I hope to see you here tomorrow with a proper apology ready,” Rachel said cutting Charlie off and ending the call. Rachel handed the phone back to Quinn.
A small smile appeared on Quinn’s face. “Consequences?”

“I thought it sounded ominous? Charlie seemed to believe me, she said she’d be here first thing in the morning with an apology ready. Truthfully I was going to ask Brittany to put Charlie on punishment, it seemed to be a very effective punishment for Santana,” Rachel informed Quinn.

“That’s actually—a really good idea,” Quinn says after a moment, because Charlie adores Brittany and anything the dancer could do to her, would be plenty punishment.

Charlie sits at the island waiting, she’s been there for ten minutes, it had been hard to leave Santana’s side this morning because it had felt comfortable, she had felt comfortable cuddled up with Santana on the couch, they had spent the night watching the Spiderman trilogy, which Santana had never actually watched and Charlie had given her a brief history so she would understand things better. She had paused the DVD several times to get her point across till Santana had begun smacking her every time she reached for the remote. And when Brittany had come over they had watched Lady and the Tramp and Lilo and Stitch, till Brittany had to go home.

She had stopped at a diner and picked up breakfast for her sister and Rachel and was now just waiting for Quinn to wake up, she didn’t have to wait long because she heard Rachel and Quinn coming downstairs and she froze for a moment and sighed biting her lip as they entered the kitchen and looked at her. Charlie pushed the food in front of her out, each one had their names on it. “Picked up breakfast,” she said calmly.

Rachel glanced at the container that had an R on it and frowned at Charlie, she wasn’t going to be easily bribed by food, “Charlie Reagan—” she trailed off when she saw the pointed look that Charlie gave her, clearly this was something that the two sisters needed to work out and she couldn’t be involved. “I’ll be taking this in my room, I still have homework to do,” she said grabbing the food that Charlie had bought and leaving Charlie and Quinn alone. Eavesdropping was rude, but the two of them needed to have a talk.

Quinn stared at her sister and took the container watching as Charlie placed a fork and a knife on it, and she opened it, smiling her sister had gotten her like three orders of bacon, eggs and French toast. But she was still hurt by what Charlie had said, “If you think you can—”

“You made the right decision, and you know that and I know that. And I lost my head when you slapped me, because I could only see Judy. And you’re not our mother. One day Beth is going to ask you why you gave her up. You’re going to tell her why you gave her up, and part of that story will be because your grandmother is a lunatic and I didn’t want you to get a nose job at thirteen, or feel that you had to drop fifty pounds. You’ll tell her that her grandfather went crazy after being a somewhat decent dad. You’re going to tell her that you weren’t ready to be a mother and you still think what if, every single day. You made the right decision and it hurts now, because I’m just her aunt and I miss her, she was beautiful Quinn, and if I hurt this bad and she’s not even mine I can’t believe how awful you must feel. But you saved her, you saved her from what we went through. And that is the right decision, and deep down you know it just as much as I do. Beth isn’t going to hate you, she’s going to see the scars and be grateful and love you, because you did something that Judy could never do. You’re sixteen and our mom’s like ancient and you’re already a better mother. And I’m sorry that I said the shit that I said yesterday,” Charlie says interrupting her sister because she hadn’t bought breakfast for a peace offering, she had been hungry and se still had to get to soccer practice later.

Quinn bites her lip a bit and she nods because she still had doubts, she would always wonder what
if, what if she had kept her daughter. It’s never going to go away and even though she’ll see her daughter once a month but she’ll miss so much and she wonders if it’s worth it. “It still doesn’t make it hurt any less, I gave my daughter to strangers, who at any time can stop us from seeing my child. She’s your niece don’t you want to teach her soccer, or try and convince her that Marvel is better than DC, or read to her like dad used to do for us every night. And what happens when I’m older and if I have more kids, and they’re with me. What will she think, will she think I just threw her away? That I love them more than I love her? What am I going to tell her then? What if she does hate me, what if she hates me and she never wants to see me again?”

“She’ll see that you gave her the best chance at being normal—of living a life that we’ll never get to have. I’m going to have these scars and you’re always going to have the invisible ones. The ones that she gave you but you can’t see because you think she did you a favor, and she’s smart because she probably got your brain instead of Puck’s so she’ll realize that you probably saved her from years of expensive therapy. And she’ll have Rachel in her life who apparently can forgive anyone, so she’ll learn to forgive people, and she’ll be surrounded by so much love that she won’t know what to do with it.”

Quinn swallowed because they didn’t do this, they didn’t do this emotional stuff, they were Fabray’s and Charlie avoided talking about things like this like the plague. But here she was talking about “But what if she doesn’t get it. Rachel wants Shelby so badly—”

“This isn’t the same situation as Rachel’s, you aren’t going to disappear from Beth’s life for sixteen years, and then reject her because you didn’t make good memories with her. You are going to go every month to visit your daughter, you and Puck because both of you want her, but you’re both intelligent enough to know that you aren’t ready to have her yet. So she won’t hate you, because you’ll actually be there and you won’t turn your back on her when she needs you.”

Quinn nibbles on some bacon letting Charlie’s words assure her, and they do because Charlie sort of hates everyone in her family except her, and maybe that should tell her something. “I think that’s why I need to go back because she’s our mom and she needs us. She has only done what’s best for me, and she was a good mom she wanted to make me better to make sure I wasn’t picked on at school. Maybe it was his influence on her, and I miss her. I miss my mother. I’m not you I can’t just turn my back on her, she loves me. She loves you and she wants what’s best for you. We’re her children, and this thing with Beth has just reinforced the idea that every daughter needs her mother. You don’t have to go back, but you need to give her a chance, to show you that she isn’t like that anymore. That she isn’t like him, she knew and she didn’t tell him to protect me from him and you weren’t there she didn’t like him any more than you did. She didn’t love him like she used to. I think she really was just scared of him and you never needed her, you were always dad’s favorite. You would follow him around all the time and you never listened to her, and she never knew how to parent you. But she’s willing to try, she’s willing to try and earn your forgiveness. And it’s not fair to her that you’re willing to forgive our dad but you can’t forgive her, when she never touched you.”

Charlie makes a face, “The very first time he lost it with me she took you to the spa, I begged her for help I begged for my mother and she gave me this look, and I remember it and she walked away, she walked away and she took you with her to protect you, I don’t know but you didn’t need her at that time. I needed her, I needed my mother for the first time in thirteen years. I needed my mother to help me, and she just walked away from me, and she chose you. And I couldn’t—I don’t have good memories with her, I have good memories of dad, I have good memories of Russell and yeah he did some shitty stuff to me but he was still my dad. Judy watched twice, she’s watched when I really needed her she never stopped him and she never came to my aid. Not once. Even if she was scared of Russell, she never came to my defense when he was in a good mood she never once told him to stop calling me names. She never came in and helped me like you did she never
took care of me.”

“She said she tried once and you told her to get out,” Quinn said trying to convince her sister.

“I told you to get out several times and you stayed,” Charlie pointed out. “You stitched me up, and you wanted to tell. You wanted to save me and I refused to let you. Because it was just five more years, five more years and I’d be free. She didn’t try and save me she didn’t try and protect me she didn’t do anything and she’s only going to ruin you. She’s going to turn you into her clone and I can’t stand the idea of losing the last person in our fucked up family because she’s just like that. She ruined you, she made you this person and she took away the one person that I cared about more than anything. She took away Lucy, she took my sister from me, and it became more important to you to have friends and be popular and go to parties and she made you Quinn and Quinn reminds me of her someone who would turn her back on me just because it was easier. I just want us to go back to being Charlie and Lucy.”

Quinn frowned because Lucy had been weak, she had been useless and needed Charlie to continuously put herself in harm’s way, she had been forced to become stronger and Charlie was her sister, she was really the only person who understood what it meant to be a Fabray, who understood their world. “I’m still that person Charlie, I’m just not that weak person who needs you to always protect them. I don’t need you to protect me anymore or try and be some moral authority on my life anymore. All Judy did was make sure that I didn’t need you to put yourself in harm’s way because of me, and I grew up. You needed to—you need to stop defending me and treating me like a damsel in distress because I can handle it. I can handle the harsh reality, I’m not like I was back then and you need to stop treating me like this mayflower because I can handle it and you’re not a boy anymore. I don’t need a knight in shining armor. You’re five minutes older than me you’re not years older than me. I don’t need your protection. Judy isn’t going to hurt me, she never hurt me and she made me into someone who wasn’t being called names and—”

Charlie’s voice is quiet but it cuts Quinn off completely and takes the wind out of her sails, “Lucy would never have done what you did to Rachel. All Judy did was make you into this robot who only cared about being popular. Lucy Cabooesy, that’s that they used to call you and it sucked but you became your bullies and you went above and beyond what they did to get at Rachel. I still don’t know why you targeted her of all the people at school but you did. And maybe some of this is my fault, because I pulled away from you. But he was going to start gunning for you because you weren’t Frannie. You weren’t perfect and he thought I was infecting you or something. It doesn’t matter if it’s five minutes, a year, ten seconds I am older and it’s my job to protect you. And Judy’s going to ruin you, Quinn she’s going to make you all Quinn and maybe you need to stand on your own away from me for a bit and I need to do the same but you can’t let her make you into something you’re not.”

Quinn swallows and she looks away, “Rachel forgave me, she forgave me for everything that I did and I can forgive her too. You can forgive her too, just give her a chance for me? Please. I want us to be a family again.”

Charlie stares at Quinn for a moment, and she remembers all the times where it was just the two of them, against the world but it’s changed now and it’s not the same because they aren’t as close. Quinn isn’t Lucy anymore and Charlie’s not a boy anymore. “The stories that we told never had her in it. Frannie was the evil dragon or queen that needed to be vanquished and I was the knight and you were just Lucy the princess. And it should be just that. You and me like it always was. I can’t be a family with her, I can’t forgive her for taking my sister from me more effectively than Russell did. I won’t forgive her, not even for you Quinn.”

“I’m still Lucy, Charlie,” Quinn says with a sigh.
Charlie looks at Quinn carefully, because she can see it. She can see her sister coming back because Judy’s not around to tell her what to eat or how to behave or what to wear or how to be a proper girl, and how she needed to find the right dopey man to make her into a better person. Lucy would have become strong all on her own, because quite frankly she had always been smarter than Charlie. “I know, but I can’t go back not even for you. I need to think of me, and I’m sorry that it’s selfish and it’s not what you want but I feel safe here. I feel like I have a home here, and I don’t want to let that go. But I’m always going to be right here Quinn and I’ll always be there when you need me I promise.”

Quinn nods because if anything Charlie has earned the right to feel safe, she hasn’t in years and she can’t fault Charlie’s reasoning and maybe her sister will come back and they can be happy they can be a family again, “I promise to not abandon you either, and that I’m going to be here when you need me. Seal it like we used to?” Quinn asks and her voice is soft because they haven’t had a pinkie promise in years.

Charlie smiles and it’s the crooked grin of hers and she holds out her pinkie for her sister, “Of course,” she says as Quinn links her pinkie with hers and they shake on it.

It’s a promise to be there for one another no matter what, and Quinn knows that Charlie will be there, that Charlie won’t turn on her. That her sister won’t hate her like she does everyone else in her family. She remembers their first one where Charlie announced brashly that she was going to protect her sister. And maybe they can back what they once had before it became so broken and twisted.

Quinn wants to be a family again where they were happy, where they were normal. She wants to forgive Judy and she wants her twin to forgive Judy as well, because she’s still Lucy, Lucy’s still there and she’s upset that Charlie can’t see her anymore. But she can’t see Charlie anymore either because Charlie’s hiding just as much as Lucy is.
This wasn’t how Quinn Fabray planned to spend her summer vacation. She had planned to be doing everything in her power to shed all her baby weight, she didn’t expect to be stuck in a stuffy room, with a bunch of stuffy lawyers who kept grilling her over events that were months old. The case was in a week and they were prepping all the witnesses.

“So the afternoon of the event, you and your twin Charlie had a plan to inform your parents together, about your pregnancy?” William Henderson asked.

“Yes,” Quinn repeated, it was the fourth time they had been over that day.

“However your ex-boyfriend decided that it would be wise to announce the pregnancy by singing, and your father then preceded to kick you out of the house.”

“That is correct,” Quinn said, swallowing she could still remember that day like the back of her hand. “I tried to contact Charlie to let her know that I had been kicked out but, she wasn’t picking up her phone. I get a call about an hour to an hour and a half later, from one of my friends letting me know that Charlie was hospitalized.”

“That’s Santana Lopez,” William Henderson glancing down at his notes.

“Yes, she’s Charlie’s friend as well,” Quinn said. It seemed what they had all finally settled on at least, things had seemingly cooled off between them, but the ensuing friendship had strengthened. Though now that it was summer Charlie, who was fresh off another MVP and state championship, had taken it upon herself to pull Puck out of his depression. Rachel was spending nearly every free moment, either doing dance lessons or practicing her vocals, while also somehow managing to write down every idea for glee club and spend at least an hour talking to Finn every day.

“So you went to the hospital?”

“She didn’t wake up until early the next morning, but I stayed with her,” Quinn reiterated for what felt like the fiftieth time. Santana and Brittany were off, getting their lady kisses on, or something. Even though Brittany had motocross races every other week, and she taught dance classes to children during the weekdays. She hadn’t expected to have most of her friends, and her sister totally abandon her. And Judy was trying to be super-mom. It was nice if it wasn’t so exhausting. It was nearly exhausting as her morning runs, as she tried to get her cardio back. She was regretting eating all that bacon, throughout her pregnancy.

“And you knew immediately that it was your father?”

“Yes I did. Our mother had never laid a hand on Charlie before, and I had seen the damage, and I’ve heard him. Hitting her before. He was the disciplinarian in the house, it was his word that was law.” The only shining moment was that the weekend before the court case she was going to see Beth on the weekend, she and Puck were going to make the trip up. The last visit she had made with Rachel, Charlie and Puck. Apparently Beth was a screamer, and the only person who she managed to respond to was Rachel who had sung the girl to sleep. Watching Rachel had made her feel all warm inside, because it even soothed her frazzled nerves. She had been about to cry, because Beth didn’t seem to respond to her at all.

“You said you saw the damage beforehand?”

“I had stitched her up before with a sewing needle and some thread, I learned how to do it off
YouTube,” Quinn replied. Rachel would make a fantastic mother someday, in the future. Though at this point, and from what Rachel managed to text her, she really hoped it wasn’t with Finn Hudson. He had taken her to Breadstix again, even though they didn’t really have any vegan options for Rachel who had been forced to eat their terrible garden salad again. They had another date again tonight and Quinn had planned to get home in time to make some Kung Pao Tofu with some vegetable fried rice with tofu. She had found the recipe online, and had spent the past few days just working on it, till it tasted good. At least she imagined it was good. She had brought a container out to Charlie and Puck who had eaten it all before she had informed them that it was vegan. She hoped Rachel liked it, because she imagined that Charlie and Puck would eat anything.

“And why did you never call child protective services or the police?”

This caught Quinn’s attention, because it was a new question. “Because she’s my twin and she didn’t want to leave me with him. Because we thought about it, and with Charlie’s condition we didn’t know anyone who wouldn’t treat her like Russell did or worse. Maybe I thought it would get better, there were days when he wasn’t…he didn’t hit her, he just ignored her.”

William Henderson stopped for a moment and nodded at Quinn, “The defense will probably go with something along those lines. They’re going to try and discredit you as a witness. Is there anything about you that I need to know?” I don’t like to be caught off guard.”

Quinn frowned because she didn’t really want to tell him about the whole baby-gate scandal at school, but it wouldn’t take much for anyone to figure it out. It was all over JBI’s blog. “The father of my baby wasn’t Finn Hudson. It was Noah Puckerman.”

William Henderson frowned at this and resisted the urge to pinch the bridge of his nose. He hated unnecessary complications. He wouldn’t even need Quinn or anyone else if Charlie would just come in and testify, but she refused. He had tried to get her in front of him, but from what he could gather she had no inclination to even show up to the trial. Not that he could blame her, she probably didn’t want to see Russell Fabray. The man had threatened to kill her the next time he saw her in open court. “Is there any way you could convince your sister to testify?” he asked.

Quinn shook her head, though she would talk to Rachel, the girl might have some ideas. “I thought she didn’t have to testify? Because you had more than enough evidence to put him away.”

“We do for the physical abuse, the pictures and the statement from both Miguel Lopez and Leroy Berry, are all we need. But all we have for the sexual abuse case is your mother’s word against his. Charlie may have told the police what happened to her, but his lawyers are trying to get that bit of information thrown out. They insist that it’s just the ramblings of a scorned woman. I can see why she wouldn’t, I can’t imagine the cross-examination would be anything less than brutal.”

“Brutal how?”

“They’ll probably ask about her sexual history, they might imply that it wasn’t abused because she liked it. That it’s a normal fatherly tradition to get your son prostitutes to celebrate. That he probably did her a favor because of her condition. They might as about her current sexual history, and they will probably make her feel like a freak. She’d need to keep her cool the entire time, and they will provoke her at every opportunity. They are going to do the classic blame the victim, make her out to be the bad seed, try and discredit her in front of the jury.”

Quinn could suddenly understand why Charlie had simply refused to attend, she didn’t like talking about herself to begin with, and she hated answering questions about herself. Being forced to defend her actions, or discuss intimate details of her life in front of a bunch of strangers would be simply torturous for her. But if it would keep Russell in jail for longer, she’d see if Rachel or
Brittany could make Charlie talk. “I’ll try,” it’s all she can say, because it’s the best that she can offer.

“Do you want to run through it all over again?” William Henderson asks and Quinn shakes her head.

She’s ready. She’s ready to get on the stand and face her father, even though the thought terrifies her, she hasn’t seen him in person in months, not since she was kicked out. And truthfully they’ve been at this all morning and she still needs to go by the store and pick up some ingredients for tonight.

Charlie was supposed to be on some adventure with Puck for the night, which meant that it would be just her and Rachel, as her dads were on some cruise together, which Rachel had turned down. It would be the perfect night, they could watch a movie and just catch up. Because they hadn’t really had time for each other since school ended.

Charlie stared out the window lost in thought as she watched the houses slowly start to become sparser as Puck drove her to the warehouse district. He had said that it was something that was going to be lucrative, and the only job she had managed to line up for the summer so far was coaching soccer in the little league. She needed spending money for the year, and she didn’t like being so dependent on the Berry’s. They had been so good to her and she didn’t want to take advantage. Judy was trying to throw money at her in an attempt to get her to come home. Truthfully Charlie just needed to keep her mind busy, a job would be a welcome distraction from the trial, and the fact that she may have just broken up with Santana and Brittany. She had no clue because she wasn’t even sure what they were.

For the past couple of months, they had been flirting and she had been responding to a degree but she hadn’t cracked, she had said no, even if she really wanted to. And really she should have said no when they had invited her back to Santana’s place after her championship game. But she had been happy and they had been happy and Santana’s parents weren’t around and being kissed by Santana and Brittany was way to intoxicating to be legal. She had wanted it desperately in the moment, she had wanted to be normal, to pretend that she was someone important and great that got the girl and as an added bonus her hot best friend. It was petty and shallow and she had felt hollow the next morning. It wasn’t as if the night wasn’t something to be remembered because she did, she played it over in her mind again and again, but it had been fake. Santana was still in love with Brittany and she would still go back to sleeping with Puck to pass the time and it hurt. It hurt a lot more than she would ever care to admit to anyone.

Sleeping with Santana had been a mistake, even if it was Santana and Brittany. It had been a terrible mistake and she had underestimated the effect it would have on her. She couldn’t do it again not while Santana had this off again, on again thing with Puck, even though it was clear that she was in love with Brittany. She was Mrs. Never Say No, and she wanted Santana to say no to everyone, she wanted to be Santana’s one and only choice. Brittany she could always sleep with whenever she wanted, she loved Brittany dearly, she did she was the only one that could dance behind the walls she erected but Brittany was someone who needed to be free. But that would ultimately hurt Santana if she chose to sleep with her best friend, they shared everything including their sexual partners.

So she had left, even though they had wanted to continue last night’s events, she had blurted out that it would be best if they just remained friends. Santana had been pissed, and she had seen hurt and Charlie knew that she had messed up, but she wasn’t Puck or Finn or any of those other guys
she wanted the Latina desperately she did but it’s not like she could announce to Santana that she liked her, she had for a while and she wanted to go out. She wanted to be with her. Santana would laugh in her face, or worse point out that it could never happen between the two of them. She’d be right she was the school freak and Santana had a reputation to uphold. Brittany seemed rather unaffected by the whole thing and Charlie suspected that she understood why, but it had always been difficult to tell with the dancer. So she needed to convince herself desperately that she wasn’t in love with Santana Lopez, or even if she was that there was no point because Santana Lopez could never love the school freak.

“So what do you think?” Puck said as he pulled in front of a run-down warehouse, that had a few windows smashed and she could definitely see some needles on the ground, and the outside walls were covered in graffiti.

Charlie’s hazel eyes flicked over the building before she looked at Puck. “Did you bring me here to murder me?” It’s a legitimate question because this place looks like the perfect serial killer lair. She’s sure that she can take Puck in a fight though.

Puck laughs at this and they step out of his beaten down old truck, “You remember Sandy Ryerson right?”

“You mean the perverted teacher that got fired for like molesting one of the male students?” Charlie pauses. “Dude I need money but I’m not desperate enough to let him touch my junk,” Charlie hisses at him.

Puck rolls his eyes, “No—no he’s only done that like once with me. I’ve been working for him. He’s like the area’s drug dealer, and he wants to branch out.”

Charlie studies Puck for a moment and she frowns, “When you say you’ve been working for a drug dealer, please tell me you haven’t been dealing.” When Puck doesn’t answer her and turns away, Charlie lets out a low groan. “Puck, if you get caught dealing, the Griffins aren’t going to let you see Beth.”

“I’m not going to get caught, I only sell to people I know. Stoner Brett and his stoner friends basically buy out my supply in a week. And I only sell pot none of the hard stuff. Pays better than working in a store where I make minimum wage and I work my ass off for a few bucks. Pays better than my pool cleaning business too.”

Charlie makes a face and looks at the building, “So when you say lucrative, you clearly mean illegal.” Charlie mulls it over. “How illegal are we talking? Like a few weeks in juvie? Or you know me being thrown into an adult facility.”

Puck motions for her to follow him as he pushes open the warehouse doors and waits for Charlie who is still eying him rather suspiciously, but she finally follows him into the warehouse doors. It’s not as terrible on the inside as it is in on the outside. In fact it’s almost clean. “So what do you think of helping me create Lima’s very own fight club.” When Charlie doesn’t answer right away, Puck immediately launches into his business model. “We’ll make money on the bets for the fights. We’ll sell drinks and possibly some weed to some of them.”

Charlie blinks once then again, because it sounds like Puck is asking her to run a criminal enterprise with him. “You’re joking right?” But Puck’s not laughing and Charlie studies the place again, it’s not like the Lima Police department is the best force in the country. Sandy Ryerson got accused of molesting a teen and the cops didn’t even get involved. They had like ten detectives, including Mike and Lisa. “You wouldn’t make that much money, this is Lima not Beverly Hills. All you’d be doing is taking kids lunch money. You’d have better luck running an underground
club. You’d sell more drugs, sell more booze, you can run a taxi service of sorts to make sure that everyone got home safely. Because if one kid dies in some drunken accident, it’ll probably get the police involved. You run it once a month, at the end of the month, you invite kids from McKinley, Carmel, Dalton, Thurston, get some of those Crawford Country Day kids. You’d easily rake in about ten thousand dollars. If you do it right, and if they actually save up their money. All this depends on good your weed is.”

A clapping was heard from behind her and Charlie turned around and groaned when she spotted Sandy Ryerson, “I can see why you brought her here. That actually is a brilliant idea. Of course I should have thought of something along those lines.” Sandy approached her and looked her over, a leering grin on his face. “Is it true what they say about you? That you’ve got a bit of something extra?”

Charlie raises her hands and immediately and takes a step back, “Totally not interested in having a NAMBLA moment with you.” She shoots a look at Puck who shrugs. “Look, I just gave an opinion. I don’t really want to get involved.”

“It’s not just going to be kids, fighting. It’s going to run properly, sort of like an underground mixed martial arts fight. Fighters will get paid from the money that’s taken in. I’ve got some interested parties that include several cops on the force, who I have more than enough dirt on to ruin their careers. I’ve got some doctors who are interested, some university professors, real professionals, who are all willing to get involved. I’m not talking a few hundred dollars, I’m talking thousands of dollars.”

Charlie rolls her eyes, “Teens fighting adults, I wonder how that could go horrendously wrong,” she says sarcastically. “I don’t want to do anything illegal. I don’t think I’d fare well in a woman’s prison.”

“You kidding? You have a dick, you’ll totally be the most popular girl in there,” Puck says and Charlie rolls her eyes, because that’s exactly why she wouldn’t fare well in a woman’s prison.

“They will if the price is right, two hundred dollars a fight? For all the fighters on our roster. We have ten fights that night. We give out two thousand dollars plus let’s say another thousand in bonus money, for making the fights interesting. I ran the numbers, the amount of money that we will be around twenty thousand a night. That’s just on bets alone. We start adding drinks, and other services rendered and we might start making close to thirty thousand a night. Of which you’ll take home about ten percent of the profits. We do that four times a month then you’ll be making twelve thousand dollars a month.”

Charlie could see that the money was talking to Puck and she swallowed, it was a lot of money to someone like him. She was a trust fund kid, all she needed to do was wait till she was twenty-one and she’d have enough money to live on for a few lifetimes. If Russell hadn’t completely screwed her over in the will she’d probably get even more money added to her trust fund if he happened to die.

“You heard him. I could make more than my mom is making in like three months. We could totally do this and not get caught,” Puck said trying to convince her, but Charlie gave him a dull look. “He’s got cops on the take.”

Charlie shook her head, “The more money involved the more dangerous it is, and I’m not going to be the one to explain to your mother how her son could end up dead by seventeen. I’m not doing it Puck. We can get a bloody job together. You wanted to be around as a father, then stay the fuck out of jail. Cause this—this is a terrible idea. And this guy plays with fucking dolls, do you really think he has the brains to be some sort of mob boss.”
“Dalton Academy already has a fight club, some freshman started it. He hasn’t been caught yet,”
Puck argued.

Noah Puckerman was an idiot and his stupidity had gotten her sister pregnant. But he had accepted
her, and apart from a few perverted jokes which made her laugh every now and again, and he was
sort of blood. Sort of thanks to Quinn, he was now in her family tree. They were friends and she
was his bro. “Puck, I can’t do this. The best I can do is go over the plan with you, and make sure
you minimize risk everywhere. And I’m sure that’s illegal as well, but that’s as far as I’m willing
to go for you.”

Puck is mostly surprised because he thought that Charlie would be cool with it. But at least she
said she’d minimize the risk for him, it was probably the best offer that he could have hoped for.
“My mom can’t be working two jobs to support me and my sister anymore, it’s about time I
stepped up and provided for them.” He knows he’s going to be a Lima Loser just like nearly
everyone in this school. The only thing he has is football, and even though he’s good at it, like
really good. No one is going to pay attention to a kid on a team who only won one game in a
season.

Charlie wants to argue with him but she knows his mind is made up, “Your mom would appreciate
it more if you don’t get into any trouble, and try and get your grades up,” she says and Puck rolls
his eyes. But it’s the best that she could do. Puck’s too proud to take any money that she might
have, and she can’t rat him out, so she makes up her mind to make sure that his plan, or Sandy’s
plan is solid enough that she won’t have to worry.

The fact that Quinn can cook surprises Rachel, Charlie had attempted to help her bake, and that had
ended up with a small fire, because the soccer player had gotten bored and walked away, slipped
on her headphones and proceeded to go outside to juggle a ball. Charlie Fabray occasionally had
the attention span of a kid hyped up on sugar.

“My mom taught me how to cook,” Quinn responds with a smile. It was required learning in their
household for her and Frannie, because they would need to be the ones to feed their husbands once
they came home. “She never taught me how to cook anything vegan though. So I looked up some
recipes online, since I know you probably would be starving after going to Breadstix again.”

Rachel flashes a smile, because she had spent the last hour just picking at a salad that had lost its
crispness ages ago. “So I’m going to be your guinea pig?” she asks in a teasing tone.

“No, we need you to be alive for Regionals next year,” Quinn says in a serious tone, but cracks a
smile when Rachel gives her a mock offended look. “No I used Charlie and Puck, as my test
subjects. Charlie might complain but she really will eat anything and so apparently will Puck, but
they did ask for seconds even after I told them that it was tofu. So I hope that you’ll like it.”

Rachel watches as Quinn uses the wok, that her fathers have bought but have never used, and she
makes a note to ask Shelby if she knows how to cook and will teach her. She’d like to return the
favor, though she really doesn’t want to actually cook meat. She wonders why Finn can’t be nearly
as considerate as Quinn is, even though the boy probably cooks as well as he dances, it would be
the thought that counted. “How was the DA’s office?”

Quinn grimaced, “We’ll talk about it later. Apart from the terrible dinner, you do anything else
with Finn?”

“He asked me if I wanted to play Call of Duty with him, so we could have some bonding time. I’m
not a fan of such violent video games,” it had led to a mini fight, but Finn had apologized and
flashed that big dopey smile of his. Truthfully the whole thing was exhausting and she had even politely told Finn that she couldn’t really enjoy herself at Breadstix because of their very limited options. It didn’t seem to register in his mind.

Quinn opens her mouth to point out that Rachel should dump him if he can’t even figure out that his girlfriend can’t eat at Breadstix because of her vegan diet. But she can remember having several conversations that were similar with Charlie and each time they had just ended in pointless arguing. So she keeps her mouth shut because nothing good will come with pointing out that Rachel has once again picked a terrible leading man, but she wants to be the supportive friend because Charlie wasn’t supportive of this union at all, and she was sure that that she had a bias. But Rachel deserved to be happy and Finn Hudson was who she wanted. “Just give him some time, Finn isn’t particularly that sharp.”

Rachel doesn’t say anything, because everyone knows that Finn isn’t the smartest tool in the shed, and she constantly has to tell him what the simplest words mean at times, and she’s being forced to dumb things down for him. Being with Finn was exhausting, but he had his moments, when he was somewhat romantic. He was planning to take her to see the local production of Les Miserable. So it wasn’t as if he was completely hopeless, it wasn’t like this was a Broadway production and she had a sneaking suspicion that Finn probably wouldn’t like it, but at least he was making the effort. “He’s not that bad, he’s taking me to see Les Miserable next week Friday. He says he’s got this huge date planned out.”

Quinn stilled for a moment because she hadn’t expected Finn to get something right, it was Finn after all and she wondered who had given him the idea. It was probably Kurt, she would probably need to have a bit of a talk with him. So she changes the subject, “How’s it going with your mom?” she asks, because Shelby has just won her third Show Choir National Championship and has just retired from Show Choir all together.

Rachel brightens, “We try and meet each other every other morning for coffee. She says she can take over my voice lessons, so we can spend a bit more time together, and we can sing together,” she doesn’t mention that Shelby didn’t seem impressed with Finn Hudson either, and had seemed to take an interest in the Fabray twins. Though it was the wrong twin, she had been impressed with Charlie, even though according to Charlie it had been Quinn’s idea. “I never said thank you.”

Quinn looked up at her from where she was plating the food, “Thank you for what?”

“Charlie told me that you suggested that she go have a talk with Shelby, and I think it was Charlie who managed to convince my mother to stay, she won’t be teaching glee club or anything. So thank you, I forgot to mention it to you earlier but my mother is back in my life,” Rachel explained, she had never had friends do something like that for her before. In fact if she didn’t know any better she would say that it was damn near romantic.

Quinn shrugged, “It really was nothing, I would have gone myself but you needed me to be there with you and I probably would have gotten angry at her, Charlie was the better choice because she doesn’t really get angry, not normally,” she winced at the memory of Charlie’s harsh words. She gently pushed a plate of the vegan Chinese food to Rachel and picked up her chopsticks, “Try it.”

Rachel glanced down at her food, it did smell delicious and Quinn was watching her so she picked up her own chopsticks, Quinn won points for trying to be as authentic as possible and she took a bite. She didn’t really mean to let out a moan, because it really was that good. It was certainly better than the takeout that she was used to, and she was sure that it tasted better because Quinn had made it for her.

Quinn tried to will the heat from her ears, that moan had been unnecessary, so she coughed and
Rachel looked back up at her and she fixed an amused smile on her face. “You like it?”

Rachel grinned back at her, “I could marry you,” because at this point she could, it really was the best Chinese food that she’d eaten.

Quinn snorted because it was just food, “Is that a proposal?” she asked in a teasing tone.

“Yes,” Rachel said completely seriously, because Quinn was just teasing her after all, and two could play at this game. She didn’t expect there to be an awkward silence and she looked up at Quinn who was a deep red and she wondered if she had taken it a step too far. “I was just—”

Quinn was about to say something when the front door slammed shut and she jumped back mostly in surprise. Maybe the Berry’s were back from their trip, but she quickly scowled when she saw that it was Charlie who walked into the kitchen, “What are you doing here?” She was supposed to be having some grand adventure with Puck.

Charlie raised a brow and took in the scene in front of her, Rachel looked disappointed and Quinn just looked annoyed. She wondered if she had interrupted anything important. “The last time I checked I lived here,” she said dryly when she noticed that they were eating and she looked over at the stove. She had thought it was only there for decoration, she didn’t know that the top actually worked. “Ooooh you made food,” she said completely distracted from the awkwardness that was in the room.

“Its vegan,” Quinn said immediately, and Charlie stopped moving towards the food.

This forced Charlie to stop because she wanted meat and her thoughts returned to the scene in front of her and she squinted at her sister and her best friend. Because Quinn didn’t really cook for anyone but herself, even when Charlie had been on mandatory bed rest, Quinn hadn’t bothered to cook for her. “This isn’t a date?” she asked because it sort of looked like a date. Though it would be weird because both her sister and Rachel were straight…right?

“No.”

“Yes.” It had been Quinn that had said yes and this cause both Charlie and Rachel to look at her, but she had on her best HBIC face, and she had managed to keep her nerves at bay. “We were having a nice conversation before you so rudely interrupted.”

Charlie was stunned for a moment and turned to Rachel, “You’re on a date with my sister?” There was disbelief and shock in her voice.

Rachel studied Quinn for a moment and decided to play along because the look on Charlie’s face was way to priceless. “Yes this is a date, I merely said no because I wasn’t sure if Quinn was ready to announce our secret romance to the world yet. You are interrupting by the way.”

Charlie just stared at the two of them, well secret romance would explain why they spent an insane amount of time together and why Rachel had stopped spending a lot of time with her, but there was the Finn issue, “And the idiot?”

“Yes merely a beard,” Rachel says as she schools her face, trying not to laugh she can see that Quinn is about to crack, because Charlie totally seems to believe them.

Quinn half expects Charlie to call bullshit on this, to ban her from dating Rachel to ask when the relationship had begun, there was a list of things she expected Charlie to say. She doesn’t expect the look of introspection.
“So that’s what Brittany was talking about,” she states simply and heads to the fridge and grabs a container of take out with her name written on it and heads to the microwave.

“Wait what was Brittany talking about?” Quinn asks now completely confused because Brittany makes all these weird comments all the time and if Quinn didn’t know any better then she’d suspect that Brittany was psychic or something.

“Doesn’t matter. If you’re not really dating Finn I approve of this union. Or whatever, you didn’t need to hide that shit from me. But I can’t hear the details Rachel coz Quinn’s my sister and that’s just gross. I can totally give you space, just you know text me or whatever and give me the heads up,” Charlie says because really this is a step up for the both of them, even though when Rachel said that she was using Finn as her beard she knew it was bullshit.

Rachel just stares at Charlie, because she doesn’t understand how Charlie can be so indifferent, and she looks at Quinn who is just staring at Charlie in shock, she had thought that Charlie would get over protective of Quinn or her, something. Anything other than just this general apathy towards the situation. Maybe she could tell her best friend about her secret crush, “You don’t care.”

“If you two date, no. But you’re not, because there is no way in hell Finn would ever agree to be your beard,” Charlie says simply rolling her eyes. “So I’m going to sit here, and eat my food while making you both very uncomfortable for getting my hopes up that Frankenteen was out of my life for good.”

Quinn groans inwardly, as Charlie takes a seat at the island beside Rachel, she had enjoying the night just the two of them. She had totally just said that it was a date to make Charlie go away, it’s not like she secretly hoped that it was a date or anything. She’s about to say something to Charlie when the doorbell rings.

Rachel who still looks disappointed and slightly annoyed by Charlie’s intrusion gets up to go get the door.

The moment that Rachel is out of earshot, Quinn’s voice gets dangerously low, “How much to get you to leave?” she hisses at Charlie.

“My history homework for junior year,” Charlie states without skipping a beat, though she’s studying Quinn closely because her sister seems rather desperate for her to leave. Which is stupid because this isn’t a date, and Quinn is straight. But Quinn seems to be debating Charlie’s terms and Charlie begins to wonder if maybe she should pay more attention to what’s going on between her twin and her best friend, when she hears footsteps. “Who was at the door? Was it one of those people trying to convert you?” she asks as she shovels more food into her mouth. Her attention is on her food and she doesn’t notice Quinn stiffening and her eyes widening as she sees the person behind Rachel.

“It’s a bit too late for someone to attempt to save your soul isn’t it? Mom said I could probably find the both of you here,” Charlie tenses immediately and nearly chokes on the food that’s in her mouth as her eyes widen and she turns around to look at Frannie Fabray. “Charlie. Lucy. It’s been a long time,” there’s a fake smile that doesn’t quite reach her eyes plastered on her face. It’s a politician’s smile and it sets the twin on edge immediately as they gear up for a verbal battle.

Quinn flicks her eyes to Frannie studying her sister, she hadn’t seen her since the wedding and that was two years ago. She had expected to see Frannie at the trial, she had heard that Frannie was going to testify for her father’s defense team about what a good man he was. She should have known that the eldest Fabray would be in town, the trial was next week. Frannie was taller than her and it bugged her that she was the shortest out of all three of them but she noticed it immediately
because Quinn Fabray did indeed pay attention to fashion, Frannie was wearing fashion from at least two years back. “It’s Quinn Frannie, I go by Quinn now.”

Frannie studied Quinn closely and kept that politician’s smile on her face, “How very butch of you.” Quinn’s reaction was instantaneous and she flinched and took a step back because Frannie had always managed to get under her skin.

“Now see here—” Rachel began because how dare this woman come into her house and insult her guests, they were her friends, and she was a stranger.

“Oh look the psychotic bitch is back. What do you want Frannie clearly you aren’t here because your husband realized what a frigid bitch you are, which is odd because I know for a fact that you spent more time on your back with your legs spread on some frat brother’s bed then in class. At least you found some gullible sap to believe that you were a virgin,” Charlie said calmly, interrupting Rachel. She didn’t want Frannie to focus her attention on Rachel. Charlie’s word hit their mark and the smile slipped from Frannie’s face and she took a step towards Charlie.

Frannie had been seven years older than they were, she had always been bigger. Always taller and always stronger than they were and she had always used her size advantage to intimidate them. But Charlie was nearly as tall as Russell and she hit the gym everyday almost religiously, and Frannie couldn’t bully her anymore, so she stabbed her fork into the container and stood up, stretching to her full height. She was taller now, she was stronger than Frannie. She had never been afraid of Frannie she had just hated her older sister, Frannie had spent the better part of her youth tormenting them. Verbally and physically when Judy and Russell weren’t around, but she couldn’t torment them physically anymore.

Quinn who had always been Frannie’s favorite victim placed a hand firmly on Charlie’s arm and pulled her twin back stepping between them. The night was ruined and there was nothing she could do about it. At least Charlie was here though that was going to be debatable because the last thing she wanted was for Charlie and Frannie to get into it in Rachel’s kitchen. “What do you want Frannie?”

Frannie flicked her gaze to Quinn, and the politician smile was back and she studied Quinn, at least she wasn’t fat anymore, she had thought that Lucy would still be that fat little kid, who had been so easy to pick on, she had even gotten a nose job too. It was cute how Lucy always seemed to want to be her, “For someone who just gave birth to a bastard baby, I would expect some more junk in that Ca—”

A few things happened at once, Charlie barely managed to wrap an arm around Quinn to keep her from lunging at Frannie, and Rachel stepped between the twins and Frannie, ignoring the fact that Charlie was currently struggling to hold Quinn back. “I don’t know who you think you are, but you need to leave now. You’re not welcome in my house anymore.”

Frannie stared at Rachel for a moment as if realizing she was there, “You must be the girlfriend. Of course someone who grows up in a house of sin like this would find my freak of a sister attractive,” as Rachel sputtered in shock at the blatant disrespect, Frannie opened her purse and pulled out a sealed envelope and walked over and placed it on the table. “Dad sends his regards,” she said simply throwing a haughty look at her siblings before walking out.

Quinn quickly calmed down after that, though she was seething and Charlie slowly unwrapped her arm from around her. “Well she was—charming,” Rachel said after she came back from locking the door behind Frannie. “I can see why you never talked about her now,” Rachel said directing the comment at Charlie. Clearly the twins were the only normal people in the Fabray family.
Charlie had picked up the letter that Frannie had left behind before dropping it immediately. It was his handwriting on it. It was glad to see that Russell still didn’t think the rules applied to him, witness tampering was a felony last time she checked.

“She’s also broke,” Quinn said after a moment and Charlie turned to her sister, confusion on her face.

“What are you talking about? She has her trust fund, and her husband is like reasonably wealthy.” Charlie said, because Frannie was only twenty-five and there was no way that she blew through the entirety of her trust fund in four years.

“Her clothes, they haven’t been in fashion in about three years. In all the years that you’ve known Frannie has she ever worn clothes that aren’t in fashion? That Prada purse is like two years old.”

Rachel blinked suddenly feeling on the very outside of the conversation, she hadn’t really noticed what Quinn was talking about, everything Frannie was wearing seemed very expensive to her. “It was a very nice purse.”

“It is a nice purse,” Quinn agreed. “It’s also two years old and Frannie always needed to be seen as the one who got all the latest fashion trends.”

“She never did graduate from Dartmouth, she dropped out. Must have been flashing her inheritance as a way to land a reasonably wealthy husband.” Charlie said with a grunt as she tossed Quinn the letter with her name on it. Watching as her sister caught it. “So not only is she broke, I’m pretty sure she just committed a felony through Frannie must be pretty desperate for Russell to make her the sole beneficiary to his fortune. I think she’s hoping that he croaks so she gets her hand on most of the money.”

Quinn stared at the letter in her hands, it was definitely their fathers writing. She handed Charlie’s letter back to her sister watching as Charlie ran her fingers over the letter. She wondered what he had to say, maybe it was an apology, maybe Russell Fabray had realized what he had done to the family and he wanted to beg for forgiveness. Maybe he wanted to actually try and be a father again. “Vultures circling?”

“Isn’t that always the case?” Charlie responds with a sniff, as she looks at the letter in her hand. “Frannie always a vulture though, or a leech, never could tell the different. I think the best term is parasite.”

Rachel flicked her eyes between twins watching as they openly discussed their father’s death like it was nothing and all this talk of money matters. She didn’t know how to add to the private conversation but she did see the letter and she saw how Charlie was looking at it. “Witness tampering is a felony, and if that’s your father who sent it to you then your sister could go to jail.”

Quinn sighed, the last thing they needed was for more family to be in jail, “Don’t give her a reason to open it,” She says at Rachel smiling at the diva gently.

Charlie pocketed the letter, “I’ll burn it later with Puck,” she said dismissively.

“Don’t you want to—?” Quinn asked,

“No,” Charlie said immediately. “I don’t want to do anything with it. I’m not going to the trial, I’m not going to testify. I’m not going to read the stupid letter that he sent to me illegally. I’m not going to do anything but coach soccer, work at the old record place downtown, and hang out with Puck and pretend that this isn’t happening.” She had gotten the call earlier today and had gotten the job,
even if it was minimum wage, at least it was something. Besides the guy had said he’d teach her how to mix her own music when the store wasn’t that busy, so at least there was that. “So let’s pretend that Frannie didn’t just put us all in a bad mood, and go back to Quinn trying to get me to leave so she can seduce you Rachel,” Charlie said taking a seat on the stool again and picking up her food.

This seems to lighten the mood a bit, as Quinn blushes and starts to protest and Rachel rolls her eyes, because she wishes that was what Quinn was doing. But Charlie’s words worked and the letter was forgotten for now. “So Lucy?” Rachel asked and both twins looked at each other.

“Lucy Quinn Fabray. I thought that Quinn suited me better,” Quinn answered immediately. She couldn’t tell Rachel about Lucy Caboosey.

“I like Quinn though Lucy is a beautiful name as well,” Rachel said quietly accepting the answer for now, it answered a few questions but not all of them.
Chapter 22

It seemed that everyone that knew Charlie had shown up for the trial, in some sort of solidarity for
the soccer player who refused to show up. Quinn had stopped to fix Puck’s tie for him, the fact that
even he had showed up to watch the trial from start to finish, was something that surprised her. But
he had shrugged simply and said that he was there to support her. She was slightly surprised to see
Santana, who had shrugged and said she had nothing better to do. Quinn had made it a point to sit
beside the Latina and by Rachel who was sitting by her fathers on her left side.

It was touching to see that her friends cared enough to be here, and it hurt that her mother was
sitting beside Frannie who seemed to have a pleased smile on her face, and Quinn had to know
why. She hadn’t approached her but it seemed that Frannie was pleased that Charlie hadn’t shown
her face. There was some light talking but Quinn wasn’t paying attention, as her father walked into
the courtroom. It was the first time that she had seen him in months and the first thing that she
noticed was that he had lost weight and his eyes had this haunted look in them.

He turned to look at her and Quinn hoped that he would say something to her, he had stopped and
was looking at everyone who was beside her, as if he was searching for someone, searching for
Charlie and when he didn’t see her a smug look appeared on his face. Quinn immediately turned
away from him, he was unrepentant.

He didn’t care that he had ripped their family apart, he didn’t care that he had put his own child in
the hospital. He was happy that Charlie wouldn’t face him and Quinn felt Santana shifting beside
her and she immediately grabbed onto the Latina. “You can’t.” She could see the look of fury on
her face and she tightened her grip immediately. The last thing she wanted was Santana to be
arrested for attacking Russell Fabray. They had to keep cool head.

“Did you see that smug look on his face,” Santana hissed, wanting to beat it off him. Leroy had a
firm hand on Puck’s shoulder and it seemed that Santana wasn’t the only one who wanted to beat
the shit out of Russell Fabray.

It wasn’t as if Quinn didn’t want to get up and yell at him, to cry, to scream at him for all of his
sins, for kicking her out, for every last thing that he had done. But she didn’t, she just stared at the
man who had once tucked her into bed and read her a bedtime stories. She didn’t know who this
man was anymore because she thought that he had loved her. That he had loved all of his children.
But he hadn’t.

The judge was female, not that it mattered because the jury was made up of seven men and only
three women, something which hadn’t pleased the District Attorney, he had mentioned that it
would be harder to convince them that Charlie had even been abused, he was also worried that
they’d be less sympathetic with Charlie’s condition.

Quinn rose to her feet, when the judge walked into the room and sat down, and read the case
number and just like that the case began, William Henderson was succinct and to the point in his
opening statement. Russell had broken the law, it didn’t matter what their personal feelings on
what he did was, the law was clear. Max Gladstone, her father’s lead attorney immediately began
with trying to discredit Charlie painting her as a wild child who went to parties, and was a good for
nothing. That Russell was just a father trying to struggle with the fact that his daughter was a freak
of nature, and had gotten a bit overzealous.

There was several times when Quinn was forced to put her hand over Santana’s mouth to not draw
attention to her, because it looked like the Latina was about to get up and murder the defense
attorney for trying to pain this grossly exaggerated picture of Charlie, making her seem to be something she wasn’t. Trying to discredit her as a witness.

It was Santana’s father who William Henderson had chosen to talk about her injuries. The pictures were shown to the jury, William Henderson had spent his own money in blowing up the photos. They talked about the worries, about the damage, about the fact that Charlie had scars that indicated the abuse had been going on for a while. There was a picture of her back and Miguel Lopez pointed to the fact that after they cleaned it up there was evidence of more abuse, that the scarring was extensive. He pointed out the areas on Charlie’s x-rays where they could see that she had broken her ribs several times and that they had healed, as well as the new fractures at the time she came into the hospital.

There really was no doubt about the fact that it was an abusive situation, it didn’t matter that it wasn’t the worst case that Miguel Lopez had seen of child abuse. He was a professional answering the questions and giving his medical opinion. Though he focused on the eye, talking about the fact that they had been worried that she would go blind in the eye.

Santana looked proud of her father, though the smile faded when Mr. Gladstone began to question his credentials and then proceeded to drag her into it. Wondering if he was doing this because Charlie had such a close relation with Santana, but unlike his daughter who probably would have began to curse out the defense lawyer, Miguel Lopez stayed perfectly calm. The scars were mostly superficial but Charlie had fractured her orbital bone, Charlie did have a clean break, and several fractured ribs. The bloody wounds were for the most part superficial but the damage hadn’t been. She would carry the scars for the rest of her life.

Santana leaned into Quinn, “See my dad’s got this,” she muttered quietly into Quinn’s ear, but her ease was short lived as the defense began to point out the fact that many of those injuries could have come from other things such as football, or getting into fights. He had several reports from their old school back in Toledo which testified that Charlie had gotten into several fights. She had after all broken her wrist in a fight, and Miguel admitted that it could have possible come from those fights, but it was also highly likely that Charlie had received the damage from Russell who had broken her ribs, this time.

When the defense rested there was a short recess and Santana finally spoke up, “We’ve got this in the bag. No way that bastard walks, you saw how positively green some of the people looked in the jury. He’s definitely going away for child abuse.” It didn’t seem that Charlie would need to testify after all.

Quinn wasn’t so sure, Charlie had taken a beating before it wasn’t as if she didn’t have a history of getting in fights before. She had broken her wrist and Quinn could remember times when some of the older kids who had picked on her had kicked Charlie when she was down before. It was possible that Charlie hadn’t talked about the injuries back then. It wasn’t completely out of the picture that Charlie had received those injuries doing something else.

The short recess was over and it was Detective Lisa Hamilton who was on the stand next, testifying to what they had seen when they had arrived at the Fabray residence that night. Quinn hadn’t been aware that Judy had tried to clean up some of the blood on the rugs that they Charlie had bled on. They had collected several of the rugs for evidence and the knife that they had found on the ground, covered in Charlie’s blood, and fibers that matched her underwear. When William Henderson pressed her for more details, Lisa admitted that it was probably due to him trying to castrate Charlie. It was then that Charlie’s secret came out in open court.

Quinn couldn’t help but look at each and every one of the jurors, some of them seemed confused,
and two of the men looked disgusted. Though the idea of the castration had seemed to make every one of the men wince collectively. So there was at least that, maybe it wouldn’t be so bad. It didn’t matter what Charlie was, it had happened, they had the proof the evidence. There was no way they couldn’t convict him on the child abuse charges. William Henderson had been right about that.

Yet there was Max Gladstone again, pointing out through the hundreds of pages that Charlie had never actually informed anyone that’s what happened that afternoon and that it was simply a theory. This time Quinn had to hold back Rachel because she had figured it out in like two minutes and she wanted to give him a piece of her mind.

He was rather oily and Quinn had to wonder how much her father was paying him, because he had managed to discredit Lisa just as quickly, the knife could have fallen, she might have grabbed it and tried to use it against Russell who had been taken in with a massive bruising to his abdominal region.

He tried to frame it as if Charlie had attacked him and they had fought, she did have a history of getting into fights and she was out of control. That perhaps that it was just self-defense. Quinn realized his strategy immediately, without Charlie to actually tell her version of events, all he needed to do was plant that seed of doubt in the jurors mind. Let them believe that Charlie was something that she wasn’t. Charlie wasn’t a fan of violence but she wasn’t against using it as a method either, but she didn’t even really partake in the slushy system at school.

It was becoming clearer and clearer that with defense attorney’s like Max Gladstone, and his giant firm the only thing that would help them win was Charlie herself, and the soccer player refused to testify. There cross-examination was brutal and Quinn had a feeling that without Charlie to actually talk about it.

William Henderson looked irritated when he met them after the first day of the trial was done, “Please tell me you’ve figured out a way to get Charlie to testify. By the time that Gladstone is done assassinating her character well we might not even get him on a third degree charge. She needs to testify. Promise her a pony, if that’s what she wants, but you need to convince her to get onto the witness stand.”

“We’ve tried that,” Rachel said, she had baked Charlie brownies but the moment she had brought up testifying she had put the brownie down and walked away.

“She doesn’t want to testify,” Quinn said, “She hasn’t wanted to testify or even talk since the first day this happened. She hasn’t changed her mind in months.”

Santana was quiet for a moment, she and Brittany could generally make Charlie do anything. No one had asked them to have a talk with her, “Put her on the list, she’ll be there. I promise. I don’t know how much prep time you’re going to need with her but she’ll totally be here.” Even if Santana had to drag Charlie kicking and screaming.

It was Rachel who helped her get ready, going over all the possible outcomes, for her turn to testify, trying to get her ready for the witness stand. They had spent the night practicing, keeping quiet when Charlie would pass them. Charlie never checked on them she didn’t want to know. They had tried to get her involved but she had simply refused to do anything.

She wasn’t worried about what the DA was going to ask her, they had gone over it. He had prepped her but she still didn’t even really expect Max Gladstone to ask about Beth, to ask about whole Babygate situation. He had managed to make it seem like she was a slut, when it had only been one drunken mistake. He picked at her story, he made her out to seem like a liar who was only
getting back at her father because he had kicked her out.

“Yes, I lied about the paternity of my baby, because I was scared of being seen as a slut, of being labelled a cheater. Of losing my position in school. It was drunken sex and Charlie kept trying to convince me to come clean.” She didn’t add that it was mostly because Charlie hated Finn Hudson. It was irrelevant, the only thing that mattered was trying to make Charlie look good.

“Was Charlie at that party? The party in which you claim you lost your virginity?”

“No,” Quinn said immediately, because if Charlie had been there she wouldn’t have ended up pregnant.

“You said she wasn’t at home that night, and according to your testimony you hadn’t seen her at home for nearly a week before hand so where was she? Was there another party that night?”

“Not that I’m aware of, Charlie doesn’t usually show up to parties. I think she went to at least three in freshman year. She just sort of talks to people, and she never drinks at parties. It’s always non-alcoholic. But the night in question, I believe she was at Rachel’s house.”

“Did she normally tell you where she’s going?” Max prompted and smiled at her.

Quinn frowned because it was only until recently that Charlie had begun to inform her of where she was going, and that was rare. “No.”

“Yet you claim that she was probably at Rachel’s house? How do you know she wasn’t out doing other things that teenagers do like buying drugs, or hanging out with the bad crowd? There are huge portions of time where you say you had no idea where she was.”

“Charlie doesn’t do drugs like weed, the most I’ve seen is her take a pain-killer for pain after one of our father’s beatings.” Quinn completely fails to mention that Charlie still has a bottle of Percocet hidden up in her room. Quinn had no idea how she had managed to get her hands on it, or who had sold it to her.

“How do you know?”

“Because Coach Roz Washington is just as cra—intense as Sue Sylvester and she regularly drug tests the girls on her team? If you get caught with anything in your system you’re either suspended or off the team. Charlie was never suspended, and she is still captain.”

“By all accounts people keep saying that Charlie is the star of that team. Isn’t it possible that her possible addiction was brushed under the rug?”

“Objection, how is she supposed to know?” William Henderson said interrupting. “She can’t testify to any knowledge that she doesn’t have.”

“Sustained.”

Max shrugged, “Let’s redirect the questioning back your child that was born out of wedlock,” he began and Quinn sighed. “You were the president of the now defunct chastity club at McKinley, and yet your sister wasn’t a member?”

“No, she wasn’t.” Quinn replied firmly.

“Why was that?”
“Well I didn’t know it at the time but she wasn’t a virgin when I started the club. But I don’t know why she didn’t join the club.”

It was a dangerous line of questioning for Max Gladstone, but the payoff would be great. “And your father was clearly proud of you for being the president of the Chastity club?”

“Yes he was.”

“And you were also very active in your church at the time?”

Quinn nodded, “I was, I haven’t been to church in a while though.”

“A church in which your sister was in attendance twice since you moved to Lima?”

“Objection what’s the point of this line of questioning?”

“I’m getting there, you honor.”

Judge Wakefield looked between the two lawyers, “My patience is wearing thin on this line of questioning so get to the point.”

Max Gladstone shot a smug look at the DA, “And is Charlie influential in your life? Does her opinion matter to you?”

“I do take into consideration her opinion,” Sometimes. “She is my twin.”

“Did you two talk about sex?”

Quinn pauses for a moment and her eyes flick to Santana who has sunk down in her seat a bit. She still couldn’t believe that she had walked in the two of them during freshman year. “Yes.”

“And did she try and make it seem like it was no big deal?”

Quinn frowned, she wanted to lie for Charlie who wasn’t here to defend herself, but she really didn’t want to go to jail for perjury. “Yes.”

“Did she ever suggest that you try it?”

Quinn could remember the argument rather well and she winced because Charlie had said it. “Yes but—”

“And you tried it with someone who wasn’t your boyfriend, and you ended up getting pregnant. Seems to me that Charlie’s advice ruined your life. Defense rests your honor.”

Quinn stared at him stunned, because she hadn’t been able to say what she needed to say, and Charlie hadn’t told her to cheat on Finn, though Quinn suspected Charlie wouldn’t have cared one way or another. She hadn’t told her to get drunk and sleep with Puck. She hadn’t told her to do anything, she had made each of those decisions by herself.

William Henderson immediately went back to grilling her, trying to undo some of the damage that was done, but from the look on the jury’s face they weren’t buying Quinn as a reliable witness. The women didn’t look pleased that Quinn had cheated on her boyfriend, the men were annoyed that Quinn would try and lie about the paternity. The damage had been done, once again, and Charlie was portrayed as this bad seed when she hadn’t even done anything wrong.
“I think you did a good job,” Rachel said, she had followed Quinn to the bathroom after she was done on the witness stand.

Quinn turned on the tap and began to wash her hands, “Were you paying attention he made me look like a trailer-trash slut, who belonged on the Jerry Springer show. And a coward, and a—”

“Except you’re not any of those things, that’s his job to take what you say and twist it. Twist it horrendously, to make you look like the bad guy. And you didn’t do anything wrong. You came off well-spoken and apologetic and mature for someone who had made a few mistakes. The Jury has to be able to see that.”

“But they won’t you saw their faces when it came out that I lied about the paternity of my child. And how I gave my baby away. Did you see how those women looked at me, they were disgusted with me because I got pregnant and then gave away Beth. I thought that it was the right decision—but I didn’t think that other people—” Quinn said and she could feel the panic rising, she still questioned her decision daily, she wondered if that feeling would ever change. The feeling of regret, the feeling like she desperately wanted to get her child back, but Beth was doing well with the Griffins. And most importantly the Griffins seemed to love Rachel, apparently Beth would only fall asleep while listening to the diva sing. Quinn bet it probably had something to do with the fact that she had been near Rachel quite a bit during the pregnancy and she was sure that Beth could hear all the time that Rachel burst into song.

“Who cares what they think. They don’t know who you are and if they were intelligent people, they would know that it’s that Mr. Gladstone’s job to make you look bad. Except that’s not what I saw when you on that stand. I saw someone who was brave standing up to her abusive father, even though it must have been very difficult for you. I see someone who put her wants aside and made the ultimate sacrifice to make sure that her daughter had the best life.” Rachel said finishing off her little speech and smiled at Quinn, “I’m going to hug you now,” With that Rachel wrapped her arms around Quinn tightly.

Quinn relaxed immediately and hugged the diva back. She tried not to think about how right it felt to have Rachel there, and how disappointed she felt when Rachel finally pulled away. “I

When Charlie had informed Quinn that Judy Fabray knew more than she let on, Quinn hadn’t really believed her. It was her mother, and truthfully while Quinn loved her mother, it wasn’t as if Judy Fabray had ever shown that she had a mind of her own. William Henderson eviscerated her on the stand, grilling her hard, for details.

Judy had made a deal to save her own skin, not out of some love for her children. That had become very clear from the beginning of Henderson’s examination, he made her look like a villain, like she was evil incarnate. She was just a less evil version of the man sitting beside his defense lawyers.

Quinn swallowed as she heard her mother describe the very first beating, and how she had walked away from Charlie, and taken Quinn on a spa adventure. She heard how every time she heard her middle child screaming in pain she would just drink more, or turn up the volume to the television. But at the same time Judy defended her actions, saying that she had kept Quinn safe from Russell.

She hadn’t known that there had been a point in time where she was actively in danger for not being perfect enough. For not being like Frannie, and she could trace it back to the point where Charlie had pulled away originally, and her mother had hired a personal trainer for her. Judy blamed a lot of her actions on alcohol and told the courts proudly that she was now working on her fourth month of being completely sober, how she was still taking parenting classes. How she was trying to make up for everything that she had done. Judy had said this while looking at her. Quinn
believed her, it was like she was trying to be supermom now, and while irritating she was trying. She had once again hired Quinn a personal trainer, she had suggested that Quinn attend dance classes.

Judy had even suggested that she talk to Sue Sylvester to see if her crazy coach would be willing to take her back. Quinn had immediately put a stop to that idea, Sue wouldn’t respect her if her mother decided to talk to her. Quinn could do without her mother pressuring her to date Josh Coleman, and her mother trying to stop her from spending so much of her free time with Rachel, but as Quinn pointed out Charlie lived there. And all it took was her lying to her mother on how she was trying to convince Charlie to come home. She had tried a few times but Charlie wasn’t hearing it.

But just like every other person before her Max Gladstone called into question her ability to be a credible witness. Judy had spent quite a bit of their marriage inebriated, her memories of certain events were hazy sometimes. She contradicted herself a few times on the stand. She was currently divorcing Russell, because she had found out that he was cheating on her, not in some attempt to be a better family. All of Judy’s sins were laid at the feet of jury, and while many of them kept their faces perfectly neutral, Quinn could see the looks of disproval and disbelief on their faces.

Somewhere in the middle of Judy’s roasting Santana got up and left the courtroom, Quinn didn’t know where she was going. But Quinn imagined that it had something to do with how Judy was once again describing how Russell would hit Charlie.

“She was supposed to get into position. That’s how I’d know it was time to get Quinn out of the room. I couldn’t expose her to that level of violence. Sometimes it would be ten minutes, sometimes it would be thirty. It was never more than thirty minutes, at least not while I was around.”

“Did you ever fear that your husband would ever kill her? Would ever kill your daughter?” Max asked her.

“No.”

“Even the night in question, where he allegedly tried to castrate her?”

“No I didn’t think he’d kill her then either,” Judy said before looking at the jury, “Charlie was always a tough trooper, she never needed my help with anything. I didn’t think that he was going to do anything and the next thing I know Charlie is fighting back, and he drops the knife. Charlie picked it up and for a minute she had this look on her face, like she was going to kill him and I was scared. I had never seen her like that or Russell like that for that matter.”

Quinn leaned forward this was new information, there was a murmur in the gallery. Quinn hadn’t known that Charlie could have done some real damage, she could killed their father. Charlie didn’t really talk about the night in question period. It came out in short bursts of anger but never had Charlie sat down and explained what had happened to her, she had never given anyone details of what happened and then she had just shut down.

Part of Quinn could see why Judy hadn’t gotten involved, from the sounds of it Russell had lost his mind. She was scared, she had been terrified of what he might do to her. But at the same time Quinn knew she would have done anything she could to save Beth, she didn’t understand how Judy could just walk away. At least she was trying now right?

Charlie stared at the letter in her hand from where she was laying on her bed, fighting the urge to
open it and read its contents. The curiosity ate at her. But she made no move to open it and read what her father had wrote to her. She didn’t know want to know if he was cursing her out or trying to apologize. She had simply wanted to burn the thing and when Puck had been lighting stuff on fire, she had been tempted so very tempted to simply throw it into the inferno and be done with it. But she didn’t she couldn’t. At least everyone had been respecting her wishes and had kept the talk about the trial to a minimum around her, though she could see that they were eager to tell her the surprises that had happened and what had been asked.

The door to her room opened and Charlie’s eyes flickered to Santana and Brittany who didn’t look impressed to see her on her bed, in only her boxers and a tight t-shirt. “I’d ask if you two ever knocked, but that would be rhetorical,” Charlie said as she sat up and reached for her shorts. She hadn’t seen them since school ended, she’d been avoiding them only texting them a few times.

Brittany approached her first, “You’re wearing the boxers we got you,” she said a smile on her face.

Charlie glanced down at her boxers and shrugged, she liked ducks and she had avoided the duck pond with Brittany and Santana though they had both tried to get her to go. “I am,” she said slowly as she let go of the shorts in her hand. They had seen her with considerably less clothes on anyway, boxers would be enough. She shifted on the bed to let Brittany take a seat beside her, Santana was still standing at the door. The soccer player wondered if Santana was still upset with her. She wondered if Santana thought that she had treated them like the prostitutes she had been with before.

Brittany looked between the two of them for a moment and then tapped Charlie on the nose forcing her to turn to face the dancer. “Remember when I told you that Lord Tubbington said that it’s okay to be scared.”

Charlie immediately knew where this was going and she realized that Santana wasn’t standing at the doorway and away from her cause she was mad, but because she was blocking the exit so Charlie couldn’t run. She wondered if Quinn or Rachel had put them up to this. Charlie placed the letter down on her bed and sat up, “I don’t want to do it.”

“It’s okay to be scared. But everyone will be there supporting you,” Brittany said but it didn’t really seem to have an effect on Charlie who just shook her head. “Just imagine you’re at the duck pond, and that you’re surrounded by little ducks.”

“The DA said that I didn’t have to testify, and I really don’t want to testify, so I’m not going to testify. I don’t want to actually see him.”

Santana left the door and climbed onto the bed with Charlie grabbing the letter and placing a firm chest on Charlie’s chest to keep her from getting at it. She wanted to see what the big deal, it was probably for the best that Charlie hadn’t opened it. The Latina imagined that it was some sob story, or some attempt to emotionally manipulate Charlie. “Well if he walks, you’d better go to my trial for like capital murder,” she says before flicking the letter back at Charlie who grabbed at it. The action caused Santana to pause, because Charlie seemed to care greatly about what happened to the stupid letter. “Oh please tell me you aren’t that stupid.”

Charlie’s eyes flicked to Santana, “What are you talking about.”

“This entire time I thought you were just scared to face him but it’s more than that. You’re pulling a Quinn and hoping that things will go back to normal. That he’ll fucking apologize, that he’ll get better, that you’ll be his favorite again. He put you in the hospital and you can’t go making excuses like Quinn does for Judy,” Santana said reading Charlie like a book, god damn Fabray’s. “Your
mother didn’t even touch you and you hate her, but Russell writes you a letter and you’re about ready to forgive him. God you Fabray’s are fucking idiotic.”

“I don’t—it’s not—it’s fucking complicated,” Charlie sputtered before sighing, “Look logically, I know that you’re right. And most of the time I don’t want anything to do with him. I don’t want to see him, I don’t want to be near him, but I can’t pretend that he isn’t my father. That he wasn’t the man that tucked me in and read me bed time stories. I can’t pretend that I didn’t have good memories of him before I was thirteen. Do you know what happens if I testify and he becomes a sex offender? Of course you do, you’ve seen prison shows. I can’t condemn him to that.”

“Fuck yes you can. It’s something that he deserves. It’s like karma is giving him a giant bitch slap for you,” Santana argued.

Charlie shook her head a frown on her face, “He’s my fucking father. And I miss my dad. And yes I know he hasn’t been my dad in a long time but he’s still my fucking dad, and everyone is so gung-ho about how he has to pay. How I have to have justice. He thinks I killed his son. And I think he just got stuck in the anger phase of grieving. The last phase is acceptance and that’s what I want, I just want him to accept me.”

Brittany sighs, “You know that isn’t going to happen.”

Charlie says nothing for a moment, “When I hit eighteen, I can get a surgery to correct—to correct it. You know get rid of it and you know be a normal girl. I can keep it and just be the chick with a dick forever. Or I can have another surgery and live my life as a guy. The third option isn’t really available to me because I identify with being a girl, but I’m sure there is some shady doctor out there who would totally do it for me. If he wanted me to I would have taken the third option.”

Santana looked horrified for a moment, that Charlie would even consider mutilating her body just for someone’s approval. “You’re not getting any surgery,” Santana said firmly. “You’re not a boy, you’ve bitched out people for calling you a boy. You can’t let him decide how you’re going to live your life. You need to face him.”

Charlie made a face and Brittany touched her arm, “You don’t have to be afraid of him. Coz if he gets away with it, we’re going to have to visit San in jail. And I’ll be sad.”

Charlie gave a small smile, “His defense is going to try and tear me apart.”

Brittany gave her a look, “Are they going to be worse than Santana?” Santana rolled her eyes. “Because Santana’s words will hurt more because you like her.”

Charlie grunted, this was not something that she wanted to do. She didn’t want to get poked and prodded at by attorneys, she wanted to stay in her room and hide, and hope for the best.

The smug look that had been plastered on Russell’s face all throughout the trial disappeared when Charlie appeared on the very last day before the prosecution rested. She wearing a simple button up shirt a black skinny tie and some dark slacks. It really wasn’t court attire, but she had nearly chickened out several times. Actually she had chickened out and had been dragged back by Puck and Santana, who had managed to get to her before she could make her daring escape. She had everything planned out, she had nearly made it to the doors when she had been tackled by Puck. They had made a bit of a scene but Detective Fisher had managed to smooth it out with the bailiffs.

The questioning for the prosecution was rigorous but it was nothing that Charlie hadn’t been prepped for, but she kept her gaze firmly on the District attorney as he questioned her. She didn’t
look at the jury, she didn’t look over at her friends and family. She didn’t look at him. She couldn’t look at him. She refused to look at him, because she was afraid the moment that she did she would crack.

When it was finally Max Gladstone’s time to cross-examine her, everyone held their breath because he has so far eviscerated nearly ever credible witness on the stand, and Charlie met his gaze coolly, and straightened out in her seat. She was a god damn Fabray and she didn’t crack under pressure. She noticed the DA shifting in his seat ready to yell out objections to everything that was said.

“You play soccer right?” Max Gladstone began.

Charlie kept her face completely neutral, “I do.”

“How many games did you miss last year?”

“None,” Charlie said immediately.

“How many games did you miss this year?”

“Zero.”

“The prosecution claims that your punishments were a regular thing at least once a month and yet you haven’t missed a single game?”

“I learned that the best way to avoid getting hit was to not be around. So when he was home, I usually stayed at a friend’s house. And if I was injured I simply took some pain killers, and kept going. I was taught to take it like a _man_. So taking some time off to heal wasn’t in my general mindset.”

“Yes, the friend you’re currently living with now?”

“I’m living with the Berry’s,” Charlie said keeping her hands firmly on her lap as she traced the scar on it.

“So every time you weren’t at home, you’d live with the Berry’s?”

“No sometimes I lived in my car for the night and I’d come to school freakishly early to grab a shower. If I felt like I had been staying with the Berry’s for too long,” Charlie answered scratching her cheek. “I just didn’t want to be at home.”

“So you never went to any parties?” Max had a nearly predatory grin on his face.

“I showed up to a few, parties aren’t really my thing,” Charlie replied, she was constantly invited to parties she just only showed up to about three every semester.

This caused Max to pause, they had photos of her on Facebook at parties with a drink in her hand. “According to your sister you’re one of the most popular girl in school surely partying is in your nature?”

“Objection, question was asked and answered,” District Attorney William Henderson said shooting up immediately.

“Agreed, keep it moving Mr. Gladstone.

“So during these parties did you ever do any recreational drugs? You know ecstasy, weed, you
know drugs like that?”

Charlie snorted, “No of course not, Coach Washington would flay me alive. She randomly drug tests some of us at least three times a month. I’ve passed all my drug tests.”

William Henderson glanced back at Lisa who was already texting her partner to go find this coach that Charlie was talking about, it seemed to have struck a blow to Max Gladstones theory that Charlie was some wild party animal that needed a firm hand.

“Alcohol counts in this,” Max added, they didn’t have any pictures of her popping pills but they did have photos of her with those classic red cups.

Charlie tilted her head and glanced at the judge, “I’m not going to get in trouble for answering this am I?” Max nearly had to contain himself with glee, and William gritted his teeth, because Charlie seemed oblivious to the damage she was doing to her case.

“No one is going to arrest you for it,” Judge Wakefield said immediately surprised that Charlie would even ask this question.

“I’ve been drunk once in my life. When I was fourteen and Russell had beaten me so badly that I needed stitches and I didn’t want to go to the hospital. So I had Quinn stitch me up, she stole one of the bottles of vodka that is in our parents bar, and I drank it because we saw it in a movie. I can’t remember which one and she took a needle and a thread and stitched me up. It still hurt, but I don’t really remember much, cause I think I was pretty wasted.” Charlie said and the smile on her father’s attorney faded a bit.

“We have photos taken from facebook of you at a party with beer in your hand.”

“I don’t drink at parties,” Charlie answered. “I don’t really drink at all. For a couple of reasons, both my parents are alcoholics and I heard on TV that it like runs in families. And up until earlier this year, my condition was a secret. I couldn’t do anything to lose control of my inhibitions. So the photos that you’re looking at probably me with those classic beer cups, but I only drink water or juice at parties.”

William smirked, Charlie came off like a responsible teenager who seemed uninterested in most things. Max looked annoyed that his defense was crumbling, he had asked how Charlie was doing in school, a 3.99 GPA, second in their year behind her twin and that’s only because of the time that she had been forced to take off. The jury didn’t seem to be buying into the whole idea that Charlie was some sort of control kid who needed a very firm hand.

“Let’s redirect here, on December seventh, you were called into the principal’s office for fighting? What was the fight for?”

“Dave Karofsky dumped a cooler filled with slushy on my head stated that I was transgendered and thus a sissy. He also implied my sister was a slut. I may have let my mouth run, despite the fact that I had fractured ribs. He tackled me I didn’t fight back,” Charlie pointed out.

“Slushy?” Max asked there had been no mention of that in the report that they had gotten from McKinley.

Charlie nodded, “McKinley is a school that’s divided into two separate classes. You’re someone if you have a letterman jacket, you’re a loser if you don’t have one. Championship teams have the most power in the school. Even though I have a letterman jacket, Karofsky thought that he could use the fact of my condition to sort of push me off my throne. So he slushed me. Except I’m the
captain of a championship team and I have a letterman jacket.”

William Henderson stared, as did most of the adults in the courtroom, Charlie said it so casually it was like it was something that went on every day at McKinley. They truly had no idea how bad it was. It was something that he’d look into after this case was done.

“So as a member of the so called elite you were a bully?”

“Hardly, I dished out a slushy was when someone deserved it. Jacob Ben Israel tried to take naked photos of the girls on my team. I dumped a slushy on his head, because it’s not like the teachers at McKinley were going to expel him. So we sort of figured a way to police ourselves. Slushying wasn’t really my thing which is probably why I got slushied twice this past school year.”

“So you never retaliated on this Karofsky?”

“Me personally? No. Other people who wanted revenge after he lost his letterman jacket? Yes.” Charlie said with a shrug, not bothering to mention that Santana had decided to punish the boy.

“So what you’re saying is that you never did anything wrong as a teenager and that you’re perfect?” Max said trying to push her to admit to some wrong doing something that would show the jury that Charlie was indeed a wild child.

“Are you asking if I did anything to have Russell use his belt buckle on me, or kick me in the chest, or punch me in the face whenever he was drunk and angry? That depends, I suppose I looked at him the wrong way a few times,” Charlie said with a shrug. “I’m not perfect, I’m sure I can think of certain things I do that will annoy most parents. Do most parents put their children in the hospital? No.”

“Yet you attacked him on the night in question.”

“He punched me in the face first and he began to beat me with the belt, viciously. All I did was curl up and try and protect my face and head. The next thing I know I feel pain in my head and he’s dragging me to the kitchen. I think I started to fight back then a bit there, but I can’t remember a lot of that night.” Charlie admitted, she had been out of it a few times.

“So you don’t remember pulling a knife on him?”

Charlie’s voice went distant as she recalled the night in question. It had happened earlier when William Henderson had questioned her, and it was happening again now. “I remember a knife in his hands, I remember smelling the alcohol on his breath. I remember his hands on me, pulling my pants down, grabbing at my compression underwear, before I felt this sharp pain in my side as he began to cut it off. He was drunk, he cut me. I remember him grabbing—” Charlie froze, and her breathing picked up for a moment, and for a moment a look of panic crossed her face as she relived the moment again. It was one thing to say that he tried to castrate her, but when she was forced to give details of the event it seemed to trigger a panic attack.

“Your Honor,” William Henderson said standing up, she had allowed Charlie a moment to catch herself earlier.

“Do you need a break?” Judge Wakefield asked Charlie gently, but Charlie didn’t answer her right away as she counted back down from ten slowly, and tried to regulate her breathing.

It took a few minutes but Charlie was back, “I remember him grabbing me, grabbing my you know penis. And he moved and that’s when I had enough room to move my legs. I think I kneed him and he finally dropped the knife and I picked it up and I can remember trying to pull my pants back on,
but they were ruined. And I remember looking at him and I had the knife. But I know I didn’t grab it first, I know I didn’t bring a knife into this situation.”

Max Gladstone, “Did you want to kill him?”

Charlie flicked her eyes to her sister and then back to Max, “I can’t remember. I think I wanted to, but I can’t remember certain feelings. I remember feeling scared. I remember feeling angry, but mostly it was scared.”

“Do you remember attacking your father at all?”

“I was trying to get away and he grabbed my ankle, and I kicked him to get him off me. I just wanted to get out of there. I wasn’t thinking about how hard it is, all I remember was feeling panicked and scared, and I just really wanted to leave. So I kicked him, and then I think I just ran, I ran away, got into my car and drove to Santana’s house. Because I remember thinking that it was the closest house and, I was getting really tired, and I didn’t want to crash.”

Quinn swallowed, to hear Charlie being forced to relive the moment again and again as Max tried to call into question her version of events, but Charlie never changed what she said. She admitted when there was thing that she couldn’t remember, but she could vivid detail of what happened to her and finally the jury began to look sympathetic to her. Watching as she struggled to tell what happened to her, to describe various punishments that she went through.

“You are a lesbian,” Max pointed out immediately, “Which is against your father’s religious morals.”

“Objection, her sexual preferences have nothing to do with this,” William said immediately. “Unless you mean to tell me that you believe that gay kids should be beaten viciously.”

“Of course her sexual preferences mattered, you claim that Russell Fabray had her sexually abused.”

“I’ll allow it,” Judge Wakefield said, “But you have a short rope Mr. Gladstone.”

“You’re a lesbian which is against your father’s morals. Did he ever talk to you about it? Tell you that it’s not an acceptable lifestyle? Your best friend has two dads, and you would sleep over there.”

“Russell didn’t care what I did, so long as I didn’t embarrass him. He never knew where I spent my nights when I wasn’t around. As for him talking about my sexuality, the only thing that was acceptable for me to be was a man who liked women. I thought I was a boy, I did like women. Turns out I’m a girl and I still like women,” Charlie shrugged again. Her sexuality had always made sense to her, her gender not so much.

“Given your condition, it could be said that he did you a favor. It must be difficult being in your position at school?”

Charlie’s eyes flicked over to Russell for a moment, “If you’re trying to ask me if I’ve had sex which wasn’t paid for by my father. The answer is yes. I’ve had a couple of partners after we found out that I was a girl who had a penis. Do I wish that my father hadn’t basically paid someone who didn’t know me to take my virginity? Yes. I’m charming—” Quinn snorted at this and covered it off with a cough and Charlie’s eyes flicked toward her sister, “Okay maybe I’m not that charming but there are people who want me not because of what I have between my legs, or because my last name is Fabray. They just want me.” And she had amazing abs, as Brittany had pointed out bluntly.
She was sure the abs played a role in it somewhere.

“Yet you’ve never had a girlfriend?” Max prompted.

Charlie looked up at him, “I don’t understand the question.”

“You’ve never had a girlfriend yet you claim you’ve had sex that wasn’t paid for.”

“Yes?” Charlie was confused. It’s not as if casual sex was a new concept to adults.

“Objection, badgering the witness. She’s already answered you Max.” William said jumping to Charlie’s defense, and so it continued on and off Charlie’s answers seemed to drive Max crazy because nothing he said seemed to get under her skin. Which was doing further damage to his own theory that Charlie was simply an out of control teenager.

“Did you like it?”

“Objection,” William roared, “That is totally inappropriate question to ask to anyone who was sexually abused.”

“I’m trying to prove that it wasn’t sexual abuse, how could it possibly be abuse if she liked it.”

William was about to open his mouth again to argue the point, when Judge Wakefield interrupted him. “I happen to agree that the question is wholly inappropriate.”

“Fine, did you consent to it?”

“She was thirteen the law already determined that she can’t legally give consent to it,” William argued, and so it went on for two hours Charlie sat there answering questions, letting them the lawyers dissect her life. From her various injuries, to the fights she had been in when she was much younger.

There was a flicker of pride in Russell Fabray’s eyes as he watched Charlie, watching as she calmly managed to whether the storm that his defense attorney was putting on her. She didn’t seem to be aware that there was any pressure on her, she just answered the questions to the best of her knowledge. He truly hadn’t expected her to show up.

He hadn’t known that Charlie had the second best GPA in school after Quinn. He didn’t know that Charlie had been on a championship team, he didn’t know that Charlie had been sexually active. There was a lot about his daughter that he didn’t know, and for a brief moment. Just a millisecond, Russell Fabray felt something. But there was no time to dwell on anything he couldn’t go back to prison. Surrounded by all those black men, and the dregs of society. He was Russell Fabray he was a millionaire, prison wasn’t for people like him. It was for people who were worthless to society, who simply drained the economy of its resources, taking government handouts.

He sneered inwardly trying to keep his face as neutral as possible for the jury and thought about his family. Quinn had gotten pregnant out of wedlock, cheating on her idiot boyfriend and sleeping with a Jew. Frannie was only around because she smelled blood in the water and wanted to be seen as the favorite daughter. A quick look at her financials by one of the private investigators at Gladstone and associates had informed him that she was near bankruptcy, she had sunk her trust-fund into her husband who had a gambling problem. She probably expected for him to die in prison, and Judy. Judy was a bitch who had abandoned him at the first sign of trouble, clearly her
vows to him had meant nothing. Which left Charlie. She was dressed as a boy, and she looked like the son he had lost. Sure it was a rather feminine looking boy, but he could see the son that he had raised in her. Every time she had said one of her various accomplishments she would finally meet his eye, and there would be a pleading look, hoping that she would acknowledge her. He wasn’t really surprised that she had shown up he hadn’t raised her to be a coward.

Russell Fabray said nothing as he watched Charlie finally step out of the witness stand and proceeded to walk past him, he didn’t expect her to look at him, but she did it was only for a minute, she was searching his face for something but Russell Fabray kept it neutral, and he watched as Charlie deflated for a bit, before walking out of the courtroom. He could remember his son, the one that had endured just to make him proud, that had gotten good grades that had done things that he hadn’t really wanted to do just to impress him. And for the first time in a long time Russell Fabray felt guilty. He felt guilty for what he had done, not guilty enough to admit defeat. He didn’t belong in prison, he was after all a Fabray.

For the first time in three years, Charlie Reagan Fabray was finally acknowledged by her father.

Charlie giving her testimony had managed to undo most of the damage that Russell’s defense attorneys had managed to do to the case. Charlie didn’t show up to watch Frannie on the stand, or anyone else the defense had dragged up that basically told the jury that Russell Fabray was indeed a good man. Charlie didn’t show up to closing arguments. Or when the judge gave the jury its instructions.

She did get the text from several of her friends who told her that the verdict was in in under two hours, but she ignored it. She just in her room with the letter in her hand, wondering why it had been her. She couldn’t help but wonder why it had been her, the beatings as a child she could understand; she hadn’t been good enough for him. Everything he had asked she had done, from her grades, to being a champion, everything he had asked for. Everything that he wanted she had done and it still wasn’t good enough.

It was Quinn who called with the news that their father had been found guilty of all of the charges laid against him. She sounded relieved, and while a part of Charlie was relieved that he couldn’t ever hurt her again. She had never really wanted her father to go to jail. Judy could rot, but all she had wanted was for Russell Fabray to acknowledge her, to be proud of her. All she wanted was the same man who she would wait for and sit on his lap and demand that he read to her, cause no one else could do the voices right. The same man that made it back in time to tuck her in. The same man who taught her at a very young age who made her promise to protect Lucy.

Charlie Fabray had never wanted Russell to go to prison, she wasn’t going to cheer like everyone else was doing that he was gone. So while everyone was still at the courthouse celebrating, Charlie Fabray sat there with the second last letter that Russell Fabray would ever write to her. She didn’t open it, she just stared at her name on written in his rather neat handwriting and traced the letters with her fingers, lost in thought.

She heard the clamor of the people downstairs, but she didn’t leave her room and kept her door closed, ignoring people who knocked on the door trying to invite her downstairs to join the party. She didn’t feel much like celebrating her father’s incarceration.

Santana Lopez had never bothered with knocking on doors. Charlie half expected her to yell at her for being in such a bad mood but she didn’t, she just looked at the letter that was still in Charlie’s hands and sighed before taking a seat on the bed beside her friend and pulling the letter out of her hands. “Britt wants me to tell you that the baby ducks are really—”
“No,” Charlie said wrapping her arms around herself watching as Santana dropped the letter on Charlie’s desk. She didn’t want to go to the duck pond, she didn’t have anything she wanted to share. “Can we just stay here and listen to some music?”

“Yes. But if you start listening to Linkin Park or some other emo shit, I’m out of here,” Santana said adjusting on Charlie’s bed beside the teenager.

Charlie’s lips twitched upwards for a moment, as she begun to flip through her extensive music library on her computer, trying to find the right song that signified her mood.
Charlie played with the filters, she had thought she’d hate working in this old school record store, but she was actually learning something and she had a lot of free time to go over the mixing lessons that Tyler Jameson was giving her. She didn’t think she was particularly good at it but at least it kept her mind off the fact that her father was currently in prison. That he had been given the maximum sentence for what he had done. Forty years, he would probably die in prison. So she did what was normal for her, she threw herself into something else and refused to deal with the fact that her father was going to die in prison.

Except Jameson Record’s, had like zero foot traffic, in fact Charlie only served about five customers a day. She wondered how Tyler had managed to pay her on time every other week but he did, and he found time to give her tips on how to mix music. He was a decent DJ, and he spent most of his summers touring around the clubs in Ohio. He made time for her though, and he gave her tips, and listened to each song that she mixed giving her helpful critique. It wasn’t as good as anything he could do, but Tyler had handed her some music theory books and she had begun to go through them, when she wasn’t fiddling with one of Tyler’s old Traktor controls, that he had given her. It was his first one, and he no longer needed it.

So it’s how she spent her days, most days just practicing and creating music while getting paid to watch over a relatively dead store. Her headphones were over her ears and she didn’t hear the bell over the door ring, in fact she didn’t even notice that she had a customer until a familiar tattooed arm waved in front of her face, forcing Charlie to flick her eyes away from her laptop. She immediately pulled her headphones off her ears and rested the DJ headphones on her neck as she looked up at Dani. “Hey, sorry I was just working on something.”

“You’re a DJ?” Dani asked surprised.

“Learning I guess, I’m not that good at it yet,” Charlie admitted as she picked up the old Michael Jackson record and rang it up. She bagged it for Dani, glancing down at the guitar case that she was holding, “You play the guitar?”

Dani glanced at the hard case for her acoustic, “Yeah, I do. I give lessons at the Community Center. I came too late to sign up for a coach for the little league, so this is the next best thing.”

“Shame, my team would have totally kicked your teams ass,” Charlie said with a playful grin and handed the bag to Dani.

“You got lucky Fabray,” Dani scoffed as she took the bag and picked up her guitar.

Charlie shrugged, didn’t matter she still managed to pull out the win. “You give any more thought to joining McKinley? You never called,” Charlie asked.

“I know, but Carmel basically hired an Asian kid to take all my classes for me, so I’m getting straight A’s lets me focus on my song-writing. McKinley can’t offer me anything like that. And I don’t know what they could offer me that I want enough, for me to make the jump.”

Charlie bit her lip chewing on it for a moment, before deciding to take a risk. “Me. Carmel can’t
offer you me. Or another state championship, and with Jesse and Shelby gone the best days of Vocal Adrenaline are over. I can offer you a championship soccer team, which you can co-captain with me. And well—I’d say some nice things about the glee club, but I’m not on it but it’s really good. I think they’ll make it to nationals, they might even win it.”

“You have a girlfriend,” Dani pointed out. Truthfully she had thought about it, Charlie was hot and she was an excellent striker, it would be fun to play with her instead of playing against her. But she wasn’t going to risk the drama of falling for someone who was taken. It was the reason she had left LA and jumped at the chance to play at Carmel.

“No I don’t,” Charlie said truthfully, “I had some casual thing going on, but I stopped that before school ended. Hasn’t happened since then. So let me take you out to dinner and convince you why you should transfer to McKinley.”

Dani stared at Charlie wondering if the striker was asking her out on a date, it sounded like a date, and the smile on her face made it seem like that’s what she wanted. “Alright when do you finish here?”

“Eight-Thirty.”

Dani frowned that was pretty late, “What about tomorrow?”

“I’ve got a little league practice at seven pm.”

Dani nodded, “Pick me up at five-thirty tomorrow then, you only get one shot at this Fabray,” Dani said picking up her guitar case and grabbing the record, it was her dad’s birthday in a few days and he did like old school Michael tracks. “Impress me.”

Charlie blinked and smiled as she watched Dani left the store. Dani turned and shot Charlie one last dazzling smile at the soccer player and Charlie bit her lip and waved at her, before returning to her music.

“You can’t wear shorts on a first date,” Quinn said as she went through Charlie’s closet digging through her clothes.

“First impressions are incredibly important on dates,” Rachel agreed, as she helped Quinn sort through Charlie’s clothes.

“It’s not a date and we’re just going to Breadstix,” Charlie protested looking down at what she was wearing. “I look fine.”

“What is with this town and Breadstix,” Quinn said with a roll of her eyes. She hated that shitty Italian restaurant, where they didn’t make anything fresh. “You look like you’re about to go play soccer. This is a date.”

“I agree with Quinn, you should totally take her out somewhere else. She’s from LA, you have to impress her. That and you hate Breadstix,” Rachel added. “How about these jeans and that shirt?” she asked Quinn turning to eye Charlie. “And you people say that I can’t dress myself.”

“You wear argyle, like all the time with animal pictures on it,” Charlie grumped, “This is a recruiting dinner, I want to convince her to come to McKinley.”
Quinn wondered how Santana found Charlie’s denseness attractive, “Charlie when you ask a girl who openly flirts with you to dinner, just the two of you. It becomes a date.”

“I’ve had dinner plenty of times with Santana and Brittany. They weren’t dates,” Charlie defended herself, scratching her cheek.

“Are you paying?” Rachel asked.

“Yes I invited her out to dinner and it’s only polite—”

“It’s a date,” Rachel and Quinn said at the same time.

“She likes you and she would make a fine leading lady,” Rachel added, “Plus if she comes to McKinley, we’ll totally take away one of Vocal Adrenaline’s stars. She can sing Charlie, and we could use some more powerful vocals. So you have to do everything you can to bring her to McKinley.”

Quinn sighed and nudged Rachel playfully, “Rachel we’ve talked about you attempting to pimp Charlie out.”

Rachel stuck out her tongue at Quinn, “It’s not pimping if she wants to do it,” Rachel turned back to Charlie. “You want to do this don’t you?”

“It’s a recruitment dinner, I’m taking her to Breadstix, where we will talk about soccer, and I suppose your glee club, and I will try and get her to transfer to McKinley. This isn’t a date,” Charlie said as she pulled off her shorts and slipped into a pair of dark jeans, grumping as she did so.

“Charlie Reagan Fabray,” Rachel said and Charlie winced at the use of her full name her hazel eyes flicking to Rachel. “You are not going to be just like every other boy at McKinley, I understand that this is your first date but the very first thing you should do is ask if she has any dietary restrictions. If she says no, there is this new Thai place that opened up. It’s not too fancy, or too expensive, and you will show her a good time. This is a date. And you have asked a lady out to dine with you, it is your job to show her a good time. You will do whatever it takes to bring her to McKinley.”

“You heard her Charlie, whatever it takes,” Quinn mocked and Charlie shot her a withering glare.

“I don’t know why I even mentioned it to you to begin with. Maybe I should have just called Puck —”

Quinn looked horrified at the idea, “You want to ask dating advice from the guy who refers to himself in the third person when asking a girl out?”

“It worked on you didn’t it?” Charlie snipped as she pulled her shirt off and grabbed the white button up shirt and buttoned it up.

Quinn glared at Charlie and threw another shirt at her sister’s head, watching in annoyance as Charlie dodged it. “If you get her pregnant—”

“I’m not sleeping with her, it’s the first date,” Charlie snapped at Quinn, before pausing as both Quinn and Rachel turned to her, and she realized what she had just said. “Ah shit.”

Rachel smiled, “Well now that you agree that it’s a date, we can talk flowers. You can’t show up to her house empty handed. And you should walk up to the front door, and be polite to her parents.”
“You can’t just take her to dinner either, you need to do something else that screams romantic. She likes soccer probably as much as you do, so why don’t you take her to your little league practice tonight. You should tell her to bring a change of clothes,” Quinn added. “You two can bond over the fact that you like kicking a black and white ball around.”

Charlie sighed as Quinn and Rachel began to shoot ideas at her, it had never been this difficult to think of things to do with Santana or Brittany. But she made a mental note of things that she could do with Dani. “Alright, I’ll pick up some flowers, and I’ll take her to that Thai place, then we’ll totally go play soccer together with a bunch of children anything else?”

Quinn walked up to her twin and fixed the collar on her shirt. “Does she know about you?”

Charlie’s face twisted, “No—maybe? I don’t know.”

“Well you’re going to need to be honest with her, find the right time and tell her. Preferably before you start making out,” Quinn said and Charlie nodded a flicker of hesitation crossed her face. This wasn’t Santana and Brittany, and there would be a chance that Dani might not be down with Charlie’s body. There would always be the chance that Charlie would be rejected because of her body wasn’t normal. “Don’t worry, I’m sure that she’ll be okay with it.”

Charlie nodded mutely and looked at herself in the mirror and running a hand through her hair fixing it. This wasn’t Santana or Brittany, this was someone new, someone that she was interested in. Someone who was interested in her, she could do this. She could turn on the charm and totally make Dani laugh with her or at her. This would have been so much simpler if she had just asked Puck for advice, he had been of hundreds of dates. All she would have to do is do the exact opposite of what he said. She stopped fixing her hair and looked at Quinn and Rachel, “So how do I look?” she asked.

“You look great Charlie now hurry up or you’re going to be late picking her up,” Rachel said watching as Charlie picked up her wallet and then her car keys and the house keys and pocketed them before leaving the room. It wasn’t until Rachel heard the front door close that she looked at Quinn. “Want to go spy on her?”

It was a terrible plan and there was a chance that Charlie would totally get back at her for this, but her sister was completely hopeless when it came to women. They were totally doing this for her benefit, they could bail her out if things went badly. “Lets.”

Charlie fidgeted nervously as she walked into the Thai place with Dani, damn Rachel and Quinn for putting her in this awkward position, she didn’t know what to say and Dani just had this amused look on her face, as if she was enjoying watching her squirm. “I really hope you like Thai.”

“I do actually really like Thai,” she had thought that Charlie was going to take her to the infamous Breadstix that Kitty had mentioned, at least it seemed that Charlie was at least trying to be original. It wasn’t like she was expecting something amazing, this wasn’t LA. Dani looked around the restaurant, there weren’t that many people seated. “Hey isn’t that like Rachel Berry? I saw her perform at regionals she was really good.”

Charlie froze and her eyes flicked up to where Rachel and Quinn were seated at a table, talking to each other. “Yeah she was—really good. She’s actually one of my best friends,” Charlie said gritting her teeth and putting on a fake smile. “Want to go say hello?”
“Sure,” Dani said enthusiastically, and let Charlie lead her to the table.

“Dani this is Rachel Berry, she’s one of the captains of the New Directions,” Charlie introduced watching as Rachel smiled and stuck her hand out for Dani who shook it.

“I’ve heard so much about you,” Rachel said ignoring Charlie who had turned a bright red, “Charlie won’t stop talking about you.” It wasn’t technically a lie, Charlie had talked about Dani for about ten minutes non-stop before she casually mentioned that she was taking her out to dinner. Rachel had been furious that Charlie had dropped the lead like that.

Dani grinned and looked up at Charlie who immediately looked away, trying to look cool. “I heard you sing at Regionals you were phenomenal,” Dani said sincerely as Rachel beamed, she turned to the other blonde at the table who looked suspiciously like Charlie. “I thought you guys got robbed though. You should have totally placed.”

“I think so too,” Rachel smiled, at least this girl understood that they had been robbed. Dani would be a perfect leading for her best friend. “This is Quinn.”

“Quinn Fabray,” Quinn threw in, smirking as Charlie glared at her, as she shook Dani’s hand.

“Fabray?” Dani echoed looking over at Charlie who looked wholly unimpressed.

“Charlie?” Charlie said dully.

“Fabray?” Dani repeated, a grin on her face. Charlie wasn’t very good at this, she seemed nervous, it was actually sort of cute.

Charlie looked between the two of them, and then plastered a fake smile on her face again, “Well we’ll leave you to it, let’s go grab a seat Dani.” Charlie said and Dani nodded. When she turned her back the smile on Charlie’s face fell and she glared at the two of them. She knew where they both lived and she knew where they both slept. Oh she would get her revenge. She sniffed before following Dani and pulling out the seat for her.

Quinn smiled, she hadn’t let go of Rachel’s hand just yet. “Q-bear?” she asked raising a brow.

“I had to think of something, to make it believable.” Rachel said flushing. Maybe that had been too much. But Quinn hadn’t let go of her hand so that was a plus.

Dani watched Rachel and Quinn, Quinn’s hand was still on Rachel’s and they seemed to be teasing each other. “They make a cute couple you know,” she said nodding towards them. “How long have they been together?”

Charlie turned to look over at them they did look rather cozy together, she narrowed her eyes for a moment, Rachel was a fantastic actor and she was clearly committing to this lie, “They aren’t together, they’re here to spy on me and make fun of me later.”

“Well they’re in love,” Dani said in a sure manner and Charlie snorted causing Dani to look at her. “Can’t you see the way that your sister looks at her?”
Charlie tilted her head and studied Quinn for only a moment, and for a moment she saw a flash of Lucy Fabray and she smiled a bit, but ignored it because Quinn was straight and so was Rachel, and she still planned to murder the both of them for interfering like that. “It’s a Quinn thing. She looks at bacon the same way,” Charlie said dismissively and Dani laughed.

Dani turned her attention back to Charlie, “So you’re trying to convince me that McKinley is the place to be. But I heard that they were cutting the budget for the girls’ soccer team.”

Charlie exhaled slowly, this was a recruitment dinner, meaning she had nothing to worry about. “They are but our budget isn’t huge to begin with. Most of it goes to transportation, and hotel rooms. All it means is that I can’t have my own private room anymore and we find a cheaper bus to take us to away games. We still won the state championship again this year.”

“And you won MVP,” Dani said slightly impressed. “I watched the finals, you were impressive.”

Charlie flushed and rubbed the scar on her hand, “You were really good as well, which is why I really want to play with you,” Charlie blinked at her words. “Shit, that sounded bad—I mean I want to play soccer with you,” she stammered.

Dani laughed, “You don’t do this much?”

“Recruit people?” Charlie asked taking a sip of her water.

“Date people,” Dani said correcting her watching as Charlie flushed again.

“No not really, you’re like the first person I’ve ever been on a date with.”

Dani didn’t believe that for a second, Charlie Fabray was hot, surely there were people who wanted to date the captain. But she turned to Rachel and Quinn who had been watching them and whispering to each other, her attention made them go back to eating their food, “So they’re not really together?” she was never really wrong about these things.

Charlie shook her head, “But apart from their nosiness, they are really good people. Rachel’s a bit intense when it comes to glee club, and my sister was a cheerleader and now she’s in glee club.”

“And they’re still in love with each other,” Dani pointed out as she watched Quinn stare at Rachel who was still trying to sneak glances at the two of them. “Well your sister is in love with Rachel at the very least.”

“Quinn is straight,” Charlie said as she sunk down low in her seat. “She just had a baby. And Rachel is dating the freakishly tall quarterback of the football team who was my sister’s ex-boyfriend. They are both very straight. They fought over him for like months.”

Dani frowned, “The really tall guy at regionals who can’t really dance or you know sing?” When Charlie nodded, Dani tilted her head a bit, “So he gets your sister pregnant, and then dumps her for the diva and they’re friends?”

Charlie shakes her head, “My sister cheats on Finn, who is the quarterback. She gets pregnant with Puck’s kid, Finn thinks the baby is his. Rachel has been obsessed with Finn since freshman year, finds out, she tells Finn, ensuing drama happens. Finn breaks up with Quinn. Finn starts dating Rachel, they break up. Rachel dates Saint Jack—James. Jesse Saint James. They break up. Rachel finds out that her mom is the Vocal Adrenaline head coach. Jesse goes back to Vocal Adrenaline. They egg her. The New Directions slushy Vocal Adrenaline. Vocal Adrenaline wins at Regionals, where Quinn has her baby. It’s a girl. I’m an aunt, her name is Beth. She’s adorable.” Charlie says and then pauses as she realizes how horrible that sounds. “Don’t worry drama at McKinley doesn’t
usually happen every year. Seriously the soap-opera like events are not the norm I promise you this. I think it’s just a glee club thing. The girls’ soccer team is generally drama free.”

Dani watched as the server placed down their food. It actually sounded pretty normal to her. Jesse Saint James made everything more dramatic than it had to be, “And what about you?” There had been some interesting rumors about Charlie Fabray at Carmel. “What’s your story?”

“I think you know most of it, youngest captain in McKinley history, youngest MVP, led my team to a state championship in freshman year, and in my sophomore year. Carmel tried to recruit me, I turned them down. I’m not a fan of unnecessary drama, so I try and keep it low key,” Charlie said honestly.

“You have your own fan club,” Dani pointed out. “How did that happen?”

“Championship teams are royalty at McKinley, as captain you’re seen as the best. You’ll be untouchable. And there are certain perks to being at the top. We’re like celebrities. Fan Clubs are just part of the charm. Quinn had one when she was head cheerleader. Rachel has one, it consists of one person who is like her own personal stalker. It just sort of happens at McKinley.”

Dani frowned a bit, Charlie didn’t seem to be the type of person to take advantage of a fan, but someone had left that hickey on her neck where the world could see. And then there was those rumors circulating about Charlie being a transgendered teenager. She doesn’t ask Charlie about that instead she looks over at Rachel and Quinn again. Two friends did not hold each other’s hand like that, “Are you sure they’re straight?”

Charlie’s eyes flick back and she nods, “Yes they’ve been like that since Quinn was crazy on her pregnancy hormones.”

Dani frowned she was so sure that they were together, “That’s rather disappointing.”

“I’ve never had a girlfriend, I never really wanted one before. I did have something casual going on but that’s over now. It’s been over for months,” Charlie said rubbing her hand. It didn’t matter how much she wanted something to happen it wasn’t going to and she couldn’t just keep sleeping with Santana hoping that something would change.

“We’re getting a new Coach for the team, Bieste or something like that,” Puck said as he threw the football at Charlie who caught it with ease, “You should totally try out. Chick’s dig football players. We need a new running back. And I know you know how to play, plus you’re really fast when you want to be.”

Charlie snorted and launched the ball back at him, they had been tossing the ball around for about half an hour. She had volunteered to help him get ready for the new try outs, that he had to go through when Finn had bailed on him, saying that the spot was as good as his anyway. “One. I haven’t played football since I was fourteen. Two. I really hate the sport. Three. Finn sucks as a quarterback. Four. I’m a girl. Five. I don’t have time for the football team, I’m a soccer player.”

Puck sighed, the fight club business was booming and he was taking in a bit of cash, but he didn’t want to be stuck in Lima for the rest of his life and football was his ticket out of here. “Football games are on a different night than your soccer games, our season goes for longer in the fall, but ends before you have your spring tournament. You said it yourself Dani is just as good as you are. So you won’t need to be working as hard on the team. So join the football team. The guys might
“give you shit to begin with but once they see you play.”

“This doesn’t change the fact that I hate football,” Charlie said raising an eyebrow at him, “Or you know the fact that I hate Finn Hudson, or the fact that Finn Hudson is the quarterback.” Russell had desperately tried to get her to play football, she had thought about joining the Titans during freshman year as a way to get Russell to pay attention to her but they really did suck, and there was no point being on a losing team.

“Dude you know you love me more than you hate Finn,” Puck said flashing her his most charming smile.

“Maybe, but Finn has an unreliable arm, and doesn’t have the leadership abilities to actually be a quarterback. He hesitates to long which is why he’s been sacked as many times as he was. Even if you managed to get a new quarterback, I’m not joining the team. I can help you practice as much as you want. But Coach Roz would skin me, like actually skin me if I dared to join the football team. Missy hears that you guys are getting a bigger budget even though you had a shit season last year. Which means they’re cutting into all the other clubs budget. Roz is pissed, Sue is on the warpath. Glee club barely has a budget as is, but that got cut into. You are my bro, and you’re like family, but I like being alive and I like being captain of my team way more than I like football.”

Puck caught the football that Charlie had just thrown, he was about to suggest that she try out for the quarterback, but he knew she didn’t have the shoulder strength for such a position. He was about to throw the ball back when a soccer ball crossed their path. Almost immediately Charlie was distracted and ran after the ball, catching up to it and stopping the ball. Puck turned and saw a guy with blonde hair with two kids waving at him a sheepish look on his face, as Charlie expertly kicked the ball back watching as it landed right in front of the blonde dude, who kicked the ball back to his siblings awkwardly before walking over to the two of them.

“Sam Evans,” he said greeting them with a smile on his face, extending his hand as both Charlie and Puck stared at him, well mostly his lips.

Charlie recovered first and shook his hand, “Charlie Fabray. The idiot gaping at your lips is Noah Puckerman, everyone calls him Puck.”

“Dude, your mouth is huge. How many tennis balls can you fit in there?” Puck asked and Charlie snorted.

Sam blinked and turned to Puck, “I don’t… know. I’ve never had any balls in my mouth. Have you?”

Charlie laughed at this, “Yeah Puck have you?”

Puck grumbled but shook Sam’s hand, “How’s it going?” he asked looking the blonde haired teen over carefully. Apart from the Justin Bieber haircut he seemed like a relatively cool guy.

“Good we just moved to Lima, my dad got transferred here. I’m heading to McKinley in the fall,” Sam explained.

Charlie nodded and nudged Puck, “We go to McKinley, those your kid brother and sister? They play soccer?” she asked watching them.

“Yeah we came too late to sign them up for the league that runs through the summer, but they really like it so I said I’d take them to the park every day to practice. But I’m terrible at it.”

“Charlie’s like the best soccer player in Ohio, and she coaches the Lions team, aren’t you like a
few players short?"

“I am the best soccer player in Ohio,” Charlie corrected Puck before flicking her eyes over to Sam. “I do have space on my team if you want to bring them there, I’ll bring the forms to the next practice so you can fill them out. Just some emergency information and all that, and I’ll bring the extra jerseys.”

Sam grinned at her, “Yeah that would be totally cool of you,” He turned and yelled for Stevie and Stacey to come over and the two of them ran up to him and he gently pushed them forward, “Charlie these are my siblings, Stevie and Stacey. They’re twins. Charlie said you can join her soccer team for the summer. Isn’t that cool.”

Charlie grinned and leaned down so she was at eye level with them, “Twins? I have a twin, she’s totally not as cool as I am though.”

“Are you identical twins?” Stacey asked her eyes wide.

“Nope, she’s prettier than me though,” Charlie said and the twins laughed. “So I hear you like to play soccer, want me to show you my special move?” she asked nodding at the ball in Stevie’s hand.

“Yeah,” Stevie said tossing the ball to her. “Sam’s not very good.”

Charlie flicked her eyes up to the boy, “Yeah he’s really not,” she said with a teasing grin as she dribbled the ball with her feet as she moved backwards a bit.

Puck rolled his eyes, but placed a hand on Sam’s shoulder pausing as he felt the muscles under the boys shirt, “You play football?” he asked turning to Sam who nodded.

“Yeah I was thinking of trying out for the team this year, I heard that there were like open tryouts. I didn’t make the main squad last year because I was a freshman, but the Coach was going to make me starting quarterback before I found out my family had to move.”

Puck grinned wide not believing his luck, “That’s great our current quarterback is a piece—” Puck stopped and remembered there were children around, “He’s not that good, and we could use some new blood on the team. And Charlie here refuses to join up with me.”

Sam glanced over at Charlie who was walking towards Stevie the ball at her feet, she was going slowly and Stevie lunged for the ball, as Charlie spun around him leaving him standing there. It was like magic, and Stevie turned to stare at Charlie who was juggling the ball on one foot. His mouth dropped, and Stacey ran up to him. “Isn’t she like a girl though?”

“Yeah but she’s really fast and she knows how to catch a football,” Puck said dismissively. “And we’re currently lacking a decent running back this year. She’d be perfect.”

“You gotta show us how to do that!” Stacey said vibrating with excitement and Charlie grinned at them.

“Yeah it was like magic. Are you a magician?” Stevie asked her.

Charlie grinned, “Of course I’ll teach you that trick, and it’s like my specialty. But you’re going to need to practice it a lot to get it right.” Both twins nodded at her as she gently kicked the ball towards them. “You’re lucky you have a twin that likes to play soccer, so you can take turns practicing the move on each other. Who wants to go first?”
Sam watched as Charlie slowed the move down, letting them see every movement in slow detail. “She’s really good with them.” Charlie clapped her hands when Stevie finally managed to get the basic movement down on Stacey. His brother and sister were notoriously shy and this was the first time they had taken to anyone, and he thought she was really pretty as well, “Are you two—?” he asked turning to Puck and nodding towards Charlie.

Puck frowned for a moment and looked at Charlie before looking back at Sam, “Dude, no. She’s like my bro, and the aunt to my kid. We just hang out, go to the gym and play video games and stuff.”

“So you wouldn’t mind if I asked her out?” Sam asked.

Puck almost wanted to see Sam be shot down by Charlie, he had watched her shoot down a few guys and it was always a riot. But he needed more friends to hang out with and Sam seemed to be a decent guy even if his haircut was stupid. “I don’t mind at all, but—” he began but Charlie had chosen that moment to walk back to them.

“They’re really good, with a bit of practice we’re totally going to come in first in the round robin this year.” Charlie informed Sam nodding at his siblings who were practicing the move that Charlie had showed them.

“They’ve really warmed up to you, normally they’re rather shy. You’re really good with kids,” he said.

Charlie shrugged, kids were easy to impress. “Thanks but they’re really great kids, they should fit right in on the team. Stacey will probably like to hang out with Brittany’s sister Hailey, I’ll be sure to introduce them.”

“Thanks,” Sam said and swallowed, he had never asked out a girl before. “So I was thinking that maybe you and I could go get ice cream or something together at some point.”

Charlie flicked her eyes toward him studying him before looking at Puck who was shaking his head, “Are you asking me out?”

Sam flushed and nodded, “Yeah?”

Charlie tilted her head at Puck, “You didn’t tell him?”

“I tried, you interrupted,” Puck said shaking his head.

“How come he gets to be let down easy?” Puck asked, slightly offended Charlie had said no and the moment he had tried to use on of his lines on her she had tipped the slushy he had gotten for her onto his shirt before walking away.

Charlie rolled her eyes, “Don’t be jealous Puck you know how much I tolerate you.” Charlie said dryly before turning to Sam again giving him a look again. “And cause you’re going to McKinley and it really isn’t a secret anymore. I’m intersexed, meaning that I have boy parts. I’m a girl. Not transgendered, I was born female just with extra. Is that going to be a problem?” She asked him.
Puck moved to stand beside Charlie but Sam shook his head, “No that’s actually really cool,” he stated and Charlie turned back to him in surprise. “Does it—?”

“Yes. And I can get other girls pregnant as well,” Charlie informed him still eying him carefully as if expecting him to snap but Sam seemed to be cool with it.

Puck grinned and slapped Sam on the back, “Charlie’s like the coolest girl in school, and stick with us and you’ll totally be like one of the most popular guys in the school. Especially if you’re the quarterback.”

“In other words stay close to me because Puck will totally get you in trouble. Or worse you’ll join their glee cult,” Charlie said seriously.

“Glee cult?” Sam asked his eyes widening.

“Ignore her, glee club is totally cool,” Puck says gently shoving Charlie away.

“They break out into song and dance at incredibly inappropriate times. It’s creepy,” Charlie threw in. “It’s like living in a musical. It’s horrifying.”

“It’s cool you can sing any song that you want and you’re totally in.”

“So I could like sing a Justin Bieber song? Cause you know he’s like the man.”

“And just like that your little cult got so much lamer,” Charlie said turning to Puck a playful grin on her face.

“The girls go crazy for the Bieb’s,” Sam protested.

“Yeah if you’re twelve,” Puck pointed out.

Charlie grinned at Sam who looked rather embarrassed, “Don’t worry we won’t make fun of you for you terrible taste in music. At least not much.”

Charlie looked at her phone, rolling her eyes, Puck was totally ditching her to go do something for Sandy Ryerson. At least Sam was still showing up. She’d told Rachel about Sam and how he was interested in Glee Club. Rachel had insisted that she meet him and invite him over to hang out with them in the Berry’s pool. Charlie had pointed out immediately that he had an unhealthy obsession with Justin Bieber and thought that the Canadian singer was like the best thing ever and a perfect way to get girls but Rachel had simply ignored her, telling her that everyone was welcome in glee, all they needed to do was sing.

Charlie adjusted her swim trunks, at least Quinn would be there to make sure that Rachel didn’t scare him off. He was actually pretty chill even if he was really lame, Charlie blamed it on going to an all-boys school. He didn’t seem to know how to talk to girls. He probably was in the wrong group of people because Puck came off as slimy ninety-percent of the time, and she would just talk to them like they were normal human beings. She was just blunt like that. Sam Evans really wanted a girlfriend, it was almost cute. Which was why she had told him that she would introduce him to her sister.

Quinn needed a win, and Sam was a nice guy a bit nerdy, polite, he might make a good match. Or maybe not, Charlie wasn’t really sure what her sister looked for in a guy, she only had Puck and
Finn to go on, and while Puck was her friend, he was still a man whore, and Finn was a man-child. Sam at least seemed normal. Sam didn’t even seem to care that she’d been pregnant and he was a decently attractive man, at least Charlie imagined so, she preferred looking at his face even though his lip to mouth ratio was off, as opposed to Finn Hudson who looked like a baby.

When the doorbell rang, Charlie made it to the door first, and she opened the door, “Hey Sam, Puck bailed—holy shit you’ve got abs.” Charlie said staring at Sam’s abdominal region. She had never seen a teenage boy so ripped before, if she had any doubt that he’d make the quarterback over Finn those thoughts were put to bed. Sam either had the best genetics available or he spent obscene hours working on his physique. “You’re now my new gym buddy,” Charlie said throwing Puck under the bus, screw him. He didn’t have abs like that.

“I probably should have brought a shirt but Stacey spilled a slushie on it, and I didn’t bring a spare,” Sam said apologetically.

Charlie eyed him, he was thicker than her, but a lot of her shirts were baggy to begin with. “I may have something that can fit you. Come on they’re at the pool,” she said nodding for him to follow her. “I thought I had abs. Hell I thought Puck had abs, but I think you’re more defined than Mike Chang.”

Sam smiled, “You think so? I was like one of the smallest guys back in Tennessee, I definitely didn’t have the best body.”

“You’re being modest—what the hell do you eat and what exercises do you do? I mean I hit the gym for a couple of hours a day, but even I don’t have the definition of a Greek statue.”

Sam nodded, “Can I see?” Charlie stopped and pulled her shirt up in the hall so Sam could take a look, Charlie was well defined and he could see the beginnings of a four-pack starting, “You’re like the most defined chick I’ve ever met. You sure you want to do more?”

“Core is important in soccer, and the fitter my body is the better I play,” Charlie answered. She didn’t want his definition she just wanted what she could imagine was amazing core strength.

Rachel took this moment to finally leave the backyard to come looking for her guests, “Charlie what’s taking so long? Holy Barbra—” she said as both Sam and Charlie turned to her, Charlie still had her shirt up, but she dropped it when Rachel walked in. She couldn’t help but gawk at Sam’s body and she thought that Finn had a nice body.

“This is Rachel, she’s the captain of the Glee club. She has a boyfriend. She’s very into glee club, like I’m really into soccer,” Charlie said as Sam stuck out his hand and Rachel shook it hesitantly. “Rachel this is Sam, he’s going to be the new quarterback.” Charlie said doing the introductions, “And he’s got this weird thing with Justin Bieber which is probably why he has that silly haircut of his.”

“The girls go crazy for the Bieb’s. He’s like magic,” Sam protested for the umpteenth time.

Charlie rolled her eyes, “Sure they do Sam. Sure they do,” she patted his arm. “Come on I’ll introduce you to my sister.”

Rachel finally found her voice, wondering if Charlie was actually attempting to set Sam up with Quinn. But Charlie generally stayed out of Quinn’s love life that wasn’t why she had brought Sam over, and where was Puck he was supposed to be here. “I think that it takes a rather confident—” Rachel barely avoided slamming into Sam as he stopped suddenly.
Sam looked over at Charlie, “Dude she’s like the prettiest girl that I’ve ever seen,” he whispered at Charlie.

It was that moment that Rachel Berry realized that she wasn’t Sam Evan’s biggest fan. It didn’t matter that he had the most amazing abs that she had ever seen, and that Charlie seemed to like him. Or that he agreed in her assessment that Quinn Fabray was the prettiest girl ever. She half expected Charlie to yell at him but Charlie seemed indifferent. And Rachel wanted to yell at her friend about being a terrible twin. Charlie should care.

“Remember she’s also my sister,” Charlie said, “And I’m required to tell you that I’ll break your face if you hurt her. Or you know get her pregnant. Because I can only deal with one idiot, and that quota has been filled for the rest of my life.” Charlie said simply as she walked over to her twin to introduce her to Sam.

“What do you think of Sam and Quinn?” Charlie asked as she juggled the soccer ball. “He seems to really like her, and most importantly I don’t hate him. Though his taste in comic books leads a lot to be desired.” It was the first time that they had just hung out, just the two of them in months. Rachel paused from where she was looking over possible song selection choices for the very first glee club of the year, there was no such thing as being too prepared. “Sam likes Quinn?” While she wasn’t in disbelief over the fact that someone could like Quinn, she just hadn’t been prepared to deal with someone this soon liking her. She had known that he thought she was pretty but there were plenty of pretty people, it’s not like she tried to date them all. A boyfriend would mean that Quinn would have less time to spend with her.

“I think he was attempting to flirt with her. He has like zero game though,” Charlie replied keeping her focus on the ball, as she kicked it up in the air and caught it, before placing it back on the ground and began to do her drills. “I like him. He’s not a man-whore like Puck is. He’s fairly intelligent, at least I think he is. He likes a lot of the things that Quinn likes, and he really likes her. He’s totally cool with the fact that I have a dick. Plus he’s probably going to be the new quarterback.”

“Finn’s the quarterback,” Rachel said absentmindedly as she tried to think of something that would dissuade Charlie from trying to set Quinn and Sam up.

“You didn’t hear? Coach Tanaka had like a nervous breakdown, so we’re getting a champions caliber Coach for the football team. There is no seniority anymore, everyone has to tryout again. Sam is actually a decent quarterback. No way Frankenteen makes the team as quarterback again.”

“I thought you hated when Quinn was a walking cliché,” Rachel said throwing out there. “I mean head-cheerleader and the quarterback, haven’t we already done this. What about a new story.”

“Santana is head of the Cheerios, and she plans on holding onto that title till she graduates—”

“Cheerleaders date football players all the time, why can’t we find her someone else. Someone who is talented in other—”

“Sam has this weird crush on Justin Bieber like I mentioned, and he’s thinking of joining glee club. Especially since Quinn is in it. Puck’s been teaching him how to play the guitar,” Charlie interrupted. “I know how important glee club is to you and he’s totally into it. So long as he gets to perform one Justin Bieber song, because Sam is sort of lame but he totally owns it. I think Quinn
could really grow to you know like him, a lot. If she gives him the chance. He’s like the better version of Finn Hudson. Not freakishly tall, better abs, a hard worker, better voice, and he’s okay with not being seen as the cool kid. The bonus to this, is that I don’t actually hate him, and I’d probably approve of this relationship. Plus he has twin siblings, and they’re joining the soccer team I coach.”

“Yes but his mouth to face ratio is incredibly off. And his nipples are crooked. Quinn needs someone who is just as perfect as she is. Nothing less than perfection—”

Charlie stared at Rachel letting her soccer ball bounce away harmlessly away because it was all sort of falling in place. “You have a crush on my sister.” She said simply tilting her head as she said it. When Rachel didn’t deny it Charlie’s mouth dropped, “Holy shit, you’re in love with Quinn? You’re in love with my sister and you didn’t fucking tell me? I am your best fucking friend, this is shit you share.”

Rachel flushed immediately, slamming her binder closed, as she tried desperately to get away from Charlie who just followed her back inside the house. Truthfully with all the looks she had been giving Quinn, she was surprised Charlie hadn’t figured it out sooner. She wants to point out that Charlie doesn’t really share her feelings ever, but she doesn’t because it’s Charlie and she usually has her reasons. “Because, Charlie. Your sister is straight. There was no point in telling you about it because there was nothing you could do. She’s one of my closest friends, and even though there are a few times when I am sure that there might be something more between us, that is simply my personal bias.”

Charlie was quiet for a moment, as she thinks about what Rachel just said, “So Finn really is your beard? Does he know that he’s your beard?”

“I’m bisexual Charlie, and Finn is really trying hard to be a good boyfriend, and I do love him,” Rachel ignored the face that Charlie was making at this. “He actually likes me Charlie, Finn Hudson is the best I’m going to do in this school. People like Quinn don’t fall in love with people like me, but Finn is kind and he tries really hard, and it’s not really his fault that he’s not that smart, but he likes me. He really likes me.”

“Settling for someone—”

“You’re settling for Dani,” Rachel interrupted not letting Charlie finish that thought.

“Santana is in love with Brittany. Brittany is in love with Santana. There isn’t any settling, I’m trying to move on with my life. I thought you liked Dani,” Charlie said with a frown, there was a hint hesitation in her voice. She had never really dated anyone before.

“I do like her, she’s a perfect leading lady for you. Just like Finn is a perfect leading man for me,” Rachel said firmly, she doesn’t add that when Santana calls or Brittany asks for her, she still came running. Though lately it seemed that Charlie seemed to be going to Santana’s beck and call more often. “We don’t always get who we really want, and so we have to move on.”

“Finn Hudson is an asshole, I have been saying this to you since day one.”

“The first day I met you, you helped me get cleaned up after Quinn slushied me, and you apologized for your sister. That’s how we became friends, Quinn would slushy me or have me slushied and you’d always be apologizing after her and helping me clean up. Your sister was horrendous to me back then. I don’t even know why I—” Rachel’s mouth snapped shut.

Charlie stared at Rachel for a long moment, “You’ve had a crush on my sister since freshman year?
When she was being a complete and utter bitch to you?” Rachel immediately looked away. Charlie tilted her head, and then snorted, “I didn’t know you were into that sort of thing.”

Rachel flushed as she thought about what Charlie had just said and slapped her friend’s arm, “I’m—I just thought she was the prettiest girl in school. I did, and I remember staring at her and I think she caught me and she just threw a slushy in my face. It was a crush back then, one that didn’t last long and based solely on her looks. I didn’t even know who she was. She was just—you know she’s the prettiest girl in school, and she’s really wholesome—” Rachel ignored the disgusted look on Charlie’s face, “I wasn’t in love with her back then it was a harmless crush.”

“And now it isn’t?” Charlie asked.

“I never expected her to be so nice, and she makes me dinner sometimes and she doesn’t mind if I ramble, she thinks it’s cute. Even Finn doesn’t think it’s cute, and she knows that I’m a vegan, and she made you go see Shelby so now I have my mom in my life. And whenever she gives me a ride she lets me listen to show tunes, and she supports me. She has faith in me, and she shows up when I need her, all I have to do is ask. And there is so much about her that I still don’t know and I want to find out. And I really, really want to—you know kiss her and stuff,” Rachel blushed at the last statement.

Charlie stared at Rachel and tilted her head, and thought about the situation for a second. Brittany had made some suspect comments about Quinn but Charlie hadn’t really paid her any mind, it wasn’t as if it was impossible. Quinn had been awfully protective over Rachel especially when she had been pregnant, Charlie had chalked it up to her sister being crazy with the pregnancy hormones. “She might like you as more than a friend,” Charlie admits after a moment. Because there is evidence to support the theory, and she winces when she sees Rachel’s face light up, “But she also might be very straight. It’s not like we talk about this, she doesn’t talk to me about boys. She talks to Santana and Brittany about that stuff. But Brittany is sure that Quinn is a pressed lemon or whatever, but Brittany also thinks that her cat is in a gang. So I mean grain of salt.” She doesn’t talk about Dani’s prediction that they’re probably both very repressed.

Rachel nodded, “Finn has done some pretty romantic things for me, and said some pretty romantic things to me. It’s not that I’m unhappy with him, because he does try and that’s part of his charm. He is the perfect leading man.” He had taken on Vocal Adrenaline for her after all, he had turned down Santana Lopez for her.

“I don’t get it you have two gay dads, how in the world can you date Finn Hudson? Your father’s don’t even like him. Hell Hiram asked me when I was going to make my move on you and save you from the Neanderthal. Is this part of the whole everyone deserves a second chance thing? He called Kurt a fag.” She didn’t mention the time that both Leroy and Hiram had basically begged her to finally make a move on their daughter. It had been odd and embarrassing for Charlie to admit she really wasn’t interested in Rachel that way.

“He apologized for that and Kurt was continuously coming on to him despite Finn’s insistence that he is straight. He’s been really trying, and he’s trying to be really sensitive to the issues,” Rachel defended him immediately.

Charlie groaned and pinched the bridge of her nose and shook her head, she wasn’t going to get into this argument with Rachel again. “Sam likes Quinn and I told him that he could go for it. You’re going to need someone else to distract him from Quinn. So any girl that you know is single and—”

“Mercedes. We’re going to introduce him to Mercedes,” Rachel said immediately, because Mercedes was the only person in the glee club who hadn’t had a real boyfriend. “Can you make it
happen if you introduce them to each other?"

“I’m not really friends with Mercedes, I can’t just show up at her house and be like here. I got you a
present, enjoy this man meat and his amazing abs. Host a glee club party to try and get to know the
new members. I’ll invite Dani, you invite the rest of glee club, and we can say it’s a party to get to
know potential members of the glee club.”

Rachel stared at Charlie, “You’re going to help me keep your sister single?”

“Against my better judgment, yes. For now anyway, but it’s not like we can keep her single forever.
Quinn isn’t stupid she might suspect that I have something to do with it. But you totally owe me for
this.”

Charlie rubbed the scar on her hand before she rang the doorbell to the Lopez’s house, she hadn’t
seen Santana in weeks, it was like the Latina had dropped off the face off the planet; all of her texts
had remained unanswered. She didn’t know what she had done, but while she was doing inventory
the Latina had finally texted her back. The message had been short and to the point telling her that
the moment she was done work, she was supposed to come over. So even though she was supposed
to meet Dani in about two hours, Charlie swung by the Latina’s place. Because Santana never
really made requests, and Charlie rarely ever said no to the Latina.

It took a moment but the door swung revealing Santana, post her breast enhancing surgery. Charlie’s
mouth dropped as she stared at the Latina’s chest, and Santana smirked as she grabbed
Charlie’s hand pulling her into the house, Charlie following her wordlessly. The door slammed
behind the soccer player and leaving her alone with Santana. “No more playing around, I’m giving
you full visitation rights to the set of rambunctious twins that live on my rib cage,” her voice was
low and husky, and she watched in delight as Charlie shivered. Brittany hadn’t been nearly as
responsive to the fact that she had forged her mother’s signature to get the surgery done. In fact
Brittany hadn’t been pleased with her at all.

It took Charlie a moment but after she got her mind off Santana’s newly enhanced breasts and
finally managed to tear her eyes from them, “You got a boob job?”

Santana rolled her eyes, “Stating the obvious Fabray,” she said reaching for Charlie’s hand again,
but she didn’t expect Charlie to move her hand away from hers. The action hurt more than it
should have, and she had to wonder if Charlie would have the same reaction as Brittany.

“Why?” Charlie asked confusion in her voice as she pulled herself away from Santana. “Why did
you do it?”

Santana frowned this was not the reaction she had hoped for, but as reactions went it was neutral
for Charlie, she wasn’t angry like Brittany had been, and she had at least noticed unlike her parents
who she still barely saw. “I felt like it,” she said with a shrug, “Now are you going to—”

“Santana,” Charlie said patiently, “Why’d you do it?”

Santana frowned this was not the reaction she had hoped for, but as reactions went it was neutral
for Charlie, she wasn’t angry like Brittany had been, and she had at least noticed unlike her parents
who she still barely saw. “I felt like it,” she said with a shrug, “Now are you going to—”

“Santana,” Charlie said patiently, “Why’d you do it?”

Santana stared at Charlie for a moment wondering if she should have the discussion with her, or
not. There didn’t seem to be judgment on Charlie’s face, just confusion. Charlie wanted to
understand, so Santana sighs and pulls away because the moment is gone and it doesn’t look like
Charlie will be jumping her any time soon. “I wanted people to notice me more.” Charlie doesn’t
say anything for a moment, and Santana suddenly awkward under Charlie’s gaze.
“You didn’t need to do this to get people’s attention. You’re Santana Lopez, people look when you walk into a room,” Charlie said softly.

Santana scoffed, because Charlie was just trying to make her feel better. She had walked away from both her and Brittany, she had walked away like everyone else. It didn’t matter that Charlie still came whenever she called her, she couldn’t help but wonder if Charlie thought of her like everyone else did, as someone disposable. “How do you know?”

“Because I look at you whenever you enter a room,” Charlie said with a small smile and scratches her cheek. “You were beautiful before you did this, you’re still beautiful now. I’m not angry or anything, it’s your body, I just wish you hadn’t done it because you felt like no one noticed you. Because I do. I’ll always notice you.”

Santana stares at Charlie for a moment and in that moment she leans forward to kiss the soccer player, because it’s the nicest thing someone has said to her in her recent memory, but Charlie has placed her hand on Santana’s shoulders stopping her.

“We can’t do this anymore San,” Charlie said swallowing, she wanted to, because kissing Dani was different than kissing Santana, it was different than kissing Brittany. She liked Dani just fine and the blue haired girl was a fantastic kisser. But when she kissed Santana it was like all the cells were alive.

“Why! Fuck you want me, I know you do and I want you. So why the fuck not?” Santana snapped at Charlie who winced.

This wasn’t how she had planned to tell Santana, “I’ve got a girlfriend Santana. Dani, remember the soccer player from—”

“You’re dating someone from fucking Carmel? Were you dropped on your head or has living with the fucking hobbit finally drive you crazy? You saw what Saint Jackass did to her.”

Charlie expected the anger, “I’m not in love with Dani or anything but I really like her, and she really likes me. I think.”

“Have you fucked her yet?” Santana asked trying to keep her anger and hurt under check.

Charlie shook her head, “We’re taking it slow.”

“It’s not cheating then, if you two aren’t doing it,” Santana said as she stepped toward Charlie again.

“Yes it is. You know it is. I like Dani a lot, and I’m not going to cheat on her. And I respect you too much to use you like that,” Charlie said as she took a step back.

“Then dump her,” Santana said in a bored tone, this was a simple solution.

“No. I like her Santana, she’s funny and she’s creative and she’s really cool, and she actually understands what I’m talking about when I go on about soccer, and I can call it football without her getting confused and we can talk about plays and stuff. She wants to be me with me. I want to be with her.”

Santana swallowed trying to keep her anger under check, “Then what are you doing here? Go be with your girlfriend then.”

Charlie sighed, “Santana—”
“Get the fuck out of my house Fabray,” Santana snapped and turned her back on Charlie who looked at her helplessly before doing exactly what the Latina had said, even though Santana wanted her to stay. When the door closed behind Charlie, Santana couldn’t help it she just began to cry.

Quinn frowned a bit, “Where’s Charlie?” she asked Rachel.

“Date with Dani, they’re really getting on well. I think Dani makes the perfect leading lady for your sister,” Rachel said, she wouldn’t mention that she wouldn’t be seeing Charlie that often around the house anymore, the soccer player had promised to give her space to try and figure things out with Quinn. Charlie had her moments where she really was a good friend. “Charlie seems to like her this is their third date this week.”

“So she’s not running away because you planned a movie night? I know how she feels about musicals and Barbra Streisand.”

Rachel sniffed, “Your sister has no taste and is a terrible person. How dare she say that Yentl, was a really boring version of Shakespeare’s Twelfth Night, and then imply that Amanda Bynes did it better? I will never forgive her for that. It’s sacrilege.”

Quinn bit her lip as she looked at Rachel, “I like Yentl better than She’s The Man.”

“That’s why I like you better than Charlie, but don’t tell her that,” Rachel said smiling back, “But no, I have realized I’ve been a particularly bad host, by always making you watch musicals with me—”

“I like watching musicals with you,” Quinn interrupted, she especially enjoyed when Rachel would break out into song with the movie.

Rachel ignored her, “And I know about your secret comic book collection, so I thought today we could watch Batman Begins and The Dark Knight, with Christian Bale, who is a fantastic actor. Charlie tried to insist that I’d much prefer to watch Ironman, but I do know enough to know that Iron Man is Marvel, which is Charlie’s favorite and Batman is DC which is yours. I did a bit of research on both, and I find Batman to be a much more compelling hero than Iron Man.”

“You did research? On which superhero was better? There are like a million forums on the internet arguing for each one,” Quinn protested.

“Yes I spent most of last night, reading people’s differing opinions, and then after that I asked Charlie, who basically boiled it down to, Iron Man is hilarious, Batman growls at people. I decided that I could make up my mind with you. After all it’s not as if I haven’t given you more details about Funny Girl then you know what to do with.”

“These are like really dark, and pretty violent, you don’t have to watch these. Charlie’s probably right in saying you’d probably enjoy the lightness of Iron Man more. Even though there aren’t really any interesting female characters or villains like in Batman, you have Catwoman, and Poison Ivy and Harley Quinn, each is their own character, and each has their own faults. They aren’t just bad for the sake of being bad, Catwoman is more of an anti-hero type, Poison Ivy well her intentions are usually noble, and Harley Quinn is just insane,” Quinn explained. “But none of these movies feature any of those strong female leads. But Heath Ledger did a fantastic job in The Dark Knight.”
Rachel nodded, “He won an Academy Award for that role didn’t he? I heard great reviews from it, but I’ve never had a reason to watch it. And if it gets to scary, I’ll be sure to hold onto you.”

Quinn just nodded, not trusting the sound of her own voice, she didn’t mind the idea of Rachel Berry holding onto her. And so the movie began and Quinn was made suddenly very aware that Rachel hadn’t been joking when she said that she’d be holding onto her. It started off with Rachel holding onto her arm and moving closer to her, it wasn’t something that Quinn paid any attention to, but as the movie progressed Rachel was moving closer to her, and before Quinn actually understood what was going on Rachel was buried into her side, and Quinn had an arm wrapped around Rachel’s shoulders.

It was moments like this that confused the ex-head cheerleader, and moments like this that she forced back down to the bottom of her mind, she didn’t and couldn’t have feelings for Rachel Barbra Berry, she was straight. She was a good Christian, and Rachel was very straight. A year ago she was calling Rachel Berry Man-hands and writing horrible messages about her on Myspace, and yet here she was snuggling on the couch with a one Rachel Berry.

She was straight, thought boys were attractive, she had always dreamed about getting married to the perfect man, and popping out two and a half children. It didn’t matter if the man was faceless, and it didn’t matter that for the longest time she’d had a crush on all versions of Catwoman in the old Adam West version of Batman. It certainly didn’t matter that she totally shipped Harley Quinn and Poison Ivy secretly, she wasn’t a lesbian. This was just a friendly, Rachel had a boyfriend, even if he was an idiotic douchebag who wasn’t worth her. Rachel was her friend and having feelings for her was unacceptable.

So Quinn did the Fabray thing to do, which was simply to pretend the problem didn’t exist. She wouldn’t talk about it and she would do everything in her power to make sure it never existed.
“You know Sue has a no plastic policy on the Cheerios right?” It was the first thing that Quinn said to Santana the moment she saw the Latina for the first time post-surgery. “You’ll be lucky if all she does is put you at the bottom of the pyramid.”

Santana rolled her eyes, the only way that Sue would find out that she got a boob job is if someone rattled her out. The only people who knew were Charlie and Brittany and now Quinn and she didn’t think that any of her friends would rat her out. “I didn’t come visit you in this hell hole to talk about my new set of twins.”

Quinn raised an eyebrow but moved aside for Santana to enter her house, it had been ages since the Latina had been to her house, not since she had helped Quinn move her stuff back. “Why are you here?”

“Please don’t tell me you approve of this union between Charlie and this Dani person. She had blue hair and tattoos. So I’m totes going to do you a favor and help you break them up. Charlie will be happier in the long run and you know it.”

Quinn stared at Santana for a moment, “No.” She wasn’t going to get involved in any of Santana’s schemes when it came to her twin.

“What the fuck do you mean no? She’s dating the enemy,” Santana snapped, she had expected Quinn to be on board with this, she had interfered in Charlie’s love life before.

“What enemy? Dani signed the paperwork to transfer to McKinley yesterday. She’s going to join the glee club, she’s going to be on the soccer team with Charlie. Charlie likes her Santana, she really likes her and she’s finally acting like a normal teenager. She seems happy to be with her Santana, and I don’t understand why you want to wreck that for her. What is your plan anyway, we break them up so you can go back to getting naked with my sister while you also have sex with Puck and Brittany whenever you feel like it?”

The words hurt but Santana would not give Quinn the satisfaction of letting her know that her words had cut deeply. There was nothing wrong with liking sex, as the Hobbit had said last semester, girls like sex just as much as boys did. “Dani is a senior, which means at the end of the year she’s going to leave. We both know that long distance doesn’t work, so at the end of the year they will break up. I’m trying to be a good friend and protect Charlie from Dani. Did I forget to mention that she has blue hair and tattoos, she could fit in with the skanks. Your sister could do so much better than that.”

Quinn noted the jealousy on Santana’s features and sighed, because she needed to put a stop to Santana doing something stupid. “Charlie has feelings for you or Brittany, to this day I’m not sure which one of you it is. Mostly because you two are always together.”

“Yes because we’re awesome at sex,” Santana said as if it were obvious, “The sex is amazing between us. You know she does thing——” Quinn held up her hand not wanting to hear it. “Charlie likes the sex, it’s not like she’s in love with us or anything. And trust me there is nothing that Dani can do——”

“I don’t want to hear about your sex escapades with Charlie. She’s my twin, there wasn’t enough mind bleach in the world to erase the fact that I caught you in bed with her. So if you want my advice you’re going to keep it PG-13.” Quinn hissed.
Santana rolled her eyes again, “Fine but when you finally stop being a pressed lemon and get it on with your hobbit you’re totally want to go to Charlie for a bit of advice.”

Quinn pointed at her front door, what was with people and saying that she had feelings for Rachel Berry, she didn’t. She was straight. “Get out.” Santana didn’t move and just gave Quinn a dull look. “Get out Santana.”

“Look I promise to not tell you how fucking awesome your sister is in bed, so long as you give me decent advice this time. None of this give her cupcakes shit like you tried to pass off last time,” Santana said not moving. “So spill Fabgay.”

It was the best she was going to get out of Santana, but Quinn could feel a headache coming on. “Charlie liked you, she liked you and Brittany. How the two of you hadn’t figured that out yet, is beyond me. The entire school knows. Charlie doesn’t do subtle, she doesn’t. Charlie carries your books to the classes you share. She takes your bags without you asking it of her. She shows off just for you or Brittany, like she wants you to notice her. Let’s not forget that she always comes when you call for her. After you had sex with Finn and Charlie was pissed she still went to make sure you were okay. She paid Karofsky to slushy Finn at will, because he called you a slut. FYI she hates Breadstix, like she absolutely detests the place but she goes there because you and Brittany love to go there.”

“Exactly why we should break her up with Dani,” Santana pointed out, smirking this would be a lot easier than she expected especially if Charlie had deep feelings for her. She’d get Brittany on board, the dancer wouldn’t be pleased with the fact that Charlie was dating someone who wasn’t them.

“She’s happy with Dani and if you cared about her in the slightest you would let this play out normally. Because getting naked isn’t dating and Charlie tries not to get possessive over you, but she gets insanely jealous when you sleep with other people. But she can’t ask you to stop because you’re Ms. Never-Say-No. So now she has a girlfriend who wants to be with her, who isn’t going to simply call her for a booty-call and she can get possessive off. She has what she can’t have with either of you or Brittany, and she gets to be normal for a bit. So let her be normal and let this play out. They aren’t going to be together forever, Dani is going to leave at the end of the year.”

“And if she falls in love with her and tries to make the long distance work?” Santana pressed, because it would be best to break them up before it got too serious.

Quinn shrugged, Charlie was a Fabray and she didn’t think that it would be something that Dani would ultimately accept. Charlie had too many secrets, and she didn’t trust people easily, even Quinn could see that their relationship was superficial. Dani couldn’t make Charlie talk, and Charlie didn’t want to. It wasn’t like Santana or Brittany. Santana could make Charlie talk, all she had to do was ask. Brittany could make Charlie talk with one of her looks. What’s more is that Charlie trusted them enough to talk to them without them trying to pressure her into talking. She was getting better with it, the therapy helped and she was expanding her circle of friends slowly. Charlie didn’t love Dani, even if they had been seeing each other for about a month now. Quinn hadn’t heard Charlie talk about Dani like she had talked about Santana and Brittany. Charlie wasn’t in love with Dani, right now and she didn’t adore the girl like she did Santana and Brittany. Santana really didn’t have anything to worry about. “Let Charlie have this, this isn’t a game to her. She’s not trying to make you jealous, she’s just trying to live her life. So let her be.”

Santana Lopez was not the type of person to let things go, and she always got what she wanted. She wasn’t going to stop trying to drag Charlie back to her, all because Quinn said that it was a bad idea. So she lied. “Fine but when she gets her heart all broken, I’m totes blaming you.” Santana
Lopez would get what she wanted and what she wanted was Charlie Fabray.

“You’ve been spending a lot of time over at the Berry’s house. Is Charlie almost ready to come home?” Judy asked Quinn as they ate their dinner.

Quinn swallowed, she couldn’t even remember the last time she had seen her twin. Charlie was always so busy with work and hanging out with her new girlfriend, and she often disappeared for the weekend on little adventures with Puck. “No. Rachel suggested that we have family dinners in an attempt to get her used to the idea that you’re around.”

“Well this is her home, I haven’t changed anything in her room, but I have the cleaners go through and dust the entire place every now and again. You tell her that we can repaint her room and I can have the contractors come in and update it. Her room looks like something a thirteen year old boy would like. Once she comes home we can work as a family in healing from the damage your father caused us.”

“She still goes to therapy every Thursday, morning before work. She works at that old record place downtown, and she’s teaching soccer. She’s doing better, she’s getting better,” Quinn said defending her twin.

“Is she already thinking about getting the corrective surgery for her condition?” Judy asked calmly ignoring the fact that Quinn had nearly dropped her fork.

“I don’t know, Charlie doesn’t talk about it she has a new girlfriend who seems to be fine with her condition.”

“Well once she gets herself fixed, we can work on finding her a nice boy to date. Its Russell fault that she turned out the way she did you know. Hiring prostitutes for her, it’s no wonder she’s all mixed up,” Judy said as she ate her salad, since she had put Quinn on this diet and hired a personal trainer for her daughter she had nearly lost all the baby weight this summer. And with a bit of pushing she could make Quinn hungry for that top spot again, at the top of the pyramid on the cheerleading squad.

“Charlie likes girls. That’s not going to be fixed with a simple surgery.”

“Nonsense, all that testosterone that she is producing is clearly the cause, once we deal with that issue Charlie will be better. When she was a boy she was straight, she’s a girl now. She will never be you or Frannie of course, she’ll never be the prom queen. But she can still find herself a relatively wealthy husband once we get her a proper haircut, with a bit of make-up she could be a model.”

Quinn sighed, it had been like this for the past couple of months, Judy would insist that Charlie needed to be fixed, that they could undo the damage that Russell did, Quinn had long since given up in attempting to change her mother’s mind.

“But you have been spending an awful amount of time with that Rachel girl, is she still dating that idiot?”

Quinn frowned, she had heard that before, “We’re friend’s mom, and yes she’s still dating Finn,” It was rare for the entire Fabray clan to agree on anything, but they all seemed to agree that Finn was an idiot.
“Are there still no good prospects at that school of yours? I know the Coleman’s son goes there, and with him by your side you’ll be sure to win prom queen, especially after we finish cleaning up your image. You need to do something to get back to the top of the pyramid.”

“I don’t actually like Josh Coleman, he’s always making sexist comments and he sort of gives me the creeps,” Quinn answered honestly, she had met him at various church functions. He reminded her of Russell, at least his attitude did.

“Well you need to do something, because with the amount of time that you’re spending around that Rachel girl and her family, people are going to start making assumptions about you. There is no coming back from rumors that you’re gay. You know how people will talk, any boy you date afterward people will wonder if he’s just your beard.” When Quinn didn’t answer Judy looked up at her youngest daughter, “You aren’t—a lesbian are you?” her voice dropped to a whisper even though they were the only ones in the house. “I’ve seen how you looked at that Rachel girl sometimes and you spend an awful lot of time over there, even though I know it’s not to see Charlie.”

“Charlie introduced me to the new guy, he’s a year younger but both Charlie and Puck swear that he’s going to be the new quarterback. His name is Sam, Charlie introduced me his family just moved here from Tennessee. His dad’s an accountant, I never caught what his mom did. I think he’s really into me and I think he’s really nice,” Quinn said as patiently as she could.

Judy was surprised by this news, she hadn’t heard anything about a new boy; perhaps she had misread her daughter after all. “Well then you have to have him over for dinner. We’re not going to have you making the same mistake like you did with that Finn boy.”

“I just met him two weeks ago, he hasn’t asked me out or anything, but I think he likes me, he’s going to be at the glee party that Rachel is hosting. He’s thinking of joining glee club, and this is just to introduce him and Dani to the rest of the glee club. Rachel was worried since Matt transferred out, we were down a member but Charlie managed to bring over Dani, and Puck managed to convince Sam to join. She’s still going to try and do a push to bring in more members in once school starts. Nationals will be in New York this year and she wants to get as many members as possible to join. I think she’s given up on getting Charlie to join though. She wants to do Empire State of mind, and she’s getting Brittany and Mike to choreograph it—” Quinn said smiling as she thought about how Rachel had hunted both Mike and Brittany down, and asked them to help her choreograph a dance number that would entice more people to join glee club. “Tina and Kurt are in charge of the wardrobe design, and Kurt’s got some pretty cool ideas.”

Judy nodded as she listened and watched her daughter, there was something definitely going on between her and this Rachel person. She could see the way that Quinn lit up as she mentioned Rachel’s name. “And how is Finn doing?” she asked wanting to test a theory, the way her daughters eyes dimmed at the mention of his name and the look of irritation on her face said it all.

“I don’t know why I dated him for as long as I did. Did you know he called Santana a slut? I’m sure he’s said terrible things about me as well—”

“You did cheat on him, and have a baby by his best friend, the boy is allowed to be upset,” Judy pointed out dryly.

Quinn’s face twisted at this, her mother was right of course. She had cheated on him with his best friend, part of Finn’s anger with her was justified. “You’re right, but he just wasn’t the boy I thought he was.”

“Well I certainly didn’t expect him to announce that you were pregnant by singing about it at
dinner. Speaking of pregnancy, I think it’s realistic that we put you on some form of birth control, we can’t have any more accidents happen.”

Quinn flushed, “Beth—”

“Yes she may be perfect, but she was still an accident. I’ve scheduled you an appointment with Dr. Wu. There’s no point in attempting to maintain the image that you’re pure anymore, and this Sam might expect you to put out. You’re going to need to do anything to keep him around if you expect to win prom queen. Have you thought about how you’re going to convince Sue to let you back on the squad?”

Quinn nodded, “The Cheerios budget got cut again and she’s probably lost her confetti canons or something that we don’t really need. So I’ll basically start campaigning for funds with our church groups who will probably give money to the cause that cheerleading helped keep me on the straight and narrow.”

“Will she make you head cheerleader?”

“Santana is head cheerleader,” Quinn said with a shrug having her best friend as captain would mean incredibly less pressure on her.

“If you’re thinking about prom queen then you have to be head cheerleader. So do whatever you need to do to make sure that Sue makes you head cheerleader again. This could be your year, a national’s win for Cheerios, and another national win for your glee club. It would look fantastic on your college transcripts. Especially if you end up being prom queen.”

Being prom queen and carrying the family tradition was important to Judy. It was normal, it was the ultimate sign that she was back on top, and that’s where everyone expected her to be. Charlie hated being the one to dole out punishments and expected her to take her rightful spot at the top of McKinley’s elite. Rachel expected her to be the head Cheerio the moment that she got back to school. Becoming Head Cheerio would mean no more slushies, that she wouldn’t need Charlie’s protection anymore, that she could change things at school. She could put the glee club under her protection, and everyone would be safe. It was something that Santana hadn’t done, probably because she had never been on the receiving end of a slushy. She would get her reputation back, she’d become prom queen with Sam, and she’d get herself a good reputation.

So even though Santana’s family had taken her in, and Santana was her best friend. Quinn Fabray made a decision, it was what the old Quinn would do, the HBIC Quinn, pre-baby. It was the person that she’d have to be to make Judy happy, to be at the top again, and to rebrand her image. She’d make sure that Santana would still be her second in command, but it was time for Quinn Fabray to back her spot as the queen of the McKinley elite. “Santana got a boob job,” she informs Judy, “Sue has a strict no plastic policy.”

“You have to use that then, I know that she’s your friend and that you stayed with her through all this terrible business with your father but you need to get your reputation back,” Judy said firmly.

Rachel smiled as she grabbed Sam’s arm and redirected him from the bee line he was making to Quinn who was talking to Mike, “It’s only polite that I introduce you to everyone else. Mercedes have you met Sam?” she asked. “Mercedes is one of our powerhouse vocals, she can hit notes just like Aretha,” Rachel said.
Quinn walked over to Charlie who was lounging in a chair with a pair of dark sunglasses on her face and in her swim trunks and a tight shirt. She eyed Rachel who was watching Sam and Mercedes and trying to keep them talking. “What’s Rachel doing?” she asked her twin who had pulled out a headphone and tilted her head to her sister.

Charlie tilted her glasses up and looked at the diva for a moment, “I think she’s trying to set Sam up with Mercedes,” she said absentmindedly. “She thinks that he’ll make a good match with her.”

“I thought you were trying to set him up with me?” Quinn asked confused.

“I said I’d help him meet girls. You’re a girl.” Charlie pointed out with a shrug of her shoulders.

“So are Santana and Brittany,” Quinn retorted.

Charlie didn’t dignify that with an answer, “Do you actually like him?”

“Yeah he’s really nice, and he tries really hard to be funny and I do like his impressions. Plus he likes DC comics like I do. The abs are a bonus. Mom wants to meet him of course especially after what happened with Finn, I think she wants to screen all my potential suitors. She wants a family—”

“No,” Charlie said firmly.

Quinn left it alone there was only so much she could push her sister without it blowing up in her face, if Charlie wanted to visit the Fabray home she would. So she took a seat in the lounger beside Charlie and watched as Mercedes touched Sam’s arm and leaned into him flirtatiously. Sam looked nervous and glanced over at her direction. She didn’t find herself getting jealous of Sam but she smiled at him and saw that he excused himself and jogged over to where she was sitting with Charlie.

“Sam,” Charlie greeted with a small tilt of her head.

“Charlie,” Sam greeted before he turned to Quinn a grin on his face, “Hey Quinn.”

Quinn smiled warmly at Sam, he really seemed to be a good guy, and they did text a lot, they had a lot in common and it made talking to him really easy. She wasn’t quite sure if she was ready to date again, not after the whole baby fiasco but everyone else seemed to think so. “Hey Sam, I got your text messages last night, I didn’t know you were fluent in Navi.”

Sam blushed and looked over at Charlie who was biting her lip, “It’s supposed to be a secret,” he said as he realized how lame that it sounded by the look of pure amusement on Charlie’s face.

Quinn looked over at Charlie, “Don’t worry Charlie’s not going to make fun of you or tell Puck. Your secrets safe with me. Besides she’d have to admit that she knows what Navi is, because I doubt Puck’s seen Avatar. Besides if she starts on you all you need to do is find me I have plenty of embarrassing secrets.” The smile faded off Charlie’s lips as Sam grinned at her.

“Fine Sam, enjoy spending time with my nerd sister who by the way also knows what Navi is because we totally went to see the movie together,” Charlie grumped as she stood up, “Oh look there’s Dani, come on Sam I’ll introduce you to her, she’s joining glee club too.”

Sam glanced at Charlie, he really wanted to spend time with Quinn, “Maybe later,” he said stealing Charlie’s seat and taking a seat beside Quinn.

Charlie eyed the two of them for a moment thinking about saying something to separate them, but
ultimately deciding not to as she turned to go greet her girlfriend, and as she made her way to Dani she felt Rachel slide beside her.

“It didn’t work you’re supposed to be making Mercedes look good in front of Sam,” Rachel said with a smile on her face.

“I don’t know Mercedes well enough to actually say anything more than, hey Sam this is Mercedes she knows everyone’s business even if they really don’t want her too,” Charlie snipped. “He’s smitten with my sister, this is why you should tell me things, if I had known I wouldn’t have introduced the two of them. And Quinn seems to like him, so they’re going to have little blonde—”

“Don’t you dare say babies Charlie,” Rachel hissed as they stopped in front of Dani who shot the two of them a look. “Hi Dani, let me introduce you to people. This is after all a glee meeting and Charlie simply refuses to join the glee club.”

“Yes because it’s a weird musical cult with way too much unnecessary drama. Are you sure you want to join, totally not too late to back out.” Charlie said with a smile as she leaned in and kissed Dani, “Missed you,” she said with a small smile.

“Yes I want to join glee club,” Dani said, kissing Charlie back before pulling away from her girlfriend, before turning to Rachel, “Alright introduce me to the rest of the members, and don’t worry I’ll get Charlie to change her mind.”

Rachel smiled, “There was a reason I knew I liked you. Now Charlie why don’t you grab Sam and make sure that everything is ready for the barbeque, and make sure that they don’t forget my vegan burgers,” she said shooting Charlie a look.

Charlie wanted to point out what a terrible idea it was putting her next to an open flame so instead she nodded, because really it was only in the kitchen she was a terrible cook and the whole point of barbequing was to cook over an open flame. “Of course. Can I get you anything Dani?” she asked but her girlfriend shook her head and went off with Rachel. Charlie turned a bit and noticed that Santana was glaring at her, while Brittany had an unreadable expression on her face. She really ought to have talked to them prior to Dani arriving but she hadn’t, they had been ignoring for weeks now. She probably should say something now, but she didn’t make a move, to walk over there. So instead she turned to Sam, “Sam, we’ve got to go get the meat ready with Puck and them.” Sam looked up at her and she saw the flicker of disappointment on his face, but he turned to smile at Quinn before getting up and jogging over to her.

“Dude your sister is like the coolest girl I’ve ever met,” Sam said quietly to Charlie as they entered the house where Puck, Mike and Finn were busy getting the meat ready for grilling.

Finn flicked his eyes over to Sam, “Quinn?” he asked. “Dude that’s like a major glee foul. She’s like my ex-girlfriend.”

“Yes emphasis on the ex Frankenteen,” Charlie said in a surly tone as she grabbed Rachel’s vegan burgers from the fridge. “Heavy emphasis on the ex. Besides you’re dating Rachel.”

Finn made a face at her, “Yeah but what about Puck—”

“We aren’t dating dude, we’re just friends. I don’t care who Quinn dates,” Puck said with a shrug as he finished preparing the burgers.

Finn scoffed, but shrugged, he couldn’t make a scene here at least not over Quinn. “You know she had a baby right?”
“I do, and I still think she’s really cool, and like the prettiest girl I’ve ever seen,” Sam said firmly, not liking what Finn was implying.

Charlie flicked her eyes over to him, and frowned suddenly cursing the fact that Glee drama seemed to be taking over her life again. She liked Sam he was a good dude and he would be good for Quinn. But she had promised Rachel that she’d help break them up. Ultimately it was up to Quinn to be with who she wanted to be with. She had dated Finn for like a year and a half or something ridiculous like that, and she wasn’t even sure that Quinn was even gay.

“Yes well once a cheater—” Finn began to say.

“Hudson, we had this talk,” Charlie said her voice cutting him off and Finn turned to sneer at her. “You don’t talk shit about Quinn. And you cheated on her twice with Rachel. At a time when you still thought the baby was yours you went out on a date with Rachel. You are not innocent in this entire mess. So fuck off.”

“What are you even doing here? You’re not even joining glee.”

“Dani is, and I’m here to support my girlfriend,” Charlie said simply, ignoring the look of disgust on Finn’s face.

Puck looked between the two of them for a moment, ready to come to Charlie’s aid but Finn didn’t say another word and he nodded. “Alright let’s get this barbeque going,” he said as he grabbed the hamburgers and the hotdogs and everything else that he’d need with Sam and Mike grabbing helping him with trays and whatever else he’d need. Leaving Finn and Charlie in the room together.

Finn looked over at Charlie, Dani was hot, even he had to admit that and he didn’t understand what she would be doing with a freak like Charlie. He hated the soccer player and suspected she was the reason Karofsky had been slushying him non-stop for the rest of his sophomore year. He didn’t have any proof but Charlie would always pass by and shoot him this smug smirk. He had complained to Rachel in an attempt to get Charlie to lay off him, but Rachel had insisted that Charlie wasn’t behind the attacks. “I know why you hate me.”

“How?” Charlie asked simply keeping her face neutral. “And why do I hate you?”

Finn smirked, “You’re mad that I got with the school slut and you couldn’t, because even Santana has standards. Clearly your ‘girlfriend’ doesn’t. Or you know she’s taking pity on you.” It was a low blow and he knew it but he didn’t care because Charlie had started it.

Charlie had cleared the distance between her and Finn and she was about to kill him when Rachel popped him, probably saving Finn’s life. “Charlie I told you to not let Puck forget about my vegan burgers,” she said completely oblivious to the tension in the room.

Charlie wheeled around and grabbed them from where she had put them on the island, “Here you go Rae,” she said trying to keep her voice neutral.

Rachel took them from her, “Dani’s looking for you,” she said absent mindedly as she walked over to Finn who leaned down to kiss her.

Charlie rolled her eyes at this, then there was that. That needed to stop as well. She was sick of Finn Hudson being in the peripherals of her life. She was sick of seeing him kissing Rachel and she was grossed out by his lumpy body. “I’m going to go find Dani,” she said exhaling as she stormed out of the kitchen. She hadn’t expected to see Santana and Brittany talking to Dani, but they looked
like they were in a deep conversation and Dani was smiling, so she waved at Dani before taking a seat beside Quinn.

Quinn looked over at her twin, “I thought you wanted to go light things on fire with Puck,” it was such a boy thing to do.

“Puck can handle it,” Charlie said crossing her arms over her chest as she plotted ways to destroy Finn Hudson.

“I think Sam’s going to ask me out soon, hopefully it will be before school starts,” Quinn said to her sister completely ignoring the mood that Charlie was in. It probably had something to do with Finn and Quinn didn’t want to hear it. All it would do was make her hate the footballer more, she didn’t think that he was a good fit for Rachel and she had a feeling it wouldn’t take long for Rachel to figure out what a peace of crap he was.

“You sure? You want to date him?” Charlie asked flicking her eyes back to her sister. Quinn had shown more enthusiasm when Finn had asked her to be his girlfriend.

“I thought you liked him,” Quinn said tilting her head to her sister. “Is there something about him that I should be—?”

“I do like him as a friend. I mean I know he likes you, but you’re going to be like his first girlfriend. You know that right? And he’s a really good guy,” Charlie said as she looked back at Sam.

“What are you saying?” Quinn asked narrowing her eyes at Charlie, did she really think she was going to cheat on Sam. It had been one mistake.

“Nothing. I don’t think you’re going to cheat on him. If that’s what you’re thinking. Just—don’t break his heart. He’s a good guy, and if you can’t love him, like he’s going to love you, then you need to be straight with him. Cause the longer you keep up that charade the more it’s going to hurt.”

Quinn turned to Charlie about to ask her twin what she was talking about when Dani walked up to them and took a seat on Charlie’s lap. “Take your own advice Charlie,” she said getting up to go talk to Sam, ignoring the puzzled look on Dani’s face. “Puck has an empty wine cooler bottle you know what means.”

“Who wants to play a game of spin the bottle?” Puck yelled out, spinning the empty bottle in the air before catching it.

“No one is drunk enough for this,” Santana said with a roll of her eyes.

“That’s the point. It’s a bonding session,” Puck said seriously as if it were the most obvious thing in the world.

“Wouldn’t it be easier to just play a game of truth and dare?” Rachel asked, getting excited she had never had enough people over to play either game. “We get to know each other, and the dares can’t be like anything illegal.”

“Pfft where’s the fun in that my Jewish princess. We have all year to find out each other’s deepest darkest secrets. This way we get to know the glee club intimately,” he wiggled his eyebrows.

“Puck’s just hoping for the girls to make out in front of him,” Quinn said, this was the game at all of his parties.
“Duh. Ten second rule, no pecks on the cheek, has to be with tongue,” Puck said.

Dani looked over at Charlie, “Are you okay with this?” she asked.

Charlie shrugged, “Go ahead, I’ll probably work the grill while you guys play,” she said, it was just a game after all.

“San let’s do it, I can add to the people who I’ve kissed,” Brittany said pulling Santana forward to the circle that was forming.

Santana shrugged, “I’m game. Maybe I can get me some of those Trouty lips,” she shot a wicked grin at Sam who flushed. Rachel looked between Santana and Sam that would work as well, anything to distract Sam from Quinn.

Quinn rolled her eyes as she took a seat beside Rachel and Dani, suddenly realizing that there were more girls than boys which was probably why Puck had made the suggestion in the first place. Hopefully it would land on Sam, she wanted to prove to Charlie and to everyone who suspected that she had feelings for Rachel, that they were wrong. She had liked kissing Finn, even though his kisses were sloppy and wet.

“You go first Sam,” Puck said, watching as Sam leaned over and spun the bottle.

Charlie walked by and tapped Mike on the shoulder motioning for him to join the group and that she’d take over. Even though she had no idea what she was doing, and there was no supervision which was probably a bad thing. It couldn’t be hard to flip burgers every now and again.

The bottle landed on Kurt and Finn frowned at this, “Dude you don’t have to—” he began. The last thing he wanted was for Kurt to develop a freakish crush on Sam as well and totally chase him away.

“You have to do it,” Puck interrupted, “Ten seconds with tongue.”

Sam shrugged and leaned in and kissed Kurt, the kiss lasted exactly ten seconds before Sam pulled away. It wasn’t the worse experience in the world, he looked over at Quinn who seemed impressed that he hadn’t freaked out. Puck had told him that confidence was key to a girl’s heart and it seemed that it was working.

“You’re going to make some girl really happy,” Kurt said, not admitting that Sam Evans had just stolen his first kiss, his first kiss from a boy that is. Sam flushed at this and Puck smacked him on his back laughing.

Rachel’s face fell at this because what if Sam really was a good kisser, what if he felt these mythical fireworks with Quinn, what if Quinn felt them with him.

“Dani as the newest member you should go next,” Rachel said, there was a hint of gratefulness in her voice. Sam hadn’t kissed Quinn, and at least Kurt had gotten some love, there weren’t any openly gay men in McKinley and she was worried that he was feeling rather alone, perhaps she’d invite him over a bit more and they could hang out just the two of them.

Dani flicked her eyes up to Charlie who shrugged again, she was slightly disappointed that Charlie didn’t seem to be the jealous type who would care, but she spun the bottle anyway. When it landed on Puck, both teens looked up at Charlie again, who once again shrugged.

It was Puck and Dani, Puck was her friend and he didn’t seem interested in Dani, and Dani was a lesbian. The only person she would have made an issue with was Finn, there was no way that he
was going to touch her girlfriend. But she watched anyway, as Puck and Dani kissed, it lasted like five seconds before they had pulled away from each other.

Dani looked up at Charlie, “Don’t worry you’re the better kisser,” she said and Charlie grinned and stuck her tongue back out at Puck who’s face dropped.

Santana leaned into Quinn’s side, “See what I mean about the—”

“Shut up,” Quinn hissed at Santana who laughed and pulled away. When everyone looked at her she shrugged and leaned in to spin the bottle, it was a stupid game, and she certainly wasn’t drunk enough to be doing this. She watched as the bottle slowed down, going from Mercedes, to Artie, to Finn before coming to a stop on—

Rachel Berry.

Quinn stared at the bottle, willing it to move. But it stayed put and she looked up as the glee club, “Let me spin again. I can’t kiss Rachel,” there was a pleading tone in her voice.

“Sam kissed Kurt, you’ve got to kiss the hobbit. Those are the rules Q,” Santana said before Puck said anything.

“Yeah Quinn, you’ve totes got to kiss Rachel,” Brittany said gleefully.

“Let her spin again,” Finn said with a scowl on his face, there was no way he was letting Quinn Fabray kiss his girlfriend.

“It’s just a kiss, which is totally going into the spank bank,” Puck said grinning at Quinn and Rachel.

Dani gave her a weak smile, “I had to kiss a guy who says the word Spank bank, it can’t be that bad,” She heard Charlie snort at this.

Quinn swallowed, as the peer pressure mounted, with the only person openly against this idea being Finn, she didn’t really have a choice, it was just ten seconds. Ten seconds. That wasn’t a long time and then it would be over. So she leaned in and pressed her lips against Rachel’s taking the shorter girl by surprise. She hadn’t been expecting Quinn to give in so easily.

The initial contact was like electricity, like an electric shock and it almost made Quinn pull back, just from the suddenness of it all, and for a second all she could feel was Rachel’s soft lips on hers, and her tongue working in tandem with hers, and it suddenly clicked in her head that she was kissing Rachel Berry. That she was kissing Rachel and it was the best damn kiss she’d ever had, and at that moment she felt it. The fireworks and her body nearly hummed in response, it felt right. Kissing Finn had never felt like this, and neither had kissing Puck. Both had felt so wrong to her, so foreign.

Quinn’s hand moved and she was about to pull Rachel to her when suddenly that sensation was gone, Rachel had been pulled back, and the world slowly came back into focus again, and she flushed when she saw that everyone was staring at them. Quinn wiped her lips immediately and schooled the best HBIC look on her face, “That wasn’t terrible man hands.” She said pulling away from Rachel, she hadn’t called Rachel a name in ages and the sudden use of it surprised Rachel who shot her a wounded expression.

“That was way more than ten seconds,” Finn bitched but no one really paid him any mind.

“That was hot,” Brittany said looking between the two of them, it had been more than ten seconds.
“Definitely going in my spank bank,” Puck said nodding.

Charlie raised an eyebrow, but didn’t say anything instead she focused on her sister curiously before shrugging and going back to the burgers, as the game picked up again.

Brittany kissed Mike, much to Tina’s annoyance. Mercedes got to kiss Sam stealing the blonde’s first female kiss. Artie landed on Tina, and they kissed it didn’t seem like Tina was that into it. Tina landed on Puck who pumped his hands in the air. Mike landed on Santana, and much to Santana’s annoyance Charlie showed the same non-reaction when she kissed the Asian. Santana’s spin landed on Brittany and there was still that none reaction when she kissed the Asian. It was something she’d seen them do a hundred times before. There was no issues until Finn spun last and it landed on Santana.

The only visible reaction from Charlie was seen by Brittany and Quinn who watched as her back straightened but the soccer player didn’t say anything and her face didn’t betray anything more. But she counted to ten quickly in her head, before announcing that the burgers maybe ready. She didn’t care if they weren’t she just wanted to break Finn off Santana who looked rather uncomfortable at the kiss.

“Hey Dani,” Rachel greeted ignoring the slightly irritated look that Charlie was giving her. “Can I borrow your girlfriend for a bit?” she asked. Charlie was currently sitting on one of the lounge chairs with Dani on her lap, they had been talking and kissing for the last thirty minutes. It was chaste and sweet and they weren’t attached at each other’s lips or anything, but still she needed to talk to Charlie.

Dani nodded, “Sure, I’m going to go talk to some of the glee club people. Kurt and Mercedes wanted to hear more about LA,” she leaned in and gently pressed her lips against Charlie’s before getting up off her and heading to the other members of the glee club.

Charlie smiled for a moment before flicking her hazel eyes to Rachel, and the smile faded when she saw the agitated look on Rachel’s face. “What’s wrong?”

“While I’m incredibly happy that you found your leading lady. I thought that this party was to get Sam to be interested in Mercedes,” Rachel hissed quietly keeping her voice low and Charlie tilted in her chair and looked up to where Quinn was talking to Sam, she was touching his arm.

Charlie looked back at Rachel, “When you kissed her, what did you feel?”

Rachel flushed and looked around but no one was currently near where they were sitting, “Fireworks. It felt like fireworks, and like—”

“Every cell in your body is alive?” Charlie asked her eyes flicking over to Santana for a brief moment before looking back at Rachel, who nodded.

“I know she felt it too, there was no way that she couldn’t have felt it Charlie,” Rachel said and Charlie rubbed her cheek. Because the moment that she had opened her eyes and looked at Quinn she saw it in her eyes, that she had felt it too, of course that look was quickly replaced with panic and the insults. That had hurt, she couldn’t even remember the last time that Quinn had called her a name.

Charlie watched Quinn for a moment she was definitely flirting with Sam, she had seen the same look on her face when she was flirting with Hudson. “I can have Brittany have a talk with her. If
anyone can gently make Quinn realize that she’s a unicorn it’s Brittany.”

“Brittany and Santana are mad at you,” Rachel reminded Charlie who winced. “Why can’t you have a talk with her, you’re the only out lesbian she knows.”

“Because I have a dick,” Charlie said in a calm manner. “My parts ‘fit’ with another girl, which is why my sexuality is sort of brushed over, because people are still confused about the gender thing. Besides what do you want me to say to her? I know you’re gay for Berry. She’s gay for you too?”

“You need to stop spending time around Santana,” Rachel snipped dryly and Charlie smiled. “We need to do something about Sam, she needs to break up with him. Well she can’t start dating him. You have to help me think of something.”

“You’re not going to interfere Rachel, if she wants to be with Sam in an attempt to convince herself that she’s straight then you have to let her, pretend to be straight. It won’t last. Though you should probably let it drop that you’re bisexual, because as it stands now, everyone thinks you’re straight. Well maybe not everybody especially not after that that kiss with Quinn. Though Dani is totally rooting for you,” Charlie said with a shrug.

“You told her?” Rachel said her voice raising half an octave and a few members of the glee club turned to look at her.

Charlie smiled and waved at them, before flicking her eyes to Rachel, “You’re the one who pretended that you were on a date with my sister when you went to spy on me. You two have been eye-fucking for months now. I dismissed it because I thought that the two of you were straight, what with your obsession with Finn and Quinn having sex with Puck. Let Quinn be with Sam he’s a good guy, and he really wants a girlfriend.”

“Yes but Quinn—” Quinn was hers, Quinn liked her. She had felt it in that kiss. The fireworks, if Finn hadn’t said anything she would have kept on kissing Quinn. It was like everything she had ever thought it would be and more.

“Rachel, when has any of your crazy plans ever worked in your favor?” Charlie asked.

Rachel scowled. “Never?”

“Yes and how many times have I said I told you so?”

Rachel’s scowl deepened, because Charlie would say it weeks later at the most random times, “A lot.”

“Exactly, just let this play out, and be her friend for now,” Charlie said as she adjusted on the chair, and placed her sunglasses back on her face, signaling the conversation was over. But she paused and before Rachel could storm off, Charlie grabbed her wrist because she knew Rachel. “I’m serious Rachel, don’t push her, on this. Not yet. Because for her entire life Quinn has believed that she liked guys. I’ve heard her go on about her perfect wedding when we were kids. So please actually listen to me. You can’t push this no matter how much you want her. I know my sister, I know Quinn. When the light bulb finally goes off there is a high chance that she’s not going to handle this well.”

Rachel stared at Charlie for a moment and then looked back at Sam and Quinn, she had heard how difficult it was for her Father Leroy to accept that he was gay, and his family had rejected him. It had taken him years to be okay with himself, and she sighed, “I won’t push.”

It was the quiet resignation in Rachel’s voice that finally caused Charlie to relax and let go of the
diva’s wrist. “Trust me, I’ll help her. She was there for me when I went through my whole gender crisis, I’ll be there for her for what I can only imagine is going to be some sexual crisis. And you can’t forget about your giant elephant that follows you around. You’re going to need to break up with Finn. Something needs to give, while you leading him on brings me great amusement, you need to break up with him.”

“He hasn’t done anything—”

“To you maybe but Finn Hudson is a fucking asshole, who basically called Santana a slut to my face and if you hadn’t walked in when you did I would have murdered him.”

Rachel stared at Charlie disbelieving her for a moment, “Finn wouldn’t do that—”

“He’s been calling her a slut since he slept with her back in the winter,” Charlie pointed out, “He was bragging about it for weeks, everyone at school knows that he slept with Santana. You can’t seriously tell me that you didn’t know.”

Rachel scoffed, “That’s only Finn trying to make himself seem cool. You can’t believe the rumors, Finn told me that he didn’t sleep with Santana.”

Charlie blinked in surprise, “Rumors? Everyone at fucking school knows he did it. He wouldn’t shut up about it. He lied to you.”

“You know how boys are—”

“You don’t hear me bragging about the people I’ve been with. You don’t hear Puck bragging about his conquests and trust me he has plenty of them. Or Mike, or anyone else who has had sex in that glee club. He had sex with her, why do you think I fucking hate him more now than I did at the beginning of the year?” At this point a few people from the glee club who had heard the commotion had come to check out what they were arguing about. “Mercedes did Finn have sex with Santana?” she asked the school gossip.

“Yeah that’s old news though, people have known that since like the winter,” Mercedes said with a shrug.

Rachel stared stunned for a minute, “Who told you?” she asked Mercedes.

“Kurt.”

Kurt shrugged, “I heard Finn talking about it.”

Rachel looked around, the only people who were absent were Finn, Artie and Puck. “Who else knew?”

Quinn raised her hand, “Santana told me. I thought you knew.”

Rachel turned to Santana, who shrugged, “It only lasted like five minutes. Longest five minutes of my life. Trust me, not worth it.”

“So everyone knew but me?” Rachel asked feeling humiliated at the prospect this was not how her first party was supposed to go.

“Why do you think I’ve been having Karofsky shower him in slushy every day till school ended?” Charlie asked in a dry tone.
“You said that wasn’t you!” Rachel snapped at Charlie.

“I lied,” Charlie said with a shrug as if it were normal behavior for her. “I didn’t want you to try and make me stop, he was running his mouth and I punished him, without killing him, I deserve a medal for my restraint.”

Dani looked confused as Charlie and Rachel went back and forth, “Is this the drama that Charlie was talking about?” she asked Quinn.

“Yes. But truthfully I thought Rachel knew about all this, about Finn,” Quinn answered as Puck and Finn finally left the house and came over to them. Finn had a dopey smile on his face.

“You lied to me about Santana?” Rachel said turning to him.

“What? So what if I did it’s not like we were together at the time, and it meant nothing. She meant nothing to me.”

“Dude not cool,” Puck said coming to Santana’s defense, as he moved to keep a firm hand on Charlie’s shoulder. He had seen her beginning to stir and the last thing they needed was a brawl between Charlie and Finn.

“What she didn’t mean anything to me, so it doesn’t count.”

Puck’s grip on Charlie’s shoulder tightened and he motioned for Sam to move to other side as he felt Charlie began to push against him. Sam also placed a hand on Charlie’s free shoulder forcing her to sit. “Fucking hell dude shut up. You’re digging yourself deeper.”

“She doesn’t matter. You—”

Rachel slapped Finn Hudson. The sound was loud and everyone stared at this for a moment before Puck immediately let Charlie go and went to intervene on Rachel’s behalf because they were friends, and because it looked like Finn might start getting pissed. “We’re through,” the words were said with such finality that it stunned everyone again.

The look on Finn’s face turned ugly for a minute, because he was the quarterback of the Titans, he was the most popular guy in school, and how dare Rachel break up with him. Who was going to want her now, there wasn’t another guy in the school that would. But he knew better because at this point Sam and Puck had moved to take a step between Rachel and him, leaving Charlie unattended and she had that smug smirk on her face. “You did this,” he snarled at her, but Charlie didn’t dignify that with an answer, instead getting up to comfort Rachel.

“Leave Finn. I thought you were better than this. Please. Just go.”

Finn turned back to Rachel and at this point even Quinn was there comforting the diva, she was so dramatic. They hadn’t been together and it hadn’t meant anything to him. It hadn’t meant a thing to him, Santana was the school bicycle, Rachel should have understood that she had meant nothing to him. “Come on Rachel—”

“Dude maybe you should just go she’ll talk to you when she’s ready,” Puck said.

“You can’t just—it meant nothing, you’ve got to believe me,” Finn protested again, but Puck was ushering him out of the Berry house. Finn cast one last look over his shoulder and saw both Fabray’s surrounding around Rachel, whispering to her and he bet that they were feeding her head with lies about him. First it was Quinn who had humiliated him and hounded him for weeks, lying to him about a baby that wasn’t his. She had fucked his best friend and he doubted that it was only
once, they had probably been carrying on behind his back for months. And then there was her freakish sister, who had slushied him and humiliated him at every turn, and she always had that smug look on her face. She thought she was so great all because she was on a championship team. He would make them both pay. No one humiliated him, he was Finn Hudson. He was the Quarterback for the McKinley Titans, he was the co-captain of glee club. He was the most popular guy in school and yet there was those damn Fabray’s. Quinn was a slut and Charlie was a freak, and yet people worshiped the ground they walked on. It wasn’t fair.

Quinn stayed until Rachel had finally cried herself to sleep, and she gently tucked the diva in. She didn’t expect to see Charlie sitting by the doorway, and her twin’s presence scared the crap out of her, “She’s out,” Quinn said. Charlie grunted in response and Quinn had to wonder if Charlie felt bad for being part of the reason that Rachel and Finn broke up. But there was nothing on her face to indicate that. “I should be getting home, mom’s called like twenty times already. So take care of her until tomorrow alright?”

Charlie nodded and didn’t move from where she was sitting. “Rachel isn’t straight,” Charlie said as Quinn passed her.

“What?”

“She’s bisexual, and she’s single. I meant what I said earlier, if you can’t love Sam then don’t be with him.”

Quinn studied her sibling her thoughts racing, “I’m not gay Charlie.”

“I didn’t say you were,” Charlie said simply. “I just said that Rachel was bisexual and I told you that if you can’t love Sam then don’t be with him.”

“Sam asked me out. We’re going on a date tomorrow night, I don’t know where he’s taking me though. It’s supposed to be a surprise. He’s a nice guy and I could be happy with him. He could make me happy.” Her twin didn’t reply to this, and Quinn turned to head down the stairs.

“You felt it didn’t you?” Quinn turned to Charlie who was looking at her. “The fireworks. You felt the fireworks.”

Quinn didn’t choose to answer that, because she had. She had felt the mythical fireworks that Charlie had talked about all those months ago. “Do you feel them with Dani?” Her tone was unnecessarily accusatory and Charlie made a face and finally looked away. Because her sister was being a hypocrite. But they were Fabray’s and it was what they did. “If you can’t love her then don’t be with her.”

“I can learn,” Charlie says mostly to herself and mostly to Quinn. “We’ve known each other for three weeks now. I can learn to love her.”

“I can learn to love Sam,” Quinn replies coolly. “I’m not gay Charlie.” It didn’t matter if Rachel wasn’t exactly straight, or if she wanted to kiss Rachel Berry again, she couldn’t. She wouldn’t kiss her again. She was a Fabray, she was Quinn Fabray and she was going to climb back to the top. She was going to date the hot new quarterback who really liked her and she had a lot in common with. She liked Sam Evans, she really liked him. He was a good guy. She was going to become the prom queen just like Frannie and her mother had been, this was going to be her year. She wasn’t going to let Rachel or anyone else convince her otherwise.
“Up here. Come on, focus.” Jacob Ben Israel says to the camera guy, because it’s the first day back and he’s heard some juicy rumors and he needs to make sure that they are very true. Because the students of McKinley need to know. “Okay. Hi, I’m Jacob Ben Israel with all the news that you missed this summer, and all the news that you’re dying to know.”

Rachel is the first one that Jacob targets, breaking up with Finn had been the right thing to do, and surprisingly Charlie hadn’t rubbed it in or said I told you so, she’d actually been a supportive friend, though Rachel suspected it was because Sam and Quinn had gotten together a few days later. She closed the locker, it was strange to be single at the beginning of the year again, and she’d thought that her fortunes would change. Quinn had pulled away from her, going on dates with Sam, they still talked daily and texted but she hadn’t actually seen Quinn since the party.

“Rachel, how do you respond to rumors you’re incredibly difficult to work with?” Jacob asks her sticking the microphone in her face.

Rachel smiles for the camera, because she’s a diva and she’s an actress and when she grows up there will be more annoying paparazzi around than Jacob Ben Israel.

“I’m controlling. Performing is my life. And yes, do I have opinions about it? Does my need to constantly express those opinions annoy my fellow Glee Clubbers? Probably but we will bring home a Nationals trophy this year, and it will all be worth it.”

“And what about your failed romance with quarterback Finn Hudson, was your controlling behavior behind that break up as well?”

The smile on Rachel’s face fades a little bit, “No, Finn and I have decided to go our separate ways because we had unreconciled differences,” it’s the term that every celebrity uses on their divorce papers and it seems to be enough. Finn had been calling her non-stop and he had even shown up to the house a few times. Puck had been there with her, he had shown up soon after she had called Charlie about Finn being there. The two of them had become closer as a result.

“So he cheated on you?” Jacob asked, because that’s what term was secretly code for.

“No,” Rachel said firmly because she isn’t going to sling mud. Finn hadn’t exactly broken her heart, and she was sad that he wasn’t her boyfriend anymore, but she hadn’t known about that ugly side of his personality, he always seemed so nice to her, and accepting. Sure he had his moments but he was a teenage boy, they had plenty of moments.

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“Do you want to go out on a date sometime?” Jacob asks, because he’s wanted Rachel Berry since he first laid eyes on her.

Rachel makes a face at this, “No,” she says firmly closing her locker and walking off. She’s off to see how Shelby is doing. It’s her mother’s first day at McKinley and they hadn’t talked in the past week, Shelby had been busy with her move. She had moved into an apartment near McKinley, and after school she and Rachel were going to the pound to pick out a dog for her. It was a two bedroom apartment, and Shelby one of the bedrooms was hers if she ever needed it. There was still moments when things were awkward between them but Shelby was trying and she currently saw Shelby a lot more often than she saw her fathers.

Jacob is about to follow her when he sees Mr. Schuester walking through the hallways, and since
he’s a creepy reporter first he sticks the microphone into Mr. Schue’s face. “Will Schuester, how do you respond to a recent post on my blog saying your Glee Club song selections sound like they come from a drag queen’s iPod?”

Will coughs, he’s dressed his best because he had heard that Shelby Cochrane was joining the staff as the new English Literature teacher, and Emma was also back and single. There were two women who he would be competing for his affection. Terri was a distant memory, and he had spent all summer getting over his first wife. That had been a disaster. “Well, I try to do something for everybody. Uh, twenty-five percent show tunes, twenty-five percent hip-hop, twenty-five percent classic rock—”

Jacob can’t help himself at this point and turns to the camera, “100% gay. Did you know there’s a forum on my blog that’s begging you to stop rapping?”

Will blinks and looks up surprised to hear this he had never been a frequenter of JBI’s blog, he had thought the whole thing was rather creepy, “Wait, the kids don’t like it when I rap?”

Jacob shakes his head, because Artie is a better rapper than he is, “And people want to know about your failed romance with Ms. Pilsbury, rumor has it she has a new boyfriend.”

“What?” Will asks completely horrified before running off to the teacher’s lounge to find out if that rumor was true or not.

Jacob shrugged, and continued on through the hallways, stopping to talk to important people in McKinley, and he entered the football locker room where they found Puck who was putting on a shirt. Jacob was sure that he saw bruises on Puck’s chest before the shirt went down but he thought nothing of it, Puck was after all a football player.

“Confirm or deny the rumor that because you knocked up Quinn Fabray, you spent all your summer pool cleaning money on a vasectomy.”

Puck blinked, he wondered where that rumor had come from. Charlie had gotten on his case to do something about his dick, when he had mentioned that he still didn’t wear condoms. She had been buying some for herself, just in case she needed them with Dani. He had thought about it, but when he had mentioned it to his mother, she had flipped out. Something about never having a proper Jewish family and how she wanted grand children from both her children one day. “I didn’t. I want to have a proper family one day,” he answered truthfully. He had simply stopped sowing around over the summer. Going cold turkey had been harder than he had thought but he couldn’t have another accident. There couldn’t be another Beth, at least not now. What would she think if she found out that he had gotten other girls pregnant? He still hated condoms though.

“Is it also true you’re suffering from a crippling depression because you’re not over Miss Fabray?”

Puck snorted he wasn’t in love with Quinn, he couldn’t be she had made the decision to take away his child. He cared for her, he always would they were connected and always would be by Beth. And Charlie was his new bro, it had been Charlie who had been there nearly every day first thing in the morning this summer with a coffee in her hand and breakfast, forcing him out of bed before she had to go to work. She hadn’t let him slip farther than he already had. She made sure that she was there every single time he needed to drive down to Toledo, always letting her use her car, because he doubted his truck would make the monthly drives. “No, I’m not in love with Quinn,” he said firmly, before he got up, and pushed Jacob out of the locker room. He hated the little creep and he was done being harassed by him.

Jacob paused when he saw the new English literature teacher walking by him, he turned and stared
at Shelby Cochran, before putting the microphone in her face, “As the former coach of Vocal Adrenaline what brings you to McKinley? Is it true that you’re the mother of the one Rachel Berry?”

“No comment,” Shelby said before walking by him.

Jacob frowned, “More on that later,” he said before walking through the hallways where he came upon Charlie Fabray and Dani Harper who were kissing.

“You’ve seen it here first, the star striker of McKinley, has a new girlfriend. And she’s dating an older woman. This news is going to hurt your fan club. But my loyal audience wants to know how did Dani Harper, former star of the Carmel High soccer team manage to capture your heart?”

Charlie glanced up at the camera in her face and groaned, before plastering on a fake smile and wrapping an arm around Dani’s shoulders. “Music and Soccer,” Charlie said. “She’s going to be joining the glee club, and you’re looking at the new co-captain of the team.”

Jacob nodded and looked over at Dani, and wiggled his eyebrows, “Inquiring minds want to know, how is the sex? Rumor has it that Charlie is bigger than most—”

Dani flushed, Charlie had mentioned that she might get harassed by this Jacob fellow. That certain people at McKinley were treated like celebrities but she hadn’t expected that he’d ask her that. “We haven’t—”

Charlie moved and put her hand over the camera and glared at Jacob, “Ask about my sex life again and I will use your head as my soccer ball. Do I make myself clear?” Jacob nodded quietly.

“Good,” she removed her hand from the camera and put that fake smile back on her face. “Any more questions?”

“Are you only with her because Santana Lopez and Brittany S. Pierce rejected you?” Jacob asked.

Charlie made an internal note to keep her promise about using his head as a soccer ball as she kept her face neutral, “No,” she said and leaned down to kiss Dani’s cheek. “Now if you’ll excuse us, I’m going to help my girlfriend find her classes,” she said wrapping an arm around Dani and pulling her away from Jacob Ben Israel. She turned and shot the boy a dirty look before talking to Dani probably trying to convince her that there was nothing going on.

Jacob stared at Charlie for a moment, before shrugging his shoulders and moving on through the hallways, he spotted Mike Chang and Tina, who were holding hands. “What can you say about the rumors the two of you are dating?”

Tina rolled her eyes, “Is this because we’re both Asian? That’s racist.”

Mike nodded, “Totally racist.”

Jacob watched as they walked away still holding hands, before turning to the camera guy who was following him around, “Did you get that? You saw it here first,” he said. As he spotted Quinn Fabray holding hands with a new guy that he didn’t recognize. He walked up to the other Fabray, “How has life changed since the birth of your bastard child?” he asked her pushing the camera into her face.

Quinn smiled, though she really just wanted to hit Jacob in the face, Beth was not a bastard child. But she was trying to cultivate her image, she was going to be standing up at that stage with Sam by her side as Prom King and Queen. “Well, I’m happy to be back, and I’m ready to start fresh. And—I’m a lot less hormonal, so—so there’s not really any crying.”
Jacob nodded not really caring, “Is this your new boyfriend? What’s your name?”

“Evans. Sam Evans,” Sam said doing his best James Bond impression, he actually did a pretty decent Sean Connery.

Jacob wasn’t impressed, “You’re dating him?” he asked turning to Quinn.

“Yes, you’re looking at McKinley’s new starting quarterback. You heard it here first,” Quinn smiled and leaned up to kiss Sam’s cheek, and Sam grinned wrapping his arms around her, as they walked by him.

Jacob stared, “You hear that folks at McKinley both Fabray’s are currently off the market, and apparently Finn Hudson has some new competition for his position on the Titans. You heard it here first—” Jacob suddenly caught a look at Santana Lopez, or at least her chest and he stumbled over his words. “Santana how was your summer,” he said his eyes focused on her chest.

Santana rolled her eyes, suddenly regretting all the attention she was receiving from all the wrong people. She had wanted to be noticed but now people weren’t even taking her seriously anymore, just ogling her. “My eyes are up here, JewFro. And it was uneventful.”

Jacob finally managed to tear his eyes away from Santana’s chest, “And what are your feelings about the romance between a one Charlie Fabray and a Dani Harper? Upset that she won’t be following you and Brittany around carrying your books for you anymore?”

“Please Charlie is free to be with any short, blue-haired wonder—”

“People thought I went on vacation, but actually I spent the summer lost in the sewers,” Brittany interrupted Santana who was about to say something that she’d regret on Jacob’s blog. She smiled at him and pulled Santana away before she could continue her rant about how much she hated Dani.

Jacob blinked, it almost sounded like Santana was jealous, but he was smart enough to not say anything about the Latina. She carried razor blades in her hair and she was crazy. He spotted Kurt and Mercedes, “And now for the glee club members that no one really cares about,” he said walking over to Kurt and Mercedes.

“Kiss it Jacob,” Kurt said with a sniff, he mattered at the school. He had been on the Cheerios, he had won a national championship. How was he not getting the respect he deserved?

“When will you glee clubbers accept the fact that people hate you, and think that you’re nothing more than a glorified karaoke club. Designed to make the inventors of AutoTune millions of dollars?”

“Just leave Jacob,” Mercedes said as she followed Kurt.

Kurt slammed his locker closed, “You know what, Jacob? It doesn’t take much courage for people to park their cottage cheese behinds in their Barcaloungers and log on to the Internet and start tearing people down, does it? But you know what does take some courage? Standing up and singing about something. So here’s a message for everyone that reads your blog. Next time, instead of posting an anonymous comment online, say what you have to say to my face.”

Azimio and Karofsky decided to do just that with twin slushies to the face, “Welcome back, Lady!” Azimio called out.

Karofsky smirked, glad to be wearing a letterman jacket again, “Hell yeah.”
Kurt shivered and looked at Jacob, “I don’t suppose there’s any way you could just cut out that last part, is there?”

Jacob picked up a huge chunk of ice and brought it to his lips, and shook his head. It was the perfect way to end his interview for the important players of McKinley.

The news that Sam has become the school’s new quarterback spreads, goes viral. Finn Hudson who really was a terrible quarterback, was thrown off the team. Shannon Bieste had knocked him down to second string, but Finn had argued with her openly, and she had kicked him off the team.

When Finn desperately tries out for the Cheerios, because being without that letterman jacket is like suicide for someone who used to be popular, Santana records the whole thing and hands it over to JBI. Its lunch when the first slushy hits.

Charlie orders the first hit, because she hates Finn Hudson and she really can’t help herself, and Karofsky is the one to carry it out. She walks by as Finn is dripping wet with slushy dripping down his face and onto his chest. She doesn’t say anything but merely gives the freakishly tall boy a brief nod and a wink, letting him know that she’s the one behind the attack. She doesn’t stop for him and he’s still too stunned by the turn of events to actually go after her, but the moment Charlie turns the corner she hears the mass slushying begin, with big gulp cups hitting the floor, and she can’t help but grin. It’s a fantastic start to the school year.

Charlie’s not really surprised when the word around school is that Mr. Schue had gone to bat for his golden boy. She is surprised when she finds out that it doesn’t work, that Finn still only has glee club. Which means he’s bottom of the pack.

“Charlie Reagan Fabray!” Charlie head snaps up from where she is sitting with Dani on her lap and turns to look at Rachel Berry who is storming up to her. It would almost be comical if Rachel didn’t look so angry.

“Yes I was named after the president. What do you want Rachel?”

“You need to stop the slushy attacks on Finn. I know you think that they’re supposed to make me feel better, but I don’t approve of bullying or violence of any kind, so you will order that the attacks stop,” Rachel demanded, she actually felt sorry for Finn, it was like his whole life had been ripped away from him and the last thing Rachel Berry wanted was for him to blame someone else for his behavior. And Charlie was making herself an easy target.

“No. The attacks on Finn aren’t there to make you feel better. I’m doing it because it makes me feel better,” Charlie said with a shrug.

“He didn’t do anything to you, he lied to me. He called Santana a slut, he called Quinn a slut. He hasn’t actually done anything to you. So you will cease with the cowardly attacks,” Rachel repeated trying again.

Charlie looked at Rachel, “Yes he has. Finn has called me a tranny, he has called me a freak. I’ve seen him in his swim suit, I’ve seen making out with my sister, and I had to watch him making out with you. Not enough mind bleach to unsee all of that. Finn Hudson has been the bane of my existence for the past two years. I get to slushy him for the next two years or until I feel better, whichever comes first.”

“Charlie,” Dani said in a patient tone, she had been learning all about the hierarchy of McKinley,
getting a crash course on what it took to rule the school. She was a quick study and she’d never instantly been this popular before, even when she had been at Carmel. It almost felt welcoming, except as Charlie pointed out the price was that they needed to win another state championship. “He doesn’t have his letterman jacket anymore. Which means that he has no power, which means that you’re basically bullying him.”

Rachel was grateful for Dani Harper, because she saw Charlie mulling it over in her head, which meant that she would probably see reason. “He already lost his spot on the football team, he’s lost his girlfriend, he’s become a social pariah and the first day of school hasn’t even finished yet. Don’t you think it’s a bit much? He’s been punished enough.”

Charlie really didn’t think that Finn had been punished anywhere near enough, but the last thing she wanted was for her girlfriend and Rachel to be mad at her. “Fine,” she said dismissively, “But he needs to stay out of my way. And if anyone catches him calling any girl a slut or any derivative of it, I’m going to start right back up.”

It was the best that she was going to get out of Charlie and truthfully it was more than fair, it was news to Rachel that Finn had said something as ugly as to call Charlie a tranny, but Charlie was generally above such things. She thought back to every interaction she had seen between the two of them and there had always been tension. She wanted to know why Charlie hadn’t said anything, but Charlie had said things throughout freshman year, she had said things through most of their sophomore year, and then she had just let Rachel make her own decision. But it hadn’t been informed. It was something that she would have to talk to Charlie about full disclosure was important.

It feels good to have her Cheerio’s uniform back on. It feels even better when the crowds part for her, like they once did. She is back where she belonged at the top of the pack. Charlie didn’t have to dish out punishments anymore, and could finally melt into the background like she had wanted. With Sam being the new quarterback, she was where she was supposed to be.

It bothered her that the first thing that she wanted to do was go show Rachel, to have her friend, bask in her good fortune, with her. But she couldn’t really face the diva, every time she had, all she seemed to focus on was those lips. It was a feeling that made her feel uncomfortable, she hadn’t felt that with Sam, he was an excellent kisser, much better than Finn had ever been, but there was nothing there. No spark, and even though she thought he was cute, that was it. He was just a nice guy, a nice guy who was safe and seemed to respect her boundaries, though Quinn couldn’t be sure if that was because he was a nice guy or if he was simply afraid of Charlie’s wrath.

The sharp pain of being slammed into the lockers cuts her out of her thoughts, and Quinn focuses her best HBIC stare on the person who dared. She isn’t shocked to really see Santana, but the fury and the hurt on her friend’s face is a bit much. She had betrayed her best friend to get to the top, because that’s what Fabray’s did. Anyone in her position would do the same thing, anyone who had tasted the being on top would do anything to stay there.

“You did this to me. You told Coach Sylvester about my summer surgery!” Santana snaps at her, pushing her again as a crowd begins to form around them.

Quinn shoves her back, trying to push the Latina off her, “You have a surgery when you get your appendix out. You got a boob job.” A murmur ripples through the crowd, she had known some people had suspected it no one came into their boobs as fast as Santana had. But she couldn’t have her position rattled so early on. So she swallowed the guilt that she felt, she put it away because she had just betrayed her friend. The friend that had taken her in, for a bit of popularity and position and for a moment being on top didn’t feel as good as it used to.
Santana doesn’t hesitate, it’s out now anyway, and even if it wasn’t people would start asking questions as to why she was at the bottom of the pyramid. “Yup sure did,” she slaps Quinn across the face. Brittany had finally forgiven her and Charlie had nothing to gain by telling Sue Sylvester, it had to be Quinn. She was the only one who knew for certain that she’d had a boob job.

Quinn touches her cheek in shock and stares at Santana, “You can’t hit me!” She hadn’t been slapped in a long time. No one had dared to lay a hand on her in years, not since Russell had disciplined when she was a child. It had never been as bad as Charlie, but still it was the principal of the thing.

Santana scoffed, “Oh, sure I can, unless you got yourself knocked up again, slut. Who’s the baby daddy this time Sam? Or did Puck manage to get there all over again.” She can’t help the words that are coming out of her mouth as she pushes Quinn, she wants Quinn to fight back so she can kick her ass in front of the crowd. She sees Charlie standing at the front of the crowd with Dani and Brittany.

“Shouldn’t you do something?” Dani asks Charlie who watches as Quinn slams Santana against a locker.

Charlie stands there torn between protecting Quinn and protecting Santana, and she winces as they grab each other’s hair. “I—”


Charlie nodded, because it was Brittany and she hated violence more than Rachel did, and she didn’t notice the face that Dani made when she moved, stepping over Quinn’s fallen body and stepping in between the two of them holding her hand up. Quinn was on her feet and Charlie rotated her body catching Quinn as she launched herself at Santana. “Hey, knock it off. You’re supposed to be like best friends. Unholy Trinity remember?” Charlie adjusted her grip on Quinn who was still struggling to get her hands on Santana.

“Oh, please, friends don’t stab each other in the back,” Santana sneered at Quinn but she had taken a step back once Charlie had gotten involved she wasn’t going to hurt the soccer player who hadn’t done anything wrong. “That what you do, turn your back on your friends. Your family. Trying to get rid of me like you did Beth?”

Charlie winced, it was a low blow, and she felt Quinn still for a moment. It was just a moment and Charlie nearly let her sister go, but she felt Quinn snap again and lunge for Santana and Charlie barely had a moment to tighten her grip. “Santana,” Charlie said pleadingly.

Santana looks up at Charlie and rolls her eyes before turning her back on Quinn, “Whatevs. Come on Britt’s.” Santana said as the crowd parted for her and she began to walk away. Brittany following behind her.

“What’s over, everyone move it along,” she orders and slowly people begin to filter away. The news of the fight will be all over the school in the next five minutes and Charlie sighs because there is nothing she can do to contain it. Everyone is going to know that Santana had a boob job, everyone is going to know that Quinn got her ass kicked by the Latina, who really could have done more damage if she had wanted to. The
whole situation was a mess and she looks at Dani who is still standing there and smiles, “You head to class, I need to talk to Quinn.”

Dani can’t help but look a bit worried because Quinn looks like she’s going to rip into someone and with everyone gone that person is obviously going to be Charlie. “Are you going to be okay?”

Charlie nods, “I will just need to get her to calm down. And you’ve got your glee audition to practice for remember?” she says.

Dani nods before reluctantly leaving her girlfriend and her murderous twin alone, at least they were in a very public, very well-used hallway. So she was half sure that Quinn wouldn’t turn and snap on her sister. Charlie hadn’t been kidding when she had talked about the drama. She really hoped that it wasn’t like this for the rest of the year. She’d already witnessed one epic break-up, gotten harassed by McKinley’s version of paparazzi, and just witnessed a cat-fight between Santana and Quinn. The first day of school wasn’t even over yet. She stopped and watched as Charlie dragged her twin into the bathroom.

“What did you do?” Charlie hissed at Quinn.

“I didn’t do anything. She attacked me.” Quinn pulled away from Charlie, but her sister didn’t move out of her way. Charlie wasn’t buying that Santana had just attacked her for no reason. “All I did was get my spot back as head cheerleader,” her tone was defiant, it was all she could do to hide the guilt that she was feeling.

“You told Sue about her boob job? So you could be head cheerio again? Why? Santana wasn’t going to have you at the bottom of the pyramid, you three are the unholy trinity. You would have been second in command and we both know that Santana still comes to you for advice and stuff for running the Cheerios.”

“Why do you care? You’re dating Dani and she’s not stupid Charlie if you keep talking like that she’s going to realize that you are in love with Santana,” Quinn said desperately trying to deflect the conversation onto Charlie’s problems. “If anyone else had called me a slut, had said what they said to me you would have gotten involved immediately.”

“This isn’t about my feelings. This isn’t about the fact that I didn’t protect you against Santana. Cause from where I’m standing you deserved the ass-kicking, and the only I stopped it is because Brittany asked me to. We’re talking about the fact that Santana totally kicked your ass in front of a group of people because you ratted your best friend out to Sue Sylvester for a small boost in popularity. You had your popularity back, you were a Cheerio you had the letterman jacket no one was going to slushy you again. You’re dating the quarterback, everything is going right for you again. So why did you have to throw Santana under the bus?”

“This is my year Charlie, I have the perfect boyfriend. I am back on top where I belong. I’m going to be prom queen and Sam’s going to be prom king. You didn’t know what it was like when people made me the school pariah. Or how many times Azimio or some other idiot called me a slut to my face. I made a mistake, and this year it’s going to go right. I’m going to salvage the wreck that is my reputation and people will like me again. People will respect me again.”

“The reason you fell so hard and so fast and I didn’t was because you were cruel to most of the student body. The only people I slushy, are Finn Hudson and Jacob Ben Israel. People who deserve it. You ordered hits on people who looked at you funny. People didn’t like you. I didn’t like you back then, I mean I love you, you’re my sister and all but I didn’t like what you were doing at school. As for reputation the only reputation you’re going to get if you keep this up is that you don’t stick by your friends. That you aren’t loyal, that you’ll sell them out for a bit of popularity.
And when you fall again, this time you’ll be completely alone. I liked the version of you that reminded me of Lucy. I thought that you could be that person and be a Cheerio, guess I was wrong.”

“You’re just upset because I hurt Santana,” Quinn said dismissively, Charlie didn’t know what she was getting into with Santana, this was for the best.

Upset was an understatement, Santana was barely talking to her and now that she was mad at both of them, she wasn’t going to have Santana talking to her for weeks, but this wasn’t about her broken nonexistent relationship with Santana Lopez. “I’m upset that you’ve decided to listen to our drunken mother who wrote I know how to be popular and got into Arizona State. Just be yourself. Just be Lucy.”

Quinn scoffed, the only person who had liked Lucy was Charlie. She had been bullied severely in junior high, she wasn’t going back to that. She couldn’t go back to that. “The only person who accepted Lucy was you. And all she wants is for me to get my reputation back. She wants what’s best for me.”

Charlie shrugged and finally pulled away from Quinn, “Yet you had more friends when you were Lucy Quinn Fabray then when you were just Quinn Fabray head cheerleader.”

“You think that I’m going to have people slushied? I’m going to make this school better. Santana could never control the jocks like I could. Like I still can,” Quinn protested, because she was going to make a difference, she had promised Rachel that she wouldn’t become the person that had tormented her. She wouldn’t allow anyone to hurt Rachel or any member of the glee club again.

Charlie looked at her sister for a moment, “Apologize to Santana. Because you owe her that, you owe her an apology, you owe her a lot more. I get that you two have this ‘who is the biggest bitch at McKinley’ thing going on, but she didn’t run to Sue and tell her that you were pregnant when she found out. She gave you a place to stay. So you’re going to apologize. After that if you want to be the school’s new dictator go right ahead,” with that Charlie turned and walked away, opening the door only to see Rachel Berry standing there a look of concern on her face.

“I heard what happened and—” Rachel began twisting her body so she could see past Charlie who rolled her eyes.

“Maybe you can talk some sense into her,” Charlie said stepping aside and letting Rachel into the bathroom before walking away.

Rachel winced and looked at Quinn, “Are you okay? When I heard that you lost a fight against Santana—” she trailed off and studied Quinn’s figure trying to see if there were any bruises.

“I’m fine, and I didn’t lose Charlie just stopped the fight early. Santana’s bark has always been worse than her bite,” Quinn said dryly.

“So she really doesn’t you know carry razor blades in her hair?” Rachel asked, because it really was Santana’s go to line, and no one was a hundred percent sure if she was kidding or not. It was generally safer to err on the side of caution when it came to the Latina.

“No, she really doesn’t carry razor blades in her hair,” Quinn said smiling at Rachel’s naivety. They hadn’t seen in each other for the last few weeks of summer and yet it felt as if nothing had changed, but at the same time something had changed. Quinn gently moved her eyes away from Rachel’s lips, she couldn’t think about if the kiss had just been a one off or not. She was with Sam and Quinn Fabray had learned her lesson about cheating. “Have you come to tell me off about
backstabbing Santana?” she asked with a sigh.

Rachel bit her lip, “Well it’s not like you’re the only person who did something terrible today,” she admitted, thinking about Sunshine. It was an abandoned crack house. It’s not like she was in any real danger. Well she hoped not, she already felt terrible about the entire thing if anything happened to the girl she’d feel even worse. “I think what I did was worse.”

“What could be worse than stabbing your best friend in the back?” Quinn asked not really needing Rachel attempting to be dramatic in an attempt to make her feel better.

“I sent Sunshine Corazon, the new foreign exchange student, to an abandoned crack house. She wanted to join the glee club, and her voice was amazing and I already have to fight Kurt and Mercedes for the solos, and now with Dani joining glee club, it’s too much competition,” Rachel rambled, turning red as she saw Quinn’s mouth drop. “It was abandoned, it’s no longer an active crack house. If I’m going to sabotage someone, I’m not going to put them in any danger. That would be completely irresponsible.”

Quinn began to laugh because it was ridiculous and dramatic, and something only Rachel would admit to doing. It was just as terrible as betraying Santana. Santana would probably forgive her grudgingly and then they’d be trying to outdo each other again, with Santana always coming in second. “You’re going to need to apologize to her.”

Rachel huffed, “She was really good though. Like amazing we had this amazing duet where we sang Telephone, together. She managed to keep up with me vocally, and I just got really jealous. Mercedes doesn’t practice near enough to be an actual threat, and she hasn’t truly come into her voice yet. The only reason Kurt doesn’t get more solos is partly because he is a boy and while Show Choir is progressive it isn’t that progressive.”

“She probably wasn’t as good as you are. Sure there are people who are just as talented as you are but you’re talented and you work at it. No one works as hard as you do for this club, but we do need her, we can’t keep depending on you. Remember last year, you got laryngitis because you were trying to carry the team by yourself.”

“And you’re a better cheerleader than Santana, you didn’t need to resort to underhanded methods to get her spot,” Rachel said with a smile, there was a moment of awkward silence between them. “How are you and Sam?” she asked after a moment.

Quinn looked over at Rachel, she had caught the hint of jealousy in Rachel’s voice and Quinn found herself wondering what it would feel like to kiss the diva again. But she didn’t let her mind focus on that, “We’re going to have a celebratory date night. He’s the new quarterback and I’m the new head cheerleader. It’s going to be a good year,” she saw a flash of disappointment in Rachel’s eyes but she didn’t say anything she didn’t comment on it.

“I really wanted to go on that date with you,” Rachel said and then realized what she had said, “double date with you,” she corrected herself immediately.

Quinn didn’t say anything for a moment, “Well maybe after we’re done I can drive over and we can make a plate of those I’m sorry sugar cookies and we can make a batch for Santana and one for Sunshine,” Quinn offered. “I’ve got a Cheerio’s practice, and I know Sam has his first football practice this afternoon. So it won’t be till around seven that I can swing by your place.”

Rachel grinned, “Of course and I think Charlie planned to take Dani out after practice,” and if she hadn’t then Rachel would just make a suggestion to the soccer captain to get lost for the evening, or go to Dani’s house to make out. She never knew how annoying it was to watch another couple
make out in front of her till she had seen Charlie and Dani.

Quinn smiled, nothing had changed after that stupid kiss; they were still just friends. It didn’t matter if Rachel wasn’t completely straight. She was, she liked Sam and she was straight—if you tell yourself a lie enough maybe you’ll begin to believe it.

Judy is happier than Quinn is about the fact that she’s head cheerleader. Personally Quinn had forgotten just how crazy Sue Sylvester was, and just how hard of a task master she was. Even though Nationals was weeks away, Sue seemed hell bent on another National Championship trophy. Santana had gotten it rough though being at the bottom of the pyramid and having to help support three other girls. The Latina wasn’t going to forgive her anytime soon, and she was reminded that being at the top and being alone sucked just as badly as being at the bottom with no friends.

“We have to celebrate of course, how you feel about inviting him over to the country club where you can finally introduce me? I have to make sure that he’s the perfect match for you and that he’ll make the perfect prom king,” Judy went on.

Quinn frowned she had thought that with Russell’s arrest that they would have been kicked out of the country club, but apparently not. “I’m not sure we’re that far along yet, all we’ve done is gone for a few dates and see a few movies together.”

“Nonsense, of course you’re ready for that step, you’ve told me you’ve met his siblings, and his parents,” Judy pointed out.

Quinn frowned, that had been the case because Stacey and Stevie were playing on Charlie’s soccer team and they had made it to the finals. Quinn didn’t have anything better to do with her time and had gone to support Charlie and had bumped into the Evan’s family. “I don’t think that it’s really his scene though, maybe if we all go out to Breadstix, it would make him more comfortable.”

Judy sniffed at this idea, “We’ll be going to the country club of course, it’s been ages since we’ve been. It’ll be a family event, do make sure your sister actually attends this function. She may bring her little girlfriend of course if that makes her happy but I need to know what’s going on in my children’s lives. This is a family dinner.”

If Sam wasn’t really country club material than Dani wasn’t country club material, with her blue hair and the tattoo on her wrist and arm. She was about to suggest that they simply have a dinner at the house, but Charlie still wouldn’t step foot in the Fabray house. She wouldn’t even drive past it, at least the country club was neutral territory. “Dani has tattoos and blue hair, she’s not exactly country club material.”

Judy looked at Quinn unamused, “Don’t joke about things like that, it isn’t funny. Charlie was raised to have better taste than that, and surely your father didn’t ruin her completely.”

Quinn had heard about the tattooed freak, her mother would go on about it. The divorce proceedings were going slowly and Russell’s lawyers were currently fighting with Judy’s lawyers over every little thing. The money, the house, the cars, most of which was in Russell’s name. It was going to be a very bitter divorce settlement. They usually were when there was this much assets that needed to be divided. “It’s not a joke, Dani is a senior, she has tattoos and her hair is currently dyed blue.”

Judy looked like she had sucked on a lemon, “Clearly her taste is genetic. If she’s going to insist on acting like a boy, then she should have the decency to bring home a normal girl. That Brittany
Pierce is a nice girl. How come I don’t see your friends around anymore? You three used to be inseparable.”

Quinn sighed, “I just stabbed Santana in the back, and Brittany’s mad at me as well. I made them some I’m sorry cookies with Rachel though. And I plan to talk to Sue about having Santana moved from the bottom of the pyramid to being my right hand like she was last time. So hopefully she’ll forgive me, it needs to be the three of us ruling the school.”

“Of course dear, why don’t you invite them for a sleep over so you three can reconnect,” Judy said gently, “I know how difficult it was to make that decision but it’s all for the best you’ll see when you’re crowned prom queen.”

Quinn just nodded, she didn’t know if she could invite Santana or Brittany over to the house. Neither seemed interested in coming over even though Judy had managed to get rid of all the damage and the evidence. “I’ll ask them,” she’d have to beg of course. “It would be easier to invite Rachel, she’s never been here before,” Quinn said absentmindedly not noticing Judy making a face at the suggestion. “It’ll be fun, Brittany likes Rachel a lot and if she comes then Santana will come.” It was the perfect plan.

“Dude I don’t know what to wear to meet your parents,” Sam said as he ransacked his closet trying to find the perfect outfit. “I’ve never been to a country club before,” Sam admitted as he looked at Charlie holding up a dark pair of jeans and a white shirt. “I need to make a good impression on them or they won’t let me date Quinn.”

“So you decided to harass me instead of your girlfriend?” Charlie asked tossing the soccer ball up and down in the air. Sam had duped her into helping him, saying that Stacey and Stevie missed her and wanted to know if she could teach them another soccer trick. “Don’t wear jeans, keep the shirt, put on a tie, and some decent shoes and you will be fine. I promise. You’re more intelligent than Finn Hudson, and so long as you don’t burst out into song at the most random of times Judy will probably adore you.”

“What if your dad hates me? How do I impress him? Does he watch sports? I can talk about that with him. He likes football?”

Charlie paused and tilted her head, because Russell Fabray was currently sitting in prison, reflecting on his actions, and trying to pay his debt to society. Which meant Quinn hadn’t told him about their father, “He’s not in the picture anymore, all you need to do is impress Judy.”

Sam looked at Charlie for a moment, “Well what does your mom like?”

“Drinking? Being judgmental? I don’t know, I haven’t spoken to Judy in months, and the last time we talked I’m trying to pretend never happened. Look I can’t imagine that the dinner conversation will be inspiring so if you don’t have anything to say just keep quiet, or talk about something perfectly harmless like glee club or football. Do try and keep the impressions and the geeky conversations to a minimum and you’ll be fine.”

Sam nodded, “Is Dani as nervous as I am?” he asked trying to laugh it off as he pulled out a pair of dark slacks, he could borrow his dad’s work shoes; they would work with the outfit.

“I wouldn’t know, I haven’t asked her, because I’m not going,” Charlie said with a shrug. Judy couldn’t summon her and expect her to show. She wasn’t Russell, and she didn’t have to break her back trying to make her mother happy. She didn’t care if this was supposed to be a family thing or not.
Sam stared in shock, “Why?”

“Because the last thing I want is to subject Dani to Judy making snide remarks all night because Dani isn’t a ‘proper’ lady. My dad cheated on her with a stripper who had tattoos and I think she had dyed her hair bright red. This dinner has disaster written all over it.”

“Oh,” Sam said he had never really asked about Quinn’s family and Quinn had been pretty vague about their family. “Is that why your parents are getting divorced? Cause your dad cheated on your mom?”

“Yes. Tip don’t bring that up,” Charlie said with a shrug. “Just keep it neutral and talk about things that are important, stay away from politics, religion, don’t give your opinion. Best way to deal with Judy.”

“Sam, mom said you can’t have a girl in your room without the door being open,” Stacey said banging on the door.

Sam flushed immediately and opened his door for his sister who jumped onto Charlie who caught her, “Charlie’s just a friend, remember I’m dating her sister.”

“Do they kiss?” Stacey asked Charlie who nodded solemnly, “GROSS!” she yelled.

“I know right, your brother is giving my sisters cooties,” Charlie whispered conspiratorially.

Stacey’s eyes widened at this information, “I’m telling mom,” she announced loudly before racing off.

“Thanks,” Sam said dryly and Charlie shrugged and smiled, “Can’t you just show up for me?”

“No. I’m making a point. My mother can’t summon me when she feels like it. Showing up will set a dangerous precedent, she might think we’re bonding or something ridiculous like that.”

Sam sighed, “Look my parents aren’t loaded, and Puck keeps saying your family is like Bill Gates rich, and my father tells me that the rich live by a whole different set of rules. I’m not going to know what to do when I get there and I don’t want to embarrass myself. So can you do this for me? You don’t have to bring Dani with you, but like all the cutlery and stuff, and what to order. You know how hard it is for me because of my dyslexia, and it’s not like I want to advertise that I have a learning disability to your mom. Or embarrass myself in front of your sister. You grew up in this world you know it.”

Charlie stared at the blonde boy, she almost felt sorry for him but not nearly enough to actually decide to go with him. She knew he wouldn’t be asking if he knew and she cursed Quinn for not being honest with him, but that would be hypocritical she and Dani hadn’t talked about it.

“Look I’ll do anything you want, I’ll owe you if you just do me this solid,” Sam begged.

“I can’t just show up, my mother expects me to bring a date. This is an ‘I want to pretend to be a decent mother and I want people to see how I care about my children’s lives’. This isn’t about you or me, it’s about Judy. I’m not going to subject Dani to that and I don’t want to go.”

“Can’t you just bring Rachel?”

“No, she’s Jewish, I don’t think she’s allowed in that country club,” Charlie said with a shrug when she saw the look on Sam’s face. “Russell was very particular about who he spent time with. He is a racist, he is a homophobe, he is a misogynist. You should be very grateful that you aren’t
meeting him,” Charlie informed Sam.

Sam nodded, clearly it wasn’t them. Charlie was chill and so was Quinn, clearly they were nothing like their parents, “What about Santana?”

Charlie’s lips twitched upward at that idea, “Do you want her to get arrested? She’ll be treated like the help, or someone will make a comment about it to her face. It would be hilarious though.”

“Brittany?” Sam asked running out of people.

“Brittany—she works,” Charlie said with a sigh she didn’t want to do this. She wanted to spend the whole day just working on mixes and reading music theory books while listening to music. She was getting better at it, or even better just spending a day at the gym with Puck, or just hanging with Rachel.

“So you’ll do it?”

“If Brittany says yes, and you owe me Evans and I will collect,” Charlie informed the boy as she got up and reached past him and grabbed a black tie. “There’s your outfit, make sure it’s properly pressed.”

Quinn adjusted Sam’s tie for him, they were early. “Don’t worry my mom just wants to make sure you aren’t Finn Hudson. There’s nothing to worry about, she’s harmless. Just be yourself. I promise you that you’ll be fine. I’m sure she’ll really like you. I mean I like you. This seemed to be the right thing to say as Sam grinned widely.

“I’m just nervous, this is really fancy,” he said suddenly feeling inadequate. If this was how the Fabray’s rolled then maybe he wasn’t good enough for Quinn. He lived in the Heights, he had to ride the bus when he couldn’t get a ride with Puck, and the Fabray’s seemed to be swimming in money.

“Just follow my—” Quinn trailed off as she looked at her sister who had just entered the country club and was chatting amiably with the staff. She was in her usual formal attire but her hair was actually combed and tied back. She hadn’t expected Charlie to show, not with Dani by her side. Dani didn’t fit into this world, Charlie knew that. Charlie raised her arm and Quinn watched as Brittany S. Pierce took Charlie’s arm.

“Thank god she came,” Sam said and Quinn looked at him.

“You made Charlie come?”

“I owe her a favor, but she said if Brittany said yes then she would,” Sam said swallowing as Quinn stared at him, “Did I do something wrong?”

Quinn shook her head, if Judy knew what Sam had done she’d insist that she marry him. He had basically pulled a miracle out of his hat, though Charlie was probably only there because she felt sorry for him. “No—that depends. My mother and Charlie don’t get along, this dinner could be more awkward than anything.” But that was unlikely, Charlie knew better. There wouldn’t be any family drama, they were Fabray’s they didn’t air their dirty laundry in front of people.

“Hey Brittany,” Quinn greeted her friend, Brittany looked fantastic, in a light blue dress. “What are you doing here?” The question was mostly for Charlie who gave her sister that crooked grin of hers.
Brittany smiled brightly at Quinn, “Charlie invited me, she said it wasn’t a date though,” she said the last part sadly.

“Is Dani—?” The look on Charlie’s face told Quinn everything that she wanted to know. Charlie hadn’t mentioned this to Dani. “Never mind, mom got us a table outside. She’ll be really happy to see you Britt, she’s been talking about how much she misses you and Santana. I was thinking of having a sleep over soon, and inviting Rachel.” Quinn said as they walked to the outdoor dining area.

Brittany turned to Charlie, “Are you coming?”

“You know I can’t,” Charlie said with a tight smile on her face as they got closer to the table.

“Why can’t you go?” Sam asked confused, if Charlie was around then surely she could just join in. Both twins looked at him, forgetting that it wasn’t common knowledge that Charlie lived with Rachel. “I don’t live with Judy and Quinn,” Charlie answered, giving him a look that told him that they’d talk about it later. Sam followed all of Charlie’s mannerisms, which started with pulling out Brittany’s chair for her.

Judy watched Sam with mild interest, she flicked her eyes over at Brittany, at least Charlie had the sense to not embarrass the family name, the last thing that they needed was more mud sticking to their name. “Brittany it’s a pleasure to see you again, I was just telling Quinn how much I missed having you and Santana around.”

“Quinn invited us for a sleep over, we’ll totes be there,” Brittany said brightly, keeping the smile on her face, despite the fact that Brittany didn’t like Judy Fabray.

Judy flicked her eyes over at Charlie who took a seat beside the dancer, “And you’ve managed to convince my wayward daughter to come, thank you. I always knew I liked you,” Judy said there was a hint of annoyance in her voice as she looked over Charlie, at least her middle child was finally softening her stance a bit. “Hopefully we can have a few more dinners, and we can finally put this nasty business behind us and you can move back home.”

Sam glanced at Charlie who was giving him a dull look and he could tell that he definitely owed the soccer player.

“Brittany and I can’t stay long, I promised to take her somewhere important, so it’ll just be lunch for the two of us,” Charlie informed Judy not bothering to look at her as she picked up the menu. She noticed the annoyance that flashed across her mother’s face. She would rather be at the duck pond with Brittany than attempting to make small talk with her mother.

Judy shot her daughter a thin smile, before turning to Sam who squirmed in his seat and began to fidget, “You must be Sam, Quinnie has told me so much about you.” So far Judy Fabray wasn’t impressed, his posture was all wrong and he didn’t seem to want to meet her eye. She wondered if he was slow like that Finn Hudson was.

“Uh—I am Sam. Sam I am?” Sam said nervously cursing himself as Charlie’s eyes flew off the menu which she was looking at and she stared at him, though there was an amused smile on her face. Sam glanced over at Quinn who looked semi-mortified. He knew this was a terrible idea. He had already managed to embarrass himself.

“Sam’s the quarterback and is just nervous to meet you mom,” Quinn said stepping in for Sam who flushed red.
Judy eyed the boy, Josh Coleman would be a much better fit for her Quinn. “But the last boy that Quinn had brought home had been this nervous had decided it was a brilliant idea to sing to them about how Quinn was having his baby. “Don’t be nervous dear, I’m just trying to be the cool mom and get to know my children a bit better.”

Sam looked at Charlie for help and the soccer player sighed, “Sam just moved here from Tennessee, he managed to oust Finn as the quarterback. And he really wants to impress you because he really likes Quinn,” Charlie went back to looking at her menu and leaned over to Brittany. “Do you know what you want to eat yet?”

“I don’t understand the menu,” Brittany said looking over at Charlie with a frown on her face.

“That’s because it’s in French. People seem to think that it makes the food fancier if you put it down in French. What do you want to eat? They’re pretty good at getting whatever you want to eat.”

“French fries and dinosaur nuggets,” Brittany said brightly and Charlie grinned despite the look of horror that flashed across Judy’s face.

“Cool I’ll get the same thing,” Charlie said putting the menu down, “We can ask them if they have one of those coloring things as well.”

“Charlie that isn’t—” Judy began.

“Can I get the same thing to?” Sam asked cutting off Judy, his voice still wobbled with his nervousness but he hadn’t been able to make heads or tails of the menu either and he had thought it was his dyslexia. He hadn’t figured out it was in another language. He looked at Quinn an apologetic look on his face, he didn’t mean to embarrass her.

Judy looked horrified here she had taken out these teenagers to this fancy place where they could enjoy good food and they had asked for food that was meant to be served to children. Judy turned to Quinn expecting her to at least act her age.

Quinn looked up at her mother and noticed that everyone was looking at her, she really wanted the dinosaur shaped chicken nuggets with fries but the look on Judy’s face said that wasn’t acceptable. Charlie was just being passive aggressive, she never would have done this if Russell was around. He wouldn’t have stood for it, “I’ll have the chef’s special,” she said, and she watched as Sam’s face fell a bit, he had probably been expecting her to side with him.

Sam looked over at Charlie needing her help to navigate the minefield, he really wanted those chicken nuggets and he had no idea what the chef’s special was, but the look that Judy was giving him suggested that it would be wise to follow Quinn’s lead. “Actually I changed my mind, I’ll have the chef’s special.”

“Well that’s excellent so will I,” Judy said, “Now tell me how are classes going for all of you? Quinn has a perfect GPA, you know.”

Sam’s eyes widened because he hadn’t been expecting that and he looked at Quinn for a bit of help, she knew about his dyslexia.

“Mom, lunch isn’t the time to talk about grades. Brittany is choreographing a new routine for the Cheerios, and we’re going to perform it at Sam’s game next Friday,” Quinn said finally coming to Sam’s aid, Sam didn’t have the highest GPA, in fact his grades were barely better than Finn’s.

Judy acquiesced, she could already tell that she wouldn’t like she was going to hear, at least this
boy was better looking than Finn. With a bit of work, she was sure that Quinn could turn him into a winner, because from what she could see he was quite awkward. To be prom king he’d need to be confident and walk in like he owned the place. “Are you still dancing Brittany?”

Brittany who had been watching the events unfold nodded. This whole thing was a disaster, and while she liked Sam he just didn’t fit into this life that Quinn had. She was constantly having to come to his rescue and she needed someone who would be able to hold their own without Quinn needing to come to the rescue. “I teach kids how to dance on Wednesday afternoons, like Charlie teaches kids how to play soccer.”

“I didn’t know you taught kids how to play soccer?” Judy said turning to Charlie.

Charlie didn’t say anything and she looked at Sam expectantly, “She taught my brother and sister how to play. That’s where we met. At the park she was with Puck and they were throwing a football around,” Sam said managing to get the words out. “We’ve been trying to convince her to —” Charlie kicked Sam’s shin from under the table and she smiled at him and shook her head.

“You have a brother and sister?” Judy asked as the waiter came to take their orders and they ordered. The waiter seemed surprised by the request but they went to go find Brittany a coloring book and some crayons, returning with them as Charlie and Brittany began to color. Judy eyed Charlie and shook her head in irritation.

“Yeah they’re twins. Stacey and Stevie,” Sam said.

“And you’re Sam?” Judy asked, unimpressed.

“Yeah my parents had a thing for the letter S,” Sam said proudly, not knowing that Judy was being judgmental. He could do this.

Quinn wondered why she had thought this was a good idea, Judy wasn’t impressed and Sam didn’t know how to impress Judy at all. He wasn’t that smart, he played football, her mother was probably thinking that Sam was just a better version of Finn, and that’s only because he hadn’t started singing yet.

Charlie hummed at that moment, forcing the attention onto her, “I’m thinking of joining the football team,” Charlie said after a moment, this wasn’t exactly true, she had no intention of actually joining the team, but she had told Puck she would think about it.

“Absolutely not,” Judy snapped at Charlie, “You’re a girl. Girls don’t play football. Tell her Sam that it’s not acceptable.”

Sam stared at Charlie who winked at him he hated being put on the spot but at least Charlie had given him an easy out, to talk about football. He relaxed, “I don’t think Coach Bieste would go for that she’s really strict. Like super strict, and you might get hurt,” though he doubted it.

“Good thing I’m just thinking about it then,” Charlie said going back to her coloring with Brittany.

The topic shifted to football and cheerleading and those were topics that were relatively safe for Sam and he talked about them with Judy. Quinn looked relieved she had sunk down in her chair and when the food finally arrived, she was slightly jealous as Charlie and Brittany played with their food with their fingers before eating it. Sam needed help knowing what forks to use, the chef special had been a beef wellington and she could tell that Sam wasn’t a huge fan of it. The date was a disaster, and it kept getting worse when Charlie and Brittany finally left a bit early.

“Sam if we don’t leave now you’ll be late to baby sit Stevie and Stacey,” Quinn said finally.
figuring out something that would pass and Sam looked absolutely relieved as they made their excuses and finally left.

“How bad was I?” Sam asked when they were finally in the car.

Quinn winced, “It wasn’t that bad, I think she knew that you were nervous,” Quinn lied.

She already knew what Judy Fabray was going to say, and when Quinn finally arrived back at the Fabray manor her predictions were right. Judy Fabray gave her a list of things to work on, of things to fix in Sam Evan’s behavior, as well as a lecture to give to Charlie about the importance of appearances. The entire time she knew that Rachel could have handled that dinner, she wouldn’t have been nervous and even if she was she would have acted confident she would have impressed Judy because the tiny diva was that impressive.

She wouldn’t have needed to cover her inadequacies, and she knew that Rachel would have known which spoon to use and which fork to use. Rachel would have been sure of herself, and confident even if the diva didn’t feel that way. There would have been no stuttering, she would have done some research instead of asking Charlie to basically walk him through this and save him. And Rachel probably wouldn’t have changed her order despite what Judy said. The diva just knew what she wanted.

Quinn Fabray went to bed thinking of the tiny diva, and she swallowed, because there was no way that she was gay. It wasn’t Sam’s fault, he was truly out of his element, and he hadn’t known how to prepare. He was nice and kind, and he tried really hard. And he was a really good kisser.
Chapter 26

“And this was Charlie’s room,” Quinn said opening the empty looking room, there were still a few books on the shelves, but all the necessities had been stripped from the room, all that was left were some iron man sheets, that were neatly folded on the bed, and some empty boxes.

Rachel nodded, looking at the room, it was the first time that she’d ever been to the Fabray mansion, and Quinn was giving her the grand tour. It was odd there wasn’t any family photos around, it was just pictures of stuff, or what looked like very expensive paintings. There wasn’t anything in the house that screamed that a family had once lived here. Even with a whole house filled to the brim with material possession’s the house itself didn’t feel like a home. It didn’t help that Rachel knew some of the horrors that had gone on with these four walls, but it was home to Quinn. And she supposed that’s all that mattered, “I’ve never been to a sleep over before,” she said. She had never expected an invitation of the sort, and Judy had promised to make herself scarce for the night so it was just going to be the unholy trinity and her.

A year ago she’d be terrified of being where she was without Charlie to act as a buffer, they were after all the unholy trinity even though Santana was currently peeved with Quinn and didn’t want to be here, but Brittany was here so she had come to. “So what do you normally do at these things?” Rachel asked, Charlie was terrible at slumber parties, she was never interested in doing anything that was remotely girly, unless Rachel harassed her until she said yes.

Quinn thought back to all their sleep overs, at the Fabray house, it had always gone the same way. They’d watch movies, talk about which boys they thought were the cutest, paint each other’s nails, talk about routines for the Cheerios, they weren’t that special but from the way Rachel was looking at her she was expecting something fantastic.

Santana rolled her eyes because Rachel looked like a kid at a candy store. It was cute in the hobbit who just came from the shire sort of way. “Normal sleep over stuff Rachel, we talk about boys and shit and watch some crappy romantic comedies. It’s not like we sit around plotting how to torture people and rule the school.”

“We dance, and perfect Cheerio routines as well,” Brittany added, “We should totes come up with a routine for glee club.”

Rachel smiled at this, she had never got to see the unholy trinity perform before but Mr. Schue had insisted that it had been really good, “Well we do have that assembly coming up and if you guys performed I’m sure you’d bring in new members.” She had liked the Cheerio’s numbers not just because they were overly produced but because they had worked so well as a functional unit, “If you bring the production value of a Cheerios number to a glee performance, we’ll be sure to take Vocal Adrenaline.”

“Sue would kill us, and I’m already at the bottom of the pyramid,” Santana said looking over at Quinn.

Quinn ignored her she had already apologized to the Latina and had given her sugar cookies, all she could do now was wait it out. Or wait for Santana to have her revenge. “No she wouldn’t I think if we reminded her that you’re on the best dancers on the team she’ll pull you from the bottom of the pyramid. Kurt was talking about how we should pay tribute to Brittany Spears.”

Brittany frowned, “We can’t do her, I can’t keep being in her shadow guys.”
Rachel looked at Quinn who just smiled at Brittany, “Brittany’s full name is Brittany S. Pierce, if you say it fast you get—“

“Something close to Brittany Spears, name,” Rachel said finally getting it. “Well while she is talented, don’t you think she’s too—provocative for a school assembly?”

“You humped Finn Hudson last year on stage,” Santana pointed out bluntly.

Rachel flushed, they had a point and if anyone could make a club cool and make people want to join it was the unholy trinity and it would be a good way to use their powers for good. Quinn made a face at the memory and Rachel gently touched her hand, “I promise that I won’t be doing any more dry-humping against Finn or your boyfriend this time.”

“Speaking of which, how is trouty mouth?” Santana asked only slightly interested in Quinn’s answer, Brittany swore that there was something going on between the Quinn and Berry of them, and while she had teased Quinn, the head cheerio had neither confirmed it nor denied it. She wanted to find out so she had something anything to use against Quinn, to one up her, and get back at her for her betrayal.

Quinn smiled because Sam was really trying, “We’re having a picnic tomorrow, if the weather is decent,” she said. Sure it would be in his living room because he had to babysit Stevie and Stacey, and sure she’d have to share him with his twins, but it was still somewhat romantic.

“That’s sweet, I think Hailey has a crush on Stevie. She follows him around,” Brittany added, she had met the twins at one of Hailey’s soccer games. She had just gone to see Charlie who really was an excellent Coach, or well it was like she was laid back, she stressed the fundamentals but she also made sure that she taught them really cool tricks.

“They’re really sweet and absolutely adorable,” Quinn said, wondering if Beth was going to turn out exactly like that, they had another upcoming visit with Beth and she was growing so fast and the clothes that they were buying for her, kept getting smaller and smaller. She now smiled whenever she saw them and Quinn now settle her daughter, but nothing seemed to settle Beth like Rachel. She was still a bit jealous that Rachel seemed to be better with Beth than she was, but it worked when it came time to put her down to sleep at night.

“Speaking of twins where is yours?” Santana asked Quinn a smirk on her face.

“Charlie can’t come here Santana remember? She gets bad dreams,” Brittany said patiently, and truthfully she didn’t want to be here either but she wanted to spend time with Rachel and the rest of her friends. She was slightly sad that Charlie wouldn’t be able to make even if she was angry with the soccer player for dating Dani. She would have said something but Charlie was finally able to say no to the both of them and the thought confused her to no end.

“I know Britt’s I’m just wondering what Charlie is getting up to.” Quinn shrugged.

Rachel spoke up because Charlie had been on the rampage cleaning the house, and most importantly her room hiding anything that could possibly embarrass her. She’d even gone to Sheets-N-Things, to get herself all new sheets and pick up some candles. “She has Dani over, I think tonight is the ‘night’. Charlie’s been trying to get everything ready.” Rachel had been to her various classes which Quinn had picked her up from, so they had most of the afternoon and into the early evening.

Quinn winced as she saw both Brittany and Santana look at each other and nudged Rachel who quickly realized that she had revealed too much information, “Though it is just the first time that
she’s had Dani over so they’re probably just watching one of my many musicals, or talking about soccer. They argue over who’s a better striker all the time,” Rachel babbled, suddenly feeling a sinking feeling in her chest as Santana squeezed herself between Rachel and Quinn. “She never actually told me that was her plan so I could be completely wrong.”

“You’re not. Charlie is totally getting lucky right now,” Brittany said sadly and looked at Santana.

“She’s friends with Puck and Trouty mouth right?” Santana asked Quinn as she pulled out her phone and began to text Puck.

“Santana I told you to stay out of it,” Quinn hissed at her.

“I’m not doing anything I’m just making sure that Charlie gets supervised, who knows what Dani is doing to corrupt your sister,” Santana said with fake sincerity as she finished texting Puck.

Quinn groaned, “I don’t see why you’re getting Sam involved.”

“Your boyfriend is sort of really lame Quinn, Britt’s told me all about how meeting your mother went. Who turns down Dino Nuggets and French fries? Cept maybe the hobbit, because she eats leaves and stuff.”

“He met your mother?” Rachel asked, Charlie had mentioned that Judy had summoned her and she was going to the country club.

Quinn made a face, “He didn’t really impress her, she thinks he’s just newer model of Finn, with slightly better manners. She’s been telling me how I can fix him for the past week. He really tried hard though, it’s got to be nerve wracking to meet someone’s parents.”

“You met his parents,” Brittany pointed out, “You were really polite and they really liked you.”

“It was different, it was just a soccer game, and they came to cheer for Stevie and Stacey. It wasn’t like it was planned or it was a family dinner. He just kind of did what Charlie did the entire night, and Charlie was trying to aggravate mom, in a purely passive aggressive way.”

“It could have been worse,” Rachel said, and while she felt sorry for Sam Evans, a little part of her was slightly happy that Judy Fabray didn’t really approve.

The last thing that Puck expects to see as he pulls into the driveway of Rachel’s house, is Charlie kissing Dani goodbye on the porch. He had expected Charlie to ignore him at the door until she was good and ready to answer the door. He had argued with Santana about the proper etiquette, you didn’t interrupt when you knew your bro was going to have a good time. You also didn’t say no to Santana Lopez though especially when she started speaking in Spanish. Seeing Charlie walking Dani to her car, bothered him because while Dani clearly got laid, Charlie was lacking the bounce in her step and the smile that signified that she had done the deed.

Puck at least had the decency to wave to Dani and wait till she had driven away from the Berry household before he turned on his best friend, as he exited the car, Sam following him. “Early arrival problems?” he asked seriously. “It happens to the best of us, don’t worry about it. She looked satisfied though.”

Charlie blinked once and turned to him a look of irritation flashing across her face, “Do I look like a freakishly tall douchebag?” She asked him, she didn’t have an early arrival problem. And Dani
Charlie paused for a moment because that probably wasn’t the case, she ignored it for now and motioned for them to follow her into the house.

“You just got laid you should be happy or something right?” Sam was confused, both Charlie and Puck didn’t seem to care that something big had just happened. “She’s your first girlfriend right, you got rid of your virginity; shouldn’t you be like really happy or something?”

“I wasn’t a virgin before this,” Charlie said dismissively as she pulls open the fridge and pulls out her water bottle and drinks from it, “So apparently my plans for the night has changed, what do you want to do, keep in mind that I have an early morning practice in the morning.”

“You weren’t a virgin?” Sam sputters, he’s barely gotten past second base and yet both Charlie and Puck were talking like sex was somewhat a normal occurrence for them. Maybe going to a boys school had stunted his development. “When did you lose your virginity?”

“Fifteen,” Puck replied puffing out his chest. He had lost his virginity to Santana Lopez, he had bragged about it, he had gotten there first. “Santana Lopez towards the end of freshman year.”

Charlie flicked her eyes to him, and debated telling him, he knew about the prostitutes, he had gone to the trial, but she had never named who she had been with after she moved to Lima. Puck was about the least judgmental person ever probably because he was such a man-whore, and Sam wasn’t going to say anything, and Rachel couldn’t give her any practical advice, she didn’t have a dick, but it would out Santana.

“I thought Santana was like in love with Brittany?” Sam asked. Never mind it was clear everyone knew that Santana was at least bisexual.

“She is,” Puck said with a shrug. This was common knowledge at McKinley, everyone suspected that Santana was gay for Brittany. “But she still comes to Puck to satisfy her needs. I took her virginity you know.”

“Did you have sex with her before or after the slushy war of freshman year?” Charlie said after a moment as she tossed a bunch of delivery menus onto the counter. She was irritated at his bragging and she wanted to punch him in the face.

“After the slushy war.”

“You weren’t her first,” Charlie said blandly she was mostly irritated at him and had stopped thinking of the consequences. When Puck’s mouth dropped Charlie realized that she may have overstepped. “This isn’t something that leaves this room. She’s not…she’s I don’t know what Santana is. She hasn’t come out and said what she is, and she doesn’t want people knowing. But you didn’t get there first, and you treat Santana like shit. She’s not a sex toy, either stop having sex with her or treat her better and not like some vapid sex doll. She’s a person.”

Puck blinked, this wasn’t something that he had expected, Charlie never talked about sex and she still wasn’t. “You’re in love with Santana—I thought you were in love with Brittany.” When Charlie flushed Puck’s mouth dropped, “You had sex with Brittany too?”

Sam stared, “You had sex with two of the hottest girls in school and you haven’t said anything?”
Charlie grunted, and made a face. “I don’t like bragging about it, it’s a private thing,” Charlie said, “Santana’s not out and if this gets around school I will murder the two of you. I’m serious about the murder thing. Coach Roz has shown us how to get rid of the bodies. She only taught it to us because Sue taught it to her cheerios what it had to do with soccer I will never know. I just need another perspective that isn’t female and not Rachel trying to psychoanalyze everything.”

“You’re in love with Santana and I’ve been fucking her since freshman year? Dude you should have said something,” Puck said with a frown. “We’re bros, I would have stopped. I thought it was Brittany.”

Charlie sighed, it didn’t matter she was with Dani, and she liked Dani. It wasn’t as if she could ask Santana out. “I’m not in love with anyone. But Santana’s my friend and you treat her like shit, so stop. I don’t care—”

“Bullshit you want to punch me in the face don’t you?”

Charlie stared at Puck for a moment, “Yes. I want to punch you in your face for every time you made her cry. I want to kick your ass because she kept running back to you only for you to use her and throw her away again. I know it was just sex between the two of you, but for fuck’s sake, she should be more than enough for you.”

Puck and Sam looked at each other as they realized that Charlie Fabray, had it bad for a certain Latina. Sam took a breath. “You have a girlfriend,” she would need to break up with Dani.

“I’m aware, I have a girlfriend. I didn’t want the same relationship Santana has with Puck, I felt like I was going to murder someone someday, probably you Puck. So I’m moving on and Dani is a fantastic girlfriend.”

“Who didn’t return the favor,” Puck pointed out, he could tell that Charlie was agitated. No guy was agitated like that after he got laid.

Charlie’s eyes flashed, she hadn’t expected him to figure it out, but she was frustrated as hell. “Doesn’t matter, Santana Lopez can’t love me when she’s in love with Brittany,” Charlie said dismissively. “So I’m going to step back and let them have their relationship together. Now let’s order a pizza with meat on it, I’ve got an early morning practice and I want you all out of my house by midnight.”

Charlie tossed her keys up and down in the air as she waited for Rachel, “Come on Rae, we’re going to be late to pick up—holy—” Charlie said dropping her keys onto the ground as she stared at Rachel. “What are you—what are you wearing?” the soccer player babbled forcing her eyes away from Rachel.

“It’s Brittany week at glee club,” Rachel explained, looking down at herself and then looked Charlie, “This is just like my regular look with the volume turned up.”

Charlie glanced down at her waist, and then back at Rachel, “Please tell me that this is just a Rachel thing.” Because she really couldn’t handle dealing with Dani walking around in an outfit like that, or Santana, or Brittany. It was distracting and she was suddenly very thankful that she had chosen to go with the compression boxers today.

Rachel blushed and followed Charlie’s gaze, Charlie had never physically reacted to her before. It was like the diva wasn’t even a blip on her radar, “Do you think it’ll get Quinn’s attention?”
“Yes this is going to get you attention, now tell me if I’m going to have to worry, and if I need to wear my special boxers for the rest of this week.” Charlie asked as she thought about the most disgusting things she had ever seen. Her mind went to Finn Hudson in the hot tub with her sister, it was like someone had splashed her with a cold bucket of water and she shivered as she flicked her hazel eyes back to Rachel.

Rachel shrugged, “Mr. Schue seems to be very anti-Brittany, even if she is an icon. She’s just as controversial as Madonna was back in her prime.”

“So no?”

“Kurt’s working on convincing him, and we do have that assembly at the end of the week. I think Quinn, Santana and Brittany are prepping something to show at the assembly. I’m actually surprised that they decided to take initiative like this. Brittany has never been one to ask for a solo.”

Charlie groaned, and tuned Rachel out, all this meant was that she was thoroughly fucked. Maybe she could avoid skipping the whole thing all together.

“So you really think that Quinn will notice?” Rachel asked suddenly unsure as they drove to school in relative quiet.

Charlie looked at Rachel once more, Quinn would definitely notice it would be impossible for her not to notice. Charlie had certainly noticed and she hadn’t looked at Rachel like that in years. She could see the determined look in Rachel’s eye and she almost felt sorry for Quinn. Almost. This was drama that she had to personally witness.

Quinn was putting stuff in her locker when Charlie slid up beside her, their lockers were side by side. “Did you finish the math assignment that Ms. Hagberg assigned for us?” She asked turning to her twin, just planning to copy Charlie’s assignment. Charlie had always been better with numbers than she was.

“Yes, you want to copy?” Charlie asked keeping her face neutral as she saw Rachel approaching the two of them. She had watched as everyone from jocks to just the simple guys around school had reacted, the whole thing had been rather comical. Though she had been forced to slushy Jacob in an attempt to get him to leave Rachel alone.

“Hey Quinn,” Rachel greeted.

Quinn smiled, something that didn’t go unnoticed by Charlie and turned to Rachel, about to greet the diva when her mouth went dry, as she stared at what Rachel was wearing. Her mind short-circuiting. Charlie watched Quinn and sighed before nudging her shoulder to get her brain working again. “Hi—hey Rachel. What are you wearing?”

“Do you like my new look? It’s not too much is it?” Rachel asked as she noticed Quinn’s eyes darkening as she looked at her, Quinn’s gaze was intense. “I thought I’d pay ode to Brittany,” she said with a shrug.

Quinn swallowed, and struggled to find the words, suddenly aware that all eyes on the hallway were on Rachel, Finn looked horrified and was walking up to them. “You look great Rachel,” she said finally.
“Rachel, what are you wearing? Here take my hoodie,” Finn said as he pulled his hoodie off and tried to use it to wrap it around Rachel.

“Finn, she looks fine and she’s allowed to wear anything she wants,” Quinn said snapping to Rachel’s defense.

“She looks like a—”

Charlie slammed her locker closed, before Finn could finish that sentence, “Hudson she isn’t your girlfriend anymore so just leave.”

Finn glared at Charlie for a moment before turning to Rachel, “That guy just broke up with his girlfriend to be with you. Come on you can borrow my hoodie—”

“I’m fine Finn. I said that we could be friends when you cleaned up your act. But if you’re going to imply that I’m a slut just because of the clothes that I wear, then being friends with you seems to be out of the question.”

“That’s not what I meant,” Finn said arguing with her as Rachel stormed off and he followed her.

“They’re just personifying you Rachel, and it’s not cool.”

“It’s objectifying Finn,” Rachel snapped at him halfway down the hall from where Quinn still stood.

Quinn turned to Charlie, “What the hell was that?” she asked her twin.

“I don’t know, but I’m not the one with drool on the side of my mouth,” Charlie snipped as she played with her phone. Watching as Quinn’s hand went to the side of her mouth, Charlie couldn’t help but snort at this and she opened her bag and handed Quinn her math homework.

“She can’t go around dressing like that! Half the guys are looking at her like she’s a piece of meat. I only said it was okay because I knew Finn was going to put his foot in his mouth. How dare he —” Quinn ranted keeping her voice neutral and as calm as possible even though she was having very inappropriate thoughts about her best friend. “But Finn’s right all these losers are doing is turning her into a sex symbol.”

Jacob Ben Israel chose this moment to approach the two Fabray sisters, “What do you want for her? I'll give you anything. I'll give you my house. I'll kill my parents and I'll give you my house,” he asked desperately, it was well known that Rachel was protected by both Fabray’s at this point and that Quinn and Rachel were friends.

Charlie reached over and grabbed a slushy from a passing freshman and handed it to Quinn who threw it in Jacob’s face, causing the soccer player to grin as they walked away from the creepy boy. Being a Fabray had its perks.

“See? What I mean they’re treating her like an object, a sexual object!” Quinn said jealously as she shoved a freshman out of the way.

“While I’m incredibly glad that you’ve finally decided to join a feminist movement your point would make considerable more sense if you weren’t currently wearing the Cheerio’s uniform. You’re barely wearing more than she is,” Charlie said dryly as she walked with her sister down the hallway. She spotted Dani with Missy and Marissa but she didn’t pull away from Quinn right away, “Your motto last year was, and I quote ‘It’s all about the teasing and not about the pleasing.’ Let Rachel have her fun. She doesn’t normally get swarmed with this much positive attention from boys or girls from the looks of it,” Charlie said nodding at where Gabrielle Avery was talking to
Rachel. “Give me back my math homework by lunch,” Charlie called over her shoulder as she went to go greet her girlfriend.

“Was that Berry?” Santana asked still staring at Rachel, as she approached Quinn.

Brittany eyed Quinn for a minute seeing the look of jealousy in her face as she watched Rachel walk away, and smiled because her advice to Rachel had worked, “She had a Brittany fantasy too.”

Quinn turned to her friends because the idea that they had some joint fantasy was weird, “She’s doing it on purpose,” Quinn announced.

Santana stared at Quinn for a moment, “She’s doing what on purpose?”

“Trying to be—all—sexy,” Quinn sputtered, trying to come up with something but every time her mind flickered back to Rachel her mind would just short circuit and she blushed. Because she’d never had these type of thoughts for anyone else before, not Finn and certainly not Sam.

Santana shrugged. “Normally, Rachel dresses like the fantasy of a perverted Japanese businessman with a very dark, specific fetish, but she actually sort of looks good. You know what good for her, she needed to leave the shire eventually.”

“I’ve never kissed Rachel before, can I add her to the list?” Brittany asks Santana.

Quinn looked horrified at the idea, “She is not going to be just another notch in your bedpost,” she snaps at them.

“Careful Q, if you weren’t dating Trouty Mouth, I’d assume that you were getting in touch with your Sapphic side,” Santana said in a mocking tone.

“I’m not—I’m not into that. I like Sam.”

“Yes in the beard sort of way,” Santana said with a shrug.

Quinn looked uncomfortable for a moment, before flicking her eyes back to where Rachel had just been. “Sam is my boyfriend,” she repeated firmly. “I don’t have any feelings for her.”

“So you won’t mind if Brittany makes out with the hobbit? Great.” Santana said, “Come on Britt’s lets go find the hobbit. Though you have to be careful she doesn’t drag you back to the shire. You know how tricky those hobbits are.”

Quinn thought fast, “Rachel is my friend, I just don’t want you messing with her.”

“It’s just a kiss, I’ve kissed like everyone in our year. I’ve even kissed the janitor,” Brittany said in a bored tone. “I kissed Kurt remember.”

“I said no,” Quinn snapped, letting the subject drop, as Sam wandered up to her and gently pressed his lips against hers. “Hey Sam.”

“What are you talking about?” Sam asked.

“Britt wants to make out with the hobbit, and Quinn is saying no,” Santana said with a smirk as she threw Quinn under the bus. “Sounds like she’s jealous,” Quinn glared at Santana who tilted her head, as she linked pinkies with Brittany. She had just planted the seed of doubt in Sam’s head and she would watch it grow. Now they were even. Like hell she was going to let Quinn walk for selling her out to Sue Sylvester. “Come on Britt’s lets go find the hobbit, and help you get your
“Santana,” Quinn hissed as trying to keep her face neutral but failing miserably.

“Later Q, enjoy getting your mack on with trouty mouth,” Santana said with a sing song voice as she walked away with Brittany.

Sam gave her a curious look, “Jealous?” he asked confused.

Quinn looked at Sam and smiled at him, “I’m just worried about her, she’s wearing really revealing clothing and the guys are all over her. She is one of my closest friends,” she lies through her teeth but Sam nods and believes her, and Quinn is eternally grateful that Sam is still naïve to believe her, and she feels guilty because she shouldn’t even be having these thoughts about Rachel. She isn’t jealous that the diva is finally getting attention. “Santana’s just being Santana.”

Sam nodded, and looked over at Santana for a moment, thinking about what she said but he dismissed it, because it was Santana and Charlie would have mentioned if she suspected her sister was cheating on him with Rachel, or if her sister was gay. It wasn’t as if he hadn’t noticed that Quinn did spend a lot of time with the diva, or whenever Rachel’s name come she’d smile. They had only been dating for a few weeks, and after a few more, he was hoping that they could take the next step together.

Rachel’s mouth is dry and she’s not sure if she can remember the steps or anything else or even the words to the song as she watches Quinn talking to Brittany and Santana. The Unholy trinity is back together it seems despite their little spat earlier this year. Quinn had taken the catholic school girl dress to a whole new level.

Quinn had taken her look and upped it, turning on her sex appeal, yet it still sort of looked wholesome. Sam had the same expression on his face and was currently trying to talk to Puck who just seem disinterested in the whole thing. She briefly wondered if they’d get in trouble with Figgins again, their last performance had put them in a world of trouble, for being too sexual but if there last one had been to sexual, this one would cause a riot. If this didn’t cause a stampede of people willing to join them then Rachel had no idea.

Santana passed Rachel and smirked before leaning in and whispering into Rachel’s ear, “You’re going to let the flies in hobbit. I know you’re a hobbit and it’s probably part of your everyday diet, but not now we’ve got a performance to give. Oh and she knows you’re watching her, so do try and keep up.”

Charlie slips into the empty space beside Missy and Marissa, leaning back as much as she can. “I hate these things,” she says to no one in particular.

“Dani mentioned that it was Quinn, Santana and Brittany who had taken control of this assembly, so hopefully we won’t see any more dry-humping,” Missy informed her captain. “She said it’s a Brittany number, she wouldn’t give me any more details said it was a surprise.”

“Come on Charlie. Dani’s totally into you and she’s going to be out there performing for you, and I got a look at what she was wearing it was very—catholic school girl gone bad. You won’t be able to keep your hands off her,” Marissa said knowingly, Dani had become their quick friend though there was some tension on the team as she had taken Missy’s spot as co-captain. She didn’t seem to
mind that she could hold mental conversations with Missy even though it did creep Charlie out. Dani had taken to talking to them about their captain, and from what Dani had said, Charlie was a very talented lover.

Charlie turned to Marissa about to say something when the microphone screeched and Figgin’s began to talk. “Quiet, please, children. Quiet now. First, students who ate the ravioli today and are not up-to-date on their tetanus shots should see the nurse immediately. Welcome to our homecoming pep assembly. Because of last week’s grisly train derailment, the dulcimer club is on hiatus until further notice. But do we ever have a treat for you. Fresh off their last place finish at the Regionals, please give it up for the New Directions!”

The room went deathly quiet when Santana, Brittany and Quinn walked onto the makeshift stage, and Charlie’s mouth dropped. As the music started to play and they began to sing, the rest of the glee club providing the backup dancing. Almost immediately nearly everyone was on their feet, cheering as they began to dance and sing to the song.

She could hear Jacob screaming, something that was probably inappropriate, she could feel Missy and Marissa moving beside her but Charlie’s focus was on Santana Lopez who managed to catch her gaze and the Latina winked at her. Charlie let out a small whimper as she felt herself press firmly against her jeans. She didn’t notice Dani, or Brittany or anyone else for that matter. Her eyes just followed Santana who seemed to know that her attention was going to be focused solely on her. She barely noticed when the fire alarm went off, Sue having turned it on to prevent a sex riot, or to start one. She didn’t move as people smashed into her body trying to get out of the gym. Missy finally snapped her out of it as she grabbed onto Charlie’s wrist and pulled their captain away, but Charlie stumbled along her eyes keeping on the Latina. It wasn’t until she was out in the hallway, when she could no longer see the glee club did Charlie snap out of it. “What. The. Fuck. Was. That?” she said to no one in particular.

Missy and Marissa who thought that Charlie had been staring at Dani, who had been behind Santana for most of the dancing, smiled. “I’m sure Dani wouldn’t mind skipping a few classes? So you know you can show how much you loved that outfit of hers.”

Charlie was about to ask Missy who she was talking about but her brain finally rebooted and she nodded swallowing, before she headed to the locker room to go meet her girlfriend, and she tried to shove the thoughts of the very little Santana had been wearing out of her mind.

Rachel and Quinn were the last ones in the locker room, it had taken Quinn only a few moments to dress but she seemed to be waiting for the diva who had taken her time, pulling on her clothes slowly, trying to keep her eyes the head cheerio, who was watching her with that intense gaze. That had been the worst performance she had ever given and Rachel Berry prided herself on being ever the professional. But that had just been unfair, the way that Quinn was moving her hips and playing on her wholesome image was just—it was wicked it was sinful and Quinn Fabray wasn’t playing fair.

“I saw you trip a few times Rachel, I just wanted to make sure that you were okay.” Quinn said as she approached the diva. That had been payback for Rachel’s Wednesday outfit. She had gone back to wearing her regular clothes the next day but Quinn hadn’t forgotten. So she had made a last minute wardrobe change, dragging Santana and Brittany along to Victoria Secret last night.

“Rule number one; every intimate encounter that you’re ever going to have in your life is going to start with a touch. And that’s really all it took, when Quinn touched Rachel’s elbow, Rachel turned
and swallowed throwing away all resistance and all of Charlie’s advice to just be patient and every object she had learned the previous year when she went after Finn and she kissed Quinn Fabray. It was hungry, it was passionate, it was desperate. It caught Quinn by surprise this time and for a moment Quinn Fabray didn’t do anything she was to stunned to move but slowly her lips began to move against hers, and it was their the passion. Just like last time, it always started with a spark with them and then there it was the fireworks.

It was Quinn who took control pushing Rachel against the locker. Wondering why in the world that she had denied herself this feeling for a few weeks, why she had insisted on dating what’s his name. Rachel let out a low moan into the kiss and Quinn deepened it, because at that moment she really wanted Rachel Berry and—

“Finally getting your mack on with the hobbit. It’s about time Q.” Santana Lopez said in a bored tone watching as the two girls leapt apart. “I owe Brittany twenty dollars, coz she said that it would totally take place in the locker room, and I totes said that you were too much of a pressed lemon to do anything for a few more weeks.”

Quinn panicked because it was Santana, she could have dealt with anyone but Santana, who still had a vendetta against her for ratting her out to Sue. “I—this isn’t—what,”

“Oh relax Tubbers, I’m not going to rat you out to your trouty mouth boyfriend, but you are going to give me twenty dollars to give to Brittany,” Santana said still in that same bored tone. She had texted Charlie to meet her in the locker room, she had seen how the soccer player was focused on her. Her little plan had been a success. Charlie was going to be here any minute.

“What are you even doing here?” Quinn said finally as she pulled away from Rachel who had ducked behind her.

“You aren’t the only Fabray that is going to get lucky today,” Santana said with a shrug. “Your sister had a—”

Quinn held up her hand, stopping Santana because she already knows what Santana is going to say and that’s gross. “She isn’t going to show up. Charlie doesn’t cheat.”

“Charlie’s never had a girlfriend before, so we don’t know what Charlie will do. Especially since from the looks of it—cheating runs in the family.” Santana argued. “She could barely take her eyes off me. She is totally going to show.”

Rachel finally spoke up, “Charlie went off with Dani earlier, I saw her practically dragging her away.”

The smirk on Santana’s face fell, not believing that Charlie would choose Dani over her. “Say that again hobbit?”

Rachel looked at Quinn who sighed, “I saw Dani with Charlie on my way here; they were heading toward the parking lot. I think she’s going to skip the rest of the day.” Santana was deathly quiet for a long moment and Rachel was sure that Latina was going to lose it because the Latina soon began to mutter in Spanish, but instead of attacking Rachel she stormed out of the locker room a murderous expression on her face. “Shouldn’t we go save your sister?” It was just light commentary, she had no intention of actually moving from where she was.

“No,” Quinn said, she had just been in a fight with Santana and had gotten her ass kicked. Charlie was capable of dealing with Santana Lopez without getting hurt too badly. Besides maybe the two of them would deal with their feelings like grown adults for once. This back and forth between the
two of them was exhausting and she didn’t even want them to get together to begin with.

Rachel swallowed as she looked at Quinn who looked deep in thought, “So what does this—
mean?” she asked Quinn. They had just shared a rather impromptu kiss, and while she didn’t expec
Quinn to proclaim her undying love, well a little part of her hoped that Quinn would. She didn’t expec
them to actually have an open honest discussion about it.

“Nothing,” Quinn said quickly without looking at Rachel as she went to go grab her bag, “You
kissed me Rachel, I’m with Sam and I’m not—I don’t swing that way,” she said firmly.

This wasn’t the response that Rachel was expecting, and she could tell that Quinn was lying
because she was turning a deep shade of red, and the cheerleader refused to meet her eyes. Rachel
wanted to throw a tantrum but she took a breath because Charlie had said that Quinn wouldn’t
handle this particular change well. “You kissed back. And you kissed me first last time.”

Quinn’s back tensed and she turned on Rachel, because how dare she attack her with a kiss, and
then accuse her of being gay. She hadn’t done anything to deserve it, “It was a freaking game
Ru’Paul,” she said snapping into her HBIC mode, ignoring the hurt that flashed in Rachel’s eyes,
and the growing turbulence in her stomach.

Rachel blinked back tears, surprised by the venom in Quinn’s tone, but she stood her ground, “I
know you felt it to. The spark, I felt it. I—”

Quinn had pulled back, “Great the last thing I need is you freaking lusting and obsessing over me
like you did Finn Hudson. I’m straight and I’m with Sam,” she stated firmly and with that she
grabbed her stuff and left.

Charlie wasn’t picking up her phone and Rachel personally believed that she was getting busy with
Dani, or that Santana had found her and murdered the soccer player. She didn’t really care which
one it was, she wanted her best friend but Charlie was nowhere to be found and a quick check of
the parking lot told her that her best friend wasn’t even at school anymore. And she still had some
free time to spare so she headed to the teachers’ lounge, and knocked on the door. It was Roz
Washington who opened the door.

“Tiny Barbra Streisand, the vest—”

“Is Ms. Cochran there?” Rachel interrupted, she knew that Shelby insisted that they keep things
professional at school but she really needed her mom. Well she really needed her best friend but
Charlie was probably defiling her car and probably every surface of her house.

Shelby appeared at the door and took one look at her daughter, who looked like she was about to
cry and bit her lip wondering why she had ever thought, or even suspected that her daughter
wouldn’t need her. “Rachel, let’s go to my office,” she said as she gently took Rachel’s arm and
they walked to Shelby’s office, it certainly wasn’t as big as her old one at Carmel but all she was
doing was grading papers. “I saw your performance today in the gym, it was really well
choreographed. It was a bit to sexual and it would never impress the judges,” she said giving her
daughter gentle criticism, and it was clear that her ever professional daughter had been distracted.

Rachel nodded absentmindedly, “I kissed Quinn, she didn’t—she didn’t handle it well. I think I’ve
messed everything up. I don’t think she even wants to be my friend anymore.” She doesn’t mention
that Quinn had called her Ru’Paul or had made her feel like she was crazy. This wasn’t an
obsession, it was different she had allowed Quinn some time to figure it out but it seemed like the cheerleader had just stagnated. Charlie wasn’t nearly as involved as she thought she’d be.

“Quinn? Isn’t she with that Sam boy?” Shelby said, she had heard Sue going on about the sexual deviance in the glee club, and had heard Roz go on about the drama that seemed to suck in the whole school. Even though they were at the bottom of the food chain, Jacob reported on them religiously.

“Yes but I know she’s in love with me, she kissed back, and she kissed me first, and even though it was just a simple game of spin the bottle but we went over the ten second limit, and I felt the spark, the fireworks. It just—we just fit.”

Shelby didn’t know what to say to her daughter, she wasn’t exactly rolling in a healthy relationship, and truthfully she had expected Will Schuester to be gay and not courting her in an attempt to get Emma to like him. But she remembered this age well, she had been just as awkward and just as badly dressed as Rachel was. But she’d grown up quickly when she got to Broadway, she hadn’t made it. “You still need Quinn to have a bit more time, I’m sure that this transition isn’t easy for her, and she is dating someone else.”

“She doesn’t even love him, she just likes him, and they have a lot to talk about because he likes some of the same stuff that she does. They weren’t supposed to last this long,” Rachel pointed out, she can see that Sam would simply make a better friend than a boyfriend. It’s like Quinn’s dating a slightly more awkward version of Charlie. “He’s not good enough for her,” Rachel insisted.

Shelby sighed, “I’ve broken up relationships before and if I had just let them end naturally, there might not have been any resentment or broken hearts along the way, Rachel you need to give Quinn her space. If what you’re saying is right then they aren’t going to last long anyway, and you just need to focus on being her friend for now. Having her as that is better than not having her at all,” It was something that Shelby Cochran had come to learn the hard way. It seemed that her daughter was really just a miniature version of herself.

“I don’t think she wants to be my friend anymore,” Rachel admitted as the bell rang and she looked up, there were just two more periods and she sighed.

“I’ll give you a drive home today and we can continue this conversation in the car.”

Charlie ran a hand through her hair as she stared at herself into the mirror, shivering slightly. Another cold shower, she didn’t want to pressure Dani into anything she wasn’t comfortable with but this was getting ridiculous. She understood Dani’s reservations but Dani grew uncomfortable whenever she wanted to just get herself off and she would begin to pull away. So she didn’t touch herself, instead she focused on making Dani feel good. She was really good at that, and she liked doing it. But at the same time—she sighed, because it sucked. Because maybe Dani really was too good to be true.

The ringing of the doorbell caused Charlie to throw on a baggy shirt but she wrapped a towel around her midsection, Rachel had texted her that she was getting a ride home from Shelby and they didn’t have practice today because they had a game tomorrow. She was excited to play with Dani, they connected in a weird way, and she wouldn’t have to run herself ragged anymore trying to break through the defense because she could depend on Dani. It was nice. Charlie checked the peephole and saw Santana and swallowed hard as she felt her body react. This so wasn’t good.

“I know you’re in there Charlie,” Santana’s voice was loud enough to get through the door and Charlie winced before opening the door for the Latina. Santana stormed into Rachel’s house and
stared at Charlie for a moment who gripped the towel around her waist tightly. “When the hobbit said that you went to go have sex with her. I didn’t believe her. But I have to know did you think of me while you were fucking her?” Santana hissed as she closed the door and took a step toward Charlie who immediately took a step back. “I saw your eyes on me.”

Charlie didn’t respond, she really needed another cold shower, and she swore inwardly. She fucking hated being cold. She wasn’t going to give the Latina the satisfaction of knowing that she had crossed her mind a few times in the act of pleasuring her girlfriend. “Santana you’ve got to leave—”

“Why is she here?” Santana asked, because she really doesn’t care how she breaks Charlie and Dani up.

“No but Rachel will be home any minute and I can’t—you can’t be here right now,” Charlie sputtered. “I had sex with my girlfriend, it happens. She’s been my girlfriend for weeks now, I told you that I wasn’t going to make you the other woman. I respect you and you’ve got to respe—” Charlie’s back hit the wall, because as she had been speaking Santana had been getting closer to her and she’d been trying oh so desperately to move away from her.

“Was she as good as me?” Santana asks, and it’s forceful and Charlie swallows which makes the Latina smirk because she knows that Charlie can’t resist her for much longer.

Charlie opens her mouth to protest but a strangled noise comes out of it when Santana touches her hip, “Santana please,” she begs and she’s not sure what she’s begging for at that moment, because she really doesn’t want to cheat on her girlfriend but she also really just wants to be with Santana. She’s frustrated because Santana Lopez makes it very difficult for her to think and she knows better.

“Please?” Santana begins but the door opens at that moment and Rachel walks in with Shelby right behind her and Charlie uses the momentary distraction to slip away from Santana, much to the Latina’s annoyance.

“Rachel! Ms. Cochran—we were just. I was just—” Charlie babbles she’s bright red and still clutching the towel around her waist and she gives up and just flees upstairs, leaving Santana irritated with her, Rachel slightly amused that Charlie is acting like that and Shelby slightly horrified that she caught one of her students in a semi-compromising position.

“Sup Hobbit. Hobbit’s mom,” Santana says turning to look at them, she’s slightly irritated at them because all she needed was about two more minutes with Charlie.

“Hobbit?” Shelby asked confused, because she’s sure she saw a tent shape in the towel that Charlie had around her hips.

“It’s a nickname,” Rachel says dismissively. “Santana calls everyone a nickname. Did you really have to push her like that?” Santana Lopez smirks.

“Yes. It’s fun to mess with her. How’d it go with Q?” Santana asks and she winces when Rachel’s face falls. “That bad? Shame I was hope you’d be making lady babies by now, that being said I guess I don’t owe Britt’s that twenty dollars.”

Rachel doesn’t say anything, “Is your way working?” she asks Santana, because from the look of Charlie’s face she had been about to break. To crack into a million pieces and have her way with Santana. She couldn’t help wondering if that would work on Quinn.
“You saw her,” Santana says with that proud smirk of hers. Seducing Charlie had always been relatively easy, but the soccer player had never really cracked before. Charlie looked ready to break, she had looked ready to throw away her morals to be with her. Charlie would probably never carry on an affair of sorts, she wouldn’t cheat indefinitely and all Santana really wanted to do was break Charlie and Dani up. Then things could back to the way they were. She wanted things to go back to when Charlie would keep trying to impress her, she wanted Charlie to keep on telling her how amazing she was. She wanted Charlie to be hers.

“Rachel, I don’t think that attempting to seduce Quinn away from her boyfriend is a good idea,” Shelby said immediately putting a stop to that idea, because she been where Rachel was and she knew what the girl was thinking. “She just needs a bit of time to come to her senses,” She looked at Santana about to say something when Charlie comes back downstairs dressed in baggy cargo pants and she’s keeping her head down and not looking anybody in the eye. Shelby’s disappointed because she thought that Charlie was better than that and she wants to give the soccer player a lecture.

“It’s a perfectly natural response to—” Rachel offers trying to make Charlie feel better. It doesn’t work.

“Rachel, please just shut up,” Charlie hisses her face still flushed, before turning to Santana, “You need to go home Santana,” she says and her tone doesn’t leave any room for argument and Santana rolls her eyes. She can’t meet Santana in the eye because she’s sort of upset mostly at herself for nearly being unfaithful. And she’s not sure that looking at Santana is the smartest idea.

“Whatever, later bitches,” Santana says walking out, side stepping Shelby.

Shelby stares at Charlie who scratches her cheek, “Do you have a?” she asks delicately.

“Yes,” Charlie says because why not it’s not as secret anymore. She shoots a pleading look at Rachel, “I’m starved and I feel like Chinese.”

“Actually Charlie, Shelby said that she was going to teach me how to cook tonight, you’re welcome to join us.”

Charlie turns to look at Shelby who is still studying her, “I wouldn’t want to intrude on your mother-daughter—”

“You won’t be and now that I’ve found out that you’re living with my daughter, I feel the urge to have a discussion with you,” Shelby said getting overprotective of Rachel.

“Is this because I have a penis or because I’m a lesbian?” Charlie asked, noting that Shelby was taken aback by her bluntness, but she’s tired and she’s been pushed to the brink of her sanity and she really hates the bloody glee club assemblies.

“Well I’d like to know what’s going on here. I come to visit my daughter and I see you and Santana about to have sex—where are your fathers?”

Rachel shrugged, because she really had no idea. There was always enough money for her and Charlie to get take out, and there was gas money, though Charlie insisted on paying for that by herself, and Charlie had started to receive monthly payments from Judy, of three hundred dollars as a way to entice the teen to come home.

“I think Leroy is in Toledo and Hiram went to Los Angeles,” Charlie offered scratching her cheek.

“That was during the summer,” Rachel reminded Charlie.
“Oh,” Charlie said and shrugged because she had truthfully had no idea where they went.

Shelby stared at the two teens, in shock because they seemed to be living on their own for long periods of time, “Does Quinn live here as well?” That would be too much, she didn’t understand why Charlie had seemed to move in. If the girl that Rachel had a crush on lived with her then she’d have to call Hiram and Leroy and question their parenting technique they were still under eighteen, they were still minors.

“No she lives with Judy—my mother,” Charlie said with a shrug and answered the unasked question. “Leroy and Hiram are technically my legal guardians.”

“I haven’t seen them since the trial, have you?” Rachel asked, completely indifferent. The moment that she had turned sixteen her father’s had gotten busier and she was given a lot more responsibility.

“I was out for most of the summer remember? Working and then hanging with Puck and you know Dani,” Charlie pointed out.

“So basically you two live without parental supervision?” Shelby asked.

Rachel and Charlie looked at each other, “Yes, but we’re practically adults and we share the chores, and we do our homework together. My father’s trust us and we haven’t done anything to abuse their trust,” Rachel said even though that wasn’t technically true. She’d thrown a party but it had been a small one and nothing had gotten broken. They were responsible and nothing really bad had happened.

Shelby stared at the two teenagers, as if they didn’t just understand the gravity of the situation. “I just walked in on Charlie, about to have sex or something of the sort with another teenager. How have either of you not abused their trust? Is this a regular occurrence?”

Rachel blinked, “Charlie’s been sexually active since she was thirteen and my fathers are aware of that fact and they have also given her the talk, and given her condoms, which from what I hear Charlie uses religiously. And I am still a virgin.”

“It’s not that common, I’ve only been with Dani twice,” Charlie said rubbing her head. “Santana just invited herself, I didn’t tell her to come over. I didn’t even really want her here and we weren’t going to have sex.” It’s a complete lie and she’s extraordinarily grateful that they had walked in when they did.

“You’ve been sexually active since you were—” Shelby had read Charlie’s English literature essays, and they were actually really good, considerably much better than most of the other garbage that most of the other students handed in. She had thought that Charlie was actually a pretty decent teenager.

Charlie turned to Rachel, “You didn’t tell her anything?”

“I didn’t think it was my place,” Rachel said with a shrug, “It happened to you, and I know you don’t like talking about it.”

“Talking about what?” Shelby asks confused.

So Charlie starts from the beginning and tells Shelby everything mostly because she doesn’t really like the look that Shelby is giving her, and she pulls up her shirt so the English Literature teacher can see the scars on her back and it suddenly all makes sense to Shelby and while she feels sorry for Charlie that doesn’t excuse what she just walked in on, what Charlie had just exposed Rachel
to. “You can’t just—when was the last time you two even had a home cooked meal?” Both teenagers shrugged, it was probably the barbeque. So Shelby checks the fridge which really is just a mess of take-out boxes with names scrawled on the boxes. There aren’t even any ingredients to make a fresh meal with. “You’re teenagers,” she says.

“Who are both responsible, Charlie worked three jobs in the summer and now works weekend afternoons at a record store, and I have all my various classes to attend. We do our homework together, watch a musical, talk about the day, and compare schedules because I still haven’t earned my driver’s license yet. We don’t party or do drugs, and the only guest that is constantly over is Quinn, and occasionally various members of the glee club,” Rachel said still not understanding, she had been self-sufficient since she was about twelve. Charlie was equally as self-sufficient and they simply just worked together. “Santana has never shown up here without being invited before, so it was probably a one off.”

Shelby couldn’t help but stare, from what Charlie had told her, the girl had never had a mother and didn’t particularly want another parental figure in her life, and Rachel was actually pretty self-sufficient on her own as she just pointed out. But they were still teenagers and whether they liked it or not they needed some adult guidance, she had just caught Charlie about to have sex, even if the teen denied it. “Alright, even though I know I haven’t been your parent for that long but you two need adult supervision, and properly balanced meals, and while I know you two have a system that works for the two of you. You’re still teenagers, so I’m going to check in on you two a bit more often, and every week I’ll make you guys enough food to last the week so all you’ll have to do is microwave it. And I’m here if either one of you need to talk. This—” Shelby pulled out a Chinese take-out container, “Is probably going to kill you by the time you’re thirty, it doesn’t matter how much you go to the gym or how much you dance. You both could stand to eat better.”

“So you’re not going to mess with the system?” Charlie asked because she liked not having a curfew or having someone come after her all the time. She had never felt so free and yet so safe, the Berry’s were always a phone-call away, and she was allowed to basically do anything she wanted within reason. It was a good thing that she wasn’t much of a partier to begin with.

“No I won’t because I believe you when you say that what happened earlier wasn’t planned. But if it happens again, I’m going to have to talk to your father’s Rachel.”

Rachel nodded but she was secretly delighted, it meant that Shelby would be making more time for her daughter, and they could have some more mother daughter bonding time. Charlie seemed indifferent it wasn’t as if Shelby was moving in to be a full-time mother but she had just signed up to parent the two of them.
The Fabray twins were two different people, even though they had the twin thing going on, and they were close but they were also Fabray’s and the modus operandi when presented with certain situations was to do the exact same thing. Avoid and not talk about it. It had more to do with being a Fabray than anything else, it was something that they both did, and no one was really surprised when Charlie openly avoided Santana taking great lengths to stay away from the Latina. But when Quinn began to avoid Rachel and react to the diva negatively people began to notice. There were rumors circulating that Rachel was after another one of Quinn’s boyfriends and there was a falling out because Quinn Fabray had returned to her usual icy demeanor.

Charlie doesn’t really care or notice when Finn gets put back on the football team, she’s got soccer to worry about. McKinley is bulldozing the competition and she’s settled into a new role, Dani doesn’t have the field vision she does and she’s fine letting Dani have the best goals, because it’s Dani’s senior year and she’s getting scouts from UCLA coming to view her games. Dani wants a division I scholarship and Charlie doesn’t mind taking the back seat to help her achieve that. So it’s easy to throw herself into soccer, school and work and not think about Santana Lopez. It’s even easier to simply not sit anywhere near the Latina in the sole class they share together, and she makes herself scarce whenever Quinn is with Santana, people notice of course well Jacob Ben Israel notices and suddenly the rumors start to fly that something must have gone down between the two of them because the last time this happened Santana and Charlie were fighting.

Quinn on the other hand is focusing all her attention on Sam, who has been thinking about ways to take their relationship to the next level. She’s been finally put on the pill to stop anymore ‘accidents’ from happening. While Judy isn’t thrilled with Sam Evans, he isn’t from a respectable family and his family isn’t all that religious, he is the best candidate for Quinn to date at least at the school. Quinn believes she’s ready for sex, with him and she’s letting him go farther than ever, farther than even Finn had gone, because she really doesn’t want to think about Rachel. And that second kiss and what it meant. Her mother had pointed out that now that she’d had a child she really couldn’t say that she was saving herself for marriage, and if she wanted to keep Sam interested than this was something that she had to do. So even though Quinn Fabray really wasn’t ready to make that step with Sam she begins to get ready. She’d had sex with Puck after all and both Santana and Brittany keep pointing out that once you’ve done it once it’s really no big deal. She can’t ask Rachel for advice because she knows that it will hurt the tiny diva. So she’s stuck. Because she really doesn’t know what to do.

Puck on the other is busy with fight club and selling drugs, he’s expanding his business because Stoner Brett’s parents have realized that their son might have a problem, and he can’t afford the product anymore. Which cuts into Puck’s bottom line. So he branches out and starts taking risks, and branches out. At first the risk is a good thing because he’s selling out his product faster than ever, and more and more people start hearing about it. He’s branched out to the community college kids, and he keeps going and keeps studying and just doing all that he can He gets arrested when he sells to an undercover cop.

Puck had planned to go with Charlie and Quinn to visit his daughter that weekend and really the extra money was so that he could help the Griffins out with diapers and new clothes, even though they said that they could afford it, he did it anyway because he needed to help provide for his daughter. But he won’t be able to because he’s been stuck with a crappy public defender because his mom can’t afford a decent one, and Puck can’t use his drug money to pay for a lawyer. He’s lucky that he’s still technically a minor and the judge took pity on him otherwise he’d be tried in adult court, and the last thing he wants is to go to an actual prison.
Kissing Brittany was always sweet and gentle, and it was different than kissing Puck or Charlie, it felt nice. It was nice, and as Santana pressed her lips against Brittany’s again, she could feel the dancer mumbling against her lips. “I love your sweet lady kisses.”

“Mmm-hmm. It’s a nice break from all that scissoring,” Santana replies because she does like getting her mack on with Brittany at least someone wants her. Puck had been rejecting her for weeks now, coupled with Charlie’s freeze out, she just really needed someone to show her a bit of love right now.

Brittany smiles into the kiss as an idea strikes her, “We should do a duet together. We should sing Melissa Etheridge’s “Come To My Window.” It’s

Santana makes a face at this and pulls away because it really sounds like Brittany wants to come out and she isn’t gay or anything, even if Charlie is a girl, she has a penis so it really doesn’t count anyway, and she does occasionally like having sex with Puck. “First of all? There’s a lot of talking going on, and I wants to get my mack on.” She leans back because she doesn’t want to talk about it with Brittany of all people, no one cares if the dancer is bisexual, it’s common knowledge at school, she’s kissed both boys and girls at parties.

Brittany kisses back confused now, because Santana hasn’t really ever said no to her before, she doesn’t want to. It makes sense and Santana would be a lot happier if she was out, a bit less desperate for attention from all the wrong people. From Puck mostly, Brittany is sort of impressed that Charlie’s managed to say no to the Latina, because Santana can be very persuasive when she wants to be. “Well… I don’t know, I just… I think we just—” there are no right words to say what she wants because Santana is just as stubborn as Quinn is and pushing her away right now, abandoning her like she thinks Charlie did and Puck did will only hurt Santana’s feelings more but she really doesn’t want to do this anymore.

Santana pulls away, she knows what she is. The Latina knows that she likes women that doesn’t mean that she wants to come out at school. Kurt was being smashed into lockers by Karofsky, Dave was laying into Lady Hummel and it was getting worse with each passing day. “Okay, second of all? I’m not making out with you because I’m in love with you and want to sing about making lady babies. I’m only here because Charlie’s been making sweet lady-love to that blue-haired wonder for weeks now, and Puck’s been in the slammer for about twelve hours. I’m like a lizard. I just need something warm beneath me or I can’t digest my food.”

Brittany pulls away from Santana, because she isn’t stupid and she knows what she heard she isn’t just a warm body. “That’s how Puck and the guys at school treat you, I didn’t think that you’d be like that San,” she says because that hurt. It also hurt that Santana Lopez had ranked her behind Puck of all people, Charlie she could sort of understand even though the soccer player was being stubborn.

Santana realizes the mistake immediately and sighs, “That’s not what I meant Britt, and you know that you’re important to me.”

Brittany ignores her, it was just a song suggestion, and it could have been any other song. “Well you have to choose who to do a duet with, if you don’t want to sing with me.”
Charlie slams her locker closed sighing as she turns to head to class when she jumps back, “Santana? What the hell?”

“Look Fabgay, I’ve come to apologize,” Santana says crossing her arms over her chest, “I shouldn’t have jumped on you like that.”

Charlie stared at Santana because it’s been three weeks of her smirking at her, of her giving looks. It’s been three weeks where Charlie has simply avoided the Latina because it was easier and Santana hadn’t seemed to mind, “What do you want?” because she knows Santana and clearly the Latina wants something from her.

“To apologize,” Santana says but she can see that Charlie isn’t buying it for a second. “And to invite you to join glee club. The hobbit says you can sing, and I need a duet for an assignment.”

Charlie stares at the Latina, before she snorts, “You’re joking. I’m not going to join your glee cult,” she says because she really hates how they break out into song at random times, her life already feels like one huge musical.

“It’s not permanently, just until Asian Number Two gets back,” Santana says, with a simple shrug. She doesn’t expect Charlie to look around before pulling her into an empty classroom, “If you wanted to make-out there’s a perfectly good janitors closet on the second floor that no one ever uses.”

“Stop it,” Charlie says firmly, “Just stop Santana, I like you, you’re my friend but you can’t keep making comments like that. You can’t keep trying to pull me back to you. I already told you that this can’t keep happening, Dani really likes me and I really like her— and we’re together.”

“You don’t even like her, not like you like Brittany or even me, so why don’t you just stop pretending that it isn’t going to happen between the two of us and—”

“It isn’t going to happen between the two of us because I’m not your sex toy Santana, you can’t just pull me out when you feel like it or because Puck’s not around. You just can’t use me and put me back in the toy box when you’re done. So just stop teasing me, because I’m not going to cheat on my girlfriend, I’m not going to give up a decent thing just because you snapped your fingers at me. This isn’t me trying to prove my gayness, this is me trying to move on with someone who wants to be mine. Someone who is dating me and likes me for who I am and doesn’t care about—” Charlie didn’t finish the sentence because that would be a lie, Dani did care what she had in between her legs. “Who doesn’t care that I’m the school freak. And isn’t ashamed to be seen beside me.”

Santana stared at Charlie for a moment, because she hadn’t expected this. Charlie didn’t really talk about things like this, not with her and not with anybody else. “I don’t—you’re not just a warm body to me,” Santana says after a moment. She actually does like the soccer player.

“Yes I am, and I was okay with that back in freshman year. I was okay to be your experiment, because I really liked you and I thought or at least hoped that maybe you really liked me too. Because here was the hottest girl in school and she wanted me, she wanted to be with me in that way. You wanted to be with the school freak. Back then I would have been your dirty little secret, because I didn’t want to ruin your reputation at school, and I didn’t need Russell finding out. But you didn’t like me like I liked you and every time you get mad at Puck or you get bored with scissoring Brittany, you call me and I was fine with that. I was fine being that warm body or that shoulder to cry on but I can’t be that warm body anymore. I can’t. Because I want to be happy, I think I deserve a little bit of happiness it doesn’t matter if Dani doesn’t want me to be with me completely, or there aren’t any sparks between us, she makes me happy. And I can be happy with her, and I can grow to love her. So please Santana, I get I’m like one of your favorite sex toys, but
please just let me be happy.” Charlie begged, the anger was gone replaced by the quiet resignation.

“You weren’t just a warm body, and you’re not a sex toy.” Santana repeats again taking a step towards Charlie, because Charlie wasn’t, and distress on Charlie’s features as she sort of babbled about her feelings tore at the Latina. It was supposed to be fun, a little challenge, breaking Charlie away from someone she didn’t really love, maybe saving her from a bit of heart ache.

Charlie took a step back not letting Santana get close to her, “You had sex with Finn. Finn fucking Hudson, who couldn’t satisfy you and you tried to have sex with me. And that’s always been what’s been going on between us, if you were mad at Puck you’d start flirting with me again trying to sleep with me. If Brittany was busy and or wasn’t in the mood you’d start trying to sleep with me. I want to be normal or at least pretend to be normal for a little bit. Please Santana, I’m not interested in joining your glee cult. I don’t want to sing with you. But I do want us to be friends so can we just do that?”

Santana studied Charlie for a long moment, her face an expressionless mask, this rejection hurt more than Puck’s. It hurt more than Brittany going to be with Artie and sing with him. She wasn’t ready to come out, or anything, and Charlie deserved better than someone who still made her feel like a freak. But her toying with Charlie wasn’t going to work anymore, “Okay, Fabgay, I’ll see if I can sing with someone else,” with that Santana pulled away from Charlie and walked out the door.

“I really would like to do a duet with you,” Rachel says, there has been enough time that has passed between them. She had given Quinn her space, she had even baked the cheerleader I’m sorry cookies. But she had taken Shelby and Charlie’s advice to heart, she needed to give Quinn some more time. Truthfully she had come to the conclusion that having Quinn as her friend and having her in her life was at least something, it was better than not having her at all. It didn’t help that she was upset with Charlie for not taking her side, and not stepping in with Quinn. If anything the cheerleader had gotten cozier with Sam Evans who was now the most popular guy at school. Apparently when you lead the Titans to a six game winning streak you were considered to be something special.

Quinn looked up at Rachel and swallowed, she hated the fact that the diva was constantly on her mind that she would constantly pick up her phone to see if Rachel had texted her or just to say something to Rachel to apologize for calling her a name for being Quinn Fabray. She wanted to say sorry and beg for forgiveness to tell Rachel that she had felt it and she wanted to explore what it meant, but she didn’t because she was a Fabray, and appearances meant everything to her. Charlie was the black sheep of the family, she was the one that was different and it was okay for her to be a lesbian, it was okay for Charlie to be different she had literally been born that way. But she couldn’t risk it not again, she couldn’t risk losing everything again, going back to the bottom depending on Charlie for protection, on Santana who she was sure was still trying to find a way to throw her under the bus. Quinn Fabray just wanted to look to the future and her future was bright. “I’m doing Lucky with Sam,” Quinn said immediately.

Rachel hid her disappointment even though she had suspected this, “I just wanted us to be friends again, I’m sorry that I kissed you. I just—I thought that there was something going on between us. And I overstepped, and I shouldn’t have pushed my feelings onto you.”

Quinn looked up at her sharply, she hadn’t expected Rachel to apologize for what she had done, or look so defeated. This wasn’t what she wanted, she didn’t want Rachel to be hurt by her rejection, or even upset. “I shouldn’t have called you RuPaul. Charlie would always bitch at me when I called you that,” she said with an uncomfortable laugh. “I—shouldn’t have freaked out at you, I didn’t
even know that you swung that way,” Quinn finished lamely, even though she did know Charlie had informed her so bluntly.

“Oh well, I’m bisexual,” Rachel said with a laugh, because she probably should have told Quinn this earlier, she probably was just caught horrendously off guard.

Quinn didn’t say anything right away, “Well you know I’m okay with Charlie being so—Charlie. Can we just go back to being friends?” she asked Rachel. She could do that she could just be friends with Rachel.

Rachel smiled, “I’d like that, and I’ve missed having you around. Without you I can’t make Charlie watch musicals with me, she’s actually trying to get me to watch the Spiderman trilogy with her, despite my insistence that I am firmly a DC fan.”

Quinn grinned at this, “Charlie can’t be happy with that news,” she said.

“She did say that we could no longer be friends, and people suggest that I’m dramatic. She refused to talk to me until I baked her a tray of brownies,” Rachel informed her dryly. She didn’t mention that Shelby had come to check on them and had watched as Charlie had demolished an entire tray of vegan brownies in front of her. It had led to a lecture on proper eating and portion control, while it was nice to have a parent around this was something new for the both of them. Charlie had never had a positive female figure in her life and Rachel had never had a mother.

Quinn snorted at her twin’s antics, “Well they are the best vegan brownies I’ve ever tasted,” she said and smiled when Rachel grinned at her. “Beth—missed you she’s getting so big and the Griffins were disappointed that you didn’t come. Even if we’re fighting you should still come you know, because she really loves hearing you sing and you’re like the only person who can get her to settle down. And Charlie’s more of the play with them and then when they start crying hand them over to the mother type person, we spent like three hours trying to get her to settle down. I tried singing to her and that worked for like two minutes till she started crying again. I’m still jealous that my daughter seems to love you more than me.”

Rachel laughed, “I’ve been recording a CD for the Griffins so they can play it, just to help them out a bit, and Charlie showed me pictures. Were they upset with Puck?”

Quinn bit her lip, because the Griffins had predictably banned Puck from seeing Beth, at least for the time being until they could trust him again. She couldn’t really blame them for it and she planned to tell Puck on Friday when they went to go visit him in the detention center that they had him in. “He’s not allowed to see her for a bit, they had heard that he got busted for a drug charge. I didn’t even know that he was dealing. Charlie didn’t seem surprised by the news. She said that she had tried to get him to stop, to stop dealing but he hadn’t listened to her and she wasn’t going to rat him out or anything like that. So she told him to be careful. I didn’t think he was so reckless. They gave us this speech about how seeing Beth this often was a privilege that they could revoke, they didn’t want her exposed to negative influences.”

Rachel shook her head, she missed having Puck around he really was sweet under all his bravado and everything else, and she hadn’t expected him to be a drug dealer. Or to get arrested, but to lose the right to see his child, would hurt Puck more than anything else in the world. “I can convince them to give him another chance,” Rachel said in a determined fashion.

“Are you going to make a PowerPoint presentation?” Quinn said raising a brow. Because it would be classic Rachel, when Rachel flushed Quinn laughed because it was so Rachel. “Charlie tried to talk to them about it, carefully but they weren’t having it. I think they were more upset by the fact that he was using drug money to buy things for Beth and help out.”
“Well when you visit him, tell him that I’m very disappointed in him, but I will try and make sure that he gets to see Beth soon,” Rachel said because she had seen the amount of work that Charlie had put into getting Puck out of his depressive mood the last thing anyone wanted was a repeat of that. They needed Puck at a hundred percent because he really was one of their better singers.

Brittany S. Pierce didn’t date not really, she didn’t want to bind herself to one person. It was part of who she was, and she liked to share love and make people feel better. Sex was good at making people feel better. She didn’t really break up with people, she just had sex with them a few times, and moved on. So when Artie was the one to break up with her she was confused, because she thought that he had liked it. He seemed to enjoy himself. “You’re- You’re breaking up with me?”

“All you wanted was a free dinner at Breadstix,” Artie says because that’s what makes sense to him, he should have known that having Brittany be interested in him was too good to be true. No all she had wanted to do was make Santana jealous, at least a little bit and maybe force Charlie to pay attention. Both of them had been off doing their own thing and they hadn’t gone to feed the ducks together in months. “But I really wanted to go with you. I was going to order us one really, really long piece of spaghetti like in “Lady and the Tramp.” I’ve been practicing nudging the meatball across the table with my nose.” She had, she liked Artie he was a really good dancer even though he couldn’t dance with his feet. She liked dancing with him.

Artie scoffed, “You used me for my voice. That’s the only reason you had sex with me. I have it on good authority.” Santana had been the one to set him straight, she had done him a favor. But he sees the look of confusion and he can tell that Brittany had never really been rejected before so he explains, “I know that sex doesn’t mean anything to you, but did you ever think how much it means to me? After my accident, we didn’t know if I’d ever be able even to do that. And when I found out that I could, it seemed like some kind of miracle, and you just walked all over that. You’re not my partner anymore. I told Mr. Schue I’m pulling out of the duet competition.” It was a stupid competition and he had let someone take his virginity and something that was supposed to be one of those moments that he found special, had been robbed because Brittany was just using him.

Brittany feels sick to her stomach because, that hadn’t been her intention at all. She had just wanted to make him feel good, “Artie, I didn’t know. I’m— I’m so sorry,” but he’s gone and she knows that Santana probably had something to do with it, and Quinn wouldn’t understand. And Charlie probably wouldn’t come with her because she has a girlfriend now, and Rachel had never been to feed the ducks with her. So for once Brittany feels extremely alone because all her friends are really busy and Santana’s kind of a bitch.

Charlie had always come for Santana and she had always known about the soccer players feelings for the Latina and she had left the soccer player alone but she really just needed to go to the duck pond and talk about it and she didn’t want to go alone, and she didn’t want to go with Santana either. She was mad at her. So Brittany makes up her mind and finds the soccer player alone in the locker room getting changed for practice. “Can we go to the duck pond?”

Charlie’s eyes flicker to Brittany for a moment and she studies the dancer’s face for a second, and she can see the upset and the hurt in her eyes, and even though it’s been months since she last went or had the need to go, Charlie nods.
Santana is the last person Quinn suspects at her door on Thursday night, the Latina doesn’t look to be angry which is a good sign at least for Quinn she’s not in the mood to deal with one of Santana’s mood swings tonight. “You know how I told you that sex wasn’t that big of a deal? Forget I said that,” Santana says letting herself in as she brushes by Quinn.

Quinn blinks, because she half expected Santana to come over with another plan to break up Charlie and Dani. Though surprisingly the Latina had been deathly quiet on that front, which was a surprise to her. “We’ve been over this I actually like Sam.”

“Yes you like trouty mouth. I get it, you like him. But you’ve been saying that for about two months now and I knows you’re in love with Yentl. So don’t sleep with Sam, you’ll end up regretting it.”

Quinn stares at Santana for a moment, all of this could have been said over the phone, the Latina didn’t need to walk over to her house to tell her all this. “I’m going to do it, we’ve been going strong for two months. He’s a really nice guy and I think I’m finally ready.”

“Except you really don’t want to do it, Puck was an accident and you told me that it felt uncomfortable and you didn’t like it, and I saw you in the locker room. I saw you with Berry that was more passion than I thought you were capable of. You like her, you want to be with her so just be with her. Cause you being with Sam probably kills her inside.”

Quinn’s hazel eyes flick over Santana, this is the most subdued she’d ever seen Santana, “What happened between you and Charlie?”

Santana grimaces and looks away, “She does need to break up with Dani, but I can’t be the one to do it.”

“Charlie and Dani are a good match and like the perfect couple. Charlie brings her flowers and when the vending machine was out of M&M’s she went out to the gas station and bought Dani a pack when she was having a bad day. She cares for Dani a lot and I’m not going to mess that up for her.”

Santana made a face, she knew all that, she knew how desperate Charlie was to keep Dani happy. The whole thing was nauseating, and Charlie was trying way too hard, and Charlie hated giant displays of affection, and yet here she was doing it to keep Dani happy. And it made her jealous—she was fucking jealous that Charlie wasn’t going out of her way to make her happy anymore. It fucking sucked. “Yeah on the outside everything is good. You’re Fabrays it’s like your entire life’s mission to portray that you’re happy to the world even if you’re not. Your sister doesn’t love Dani Harper and even if she manages to convince herself that she’s happy. She can’t be happy with someone who can’t be with her completely. Dani refuses to be with Charlie. Charlie still sees herself as the school freak, this isn’t helping her. You denying that you have feelings for Yentl, isn’t helping you. So for once can you Fabray’s just—go after you want without thinking of the appearances of it all, or overthinking it. It’s like walking a minefield with the two of you. You like Yentl, you have terrible taste and I’m sure that she’ll drive you to an early grave but you like her. So just you know be with her.”

Quinn blinked and sighed, “I don’t—”

Santana rolled her eyes, “Yes you do. I’m giving you like bitch free advice and you’re totally not taking it.”

Quinn bit her lip before moving away from Santana, “I can’t openly tell Charlie to dump Dani, and I can’t order her to do it, or play games with her. We don’t talk about things like this with each
other. It gets awkward and we both have a tendency to point out the hypocrisy. And Charlie is always aware when I try and manipulate her, and she hates it. I got lucky with you because she already knew you were using her. And Charlie is just bad at manipulating people in general. When I said I can’t get involved, I mean I can’t get involved.”

“Why she’s your sister? Do you know how many times she’s dragged someone away or dealt out a punishment because someone called you a slut? She protects you, she’s protected you for years and you can’t even—you can’t even do this for her. She needs you to have her back here Quinn and if it backfires you can blame me.”

Quinn sighed, it wasn’t an issue of if Dani and Charlie broke up it was an issue of when. She studied Santana there was a hint of desperation there, “I told you to stay out of it, and you shouldn’t have backed her into this corner,” All Santana had done was managed to push Dani closer to Charlie, but Charlie was overcorrecting the problem. “I’ll—pull some strings.” Charlie was probably going to find out and another slushy war would be the least of her problems.

“How angry are they?” It was the first question that Puck asked them when they sat him down in front of the twins. “The Griffins? How angry—I mean I didn’t mean to fuck things up for you—”

Quinn took his hand gently only to have a guard bark at her and she let go, “They don’t want you visiting her, at least not until you get your act together. We’ll try and convince them of course but right now they don’t want you around her.”

Puck sat there stunned for a moment, he hadn’t meant to mess things up this badly. He had been so careful. So incredibly careful, and he had blown it all for a few extra dollars. His own mother couldn’t even look at him in the face and he didn’t even want to think about what was waiting for him back in the detention center.

“Don’t worry if anyone can bully them into letting you see her it’s Rachel,” Quinn said trying to remain positive.

“No point, the defense attorney they stuck me is a piece of crap and my mom can’t afford to get me a decent attorney. I’m not getting out of here.”

“Make a deal,” Charlie said immediately, because if her mother could avoid jail time then Puck could avoid jail time.

“Are you kidding me? There are gang members back there. I can’t rat on anyone otherwise I’m going to fucking die. It’s fucking terrifying back there, I can’t—and I’m not getting out of here. I’m going to miss her first birthday and her first words and—” Puck choked on his words, as the panic set in.

Charlie glanced around there were other boys here, and she had been a boy for thirteen years of her life, if Puck showed any sign of weakness his life would essentially be a living hell. “Puck, you can’t. Not here, not now.”

Puck looks at her and there are tears in his eyes, but he blinks them away because she’s right. “If I’m lucky I’ll be out after my eighteenth birthday, at least that’s what he’s hoping for, but I sold to an undercover officer, and I can’t cough up who the dealer is. Cause the last guy who talked in here—” Puck said lowering his voice as he told them the stories that he had heard.
Charlie tapped her fingers on the armrest from where she was sitting in the passenger seat. Quinn was driving her back to Rachel’s place. Neither one of them had said anything, as they left the detention facility. Noah Puckerman wasn’t going to survive in that center for very long. “Sunday dinners. Not at the house,” Charlie says finally, her voice calm as she looks out the window.

Quinn flicks her eyes to her twin, “What are you talking about?”

“Well, Sunday dinners not at the house, if Judy agrees to pay for his legal defense. Not some crappy lawyer, the best Lima has to offer. It’s his first offense, with the right defense team behind him he’ll get off with a slap on the wrist. You know the rules don’t always apply to us.” Charlie repeats explaining herself this time.

Quinn knows exactly what Charlie is offering to do for Puck, she had already planned to talk to their mother about it. “You don’t have to do that. I was already planning to convince her. I’ll just point out that Puck getting a record will affect Beth.”

Charlie doesn’t say anything because she knows that won’t actually do anything. Judy hasn’t made the trip down to see her granddaughter yet. Beth was just another problem that needed to be cleaned up. They both knew that nothing in the world that Judy had come accustomed to was free, and Charlie currently had something that Judy wanted. “If you can’t convince her, that’s my offer. It’s the only offer on the table. Call me and I’ll verbally confirm that I’ll go to Sunday dinner’s with her until we graduate. I’ll behave myself, I’ll even smile and call her mom in public. Just as long as it’s the best defense lawyer that money can buy. We can’t leave him in there. He’s my bro, and even though I totally still hate him for knocking you up, he’s my friend.”

Quinn nods because she feels the same way, she and Puck aren’t friends but they had created something perfect and for better or worse they’d always be tied to one another. They’d always have Beth there was no taking it back, there were no do-overs, she wasn’t going to explain to Beth that her father was a drug dealer, or worse. Puck was the only person who knew how much it hurt to give Beth up, they shared the same pain. “We’ll get him out.”

Quinn isn’t able to convince Judy to get involved, not after she finds out what Puck did. Quinn feels sick offering Charlie up on a silver platter even if it had been Charlie’s idea. Like Charlie predicted Judy bites, and once Charlie verbally confirms that it’s the only way she’ll ever spend time with Judy, Judy makes a few calls.

Sunday dinner’s become Sunday lunches, right after church at the restaurant that many of the members of her church frequent after Sunday service. Judy wants the maximum amount of people to see that she has her children back and that her middle child has forgiven her for her transgressions. It’s the first time that Quinn realizes that maybe Judy isn’t really trying to be a better mother.
“So when can I meet your parents?” Dani asked Charlie, she was sitting with her legs across Charlie’s lap as she worked on a mix, Charlie had been getting better at it, and it was quickly becoming one of her favorite hobbies, and her mashups were actually really good. Tyler Jameson had even told her that if she continued with the work she was doing then by next summer he’d see if he could get her a gig at one of the festivals he was a DJ at.

Charlie flicked her eyes at Dani, “We’ve been over this. You can’t.”

Dani frowned Charlie had met her parents and she’d charmed them, both her parents approved of the teenager. The soccer captain was polite, and had been charming. It was like she had been a different person or at best had put on a mask for the sake of impressing her parents. “What do you mean I can’t? We’ve been dating for nearly three months now, and you’ve met my parents, and I know Quinn lives with your mother. You never told me what happened to your dad.”

Charlie’s face twitched, “Russell cheated on Judy. Judy is in the middle of a rather ugly divorce with Russell. Everything is in Russell’s name and he hasn’t had the time to hide assets. They’re still fighting over the pre-nuptial that Russell made Judy sign. I expect it to drag on for another year or so.”

Dani blinked surprised at Charlie’s rather blunt way of putting it, “Is that why you live with Rachel?” she had never asked. Charlie had never bothered to explain, “It’s just easier than dealing with the fighting?”

Charlie grunted, “I don’t like talking about my parents. You know this. I don’t talk about why I live with Rachel, I just do. Her fathers are my legal guardians and I suppose now Shelby has taken it upon herself to straighten me out.” She still wasn’t sure how she felt about Shelby’s interference on her life, but her meals had helped her shed a few more pounds, they were incredibly healthy and delicious and she was learning how to cook, with Rachel. She could now make a few dishes from scratch perfectly, Shelby had made them go over it until it was perfect. The woman was a harsher task master than Roz, but at least she could make spaghetti and meatballs from scratch now. They hadn’t ordered take out in months, and they now shopped for ingredients.

“Sam has met your mother,” Dani insisted, she had asked him and he had said that he had, that Judy Fabray had taken him out to a fancy country club.

“Sam is my sister’s boyfriend. My sister lives with Judy. Of course he has met her.”

“So why can’t I?”

“Because I don’t like Judy? Because you’re a girl and I’m a girl? Because nothing that you can do will ever charm her and it’s a waste of time to even bother. You have twelve tattoos and your hair is currently blue, all of which I find extremely attractive, Judy won’t, and they have a strict dress code at the country club. They wouldn’t let you in,” Charlie said bluntly.

“So you’re not even going to try? We could go over to your place right now if you mother is there and we can meet her right now, or we can meet her whenever you see her next. Just bring me along, I was thinking of doing something different with my hair anyway, and I can cover up most
of my tattoos,” Dani said. Sam had described how proper Judy was and she really wanted to get to
know the woman.

Charlie turned back to the music mix she was making, it would probably make a decent backing to
a song, shame she wasn’t much of a lyricist. “No I’m not going to try,” Charlie said
absentmindedly. Dani shifted and pulled her legs off Charlie’s lap which forced Charlie to turn to
her. “You don’t understand I hate my family, the only person that is even important to me is
Quinn. She’s my twin. You’ve met her, she likes you and she approves. You don’t need Judy’s
approval.”

“How would you know?” Dani asked in an accusatory tone.

“Because I was there. He was a disaster, all he needed to do was have a conversation with her,
probably worship the ground Quinn walks on, and talk about his accomplishments on the football
team.” Charlie said with a shrug. “He was awkward and fidgety and he looked so out of place.”

“You were there? You haven’t told her about me? Why wasn’t I invited?” Dani demanded looking
at Charlie who suddenly seemed to realize that she had walked into a very precarious positon.

“I don’t talk to Judy if I can help it so no I didn’t tell her, Quinn did. Yes I went, even though I
didn’t want to, because Sam begged me for my help,” Charlie said slowly choosing her words
carefully, because the last thing she needed was Dani getting angrier with her.

“Why wasn’t I invited?”

“Because Russell cheated on Judy with a woman with tattoos and dyed hair, and she was a stripper.
So when I say that there is nothing that you can do to change her mind there isn’t anything you can
do to change her mind. Besides they wouldn’t have let you in, and I told you that I find you
extremely attractive, and I didn’t want you to change to try and fit in. Or have Judy make rude
comments about you all through lunch,” Charlie said with a shrug.

This didn’t seem to be an acceptable answer to Dani who glared at her, because really it just
seemed like Charlie was saying that she was ashamed of her. Sam had talked about the country
club and how expensive it was and it sounded like she was just Charlie’s dirty little secret. Like she
was ashamed to show her off to her rich upper class friends. “When is the next time you have to see
her?” Dani asked.

Charlie was tempted to say never, but she knew the topic wouldn’t die if she lied about it. “We
have a standing appointment every Sunday for lunch at some restaurant right after my mother gets
out of church.”

“Pick me up and we can go together,” Dani demanded and Charlie grunted, because it was a
terrible idea.

Despite Santana telling her what a crappy idea this is, she and Sam finally do it. They have sex. It’s
at the Fabray house, Judy has gone to visit Frannie for the weekend, and she’d be back Sunday
morning. So she invites him over on Friday night and they watch a film together, and they kiss and
there is heavy petting. He’s unsure and when he finally gather’s the courage to push further, she
doesn’t stop him this time and that’s all the confirmation they need.

There is kissing, and then he’s removing his shirt and then hers. It’s a flurry of activity, but she does ask him if he’s had a condom on him. He understands this request and he pulls one out of his wallet, and Quinn can’t help but wonder how long he’s had that there, but it’s okay because she’s on the pill and she’s sure that this time she’s not going to get pregnant. She’s done everything right. She watches him put it on, McKinley only has abstinence only education which was probably why Finn didn’t know any better. He does it correctly, there won’t be any more mistakes this time. Trust me was not a very effective birth control, and Quinn really doesn’t want to get pregnant any time soon.

His hands are clumsy on her breasts, and he’s extremely gentle, and keeps asking her if she’s okay every twenty seconds. It’s sweet, sort of like him but it doesn’t last all that long, it was certainly shorter than Puck, who is the only person she’s been with. She can’t really blame him, it’s his first time. She’s actually sort of thankful, because Sam is sweaty and she isn’t comfortable with him on top of her.

He gets off her and he’s suddenly extremely shy and asking if she enjoyed herself and if it good for her, as it did for him. Quinn can see the eagerness and the need for reassurance, and she smiles and nods even if that’s a lie. She didn’t feel anything, that wasn’t a crack at his size. From what she could remember he was just a bit smaller than Puck, even if he was a bit thicker. She just didn’t derive any pleasure from it. She didn’t feel a swell of love, it had just happened and just like that it was over with. There was no passion there was nothing.

But Sam’s promising to get better at it, and wishing he had brought more than one condom. So she says a few platitudes because she needs to reassure him, and he feels a bit proud of himself. She wonders why she feels a bit hollow on the inside.

She quickly pulls on her clothes, suddenly feeling self-conscious, she has stretch marks and Sam is there with his abs, and he’s pulling on his boxers and pulling on his clothes because laying around naked is awkward as hell between them. He still has a proud smile on his face and she doesn’t want to ruin it, and he tries to cuddle her but she’s stiff as a board in his arms, as he plants gentle kisses on her shoulder. He doesn’t seem to notice how tense she is, and it’s certainly different than her first time.

They stay like that for a while not really saying anything till she has to drive him home, he can’t just stay the night and he has an early morning football practice. She doesn’t go home she just drives to the Lopez residence because she can’t talk about this with Rachel or even Brittany the only person who will probably understand how she feels is Santana.

Santana takes one look at her and rolls her eyes before moving aside so she can come in, “Was he any good?” she asks after a moment.

“I don’t know, I can only compare it to Puck and he didn’t last as long as Puck, but he was really gentle and it was clumsy and it was over before I knew it. He only brought one condom, and we just cuddled afterwards, well he cuddled me. I just kind of laid there.”

Santana stared at Quinn for a moment, “Did you just lay there the entire time?” she asks making a face because that sounds dreadful, and she wonders how bad Quinn is at sex.

Quinn flushes because she did, she hadn’t wanted to participate, she had just taken it. Taken him and he didn’t seem to notice that she wasn’t really participating. “Yes? I didn’t really know what else to do,” she admits.
“You touch him you get involved, you move with him. I don’t know you try different positions. You—did he at least get you off? If you say I don’t know then he didn’t,” Santana says expertly. Quinn shakes her head, because the answer is no then. He didn’t get her off, she didn’t orgasm from the event. It was just as awkward as the first time she had sex. “So this experiment is over now?” she asks dryly.

“It was his first time, it wasn’t going to be good,” Quinn pointed out trying to defend him.

“What were you thinking when he was on top of you a sweaty grunting mess?”

Quinn flushed, “I just wanted it to be over. I had extra condoms but I never told him about it. He’ll get better, though I mean the first time you were with Puck it can’t have been that great.”

“No but Charlie knew what she was doing and she made sure I got off—” Santana raised a brow when Quinn made a face. “Charlie knew what she was doing, Puck didn’t. I didn’t get off the first time I was with Puck. It took Puck quite a few times before he knew what he was doing and that was only after he had sex with several other people. Even now Puck is only decent in bed, he certainly doesn’t care about his partner enough to make sure that they had a good time. You can ask Brittany she’ll tell you the same thing. She still ranks Puck as the best guy at the school, and that took him time. So once again, is this experiment over? Are you finally get your freak on with a Hobbit?”

Quinn shakes her head, “I’m not—”

“Your twin is a lesbian, it’s not unheard of that you share the same sexuality and you know Charlie isn’t going to judge you. I’m just going to mock you for life for being in love with an obnoxious hobbit. Brittany will just be happy that you’re finally embracing your inner unicorn. Karofsky isn’t stupid enough to go after you we’re Cheerios and Charlie is absolutely terrifying when she’s trying to protect you. Charlie will probably give you her blessing and stop worrying about you getting knocked up again. In case you didn’t realize this Q, but you were a fucking nightmare to deal with when you were pregnant. The only person who even liked you was the Hobbit. What with the crying and the random mood swings and you got super bitchy. That’s a keeper, she’s a keeper. You were fucking crazy as hell.”

“We’re fraternal twins, we don’t even look alike, and she’s like five inches taller than me. Charlie also has a penis. I don’t have one.”

“Which is for the best because you probably would have impregnated Yentl and I couldn’t deal with a miniature version of her,” Santana informed her friend. “The fact that you’re smiling to the idea of Rachel having your babies is simply proof that I’m right and you need to get your freak on with a hobbit,” Santana scoffed.

Charlie adjusted her tie again, and flicked a hand through her hair, it was getting to wild, and she couldn’t remember the last time someone had taken a pair of scissors to her hair. She shrugged, it’d give Judy something to complain about during lunch. At least Quinn would be there.

“You look fine,” Dani said smiling at her girlfriend, it was rare to see Charlie so formal, she was so used to Charlie wearing pants and clothes. “I’m sure your mother would approve.”

Charlie didn’t say anything they were already late, and the last thing she wanted was Judy claiming that she wasn’t holding her end of the bargain, so they walked into the restaurant, it was a family-style place and she spotted her mother and Quinn looking at menus. Judy had a sour look on her face and Charlie could already tell that this wasn’t going to go well for them, but Dani insisted on
doing this. “Mother,” Charlie greeted as they came to a stop at the table.

Judy looked up at Charlie, she was beginning to suspect that her daughter wouldn’t come. “You’re late,” she said.

“I’m sorry but I had to pick up Dani, you remember my girlfriend,” Charlie said pulling Dani forward, she looked over at her twin who was giving her a look that questioned her sanity. Because Dani still had her blue hair, but at least the tattoos were hidden under a long sleeve shirt.

“Hello Mrs. Fabray,” Dani greeted sticking out her hand, the sleeve riding up a bit to reveal a bit of the tattoos on her wrist.

Judy studied Dani for a moment critically, eying the tattoo on her wrist, “The one with the tattoos?” she said looking at Charlie and ignoring Dani’s hand for a moment.

“Yes mother the one with the tattoos,” Charlie said raising a brow at Judy who finally shook Dani’s hand and Charlie pulled Dani’s chair out for her.

“Hey Dani,” Quinn greeted warmly, nodding at Charlie’s girlfriend who looked a bit relieved to see a friendly face. She really had no idea what Charlie was thinking, she knew that this could only end in disaster. Santana would have gotten a kick out of this. She really should have invited the Latina, or even Rachel.

Judy smiled but looked at her middle child, “You’re still pretending to be a boy, and taking after your father’s habits I see.” Charlie chose to ignore the comment, she had promised to be on her best behavior after all and ignoring Judy was as great as her behavior generally got. Judy studied Charlie for another moment before smiling at Dani. “So how long have you and my daughter been dating?”

Dani let out a small breath of relief, she could do this. It wasn’t so bad sure Charlie’s mother seemed a bit judgmental, but she’d met worse parents. “Four months at the end of the month,” she said brightly.

“Four months? It’s that serious? Why ever didn’t you bring her to country club when I met Samuel? I’m sure she wouldn’t have made you feel obliged to order dinosaur nuggets like Brittany did.”

Dani froze and turned to Charlie, the soccer player had made no mention that she had invited the blonde dancer. “You brought Brittany?” she asked.

Judy eyed Charlie who turned to Dani, “Yes I was quite surprised, I thought I had made it clear that she was to bring her girlfriend.”

“And I brought a friend instead. Who just happened to be a girl, and who just happened to want to eat dinosaur nuggets with french-fries,” Charlie said dryly. “We colored—this wasn’t a date this is what I normally do with Brittany like every day.”

“It wasn’t a date Dani, Charlie just wanted someone who would give her an excuse to color in public. You know how Brittany is,” Quinn said trying to calm Charlie’s girlfriend down. Her twin was doing a piss poor job of it, and she really wished that she had brought Santana. No that would have been a terrible idea because Santana would have made snide comments all night, she really wished she had brought Rachel.

Judy decided to move on, “It’s quite alright dear, perhaps next time we can go to the country club and try again. You can bring Sam dear. You’ve been dating for roughly the same amount of time
haven’t you?”

Quinn nodded, “We have. He’s doing a really good job of leading the team to victory. This year, we might make it to the state finals if he keeps leading the team like he has.”

Judy smiled at this news, “Then you’re sure to win prom king and queen,” she said taking Quinn’s hand in her own. She didn’t notice that the smile on Quinn’s face didn’t meet her eyes, she turned her attention back to Dani, “So four months. I hope my daughter isn’t pressuring you into anything?” she said flicking her eyes to Charlie who stiffened at this.

Dani smiled, “No of course not, Charlie is an excellent girlfriend. She’s very caring and loving,” her eyes flicked to Quinn who snorted at this.

Charlie was currently absorbed in the menu, she was barely paying attention to her surroundings, and she was basically leaving Dani to fend for herself.

Judy frowned at what Dani had just said and she looked over at Charlie who still seemed rather uninterested in joining the conversation. “Well I hope you use protection, we wouldn’t want any more accidents to happen,” she said with a smile.

Dani bristled the way she said protection suggested that she thought that Charlie could catch something from her. She didn’t really want anything to do with Charlie’s penis, she was after all a lesbian and Charlie seemed to respect that and kept boxers on, or shorts. They were never completely naked together, but her girlfriend had brought her pleasure. She was looking forward to when Charlie finally had the surgery, then she’d finally be able to return the favor.

Charlie really couldn’t help herself, “We don’t,” Charlie said without missing a beat as she put the menu down. “We ready to order?” she asked a completely shocked table.

Quinn stared at her twin and then at Dani who looked absolutely mortified by the turn of this conversation. She suddenly wished that they had twin telepathy or something so that she knew what Charlie was thinking. “Charlie.” Her tone is full of reproach because Charlie seems agitated and she did promise Judy that she would behave, and she’s dangerously close to making a scene.

Charlie flicked her eyes towards her twin and then towards Judy who looked scandalized before turning to Dani, who glared at her. “Oh, that wasn’t something that I was supposed to share? Sorry.” Except she’s not, sorry at all, she’s irritated.

“What Charlie means to say is that we’re waiting for her to get her surgery,” Dani said smoothly, not noticing that Charlie had stiffened beside her.

It was the right thing to say because Judy was all smiles, “Really? I’ve been wanting to talk to you about that. Now that you’ve basically finished growing it would be time to start thinking about it seriously. Maybe you could take the summer and have it done, so you wouldn’t miss any school. I did a bit of research and the recovery time is about two months.”

Quinn hadn’t really believed Santana when she had said that Dani didn’t accept Charlie, it was Santana and the Latina was known to manipulate to get what she wanted. But this was basically confirmation. Charlie hadn’t really said anything and Quinn actually couldn’t read her twin’s expression, which was never a good sign.

“So I’m ready to order,” Charlie repeated and held up her hand for the waiter, ignoring the fact that Dani and her mother now seemed to be getting along just fine.

Quinn nodded, “So am I,” she said looking at Charlie who refused to meet her gaze, Quinn
couldn’t help but wonder had Charlie made the decision to get the surgery. The way Dani said it suggested that they had talked about it, it was one of the topics that Quinn and Charlie just never talked about and she doubted that was the case here.

Puck doesn’t know what to say, it’s his first day back and people are giving him a huge amount of space. Apparently getting arrested has made him more of a badass. But he ignores them or boasts about things that didn’t happen, because no one can find out that he cried himself to sleep every night. How he barely had anything to eat because the gang members would swipe his food. It had been hell, but by that Monday he had a new lawyer, an expensive one. One that had managed to get him five hundred hours of community service and probation until those hours were completed. He had asked of course, and the lady had just sniffed at him like he was beneath her and told him that he was incredibly lucky to be friends with the Fabray’s.

He found caught Charlie and Quinn leaving their English Lit class together, they were talking about nothing in particular, “I’ll pay your mom back for every penny,” he promised. “I’ve got a job at a diner, I’ve—”

Charlie shook her head, “You don’t have to pay our mother back. Trust me she already got her payment,” Charlie patted Puck on the arm. “Glad to have you back Puck, who else is going to give me terrible advice on how to woo women?” Charlie flashes him a grin and nods at her sister. “I’ve got math class, I’ll catch you two later.”

Puck watched as Charlie took off in the opposite direction, “What do you mean your mother already got her payment?”

Quinn flicked her eyes to Puck, “The only thing my mom wanted was for Charlie to come home so she can have another chance at a family. Charlie gave up her Sunday’s till she graduated to make sure that our mother paid for the best defense lawyer for you. Judy doesn’t want your money and by the time you can pay her back Charlie would have graduated anyway,” Quinn explained. “Just stay out of trouble, because Charlie doesn’t have much more she can barter with to get our mother to bail you out.”

“She didn’t have to—” Puck began because he knew what how Charlie felt about Judy. He knew how much she disliked her. It was like selling a piece of her soul to the devil.

“It’s Charlie and you’re her ‘bro’. So she did, because she would have done the same for me, or Rachel, or anyone else that she cared for. Charlie doesn’t care for a lot of people, but she cares about you, just as much as I care about you Puck. You can’t get in trouble anymore, we’ve got Beth to think about. Rachel is working on a presentation that will have you seeing her again. Things are going to be okay but you can’t do anything to get in anymore trouble, no fights and no more drugs or setting things on fire. No more get rich quick schemes,” Quinn lectured because last Sunday had been a disaster and Charlie hadn’t said a word to Dani since. She was simply avoiding the soccer team all together.

“I won’t I promise, but I can pay her back. I still have some money that I saved from you know, it went into a private fund I can pay for half and work—”

Quinn sighed, “Our mother isn’t going to take your money Puck. It might seem like a lot of money to you but to her it’s a drop in the bucket. You don’t owe her anything, you don’t really owe Charlie anything either, it’s just Charlie, she would have done the same for anyone else that she cared about. Seriously though just stay out of trouble and finish your community service. Which you are?”
“I’m helping Artie, he wants a date with Brittany and—”

“That’s not community service, look I used to volunteer at the soup kitchen and they always need more helping hands and its fun, and it does make you feel good and you are giving back. We can do it together, and it’ll go by a lot quicker. Plus I’m sure that Rachel also has some ideas, and if we get to it we can be finished by Christmas.”

Rachel had always been one of the last people to know things, it bothered her to some degree, she was the last to know about Finn and Santana, she was the last person to know that Quinn was pregnant. She was just usually the last person to know about anything. Charlie was a wealth of information, but she wasn’t much of a gossip. You had to know exactly what to ask her before she would confirm or deny anything. Reading JBI’s blog made her feel sleazy and a lot of what he posted wasn’t true, even if there was usually some kernel of truth to it.

So she was surprised when Kurt and Mercedes informed her of Sam and Quinn. Apparently they had heard Santana and Brittany talking about it, and the rumor was now spreading all over school like wildfire. “There are bets to see if Quinn gets pregnant again,” Mercedes said, feeling a bit sorry for the head cheerleader. It didn’t stop her from spreading news about Quinn’s life though.

“Quinn is an intelligent girl surely this time she used some form of protection and Sam’s also not Puck, so I’m not putting any money on a Fabrevans baby,” Kurt said knowledgably.

“You never know accidents could happen,” Mercedes said.

“So they’re—having sex?” Rachel said swallowing, because she can’t believe it. Quinn hadn’t mentioned that things were that serious between her and Sam and Charlie, well Charlie was in some sort of perpetual mood and holed herself up in her room, since Sunday. She hadn’t even come out to have cooking lessons with Shelby.

“Yeah heard Santana talking about with Brittany, it’s incredibly hush-hush right now, I don’t think Quinn wants a repeat of last year.”

“They do make a cute couple,” Mercedes says with a nod even though she’s jealous because she really liked Sam Evans.

Kurt flicks his eyes to Rachel, “Please Ken and Barbie, is so last year. You’d look better on Sam’s arm than Quinn,” he says to Mercedes who brightens a bit at this.

Rachel nods quickly, “I had hoped that you two would click at my party, it’s part of the reason I had it to begin with so you two could meet and hit it off,” She doesn’t add it was because she really didn’t want Quinn to date Sam but that had blown up in her face. She wanted to blame Charlie for not seeing it, but it was partially her fault if she had just been honest with the soccer player to begin with then Charlie wouldn’t have introduced Sam to Quinn. She doesn’t know how she feels because sex is a big step and maybe it means that Quinn really likes Sam Evans, because she had dated Finn for a year and a half and she had never had sex with him.

It can only really mean that Quinn has deep feelings for Sam, and it breaks her. She thought that she could handle just being Quinn’s friend, she had kept up hope that the kiss that they had shared in the locker room had meant something. Yet clearly it hadn’t if she could just give herself over to Sam Evans, the Ken and Barbie of the school.

So when Finn asks her out like he does when he isn’t giving her yearning looks, she says yes but only as friends. Because even if it is Finn Hudson, and she doesn’t really think he’s changed at
least he wants her, and sometimes that can be enough. So she makes up her mind to give Finn another chance.

“I have something to ask you,” Sam says and Charlie flicks her eyes to him.

“Sam, you’re my friend, and I know you boned my sister, and that grosses me out on all levels. So if you’re here to ask me if I’ll kill you if you get Quinn pregnant the answer is yes. I will murder you. Do you have any idea how horrifying Quinn was when she was pregnant last year.” Charlie says slamming her locker closed with a bang.

“No it’s not that, it’s just—” Sam pulls out a ring box and Charlie stares at him like he’s lost his mind. “I want to ask your sister to go steady with me, and I’ll marry her someday.”

“What?” Charlie is stunned.

“I want to ask your sister to go steady with me, and you’re like her twin and I don’t think your mom will approve and you are older than her. And you’re like really important to her so, do I have your permission? I love her, we’ve been together for like three months and she’s perfect for me. She’s funny and she’s sweet and I promise I’ll take good care of her,” Sam says swallowing, he had expected this to go better. He needed this to go better.

Charlie stares at the box in his hand and then at Sam, and then back at the box, because her life didn’t have more than enough complications. “Sam, you’re not old enough to think about getting married. She’s sixteen, you’re fifteen. You’ve been dating for three months. What the fuck does going steady even mean, we live in the twenty-first century. You’re dating her. Everyone knows this.”

“Beyoncé did say—” Sam shut his mouth when Charlie glared at him, “Look you’ve been dating Dani for a while now don’t you want a commitment? Like don’t you think of marrying her at some point?”

Charlie, who hadn’t spoken a word to Dani since the disastrous lunch that happened on Sunday, frowned at this. She didn't want anything more from Dani, though it had only been a few months. She wondered if she should feel something. She didn't care that she hadn't spoken to her girlfriend though it was probably because she was rightfully angry at her. “No I don’t think of marrying her because I’m sixteen. As in sixteen years old. As in I don’t know what I’m going to have for breakfast tomorrow. Besides I’m older than her by five minutes, that doesn’t mean I can give her away. So whatever this is—” Charlie gestured at him. “I want nothing to do with. I’ve got more than enough on my plate then to watch this train wreck happen. Word of advice, I really wouldn’t lead with ‘I asked Charlie if I could marry you’ when you try and do whatever this is. Actually my advice to you is don’t even do this, it’s a shitty idea.” With that Charlie walked away shaking her head. Quinn needed to break up with Sam right now. She had no idea the depths that she would sink to deny the fact that she was gay.

“You don’t have to pick me up after practice tomorrow, I’m going out with Finn,” Rachel informs Charlie who is tapping a beat with her pen that Rachel can’t place, Charlie had been doing that a lot lately and been using her laptop non-stop lately.

Charlie looks up at her for a moment, “Glee thing?” she asks her because they are still co-captains of the team. Rachel hesitates for a moment and Charlie immediately gets it. “Rachel.”

“She’s sleeping with Sam,” Rachel says immediately defending herself. “It’s not like I’m going to
date him again, we’re going as friends.”

“Finn Hudson has been trying to get you to date him since the beginning of the year. So when you say go as friends he thinks you’re softening your stance a bit. You want to go as friends and pretend it’s a date, call Puck. He’ll totally be down for it.”

“Puck’s busy with all the volunteering he’s doing, and I can’t let him miss one day. Glee and football cut into his time significantly, and if we make it to Nationals, he’s going to need to be done his community service,” Rachel said because she thought about it.

“So this is a plan to make Quinn jealous?”

“Finn is trying to be a good guy again Charlie, he admitted that he was trying to keep himself informed and Kurt said that he’s getting better and they do hang out together. They’re going to be brothers, and Finn stood up for him during the Lady Gaga assignment. He lied to me about Santana and he’s said some things but Santana isn’t exactly innocent in all this, and he’s apologized and—”

“I’m your best friend, and he called me a tranny. He’s said shitty things to me.”

“You aren’t innocent in any of this, and Finn really isn’t that creative. Santana has said harsher things to you before and cut you down with her words before.”

“Santana cuts down everyone because that’s what she does. But she has never once said a negative thing about the fact that I have a dick. There is a difference between her and Finn, even if Santana called me a chick with a dick to my face; I’d be more amused than anything because Santana is my friend. She gets a pass because I know her and I’ve slept with her. Finn isn’t even in the area code of being my friend, and I’d lose my lunch if I saw him naked. I fucking hate him. I fucking hate Finn Hudson, and the sole reason I haven’t slushied him into oblivion is because you asked me not to. So I’m asking you to not date him, because quite frankly you’re in love with my sister and she’s in love with you and getting Quinn to dump Sam is a headache all on its own.”

Rachel paused and looked at Charlie, “She’s-she’s in love with me?” She had thought—but hearing Charlie confirm it was something else.

“She’s been watching you since school started. It’s the same way that I—” Charlie paused for a moment, because she wasn’t going to go there. “Trust me she’s been looking at you like that for ages, and I know, and it’s not as if I haven’t pushed her, and I know that Santana and Brittany are so firmly on your side. We’re pushing her, gently.”

Rachel nods, and she’s surprised because she didn’t expect Santana to care or even be on her side, it’s touching to know that Latina cares. But she’s impatient because it’s been nearly two months since her kiss with Quinn and she really wants to do it again, it’s really hard to concentrate on what the cheerleader is saying because when all she can think about is that kiss. “Can’t you—shove her?”

Charlie raised a brow, “Sure if you want us to start fighting. The last time Quinn shoved me, it started the slushy war of freshman year.”

“I thought that was because she caught you with Santana,” Rachel said, that had been a nightmare of epic proportions. People still wondered what had caused both twins to lash out at each other.

“She ordered me to stay away and I told her no. Quinn is exceptionally possessive or protective of what she believes to be hers. And Santana and Brittany were her friends, and she didn’t want to
have me messing that up. So she ordered a slushy attack, she had been named the next captain of the cheerios so she had that power, and I had just been named the next captain of the soccer team. I ordered one in retaliation, and there was a slushy war. It would have continued for weeks but Brittany asked me to stop, so I did and I backed off. By the end of it Santana had moved on to Puck anyway.” Charlie shrugged.

Rachel stared, “You started a slushy war over Santana?” she hissed, “I lost three good sweaters because of that.”

Charlie smiled at her friend, “Well it looks like I did you a favor then, freshman year was not a good year for you fashion wise,” she said with a smile. “But if you’re asking me to start another slushy war so you can get the girl, I can do that. Just you know tell the glee club to bring a rain coat or something, and wear sunglasses or something.”

Rachel swallowed, “Are you going to tell me what shoving her would entail? I have to be prepared.”

“No. I don’t know what I’m going to do yet, I’ll probably think of it the moment before I actually make a move, might make Puck kiss you publically.” Charlie says. “But the deals only on the table if this date with Finn doesn’t happen. I’m not going to shake up the school hierarchy and possibly wreck my relationship with my sister just on one of your whims.”

Rachel swallowed because Charlie looked serious, but so was she. Rachel Berry wanted Quinn Fabray and she had sat on the side lines for to long. “Do it.”

McKinley was always a powder keg for drama, but it had been quiet lately. All it took was one spark, one spark to cause soap-opera like entertainment for the school to enjoy. It was usually the glee club that was the spark. So no one expected what happened that Friday. Not even Rachel, who had asked Charlie of this favor. Charlie herself didn’t even know what she was going to push Quinn out and away from Sam.

Dani and Charlie had entered some cold freeze out, and no one knew why, Charlie just openly ignored her girlfriend at school. Quinn and Sam were now officially the golden couple, Fabrevans was there to stay and Sam was busy trying to create a romantic setting so he could ask Quinn to go steady with him. Rachel was busy trying to avoid Finn, she had blown him off. Kurt was being harassed by Karofsky, and it was finally catching the attention of the higher ups. Things were coming to ahead, and it was Charlie Fabray who lit the match.

Chapter End Notes

I'm really not pleased with how things went with this story as a whole, I'm also much to lazy to go back and change what was written. It's probably because I have a bunch of other projects that I'm currently working on. So yes I acknowledge that this became more Charlie-centric than I wanted it to be and I did actively seek to balance the arcs out, but this fic is a mess. Part of the reason I took it down was because the reviewers were right about the balancing part, I did show preferential treatment to Charlie than Quinn. Either way I have up to chapter 50 finished, I think. Possibly 51, who knows at this point all I know is that this isn't my best work. Though I'm glad people like it.
Though I do love the hate that I continue to get on Fanfiction because I dared post this fic here, ah well I really can't win.
“I don’t understand why I’m doing this,” Puck says looking at Charlie who is grabbing her books. “Because you say so isn’t exactly a good reason and Finn used to be my bro, kissing Rachel will hurt him.”

Charlie has an internal debate about telling Puck, he deserves to know and Finn will probably attack him again, or something equally as ridiculous. It makes sense Puck has been like the least judgmental person at this school and she doubts he’ll care one way or another whether Rachel and Quinn are gay and he probably won’t tell anyone either. Charlie slams her locker closed, “Rachel is in love with Quinn.”

Puck’s eyes widen at this, “But Sam—”

“Quinn loves Rachel back, at least I’m ninety-nine percent sure she is. I’ve known for a while now and I’ve told Quinn to break up with him several times and she’s not budging, and I can’t predict what Quinn’s going to do next when Sam proposes to her, and it needs to end now. So I’m going to shove her in the right direction, you’re going to kiss her it’s going to be public and Quinn’s going to see it, she’s going to get jealous. She’s going to do something that’s possessive like I don’t know attack Rachel’s mouth and then they’ll be together.”

“That’s a shitty plan,” Puck says frowning.

“I know, but Quinn made me promise not to tell Sam and I hate doing this to him but she’s my twin and she’s currently in denial of her sexuality. All I’m trying to do is shove her along a bit, and Rachel is expecting someone to kiss her today and I trust you to not like—get her pregnant or anything or sleep with her. I mean I could do it myself but that’s taking it a step to far and I have a girlfriend. You don’t.”

“Well actually—” Puck begins.

Charlie blinks, “Please don’t tell me you have a girlfriend, because that means I’ll have to kiss Rachel and I really don’t want to do that. It’ll be like kissing Quinn and I don’t think I’m a good enough actor to pull that off. Not to mention that Quinn will murder me, she’ll kill me Puck. Like straight up take a page out of Santana’s playbook and murder me.”

“Relax dude, it’s nothing serious yet and as long as you back me up in saying that it was your plan then I don’t have any problem, with helping you out. You sure that Rachel doesn’t mind?”

“I said someone was going to kiss her today, I never said who it was, and she knows we hang out so this shouldn’t be a huge shock to her. Rachel is an excellent actress so really…just be yourself, it should be enough,” Charlie said hoping that it would be.

“Come on Rachel you said that we could try and fix our relationship. I said I was sorry, I am sorry. I shouldn’t have lied to you,” Finn said as he followed the small diva. He really thought he had a chance with the diva, he knew if he could just get her alone he would be able to woo her. She had been in love with him before and currently there wasn’t exactly a line of girls who were willing to date him. Rachel Berry really was the only girl in school who was being nice to him.
Rachel sighed inwardly, she actually felt a bit guilty that she had given him hope. It had not been her finest moment but jealousy usually made her act a bit crazy. She had thought about it and she was going to call off whatever Charlie had planned, because shoving Quinn was a terrible idea. Quinn would come to her when she was ready. At least that’s what Shelby had reminded her, even though the little part of her soul that enjoyed drama was so intrigued by what Charlie had planned.

“Finn, I thought about it and I realized that it doesn’t work. We don’t work we have two separate goals in life. My dream is always Broadway and you still have no idea what you want do with your life, or even where you want to go to university, we’re in our junior year it’s time to start thinking about the future, and I can’t see a future with you as my leading man. Not after what you said about Santana or anyone else.”

Finn slipped in front of her, “Look, I’m sorry Rachel. I just got jealous because I thought that you were lying about Jesse to make me feel bad, and I got wrapped up in what the football guys were saying. I didn’t mean anything by it and I’m sorry.”

“Noah hasn’t said those things, I’ve never heard him once refer to a girl as a slut and he’s slept with nearly everyone in this school,” Rachel protested with a sigh. “At this point he’d make a better leading man than you. I honestly thought that you were a nice guy and someone that I could be happy with but—”

“You can, if you give me another chance you can be happy with me.”

“My eyes are set on another, and you had your chance Finn,” Rachel finishes despite the interruption.

“Is it that Jesse kid? Is it Puck?” Finn said getting upset as he thought of all the guys that Rachel had quasi relationships with. “I don’t give up that easy Rachel, it’s you and me forever. Puck’s only going to cheat on you and Jesse egged you Rachel.”

“You said horrible things to my friends Finn. Charlie told me about what you said to her at sectionals last year, she told me about how you’ve been calling her names. How you called Quinn a slut, and many people have told me that you called Santana a slut,” Rachel pointed out at this point a crowd was gathering to watch the dressing down that Rachel was giving Finn Hudson. “What Quinn did to you was wrong, but you need to move on. She’s left you alone, there is no reason to keep telling anybody who will listen that she cheated on you when you cheated on her twice with me. I should have known what type of person you were then Finn Hudson.”

“Charlie told you this? You listened to that—her you listened to her? Over me? She hates me she probably has some crush on you or something, and doesn’t want to see us together she was jealous of our relationship,” Finn spat angrily.

“It doesn’t matter Finn as I’ve told you that I’ve moved on from you and I—”

“Is it with that freak?” Finn spat and the crowd murmured, because Santana had personally slushied anyone that said that word.

Rachel frowned she had never heard Finn say it before and now that she had, she realized how ugly it was coming from him. “She’s not a—”

“Truthfully Hudson, I’d rather be the school freak then the dumbest kid in school who is probably going to be a Lima Loser for the rest of your life. I suppose you’re getting used to it, I mean you’re no longer quarterback, you lost your girlfriend to your best friend, man when was the last time you had a win?” Charlie said as the crowd parted for her and she walked past them. Her tone was bored and she grinned at Rachel. “I heard Sasquatch over here was bothering you.”
“You chose the school freak over me?” Finn said looking at Rachel, he couldn’t believe it. Rachel couldn’t do that to him. “This is some kind of sick joke, Rachel isn’t like that,” he snarled at Charlie taking a step forward.

“You’re in glee club maybe you know that song Scotty doesn’t know right?” Charlie said with a wicked grin. “Finn doesn’t know, is like my own personal anthem. But then I thought to myself that Finn doesn’t know a lot of things. So let me help you out Sasquatch it’s not me who your girlfriend has feelings for, it won’t ever be me, but you guess right when you suggested that it was my bro Puck.”

“Charlie I was—” Rachel said it suddenly dawned on her what Charlie was doing. Finn looked about ready to attack her and she quickly realized that her mother had been right. This had been a terrible idea. A very terrible idea.

Charlie spins around and winks at her as she moves aside to let Puck who was standing there just watching everything unfold, takes a step forward and gives her a gentle look before he tilts Rachel’s head up and kisses her, Noah Puckerman is an excellent kisser, years of practicing with Santana and Brittany and nearly every girl in school and several mothers of students in this school have made him into what he is. It looks positively steamy and very real. The crowd gasps, this isn’t a spark. Charlie just lit the whole goddamn place on fire.

Charlie can’t help it, she’s been doing this song and dance with Finn for a year now and it’s not letting up anytime soon, “Ouch Finn—you lost your ex-girlfriend to your best friend and—”

No one stops Finn who throws himself at her furious that she’s there making a fool of him again. He doesn’t even care about Puck or Rachel, but Charlie has been a thorn in his side, taking his best friend, mocking him at every turn. The tackle knocks Rachel aside and separates her from Noah. Charlie barely manages to throw her arms up to protect her face, but it’s too late and one blow manages to get through and Finn slams his fist into her Charlie’s nose, which begins to bleed profusely. Charlie shifts her body under him and begins to struggle and manages to pull herself up and away from him.

Charlie pushes Finn off with her feet and manages to scramble up wiping at the blood on her face and Finn tackles her and slams her hard into the lockers, the crowd parting as Charlie begins to slam her elbows down hard on his upper back and trying to push him off. “Payback’s a bitch,” Charlie said as Finn slammed her into the locker again, winding her. Charlie finally brought her knee up with a rapid force slamming it into his gut sending Finn to the ground on his knees. Charlie spits because some of her blood got into her mouth, it’s like a fountain now and she’s wanted to do this since freshman year and she takes a step towards Finn only to have Puck intervene and wrap his arm around her and yank her away.

“Enough. Enough Charlie,” Puck says to her as Charlie struggles to get to Finn, but Sam and Mike are there keeping him from lunging at her. “Get him out of here,” Puck snaps at Sam and Mike who look at each other before dragging Finn away from Charlie. He’s forgotten how strong Charlie is and she nearly slips from his grasp but he tightens the hold and pushes her against a locker. Charlie is breathing hard and her white shirt is a mess of red, the blood is just gushing out but Charlie doesn’t seem to notice. It takes her a minute but once Finn is gone Charlie calms down enough for Puck to release his tight grip on her. “You good?”

“Peachy,” Charlie mutters as she brings a hand to her nose. Pinching it hard despite the pain to staunch the blood flow, fucking asshole probably broke her nose. Her eyes flick to Rachel who is standing there in shock and now that the fight is over the students are going back about their business, upset by the fact that they couldn’t watch the epic beat down. Charlie walks over to
Rachel, “That was your shove,” she says her hand firmly on her nose which now sounds nasally. “Didn’t expect the sasquatch to punch me though, I think he might have broken my nose.”

“Come on let’s get you to the nurses office,” Puck says actually sort of glad that he wasn’t punched in the face, because this totally had been Charlie’s idea and he hadn’t wanted to antagonize Finn. He had just planned to kiss Rachel and go, preferably before Finn punched him. “You totally deserved that,” he says.

“Bullshit,” Charlie says as the two of them walk away leaving Rachel standing there still in a bit of shock over what just happened.

Quinn Fabray is a lot of things, she’s usually calm and collected and when Sam asks her to meet her in the astronomy room she doesn’t give it another thought. He is her boyfriend and Sam is a bit of a kid sometimes and it’s adorable and he’s sweet, and he’s a really good guy. “So, what do you want to talk about in private?” she asks when he closes the door behind him.

Sam smiles warmly, he’s nervous because he’s never done this before, but he knows she’s the one. “These galactic mobiles aren’t the stars of McKinley. We are.”

Quinn blinked and looked at him because she can already tell that this conversation isn’t going to end well. “Okay?”

Sam shakes his head, “Let me finish or I’m not going to have the courage to do this again,” he explains and his voice almost cracks with nerves. “I think I love you. I’m the quarterback of the team, and you’re the head cheerleader. It’s like fate or something,” Sam kneels down on one knee and presents a little white box with a ring to Quinn.

Quinn stares at it and then at him, this was not how she expected the day to go, or this conversation. He couldn’t possibly be proposing to her. “Please tell me you aren’t proposing? We’ve known each other for like four months, and I’m sixteen. Stand up. Because this is freaking me out.”

Sam shakes his head, and remains on his one knee because it’s the proper thing to do. “I want to marry you—someday. Until then, will you accept this promise ring?”

“What are you, six?” Quinn asks because it’s what children do, make promises to each other to be together forever. Santana was going to have a field day with this.

Sam looks at her stubbornly, “If you accept, this ring will symbolize my promise to you to be true, to never pressure you to do anything more than you want to do, to listen to your problems, to tell you when you have food in your teeth or eye gunk, to come over to your house whenever you need something super heavy moved around. I promise to make you feel proud when you point down the hall and say, “That dude’s my boyfriend.” And I promise to do all of those things without ever trying to sound like Matthew McConaughey. I really care about you, Quinn. And I want us to go steady.”

Quinn stares at him for a moment because it’s a proposal and she really should have seen this coming because Sam is well lame like this, and she really feels guilty because she can’t be with him. So she gently closes the box.

Sam’s face falls, and he suddenly feels self-conscious, because what he did was ridiculous and everyone had tried to warn him but he hadn’t listened. “Is that—is that a no?” he asks trying to keep his face as neutral as possible, he doesn’t manage to do a good job.
“Sam I need to tell you something,” Quinn says with a sigh, there is absolutely no way to do it delicately and Quinn already knows she’s going to feel really bad about this.

“You’re not pregnant are you?” Sam asks immediately horrified at the thought.

“No!” Quinn snaps at him, slightly irritated that people keep wondering if she’s going to get pregnant. They had been safe, she had checked herself like twenty times. “I’m not pregnant. But I can’t accept the ring.”

Sam nods, “It was a stupid idea and—”

“Sam, I think I’m gay,” Quinn blurts out and Sam drops the white box onto the ground.

“What? You’re not gay, we’ve had sex and you had sex with Puck and you had a baby and you told me—” he says looking at her confused. “Is this a joke?”

Quinn swallows because she had planned to break up with him, not come out to him. “I think I’m gay Sam, I don’t think we can be together. You’re a really good guy but I don’t think I can—I don’t think I can love you the way you want me to. I don’t think I can love any guy the way they love me. And I’m really sorry, I didn’t plan this. I really thought I could love you.”

“Who is she?” Sam asks swallowing, wondering if it’s Santana or Brittany he’s losing out too.

Quinn studies him, “Rachel,” she says quietly.

Sam frowns and looks back and he sees it after it’s pointed out to him, the looks the subtle touches, “You took my virginity—was I just an experiment to you?”

Quinn winces because it had been a stupid mistake, she shouldn’t have done it, she shouldn’t have been with Sam like that. Everyone had told her not to but she had been so stubborn, so determined to prove that she wasn’t—that she wasn’t gay. “I do like you, I’m just—I’m not in love with you. Charlie told me it was a stupid idea to not be with you unless I could love you—”

Sam goes rigid because that means—“She knew?” Sam says angrily because Charlie allowed him to embarrass himself. “I thought she was my friend.” Because how could a friend allow him to go through this humiliating process. He gave his virginity to Quinn thinking that she could love him back and all this time Charlie knew.

Quinn winces, because Charlie had tried to watch out for him the best she could without right telling him, “Sam it isn’t—I told her not to tell you.” But Sam’s stormed off and Quinn is about to go after him when her phone beeps and it’s a message from Santana.

Santana: Check out JBI’s blog!!!

Quinn frowns but she loads the webpage up and there is a picture of Noah Puckerman kissing Rachel Berry, and her world shatters. But she reads the article and it’s quickly replaced with fury, because this has Charlie Fabray’s fingerprints all over it. Her sister is far from subtle especially when Finn Hudson is involved.

“What are we going to do about Sam?” Puck questions after a moment he’s sitting with Charlie who still has her hand pressed firmly to her nose, the blood has finally stopped pouring out and she’s keeping her face forward so more blood doesn’t slip into her mouth.

Charlie flicks her eyes at him, “Nothing, he’s going to keep being Quinn’s boyfriend for as long as
she wants,” Charlie states firmly. It’s cruel of her and she knows it, to use her favor to do this, but protecting her sister comes first. It has always come first and it’s not going to change now.

Puck frowns because he can hear the firmness in her voice, but it doesn’t reach her eyes, she knows it’s going to hurt the quarterback. “You can’t ask him to do that, he’s in love with her. Making him pretend to be her boyfriend isn’t going to let the dude move on. They don’t have to be out at school or anything and you know I’ve got her back. She’s my baby’s mama after all.”

Charlie made a face, “I thought I told you stop saying that,” she said with a sigh. “Sam wants to propose to Quinn or something ridiculous. Asked for my permission, or something archaic like that. I wanted to tell him, that this was a terrible idea, I think I did. I think I said to him that it was a terrible idea. But I wanted to be like Quinn’s totally gay dude. I didn’t even know that she slept with him until after.”

Puck blinks because it’s the first he’s hearing about a marriage proposal, “Dude’s got it bad. You can’t make him pretend to be her boyfriend Charlie that’s fucked up.”

Charlie grimaces because it is, and she doesn’t really want to do it to him, she likes Sam he’s fun to be around if he’s not pining over her sister. “I know. But we need to hook him up with someone else then, dude falls in love like fast. Can you sell Mercedes, I think he might be a little bit mad at me for not telling him about Quinn. Rachel thought they’d be a good match, to start with.” Puck nodded and was about to say something when there was a yelling match heard outside. He looked at Charlie who groaned and stood up from she was lying down. “Let them in might as well get the next set of slaps and threats out of the way.”

Puck peeked his head out from behind the curtain and winced when he saw Santana and Quinn arguing. Quinn was not known for her mercy and he hoped she didn’t punch him, though that seemed to be more of a Charlie thing. “You sure dude? Your sister looks pissed and Santana looks pissed. Are you sure you want to let them in they look like they want to kill you. Or me. Hopefully it’s you this was your idea.”

Charlie groans, “I don’t want to talk to Quinn, and if Santana’s speaking in Spanish then I don’t want to talk to her either because she’s going to murder me for getting into a fight with Hudson. Like straight up murder me, Puck do something.” Charlie hisses. But it’s too late because Quinn has pulled back the curtain and Santana’s standing beside her and she looks just as furious.

“Leave Puck,” Quinn says and she’s in full HBIC mode and for once Charlie shrinks back a bit because for once in her life Charlie Fabray is just a little afraid of her twin sister. Puck doesn’t even protest and just thanks any particular deity that it’s Charlie that’s going to face their wrath.

“Sorry dude, you’re so on your own,” he announces and leaves leaving Charlie alone with two angry women.

“Coward, I thought we were bro’s for life,” Charlie calls after him but he just gives her a thumbs up and walks out. “Fucking hate that dude,” Charlie bitches but she can’t blame him because if the roles were reversed she would totally have bailed on him. “Quinn hey—” Quinn takes a step forward and slaps her twin sister across the face.

“What the hell was that?” she hisses getting into Charlie’s face. “Why would you let Puck kiss her, why would you tell him to?”

Charlie frowns because she really hates being smacked in the face, it’s like the second time today that someone’s hit her and she’s already getting tired of it. “You’re with Sam. You’ve been with Sam for months and I told you over and over again what a shitty idea that was. I told you not to be
with him if you can’t love him like he loves you. The dude wants to propose to you, and I refuse to have you go along with it because you think it is what Judy would want—"

“I broke up with Sam earlier today after he proposed, I told him that I’m gay and I’m in love with Rachel. If you had just bothered to let me know in advance—”

“You took his virginity Quinn which I’m sure everyone around you told you what a shitty idea that was, but you did it anyway. What was I supposed to think, for all I knew Judy fucking brainwashed you again. All this bullshit about being Prom Queen, Sam can’t be Prom king he’s a sophomore. He’s not even fucking eligible. You’d have more luck dating Finn all over again but his popularity is in the tubes. Same goes to you by the way a bit of heads up. I had to stop Rachel from going out on a date with Finn again once she heard that you two were doing the nasty.”

Quinn blanches for a moment because no one was supposed to know about that, “How did she find out? How did you find out?”

“He had the walk, and he was walking around like a changed man. Puck noticed too, I’m sure anyone who has had sex has noticed, even if Sam’s not going around talking about and I’m assuming that someone told her. I sure as hell didn’t. Trying to protect your little fucking secret and all. So what if Puck kissed her, could have been worse. Puck’s cool and it was just a kiss to him it didn’t mean anything to either one of them, but I hope I made my point, you can’t keep jerking Rachel around, you can’t keep pretending that you don’t love her because the thing with Puck, could have been real. Hell it could have been Hudson.”

“This coming from the hypocrite,” Quinn sneers and she see’s Charlie’s eyes flick to Santana who is still standing there, “We don’t get involved in each other’s love life’s remember the last time that happened?”

“Yes well, payback is a bitch isn’t it?” Charlie snaps back staring Quinn down. “I did this for you, I made sure it happened for you. Because I am so fucking done with your denial Quinn you’re in love with Rachel, she’s in love with you go be fucking happy for once. You deserve to be happy and she makes you happy. I don’t care if you two aren’t out yet, but you two are nauseating together already and you’re not even together. So go be nauseating with her.”

Quinn stares at Charlie for a moment before letting out a frustrated groan, because she really can’t fault Charlie for her attempt to get her to move into action she hadn’t handle the situation well at all. “I told Sam that I loved her. I’m in love with Rachel Berry Charlie, Rachel Berry.”

“Good you admit it. Finally go tell her this I’m sure she’ll be thrilled,” Charlie says dryly, because she’s extraordinarily tired with the whole thing and her face hurts like a bitch. “Now go call Puck he’s going to take me to the fuck doctors so I can make sure Finn didn’t break my nose. Fucking asshole.” Santana steps forward and Charlie winces, “Don’t slap me please?” she begs the Latina.

“Oh relax I’m not here to slap you. Britt’s upset that you got into another fight with Finn, she told you to leave him alone.”

“He started it,” Charlie said under her breath. “He called me a freak.”

“I’ve called you a freak,” Santana points outs crossing her arms over her chest.

“Yeah but during sex or after sex it totally doesn’t count,” Charlie replies dryly and she watches as her twin makes a face and leaves the two of them at it. “He pisses me off, and he was harassing Rachel so I made him stop. He sucker punched me because he’s an asshole.”
Santana sighed, “You need to ease back on the Finn thing, because it’s going to come back and bite you in the ass. And you’re nowhere near devious enough to manipulate people. This was sloppy you should have come to me.”

“You would have kissed Rachel?” Charlie asks frowning a bit not really believing the Latina.

Santana makes a face, “I think I just threw up a bit in my mouth. No. I would have helped you make a subtle shove that would have made Quinn lose the rest of her mind over the hobbit.”

Charlie blinks, because she really should have asked Santana because this is really her world more so than hers, “I’ll ask you next time?” she says.

“Damn right you will, it’s fun as hell trying to remove the stick from Quinn’s ass,” Santana says crossing her arms over her chest a smile on her face.

Despite Santana’s words to Charlie, she is actually furious but not at Charlie, she’s angry at Rachel Berry. Because quite frankly the hobbit really shouldn’t have tried to get Charlie to mess with Quinn, the older Fabray is terrible at it, and it probably hurt their relationship a bit. “Yentl,” she greets Rachel who smiles at her.

“Santana. I wanted to—”

“Can it Yentl,” Santana snaps closing the door behind her. “Look I’m sure you’re going to enjoy getting your sweet lady kisses on with Q later, and I’m sure you’ll drive her to an early grave because of you are incredibly irritating. But the next time you involve Charlie in one of your schemes I will ends you. Do I make myself clear? She’s terrible at it, this was sloppy.”

Rachel Berry stares at Santana and tries to figure out if the Latina is joking but the look on her face suggests that she isn’t and she swallows because if anyone can probably get away with murder it’s the Latina. “Does it help that I didn’t know Puck was going to kiss me?” she asked.

Santana scoffs. “No. Because you asked her to do something to cause Quinn to react. She did the only possible thing that she could have done, and found someone who has very low standards to kiss you. You’re so incredibly lucky that Charlie didn't come up with the bright idea to kiss you or I would have made sure that no one would find your body.”

“Are you saying this because you’re jealous that—” Rachel slowly trails off because she’s in a room alone with Santana and pissing her off, “I’m sure if you just tell Charlie that you like her and you want to try a relationship she would leave Dani,” Rachel says softly trying to help Santana.

“She won’t, because she’s fucking stubborn and she wants something where she doesn’t have to hide anymore, and she deserves it,” Santana admits with a shrug of her shoulders. “Still next time I see you trying to get Charlie involved in one of your poorly thought out schemes I will end you, or because Quinn might object, I will go all Lima Heights Adjacent on your little hobbit ass. She got her ass kicked for you, you know that? Do we have an understanding?”

Rachel nods after a moment, “I didn’t think Finn would attack her, it was a horrible thing for him to do, and you know how much I abhor violence. Do you think she’s going to be okay? I heard Puck took her to get her nose checked. A broken nose can be horrible for a singing voice and I’m still trying to get Charlie to join glee.”

Santana frowned because Charlie had never sung in front of her, “Is she really that good? I tried to get her to do a duet with me but she refused.”
Rachel turned to her surprise on her face, because it seems she’s the only person who has heard the soccer player sing, “She hasn’t—it’s versatile, she’s actually really good. It’s different from Quinn’s, in fact I would have loved to have heard a duet between the two of you. She’d be even better if she took me up on my offer for some vocal training, Quinn’s only improved since then and I know if Charlie gave it a chance she’d enjoy it. Maybe she’s just got a form of stage fright, I’m sure my mother will have some tips for her,” Rachel said musing mostly to herself, but Santana’s not really paying attention. “I wanted to thank Charlie mentioned that you were trying to—”

Santana frowns and raises her hands because it sounds like Rachel thinks they’re friends, “I only did it because watching the eye-fucking between you two was making me uncomfortable and I kept expecting Quinn to pop out another lizard baby, except this one would be a lizard-hobbit baby and I don’t think the world is ready for that, so don’t get her pregnant Yentl.”

Rachel sputtered about to explain to Santana that she couldn’t get Quinn pregnant but the Latina was gone before she could come up with a proper argument to counter her.

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**Charlie’s nursing a bruise on her cheek, it was courtesy of Sam, it was the third time that someone hit her that day. She had expected another slushy war not violence against her person. At this rate she was going to have to take up some classes at the gym because this was getting almost embarrassing. She would look into that the moment that she got home.**

“What happened to your face?” Dani asked her, her tone was cool and she didn’t linger on Charlie for too long. She was still furious with the soccer captain. They were here for a meeting with Roz and they could at least pretend to be civil.

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“Sam and I had a little spat,” Charlie replied, her tone was just as cold as Dani’s.

“Can you still play?” Dani asked.

“Yep,” Charlie said, she had played with worse injuries than this before.

The door opened and Roz walked pausing when she saw the bruises on Charlie’s face, and the fact that her shirt was a bloody mess. “Oh lord have mercy on my soul,” Roz began, “What happened?”

“I fell,” Charlie said, she wasn’t going to rat on Sam, Roz would have him removed of the team and the Titans did need him.

“I fell,” Charlie said, she wasn’t going to rat on Sam, Roz would have him removed of the team and the Titans did need him.

“Onto someone’s fist,” Dani added and Charlie turned to glare at her.

Coach Washington looked between the two of them, she could feel the tension between the two of them. She knew she should have instituted a no dating policy on the team. The two of them had played beautifully all season, they had simply destroyed the competition all their games had turned into routings. They had the strongest team in the state. She was going to grab another championship title and most importantly with Sue getting bored with the Cheerios, she might finally be able to catch up. “I got in touch with that recruiter from UCLA, they’ll be sending him down for the final game of the regular season in two weeks. We’ll be against Carmel, it’s for a division I scholarship, there will also be a few other universities there, all willing to offer you scholarships. So it's a big game for us.”

Dani grinned, because this was the news that she had been waiting for, and UCLA was her dream school, she looked over at Charlie who gave her a tight smile.

“So we need to do two things, and that’s make you look good and win the game against Carmel. Charlie I’m pulling you from your forward position, Marissa and Missy will be playing the wing
position. Dani will be our only striker, and you will be captaining the match. You’ll be a fullback if —”

“No.”

Roz and Dani looked over at Charlie, “Excuse me?”

“No, I can stomach playing in the mid-field but you can’t push me back to a fullback position, and you can’t strip me of my captaincy for one match. I’m your captain, she’s co-captain she was always supposed to be my second. I’ve changed my style of play just to make her look good all season, I’ve done everything to make her look good. It’s against Carmel High and I’m a crappy defender and what happens next year when I want to apply for a division I team?” Charlie asks. “If they see me, playing that badly they’re going to just move on, and then what?”

“I’m a senior it’s my year—you can put together a highlight reel and they won’t—” Dani begins dismissively.

“Yes well, this is my team and I can’t control the game from the fullback position, at least put me in midfield,” Charlie begs turning to Roz.

Roz frowns because Charlie has a tendency to show off, and while she was right did tone it done it had become abundantly clear earlier on that Charlie would catch more attention than Dani. She was more athletic, flashier, but Dani was better technically. In the end Charlie would always be a recruiters first choice because she had better field vision. It was almost impossible to hide because Charlie was the one who could take control of a game, ripping apart defenses and adjusting the team right there on the field. It wasn’t an insult to Charlie’s skill but she needed Charlie to be invisible. “The answer is no, you’ll be playing fullback we can have you run the drills—”

Charlie stared at Roz, not believing that she was throwing her under the bus like this. She had done everything that Roz had asked her, and she had never complained. But asking her to do this, to change her position completely, it would make her look terrible in front of any potential recruiter and they had a long memory. “Midfield, I can’t control the game from the back.”

Dani turned to Charlie, “This isn’t about your ego. This is my life we’re talking about. I need the scholarship.”

“To get that we need to win and we won’t win if I can’t control the match, the only reason you even have most of your goals this season is because of my assists. And you don’t have nearly the ball handling skills that I do, let alone the speed to break through Carmel’s defense. So put me in midfield,” Charlie argued with her.

“I don’t have the ball handling skills? I’m better technically than you’re like a battering ram out there,” Dani snaps at her, taking offense to Charlie’s assessment of her skills.

Roz looks between the two of them, it’s Dani’s last year in high school and she already has people interested but transferring to Carmel High hadn’t been her best decision and Dani needed a state championship win to bolster her credentials. Charlie had two already and two MVP titles to her name. They weren’t in the same situation. “You’re playing fullback and that’s final.”

“Then I quit,” Charlie says making up her mind. “I can’t play with someone I don’t trust, and I don’t trust you to have my back.” Charlie says firmly. Because she’s not going to sacrifice her ticket out of Lima for Dani. “I’ll have my uniform back by the end of the day,” she tosses over her shoulder, leaving a stunned Roz and Dani sitting there in shock.
Roz had expected some resistance but ultimately she had expected Charlie to fall in line that’s what leaders did, but her dig at Dani had been personal, and she knew that she should have instituted that no dating policy but both of them had assured her that they could be professional. Apparently she had put her faith in the wrong people. “Give it two days for her to calm down and then get her back on the team, we need her for the rest of the season. Do anything to get her back here. I don’t care what you do, but we need her to get you a state championship.”

Chapter End Notes

Because I remember someone on FF pointing out that people should be more outraged that Charlie gets hit in the face I should probably point out that Charlie still has some residual, I'm still a boy feelings, that and she's one of the guys and they forget that at times she is female. Not saying that it's right, see what I mean by not my best work?

Blah
It’s Charlie who opens the door for Quinn that night, and she looks at her twin for a moment. There is nothing to say between them because Quinn is still a bit ticked at her poorly thought out plan to shove Quinn. “Rae its Quinn,” she yells upstairs.

Quinn stares at her sister for a moment, and she suddenly feels a tiny bit guilty that she didn’t try harder to stop Sam from slugging her, it had been her fault after all.

Charlie kicks at the door awkwardly and finally steps aside so Quinn can come in, “I’m sorry for attempting to manipulate you. Didn’t really mean it just got tired of you—pretending to be something you’re not. That and I didn’t know if in your state of denial you’d say yes to Sam who wanted to marry you. Drastic actions and all that,” Charlie said and it’s the best apology she can muster. “Puck’s not in love with her or anything, and you know, I know you like her or are in love with her. Look I wasn't kidding when I said I approved, and you know I have your back right?”

Quinn stares at her twin for a moment, and Charlie’s fidgeting and running her fingers over the scars and she doesn’t really forgive her sister for pulling a stunt like that, and she still sort of wants to smack Charlie but she’s been hit enough today.

Rachel who was at the top of the stairs looked down at the twins and winced because she could feel the awkward tension in the air, it really was partially her fault. She was about to call out to Quinn when the cheerleader spoke.

“Are you going to need my help to keep the jocks off you tomorrow? What were you thinking quitting like that?”

Charlie glances up and see’s Rachel, “I’ll be fine. It’s just corn syrup and ice, it could be worse. If I need you I’ll find you or Santana or Puck.” She pulled away from Quinn and began to head upstairs, “I have homework to do so if you two want to have sex then just—well don’t do anything that I wouldn’t do.”

“Charlie,” Quinn snaps at her twin who gives her a large crooked grin and laughs out loud before running upstairs and gently nudging Rachel as she heads back to her room, slamming the door shut behind her giving the two of them a bit of privacy. There is an awkward silence that develops around them and Quinn finally breaks the ice and she’s nervous because she didn’t really plan for any of this. She doesn’t know what to say to Rachel. “I—you were right you know, about what I was doing and I really just wanted to pretend that my feelings for you weren’t real. I’m not ready to be out yet and I don’t think Sam’s going to tell anybody but—”

“You told Sam?” Out of all the personal things that Rachel expected Quinn to do, she expected Quinn to bury herself deeper in denial; she expected Quinn to go back to pretending that there wasn’t something between them. She had expected Quinn to pretend that she hadn’t kissed Rachel first this time.

Quinn gives her a small smile, “I don’t think I had a choice in the matter. He proposed to me, or I think he was promising to be my husband in the future. It was really confusing, and the entire time he was talking, I really just wanted to tell him no. And I really was just planning to you break up with him, but it sort of came out. I just blurted it out. That I was gay.”

Rachel looked at Quinn for a moment before leading her to the kitchen and sitting her down on at the island, and proceeded to busy herself making a cup of tea for Quinn, the cheerleader had gotten
used to it while being pregnant and she still had a few teabags left, “You seem to be taking this all rather well. The being gay thing.”

Quinn laughed it was short, because she feels like she is losing her mind. “I am freaking out on the inside, freaking out. Because I never thought that I’d be here. I thought that maybe if I found the right guy, the guy that made sense on paper. Sort of like Sam did then I could just fall in love with him and it’d be okay. Everything would be okay, I could get my reputation back, I could rule the school and I could be happy again. I just wanted to be happy again. I gave up my daughter Rachel and I get to see her once a month and she’s never going to call me mom, and I’ll miss her first word and her first step, unless I’m lucky and she happens to do it when I’m around. And I got it back, I got everything I wanted back. I was dating the most popular guy in school, I am the most popular girl in school. I have the power to make and break people again but I had all that and I still wasn’t happy. I don’t think—I’m pretty sure that prom queen wouldn’t make me happy.” Her reputation was restored and she was back to being so lonely at the top, because it was lonely being there by yourself. It didn’t matter if she had Santana and Brittany, the only time that she hadn’t felt lonely was when she had been with Rachel. “The only time I had been happy, the only time I was happy was when I was with you and we were doing something together. And when I saw that Puck kissed you—it was like the worst feeling in the world to think that there might be something between you and Puck. It was the worst feeling in the world, like the world was trying to tell me that I had lost my chance with you. That I had lost you to Puck, Puck of all people. He can’t keep it in his pants. I don’t think I’ve ever hated someone as much as I did then.”

“He’s not in love with me,” Rachel said firmly because the last thing she wants is there to be lasting tension between her and Puck. They had Beth, and she wasn’t going to have them at each other’s throats because she had been impatient, because she had asked for Charlie to force Quinn’s hand. She still felt a bit guilty about it and Charlie had been attacked, she was only grateful that Finn hadn’t broken her nose.

“I know that, but it was the same feeling that I had with Jesse, I think that they were good enough for you. Puck’s never been anything but really nice to you, and he’s never tried to hide her friendship with you. He would have made a good boyfriend, even if he’s really not that good at the whole being with one person. He would have tried to keep you happy, he would have made you happy and you could be happy with him. Jesse St. James is a jackass of epic proportions but he could have made you happy too, if he stopped looking at himself in the mirror long enough. I never really cared about Finn because I sort of knew that he would never be able to make you happy. That he would never be good enough and you’d eventually realize this and dump him to the curb,” Quinn admitted.

“I had a crush on you the moment I saw you. You know, it was just a crush. I just thought you were the prettiest girl that I’d ever seen. But then you slushied me, and the next thing I know you were picking on me and I wondered what I had done to offend you. And even as your bullying got worse, I didn’t know that what I had done but Charlie was really nice, and she never really got said anything bad about you. In fact she talked about you rather fondly, and I may not have known what was going on at your house, or about the abuse or anything like that. But it was always different then how she talked about your dad or your mom. And I would always wonder because the person Charlie described wasn’t who you were at school and I was curious to know the real you. And I got to see that when you were pregnant and I got to see what Charlie sees, I got to see that side of you and I wanted to know. And then you wanted to spend time with me without Charlie, and I got to see more of it. You weren’t the person who bullied me, you were just—Quinn Fabray. Not Quinn the ex-cheerio, or the most popular girl in school. And I really liked Quinn Fabray. I really like her a lot.”

Quinn took a breath, because she wishes she could go back and she could slushy someone else, that
she had chosen someone else to slushy that day, but everything that she had done had led her to this moment right now. “I don’t know how to date you, I know I’m not ready for the world to know, I’m not. But I want to do this right,” Quinn gets up and walks up to Rachel and for a moment she thinks about just kissing her, because she really liked the kissing, but she doesn’t. “I’m Lucy Quinn Fabray, and I’d like to take you out on a date,” she says and her voice is shaky because she’s nervous. She’s really nervous because she’s never been the one to ask someone out on a date, she’s so used to having someone ask her. She doesn’t even know if she did it right because Rachel is just staring at her, and she can’t really read her expression. And she can’t help but wonder if she did it wrong.

But Rachel closes the distance because she’s wanted to date Quinn since she admitted having feelings for the cheerleader months ago, since their very first kiss. At this moment this was what she wanted more than anything else in the world and she presses her lips against Quinn’s and unlike the times that she kissed Jesse, or Puck, or Finn or the one time that she kissed Charlie, she feels that this is right. That it’s where she’s supposed to be, because kissing Quinn Fabray just feels incredibly right. “That’s a yes,” she says after she comes up for a bit of air, because she’s sure she didn’t tell Quinn that before she kissed her.

Charlie doesn’t usually have a lot of terrible ideas, mostly because she actually listens when Rachel goes on about one of her great ideas, and hers are rather tame in comparison, but her ideas aren’t actually all that great. But quitting the soccer team after her stunt the day before had to be one the stupidest decisions of her entire life. Because she’s only taken three steps into McKinley when the first slushy hits her face. By second period she’s covered from head to toe in slushy and she’s quickly running out of spare clothes. Perhaps she had been too slushy happy lately.

She doesn’t get any help from Quinn, because she doubts that Quinn has the pull to stop this from happening and it really is her own fault. Though she’s tempted to go to Santana for a bit of help when Azimio and Karofsky start slamming her into lockers, and knocking her books out of her hands. But she doesn’t and she refuses to let anyone help her because she got herself into this mess, and she refuses to drag anyone down with her. She doesn’t even get any help from her former teammates who probably think that she’s abandoned them. Finn doesn’t even have the audacity to hide the fact that he’s the one who ordered it, and he’s joined in with the discrete shoving of her body into lockers. She manages to last until her second slushy bath which happens right before lunch, its Azimio and Karofsky who toss her into a dumpster filled with slushy, throwing the rest of her spare clothes in with her.

She needs her letterman jacket back, or a letterman jacket it doesn’t have to be her old one. She can’t skate so the hockey team is out and she hates the cold anyway. Coach Roz coaches the synchronized swimming team, so that was out as well and she wasn’t that great a swimmer anyway. Then there is the rugby team but there season was already over. There is the guy’s basketball team but she can’t shoot or dribble. The baseball team had wrapped up for the fall, and she had never been good at the sport, she can barely pitch and she can’t bat. The wrestling team has Lauren Zizes on it and she’s terrified of her, because Lauren could crush her or accidentally rupture her scrotum.

It leaves her with three options. The Cheerios, the football team and rejoining the soccer team. The very thought of heading back to Roz with her tail between her legs makes her feel nauseated. Joining the Cheerios is a different nightmare all together, because she is a hundred percent sure that Sue is certifiably insane. Plus there was the whole thing where Quinn would be bossing her around and she didn’t want to look like an idiot in front of Santana or Brittany. This left the football team, which posed a whole different set of problems, as most of the jackasses who were going after her were on the football team. But at least she’d have Puck and probably Sam when he finally got
over her apparent betrayal of his actions, and Mike made three people. She was in luck because
they needed a new running back because Biste took head injuries seriously and Anthony Rashad
was out for the season after a concussion, which left an open spot on the second string team for her.
She fucking hated football, but she went to see coach Beiste anyway, who was eating an entire
chicken in her office going over plays.

Shannon looked up from what she was doing and saw the ex-soccer captain standing there, covered
in corn syrup and ice. “Can I help you?” While she knew about the bullying that her boys were
doling out this seemed like a bit much, and unless she had names she couldn’t actually punish
them, even though she suspected it was Karofsky and Azimio.

“I hear you’re in the market for a new running back, though personally I’d prefer to be your kicker
since I’d prefer not having three hundred pound apes chasing me and trying to flatten me,” Charlie
said dryly as she shivered wondering who she could borrow clothes from. Puck probably had
something or could go grab some of her clothes. At least the interior of her car was leather.

Shannon stared at Charlie and squinted a bit trying to make out who she was under the corn syrup,
“Aren’t you on the soccer team?”

shake your hand but—” Charlie trailed off as she looked down at herself.

Shannon nodded, and while she felt sorry for the girl, she had already filled her quota for charity
cases by allowing Artie on the team. “The only position that we have that we have open is back up
running back, you’d be on second string and—”

Charlie grinned, because second string meant that she could basically sit on the bench and do
nothing during games, and she’d only have to suffer through practices. “That’s perfect, sign me up,
and hand me my letterman jacket.”

Shannon frowned at this, “If you would let me finish, I was going to say that I’m already stuck
trying to get the plays through our current running back’s head and we’ve got a big game this
Friday against Thurston High. I’ve already reached my quota of charity cases this semester. I don’t
have time to teach you the plays, and I can’t have you ruining the team dynamic because you want
a letterman jacket. Don’t get me wrong, I’m all for female empowerment, but you’re not doing this
for the right reasons. If you need a club to join there is always glee.”

Charlie’s face twisted over her dead body would she ever join the glee club, she’d rather deal with
Sue’s craziness or go back and beg Roz for her spot back even though she was sure she was going
to be stripped of her captancy. “So that’s a no?”

“That’s a no,” Shannon said turning back to the video of Thurston High, and wincing she really did
need to get Chris ready for the game. It was a shame that she couldn’t pull him out of class.

Charlie debated internally, she didn’t want to actually play in any games, she could deal with
football practice but football games were another beast entirely, there wouldn’t be any holding
back. But she needed that jacket and she needed Roz to know that she had other options as well. “I
already know your playbook, Puck showed it to me during the summer. It’s what I used to help
him and Sam get ready. I also hit the gym with the two of them and managed to keep up. I know
how to play, I played football back in middle school. I played soccer and I was the striker so you
know that I can sprint and run, and I can keep up. Both Puck and Sam will probably vouch that I
can probably handle being your running back without getting myself killed. So I’m not going to be
a waste of time on second string and if you absolutely need someone then despite my better
judgment you can put me on first string and I’ll be your damn receiver until your receiver is
Shannon studied Charlie, it was odd that they had put her on the football team, though she could see that Charlie was toned and had definition. It suddenly hit her, she had heard about her, the teachers had mentioned it to her, “You’re the girl with the—”

Charlie rolled her eyes, “Yes, I’m the girl with the dick. They thought I was a boy till puberty. Like I said I’m Charlie Fabray, I’d like to be your new running back. I’m not a charity case I can pull my own weight, so give me a shot. I know the plays, and you can put me through my paces if you want. But I’ll keep up and if I don’t I’ll leave.”

Shannon blinked, she had heard about her. Everyone had, she didn’t know that it was the captain of the soccer team. “I added five new plays since the summer. I’ll have you run through a practice with Sam at lunch and if you can impress me you’ll be playing on Friday.”

“And I get my letterman jacket?” Charlie asked narrowing her eyes. She was only doing this for the stupid letterman jacket.

Shannon sighed, she supposed there were worse reasons to play football and if Charlie really did have Sam and Puck to vouch for her then she might be worth the incredible risk. “Hit the showers, I’ll get you some gear, practice starts in fifteen. Don’t be late.”

“We’ve got to do something they gave her two slushy baths today,” Brittany said as they headed to the field to Cheerios practice.

Quinn frowned because she had tried, “I’m doing what I can but Karofsky and Azimio aren’t listening and with the winning streak they’re on they’ve gotten cocky. But I heard that their running back is out for the rest of the season so they might start losing again.”

Santana was about to say something but she stopped and watched the action out on the field, it was another practice, she watched as the new running back, number seventeen, caught the football with two hands and tucked it into his side before taking off towards the end zone, dodging some of the bigger guys on the field before he was finally brought down, twenty yards later. “Looks like they solved the running back problem,” she said sourly. Which means that they had to deal with the football players being out of control. This was getting problematic, at this point no one was safe. Kurt was taking the brunt of the bullying, and it was getting bad.

“Come on, no point worrying about now. Sue’s going to kill us if we’re late,” Quinn said as she turned to walk towards the Cheerio’s practice.

Brittany was about to follow her but the player that had just gotten tackled pulled off his helmet and she stared, “Is that Charlie?” she asked and Quinn froze because Charlie really couldn’t have been that desperate.

Quinn turned and her face went pale as she watched as Charlie bumped fists with Puck, “She’s going to get herself killed,” she hissed as she begun to move toward her twin to stop the stupidity before Charlie got herself killed. They would just have to personally escort Charlie everywhere until she came to her senses and rejoined the soccer team.

Santana however wasn’t waiting for anyone and marched directly onto the field, Puck noticed her first and bolted abandoning Charlie who started to back up and kept her hands up trying to placate the angry Latina. Quinn quickly following her because she needed to give her twin a piece of her mind.
“Oh come on you can’t tell me you aren’t a little impressed. I thought girls liked football players,” Charlie tried as she kept backing up and tripped falling backwards as she tried to get away from Santana. “Help?” she said turning to Quinn, but Quinn wasn’t having it and Charlie realized that she was alone and she turned back to Santana. “Well now you can cheer me on?” she offered, this didn’t seem to work and Charlie immediately threw Puck under the bus. “Kill Puck this was totally his idea, just watch the face,” Charlie said covering her face.

“Oh get up I’m not going to murder you in front of all these witnesses,” Santana snapped, she was smarter than that. She knew where Charlie lived, “What are you thinking, you didn’t need to risk your neck for a stupid jacket. I thought you were intelligent.”

“Yes well, somewhere after my third slushy facial, my second slushy bath and the three mass slushy attacks I suffered, I came up with the brilliant idea to join the football team, but I thought I was going to sit on the bench during games. Apparently Russell forcing me to do football was good for something after all.”

“You hate this sport, in fact you burned your old football equipment,” Quinn said, that had let to a beating from Russell when he found the charred remains.

“If we make it to the finals, then I only have to play in four games, and I get to keep the letterman jacket for the rest of the school year and I get to be a part of another championship team. There is very little downside to this,” Charlie said with a shrug.


“Most of the guys on the team want to see you dead,” Santana added.

“Killing the last two brain cells that you have,” Quinn threw in.

“I didn’t think you were stupid Charlie. Some of the guys on the team outweigh you by a solid hundred pounds, this isn’t middle school where you were probably taller than most of the guys out there. Getting tackled is going to hurt, and you might actually get hurt. If all you want is a stupid letterman jacket then you can wear mine,” Santana snapped at Charlie.

Both twins turned to Santana, the implication of giving someone their letterman jacket held true. Charlie looked about to say something when Puck called her name and she turned to look at him before frowning as he motioned for her to bring it in. “I’ve got to get back to avoiding three hundred pound gorillas, I’ll be careful I promise,” she said as she pushed herself up and jogged towards Puck.

“She’s still dating Dani you know,” Quinn says to Santana, because she doubts her twin has actually broken up with the blue-haired girl.

Santana doesn’t say anything because this really can’t continue, because Charlie would probably end up dead and that would suck. That would suck terribly, “We need to have a little chat with the blue-haired wonder, and possibly coach Roz. Make whatever deal we have to Charlie needs to go back to the soccer team.”

Quinn sighed, “She’s not going to be happy we interfered,” she said but she didn’t really mean it because Charlie was being stupid and quite frankly she could use with a little bit of payback. “Really though? You’d give her your jacket to wear?” She still didn't approve of Santana's interest in her twin.

Santana made a face but kept her mouth shut. It hadn’t meant anything and nothing like that, it was
something Dani should have done immediately, even if the blue-haired girl didn’t have the juice that Charlie did.

Sam Evans was still angry with Charlie Fabray, because she didn’t tell him. She didn’t tell him that Quinn might possibly be gay, she could have told him that he was wasting his time, she could have told him not to have sex with her sister. He thought they were friends, while he does sort of feel bad for hitting Charlie, she is after all a girl it’s upsetting to know that his life has been turned upside down. He’s even angrier that she decided to join the football team and that he has to vouch for her. He hasn’t spoken to Quinn since he found out and he doesn’t even know what to say to her. So he avoids her, because he can’t stand to see the apologetic look in her eye every time she walks by in the hall.

He can’t believe he didn’t see it, because now that he knows he can. He can see that Quinn looks at Rachel, she had never looked at him like that. And it makes him feel stupid and it hurts because he really did like Quinn Fabray. Charlie’s the last person he expects dragging him into a classroom with Puck tailing her, she’s made the team much to the entire teams chagrin because Charlie Fabray is once again untouchable. Sam can’t help believe that she’s going to retaliate for the sucker punch but instead she motions for him to sit down.

“We need to talk,” her words are simple and she’s calm.

“No we don’t, we’ve had plenty of time to talk before all this happened. You knew, you’ve known the whole time. Did you know when you introduced me to your sister?” he asked bitterly.

“No, Rachel confessed to me after and I didn’t know about Quinn until the party after she kissed Rachel, by that time. I wasn’t going to out her to you, and you liked her. She’s my twin, it’s different for us. Sort of, it’s like Stevie and Stacey, something about sharing a womb bonds you. I was always going to take her side over yours. She made me promise not to tell you. I was always going to protect her, my loyalties are to her first that doesn’t mean that I don’t like you Sam. Or that we aren’t friends and truthfully I told you that it was a bad idea proposing to her. Just like I told her it was a bad idea to date you. I tried to stop this before it even began. I did but someone was bound to get hurt and I’m sorry that person was you.”

Sam flicks his eyes to Puck, “Did you know?”

Puck shakes his head, “Found out yesterday.”

Sam turns to Charlie and sighs, “Who else knew?”

Charlie makes a face, “Santana and Brittany. Dani knows now, Kurt maybe suspects but he’s the last person who is going to out Quinn. No one was making fun of you behind your back. We were telling Quinn not to let it continue, to not take your virginity. But she’s also my twin and above else Santana and Brittany are her best friends. It’s not like Quinn played with you, I think she really wanted what you had to be real. She really wanted to like you. But she doesn’t and I’m sorry she doesn’t.”

“She had sex with me though and she had sex with Puck doesn’t that make her a tiny bit—bisexual?” Sam protests because his heart is broken, “Can’t I win her back? I mean what does Rachel have that I don’t?”

“Argyle sweaters?” Puck offers unhelpfully and Charlie bites her lip to keep from laughing as Sam gives him a dull look but he smiles at least.
“It doesn’t matter if she’s a bit bisexual or not, just matters who you fall in love with, and she fell in love with Rachel, so no attempting to win her back wouldn’t be your smartest decision. It’ll just hurt more and you’ll just end up obsessing over Quinn, and then you’ll end up like JBI and his weird obsession with all things Rachel,” Charlie said with a sigh. “Look you’re the quarterback you have the pick of any girl in school, don’t fixate on my sister.”

“But I was the quarterback and she was the head cheerleader, it was supposed to be fate, you know like all those movies,” Sam protests, “She wasn’t supposed to fall in love with Rachel, that’s not how the story goes.”

Charlie hummed, “That story has been done so many times that it’s boring and cliché, so do something different. Mercedes likes you—”

“Yes but so has the trope that the football player falls for someone considerably less popular than he is.”

“Quinn’s a cheerleader, and yeah the trope that she falls in love with the nerdy guy is just as cliché and overdone as the cheerleader and the quarterback or the quarterback and the band geek.”

What about the football player and the wrestler?” Puck asks and both turn to him. Charlie shoots him a curious look and Sam just looks baffled.

Charlie chooses to ignore Puck’s words for now, “There are like no stories where the head cheerleader falls for another girl, so let them write their story. Let them have it and I’ll help you with yours, whoever you want because really I am your friend, and this time there won’t be any familial ties to confuse the issue, I’ll be on your side.”

Sam believes her but he wants to get last dig, “Even Santana?”

Charlie doesn’t expect this and her smile drops a bit, “You know I can’t help you with that, anyone else and I can but if you want to go after Santana you’re on your own. All I can do is promise to be straight with you, and Santana—I mean I can’t stop you and her, I won’t like it—” Charlie stumbles over her words and scratches her head.

Sam stares at Charlie for a moment, because it’s obvious that Charlie has feelings for Santana and he feels sorry for Dani, because she’s in the same position that he’s in and Charlie doesn’t seem to want to deal with it. “You need to break up with Dani,” he says firmly.

Charlie studies him, because she knows a part of her knows Sam is right, but she can’t. She can’t just break up with Dani, “I like Dani we’re just going through a rough patch and—”

“You don’t love her. Take it from someone who knows how it feels like to think that you might be good together, but you come to find out that they’re in love with someone else,” Sam’s says bitterly.

“The difference is, I could love Dani. This isn’t a case of I’m with someone who I could never possibly be in love with. I just need to work at it,” Charlie says defending her decision. “I can be happy with Dani.”

Sam makes a face because the situation does have that small caveat and he sighs, “I still think you’re making a mistake.”

“She is,” Puck says agreeing with him and Charlie rolls her hazel eyes.

“We cool Evan’s?” Charlie asked after a moment sticking out her hand, “You did sucker punch me
Sam stared at the offered hand, “Any girl I want?” Charlie snorts and nods, and he grabs her hand shaking it. “We’re cool.”

“Well now that we’ve all kissed and made up, can we get outta here, otherwise people are going to think we’re having a threesome in here, and there are way too many dicks in the room for this threesome to be fun,” Puck says.

Charlie nods and pauses, “So this wrestler you’re into—” she trails off because there is only one girl on the wrestling team. “Puck…you’re not in love with Lauren Zizes are you?” Puck doesn’t say anything to confirm or deny this and Sam and Charlie look at each other. “Dude she’s terrifying, I’m scared of Lauren didn’t she rupture some dude’s scrotum?”

Sam’s mouth drops because he’s new at McKinley and still doesn’t know everyone, “She ruptured some dude’s scrotum and you’re into her?”

“It was an accident,” Puck says trying to defend her. “She’s joining glee club, and she’s one of the few girls I haven’t slept with. We just make out a lot when I have time and it never goes any further than that, and she’s really tough.”

“Well if she’s who you want—” Charlie says hesitantly because Lauren is fucking terrifying and the sole reason she refused to join the wrestling team.

“We’ll totally help you get her, we’re like the Super Bro’s,” Sam says and Charlie groans, “Come on every superhero team needs a name.”

“Speaking of bro’s I was thinking that we should start hanging out with Mike,” Charlie says and when Puck gives her a quizzical look, “Asian Number two? He’s helped me out of a few jams.”

Puck grins and nods, “We could totally have a super smash brother’s tournament at my place after the game on Friday.”

“That’s it! We’ll be the Super Smash Bros, because we’re all on the football team and we’re all bro’s,” Sam said.

Puck grins at this, “That’s not actually that bad. Quinn, Brittany and Santana get to be called the unholy trinity and we don’t get a name? No one messes with them and no one will mess with us.”

Charlie stared at them and shook her head but smiled, because actually the name sounded pretty cool well no it sounded really lame but they both seemed to like it, and she’d never really been part of a group before. Though when Sam insisted that she fasten a Charizard pin to her bag, Charlie would come to regret thinking it was cool if even for a moment. “Fine, but if you turn this into one your glee cult things, I’m out,” she warned them not trusting them to be cool about this.

The situation with Kurt was getting out of hand, sure Rachel disliked him for always trying to steal solos from her but this was getting ridiculous and they needed to do something before things got out of control completely, which was why she called a meeting of all the glee girls. “Ladies, the Kurt-Karofsky bullying situation is getting way out of control. Kurt’s miserable, he’s losing weight…and not in a good way. And he’s barely even fighting me for solos anymore.”

Tina nodded because it was and she was worried about him, “We’ve all been teased, but something about what Karofsky’s doing is so much worse.”

Rachel nodded, “We’re all lucky enough to either have boyfriends or a girlfriend or even friends on the football team and I say we band together and demand that they confront Karofsky,” she said looking at Quinn.

Quinn’s face twisted at this because it sounded like Rachel was going to demand that Finn do something and use her relationship with him to get what she wanted. “I think you personally just set the feminist movement back 50 years,” she said dryly. They hadn’t been on a date yet, Rachel was busy with her classes and with getting ready for sectionals and Sue was having one of her crazy periods again, but this time she was now in charge of the school so it was just worse. She wondered if this was the right thing, they didn’t hold hands at school or kiss, and Charlie was the one that dropped Rachel off every morning so they didn’t have time to spend in the mornings. It was driving her crazy because she just wanted to spend time with her. Something was going to need to give.

“But guys like Karofsky only respond to muscle,” Rachel protested trying not to smile at Quinn.

“So we’re going to fight violence with violence?” Dani asked confused. She had been trying to talk to Charlie for the past two days and the Fabray was simply ignoring her phone calls or any attempt to talk. She didn’t even know if they were still together at this point.

“No! Look, I’m not saying that they should hit him. What I’m saying is that we need to defend Kurt, and there’s strength in numbers.”

Tina blinked and looked at Brittany, “Are you and Artie officially dating now?” that was an odd couple to say the least.

Brittany nodded, “Deal with it,” She wasn’t sure if it was because she felt really bad about how their first time had gone but she was trying to make it up to him.

Santana rolled her eyes, “Look I’m all for protecting porcelain, but Puck can’t get into any more fights he’s on probation. Trouty mouth is still a sophomore, and Karofsky outweighs him by a good fifty pounds. Asian number two, is in the same boat as trouty mouth, Charlie is a girl. Artie’s in a wheel chair, so who’s going to lead that charge Frankenteen?”

“Finn is a member of this glee club, and he should—” Rachel trailed off as she saw Quinn give her a look. “It’s a safety in numbers things and even Karofsky isn’t stupid enough to go against Sam, Mike and Charlie. Plus Artie and Puck just needs to be there he doesn’t have to fight.”

“I’ll talk to Karofsky,” Quinn says and everyone turns to her and she rolls her eyes. “Head cheerleader, most popular girl in school. My word is law doesn’t matter if the football team is having a good year, they’ve been out of control lately. Karofsky especially, so I’ll handle it. We don’t need boys to handle this for us. Half the guys are dating members of the Cheerios anyway. If we apply a bit of what we learned in Lysistrata—”

“Lysis-what are you talking about,” Mercedes asked confused.

“It’s a Greek comedy where the women stop having sex with the men, to get them to comply to stop fighting. Half the guys are on dating members of both the soccer team and the cheerios. I’m the Head of the Cheerios and Charlie—”

“Quit,” Dani said sullenly. Morale was down on the team, and they were playing horribly and Charlie was off playing football with the guys. As a soccer player Charlie should have hated football simply on principal alone. “I don’t think I can order them to not be with their boyfriends,” it probably had something to do with the fact that they had nearly tied last night, the team had
gotten so used to the routings that nearly tying with a team that had lost all its games this season was embarrassing, throw in the fact that Roz was on the warpath once she had heard that Charlie had joined the football team. And the game with Carmel was coming up quickly and the scouts were going to be there.

Quinn turned to Dani, “Sure you can. You’re their captain.”

“Charlie’s the captain, I was the co-captain and they weren’t pleased that I took that position from Missy to begin with. I don’t have any real power on that team. They’re loyal to your twin, who refuses to answer her phone.”

“So get her back on the team so I don’t have to worry about losing my twin to her sheer stupidity. They call themselves the Super Smash brothers now, I blame you. So fix it.”

“I think it’s cute,” Brittany said to no one in particular.

“She won’t talk to me and she ignores me I don’t even think we’re dating.”

Santana sniffed, “Why don’t you sing to her?” Quinn, Rachel and Brittany turned to the Latina giving her a sharp look. Santana gave them an innocent shrug and smiled, “What she’s got to get over her irrational fear that she’s actually living inside a musical someday.”

“Look the team is barely functioning without Charlie, and Charlie refuses to take a back seat to me at the Carmel game next week there will be division one scouts coming and she refuses to play the fullback position—it’s like bottom of the pyramid,” she says explaining it the best she can. “It’s an important part of the team, but no one notices them. She won’t talk about it with me, and she won’t stay in the same room with me, and I still can’t figure out what I did.”

Quinn winces because it’s exactly the problem, if Charlie didn’t want to talk about a problem she really wouldn’t and she looked over at Rachel who looked over at Santana and Brittany who really the only two people who could make Charlie talk when she didn’t want to, and neither girl really wanted to help Dani.

“She’s mad at you because you won’t touch her, she’s mad at you because she feels that you betrayed her and that you’re trying to take her team away from her. Putting her at the bottom of the pyramid doesn’t make her look good and she may want a scholarship down the road at one of those schools. She’s mad at you because you insisted that you go meet Judy and then proceeded to talk about things that Charlie isn’t ready to talk about,” Santana said calmly ticking off each point with her fingers.

Quinn blinked because the last person she had expected to help Dani was Santana, she didn’t even think that the Latina knew half of it, she had been giving Charlie her space and Charlie was doing the same. They weren’t talking. Even Rachel looked surprised because she only knew half of it.

“Bit of advice, get over yourself. Charlie is a girl even with her insistence of joining the football team. She’s still female she just—”

“Charlie’s a unicorn with an actual horn?” Brittany offers and Santana snorts at this.

“She’s special. So my advice, touch her properly and be okay with her body. Talk to Roz and put Charlie in the position she wants to play, she’s not going to overshadow you, she knows how important this scholarship is to you. And apologize for messing up with Judy, because Charlie hates her mother. She only barely tolerates Quinn, and they’re twins,” Santana says smirking at Quinn who rolls her eyes at this. “Not that complicated. And if you’re going to apologize use some
Has to be Marvel though otherwise Charlie will break up with you on the spot,” Quinn offered, she was exaggerating of course, but Dani seemed to be thinking about what they said. “I want my sister to be off the football team, what she’s doing is stupid and dangerous and you need to fix it, before she gets herself hurt.”

Dani studied Santana wondering when Charlie had explained it all to her, Rachel didn’t seem to know and she had asked. Quinn probably did know but had told her bluntly to figure it out, Brittany was Brittany and Puck and Sam hadn’t been a wealth of information either. “Thanks,” she said, she would try what Santana had said.
Chapter 31

Lucy Quinn Fabray was a bundle of nerves, she was terrified she’d never taken a girl out on a date before. She’d never had to think of the date ideas and Santana and Brittany were terrible when it came to giving her ideas. She was already thinking of the worst case scenarios in her head. She had thought about calling Charlie she was her twin and she had been there, and she was Rachel’s best friend so Charlie probably knew tips that could help her. She had picked up the phone to call her twin, but truthfully Charlie was like the least romantic person that she knew probably because she got all her dating advice from Puck. She really needed to have a sit down conversation with Charlie about who to listen to and who to avoid like the plague when it came to advice.

But she had planned it out, Judy was once again visiting Frannie, something was definitely going on there and she really didn’t want to think about it, so she had the house to herself. So she had spent all afternoon, skipping Cheerios practice to get it ready. It was a risk but Sue was still in her crazy phase so the only thing she had to worry about was Becky ratting her out to Sue, but Brittany had promised to keep her busy. It was the only night that Rachel had free at least for the next little bit, the diva was now obsessed with destroying the competition at sectionals and plotting how they were going to make it to nationals.

So here she was trying to recreate the vegan Chinese dish that she had made for Rachel earlier in the summer, it was the very first meal that she had made for the diva. It was really the first time they had openly flirted, and she hoped that it was the right decision. It might not even be the exact time that their friendship turned into something more but it was the first time that she could admit that something changed, she wondered how the rest of the evening would have gone if Charlie hadn’t interrupted them. There was no chance of that right now, Charlie couldn’t step foot anywhere near the Fabray property, Brittany was off with Artie, and Santana—well Quinn wasn’t sure that Santana wouldn’t show up just to spite her and be a bitch. Though there was something just more subdued about the Latina lately and it was driving her crazy. If she didn’t mess this night up, Quinn had already made plans to break Charlie and Dani up. It would be her birthday gift to her twin.

The doorbell rang and Quinn glanced at the time, Rachel was early but only by five minutes and she pulled off her apron because cooking Chinese food was always a somewhat messy experience for her and she rushed to get the door where she saw Rachel waiting, Quinn swallowed. “Hey,” she greeted flicking her eyes to the driveway. “Is Charlie—?”

Rachel grinned up at Quinn, who stepped aside to let her in. “No my mom dropped me off, after I explained the situation.”

“Does she know about us?” Quinn asked her, wondering how she was going to look her English lit teacher in the eye. The fact that Shelby controlled her grades in her favorite class was good incentive to keep the diva happy, but she didn’t really need incentive. She really did want to keep Rachel happy but she wasn’t sure how many more people she could handle finding out just yet.

Rachel blinked, she hadn’t realized that Quinn might have wanted to keep everything quiet, and Shelby was one of her teachers. It must be difficult to be dating a teacher’s daughter, but she had been so happy and Charlie had tuned her out after five minutes that she had called Shelby who had listened to her for a solid half hour. She hadn’t even told her father’s yet, but this was going to be her first date with Quinn Fabray. “My mom won’t tell anyone, I should have run it by you first and I’m sorry,” she said apologizing immediately.

Quinn laughed as she took Rachel’s jacket and hung it up before walking her to the kitchen,
Rachel its fine. I shouldn’t have been surprised if I thought that my mom would be just as excited as your mom I would have told her. You’d probably impress her more than Sam did. She really does like your singing voice, thinks you’re going to be a star one day,” Quinn informed the diva who beamed that she had another fan. Quinn didn’t add that it was perhaps the only really nice thing that she had said about Rachel, which was disappointing. Though most of Judy’s comments were about how there was no way to recover from an experiment, how everyone would wonder and talk about it. But Judy was wrong, Rachel wasn’t an experiment.

“You don’t think she’d kick you out again?” Rachel asked looking around. “If she does you can stay with me, I’m sure I can convince my father’s to clear out daddy’s painting room. He’s hardly ever home and it’s just basically become storage anyway.”

Quinn raised a brow, “You want me to move in with you?” she teased and Rachel flushed, because that was moving a bit to fast even for them.

“I just meant that you’d have your own space and you’d be close to Charlie, and you’d be safe. So don’t think that you don’t have anywhere to go because you can come live with me, or maybe even my mom she does have a spare bedroom that is meant for me if I ever needed to get away. I’ve never had the need to use it though so she might be willing to give it to you.”

Quinn smiled as Rachel took a seat and she went back to preparing the food, Rachel had said she liked watching her cook, “Is she everything you wanted?” she can’t help but ask.

Rachel nods, “She is, she’s teaching me all the things that my father’s couldn’t. I now know how to make at least ten different dishes on my own, and Charlie and I no longer order take-out every night, because she usually shows up Sunday night with plenty of food to last me the week. And we have cooking lessons every Saturday evening, and she also gives me pointers on my singing. She actually tries to take smaller breaths for a bigger longer note, and I need to work on keeping my shoulders still,” Rachel informed her. “She’s taking Charlie and I shopping next Saturday, you’re welcome to come. She would like to meet the girl I’m dating in a setting that’s not school related.”

Quinn looked up from the food that she was plating, “Charlie’s going?” Her sister loathed shopping for clothes, she would wander off to the bookstore or the video game store.”

“We needed someone to carry our bags,” Rachel joked, as she smiled when Quinn snorted and then laughed. “She really does want to meet you, I think she wants to give you a very firm conversation about breaking my heart. I’m sure you’ll get another one when my father’s find out that I’m dating you.”

“Has Charlie given you the talk?” Quinn asked because it was a thing that they did, Charlie would threaten the people she dated. It had started with Finn which was probably what started their little rivalry and she had given Sam one.

Rachel smiled, and tried to do her best Charlie impression, “I’m supposed to tell you if you hurt my sister I’ll kick your ass but we both know that I can’t hit you. So I’ll sic Santana on you.” She grinned, “So if we fight and I disappear you know who to blame for my disappearance. I assured your sister this wasn’t one of my obsessions or just a whim that I had and she seemed satisfied with that.”

Quinn smiled, because Charlie was still trying to protect her, “Well I think you might get another one from Santana and Brittany, I don’t know. Just remember Santana’s bark is worse than her bite,” Quinn said. “She lives like five minutes away from my house she doesn’t actually come from the other side of the tracks. Her dad works with your dad,” it dawned on her that Charlie, Santana and Brittany were like the only people she had that would try and protect her like that, her own
mother hadn’t given Sam a conversation about breaking her heart. She had just cared more about the illusion that they were the perfect couple then whether she actually loved him.

“Noah still thinks of me as his Jewish Princess and he’s really protective over me so you might get one from him, he already gave me one on you. He really cares about you.”

“He cares about Beth and we’re always going to have to look out for each other, and we’re always going to have this connection, nothing romantic or anything more than that but we have Beth. I might not be raising her but she was the best mistake that I ever made,” Quinn says and is quiet for a moment as they eat the food that she made. “We have a lot of people in our lives that care about us. It’s like a family.”

“I never really had friends growing up, people weren’t as accepting as my fathers would have liked. It was difficult being the child of two gay men, I love them, and I wouldn’t ask for different parents, but it was difficult. I didn’t think that high school would be different. But then I met Charlie and now I have the glee club and we’re like—it’s like family. With the exception of a few people,” well just Finn for right now.

Quinn was quiet for a moment, “Lucy Caboosey, it’s why I changed my name to Quinn so no one would ever call me that again. I wasn’t—I was never always this pretty, I know you said that you thought that I was the prettiest girl you’ve ever seen but back in middle school, I was overweight and people were vicious to me. I didn’t have any friends outside of Charlie and Charlie didn’t need anyone else apart from me and we were just Charlie and Lucy. And then we found out and everything changed. My mom helped me lose the weight and I had a nose-job, and I became Quinn. And I had this need to never be on the bottom again, I didn’t have friends I had my twin, and you should have seen us we were much closer than we are now. When we got to McKinley, I was lonely. Charlie had checked out, we had our moments but she was only staying to protect me, if it was just her she would have left a long time ago. Then I met Brittany and I really didn’t like Santana, but she’s sort of the glue that holds the unholy trinity together you know. Because I’m sure that if it had just been me and Santana we would have killed each other by now. And I had friends for the first time,” Quinn explained.

“I think I’d still believe that you were the prettiest girl in school, because you are, it doesn’t matter what you look like. It’s what’s inside that counts, and I think you’re pretty on the inside and on the outside,” Rachel said firmly, but there was a smile on her face.

“You never saw the pictures,” Quinn said in a self-deprecating manner, because she had been far from pretty her mother had pointed out all her flaws.

“I don’t need to see the pictures Quinn you’re beautiful and anyone who told you or made you feel inferior isn’t deserving of your time,” Rachel said making a note to ask Charlie to explain why Judy would insist that it was a good idea for a fourteen year old girl to have a nose job. She was surprised that Quinn didn’t have some disorder about her body at this rate.

“Well I can say that about you, you constantly put yourself down, but I think you’re really beautiful,” Quinn said seriously, because she didn’t understand how anyone could think that Rachel dressing like an adult would make her look like a sad clown hooker.

Rachel flushed, because she knew what her biggest flaw was and Quinn didn’t need to be nice about it. “I know that my nose—”

“Is beautiful Rachel. I like your nose, I like your eyes and I like everything about you, and anyone who makes you feel inferior isn’t deserving of your time. Didn’t you just say that?” Quinn said with a smile as she threw Rachel’s words back at her.
It was odd for Charlie to get a night to the house alone, but Quinn and Rachel had gone on her first date, something which Quinn had kept incredibly quiet, which ruined her plan of inviting Santana and Brittany out to go spy on them. Her homework was completed and she didn’t have any tests that needed her attention so she had planned to spend the night reviewing plays, and then mixing if Rachel was out late. She hadn’t expected to have fun playing football, she still hated it but at least it wasn’t as boring as it was before. Maybe it was because she was playing with friends, something she had never had before back in middle school. It was nice, and with the exception of Finn most of the guys had grudgingly left her alone, Azimio had even given her a compliment. She didn’t have to worry about them not protecting her out there because they wanted to win just as much as she did, and they had quickly realized that she was good enough to help them win.

Shannon was already talking about next season, a proper full season with the team for her senior year and she hadn’t decided. Though she suspected Shannon did it to piss Roz off, the team was in shambles and Charlie really missed being the star of the team and she missed half of her teammates, especially Missy and Marissa and their weird telepathy thing. They hadn’t approached her yet but they had silent conversation in front of her at the last assembly. And then there was Dani and she hadn’t spoken to the girl since their blow out in the nurses offices. She didn’t really know what to say to her and that bothered her.

Charlie flipped through the binder that Shannon had given her, there were at least ten new plays since the summer, and she still needed to learn them by Friday, which was rapidly approaching. It sort of sucked she’d much rather be doing something on a Wednesday night, and she couldn’t help but think about the fact that the soccer team would have finished playing by now. They probably won, they were the better team and they still had Dani after all. So that’s where she sat eating a giant bowl of fruit loops while studying her playbook, while waiting for Rachel to come home so she could sort of listen to how her date with Quinn. Well that had been the plan till the doorbell rang. She sort of expected Santana and Brittany to show up so they could totally see if Quinn got a goodnight kiss so she was surprised to see Dani.

“We lost.” It was the first words out Dani’s mouth and Charlie winced because if they lost again there wouldn’t be in the running for another state final.

Charlie opened the door for Dani and watched her go back to the living room, “Sucks.” Charlie said keeping her face neutral as she tried not to rage, they should have been able to win without her. They had played that team the two previous years and steam rolled them. “But also not my problem anymore,” she said taking a seat and putting the bowl back in her lap. “What do you want Dani?” she asked her girlfriend or ex-girlfriend she wasn’t sure anymore. They hadn’t talked, she didn’t want to talk to her.

“You’ll be striking up front with me at the Carmel game,” Dani said and Charlie flicked her eyes towards her and Dani ran a hand through her blue hair. “I’ll still be wearing the band but it’s only for show you’ll still be calling the shots, we need to win that game or there isn’t going to be another state championship run. The team needs you and the morale is down and I can’t seem to make them want to play like you did. Is that what you wanted to hear that you’re better than me?”

“All I wanted was midfield,” Charlie stated simply, “She wanted to shove me back to Fullback and you just let her do that. I have played all season making you look really good, and I didn’t mind doing that for this game but you need good players beside you or you’re not as effective as a player. I know I’m a show-off and I’m aware that I need to pass more but Missy and Marissa can’t read the field like I can or even like you can, you need me up there with you. Or at least around you to feed you perfect passes so you can bury the ball in the back of the net. This wasn’t an ego thing, I want to win just as much as you do and if I thought that we’d win with me being a gaping hole in
our back line then I would have taken my lumps. I’m terrible at playing defense the last time I tried I was red-carded after a poorly timed challenge, and we were down one player. So this wasn’t about my ego. It was never about my ego, it was about winning and what was best for the team. Putting me in the fullback position wasn’t good for the team and you need a win in front of all those recruiters, putting me in the fullback position wasn’t going to ensure us the win.”

“You quitting wasn’t going to ensure us the win either,” Dani points out.

Charlie shrugged, “I quit, and I’m on the football team now and they don’t have a proper wide receiver so I can’t jump ship and abandon my friends for the soccer team. I made a commitment, and me being on the team and the wide receiver really pisses Finn off, so you know cherry on top.”

“Except you’re not just quitting the team because Roz put you in a position you don’t like. You’re doing it because you’re mad at me. And I’m sorry, I’m sorry about Sunday I should have talked to you about it, I really thought it was something you wanted but you don’t talk to me. Not about the important things and it’s really hard to figure you out sometimes. I’m your girlfriend, I’m supposed to be a shoulder that you can lean on, and I’m supposed to be the shoulder that you lean on. But you don’t, because you don’t talk about anything, not even the important stuff. And it’s really hard on me,” Dani’s voice wavered.

Charlie ran a finger along her hand, suddenly feeling like a bit of an ass, because Dani couldn’t know how Charlie felt she couldn’t expect her to just take her word for it sometimes without an explanation, “I don’t like talking about things, it’s the Fabray way; pretend a problem doesn’t exist. It’s why I’ve been ignoring you. You’re a problem right now.” Dani was about to open her mouth to say something, “But that’s mostly because I created this problem. I don’t like feeling like I have to talk about things because it doesn’t make me feel better but I can’t expect you to just know or take my word for it. I hate Judy Fabray, I’m only going to Sunday Lunches with her because she paid for Puck’s lawyer and I’m only upholding my end of the bargain. When I said that Quinn is the most important person in my life it’s because she really is the only family that I can stomach to be around for an extended period of time. Which is why I didn’t find it important for you to meet Judy, I don’t care what she thinks of you. Because I can’t stomach to be around her.”

Dani swallowed and nodded, “Why?” she asked and Charlie frowned, “You don’t have to—you don’t have to talk about it.”

Charlie seemed to debate something internally for a moment before she put the bowl of soggy cereal down on top of the coffee table and she pulled off her shirt, she had always worn a shirt when they had slept together, or a tank top something to hide the majority of the scars on her back, but she turned her back to Dani for a moment letting her girlfriend take in her scars, she didn’t say a word but she felt Dani’s hand trace one of the particularly deep ones that she’d always have. “My father—Russell isn’t out of the picture because he cheated on Judy, he’s out of the picture because he did this and is currently sitting in prison. Judy watched, she never helped me, she never helped him either.” Charlie pulled her shirt back down. “I don’t talk about it. This is why I live with Rachel instead of with Judy, I can’t actually step foot anywhere near the Fabray mansion, I can’t go back there even if I wanted to.”

Dani stares at her girlfriend and she wants to hug her but Charlie doesn’t seem like she wants to be touched at this moment. “I didn’t know,” she says lamely.

“No you didn’t,” Charlie says, “I don’t like to talk it, I don’t like having to relive it every single time I talk about it because it doesn’t get easier and it just makes me upset. So it’s easier for me to just ignore it happened, or talk about it when I want to, not because I have to. I have to tell you these things and I don’t want to tell you them. I want you to not look at me like you’re like you’re
looking at me right now.”

Dani blinks in surprise, “I—”

“Like you feel sorry for me. Don’t, pity me or treat me different if you’re mad at me be mad at me but don’t look at me like I’m broken or I need to be fixed. Because for once in the past three years, when I say I’m fine. I actually mean I’m fine,” Charlie sighs. “I like the fact that I can pee standing up, and I want to have kids one day that are mine. I know that it makes you uncomfortable and if you want to break up with me and be with someone normal that’s okay. I understand but—”

“Can I see it?” she asks because she’s never seen it before and maybe she does need to get used to Charlie’s body being just the way it is because it doesn’t seem like the soccer player wants to change her body just to fit in, and Charlie has been really good about her requests as selfish as they may be.

“I do really—what?” Charlie asks confusion on her face and she flushes, “Now?” she asks and Dani shrugs. It confuses her because she hadn’t expected to do it and Dani had never been curious about it before. “I’m not trying to force you into doing anything with me, I don’t mind keeping my boxers on, I just want to be able to—you know touch myself when we’re having sex, but I can wait and—” she says trying to back track.

“I want to see it.” Dani repeats again ignoring Charlie who’s now a deep red and the teenager slowly peels down her shorts and boxers letting Dani take a look.

Charlie bites her lip and refuses to meet Dani’s face, “Well you’ve seen it can I—”

“Can I touch it?” Dani asks the teenager gently, she doesn’t really wait till Charlie gives her permission before she runs her fingers along Charlie’s waist, pausing when she sees the ugly scar on her hip but she doesn’t really hesitate before wrapping her fingers around Charlie’s member.

Charlie finally stops her gripping her wrist tightly, “Why are you doing this?” she asks because she feels like she’s being toyed with they hadn’t spoken in a week, and she’s not sure that this was how this conversation was going to go. And the last thing she wants is to do something she’ll regret.

“I want to make you feel good?” Dani offers, even though it’s only part of the reason she wants her girlfriend back. The person who really did go to great lengths to make her feel better, she wants Charlie back on the team. And she’s jealous because Santana knew why Charlie was upset and she figured it out the moment that Santana talked about it she saw that look on Santana’s face and she knows that this is something that Santana would do for Charlie, so even if she’s a bit grossed out by it, she does want to keep her girlfriend.

Charlie frowns searching her face for a moment, “You don’t have to touch it if you really don’t want to. I’m not trying to get you to do anything you don’t want to do,” she repeats because she can see the hesitation on Dani’s face, and it’s enough for Charlie to pull Dani’s hand away gently, and pulls her pants back up. “It’s okay,” she promises Dani. She’s never had a girlfriend before and at least Dani was willing to try, and maybe she will get used to it one day. “I’ll come back to the team,” Charlie says after a moment. Because that’s what Dani really wants and it’s why she’s here. “You didn’t need to bargain sexual favors with me to get me there. I miss playing soccer,” she admits.

“That’s not why I did what I did,” Dani said immediately because that’s the last thing she wants Charlie to believe. “I just—didn’t want you to leave,” she answers. She doesn’t want her to cheat either not with Santana because she can see the way the Latina looks at her and when she thinks about it she can see how relaxed Charlie is around her, how playful she is.
Charlie blinks, and then smiles, and it’s crooked but soft, “I wasn’t going to leave,” she promises because she really wasn’t planning to leave her. It’s a lie, she just doesn’t know how and the she’s having a hard time shoving Santana out of her mind. She needed to focus on making this work even if it is broken.

Quinn walks with Rachel to her front door, she’s not sure how the date went they had talked a lot more than she had planned but then they had watched West Side Story, and Rachel deserved more. She deserved more than that, it was something so simple and Jesse was right she deserved an epic romance. This wasn’t the romance that she had envisioned, but she knows what the perfect date will be she just needs the money for it. She’d show Jesse St. James an epic romance. She’s about to say something because good night kisses are generally the most awkward part of the evening, and she doesn’t really expect Rachel to give her one because they didn’t do anything fantastic. So it’s a surprise when Rachel leans in to give her a goodnight kiss, and wraps her arms around Quinn’s neck, and Quinn immediately kisses back eagerly, because Rachel’s kisses light her up and she focuses on memorizing the feel of her lips, and how their lips fit together.

The term fireworks doesn’t begin to describe it anymore because it’s not strong enough, and comparing it to a drug cheapens it. But Quinn really likes kissing Rachel, and she’s the one that attempts to deepen the kiss, brushing her tongue against the diva’s lips, and the next thing she knows their tongues are working with each other and Rachel lets out a low moan into the kiss which sets Quinn’s body on fire. They lose track of the time but Rachel has fantastic breath control so when they finally part for air, Quinn’s slightly out of breath.

“I had a really good time tonight Quinn,” Rachel lets out and her voice is low and husky and Quinn really wants to kiss her again. Quinn nods mutely and Rachel finally pulls away and opens the door and stumbles back a bit as she untangles herself from the slightly taller cheerleader. “I’ll see you tomorrow?”

“I’ll pick you up,” Quinn says because screw her twin or the fact that it’s not environmentally friendly, she wants to see Rachel again and they need more time together. “Charlie can swing by and pick up Santana and Brittany and I’ll pick you up in the mornings,” she said.

“Cheerio’s practice,” Rachel says trying not to smile when the look on Quinn’s face falls, “But if you don’t mind me watching you—”

“I don’t,” Quinn says, because at least she gets to spend time with Rachel in the mornings now and Charlie can pick up Santana and Brittany.

“Well then I’ll see you tomorrow bright and early,” Rachel says and leans in to gently press her lips against Quinn’s, before closing the door. Rachel turns and leans against the door only to see Charlie sitting on the stairs. She hadn’t even noticed the soccer player who has a brow raised and an amused smirk on her face, “How long have you been sitting there?”

“Long enough to know that you two are going to be nauseating to watch,” Charlie says bluntly as she crosses her legs, “Your mom called me a few times to know if you were home yet. So you need to call her and tell her that you’re home. Check in. I would ask how it went but I don’t want you to spew all your sweetness on me. Quick point, I’m joining the soccer team again, and I’m balancing football, so my schedule’s changed. Once you’re done with this freakish afterglow thing let me know so we can sync schedules. And call Shelby,” Charlie grumbled as she headed up the stairs.

Her phone vibrates in her pocket and she pulls it out, and it’s a message from Quinn.
Quinn: Did she have a good time?

Charlie stares at her phone and rolls her eyes and makes a note to go meet Emma’s husband or boyfriend or whatever he is to check for cavities because they are going to be a nauseatingly sweet couple, at least at least they aren’t at school. She wouldn’t be able to take the obscene amount of sweetness that’s going on between them.

“You want to what?”

“Rachel wants Karofsky to lay off, and the football Neanderthals—”

“I’m still on the football team,” Charlie points out.

Quinn gives her twin a withering look because she really can’t believe that Charlie is still on the team to begin with, her twin hated football with a passion. And Quinn really hates the fact that she’s forced to cheer on Charlie’s stupidity, she almost has plans to tell Judy but that would be a betrayal. “Well then you’re just as dumb as they are. You’re the captain of the soccer team again, just quit. Pissing off Finn can’t be nearly this entertaining.”

Charlie grinned, “You have no idea how entertaining it is, one day you’ll hate him just as much as I do,” she says crossing her arms over her chest. “Now what do you want me to do?”

“You know how half of the guys on the football team are dating some members of the soccer team? I want you to help me stop Karofsky from bullying Kurt, and you know as well as I do that they’ve been out of control lately. They slushed you without my permission, and I did place you under protection. Well Santana beat me to it and they did it anyway. So we’re going to go all Lysistrata on them.” Charlie makes a face because she doesn’t understand the reference. “Greek Comedy, you know where the women refuse to sleep with the men till they stopped the stupid war they were in? You read.”

Charlie blinks because she’s only like three pages into Pride and Prejudice and she has to catch up to the class but she keeps falling asleep whenever she tries to get onto the fourth page. “Is that what we’re supposed to—”

“No, I read it on my own, anyway I told Rachel that I would handle Karofsky, and I need your backup.”

“You want me to order my girls to not have sex with any of the guys on the football team? You do realize that Dani is on the soccer team and asking her to not have sex with someone on the football team is like me shooting myself in the foot.”

Quinn frowns because she’s surprised at the fact that Dani seems to have gotten back into Charlie’s good graces, Santana probably shouldn’t have helped because it didn’t pull Charlie from the football team. “The solution to that is simple, quit the football team.”

“I can’t leave my Super—never mind,” Charlie says suddenly feeling embarrassed, the name really was sort of lame.

Quinn stares at her twin incredulously a slow teasing grin spreading across her face, “Please don’t tell me you joined the Sam, Puck and Mike in referring to yourselves as the Super Smash Bros.” When Charlie doesn’t answer and looks away Quinn snorts, “Are you guys going to build a tree house too and have secret meetings?”

Charlie looked around for Sam before glaring at her sister, “Shut up, Sam might think that’s a great
idea,” Charlie said looking mortified.

“So tell your girls to lay off having sex with their boyfriends for a while and I won’t find Sam and give him that idea,” Quinn said crossing her arms over her chest and giving Charlie her best HBIC face. It doesn’t seem to faze her twin though.

“Give me a timeline I can’t order them to stop having sex with their boyfriends indefinitely, because you know I like having sex and this affects me too. I can’t be a hypocrite on this.”

“I’ll be confronting the football team later today after practice, all I need is your confirmation that they can at least hold on till then, and if the guys don’t bite to hold off for at least a week?”

“Right now they’ll do anything to keep me from leaving so I suppose I have enough pull for at least two weeks,” Charlie admits closing her locker.

“So you’ll do it?”

Charlie’s face twists she’s probably going to destroy a lot of the goodwill she’s gotten with the guys on the team, but even she has to admit that Karofsky is going too far. “Karofsky doesn’t have a girlfriend, and even if he did when I said last year that he asked me out after he knew about—” Charlie gestures at her hips. “I wasn’t making something up on the fly. He actually did.”

Quinn stares at her, “He’s gay?”

Charlie nods her head, “So this is probably his gay panic, on the bright side I totally thought this is what you’d do to Rachel just with you know vicious words and starting the cycle of bullying all over again. So you know kudos.” Charlie says. “You can’t out him though, so a bit of peer pressure telling him to ease off might work or it could backfire, because he doesn’t have a girlfriend. It’s putting him under the microscope so if you’re going to do it, you can’t focus on just him. Make it about how they aren’t listening to you and it stops now. No more slushying or harassing the glee club. Then when you get Karofsky alone you tell him to lay off or you’ll tell the team why exactly they aren’t getting any. So he knows, and he backs off. You still get to look like a hero in front of Rachel, and you regain control of the school. Discretely is the best way to do this.”

Quinn stares at her, “Who else knows?”

Charlie shrugged again, “About Dave? Brittany probably and maybe Kurt has figured it out. I’ve known since last year, it’s not like I did anything about it and maybe putting the thought in everyone’s minds makes this a bit my fault, so it’s the least I can do.”

Half the guys on the team feel betrayed by her, the other half is furious at Quinn for trying to regain her position so forcibly and Charlie is the closest Fabray that they can take it out on, even after she points out that she’s not get any, for as long as they aren’t. It’s not the same thing because Charlie’s also on the soccer team and no one really believes her anyway. But she manages to stop Dave Karofsky before he storms off with the rest of the guys.

“Quinn wants to have a word with you,” Charlie says simply and Dave frowns at her.

“Why what does your—” Dave trails off when Charlie gives him a look. “What does she want with me?” he asks her in a normal tone this time because Charlie probably won’t stand for him calling Quinn a bitch.

“I want you to stop harassing Kurt,” Quinn says calmly and simply as Charlie takes a step back and lets Quinn handle the situation.
Kurt frowns, “I’m not going to—”

“You are, or I tell every last one of the guys that the reason that they aren’t getting any is because you refuse to knock it off. The glee club and every member in it is off limits. I told you that and Kurt is a member of the glee club. So get over yourself.”

“You told her,” Dave says whipping to Charlie his face flushing, and his anger building because Charlie had promised not to tell anyone.

“Quinn’s not going to out you,” Charlie says simply. “No one is, and the only reason she didn’t publically name you as the reason why the guys aren’t getting any sex is because I asked her not to. Besides at some point in time people are going to start whispering about you anyway. Especially if you continue to focus on Kurt. So for everyone’s sake just knock it off Dave, and go back to slushying Finn if you need an outlet for your aggression.”

“Don’t take out your aggression on Finn,” Quinn said stopping Charlie from telling Karofsky to switch targets. Rachel wouldn’t want anyone slushied, or bullied anymore and she was trying to use her powers for good. She ignored the face Charlie was making, “The whole thing stops now, stop being a prick. No one cares that you don’t have a girlfriend. Finn doesn’t have one, and several of the guys on the team don’t have one. I didn’t even know till Charlie told me, it didn’t even cross my mind. But she’s right when she says that people will figure it out or at least start talking about it if you don’t lay off him,” Quinn says firmly and looks at her twin. “I don’t want to have to tell people that you’re the reason why they aren’t having sex. So don’t force my hand. Come on Charlie.”

Charlie follows her twin, “I’m not your lackey,” she complains, holding the door open for her sister before walking out with her.

“Yes you are,” Quinn says smirking at Charlie who huffs about being called Quinn’s lackey.

Even with Quinn’s interference and the fact that Dave does indeed lay off, the damage is done. Kurt makes the announcement the following Monday following his father’s wedding. “Can I make an announcement?” Kurt says standing up. “First, I wanted to thank everyone for what you did at my dad’s wedding. It’s nice to know that I have great friends here. Which is why it’s so hard for me to leave.”

Quinn blinks, “What do you mean leave? I dealt with the Karofsky situation he shouldn’t be bothering you anymore.”

“I’m transferring to Dalton Academy immediately. My parents are using the money they saved up for their honeymoon to pay for the tuition,” Kurt explains calmly, ignoring the mumbling that goes through the club.

Tina speaks up first, “Kurt, you can’t leave.”

Finn gets angry, because he had tried everything to get his new brother to stay. They needed him for sectionals, if he couldn’t be the quarterback then he needed a national championship win. “What the hell, dude? How about you talk with me about this first?”

Kurt eyes Finn and sighs, “I’m sorry, Finn, but there’s nothing to talk about. Karofsky’s still here, so that means I won’t be.”

Sam steps in, “We can protect you.”
Puck nods and crosses his arms across his chest, “Seriously, we can, like, form a perimeter around you like the Secret Service.”

Finn nods, “Yeah,” he said as he looks at Rachel who looks shocked by this news. They had become closer, and maybe if he could convince Kurt to stay it would show her that he had changed.

“The only thing that can really protect me is what they have at Dalton, a zero tolerance, no-bullying policy. It’s enforced. At McKinley people get away with slushying, the elite rule this school and if you’re not considered cool you get picked on,” he eyed the Cheerio’s and the football players as he spoke. “It’s still bullying even if you have a good reason to do it. The people you slushy don’t have the power to slushy you back, and on a whim you can rally the school to pick on one person and tear them apart.”

“I haven’t ordered a single slushy attack this year,” Quinn protested, “We have tried putting you guys on the safe zone, but the football guys are out of control.”

“You slushed Jacob Ben Israel who—”

“JBI is a leech and should have been expelled, he stalks Rachel and he has been caught doing extremely perverted things at school including jacking off in the school library to Rachel’s Brittany outfit earlier this year. He’s getting what he deserves,” Quinn argues.

“That’s my point, the rules aren’t enforced here and the only reason that Karofsky is still here is because he’s on the football team. If he had been anybody else he would have been gone. Sue lets you slushy anyone, fights break out all the time at McKinley and no one does anything. If you have a letterman jacket you’re protected and that’s not fair. Your twin got into a fight last year and she doesn’t even get a slap on the wrist.”

“Karofsky attacked her, not the same thing and he got kicked off the hockey team,” Quinn said, “You were a Cheerio last year and you were good at it so just rejoin the team and you’ll be safe.”

“Charlie ordered slushy attacks on Finn who—”

“If you want to speak to my sister about her slushying habits then do that but she’ll tell you the same thing I did, Finn probably did something to deserve it. You have friends here. You have people who care about you here. You’re not going to Dalton because you’re scared of Karofsky because I promise you that situation has been handled,” Quinn argues with him not letting him finish.

“How can you promise me that? So he’s laid off for a few days, he threatened to kill me,” Kurt snaps back at her.

“Because I know. Karofsky has been dealt with, he’s not going to bother you again,” Quinn responds with just as much force. “We’re family here and we protect our own, Karofsky won’t be bothering you it’s been dealt with. I promise you.”

Kurt’s eyes widen at Quinn’s implication, “You didn’t—I thought, how did you even find—?”

Quinn ignores the fact that all eyes are on her, “We’re family, and family protects their own. Most of you were there for me last year and I promised myself that I’d be there if I could. Dave won’t be a problem. So if you’re going to insist on leaving then it’s not going to be because of Karofsky.”

“I don’t feel safe at McKinley anymore, what if he starts up, all you did was make the situation worse,” Kurt says his voice breaking.
Rachel turns to Quinn and places a hand on her arm, it’s gentle and subtle. “Are you going to be competing against us at Sectionals?” she asks him. Santana turns to look at Rachel and shoots her an incredulous look. “I simply want to know, it seems that Kurt has made his decision despite our best efforts we can’t force him to stay in a place where he doesn’t feel safe,” though she suspects that this something to do with Blaine, because Quinn has managed to coral the entire football team, there had been no slushying to any unsuspecting victim. Karofsky had chosen to openly ignore Kurt.

Quinn looks at her and settles down and crosses her arms over her chest. “He is safe,” she says lowly because she’s done everything in her power to make him safe. Rachel nods because she believes that Quinn tried.

Mercedes stands up and shoots Rachel a dirty look, “Kurt—” she says reaching out for him.

Kurt pulls away immediately, not letting Mercedes touch him as he begins to walk away, “I’m sorry. I have to go.”
Santana Lopez watched as Dani wrapped her arms around Charlie, the soccer player had kept her promise and she had kept herself relegated to something low-key, barely having any touches on the ball and keeping her comments to a low murmur. There were no flashy plays, but she had made Dani look like the star that she wasn’t. They had beaten Carmel High, but it was unnaturally close and Santana had seen the growing frustration on Charlie’s face as the game went on, it was mixed with exhaustion, Charlie had been pushing her body for the past week with football practice during lunch and soccer practice after school. She had been sleeping through most of her classes as well.

Santana watched getting more annoyed as Dani was approached by the college recruiter, they seemed to exchange words before walking off, from the smile on Dani’s face it seemed that she had gotten what she want. Charlie stood there for a moment, there seemed to be a flicker of irritation on her face but she put a smile on her face and jogged to the bench where she grabbed her duffel bag and winced as she slung it onto her shoulder. The Latina rolled her eyes because trust Charlie to play when she was injured, she had seen the tackle last week at the Thurston game. She debated for a moment and looked over at Dani who was still talking to the recruiters before making a decision and walking up to Charlie. “Hey Fabgay, you played like shit today.”

Charlie blinked and flicked her eyes to Santana, at least someone wasn’t telling her that she had a good game. The honesty was refreshing because she didn’t need the platitudes and she hated not playing to the best of her capabilities. “It’s Dani’s year to shine and I didn’t want to—”

Santana rolled her eyes, “If only the hobbit could have that attitude, you know she tried to take over glee the other day when Schuester was sick? Wanted us to tell her what solo we wanted her to sing. She’s lucky that Quinn was there to calm everyone down. I thought that getting together would remove the stick Quinn has lodged up her ass and it would cause the hobbit to chill out.”

Charlie smiled because that did sound like Rachel, she winced as she adjusted the duffel bag on her shoulder and looked at Santana, “You could do a solo, don’t tell Rachel I said that though, because she would murder me for giving you ideas on how to torture her,” Charlie said regretting the compliment immediately when she saw the devious smile on Santana’s face. “Santana,” Charlie admonished.

“Oh chill out Fabgay, I’m not going to mess with the hobbit, and I’m not going to tell Brittany that you played with that shoulder injury,” she said calmly, pulling the duffel bag off Charlie’s arm gently and carrying it for her.

Charlie frowned and sighed, “Last tackle at the Thurston game I tweaked it. Don’t worry I got it checked out, Coach Beiste made me, it’s nothing to serious and I can play tomorrow,” Santana gave her a look and Charlie smiled, “Cheerleaders like football players remember, you can’t hate me for doing this. Brittany said I look hot.”

“You look like a—you’re dating Dani, who isn’t a cheerleader,” Santana pointed out and looked at the soccer captain. “Please tell me you’re not doing this to impress me.”

“I did it to stop getting slushied, the fact that you think that I look hot in my football gear is just an added bonus,” Charlie said that crooked grin of hers as they walked to her car.

Santana paused because it seemed like Charlie was flirting, but knowing the soccer player she probably didn’t think she was. “You need to stop listening to Puck on what women like,” she said after a moment, “You’re back on your team, and you’re back doing something that you love. So
why are you being an idiot and putting your body at risk? No one is going to slushy you anymore and you’re not Quinn you don’t even use your popularity except to torture Finn and get away with it.”

Charlie shrugged, “I’m having fun and I feel like I belong I guess, you know with Sam, Puck and Mike. It’s fun, I never liked doing it before because I didn’t really have friends on my old team. If they weren’t depending on me, I’d totally quit but I made a commitment and I intend to see it through.”

“You’re part of the Super Smash bro’s?” Santana said biting her lip as Charlie flushed, “Oh god Fabgay you’ve reached an all new height of nerd. I thought you were cool. Is that why you have that dragon on your duffel bag?”

“I didn’t come up with it Sam did,” Charlie said embarrassed as she reached to her duffel bag to cover the Charizard pin, she was going to murder him. “Not everyone can come up with a name like the unholy trinity,” Charlie grumbled as Santana swatted her hand away.

“What’s it called?” Santana asked as she looked at the dragon. Charlie muttered something under her breath, “What didn’t hear you Fabgay, speak up.”

“Charizard—” Charlie said as Santana snorted and began to laugh. “It’s cool! I mean it matches my name Charlie—oh come on it’s not that funny.”

Santana didn’t stop laughing until Charlie gently nudged her, Santana snorted and pushed Charlie who grinned back, “Your nerd is showing Fabgay. Do girls actually find it attractive?”

“I don’t know about other girls, but I know you do,” Charlie stated simply and gave Santana that crooked smile once more.

Santana stared at Charlie for a moment, wondering if Charlie was doing it on purpose. Flirting because Charlie Fabray had never been relatively smooth before, it was hard to read the soccer player sometimes. So she chose to ignore it because if Charlie could do it then so could she, “Is Q still getting her mack on with the hobbit?”

Charlie made a face, “It’s gross, and they seem to refuse to do it anywhere but the couch. It was gross watching Rachel and Jesse it’s nauseating watching Rachel make out with my twin.”

“And Rachel doesn’t mind being on the down-low?”

“No, Quinn’s not ready to come out yet, and she respects that. It’s probably going to cause problems later on down the line though. Finn’s figured out that the kiss was fake, so he’s going back to trying to get with Rachel. Sam and Quinn are still Ken and Barbie, and people think that they’re still together. Sam’s fine with people thinking that, it helps his popularity.”

Santana frowned, “I think it works just fine, you saw what happened with Karofsky and Kurt. Quinn did a good job at getting it to stop but Kurt’s still shaken. There are other idiots out there, some of them are worse than Karofsky. What if Dani wanted to keep your relationship secret?”

“Then I would keep our relationship secret,” Charlie said with a shrug.

Santana stopped and stared at the soccer player, “You said you didn’t want to be anyone’s dirty little secret.”

Charlie paused and looked at Santana, her hazel eyes flicking over her face for a moment, she seemed to have an internal debate with herself. “I fought Quinn to let me see you. I begged her to
let me see you and then when that didn’t work it got nasty between the two of us. She didn’t want to lose her new friends, which she planned to rule the school with. You were the first friends that Quinn ever had and she really didn’t want me to mess that up. So we fought and there was a slushy war. Brittany asked me to stop because you were with Puck. Puck thought that he took your virginity, Finn thought that he got there first. The most beautiful girl in school wanting me? I mean I’m aware that I’m good at sex but actually wanting me for something more? I can’t be your dirty little secret Santana, because you’re not just anyone to me. Not now. Besides I’m with Dani, and she’s not perfect. But she tries and I know I’m difficult and secretive as fuck, but she tries and I can grow to love that, to trust and to love her.” Charlie gently pulls her duffel bag away from Santana and throws the bag away from Santana and throws the bag into the car, “Do you need a ride home? Quinn is probably still making out with Rachel, and she can drive you home.”

Santana doesn’t say anything, she wants to walk home but it’s getting dark and she knows that Charlie will protest at the idea of leaving her alone, so she gets into Charlie’s car and lets the soccer player drive her to Rachel’s house in absolute quiet. Neither of them talking, the awkwardness back between them.

“So what are your intentions with my daughter,” Shelby asks Quinn, and the cheerleader looks at Charlie for a bit of support. She finds none, Charlie is sitting on the ground with her legs crossed playing angry bird while surrounded by a bunch of bags.

Quinn had met with Sam’s parents before, and she was fine and she had met Carol, and she had been fine as well. But truthfully Shelby was important to Rachel and she didn’t want to mess up their relationship, “I really like her, and I don’t want to hurt her,” she answers truthfully, and looks at the dressing room door where Rachel is changing. “She’s amazing, and I don’t even think all this necessary, I’m sort of used to the argyle sweaters. I think they make her look adorable,” she answers truthfully. Charlie makes a gagging noise and Quinn turns to glare at her twin, who doesn’t look at her, “I know that’s a bit cheesy but—”

“A bit?” Charlie asks still not looking at Quinn.

Shelby looks between the two of them, and smiles before scolding Charlie, “Charlie,” she says and the soccer player looks up at her.

“Sorry Ms. C, shutting up now. I’ll try not to get any more cavities,” she says slightly contrite as she goes back to playing her game. Quinn resists the urge to smack her twin upside the head but she only resists because Shelby’s watching,

Shelby looks between the twins, “She is amazing, and I have you to thank for telling Charlie to talk with me, I don’t know why you didn’t do it yourself though—”

“I was pregnant at the time and my emotions were a bit—wild, and I thought that if I went to see you I’d lose my temper. I was a bit crazy,” Quinn ignores the look that Charlie is giving her. “But I do know that Rachel is one of the most important people in my life, and I wouldn’t be where I am today, I wouldn’t be a better person if it wasn’t for her kindness. She was always there, even when I didn’t deserve it. When I didn’t deserve her. I still don’t think that I deserve her, but all I can promise that I’m going to keep trying my hardest.”

Shelby hears the sincerity in Quinn’s voice, and it’s enough, Rachel is happy and that’s all a mother can ask for. “Well, I’d like you to make sure that you don’t break her heart, though knowing her she’d only use it to fuel her artistic side. But the heart can only take so much rejection. Had I known what Jesse was doing I would have stepped in sooner. All he was supposed to do was see if she was interested in seeing me, I didn’t expect him to date her. Though I should have
known.”

“It’s okay, I didn’t know that he was a little shit, till after Quinn told me, she never liked him. Probably should have figured it out back then. She hated him from day one.” Charlie said looking up.

Quinn look horrified, because she was trying to impress Rachel’s mom and Charlie’s language was atrocious. “Charlie that’s not—” Shelby laughed and Quinn looked at her.

“As accurate as that assessment is, language Charlie,” Shelby scolded and the soccer player nodded and went back to her game. “You don’t have to worry about impressing me, I just want to make sure that you weren’t planning to use her for a music scholarship or something ridiculous like that.”

Quinn turned to Charlie, “You told her about Finn?”

“No, Rachel did. Ms. C agrees with my assessment on Finn Hudson, including the singing and dancing part,” Charlie said going back to her game.

“I don’t see why Will insists on putting him as the leading man, he’s not that good of a singer, and he can’t dance. It will never win you nationals, but you will probably make it through past regionals this year. Though at this point I would have picked out your song selection by now, and you’d have choreography. You can’t keep waiting till the last minute.”

“What they need to do is stop singing and breaking out into choreography at the drop of a hat,” Charlie said grumbling about her hatred for glee club once more.

Quinn rolled her eyes and chose to ignore Charlie’s hatred of the glee club, “Why didn’t you substitute us when Mr. Schue is sick, I’m sure we could have learned a lot.”

Shelby smiled, “I heard that Rachel gets a bit intense when she wants to win, I probably would have driven half of you to quit five minutes in. I like Will’s approach, but it’s still not going to help you win nationals.”

Rachel opened the door and all eyes looked at her, “How do I look?” she asked.

“Well there is no argyle so we’re already miles in the right—OW!” Charlie said as this time Quinn smacked her upside the head.

Quinn smiled at Rachel, “Ignore her, you look amazing,” Quinn said her eyes travelling up Rachel’s legs, the jeans were a nice touch but she still personally preferred the really short skirts that Rachel wore. “And I like the argyle, so you don’t have to get rid of it. I think it makes you look cute.”

Shelby looked at Charlie who was rubbing the back of her head, “When was the last time you had a haircut?” she asks the soccer player. She says because Charlie is a mess of blonde hair that’s shaggy and looks like she really just rolled out of bed. Now they were at the mall it was the perfect time to get Charlie into a salon.

“When I was fourteen.” Charlie says with a shrug, meaning that it’s been nearly three years.

“Well you need a new style, because I’ve told you that you can’t keep wearing shorts around everywhere, and part of this trip is to get you and Rachel a new look.”

“I like my look, and what’s wrong with my hair I keep it in a loose pony tail most of the time?” Charlie said frowning as she looks up.
Shelby sighs and looks at Quinn who is watching their interaction carefully, “Charlie, you can’t keep wearing shorts. It’s November and it’s getting colder, and Rachel tells me you only have like two pairs of jeans and two pairs of cargo pants and one pair of formal pants.”

Quinn leans into Shelby, “What did you offer her to come?”

“Rachel promised her two trays of brownies and a plate of sugar cookies,” Shelby replies frowning.

Quinn looks at Charlie, “Get a haircut and get a few new jeans and formal wear and I’ll convince mom that you don’t need to come to church with her on Sunday,” Quinn offered, she watched as her sister mulled over the offer.

Charlie huffed, before getting up, “Deal,” she said getting up and walking over to the guys section and grabbing a pair of jeans.

“They can’t be baggy,” Shelby calls out and Charlie turns to Shelby looking scandalized for a moment before putting the pair of pants back down and taking another pair.

Will Schuester was a terrible teacher, and really he wasn’t that great of a glee club teacher, “Two things. First, our competition at Sectionals are your classic stool choirs. Great voices, but they don’t move. Now if we’re gonna beat them, we need to do what they can’t. Dance. Which is why I’ve decided to feature Brittany and Mike Chang’s sweet moves in our performance.” He was proud of his decision.

Rachel frowned, while she didn’t mind having back up dancers the way he was describing it meant that he was thinking of them dancing in front of her while she was singing, “Wait, they’re going to dance in front of me while I sing my solo?”

Will gave her a dry look, “You’re not getting a solo for this competition Rachel,” he said as he looked at Sam and Quinn. They had been closer at the beginning of the year, but now it seemed that there was a cooling off period between them. It happened for every couple, he assumed they were teenagers after all.

Rachel’s mouth dropped, “Mr. Schue I—”

Mercedes grinned because finally it was her time to shine, “Finally! So what song do I get to sing?”

Santana frowned, “Why would the solo automatically go to you Wheezy? I think I’ve proven that I can handle a solo. It should totes go to me.”

“I thought we already decided that I was going to do all the solos from now on,” Brittany said dully.

Will shook his head, “I was thinking that the winners of our duets completion would take the lead. I mean they are McKinley’s resident golden couple.”

Sam and Quinn turned to look at each other, “Actually Mr. Schue—” Quinn began, they had managed to contain the situation perfectly and there were a very few people who actually knew about her break up with Sam.

“We’d love to,” Sam said quickly and Quinn turned to him and narrowed her eyes.

Rachel turned to look at Quinn and Sam, “Ken and Barbie?! Are you trying to throw this?” she
demanded turning to him ignoring the hurt look that flashed through Quinn’s eyes.

Quinn raised a brow, “I thought you said that I had a lovely voice,” she said in an accusing tone.

Rachel turned to her girlfriend, “You do I just—”

“Okay, listen, I have talked the talk about everyone in here feeling special for over a year now, but frankly I haven’t walked the walk. I mean, we have got a lot of talent here, and I’m going to highlight it.”

“With Quinn and Sam, two people who don’t want a solo?” Tina asked him, “Why don’t we just pick between Rachel, Mercedes and Santana?”

Finn spoke up and looked at Rachel longingly, trying to step up. “Look, I’m all for… pumping up the team, making everyone feel special, but that’s for practice. You don’t take the star quarterback out before the big game. Rachel’s like our best singer guys.”

“I agree with Finn’s sentiment,” Rachel said immediately.

“Easy to say when you’re the star quarterback,” Tina said turning to Rachel.

“Sam is the star quarterback,” Mike pointed out, coming to defense of his bro.

“This isn’t about Sam, this is about the team. Besides Sam’s already the quarterback and is having a good year. Rachel is the star of the glee club. Quinn isn’t as good as singer as Rachel is and that song really wasn’t that good,” Finn snapped out. “Quinn doesn’t even want a solo, she’s never wanted one before.”

Everyone turned to Quinn who was looking at Finn in an irritated fashion, before turning to Rachel, “You said that I had a lovely voice,” she repeats.

Rachel suddenly realizing the mess that her competitive spirit has gotten her into winces a bit, “You do but my voice is better and I have good harmonies with Finn—”

“I’ll do it,” Quinn says turning to Will, having heard enough.

“You can’t just—” Rachel sputters about to throw another tantrum.

“I just did,” Quinn snaps back at her crossing her arms over her chest. “Finn isn’t that great of a singer to begin with,” Quinn says.

Will turns to her, “Enough, we’ve talked about bullying before and I’m not going to have it in this room. Finn is the co-captain of this team and he deserves the respect—”

Quinn tuned him out and refused to look at Rachel who looked irritated at her. She didn’t want her singing with Finn freaking Hudson, or her talking about how good she harmonized with Finn. They had never sung a duet before she was sure that if they did, Rachel would see that she was a better fit then the man she had obsessed over since she was a freshman. Leading man material her ass, he was a terrible leader, only stepping up when it benefitted him.

“Burn Link, burn,” Charlie said, laughing as she watched Link fly off the map and Sam dropped his controller. There was no football practice tonight and Charlie had invited the guys over to play Super Smash brothers with her, it was a nice distraction and a good way to relax.

“Come on dude, that was my last life,” Sam whined pushing Charlie who shoved him back. “When
“Did you get so good at this game?”

“You’re just jealous that I’m better than you,” Charlie said before watching as Mike knocked Captain Falcon off the screen. “Pokémon Battle time,” Charlie cheered. “Charizard beats Lucario every time dude.”

Mike rolled his eyes, “You wish,” he said and they began to go at it trying to kill each other.

The game was interrupted when Rachel and Quinn entered the Berry house, arguing with each other. “I don’t see why you’re upset, it’s just a fact that I’m the best singer on the team,” Rachel said huffing as they walked into the living room ignoring the four football players who were now watching them.

“It’s also a fact that you were obsessed with Hudson and thought he was a decent singer and dancer when you know better. I don’t know why you’d want to sing with him, or even give him hope,” Quinn snapped back. “I don’t even want the stupid solo, I just don’t want you singing a love song to him.”

Mike turned to Charlie and Sam, “They’re together?” he asked a look of confusion on his face.

“Yep,” Charlie said dryly.

Sam turned to Charlie, “Is this normal?” he asked.

“Nope, usually I catch them making out, or being nauseatingly sweet to each other,” Charlie said keeping her eyes on the two of them, “Do I want to know why they’re fighting over Finn again?”

“Glee thing,” Puck supplies and Charlie makes a face, “Dude, you should totally join, Lauren’s going to join, and it’ll be cool. And Mr. Schue is totally getting on my case because I may have stolen a vending machine and he wants me to recruit more members. Think about it. State championships in two sports and one national win in glee. You’re into transcripts and stuff aren’t you?”

“Can’t sing,” Charlie lies because it really is the easiest thing to say and she really doesn’t want to talk about it.

“I can’t sing but I can dance,” Mike throws in, “And I’m sure Lauren isn’t much of a singer, and I’m sure she’s not a dancer.”

“Can’t dance,” Charlie adds, “And my parents told me to never join cults, especially musical ones.”

“Dude you’ll be with the Super Smash Bros so you know it’s going to be fun,” Puck says.

“We have football together and I’m still captain of the soccer team and soccer comes first,” Charlie said wincing when Rachel raised her voice.

“You get to sing with Sam and I don’t see how that’s fair that you can sing with him and I can’t sing with Finn,” Rachel protested.

“Sam knows that I’m with you and he isn’t trying to get back together with me, it’s different. This means nothing to the two of us,” Quinn yelled back.

“Come on, Nationals are in New York. New York, we get to go to NYC Charlie how cool is that. I’ve never been out of Lima before.”
“Come on the Super Smash Bro’s take NYC, it’ll be the stuff of legends,” Sam threw in.

“I can totally teach you how to dance, and then you can just be one of the dancers,” Mike offers her.

“Brittany would be upset if I took dance lessons from anyone but her,” Charlie says, “But you can ask her.”

“You don’t even want the solo, I do. It’s my solo. Your voice isn’t strong enough to have a solo,” Rachel snapped throwing her hands in the air in frustration.

“I won the competition, with Sam fair and square. You didn’t want to compete with Finn remember? But now all of a sudden you do? Rachel he wants to sing a love song to you, he thinks he can win you back,” Quinn argued keeping her distance.

“I’m a professional, and the team needs to win. Finn and I harmonize fine, even if he is weaker than me. Me taking the solo from you is for the good of the team. You said it yourself no one works as hard as I do, and no one is as talented as me.”

“You just want to be the star, and you think if you let anybody else shine somehow they’ll steal some of your light,” Quinn retorted.

“How long do you think they’re going to be?” Puck asked Charlie who shrugged. “Well can we continue playing and ignore them?”

“Shouldn’t we try and stop them?” Mike asked nodding at Quinn and Rachel, “I mean the only problem that we have at Sectionals will be Dalton Academy, and they only have one lead singer. We’ve got diversity, and it’s just sectionals, at least I get to dance.”

Charlie flicked her eyes toward Quinn and Rachel debating whether she’d intervene, she decided against it rather quickly. Rachel was her best friend and Quinn was her sister, it was like asking for trouble. She had already told both of them to keep her out of it, and she wondered why she thought that them being together was a good idea. “Nope. We’re going to sit here, order two extra-large pizzas, with a bunch of meat on it, get one large vegan pizza, and a bunch of soda and we’re going to game until you guys have to go home. So tell me about your set list, if Quinn and Sam are doing the duet who gets the solo?”

Sam and Puck look at each other as they watch Charlie and Mike going at it on the screen, “Santana is singing Valerie,” Puck says as Charlie freezes, it’s enough for Mike to knock her character off the platform.

“WINNER!” Mike says pumping his fists into the air.

“I don’t understand. If Santana gets the solo then why isn’t Rachel going after San—never mind that’s a stupid question,” Charlie said biting her lip, because Rachel is still secretly terrified of the Latina. “So pizza?”

“And you called me Barbie in front of everyone. Is that what you really think of me?” Quinn says.

“Everyone calls you Ken and Barbie,” Rachel said, “And Barbie hasn’t been some vapid blonde since she first came out. I’m sure there’s an astrophysicist Barbie out there.”

“The first thing that anyone thinks of when they think of Barbie is a vapid blonde who isn’t terribly bright. They don’t stop and wonder which version of Barbie you’re talking about,” Quinn says.
“Everyone calls you Ken and Barbie because you’re perfect. Barbie is supposed to be perfect. Sam has his abs and apart from his mouth to face ratio being incredibly off—”

“HEY!” Sam says in an annoyed tone looking over at them.

“He is basically perfect. You’re perfect, he’s perfect. You’re the head of the cheerleading team, he’s the quarterback. You two are already winners, all I have is my voice, and competitions are the only place I get to showcase it. So excuse me if I get a little bit crazy about it. It’s the only place I get to be a star. Everyone in this room has their thing. Charlie’s captain of the soccer team, Sam’s quarterback, Mike’s an amazing dancer. Puck can steal a vending machine without getting caught. You’re the head cheerleader, you are the most popular girl in school. Singing is my thing, which is why I fight so hard for the solos, because it’s all I have. It’s my ticket of Lima, it’s my ticket to Broadway and I need to showcase, because I need to get better,” Rachel finishes looking at Quinn who runs a hand through her hair.

Quinn sighs, “You are more than just a voice, and it’s one competition, sectionals. There is no way Mr. Schue is going to pull something like this for Regionals or even nationals. You get to showcase your talents on a bigger stage, where it actually matters it’s like—” Quinn looks around trying to think of an example. “Saving your best player for the championship round, to keep them rested and keep them guarded against fatigue and injury. You really should take it as a compliment. I’m going to have to see you up on that stage singing love songs to Finn. You’re a really good actress and you’ll probably make it believable.”

“Yes well my secret is that in my head it’s not Finn I’m singing it too, it’s you,” Rachel says shyly. “I can sing you a love song right now, I have one prepared and—”

“Please don’t,” Charlie says immediately. “We’re trying to play a game and you promised that you would stop bursting out into song and choreography when we were in the living room.”

Quinn just shoots a withering look at her twin, because she really would like it if Rachel sung to her, “Ignore her, I’d like you to sing to me, maybe we can work on a duet together,” she offers.

Rachel smiles brightly, “We can perform it in front of the glee club,” but the smile fades when Quinn looks away.

“I’m not—I’m not ready for that yet,” she admits. It’s one thing to sing a duet with Rachel but singing love songs at each other is basically like waving a bright rainbow flag and she’s not ready to take that step yet.
Chapter 33

Chapter Notes

I have no idea if you even got chapter thirty-three yet--I don't even remember where I stopped. Though I'm pretty sure we didn't make it to thirty-five oh well if this is a new chapter, enjoy the next three chapters? Like I said I reaaaally can't remember where we stopped.

Quinn Fabray had never had a job before, well not one that involved clocking in at a regular time, but since the first date that she had with Rachel, she had been babysitting. Every moment that she wasn’t with Rachel she was babysitting, whether it was Kendra’s triplets, or finding parents who wanted to simply have a night out at the church she went to, Quinn was pulling in as much money as possible. She didn’t have a normal bank account like her twin, all she had was the family credit card which her parents paid at the end of the month, but she didn’t want to depend on anyone for this present and after several nightmare sessions with a few bratty children, mostly just Kendra’s triplets. She finally had enough money for the perfect Christmas gift for Rachel, all she needed to do was hand Charlie the money. So her sister could order her the tickets without leaving a trace behind. It’s difficult keep a relationship secret from Judy who keeps asking about Sam and what she plans to get him.

It had been awhile since it had just been the two of them doing anything but doing their Christmas shopping always seemed to be their thing together. “The Glee club is going to see Santa for Brittany later if you want to come,” she said, “I know Brittany would like seeing you there,” Quinn said. “We’re all going to sit on his lap and tell Santa what we want for Christmas,” Quinn told her twin as they entered a comic book store, Charlie was shopping for the Super Smash Bro’s. “We want to keep the magic alive for her.”

“Well then I’ll be there,” Charlie said after a moment because it was Brittany and even though the idea of sitting in some dude’s lap was not something she wanted to spend her time doing, she would because it would make the dancer happy. Charlie picked up a stuffed Toon Link and a stuffed Lucario, before picking up a captain Falcon action figure and placed it on the counter.

Quinn hummed in response as the shop keeper rang it through and offered to gift-wrap it for her and Charlie nodded, “I need a favor,” she asks Charlie after a moment because it’s now or never. Charlie’s eyes flick to her sister, “Does mom have access to your bank account?”

“No. God no, it’s my account,” Charlie said frowning a bit, because it sounded like Quinn wanted her to do something that she probably wouldn’t like.

“What’s the limit?”

“A day? Five hundred dollars for in store purchases, if I want to spend more then I need to call them. A thousand for online purchases,” Charlie answered, “I needed to purchase some gear recently that was above the five hundred dollar limit that I had in place. So I upped it till after the Christmas season. Why?”

“I need to buy Rachel’s Christmas gift, and I can’t have it showing up on the credit card,” Quinn answers her sister.
“You know you can walk into a bank and get an account right?” Charlie said dryly, as she takes the bag from the shop keeper, “What are you getting her anyway?”

“Tickets to go see Wicked on Broadway. I have the money I got it from babysitting, I just need you to buy the tickets for me online, and have it shipped to the house,” Quinn asks Charlie who shrugs.

“How much?”

“Six hundred dollars plus the shipping cost, but I want her to have the actual tickets not just a print-out, I looked at it all online and I just have enough.”

Charlie blinks because that is a lot of money and if Quinn got all that from babysitting she wondered how many kids that Quinn had babysat. “How much?” she asks because she really can’t believe it.

“It’s the best seats in the house and Rachel has never been to see a real Broadway show and I booked it during the week of nationals. So we can go while we’re in New York and—”

“And if you don’t make it to Nationals—never mind if Rachel knows she’s going to visit a Broadway show with you she’ll terrorize the glee club just so she can go with you. Just call me tonight and I’ll give you my information,” Charlie said as Quinn smacked her arm.

“Don’t insult her,” Quinn warned her twin, who smiled and rolled her eyes. “I’ve got to keep babysitting of course, I want to be able to make the night magical for her, and I’ve begun to look up vegan restaurants or places that serve vegan food, so it can be the perfect night. Maybe we’ll see some famous Broadway legend.”

Charlie flicks her eyes to her twin, “The perfect night?”

“The perfect night, in the perfect city,” Quinn says firmly.

“And after the perfect night you’re going to go back to pretending in public that you two are just friends?” Charlie says and Quinn flinches.

“You know I can’t Charlie, you know how mom is and I can’t be kicked out again. I just—I can’t be. It’s our home.”

“Home is somewhere you feel safe and secure, and if you’re worried about being kicked out for being with someone you apparently love, then it’s not a home, it’s just a house Quinn. And I told you that we can move in together, and it’ll just be the two of us. It’ll be like the forts we used to build before Judy would get pissed that we were on the good furniture, and using the good linen remember?”

Quinn smiled because those were happy times, and she remembered them fondly, “You always had to be the knight in them and you always made me be the damsel in distress,” she said giving a mock glare at her sister.

“Well if we get our own place you can be the knight this time and I’ll be the—” Charlie can’t even say it before she laughs, “No I’m never going to be the damsel in distress in this scenario, but we can be knights together. You know twin power,” Charlie said nudging her twin.

“Rachel said I could move in with her, but I don’t think that’s a smart idea, we’ve only been dating for a month and we’re both not ready for—that. Not yet and her dad’s still don’t know about us, but Rachel plans to tell them soon and I don’t think they’d go for it, and you like living with the Berry’s. Brittany offered and Santana basically wants me to move back in with her because I think
she’s lonely and—” Quinn notices the look on Charlie’s face, the one where she has something on her mind, of course it comes after she mentions Santana. “What are you getting for Dani?” she asks her twin gently.

Charlie’s face twists, “I don’t know, Rachel said I couldn’t break up with her right before Christmas, or right after Christmas, because that’s bad form. And I don’t want to hurt her feelings and I want to be as gentle as possible with her. Because I promised I wouldn’t leave but I can’t stay with her. I’m doing the exact same thing you did to Sam, and I can’t justify it anymore by saying I can fall in love with Dani when—”

“You’re in love with Santana?” Quinn asked, because it’s about damn time Charlie admits it, her sister has carried a torch, and she’s been a hypocrite about Sam to some degree. It didn’t matter if Charlie’s intentions were different, whether it was trying to move on, she still had been with Dani knowing that she still had feelings for Santana.

Charlie looked around, but nodded, she hadn’t actually said it out loud yet. “I don’t think I can, and I thought that she would be enough but Santana keeps—and we keep having these moments and—I think I might be flirting with her, but I don’t know because it just sort of comes out and I’m babbling. She’s reduced me to a babbling mess and she’s not even here. And I like Dani, I just don’t—love her and it’s been like six months and I should be in love with her by now, but she’s leaving to go back to LA tomorrow for the holidays and I feel—relieved.”

Quinn shrugs, “I was honest with Sam, and maybe that’s what you should do. Be honest with Dani you know, she’ll understand.” Dani does seem reasonable and it’s highly unlikely she’s going to turn into some crazy ex-girlfriend. “So how are you going to ask Santana out?” she asks her twin.

Charlie snorts, “I’m not going to ask Santana out because she’s in love with Brittany—”

Quinn rolls her eyes because Charlie is extraordinarily dense, “She’s not in love with Brittany Charlie, they are just best friends who occasionally—well basically they just sleep together because it’s normal for them, and they both really like sex. Santana has spent the better part of our junior year trying to get you to break up with Dani, and attempting to sabotage your relationship, so you would come back to her.”

Charlie makes a face, because Santana has tried to seduce her many a times this past year and they’ve fought about it. “I know, I’ve told her I didn’t want to be her sex toy anymore and she tried to insist that I was more than that but all she’s treated me like is a—”

Quinn huffed, “You and Santana both decided to get naked with each other, without the feelings. The fact that you developed feelings doesn’t change the fact that you originally started a relationship that was eerily similar to the one she had with Puck. So you can’t fault her for thinking that for you it was all about the sex when was the last time you told anyone how you really felt.”

Charlie rolled her eyes, “And tell her what? That I like her? She has guys telling her that every day she’s Santana Lopez, she can have any guy and probably any girl that she wants. What the hell does she want with me? What if she says no—or worse laughs in my face? She doesn’t even want to be with me in public—”

“If Santana says no, I’ll do my own math homework for the rest of the year. And she’s in the closet, we go to McKinley, we live in Lima, Kurt was bullied horrendously and the only reason you’re untouchable is because Coach Roz is just as insane as Sue is, and you’ve got a letterman jacket. I’m in the closet and—”

“I’m telling you that it’s okay to not be in the closet Quinn, we can totally get a crappy apartment
in the heights. I can sell my car buy a less expensive one and we can use the difference to pay for the apartment for the year,” Charlie said. “I don’t want to hide anymore, I don’t want to be someone’s secret anymore.”

“Or you can wait until Santana is ready to come out, and be there for her every step of the way, instead of trying to give her some silly little ultimatum. Charlie it is Santana, you’re never going to win an argument against her let alone hold out by giving her an ultimatum. She’s not ready and you of all people are generally really good at trying to be supportive,” Quinn says as Charlie points to a stationery store. “Who is this for?”

Charlie hesitates for a moment, “I write letters to Russell every week, my therapist suggested it. You know say what I could never say to him before sort of thing,” she doesn’t mention that her therapist never told her to mail them that had been her decision. Russell had never written back.

Quinn pauses for a moment as Charlie picks up a nice journal and some stationery, “Does it work?”

“I’ve not forgiven him, if that’s what you’re asking. I don’t think I’ll ever forgive him at least not really, I don’t know. My therapist thinks that I need to forgive him to start moving on to being happy, truly happy. She doesn’t want me to forget that it happened, or pretend that it never did, because that’s not healthy, but I need to move on be happy. So I write to him, once a week. I don’t even know if he gets it, he never writes back, and they aren’t angry diatribes or anything. I just—I let him know about me.” Charlie quits speaking for a moment, “Don’t you ever miss him? Not Russell but our dad.”

Quinn frowns because she can’t believe that Charlie is forgiving him so easily, “Our father had his moments, but he beat you, he tried to mold you into his image and you thought that he was god,” If Charlie insisted that Judy Fabray ruined her, had ruined Lucy, then Russell Fabray had destroyed her sister. “He destroyed this family, he destroyed you—”

“I said our dad, I asked if you missed our dad before all this, you know the one that read us stories that one that played with us, the one that taught us how to read. I’m not asking you if you miss Russell, I don’t miss Russell, I just want Russell to go back to being our dad,” Charlie said calmly.

“I do but he’s never going to go back to who he was, he’s never going to acknowledge you as his daughter.” And Quinn understands what she’s saying, because who Russell was even though he was harsh with Charlie before he had lost it, he’d never been who he was. He’d never been absolutely crazy before he’d actually been a decent man, a decent father. Not the best, he would never win an award for world’s best father. “Did you ever read the letter he sent you?”

“No,” Charlie admits, she doesn’t want to know what’s inside, she doesn’t want to know what the letter says, “It’s easier to pretend that in that letter he sees me for who I am, and he says he’s sorry and he calls me his daughter. It’s probably a bunch of bullshit about how if I was his daughter I won’t show up to the trial or something, with some nice but fake platitudes written throughout it.”

Quinn snorts because that’s probably exactly what it is, “Are you ever going to forgive our mom? There isn’t a drop of alcohol in the house anymore, and she still goes to AA meetings, and she still goes to parenting classes, and she’s trying to divorce him. The lawyers have been arguing about it for months now and they aren’t getting anywhere though, and I do just really want you back, we can move out of that house and find somewhere else to live. It’s too big for just the two of us anyway.”

Charlie looks at Quinn, “Is she still talking about you becoming prom queen, and how it’ll make your life complete?” When Quinn doesn’t answer, Charlie sighs, “The answer to that is no, it’s
going to take more than Judy trying for me to be a good mom. She’s going to be there for Christmas dinner isn’t she?”

Quinn nodded, “She is. She was going to insist that you have dinner with us, but when she found out that the Lopez’s and the Pierce’s were going to be at the Berry’s she insisted that she come and help out, because Christmas is a time for family.” Quinn answered, she was grateful, she had enjoyed Christmas with the Berry’s and the Lopez’s and last year they had talked about combining the event much to Santana’s chagrin that she’d be forced to spend time in the shire.

Charlie made a face at that, “Shelby’s coming as well and Puck’s coming and Sam might be stopping by with Stevie and Stacey a bit later, so Hailey has someone to play with,” Charlie said stretching her shoulders a bit, “Who else are you shopping for?”

“Mom, haven’t found her a gift yet, I’ll order Rachel’s present tonight, and you. What about you?”

“I’ve still got to pick up your present, I need to figure out what I’m supposed to get a girlfriend I’m supposed to be dumping and I need to pick up something for Brittany, though I already know what I’m getting for Brittany and I still need to find something for Santana.”

Quinn nodded, “Do you want me to slap your name on the gift I pick out for mom?”

“Must you? She might think I actually put some effort into it and I care,” Charlie says as they enter a jewelry store together and Charlie points at a pair of duck earrings, they’re a bit on the expensive side but Charlie doesn’t seem to care or mind, because it’s Brittany.

“Charlie—it’s Christmas. Can we just have one day where we pretend?” Quinn asks nudging her sister who frowns at this.

Charlie mutters something under her breath, “Fine, but it better not be that great of a present,” Charlie says with a frown. “Dani likes Cristiano Ronaldo so I’ll probably pick her up a Real Madrid kit with his name on it, or something. Probably should have known we wouldn’t have lasted when she said that he was the best player in the world. Being the most expensive player in the world doesn’t make you the best,” Charlie informs her sister.

“What are you getting for Rachel?”

“Well since you’ve decided to go all out and make me look terribly cheap with my gift, I picked up a simple bracelet with stars on it,” Charlie said in a snippy tone. “You know I’m never going to be able to outdo that right? Though you might want to get her a dummy gift, if Judy’s going to be there, cause I’m sure that Rachel will be overcome with emotion and try and attack your mouth or something or faint or something equally as dramatic. I’ll slap your name on it or something so Judy’s thrown off, and I’ll mention to her that your present will come later, when Judy leaves.”

Quinn who hadn’t even thought of what Judy’s reaction would be to her gift, let alone Rachel’s nodded, “I—”

“I know, hiding stuff is my thing not yours,” Charlie said with a small smile, “Of course you know this means she’ll pester me until I give in—” Quinn blinked she hadn’t thought about that and she was about to say something when Charlie noticed something in one of the display cases and pointed to it. It was a simple pendent with a ballerina on it. “That’s what I want to buy for Santana,” Charlie says firmly.

Quinn checks out the price tag and turns to her sister, “It’s like a hundred dollars Charlie—and Brittany’s the dancer.”
“Santana took ballet for years, and she liked it, and Brittany always gets credit for being the most gifted female dancer in glee club but Santana’s really good as well, and she doesn’t get nearly as much credit as Brittany does,” Charlie responds. “Besides you’re basically spend seven hundred dollars on Rachel when you’ve only been dating for a few weeks,” Charlie snipped. “So don’t be a hypocrite,” Charlie says as she pays for it, it eats heavily into her budget for Christmas gifts.

Quinn rolls her eyes at her twin, “So I’m going to ask you again, how are you going to ask Santana to be your girlfriend?”

Charlie shrugged, “Why do I have to ask?” she says with a grump.

“But Santana will probably just walk up to you and say ‘you me Breadstix, you’re paying pick me up at seven; and Santana’s my friend and she really does like to be romanced even if she won’t admit it, and you’re terrible at that sort of thing.” Quinn said with a huff, this was what her twin wanted even if she didn’t agree with this decision she’d smile and grit it for Charlie.

Charlie smiles a bit because it sounds like something that Santana would do, “Well if she wants to boss me around then—”

“Charlie,” Quinn says, “You’re the person who has said no to her every single time she’s tried to ask you, so you’re going to do this and you’re going to do it properly. You’ve done this before you had Dani.”

“You told me what to do to impress Dani, and Missy and Marissa give me advice on what to do, in other words they make suggestions and then give me this look like I’m sort of idiot,” Charlie says in a grumpy tone as she watches them wrap the box up. “I don’t want Santana to think I’m like super lame.”

“You hang out with Puck, Sam and Mike and call yourself the Super Smash Bro’s, I assure you that ships sailed. She knows you’re super lame, and nerdy and for some reason she isn’t running for the hills.” Quinn said teasing her twin who flushed.

“Santa Clause looks like Coach Beiste,” Brittany announces when she enters the Berry residence and Charlie grins at her. “I totes saw him last night, he couldn’t make Artie walk again though.”

Rachel looks at Charlie for a translation but Charlie shrugs, because she doesn’t even understand this one herself and she helps the Pierce family with their stuff. “Merry Christmas,” she says cheerily.

“Charlie,” Hailey says wrapping her arms around Charlie’s waist.

Charlie grins a bit, “There might be a present for you under the tree,” Charlie whispers to Hailey, and the girl grins widely and runs off to check. “Hey Britt’s,” Charlie said letting the dancer wrap her arms around her, the Pierce family was very into hugs, and Charlie hugs back. “Santana’s up going through my stuff in my room,” Charlie says and Brittany grins.

“Is she looking for your—”

Charlie covers Brittany’s mouth, because they’re in front of her parents and she can imagine what Brittany’s going to say and she really doesn’t want the Pierce’s looking at her like that. “Probably,” she said, “I’m sure she could totally use your help in finding the presents I got for you,” Charlie says with a smile because she doesn’t live in a time where the internet didn’t exist and she doesn’t have a dirty magazine collection under her bed. “Hey Mr. and Mrs. Pierce,” Charlie greets as Brittany heads upstairs. “The adults are in the living room or kitchen,” she holds her hands out for
Mrs. Pierce who is holding a dish and takes it from her, letting Rachel direct them to the living room.

“Charlie Reagan Fabray you need to tell me what Quinn got me for Christmas, I can act surprised,” Rachel says continuing the argument that they’d be having all morning. Charlie had told Rachel about the dummy gift just so she would act surprised.

“Rachel, I love you, you’re like my best friend but Quinn is my sister and I promised not to tell you, but trust me when I say she’ll know if you’re acting. She’ll know and then she’ll be mad at me for ruining the surprise, and its Christmas and I don’t want to get yelled at Christmas,” Charlie said placing the dish on the counter. “You need any help Mrs. C?” Charlie asks.

Rachel grumps at her best friend and sighs, “Where did you hide Santana and Brittany’s presents any way?”

“In your closet hidden behind all that argyle,” Charlie says without missing a beat as Rachel’s eyes widen and she runs upstairs before running upstairs to make sure that Santana doesn’t go through her things in an attempt to find the presents that Charlie got for them.

Shelby watches as Charlie moves into the kitchen, “You just want to be the taste tester because you can’t wait till the meal’s done.” Charlie grins widely and nods, because Shelby’s figured out her master plan. Shelby’s about to answer when Mrs. Pierce enters the kitchen and the doorbell rings. “That’s probably your mother.”

Charlie’s face drops and she goes to get the door again, because she’s on door duty for now and she really wants to be Shelby’s taste tester, because Shelby can cook and it smells really good and she’s starving. She opens the door and lights up when she sees Quinn and hugs her twin. “Rachel’s with Santana and Brittany upstairs I hid their presents in her room and Brittany’s probably figured that out by now. So they’re probably trying to tear her room apart,” she mutters to her twin before letting her go and eying her mother coolly, “Judy.”

Judy stares at Charlie for a moment, “Can’t you call me mom, it’s Christmas.”

Charlie stares at Judy for a long moment and is about to say something when Quinn intervenes, “Charlie it’s one day, for me? Think of it as a Christmas present to me.”

Charlie eyes her twin for a moment and plasters a fake smile on her face, “Mother,” she greets again but her tone is tense and she can only hide the smile for a moment before it falls. “The Berry men are in the living room with Dr. Lopez, Mrs. Lopez, Ms. Cochrane, and Mrs. Pierce are all in the kitchen with Hiram hovering every five minutes.”

“I think I’ll help out in the kitchen you know how great a cook I am dear,” Judy says with a smile, “Quinn do you want to help? Oh and Charlie be a dear, the gifts and the dishes that I prepared are in the car, fetch them will you? I made your favorite dish.”

Quinn frowns because she knows her mother wants her right near her and she gives Charlie a look of pity as her twin rolls her eyes and takes the keys from Judy, before grabbing her jacket. “I think I’m going to go see what Rachel is up to, and save her from the terrors that are Santana and Brittany looking for their presents,” she tells her mom watching as Judy’s face sours for a moment but she sees Charlie shoot her a proud smile as she struggles with the two dishes that Judy brought, she had decided to make one trip instead of two and Quinn’s afraid her sister’s going to spill everything, but Charlie manages to bring everything in, and balance it on the way to the kitchen, Judy following Charlie. Quinn takes that as her cue to sneak upstairs where she heads to Rachel’s room where she see’s Rachel attempting to keep Santana and Brittany out of her room.
“Come on hobbit, I wants to get my present on,” Santana says trying to pry Rachel away from the doorway.

Rachel looks relieved to see Quinn who watches for a moment trying not to smile, before coming to her aid. “You know we said we’d exchange gifts when everyone got here and we’re still waiting on Puck.”

“Well Puck’s late and I wants to know what I got,” Santana said she had torn Charlie’s room apart looking for her gift, “Oh and I found some interesting things under your sister’s bed,” she says teasing Quinn who glares at her.

“I don’t want to hear about Charlie’s—” Quinn struggles for the right word to use, “Collection,” she said crossing her arms over her chest.

“Charlie doesn’t need some dirty magazines she totes has the internet,” Brittany points out immediately, “We found some DJ equipment hidden under there.”

Quinn blinks because Charlie hasn’t mentioned and even that seems to be news to Rachel, “Must be for the record store she works for,” she says rolling her eyes because Santana and Brittany don’t believe in privacy for a moment.

“Thought that, but then I went on her laptop, your sister needs a better password by the way, anyone who knows her will be able to get into it. All I had to do was try Iron Man and I got in. She had this program up and running and it was one of those mixing programs.”

“Well normally I am against raiding another person’s room, especially Charlie’s because I believe that everyone should have their privacy—” Rachel begins and shoots Quinn a sheepish look, “But I can’t believe she’s been doing something musical in her room and hasn’t told me! I could have helped her.”

Quinn sighed, and rolls her eyes, “Let’s go snoop in my sister’s room but if she asks it was totally your idea Santana.”

“But I want to see what Charlie got me,” Brittany pouts.

“You will when Puck gets here,” Quinn says shaking her head as Santana takes off to Charlie’s room, a smirk on her face and Quinn leans in to kiss Rachel, “Did Charlie tell you about the dummy gift?” she asks against her lips.

“Yes but I can’t see why you can’t give it to me now?” Rachel pouts, “We’re alone and—”

“I will, I’m still allowed to stay over right?” Quinn asks, she hadn’t seen Leroy and Hiram Berry yet and she had wondered if they were going to allow her to sleep over.

“I haven’t told my father’s, dad is terrible at keeping secrets, and daddy would want to grill you in front of your mother,” Rachel admits giving her a small smile. “I was planning to tell them tonight after everyone had left. Are Brittany and Santana still staying over? They can sleep in Charlie’s room and you can—”

Quinn flushed, “Rachel I want your dad’s to like me and if I stay in your room—”

“We can lock the door,” Rachel says with a small smile of her own.

“Tubbers and Hobbit I thoughts we were getting our spy on,” Santana says interrupting them, an exasperated look on her face.
Quinn gives Rachel one last quick kiss ignoring the gagging noises that are coming from Santana. “Come on before Charlie finds out we’ve been snooping.”

“I’ve never spied on anyone before,” Rachel admits, with a smile, “She won’t get mad will she?”

Quinn shrugged, “I used to go through her stuff all the time when we were kids, and she used to go through all my stuff. Besides if she does just tell her it’s payback for hiding Santana’s and Brittany’s present in your closet under the argyle.”

“How did you—?” Rachel asks confused.

“Because Santana has a strict no argyle policy and she wouldn’t have touched it and would have prevented Brittany from touching it,” Quinn says as Rachel face falls. “I think you look really cute —”

“Tubbers!” Santana snaps again.

“I’m coming Satan,” Quinn snaps back annoyed with the Latina, as they enter Charlie’s room.

To Judy’s embarrassment, her middle child was hovering over the women trying to sneak a taste of food. She couldn’t count how many times Charlie’s fingers were smacked away. “Charlie,” Judy admonishes after the umpteenth time. “You’ll ruin your dinner.” Charlie gives Judy a dull look because she’s a bottomless pit and a few dozen cookies has never stopped her from sitting down and having a meal before. Judy wonders why she thought it was a good idea to come over Maribel Lopez and Karen Pierce were being overtly polite to her. The type of polite that she normally was when she didn’t like someone, they had once been her friends, and then there was Charlie’s fondness with this Shelby Cochrane person, that was bothersome.

Shelby glances at Charlie for a moment, she had been the one to smack Charlie’s hand away. “When I told you that a good cook tastes his or her food before they serve it, I didn’t meant that they finished it. Remember what I told you about portion control,” Shelby lectures.

“I’m still growing,” Charlie insists childishly a smile on her face as she reaches for the tray of sugar cookies again.

“Charlie,” Shelby warns her and the teenagers hand drops, “Shouldn’t you be hanging out with your friends?”

“Santana is probably going through all my stuff looking for her present, Brittany’s probably helping her. Quinn’s probably ma—” Charlie’s eyes flick to Judy, “making sure they don’t break anything, and Rachel’s probably trying to lecture them on the importance of privacy and personal space.”

Maribel sighed and shook her head as she smiled at Santana’s antics, “I should apologize for Santana, the girl is always getting into trouble. Why she couldn’t be more polite or want to help out in the kitchen like you’re doing is beyond me.”

Charlie grins and is about to say something when a bright yellow ball comes into her peripheral vision and her body reacts, all the muscle memory from countless hours of soccer coming into play as she rotates her body and stretches up so she catches it on her chest.

“Hailey,” Karen scolds, “What have I told you about playing soccer in the house,” and Hailey
laughs because Charlie’s let the ball fall to her feet and she’s juggling it for the seven year old. “What if Charlie had missed?”

Charlie kicks the ball up and catches it in her hands, “I’m guessing you found the present?” she says to Hailey.

“Yes can you show me a trick?” Hailey asks.

“Yes I promise I will, after Stevie and Stacey get here,” Charlie promises, “But until then no playing soccer in the house.” Hailey pouts and Charlie looks up at Shelby ignoring Judy. “Can I grab some of those cookies and take them upstairs? I’ll take Hailey, I’m sure we can get Rachel to sing a song and Brittany to dance and it’ll be like a real life music video.” Charlie grimaces it’s like inviting the musical into her life.

“Really?” Hailey asks jumping up and down.

“Yes and you can show Santana your new present she’ll totally be jealous cause she’s not allowed to open her presents yet,” Charlie says grinning at her as she tosses the ball back to Hailey, who catches it.

“Are you going to eat most of the cookies?” Shelby asks Charlie seriously.

“Yes?” Charlie says grinning as Shelby hands her the plate.

“Portion control Charlie, or Coach Roz will put you on one of her diets again,” Shelby scolds as Judy frowns because how dare Shelby try and parent her daughter.

“It’s Christmas, I can go back to my daily runs tomorrow, I’ll be back at my normal weight by the time school starts,” Charlie says as she takes Hailey’s hand, “Puck’s coming in a bit, and so will our special guests,” she says to Shelby who nods.

Judy frowns because she’s never seen Charlie handle children before and she seems at ease with them, and open and friendly, a far cry from the foul-mouthed teenager from a few months ago. It’s odd that Charlie seems to respect the three other woman in the room far more than she respects her. It’s a travesty, “Thank-you, Charlie was always a handful,” she says to Shelby who gives her a look, which makes Judy bristle because it looks like Shelby is judging her. How dare Shelby judge her, she’d left Rachel for sixteen years, she hadn’t been there for her daughter at all. They were in the same boat after all.

“She’s not really a handful, she’s actually really polite and helpful when she wants to be. She’s actually learning how to cook, which is a—interesting experience to say the least. She has a short attention span so I have her learning how to do things that require her to be in the kitchen at all times. Italian food, she’s actually learning Mexican food as well,” she flicks her eyes to Maribel.

Maribel see’s the look and grins because, “Is she trying to impress my daughter?”

“Oh you saw it too? It’s a shame I had hoped that Charlie would show some interest in Brittany but it seems Santana won that lottery,” Karen said with a sigh.

Judy frowned because they were all talking about it like it was normal behavior for Charlie, “She has a girlfriend, Dani I believe,” Judy said knowledgably. “I’ve met her, she’s a wonderful girl, I think she’s helping her open up. You know she told me that Charlie was ready to have her surgery, and we’re trying to find some time perhaps this summer to have it done. She’ll have to move home of course, the recovery time is about two months.”
“Two months?” Maribel said in shock, because it sounded horrific to her. Charlie was still a teenager and it seemed to be a major life choice, certainly not something that should be taken lightly like Judy seemed to be taking it as. “It’s a major surgery are you sure it’s wise to push her into that?” Maribel asked.

Judy bristled again but smiled, “Of course I wouldn’t push her into that,” she says but no one believes her for a moment. It’s hypocritical that Maribel is there passing judgment when her own daughter has had a breast augmentation procedure at sixteen.

“Have you talked with her about it? She’s already signed up to coach Hailey’s team again this year, they love her you know. I’ve seen her play you know for someone who is competitive she seems to be more interested in teaching them to love the game, fundamentals and then having fun and learning cool soccer tricks,” Karen said knowledgably, “And Brittany’s been going on about how she’s going to teach Charlie to dance this summer.”

Judy frowned, because she hadn’t heard anything of the sort from Charlie, in fact Charlie had never confirmed or denied anything most of their Sunday lunches were usually her making one comment or another and Charlie giving her a one or two worded answer. She knew what her daughter’s GPA was she knew that they were having a good year on the soccer team, with her girlfriend Dani. She knew—

“Well once she puts that nasty football business behind her, you should have heard Santana go on about how foolish Charlie was being,” Maribel said shaking her head, “I managed to catch one of their games, to see Santana cheering, I still don’t understand why that Sue put her at the bottom of the pyramid, and I saw how worried she looked when Charlie was tackled.”

“Funny Brittany was going on about how ‘hot’ Charlie looked in her uniform,” Karen mused. Judy paled because this was not something that she knew, “I didn’t give permission for her to be on the football team, the sports too rough for a girl and she could get injured.”

“Oh that was Leroy, he’s a big football fan and Charlie had him sign the permission slip,” Hiram said entering the kitchen and heading to the fridge. “He was very excited, Rachel and I have no interest in sports and it gives him and Charlie something to talk about. He says he can finally have civilized conversation now. I think she’s decided to play next year but as the kicker, and Leroy said he’d help her practice during the summer when he has the time.”

“They only have one more game of the season,” Shelby offers she doesn’t really care herself about the sport of football but it’s been impossible to not hear about it, McKinley hasn’t won a football state championship in about twenty years.

“The Cheerios have a special number prepared for that, Brittany’s been going on about the choreography for weeks. Though she thinks it’s much to overproduced,” Karen says shaking her head.

“Aren’t they all?” Maribel said with a laugh, because if there was one thing she knew it was that Sue Sylvester was absolutely crazy and all her Cheerios numbers were over produced but it seemed to win nationals.

Judy Fabray had never ever felt like she was the odd one out before, she had always been popular and Maribel and Karen had used to be friends. Even though their lives were very different, they had jobs, Maribel was a lawyer, and Karen was a tenured professor at the University of Lima and then there had been Judy the housewife. It was disconcerting, but they had always talked about the unholy trinity, keeping up with what was going on in their daughter’s lives, but Judy didn’t know
what was going on with Charlie, and part of her wondered if Quinn was starting to hide things from her as well. That wouldn’t do at all, and she’d make sure to keep an eye on Quinn’s activities, after all a mother always knows.

Charlie blinked as she held Hailey’s hand as she looked at the mess that was her room, it looked like a tornado had passed through it. Her clothes were everywhere, and her bed was a mess and Santana and Brittany were playing with her DJ controller, while Quinn and Rachel were currently on her laptop listening to her mixes, “What did you do?” She asks her mouth hanging open as Hailey enters the room.

“Look Tana, I got to open my present before you,” she teases showing off her new soccer ball.

Rachel looks up, from the music mix that’s titled Never Back Down, Charlie had taken the CD that she had made for Beth and taken some of the tracks that she had recorded and began to remix them into dance tracks, she was torn on whether to yell at her friend for ruining perfectly good show tunes or be impressed at the slick beats and transitions that Charlie had managed to come up with, while at the same time somehow managing to highlight her vocal range. “How could you hide this from me? We could have been working on something like this together! You have several mashups on your computer, we could have used your advice for our annual boy’s vs girl’s competition.”

“No fair how come Hailey gets to open her presents?” Brittany says with a pout, touching the ball that Charlie had gotten for Hailey.

“Because Puck’s not here yet,” Rachel said looking at Charlie who shrugged as she reached to take her DJ controller from Santana and Brittany. “How long have you been doing this?”

“Since the summer,” Charlie answers, “It’s just a hobby, one that is expensive as hell that board cost like four hundred dollars, and Tyler gave it to me because he had several different ones. I got to see some of them and I found the one I like, but it’s like eight hundred dollars, plus shipping and handling.”

Quinn blinked, so that’s why Charlie had increased her spending limit on her card, “Why didn’t you tell me? Mom could have just bought it for you for Christmas, she was asking me what you wanted.”

“Because nothing comes free with her, you know that. She’ll ask me to move in or something ridiculous and you know it. Besides she wouldn’t know controller to get, there are like hundreds of them out there,” Charlie says knowledgably, as she puts the controller back in the carrying case she got for it and slides it under her bed.

“Charlie said that you could show me a real life music video and you could sing and Brittany could dance,” Hailey interrupts bored with the conversation.

Rachel smiles because she’s never one to turn down an opportunity to sing, and Brittany isn’t one to turn down an opportunity to dance and her mind is pulled from the idea that she’s had for regionals. Now all it would require was forcing Charlie to join the glee club, she had no idea her best friend was that into music, she had noticed an upswing in her musical tastes when they drove to school, changing the station from top forty to different genres nearly every day. “But of course —” The sound of the doorbell rings through the house. “But first I need to get the door,” she says leaving Charlie to do a haphazard cleaning job, getting most of her clothes out of the way.

Rachel doesn’t expect Sam Evans with Stevie and Hailey but they’re standing there, “Sorry I’m late Jew Babe, I had to grab the Evan’s clan,” he says, he’s holding a Nintendo Wii box in his
hands, while Sam is balancing the presents that they brought over. He steps into the house with Sam following him, “Where do we stash the loot?”

“There’s a tree in the living room, and you can set up the video games on the television, the adults are mostly in the basement, my dad’s converted it into an Oscar viewing room,” Rachel turns to Stevie and Stacey, “Hailey’s upstairs with Charlie,” Rachel says and they quickly pull off their shoes and run up the stairs and she hears some childish shouting. There’s just one more set of guests to arrive, Rachel’s present to both Puck and Quinn. She had invited the Griffins and more importantly Beth. She had driven up to Toledo and had presented a very solid case for them to come spend Christmas with them, she had also paid for the hotel room in which they were staying at; it was a night in the nicest hotel in Lima.

“Finally Puck, I wanted to get my present on like yesterday,” Santana says from where she’s standing at the top of the stairs.

“She’s already torn Charlie’s room apart looking for her gifts,” Rachel says whispering to Sam shaking her head as she looks up Santana wondering how Charlie found her behavior even the slightest bit attractive.

“Toon Link isn’t as cool as real Link,” Sam complains, but he’s not really that upset because it was a nice gift and it shows that Charlie is finally settling down to being a member of the SSB “He’s sort of lame.”

“I know,” Charlie said calmly. “Which is why I thought of you,” she says grinning at him and the group laughs.

“Walked right into that one,” Puck says with a shake of his head but a grin on his face.

Quinn rolls her eyes as Sam gently pushes Charlie who shoves him back and the two of them start pushing each other, “When the children stop fighting, Rachel gets to go next. It’s a present from Charlie—and me,” she says flicking her eyes at Rachel who nods understanding that it really is just a gift from her best friend.

Rachel opens the slim box and touches the golden star charm on the bracelet, “It’s beautiful,” she says looking up at Charlie and smiling at her best friend, she has to wonder what Quinn’s present is because her girlfriend looks like she really wants to hand it over. “Thank you both of you.”

Santana is about to comment about how cheap the Fabray’s are to only get Rachel one present when everyone else gets two but Judy walks in at that moment and she realizes that the Fabray’s probably did it to throw off Judy.

“Oh that’s a lovely bracelet,” Judy says, because Rachel is trying to fasten it to her wrist and Quinn is helping her.

“Quinn and Charlie,” Rachel says with a smile up at Judy who nods appreciatively at her twins, Quinn gives Judy a small smile and Charlie just ignores her mother. “It’s lovely, they both know how golden stars are my thing.”

“Charlie got me duck earrings,” Brittany says pointing at her ears, there is a duck theme going on and she loves them because she loves ducks, “And she promised to come feed the ducks with me and San whenever I want,” she adds.

Judy looks at Charlie who meets her gaze for a moment before shrugging. It seems childish but it seems that Brittany brings out that side of her middle child, dino nuggets and French fries. She
flicks her eyes back to Quinn and Rachel and pauses for a moment because from the way that Quinn is holding onto Rachel’s hand and the way she is looking at the diva, Judy Fabray begins to suspect that there might be something going on there again. She wants to cause a scene, to yell and demand an explanation because Sam is right there. But unsurprisingly Sam seems to not notice or care and Judy wonders if Quinn has a thing for dense guys. But this is unacceptable and she wonders if Charlie encouraged this heathen behavior. It was one thing for Charlie to be sewing her wild oats, she didn’t know any better because Russell had done a poor job of raising her. Judy looked at Quinn again, she would need to crack down before the rumors started to spread of course because if she could figure it other people would, and her daughter’s reputation would be unsalvageable she’d never meet a nice successful husband. She looked at Charlie, she’d schedule that appointment with the surgeons so the day after school ended for the year, and Charlie would start the procedure. By that time her daughter would have stopped with this foolishness and returned home. Judy Fabray needed to save her children, because she was a mother and she knew what was best for them, and if Charlie wouldn’t come home willingly she’d start getting the lawyers involved, and start the proceedings to regain custody of her child. “Well enjoy yourself,” she says as she walks back to the kitchen

“My turn, I wants to get my present on,” Santana said and she looked at her pile of gifts wondering which one was Charlie’s. She finally picks up one it’s slim just like Rachel’s and it has the same simple wrapping paper around it like Brittany’s and she opens the card and see’s Charlie’s atrocious hand writing spelling out her name. “You need to work on your penmanship,” the Latina says dryly.

“See I told you. It’s not just me,” Rachel says pointing at Charlie who flushes. “The only person who can read it is Quinn, what happens if you’re someone famous one day and someone asks for your autograph or a small note. One should always be prepared.”

“Fine I’ll do the stupid exercise booklets,” Charlie grumbles and the group laughs.

Santana rolls her eyes and opens her present looking over at Charlie who is trying to look uninterested and not at her, but it’s obvious that Charlie is nervous and Santana rolls her eyes because she’s sure that Charlie got her something nice, and she opens the box and looks at the ballerina that looks like it’s in the motion of doing a pirouette, and she turns to the soccer player who is playing with a piece of gift wrapping paper, and she swallows because the only other person who knows how much she had like Ballet class is Brittany, and she doesn’t know what to say because Judy’s in the room and Charlie is still with Dani Harper.

“Do you like it?” Charlie asks hopefully and she knows that everyone’s eyes are on her, because it was a risk.

“It’s perfect,” Santana says after a moment and Charlie shoots her that crooked grin of hers, “Now open mine,” she says and Charlie nods reaching for the bag that she had her eye on, and she lights up because Santana has gotten her an collectible statue of Deadpool, and she’s grinning because it’s the best thing in the world. “You remembered?” she asked because she had only talked about the character once.

“There’s more,” Santana said and Charlie digs her hand into the gift bag again and pulls out some green Hulk boxers and Santana can’t help but laugh as Charlie goes a deep red and stuffs the boxers back into the bag.

“Santana,” she hisses.

“I expect you to model for them me later to see if they fit,” Santana says still grinning wickedly at the soccer player.
Brittany looks at the boxers, “Oh I want to see you in them as well,” she says clapping her hands and grinning at Charlie’s embarrassment.

Sam’s mouth drops because this is completely unfair, Charlie has a girlfriend and she has two girls trying to get with her, he sighs because he still hasn’t picked a girl yet, but clearly Puck and Charlie have to be his wing-people.

The doorbell rings and Rachel jumps up, “That would be my present for both Quinn and Noah,” she says, “Stay here I’ll be right back,” she said racing to the door.

“How about those boxers?” Charlie says after a moment looking at Santana.

“Yes and you heard me I expect a fashion show later tonight,” Santana says crossing her arms over her chest. “You come shopping with us all the time and you always get to watch our fashion shows —”

Quinn groans, “Are you two forgetting that there are children running around, and the last thing they need is for you two to scar them for life,” she says and Charlie bites her lip and looks away. “Chillax tubbers, I was just pointing out that we model everything we buy for Charlie, who is extremely unappreciative, and she never models her clothes for us. So this time she has to model it for us. Right Britt?”

Britt nods, “It’s only fair. We’ve modeled for you in only our underwear before.”

“You’re—” Quinn begins only for Rachel to walk back in holding Beth Griffin, bouncing the baby and cooing softly at her as she giggles up at Rachel. Tears immediately spring to her eyes and she looks over at Puck who is just staring not moving for a second because neither of them expected it. Puck had missed this month’s meeting and he hadn’t expected to see her till the New Year, but here she was. Her baby, Rachel had managed to convince the Griffins to let her see her baby twice in a month.

Quinn’s not even sure when she’s moved but she’s taking Beth away from Rachel and the girl fusses for a moment because Beth seems to prefer Rachel, who is still singing softly but she smiles at Quinn after settling back down because Rachel is still singing, and she’s rocking her child. “How?” Quinn finally asks after a moment letting Puck finally hold his daughter. How did Rachel convince the Griffins to let this happen?

“I had Charlie drive me down to Toledo where I gave my best PowerPoint presentation on the importance of the holidays and surrounding a child with love, and while the Griffin’s love her—well you can’t ever have too much love. It was only going to be them on Christmas with Beth and I suggested that they make some new friends and have some more adult conversation with people that they know,” Rachel watches as Beth puts her fist in her mouth and begins to drool everywhere, but Puck doesn’t seem to care and he’s rocking his daughter and he’s openly crying now, because he got to see his daughter at Christmas, and he’s Jewish but it doesn’t matter.

Quinn glances at her twin who shrugs and she’s standing up offering to hold Beth, “It’s my niece, so it’s like my Christmas present as well,” she says dismissively like she hadn’t help do the nicest thing that anyone has ever done for Quinn, “It’s going to be an annual thing. Rachel convinced them that family is important, and it wasn’t just Beth that they adopted, they adopted a huge family.” Puck hands Beth over to Charlie who holds her niece and softens immediately when Beth reaches up and grabs some of her hair tugging on it. “Merry Christmas,” she says to her niece who smiling and has a fistful of Charlie’s hair and tugs on it.
“I want to see the little Lizard,” Santana says as both Brittany

“I can’t wait till she can walk and I can teach her how to dance,” Brittany said grinning.

“Singing comes first,” Rachel said, “She can already spot my talent.”

Sam looks at the scene a bit nervous because he wasn’t a part of glee club and yet everyone here
seems to be fawning over Quinn’s baby and he’s not sure what to do. Charlie looks over at him.
“Come meet your uncle Sam, he thinks he’s really cool but actually he’s really lame but you can’t
ever tell him that,” Charlie says tilting Beth in her arms so Sam can take a look.

Sam waves to Beth who is still smiling and he looks up at Quinn and Puck shyly, “Can I hold her?”
he asks and Quinn nods.

“You see the line trouty mouth? Back of it, she gets to see her auntie Tana next. Isn’t that right
Lizard. Who’s a cute little lizard baby, oh yes you are. Charlie give her to me,” Santana orders the
soccer player, who rolls her eyes and hands Santana her niece. It’s the first time since Quinn gave
birth to Beth that she’s seen the child and Beth doesn’t recognize her but seems not to mind being
in her arms one bit, reaching for her raven hair, because Beth likes to pull on people’s hair.

The teen’s pass her around before handing her back to Quinn who snuggles with Beth who has now
begun to fuss, needing a diaper change. Puck goes to get the diaper bag from the Griffins and the
rest of the presents are forgotten as the teens focus on Beth.

Christmas dinner is a boisterous affair with the adults separating from the teenagers. The Griffins
have brought a high chair for Beth and Puck and Charlie set it up, and set Beth there letting Quinn
feed her daughter who seems to enjoy the sweet potato purée that they are feeding her. It doesn’t
stop her from making a mess and watching as everyone around eats around her.

“You’ve got to make an airplane noise sis,” Charlie says when Beth stops opening her mouth for
the spoon.

“No it’s a train, you’ve got to make a train noise,” Sam argues.

Quinn rolls her eyes, because it seems that Beth is full, she’s eaten most of the puree. “I think she’s
full,” she says and looks at Beth and Charlie finally puts a plate of food in front of Quinn. Quinn
nods in thanks and begins to eat as Charlie begins to play with her niece. Quinn watches her sister
for a moment before reaching under the table and taking Rachel’s hand and gently squeezing it,
and when the diva turns to her she smiles, “Thank you,” she whispers.

The Griffin’s leave first with Beth, it’s getting late and they want to get back to Toledo before the
snow starts to fall. They seemed to like everyone and they talk about making it an annual thing for
as long as they can, Beth’s asleep by the time they leave and it hurts every time to walk away from
her daughter, and she doubts that Beth will ever remember these days, but she will and she’ll
cherish them. Judy’s next, followed by the Pierces who help clean up for a bit before Hailey starts
to fall asleep, exhausted Charlie had shown them a few tricks after dinner, which had ended up in a
snowball fight, they had come inside nearly an hour later shivering. Sam and Puck finally manage
to chorale Stacey and Stevie and pack up the stuff that they got and the presents and they head
home. Shelby and the Lopez’s are the last people to leave after the kitchen is finally clean.
Charlie’s watching Elf with Santana on Brittany on the couch, and she looks at her twin who
waves her off, not taking her eyes off the screen. “Come on it’s time for your Christmas present,”
Quinn mumbles to Rachel who grins because she’s impatient and she’s been dying to know.
They manage to successfully sneak upstairs and Quinn pulls out a white envelope with a simple red bow on it, “I know it’s nowhere as special as what you did for me tonight. It was the best thing that anyone has ever done for me,” she says handing Rachel the envelope. She’s nervous because this doesn’t even compare to what Rachel did for her, Rachel managed to convince the Griffin’s to let her see Beth, it was thoughtful and it was what she had truly wanted. She had woke up that morning thinking about how it was Beth’s first Christmas and she wouldn’t be there. So Quinn wonders if maybe she should have gotten Rachel that is just as thoughtful and just as special as what she gave her. But she can’t think of anything. She can’t think of one single thing.

But before she can tell Rachel never mind the diva has the envelope, which has her name written on it, and flicks her brown eyes at Quinn, but she gently opens the envelope and pulls out two tickets, and she stares at it for a moment. \textit{Wicked} is written on the side and it looks like two Broadway tickets— she can’t believe that Quinn Fabray got her tickets to Broadway. She can’t believe she’s holding two tickets to a production she’s wanted to see since she was a child. She looks at the dates and they coincide with when they’ll be in New York for Nationals.

“It’s not as—” Quinn begins but she’s cut off by this loud squeak from Rachel who puts the tickets down, she’d frame them if she could and launches herself at Quinn kissing her girlfriend, ignoring the fact that Quinn’s taken a step back to catch herself before responding to the kiss. She manages to pull her lips away even though she really doesn’t want to and looks at Rachel. “It’s not as thoughtful as what you gave me, but I really hope you like it.”

“I’ve wanted to watch a Broadway performance as much as I want to be on Broadway, I’ve wanted to see \textit{Wicked} since forever, and you’re taking me to see a Broadway performance, oh my gosh I’m going to see a Broadway performance,” It is by far the single most romantic thing that anyone has ever done it’s a step closer to making her dream come true. She can’t believe it and she’s kissing Quinn again and the blonde finally seems to accept that she did something amazing for Rachel.

Quinn kisses Rachel back pushing against her, there was no gentle kisses, it was one filled with passion and desire, Rachel had done something fantastic for her, something simply amazing and this had been one of the best Christmas’s she’s ever had and she wants to show Rachel just how amazing she is, as the kissing becomes intense and needy as the diva is walking backwards till she falls back on the bed, breaking the kiss for only a moment, because Quinn’s on top of her before she can react pouncing and they’re lips are pressed each other again and Quinn begins exploring the diva’s tongue with her own. Quinn doesn’t know when her right thigh manages to find its way between Rachel’s own, but she feels the diva grinding against her as they kiss with low moans between them. When Rachel’s hand finds its way under her shirt Quinn doesn’t protest because it feels intoxicating.

It’s different than Sam, it’s different than Puck and she wants to continue, this is what it feels like to want someone so completely and it scares her, it terrifies her because she feels like she’s losing herself to the pleasure, and she pulls back swallowing, her eyes wide she’s not ready for this. She has no idea what she’s doing and she wants Rachel’s first time to be special.

Rachel who’s breathing is heavy looks at her girlfriend and she wants to continue but she can see the panic flash through Quinn’s eyes and she moves her hand down immediately, “I’m not ready either,” she admits to Quinn and this seems to calm the cheerleader down a bit. “I’d still like to kiss you though,” Rachel says after a momentary pause and Quinn smiles at this idea, and they go right back to it.

Quinn slips out of Rachel’s room around midnight and Charlie’s already sitting outside the door a wrapped present in her hand, it’s been poorly wrapped because Charlie is terrible at wrapping gifts
but at least this year Charlie didn’t take duct tape to it. Quinn has her gift in her hand and the two of the sit beside each other. It’s been there tradition since they were able to give gifts that it was always at midnight on Boxing Day. “So no pony this year?” Quinn jokes with a smile on her face and Charlie grins at her.

“I got you that my little pony set when we were kids remember, I thought that counted,” Charlie says quietly keeping her voice down so not to wake up Santana and Brittany, and she holds out her gift for her twin. It’s thick and Quinn wonders what Charlie got her this year. Last year it had been comics, but it’s much too thick for comics.

Quinn smiles, “Yes but I remember telling you I wanted a real pony,” she says laughing as she hands Charlie her gift as well, it’s not as thick as what Charlie’s gotten her and it’s certainly not as heavy. She hopes her twin likes it, she had gone to three different sporting goods stores before she had found what she was looking for.

Charlie opens the present tearing at the edges and grins when she sees the new FC Barcelona hoodie that Quinn’s gotten for her, it’s laying on top of a shoe box and Charlie opens it to see new cleats.

“I hope they fit,” Quinn says, and she hopes that Charlie likes the color that she’s chosen white and red, McKinley’s colors and she watches as Charlie traces the leather, and smiles. Charlie’s pair had been getting a bit worn and she knows her sister wouldn’t bother to replace them until they’re falling apart.

Charlie immediately pulls one out the box and slips it onto her foot, it’s the perfect size, “Size eleven men’s?” she asks her twin who nods and she grins wiggling her toes in her new cleats, “I love them,” she says looking at it, “And it matches my uniform, I’ll win another championship for sure with these,” she said confidently. They’re comfortable as well but she’s still going to need to break them in. “Open it,” she says to her sister biting her lip.

Quinn looks at the poorly done wrapping job, it’s so like Charlie and still carefully pulls back the edges, it irritates her sister to see her being so careful but her face lights up when she sees the three leather bound books that Charlie had bought for her.

“You liked Pride and Prejudice for whatever reason,” Charlie says quietly, “I know you’ve read it like a billion times, so I thought you might like Emma, I have no idea what it’s about but the lady told me that you’d probably love it it’s by Jane Austen,” Charlie says, “You can start that library you’ve always wanted with the leather bound covers now,” Charlie offers.

Quinn traces the leather covers, gently, she’d actually never read Emma she had meant to but had never had the time, trust her sister to pick out something she actually hasn’t read yet. “You got me all three volumes,” she murmured, “You went over the budget,” she says scowling at her sister.

Charlie grins and lifts her foot up so Quinn can see the shoes, “So did you, I know for a fact that these shoes are at least three times the budget that we set for each other. And you got me a new Barcelona hoodie. I thought you’d like it so I got it for you. You’re going to be a famous writer one day, or something like that,” she says to Quinn.

Quinn smiles at her sister and leans against her for a bit, “You still have no idea what you want to do?” she asks and Charlie nods, “You should try music, I heard what you were creating in there Charlie and it’s really good. Even if you don’t think it’s good.”

“It’s just a hobby, it’s never going to pay the bills or anything,” Charlie argues gently, “And I’m not that good Tyler says most of what I’ve done is pretty rudimentary, and he thinks I need to listen
to different genres and actually listen. Music should touch people, and I don’t think anything that I’ve done can do that, but it helps relax me, and my therapist said that it might be good for me, and I like doing it. I can’t draw or write like you Quinn, and I’m really not that good.”

Quinn disagrees because she heard those beats, she had heard the mixes that Charlie had made, she had a talent, Rachel had even said so and her girlfriend knew music, but Charlie would keep working on it, “Have you ever thought of the future? Like what university you want to go to?” Their father had gone to Penn State, and Frannie had gone to Dartmouth.

“Columbia, Cornell, Yale or NYU.” Charlie says immediately and Quinn realizes that all the schools are located in New York or near enough to New York. They’re also all Ivy League with the exception of NYU, Charlie just wants to get out of Lima and Ohio, and New York seems to be where Rachel is going. It’s also a list of schools Quinn’s been thinking of applying to with the exception of Cornell.

Quinn nods, “Yale, Columbia or NYU, Rachel already knows where she’s heading, she knows where she’s going to apply, Tisch, NYADA or Juilliard, and she was talking about it recently, and I’ve seen the college brochures in her room, but I want to make sure we’re on the same page,” she had thought that Charlie would be heading down to California like Dani to play soccer.

“Well, I knew about Yale and I’ve always had my eye on Columbia, and my grades are nearly as good as yours are,” she says, scratching her cheeks, “I should probably start throwing in some volunteer work though, do you think I can join you when you help out at your church?” she asks.

This surprises Quinn for a moment, because Charlie is the last person she expects to see at church she thought her sister was an atheist, “I thought you said that if you stepped foot in a church you’d explode into flames, you hate organized religion. I thought you were an atheist,” she admits.

Charlie doesn’t confirm what her beliefs are, “I won’t be going to church, just you know doing charity work. I’ve got my jobs that I work, and we’re going to win the state football championships, no, and I’ve already got two soccer state championships under my belt with two MVP awards to go with it. Tyler said he’d try and get me some DJ gigs at weddings so I’ll have that as well during the summer.”

“Well the soup kitchen always needs extra hands, they’re woefully understaffed most days,” she informs her twin, “And there is always glee—”

Charlie snorts, “Don’t push it Quinn. Rachel’s tried remember? She’s still trying, every other week I get a plate of Brownies with a promise that this will become a weekly thing if I join glee club, I mean I’m easy but not that easy.”

“You will join glee club,” Quinn says in a tone that suggests that she’ll drag her twin to glee with her kicking and screaming if she has to.

“The day you see me in that club, is the day that hell freezes over,” Charlie says laughing as she pulls off her shoe, and looks back at her room. “I should probably go back to bed before they think I’ve run off or something.”

Quinn looks at the door and shoots her twin a small smile, “How bad was it?”

“Both of them insisted that they sleep in the nude,” Charlie says grumping, she doesn’t know why she’s complaining no one complained when two beautiful women said that they wanted to sleep in your bed naked cuddled up to you. “I said if they did that then I’d sleep on the couch downstairs. That seemed to work but they pointed out that they didn’t bring a change of clothes so I lent them
some of mine,” Charlie informs her sister. “I think Santana forgot about the fashion show though. So I got lucky.”

“You never mentioned that you were going to dump Dani?” Quinn says teasing her sister.

Charlie grumps, because she’s dense but she’s not that dense and she knows Santana will take that as an invitation and she wants to do it right this time. “How’d Rachel take it? The gift I mean?”

Quinn bites her lip and flushes and is once glad that it’s dark and Charlie can’t see the hicckeys on her neck. She knows their mom will ask but at least Sam had been around long after her mother had left. Judy still thought Sam was her boyfriend. “She loved it, thanks for the assist—and thanks for helping her with Beth. I didn’t expect to get to see her twice this month.”

“She’s my niece, I want to see her as often as I can, spoil the crap out of her and then hand her back to you or the Griffin’s when she starts to cry. That’s like my duty as an aunt. And she’ll love me and take my word as the gospel truth and when I tell her that marvel is better than dc she’ll take my word for it.”

Quinn snorts, “She’s never going to think that, you can see how intelligent she is already. You can see how in love she is with Rachel.”

“Like her mother,” Charlie says with a playful smile and even though it’s dark she knows her sister is turning a bright red. “Are you going to come out? Anytime soon?”

“Not yet, but I’ll think about it.”
“Did your sister like the gift I purchased for her?” Judy asked Quinn who was in the process of reading the books that Charlie had gotten for her, “I talked to that man at the comic store like you said, he said that the Green something or rather series was exceptionally popular right now. So I picked her up everything they had on the series. She hasn’t called to say thank you.”

Quinn slowly put the book down, she wants to point out that she had basically written down on a piece of paper what to get Charlie for Christmas and while Charlie wasn’t anti-DC by any means she simply preferred Marvel. “I think she was planning to say thank you at our next family lunch,” she said making a mental note to remind her twin.

“Speaking of which it will be at the country club, I would like for you both to bring your significant others this time, I haven’t had a chat with them in a while and I need to catch up. It’s about time that Charlie come home don’t you think? Maybe that Dani girl will help me make her see reason—” Judy said, “She’s been spending too much time around people who are willing to give their bodies away and she needs to have that surgery, she need’s it Quinn. She can find a nice man to date—”

Quinn frowned, “She doesn’t want to get the surgery, and you can’t make her do anything at this point, she’s old enough to not give her consent to an elective procedure. She’s finally accepting her body for what it is and she doesn’t need any more big changes in her life.”

“She’s a child who doesn’t know what she wants Quinn, and I fear she has her father’s stubbornness, not to mention his new found taste in women. It’s my fault, I should have taken more of an interest in her life and helped make her better. Because she’s confused, this surgery is a corrective procedure, she was born to be a girl. She’ll be able to have a husband, and she’ll finally stop doing silly things like playing for the football team. She can join the Cheerios with you can’t she. It’ll be Charlie and Lucy all over again, and she can home. She can finally be home and she can have a mother’s touch. Every girl needs her mother Quinn and Charlie’s living with two men and she has like no positive female role models in her life.”

Quinn swallowed, “Charlie isn’t coming back to live in this house, she can’t. As in she physically can’t walk onto the property without having a flashback and a panic attack. She wants to live with the Berry’s. She likes living with Rachel and the Berry’s, she’s happy there and she’s getting used to her body the way it is. It’s taken her years to finally figure it out, she still thinks of herself as the school freak.”

Judy wasn’t buying it for a moment, “That’s exactly why she needs to have the surgery, she won’t be a freak. She’s a girl Quinn. It doesn’t matter if she has that thing between her legs, she’s supposed to be with a man. Your father ruined her and made her think she liked women—”

“That’s not exactly true, Charlie’s liked girls all her life, and she had a crush on a girl in fifth grade named Lillian. Charlie’s always liked girls,” Quinn argues back, “No one bothered to notice it because our father was too busy freaking out because Charlie liked things that he deemed to be to feminine for a boy Charlie always liked girls. Charlie will always like girls. Even if she was going to have the surgery because she wanted to, she’d still date girls. Charlie is a girl who likes girls.”

“Quinn, your sister was—sexually abused. She thinks that it’s normal for her to like girls and she was raised in an environment where she was supposed to dress a certain way and be the man. You yourself just said that she feels like the school freak because that’s what she is. Her body isn’t anywhere normal but we can fix her, she can be normal. I’m doing this for her, because she needs
help. She’s not going to church, she’s following in Russell’s footsteps and that’s terrifying don’t you think. She’s dating a tattooed freak, I was polite at lunch but she’s not good enough for your sister, even if Charlie was a boy.” They could fix her just like they fixed Lucy’s nose, and she helped fix her weight.

Quinn bit her lip because the last thing she needed was for Judy to actually tell Charlie that, her sister would probably keep dating Dani just to spite Judy. “Charlie’s fine just the way she is—she’s getting better slowly, she’s talking about things when she wants to—and she has friends. She has Brittany and Santana, Puck, Rachel, Sam, Mike she has friends and she’s learning to open up and be normal. She’s learning to be happy and accept herself and her body. She’s doing things because it makes her happy—she likes living with the Berry’s you can’t make her leave. She told me she feels safe there, she feels safe and happy and she doesn’t want to leave until she’s ready to.”

Judy frowned at this, “Charlie has spent time around those gay men. She’s using that as a way to justify her behavior. I’ve been talking to Pastor Hawthorne about it and he says that once she finally has some positive role models in her life she’ll learn to be proper. He wants to talk to you of course, I told him how much time you’re spending over at their house. He and I agree that maybe you should scale it back, I saw the way you were looking at their daughter at Christmas. And in front of your boyfriend as well, it’s not right, and I thought you knew better than to cheat. And with a girl no less. Your sister I can understand, she’s confused and she needs to see Pastor Hawthorne as well. He was horrified to know that she was on the football team, you didn’t tell me. You see what those men have done, the next thing I know you’ll want to go dye your hair pink and get some silly tattoo and get piercings.”

“I’m not cheating on anybody mom,” Quinn says choosing her words carefully.

“Don’t lie to me I saw you looking at her, right there in front of your boyfriend. How you were touching her.”

Quinn flinched a bit because this was getting to be too much, “I’m not cheating on anyone, and things between me and Sam are fine. Rachel is one my closest friends, she was there for me throughout my pregnancy.”

Judy stared at her daughter, unhappy where this was going but she had learned in parenting class that she needed to stand her ground. She had given Quinn too much lee-way, and it was finally time to start setting down some rules. “I don’t want you spending nearly as much time there, or at the Lopez’s anymore, they seem to be okay with Santana’s loose behavior, and you know Maribel was judging me for wanting Charlie to get a surgery that will help her succeed in life when she allowed her very own daughter to get a boob job. And I know what’s best for you Quinn, and I know what I saw.” Judy softened her voice. “I understand you probably think that it’s okay because Charlie’s doing it, or because you see the Berry men doing it. But it’s not okay Quinn, Pastor Hawthorne has helped me realize a few things. I don’t hate them because they’re gay I just think they need to be saved, I’m not your father I don’t think they should go to hell. They are such good men but they are living in sin and I can’t have you or Charlie thinking that it’s okay to be there. You know what the bible says about these things Quinn.”

Quinn stares at her mother for a moment, because she doesn’t know what to say. Charlie’s dumping Dani the moment they get back to school, and Sam isn’t her boyfriend anymore. They’ve reached an understanding and she doesn’t think he’s mad at her anymore or upset about the whole she took his virginity thing and he seems okay with Rachel and her dating, not to mention he hasn’t told anybody yet. She didn’t know if he’d go for it and she really didn’t want to make him go for it.

Charlie smiled at Dani but leaned back when the soccer player tried to kiss her, this was it. She had
gone over this several times in her head, Rachel and Quinn had told her exactly what to say so she wouldn’t have a situation on her hands. She most certainly wasn’t going to blurt out that she was secretly in love with someone else. And if asked if there was she was going to deny it like the plague. She was a Fabray, she was good at being mysterious keeping her thoughts to herself. “Hey Dani,” she greeted trying to keep her face neutral and her tone neutral. “We need to talk,” she saw Dani’s face fall at that and Charlie could already see the problem with this break up thing. Maybe she should have Dani break up with her.

“Out here? Or do you want to go somewhere private?” Dani asked, because she already seemed to know where this was going.

Charlie winced because they hadn’t gone over that at all, “Out here’s fine. Um—I think we need to go our separate ways. I really like you but our lives are going in two separate directions right now. I think it’s for the best that we break up now. I will always—” Charlie pauses for a moment because that sounds like something dramatic that will Rachel would say and she skips it, “I liked hanging out with you and being with you and everything else that we did and I really hope that we can be friends. I’d really like to just be friends with you, when you’re ready of course,” Charlie said throwing her script out of the window.

Dani looks at the soccer player, and it’s filled with hurt and a bit of betrayal, and she understands why Charlie took the public route because she wants to yell at the teenager and demand answers, demand to know why, but she swallows instead. “Why?”

Charlie frowns a bit, because telling Dani about Santana seems like a bad idea. This isn’t Sam, even if she doubts that Dani is going to out Santana, it just seems like unnecessary drama to her to give her the real reason. “Because I don’t like talking about things,” she says after a moment, and shrugs shutting up immediately and looking at the ground, “I’m really sorry if I hurt you Dani I didn’t really want to.”

Dani frowns because it’s actually a legit answer from Charlie, talking to the teenager was like pulling teeth sometimes when it came to talking about the important things. Charlie never talked about how she was feeling and sometimes Dani found it impossible to get past the iron defenses. But there were moments rare ones when Charlie had lowered them briefly, ever so briefly and she had caught glimpses of who the teenager was, and Charlie had been thoughtful and kind, and sweet to her and she was willing to work to get the teenager to trust her, they could be good together. Both of them at UCLA, “So don’t. We can slow our relationship down again if you want, and actually get to know each other. I can try—”

“I can’t, Dani I really I can’t. I do hope that we can still be friends,” Charlie says before choosing that moment to walk away because she doesn’t know if she should stay and comfort Dani but that seems odd, though walking away seems cold and unforgiving to her, but she doesn’t look back.

Sue Sylvester has finally lost it, it’s the only thing that actually makes sense. Sure Sue did a lot of questionable things, and she constantly put them in danger. Quinn can still remember the insane survival training that she had to take part in when she was a freshman, but she hadn’t done anything that would cause permanent damage. Well nothing that had been done on purpose. Neck brace girl hadn’t been Sue’s fault that had been an accident, it was probably why Sue was so militant about their routines to begin with. Quinn supposed she had thought that deep down behind all that crazy Sue had secretly cared about the Cheerios.

Sure there had been humiliation after humiliation and she had taken to having Becky slap them
with chicken now, but she hadn’t actually done something that could maim any one of them. But this cannon was a terrible idea. It was a needlessly dangerous stunt and it wasn’t what Cheerleading was about maybe if they had a mascot they could convince him to do it. She made a mental note to see if Jacob wanted to be the mascot. She wondered how Santana handled Sue’s craziness last year but the Latina looked like she wanted nothing to do with Sue’s new levels of crazy and Brittany was mostly stunned, especially when Sue announced that Brittany would be doing the stunt.

The mannequin gets blown to bits and she can’t believe that Sue thinks that this is a good idea but the Cheerio coach had said she was bored, but this was ridiculous. “I’ll talk to Mr. Schue,” she finally says after a moment as the head of the mannequin rolls to their feet. This is ridiculous and she can’t deal with Sue’s craziness on top of everything else she has to deal with.

Charlie stares at the show choir room hoping that it would burst into a ball of flames, she has no idea why she’s even here. Puck had just sent her a message insisting that they were having a football meeting in the choir room. She has to wonder if this isn’t some sort of trap, them trying to capture for their cult like activities. She wonders briefly if she’s been spending way too much time around Rachel because her worries are unfounded and getting ridiculous. She stares at the door for a moment before pushing it open, and stands at the doorway looking at the choir room. The football players are one side and the glee club members are on another side. It’s like an imaginary line is drawn in between the two sides and Charlie looks at them, for a moment, before snorting because whatever this is spells unnecessary drama and she’s not having. “Whatever this is—not doing it,” she says after a moment and turns to walk away. “Later,” she says only to bump into Coach Beiste.

“Everyone have a seat,” she says and Charlie looks between the two teams both of them looking at her expectantly.

“You can’t be serious,” Charlie says, because she’s the only real wild card here, and she looks between the two teams, before looking at Coach Beiste once more, “Can I be excused?” she asks but Shannon gives her a look.

“Take a seat,” she repeats and Charlie groans and takes a step forward Karofsky and Azimio nod at an empty chair beside them, and Charlie takes a step toward them. Because it’s a seat and quite frankly she depends on Karofsky and Azimio on the team.

“Charlie Fabray don’t you even think about,” Rachel snaps at her friend, aghast that Charlie would even think about joining the enemy like that.

“She’s not in your little fairy club,” Azimio spits, and nods at the empty chair beside them.

Charlie eyes him for a moment and then turns around, “Must I do this?” she asks Coach Beiste again, and Shannon nods.

Santana watches as Charlie has an internal debate in her head for a moment, she can hear the gears ticking from where she’s seated and she can see Brittany about to speak up, but she shakes her head because she wants to see which side Charlie will pick. It takes a moment of thinking about the pros and cons of each situation before she walks away from the football team and takes a seat beside Puck and Sam.

“You’re choosing them?” Azimio states angrily because it’s fucking bullshit, Charlie’s not really a fan of the glee club either.
Charlie flicks her hazel eyes over at him and gives him a crooked smile, “Azimio, you basically gave me the choice between two sides. One had very beautiful women on it, the other side had you and Strando on it. I’m a lesbian. I’m always going to go with the side that has the beautiful women in it, sorry. If you were smart you’d do the same,” she says simply and Puck pats her on the back.

“Good choice bro, you won’t regret it,” he says smirking at Azimio.

Quinn turns to her sister and raises a brow, “Really that’s why you chose our side because there were beautiful women on it?” she asks her sister, who shoots her a smile.

“Well that Azimio, Strando and Karofsky have all at one point called me a freak, or a tranny or something worse. There’s only one person on this side who has ever said it to my face before,” Charlie says flicking her eyes to Finn. Finn meets her gaze and scowls at her before looking away.

This seems to satisfy Quinn for a moment, and they turn back to Mr. Schue and Coach Beiste who are standing in front of the choir room. Mr. Schue claps his hands and smiles at the group, “All right, New Directions! Let’s give a warm welcome to the newest member of Glee Club!”

Everyone stares at him in shock, both football players and members of the glee club. Charlie immediately just gets up and is about to walk away when her sister grabs her wrist and pulls her back down. This was a trap and she’s going to be converted to a musical background character. Charlie barely hears the argument that immediately erupts between glee club members, and the football players. But finally after it settles down she raises her hand before Rachel and Puck can sing something together.

“What do I have to do to get out of this? I don’t actually have a problem with ninety-nine percent of the glee club. Or what they do. I mean my twin’s in the glee club, my friends are in the glee club, I’ve dated a member of this glee club, and clearly this doesn’t actually apply to me. I don’t actually have a problem with glee club as a whole. I’ve also worked out most of my issues with the football team. I haven’t slushied anyone in weeks, or ordered one, so can I please be excused?”

Santana blinked and looked over at Dani who sunk at Charlie’s words and flicked her eyes back to Charlie who was still attempting to get of being in glee club. Dated as in past tense, and Dani was looking at Charlie with a mixture of longing and annoyance on her face. It clicked they had broken up, and she looked at Brittany.

“Charlie,” Beiste says nodding at the soccer player.

“Charlie, it’s mandatory for everyone. It’s a team building exercise, if you don’t do it you’re not playing in the championship game next Friday.”

Coach Beiste shook her head, “It’s mandatory for everyone. It’s a team building exercise, if you don’t do it you’re not playing in the championship game next Friday.”

Charlie was about to point out that she could survive the hit to her popularity she still had a letterman jacket. But Quinn gave her a look and leaned in, “Charlie, it’s just one week. Give it a chance for me?”

Charlie looked at Quinn who had a neutral look on her face and she glanced around the room people were still expecting her to protest, but she studies Quinn’s face for a moment. “Fine I’ll stay, for the week,” she says crossing her arms over her chest, there is annoyance written on her features.

“How did you manage to get her to stay for the week?” Rachel demanded, she had been trying to get Charlie to come in for a couple of glee meetings. “While I understood her reservations when Sandy Ryerson was coaching glee club, Mr. Schue shows promise and we did breeze past
sectionals this year, and we are most definitely going to nationals.

“I just asked her to,” Quinn admitted.

“Well we’ve lost Kurt, and Lauren is not a strong enough member, she dances just as badly as Finn does and she’s not much of a singer. However if we added Charlie, and got back Kurt, we’d take first at nationals I know it. So whatever you did, keep doing it,” Rachel says she’s got her ideas for regionals all around her and she keeps coming back to the one idea. To the idea, original songs. It’s something new and it hasn’t been done before and she wants to ask Shelby’s advice on the subject matter but she wants to have several other ideas first.

“I think that she only said yes was because it was something she was going to have to do anyway,” Quinn admits and she bites her lip for a moment because she’s not sure how to proceed. It had been bothering her for a while now and she hadn’t mentioned it to her twin, because she knew what Charlie’s response would be. “I think my mom knows,” Quinn says after a moment and this finally pulls Rachel’s attention from what she is doing. “Or she suspects, she saw the marks when I came home I told her Sam did it but I’m not sure she believed me, and she’s been insisting that I start meeting with Pastor Hawthorne after Sunday service, I’ve managed to put it off but I’m running out of excuses.”

Rachel swallows, “Perhaps your mother just needs to spend some more time around the LGBT community, part of what Mr. Schue said was right today, a lot of hatred stems from ignorance. I can arrange for my daddy to have a chat with her. I’m sure we can make it seem like it’s for Charlie, but once she comes to accept Charlie she’ll have to accept you. I know your church isn’t big on the LGBT lifestyle, but I thought your mom wanted to be a better mom. She’s not going to kick you out?”

“I don’t think she will. She’s been trying to get Charlie back home and she’s getting impatient, I can tell she’s getting impatient but I don’t think she understands that Charlie can’t come back home, not to that house anyway, and she doesn’t want to. I’ve tried explaining it to her, but she doesn’t want to listen. And she wants me to stop—she doesn’t want me to spend nearly as much time at your place anymore, and she wants to start inviting Sam to weekly dinners at the country club but I can’t ask him to pretend. I don’t want to have a beard, it’s not fair to Sam and it’s not fair to you either.”

Rachel was quiet for a moment, “Fake romances happen all the time in Hollywood and I’m sure that Sam won’t mind you are his friend, after all, and it’s just dinner right? And Charlie turns seventeen in a few weeks, it’ll be harder for Judy to force her to do anything, and I’m sure my daddy will fight for her to stay where she is and Charlie can decide where she wants to stay. I don’t mind if you use Sam to keep your mother happy. Besides he’s getting a free meal out of it, but we’d have to have rules of course. He’s not allowed to kiss you unless the situation calls for it. Or you could simply say you’ve broken up with Sam and then ask Noah, you know he’ll do anything for you and he likes to eat and you can say that you’ve bonded over Beth, if Sam’s not happy with the situation. You have people who care for you and are willing to do that for you, pretend to be your boyfriend for a fancy dinner each week where they get really good food.”

Quinn is quiet for a moment, because Rachel is being kind and she doesn’t have a timetable for Rachel yet, she can’t tell the girl that she’ll be out during this time, and she hates pretending at school. She hates not being able to kiss Rachel, she hates not being able to hold her hands, or do anything of the things that she did with Sam or Finn, and she hates having to hide her shining star. Charlie was right it wasn’t fair and she was getting irritated that Finn wouldn’t back off despite Rachel’s protests that she had her eye on someone else. She hated not being able to just walk up to her and kiss her in front of him so he finally got the message. Rachel was hers, it was possessive
and she sounded crazy but Rachel Berry meant everything to her and she wasn’t going to lose her.
“Charlie said that we could move in to a place at the Heights, she’s got a job and she has enough
money to pay for a deposit and first month’s rent.”

Rachel’s face falls at this because if Charlie actually leaves then she’ll be all alone, in that house. She
enjoyed having a roommate, she enjoyed spending time with the soccer player, well she had
most of her time these days was spent with Quinn and she hadn’t really checked in with her best
friend for a while, and she wonders if Charlie would actually leave, “You should move in with me —”

“Charlie’s happy living with you, and quite frankly I need you to be in her life because Puck is a
terrible influence on my sister. She’s going to become sort of criminal mastermind, or something. I
was going to see if I could live with Santana again. Her mom liked having me around and I don’t
think she or Dr. Lopez would have a problem with me being gay.”

Rachel frowns, “Why don’t you want to move in with me? We have the space and I’m sure that my
father’s won’t mind. Sure they’ll set rules but they’re never around anyway and my mom doesn’t
want to mess with the system that Charlie and I have devised but she checks in on us daily and
we’re supposed to give her a heads up if we’re having a party, but she likes you and she knows that
we’re together.”

Quinn smiles and gently touches Rachel’s hand, “Moving in is a big step, and even if I have my
own room you know I’m not going to—you know be in it all that often not with you across the
hall. And I’m not ready for that at least not yet, we haven’t even had sex yet Rachel.”

Rachel sighs, “Well I want to wake up next to you each morning,” she says with a pout, and Quinn
grins and leans in and gently presses her lips against hers, it’s quick and she’s moved away they’re
in the choir room after all and anyone can walk in on them. Rachel swallows because Quinn’s
kisses are addicting and she wants to kiss her more

Charlie tapped her foot as the class ended and students began to stream out of Shelby’s English Lit
class, and Charlie peeked her head in, “Hey Ms. C,” she greeted walking into the classroom as
Shelby shuffled all the homework assignments she had collected.

“Charlie,” Shelby greeted back, surprised to see the teen here, they kept things strictly student
teacher at school, much like she did with Rachel. “Do you need help with something?” She
doubted it though it really was Charlie, Quinn and Mike who seemed to get the best grades in her
class.

Charlie tapped her foot and rubbed the scars on her hands, “Um, yeah can I get some vocal training
and some piano lessons?” she asked Shelby nervously. “I’d ask Rachel but she really can’t keep a
secret sometimes, and if she finds out that Rachel knows then she’ll get the information out of her
and I want it to be a surprise.”

“Working on your solo for glee club? Everyone’s heard that the football players got drafted to the
glee club,” Shelby explains.

Charlie shakes her head, because once she’s finished her mandatory week in glee club she’s never
looking back. “Valentine’s Day is around the corner and I want to get this song done by then, it’s a
duet. I figure we have plenty of time unless I’m really a hopeless case then I’m just going to have
to figure something else out.”

Shelby hummed, “I’m sure you aren’t a hopeless case, Rachel has told me you can sing you just
need a bit of help, and I’m not sure about the piano lessons, Piano isn’t my specialty but if you can’t get it down maybe you can ask Brad,” Charlie gave her a confused face, “The piano guy that always follows the glee club around?”

“Oh him,” Charlie says rubbing her head, “I’d rather do this by myself if I can,” she admits because she has about a month and a few days to get it right.

“Trying to impress Santana?” Shelby asks and tries to hide her amused smile when Charlie goes several shades darker. “I don’t think you have to work that hard to impress her, I’m sure if you just asked her she’d say yes.”

“I want to do it right this time,” Charlie admits and bites her lip not sure, “I think she deserves the best and I want to be that person and I’m not all that good at romance. So I’m going to try it this way, she’s a talented singer and she’s a good dancer and I can’t dance to save my life. So I’d rather not—you know embarrass myself.”

“Well I can’t give you dance lessons,” Shelby said looking at Charlie who smiled.

“Oh I’m recruiting Mike and Brittany for that, I figure between the two of them I should be able to learn to not step on her feet or anything, or you know trip,” Charlie says with a smile on her face.  

Quinn only had to be patient to get some alone time with Sam, the rest of the footballers didn’t spare her a glance as they left the locker room. Finn was out with Artie and he looked over at her, “What are you doing here? Your sister doesn’t change with the guys she’s in the girl’s locker room.”

“I know Finn, I’m waiting for Sam and Puck,” Quinn replies, “I need to talk to them.”

Finn looks at Quinn for a moment, and nods towards the door, “Puck takes forever to get ready, they’re the last ones in there. They were all decent,” he says.

Quinn studies him for a moment and realizes that he misses it, he misses being the big man on campus and he misses hanging out with Puck. She wants to say something to him that’s encouraging but she doesn’t because nothing was going to change while Charlie still hated him like she did. Things would cool off and then heat right back up between the two of them. “Thanks,” she says and pauses for a minute. Finn isn’t a terrible person but she had hurt him. “I’m sorry—” she says and he looks at her. “For what happened last year. I’m sorry. I should have been honest with you, I was just—scared.”

Finn looks at her and he smiles a bit and he sighs, “I’m sorry for calling you a slut and stuff, I really was just trying to fit in with the guys a bit better. I didn’t—I shouldn’t have said it. I mean I cheated on you too,” he pauses for a moment, “You and Rachel are close now—do you know who she’s dating?”

Quinn makes a face there is something hopeful in his voice like if he just knew he could still win, he could win her back. “Finn she’s moved on,” she doesn’t say to her. “Just trust me she’s moved on and she’s happy I think. She’s really happy.”

Finn’s face falls at this news but it’s quickly replaced by a determined one, whoever this person is, clearly they’re afraid to be seen with Rachel in public and he isn’t, he can still win her back.

“Thanks,” he says and pushes Artie away.

Quinn watches them go and bites her lip, wondering if she had done the right thing, by gently pushing him away from her. Hopefully he’ll leave Rachel alone now, she doesn’t wait for another
moment and pushes the door open and walks into the guys locker room. It smells like sweaty gym socks but Sam, Mike and Puck are still there talking about what she can only imagine is video games or football. “Sam,” she begins and Sam looks up at her.

“Hey baby mama,” Puck greets her, and Quinn rolls her eyes.

“Hey Quinn,” Mike waves at her.

Sam stands up and with his bag walks over to Quinn, “What do you need?” he asks her and Quinn can still a bit of that spark, a bit of that old love that he had for her.

“I need a favor,” Quinn begins, she doesn’t care if Puck or Mike hear her, because Charlie trusts them and she trusts Puck well not enough to sleep with him again but he had her back and Mike was cool, and she didn’t think he was telling Tina everything, he seemed to get that it was a secret relationship and he didn’t seem to care that she was with Rachel.

Sam shrugged, “Sure what do you need?”

“For you to pretend to be my boyfriend and come to Sunday lunches at the country club,” Quinn said quickly and she watched as Sam slowly made a face. “My mom—still thinks we’re together and she wants to keep an eye on the relationship because she sort of suspects that there is something going on with Rachel.”

Puck frowned, “Is my Jew Babe okay with this?”

Quinn nodded still looking at Sam, “It was mostly Rachel who told me to do it. I wouldn’t ask if I had someone else willing to do it.”

“I hated it there,” Sam says with a frown, he found Judy to be judgmental and she had this way of making him feel of inadequate. He didn’t really want to do it, but Quinn was his friend, they were friends now. Well he was closer to her twin but he would do this for her. “Is Charlie going to be there?”

“She has to attend them now,” Quinn says with a nod.

“Can I get whatever she’s having?” he asks her. “Because last time the Dino nuggets looked delicious and I didn’t even know what was in the Chef’s special.”

“You’ll do it?” Quinn asks surprised, because she had expected him to say no. It was crappy of her to ask him to pretend to be something he’s not, and to subject him to Judy’s critical eye.

“Yeah for a couple of weeks anyway, we can say that my parents need me to babysit every Sunday or something.” Sam replies, because money’s been a bit tight around the house and if Judy Fabray is paying for lunch than it’s cool with him. He can pretend to be with Quinn for a small amount of time.

Charlie tosses her keys onto the counter when she gets home, it’s been a long grueling day and Quinn was the one to drop Rachel off at home, she didn’t see Quinn’s car which meant that it was just Rachel at home. They’d probably watched a movie or something. She doesn’t expect to see Rachel with a tub of her favorite Ben and Jerry’s ice cream and a giant bowl of popcorn waiting in the kitchen. “Rachel what are you doing?” she asks her.

“You broke up with your girlfriend today and even though I don’t think you’re upset by it, it’s
proper best friend etiquette to get some ice cream and watch sappy romantic comedies with you and tell you that you’ll find the perfect leading lady,” Rachel says looking at Charlie, “But it’s you and I know you’d much rather prefer to be watching something with a bit more action so we’re watching Iron Man instead or the incredible Hulk or Spiderman. And we can you know—talk about it? Only if you want to though. I know I’ve been spending most of my free time with your sister, but you’re still my best friend and it would be nice to spend time with you again.” She really doesn’t want Charlie to move out, but their friendship has been thrown to the wayside and she hasn’t been a good best friend. There were duties that needed to be performed and she hadn’t been doing it.

Charlie studies Rachel for a moment, before looking at the DVDs that Rachel picked out, Rachel disliked watching violent movies and it was touching, “I don’t know what to talk about—we just weren’t good together. And I think she wanted more from me that I could give her, or more than I wanted to give her,” Charlie says and shrugs because it’s the truth. “I’m not sad Rachel; you know I’ve been thinking about this throughout the winter break, and it needed to be done.”

Rachel is quiet for a moment, still playing with the Ben and Jerry’s ice cream tub that Charlie will probably finish in under twenty minutes. “Well still, it’s a good excuse to have a girl talk and we can talk about your future leading lady, and you can watch your super hero movies.”

Charlie studies Rachel for a moment because she seems to be upset about something, “Or—we can talk about what you want to talk about, because my heart is perfectly fine. I wasn’t in love with Dani. I’ll still totally eat that ice cream though, and you can tell me what my sister did and I’ll act horrified.”

“It’s not Quinn—not really it’s about your mother. Before she came back into Quinn’s life the stories I heard from Quinn were mostly positive and you yourself said that your mother favored Quinn more—”

Charlie leans over the counter and pulls out a spoon before taking the Ben and Jerry’s tub from Rachel and opening it and digging in because she’s going to need it. “What has Judy done this time?”

“You never told me that Quinn had a nose job—”

“Wasn’t my place to tell anyone, that’s Quinn’s secret not mine,” Charlie interrupts.

“But what type of mother insists at age thirteen that their daughter needs a nose job? And she’s making her see this Pastor Hawthorne guy and she wants you to come home, Quinn thinks she’s going to try and force the issue.”

“I’ve already said that Judy was a crappy mother to me and a crappy mother to Quinn. It’s hard when you have nice memories with them, it makes it harder to let go. I don’t know who he is but I’m sure that Quinn can pretend to be a good little machine for a few hours, and convince him that she’s perfect. She did it in freshman year and for sophomore year till it came out that she was pregnant.” Charlie licked her spoon and stared at Rachel for a moment, “As for forcing me to move back in with her. Judy can try, I turn seventeen in a couple of weeks, I’m pretty sure I can stay with you if I wanted. My grades are fine this year, I’m on the football team, I have a part time job, I’m on the soccer team and for the next four days I’m in the glee club. And I’ll be feeding the homeless with Quinn every Sunday night for the foreseeable future. What I’m saying is that all I need to do is tell a judge I’m thriving where I am, and I’m free to be who I am and my therapist says that I’m doing—better. Rachel stop worrying Quinn will be fine, and she’s standing up to our mother which is a double bonus,” Charlie says taking another bite of ice cream. “If she doesn’t want to move in with you then she can go back to the Lopez’s. I’m sure they won’t mind.”
Rachel nods because Charlie seems to be taking the news rather well, maybe she is being dramatic and she takes a bite of the popcorn that has vegan butter melted all over it. She’s quiet for a moment watching Charlie just eat her ice cream and she eats her popcorn and there is just a comfortable silence between them. “So—you’re now a member of glee club—” she begins.
Quinn held her phone to her ear, waiting for her sister to pick up, it was best to catch her sister before she went to church and Charlie was probably still sleeping.

“Quinn it’s obscenely early,” Charlie’s tired voice comes through the phone after Quinn’s worried that it’ll go to voicemail.

“It’s nine in the morning,” Quinn says flicking her eyes to her alarm.

“It’s Sunday, and I’m tired and—”

“Mom wants Dani to show up to Sunday lunch today,” Quinn says interrupting Charlie, before her sister tells her what she was up to last night. “She’s inviting Pastor Hawthorne to have a talk with you and your girlfriend.”

“Did you tell her that I’m currently unattached?” Charlie asks with a yawn, she still doesn’t seem worried.

Quinn rolls her eyes even though Charlie isn’t there to see her, “Of course I did; she didn’t believe me. So text her and see if she’s up to it. You know how mom is, though personally I think it’s for this Pastor Hawthorne guy. He’s been really big on the family unit, and I think she’s told him about she’s trying to save you.”

“Dani and I aren’t talking and asking her to help in this situation just seems like I want to get back together. I’m not jerking her around like that, and more importantly I’m not going to subject anyone to that.”

“She wants to meet your girlfriend, so bring someone you can rope into pretending your girlfriend. Not Brittany, she’s not going to believe that a second time. I’d still see if Dani can pretend, Sam is doing it for me.”

“Sam knows you’re gay, thus he has no chance. Dani has been trying to talk to me, and get back together. It’s not the same thing. So my options if Brittany is out are Rachel and Santana—”

Quinn pauses for a moment as she goes over that option, “Not Rachel, I don’t want her to have to pretend that she’s okay seeing me with Sam. It’s not fair to ask her to watch and you know it. As for you inviting Santana don’t. You know why it’s a bad idea, Charlie and don’t forget you’re picking up Sam. I’ve got to go mom’s calling me. Try and get Dani to come, it’ll put her in a good mood.” Quinn hears her sister grunt in response and ends the call. She hopes that Charlie manages to get Dani to agree to come to this. Maybe if everything goes smoothly her mother will drop the topic of her and Rachel and she can convince them that she’s madly in love with Sam. Maybe if she pretended that Sam was Rachel—it might work and her mother might finally believe her.

Charlie rings the door to the Lopez’s place, they’re car is still in the driveway so she knows that Maribel is around at least. She’s dressed up in her Sunday best and her hair is tied back, she’s gone with a black vest, white shirt and dark jeans. “Hey Mrs. Lopez, is Santana home?” Charlie asks smiling at Maribel.

Maribel studies Charlie, Santana hadn’t mentioned that she was going out on a date today, she
smiles, “She’s in her room. Look at you all dressed up where are you going?”

Charlie keeps her face neutral, “Lunch with Ju—my mother, Mrs. Lopez. Quinn’s going to be there as well,” she sees a look of disappointment flicker on Maribel’s face. “May I go up and see her please?” she asks not knowing what to make of it.

Maribel nods and smiles because Charlie is polite and she watches as the teenager heads up the stairs and heads to Santana’s room, she had thought that Charlie was finally coming to take her daughter out on a proper date. Santana had mentioned that Charlie was single, she certainly was a better fit for her daughter than that Puck fellow.

Charlie knocked on Santana’s door and waited for Santana to answer. She heard rustling and finally Santana opened her door, and Charlie smiled at her it was that crooked grin of hers. Santana studied Charlie for a moment she was dressed up something nice and she wondered if she had hooked up with Dani again, and had a date. “What do you want Fabgay?”

Charlie looked at Santana for a moment, wondering why the Latina sounded upset, “Want to come with me to lunch with Judy to watch some Pastor attempt to save my soul?”

This was not what Santana had expected Charlie to say, “Shouldn’t you ask blue-haired wonder? You’ve told me several times that you were with her.”

Charlie fidgeted for a moment, “I’m single now. I’ve been single since Monday, I broke up with her. So do you want to watch some Pastor attempt to save my soul?” She asks the Latina again.

Santana stepped back and let Charlie enter her room and shrugged because it sounded more interesting than homework, “Why me?”

“Cause I thought it’d be amusing to bring Satan along with me, and Quinn told me it was a bad idea,” Charlie answered. Santana was quiet for a moment, “And I really—like—spending time with you,” Charlie admits after a moment. “I really like spending time with you and—I thought it’d be fun.” She’s stumbling over her words.

Santana stared at Charlie for a moment, debating whether to go with Charlie or not every single time they’ve been in the same room for long periods of time a fight has always broken out between the two of them. “You weren’t just a warm body,” she mutters to herself before turning around and opening her closet and inspecting her various dresses. “Why’d you dump her?”

Charlie doesn’t answer the question, “I don’t think I told you how great you were at Sectionals. I knew you could sing—but that was amazing. And—”

“Why’d you dump her?” Santana asks again firmly as she picks out a simple red cocktail dress, and flicks her eyes to Charlie, it’s rather short and she knows it shows off her legs.

Charlie’s eyes flick to the dress, “I can’t love her,” Charlie says after a moment before looking back at Santana. “I’m going to go wait downstairs with your mom, keep her company. We’ve still got to pick up Sam though,” she says before Santana can ask her anymore questions that she has the answer to but she doesn’t want to answer at least not right now.

Santana flicks her eyes to Charlie she wants to push the soccer player again she wants more answers but she’s learned by now that pushing Charlie generally has the opposite reaction to what she wants. She’s delightfully stubborn that way, and she had been under the impression that Charlie was a pushover. “I’ll be down in fifteen Fabgay.”
Quinn Fabray didn’t like how Pastor Chris Hawthorne was touching her mother, there was something terribly off-putting about the man and the touches were subtle but she could see them, a touch to the arm, to the waist. She wondered where the hell Charlie was, and what was taking her so long, they were nearly twenty minutes late, and even though Judy was distracted by the pastor, she seemed to be getting agitated.

“Where is she?” she asks turning to Quinn.

“I don’t maybe they got stuck in traffic?” Quinn asked hopefully when her blood ran cold as a flash of red caught her eye, because she was sure that she had told her twin what a terrible idea inviting Santana Lopez to the club was. She was sure she stated that clearly and in a way that belayed the importance of Charlie actually listening to her. Santana Lopez looked absolutely sinful in that short red dress and Charlie had a matching red tie and was keeping her head held high with Santana on her arm. Sam following beside them his hands in his pocket. “There they are,” Quinn said with false cheer and stood up immediately when Sam made his way around to her side of the table and pressed a quick kiss on his cheek. “Thanks,” she mutters to him and he smiles and nods.

Charlie pulls out the chair for Santana, and holds her hand as she takes a seat, and she’s making a big show out of it as she takes her seat beside Santana, “Mother.” Charlie’s tone is cold and she’s never been good at keeping a fake smile on her face for long but there was a smugness to her voice and she knew “I know you said to bring Dani, except we parted ways on Monday, I hope you don’t mind that I brought another friend.”

Judy flicked her eyes to Santana Lopez and she struggled to keep her face neutral. How dare Charlie embarrass her in front of the pastor? What Santana was wearing was much too short that it was almost a sin, it was a Sunday and surely Maribel should have said something anything really, she’d never let Quinn out of the house looking like, looking like a high class escort and she could clearly see that Pastor Chris looked annoyed. “This is Santana Lopez, she’s on Quinn’s cheerleading squad.”

Quinn glared at Charlie who gave her the most innocent look that she could muster, but she didn’t look that innocent or contrite. “Yes we’re on our way to nationals,” Quinn said, “And Sam is on his way to lead the team to a state championship in football. Charlie this is Pastor Hawthorne who I was telling you about. Pastor Hawthorne this is my sister Charlie.”

Pastor Hawthorne put on a smile that didn’t meet his eyes and extended his hand to Charlie who looked at the offered hand for a moment when she felt a sharp kick from under the table and she saw her sister looking at her and she sighed inwardly before straightening herself in her chair and taking his hand gripping it firmly, “I suppose it was,” Charlie said before letting go of his hand. She didn’t like him but he seemed polite enough introducing himself to Sam and then finally Santana.

Santana seemed just as unimpressed as Charlie was by the man and she picked up the menu because she was promised fancy food and she planned to get her eats on. She glanced over at Charlie who was sipping her water, there was something distant in her eye and her posture had changed, and the playful smile was gone, there was a bored look on her face. She hadn’t seen this person in a long time, but she was watching the Pastor like he was beneath her. It was the same look that Quinn had from time to time, she and Brittany had dubbed it the Fabray look, like they were royalty and everyone else was a peasant, it was how Quinn had ruled the school so effectively. So she did what Brittany did whenever Charlie had that look on her face she reached down and just touched Charlie’s elbow. It was a gentle touch and Charlie turned to look at her
before her lips twitched upward.

“I used to play football myself,” Pastor Hawthorne was saying to Sam who nodded only half listening as he held onto Quinn’s hand trying to play it up as best as he could.

Santana watched the display and gagged inwardly before resting a hand on Charlie’s arm, “Charlie’s on the football team, she’s totes good at it to. She’s the running back,” she said in a proud tone and Charlie’s hazel eyes flickered to Santana for a moment before they looked at Pastor Hawthorne who had quieted down and had turned his attention to Charlie.

Quinn watched as her mother’s smile tightened considerably, and she wondered if Charlie had a plan because she needed this dinner to go well, she needed to prove to her mother that Charlie was a respectable member of society, and for that to happen Quinn Fabray needed Charlie to be the person who her father had crafted her to be. She needed to be a Fabray and it bothered her that she hadn’t wanted the Latina anywhere near this dinner because it was like putting kryptonite near Superman. Though she wasn’t sure which color just yet.

“A woman has no place on the football field,” Pastor Hawthorne began, and this finally seemed to snap Charlie out of her Santana induced haze, and the look was back. “Your mother tells me you’re living with two gay men, I’m sure you’ve come to realize that they are incapable of being parents when they live in sin. Now I don’t hate gay people, I love them but I hate the sin. I know that you think that it’s okay and I can understand why you’re confused but God made you female, and he doesn’t make mistakes. But you can’t keep living your life in sin Charlie.”

“I’ve been trying to tell her Pastor Chris, truly but she refuses to listen,” Judy says because if Charlie won’t listen to her then she must listen to a man of god.

“Yes your mother has been telling me about how you’re breaking one of the Ten Commandments, honor your father and your mother. I understand why you must feel angry and hurt by your mother, but with the help of god she’s gotten better. Your sister has done it. With prayer and a healthy attitude you can get better as well. You can be saved if you reject your sinful life.”

“Oh you’ve got to be shi—” Santana began getting angry on Charlie’s behalf, and she could see the anger on Sam’s face as well.

“Santana,” Quinn says with a tense smile, because Santana is hard to control on the best of days but you can forget about it when she’s angry and she can see the Latina is getting angry and she watches as Charlie gently places her hand on Santana’s leg which seems to force Santana to look at Charlie. Sam looks about ready to slug the guy and she should have known that it would come this. “What Santana is trying to express is that Charlie is an excellent student and a good role model and she—”

“Don’t put words in my mouth Quinn, I’m saying—”

“Santana,” Quinn orders, it’s her HBIC tone and Santana glares at her and for once doesn’t back down.

“What I’m saying is where does he get off judging her?” Santana says in an accusatory tone.

“I’m not judging anyone my dear, I’m simply telling you what the bible says. It’s against god wishes and your mother cares about you Charlie she wants you to be happy. Both of you, I see her fears about you were unfounded Quinn. Clearly you’ve learned and rededicated yourself to Christ after your unfortunate mistake that resulted in a child being born out of wedlock. But it won’t do
you any good if you continue to spend most of your time in that—den of sin. God loves the sinner, hates the sin. As do I, I try to live my life every day as best as I can.” He studies Santana for a moment, his eyes roaming her body for a moment. He doesn’t notice that Charlie is watching him and he doesn’t see the rage that flashes through her eyes when she sees him lusting over Santana.

Sam frowned and moved to get up because this was bullshit and Charlie wasn’t saying anything to defend herself, which was odd because he had seen her bitch out Karofsky and Azimio. “I disagree sir, Charlie’s an excellent addition to the team and we wouldn’t be in the state championships without her, she knows the plays and she’s fast enough and strong enough to be a part of the team. She pulls her weight. I’m proud to call her my teammate. And—”

“Is anyone else starving? I am,” Charlie interrupts and everyone turns to look at her surprised by her relatively easy going tone. “Are we ready to order?”

Santana stares at Charlie for a moment and she wonders if the teenager is running mentally from the conversation because she remembers how Charlie told her about how Russell would call her an abomination and quote bible verses at her. But this isn’t that, this is something new and there is a dangerous glint in Charlie’s eyes.

“Charlie—” Quinn says gently it’s a murmur but her twin doesn’t look at her she’s still focusing on Pastor Hawthorne and she sees it, the flash of Russell that Charlie attempts to keep locked down at all times, she had heard what Charlie had done. She was never the type to do public confrontations, she did them behind closed doors. It’s a cold look and it bothers her because she had seen that look on Russell’s face every time he tore into Charlie when they were children. She really wishes she had insisted that Brittany come.

“I’ve decided on the grilled organic sirloin burger,” Charlie says looking at Sam who is puzzled by Charlie’s attitude but he nods. “Santana?”

Santana’s anger has been deflated because she had watched how Charlie dealt with people who insulted Quinn and she was beginning to see it flash here, and glances down at the menu and curses Sue for putting them all on that stupid diet, a burger with fries would be delicious right now, “Sesame seared Ahi Tuna Salad,” she states.

“I’ll have the same,” Quinn says and she motions for the waiter to come, an take their orders, because they’ve decided and once the menus are cleared there is a silence everyone seems to be waiting for Charlie to say something.

“Charlie dear, you know I care about you. I want you to do well. I want you to find a nice husband, that can take care of you and—”

“It’s a wife’s duty to take care of her husband. Your mother has been more than patient but perhaps it’s time for you to come home. You’ve dallied long enough with those people. In that sinful lifestyle.”

“Spare the rod spoil the child?” Charlie asks calmly as she picks up her glass of water.

“Exactly—” Pastor Hawthorne says, “Obeying your mother is the first step, Charlie. Come home, come to church we can work together to make you better.”

Quinn swallows because Charlie’s taking the brunt again, she’s taking the hatred she’s absorbing it, and the attention is not on her anymore and she’s grateful but she feels sick because Charlie’s taking the brunt of it again. If Charlie wasn’t here then he’d be focused on her, he’d be telling her how sick she was, how she needed his help. But she’d managed to convince that she was with Sam.
“Charlie doesn’t need to be fixed,” Quinn says finding her voice. “She’s fine the way she is.”

“God doesn’t make mistakes, I learned that but the devil does influence things and I’m sure that it was the devil—”

“How long have you been sleeping with my mother?” Charlie asks she’s not even looking at him anymore and she’s swirling the ice in her glass and the table is stunned into silence. She’s bored and she’s had enough of this conversation he’s been prattling on forever and she doesn’t want Quinn to get involved.

“Ex-c-excuse me?” Pastor Hawthorne sputters.

“How long have you been sleeping with my mother? She’s still married to my father; the divorce hasn’t happened yet.”

Quinn turned to her mother and stared as she went a dark shade of red, “Mom?” she asked surprised because she had just suspected that he was interested in her. She wondered how Charlie figured it out. She hadn’t liked how he had been touching her mother, or how he’d been treating her the entire time, it was like how Russell would treat her, like she was his personal servant, like she was beneath him.

“How dare you insinuate—”

“I’m not insinuating anything. I’m merely asking something that is now a statement of fact. How long have you been sleeping with my mother? I don’t really care if you are. I imagine you’re hoping to get the windfall she’s due when she gets divorced. It’s a lot of money, you’d actually be able to buy yourself a decent watch to go with that Armani suit. Helpful tip. If you’re going to do Armani don’t have someone buy it for you, go in and get it properly fitted first. Russell taught me that, said something about you could tell everything you needed to know about a man from the suit he was wearing.”

Judy was furious, “Charlie Regan Fabray, how dare you! He is—” Charlie has no right, and she can see Russell, just as clearly as Quinn can, but Russell was a brute he would threaten and cajole his competitors, he would gloat over their demise.

“Fifteen years younger than you give or take. Not judging you. Since we’re not doing that right now. That would be rude, and we can’t have that now can we?” Charlie says taking another sip of her water. “Again not my business, but I’m not calling him dad, but I will call him Russell 2.0,” Charlie states simply. “The considerably less terrifying version of Russell Fabray. I wonder what your congregation will think when they find out that their pastor who preaches about sinning and goes on about how he is such a good man, is sleeping with a still married woman. The scandal.”

The threats come out so casually, like she isn’t trying to bully him into submission. Like she’s not insulting him or judging him, and Pastor Hawthorne doesn’t know what to say not to this because he has no idea if she’ll show up one day at his church and blurt it out. But her attention doesn’t remain long on him, it shifts to Judy. “I’m not moving back in with you, not because you’ve decided to purchase sexual favors from a younger man, but because you’re still the same person you always were, just you’re sober now. Same thing different man. At this point I’d prefer it if you started drinking again.”

Quinn stares at Charlie in shock, because it’s getting vicious and Charlie is slipping farther away, Charlie has never been innocent and the part of her that Russell crafted, the son that tried so hard to please him is back. “Charlie may I have a word,” she says getting up.

It’s the wrong thing to say because Charlie turns her attention on her sister. “Sit down Quinn,”
Charlie barked, “This experiment, trying to give her a second chance? It should be done. She hasn’t changed and as nice as it is to believe that she has. She hasn’t,” Charlie turns to Santana her face hard and she feels the anger bubbling it does so every time she channels him. “Do you think your parents would mind if she moves back?” It burns in her throat and she knows how proud he’d be of her taking control of the family being in charge, he had always told her that if wasn’t around she was in charge, and she feels herself slipping because how dare Judy show off her new boy toy, how dare he try and give her advice. She didn’t know this guy from dick. Yet he was treating her family like they needed to be sorry. Like he holds all the answers, he’s just a viler version of Russell, and the fact that Judy brought him here to show him off makes her sick.

“Charlie—” Quinn snaps at her trying to bring her back, because this isn’t her sister. This person is someone else entirely. Charlie doesn’t give her orders, she isn’t cold or unfeeling with her.

Santana however isn’t having it, she’s not having it, because Charlie’s acting like an asshole, “To much gamma radiation in your Wheaties this morning?” she asks her, but her tone has a bored inflection to it.

Charlie pauses and some confusion crosses her face because it’s not the answer she is expecting, she expects Santana to tell her yes not to make some silly reference to—Charlie Fabray smiles, because Santana gets it. “You’ve been reading it,” she says softly.

Santana however isn’t going to admit to anything not publically. “I have no idea what you’re talking about,” she said with a sniff of indignation, flicking her eyes towards Judy, “I wanted to get my eats on, it’s a fancy place and mostly I wanted to show off this dress. I look amazing in it—”

“Yes you do,” Charlie murmurs it’s mostly to herself.

Santana flicks her eyes over to Charlie just for a moment and Charlie immediately looks away, her ears flushing because she know that she had just spoken out loud. “I didn’t come here for a Sunday school service on what it is to be proper, I gets more than enough of that from my Abuela.”

Quinn looks at Charlie but her twin refuses to meet her eyes, and she realizes that Charlie’s out for the count retreating back into herself, erecting the walls at a dangerous pace, so she steps in, “I think we should go mom, we’re making a scene,” Quinn says mostly to Judy and she smiles at her mom who doesn’t know what to say or do.

Judy regains her footing and nods, “That will be best, switch it to a to-go meal and take your sister with you,” she says turning to Charlie who looks at her for a moment. Charlie refuses to meet her gaze and for once it’s steely and harsh again, but it only last a moment because Santana has placed her hand on Charlie’s arm once more.

Charlie turns to Santana and immediately gets up and helps Santana up, holding her arm out for her and smiling when Santana takes it and she turns to Judy, “I’ll see you next week,” she says coolly.

“You will,” Judy says just as coolly, “It will be nice to have all my daughters in one place again.”

Both twins stiffen for a moment because Quinn knew nothing about Frannie’s impending arrival and she hates being caught off guard. But they can’t subject anyone else to Frannie, even she knows that. “I’m sure we can do something just the four of us then.” She ignores the sour look on Charlie’s face because she knows that they’re going to need to be united for that one, and in control neither one of them can slip.

Judy smiles at Quinn, maybe Pastor Hawthorne was right and that she seemed to have gotten over it. Gotten over all that nastiness from last year, and maybe she had just imagined her daughter’s
attraction to that Rachel Berry. She watches as her twin’s leave, Charlie whispering something to that Santana person—she had never met someone so crude and disrespectful, she doesn’t know how Maribel dealt with Santana as a child but this is unacceptable. With Dani Charlie had been more subdued, this lunch had been a disaster and she looks over at Pastor Chris. “I’m terribly sorry, I told you how he infected her.”

Pastor Chris Hawthorne looks at the fractured family and he frowns, because he didn’t sign up for this and he had no idea how that little freak knew about him and Judy. He had heard that she was getting a divorce, and everyone knew of the Fabray Fortune that was currently being divvied up like pirate treasure. He bristled, but he put on a fake smile and touched Judy’s hand, “Some children are just broken, I will pray for her, but Quinn can’t be around that. I know how difficult it must be for you. I can understand your struggle but it may be for the best for young Quinn if you keep them as separate as possible.”

Judy frowns, “That will be impossible, they go to the same school and Quinn is a cheerleader and a shoe-in for the prom queen. I can’t take that away from her. She’s worked so hard, and it’s the sign that her reputation is back after that unfortunate incident.”

“Well perhaps for her senior year then? Crawford Country Day is a fine school with a sterling reputation, and various members of their school go on to be pillars of the community and they marry well,” he says knowledgably, “Only if you haven’t managed to chorale the devil that’s growing inside Charlie. A sickness that will spread to Quinn if you don’t manage to separate them.”

“What do you think of original songs?” Rachel asked Shelby, watching as Shelby was making their dinners for the entire week. She had come a bit earlier than expected which was just fine with Rachel because Charlie had stumbled out for her weekly Sunday lunches early in the morning, she had mumbled something about seeing Santana and picking up Sam. “I’ve been thinking about it off and on as we get ready for regionals, I haven’t brought it up with the glee club yet, but I thought I’d run the idea by you first.”

Shelby looked over at her daughter and thought about it, “It’s a lot of work, you’d need to write the lyrics and then compose the music, and you’d still need to tweak it depending on the choreography, which is something you must take advantage of again. Mike and Brittany were excellent, you need to highlight the show part of show choir. I don’t know how much time you have to get everything ready—”

“We might have the musical composition down, however it might take some convincing to get Charlie agree to create a backing for the song, I knew she was talented musically, I’m still upset that she hid that talent from me, she has a good ear for this sort of thing, and I was thinking that—maybe we could get a Fabray team up, Quinn is an excellent writer and I will of course try to write something for my solo.”

Shelby looked at her daughter and smiled, “You do have some pretty stiff competition for solo’s I was surprised that Santana had a voice like that, she might have the same amount of raw talent that you have, and if you had actually highlighted the powerhouse vocals last year and moved away from a feel-good song you might have actually placed or beaten us.”

Rachel scowled for a moment, “I thought we did a good job, we had more heart.”

“You did,” Shelby agrees, “but it’s called show choir. We had the show part down and we had Jesse who could single handedly carry the team. You weren’t prepared for the big stage, writing an original song will be a difficult sell so unless you have something—”
“I’ve been working on something, well I wrote it after I broke up with Finn, I don’t think it’s very good and it’s still going to need some music and I was going to ask Charlie to take a look at it—she’s very anti-glee club,” Rachel said nervously.

Shelby smiled, “Which is odd because she is exceptionally talented, she’s picking up the piano faster than I can teach her, she said that Quinn could play as well—”

Rachel pauses, “My girlfriend can play the piano and she never told me?” she says grumbling about the Fabray secrets.

“I asked her why she was coming to me instead of Quinn and she mentioned something about how you two spend most of your time with your lips attached to each other,” Shelby finished answering why Rachel probably didn’t know and she watched as her daughter turned a bright shade of red. “I didn’t know she was creating, she said she just wanted to learn one song, but she’s already mastered the basics of it and she just needs to practice, and I couldn’t help putting a few more challenging pieces together and handed them to her. She seems to be getting the hang of it quickly, I want to see if I can teach her to play by ear.”

“And her sister, they’re always hiding things from me!” Rachel said about to throw a tantrum, she’s scandalized at the fact that Charlie is once again hiding musical skill from her. “She should come to me for these things, I may not be the best piano player but I can play and I could have helped her. And Quinn not telling me that she can play piano. This is unacceptable, it’s like the both of them like to hide their talents from me. We could use them in glee club, especially Charlie her voice is versatile and she could do a duet with Santana or Mercedes just fine.”

“Her voice is versatile, isn’t it,” Shelby mused and Rachel paused.

“She sang for you?” Rachel yells, in absolute shock because Charlie doesn’t even sing for her she just hums, or mouths the words. “What did you promise her?”

Shelby winces because it’s supposed to be a secret, “It was an accident,” she lies.

Rachel nods believing her mother, “It’s how I found out as well,” she says. “I heard her singing in the shower in freshman year, she had told me she couldn’t sing, and that she was in awe of my greatness. Looking back at it I should have known better than to be flattered,” Rachel says with a huff. “I think she has stage fright. And I still have to think of a gift to get them for their seventeenth birthday. I’ve already picked out this lovely heart locket for Quinn, and I can’t imagine what I’m getting Charlie. And I need to bake a cake—well two one for Charlie and one for Quinn, and then there’s the surprise party—” Rachel said rubbing her eyes, suddenly cursing the fact that they were twins. It would be so much easier to plan two separate events.

Shelby smiled, “A surprise party?”

“Yes, I’ve invited all of Charlie’s friends and all of Quinn’s friends it’s not going to be a big party, and surprisingly it’s mostly glee club members. They didn’t tell me last year, and I may have ‘borrowed’ Charlie’s driver’s license to find out. They don’t even know I know. So it’ll be a huge surprise.”

“You snuck into Charlie’s wallet and got her drivers license?” Shelby asked and Rachel shrugged in response.

“Well they didn’t tell me when their birthday was, and they got me a present for mine last year, it’s only fair,” Rachel protested. She had been irratated at the fact that when she had asked she had found out that she had missed it, and then they wouldn’t give up their birthday date.
Shelby bit her lip, “Have you asked Quinn why?”

Rachel paused, “Why?”

Shelby nodded at her daughter, “Yes why? You know like why Quinn doesn’t like to cook for other people?”

“Because she thinks that it feeds into the patriarchy and she didn’t like the idea of *having* to cook for her husband,” Rachel said immediately, “She likes cooking for me though.”

“Yes well maybe they have a reason why they didn’t share their birthday with you. You should ask before you throw a party,” Shelby said.

“Do you know why?”

“I know that Charlie refuses to wear dresses or show parts of her back because of the scars, they generally have a reason for hiding things. Or they simply forget or they don’t think it’s important enough to share,” Shelby said.

“It’s their birthday, you get presents and you’re the center of attention. What’s not to love about their birthday?” Rachel asks.

“Coming from a family like theirs, plenty,” Shelby points out and she sees a flicker of understanding in Rachel’s eyes.

Rachel opens her mouth to say something when the door opens and she can hear arguing, “I told you not to bring her!” Quinn hisses at Charlie.

“Well I wasn’t going to bring my ex-girlfriend to that disaster,” Charlie snips back.

“All you needed to do was behave yourself and listen to me, for once in your life is that even possible for you—” The three teenagers looked up at Shelby and Rachel who were staring at them. Quinn smiles, “Hey Rachel, Ms. Cochrane,” Quinn greets.

Rachel looks at what Santana is wearing, it is a short dress indeed and then looks at the red tie that’s around Charlie’s neck and raises a brow, “That’s not what you left the house in.”

Charlie flushes, “Santana insisted that what I wear match her dress,” she said, “It’s why we were late, I didn’t have a red tie at home.”

Rachel nods, understanding, and looks at the bags of food that Charlie is holding, “Lunch didn’t go well?” she asks turning to Quinn.

Quinn makes a face, “*Charlie* decided that it was a brilliant idea to ask the Pastor how long he’d been sleeping with my mom.”

Shelby turned to Charlie and the teenager shrunk a bit, “You didn’t?”

“He was going on about how she was living in sin and stating that she should honor her mother and father, like they deserve it,” Santana says immediately coming to Charlie’s defense. “She just flipped it back onto him.”

“I don’t even see why you’re upset, he thought you were perfect with your stupid fake boyfriend,” Charlie snaps at Quinn. “Congrats you convinced them that you were straight.”
“There were ways to do it without making a scene!” Quinn protests, “And all I did was kiss him on the cheek Rachel.” Rachel nodded and Quinn relaxed a bit, “You accused our mother of basically paying for sex—”

“That’s what she’s doing. She’s a sugar mama. She’s buying him crap with money that she didn’t earn, she’s using dad’s money—” Charlie snapped at her.

“So now he’s dad again! He abused you Charlie you can’t keep switching back and forth on whether you like him or not, while not giving our mom another chance. You told her you’d much rather her be drinking.” Quinn interrupted.

“She hasn’t changed! She’s still finding really terrible men and letting them define her. She’s still a judgmental, she’s still trying to change me, and she wants me to have the surgery. She wants me to be straight, hell she wants you to be straight. She doesn’t care about us, she cares about the image of it all. It all boils back to the fact that Judy Fabray didn’t want to go to jail and become someone’s prison bitch,” Charlie argued. “So she made a deal and she went to a country club that basically calls itself a rehab center.”

“Our father hit you, he beat you and he made you into his little monster. His monster Charlie, did you hear yourself today, how you treated me? You’re five minutes older than me. You don’t get to tell me what to do, because you don’t know any better. You don’t get to call it an experiment, because I love our mother. How’s your experiment going writing to our father he write you back yet?”

“I never expected him to. Spare the rod and spoil the child is basically what people like him use as justification for beating kids. It’s one thing if Russell did it, it’s another thing if some misogynistic prick who isn’t my father does it. By the way he is going to treat her like crap and if he moves in then it’s you he’s going to treat you like crap. Call Puck, Mike and Sam and tell them to help you move your crap out of that house.”

Shelby had heard enough, “Enough!” she called out and both twins looked at her they were inches from each other and they looked like they were about to come to blows. Santana had an arm on Charlie’s arm and Rachel had gotten up and had wrapped her arms around Quinn’s waist. “Do I want to know what happened?” she asks and both twins begin to speak at the same time still irritated with the other, “One at a time. Quinn you can start.”

Quinn gives Shelby the short version with Charlie interjecting her opinion every now and again nearly causing them to start bickering again, “She promised to behave herself.”

“Did you see the way he was looking at Santana? I showed restraint,” Charlie snaps.

Quinn gives her twin a dirty look, “Did you see the way you were looking at Santana?” she accuses and Charlie flushes and looks over at the Latina who smirks in response.

“That’s different I’m sixteen. She’s sixteen, I’m not some dirty old man, and she looks amazing—” Charlie sputters, and her eyes look to Santana again.

“You’re doing it again,” Quinn snaps at Charlie who immediately turns back to look at her, “This was important—”

“Why exactly? All you needed to do was make lovey-dovey eyes at Sam for an hour, and you can go back to your girlfriend. What’s Judy going to do to you really? Kick you out you’ve been kicked out before the world didn’t end. You still had me, and Rachel and Santana and Brittany and Puck and now you have more people who care for you. Mercedes offered you a place to live last year.
You don’t need her, you have me.”

Quinn frowned, “Do I? I didn’t think I needed a miniature version of Russell Fabray in my life.” Quinn regretted the words the moment they were out of her mouth because Charlie’s face fell and she immediately pulled back.

“Quinn,” Rachel murmured gently.

Shelby pointed at the two chairs, “Sit the two of you,” she said firmly and Charlie made a face but did as she was told Quinn following her. “Are you two done saying hurtful things to the other?”

“She started it,” Charlie muttered.

“You started it,” Quinn snipped back.

“I told you to sit down, how is that—”

“Enough,” Shelby said looking at the twins. “You two are twins, and look at each other,” she watched as they did what they were told, “Your family, is far from the best and the most loving families. That’s a fact, and you might not agree with each other on the topic of your parents but one thing is for certain, you two need to have each other’s backs no matter the situation.”

“I do have her back,” Charlie insists.

“Right than what was that today all I needed you to do was behave and—”

“I’m not a child. You can’t treat me like one,” Charlie snips. “I made you look like a saint compared to me.”

“Today wasn’t about you. I needed you to pretend to be a normal happy family with—”

“No it’s always about her. It’s never about—”

“She wants to take me away from Rachel, she wants to—”

“It’s always about what Judy wants what the hell do you want?”

“I want to be with Rachel and I want to continue living in my home—“

“I want you to be with Rachel and I want you to be happy, and I’ve told you that house isn’t a home,” Charlie says firmly. “I’m here losing my best friend so you can make out with her all the time, you don’t hear me complaining about it because you’re happy and it’s like you’re the old you again. Rachel makes you happy, and you hate dealing with Judy nearly as much as I do, you’re just holding onto the idea that you can love her. That you have to love her because she gave birth to you.”

Quinn swallows and studies Charlie who looks equally as annoyed as she does and sighs, “I know I can reach her,” she says after a moment.

“Not if she continues to be with him or with people like him,” Charlie says after a moment. “Really she was more tolerable when she was drunk, at least then she didn’t give her opinion on anything then.”

Quinn sighs and rubs her temples because Charlie had a point, “I’m sorry, for saying you were a mini Russell Fabray,” she says after a moment.
Charlie is quiet for a moment, “I’m sorry for acting like him. I got—upset at how he was acting how mighty he was being and I wanted to cut him down to size.”

“I know the feeling,” Quinn says after a moment, because she does she knows all about wanting to cut people down to size and make them feel small and insignificant. She used to do it all the time, but it’s rare seeing it from Charlie looking so much like him. She saw the boy who wanted his father to be so proud of him. If Russell had seen her—if he had seen how she had cut him down to size he would have been impressed, he would have groomed her to take over his company which now had a new CEO. That had always been his dream for her.

“What are we going to do about Frannie?” Charlie asks after a moment.

“I don’t know, can maybe if we’re lucky the Wicked Witch of the East will be flattened by a house,” Quinn says and Charlie snorts.

“We can hope,” Charlie says as the twins ignore everyone else in the room. “She’s not very original you know, you’d think she’d avoid calling me a tranny. You know the fact that her name rhymes with tranny would be enough for her to think rethink the whole thing.”

“Tranny Frannie?” Quinn asks and Charlie smirks. “I’m game, but we can’t let mom hear us. You know how Frannie gets.”

“She always was a little snitch,” Charlie says with a smile.

“What the fuck is going on here?” Santana asks after a moment loudly and the twin’s moment is gone and they turn to look at her.

“We weren’t you two just fighting?” Rachel asks looking at them.

“We weren’t fighting we were bickering,” Quinn says as if it were obvious, “Besides if Frannie is going to be in town next week, we need to have a game plan.”

“Frannie is our psychotic older sister,” Charlie informs Shelby who looks shocked that they would wish that their older sister would get flattened by a house. “She used to torture Quinn when we were kids, and then when I turned thirteen and we found out, she was particularly vicious with me whenever she was home, and she used to make sure that Russell would focus on me instead of the fact that she dropped out of school. If I sneezed funny she’d tell him.”

“Psychotic is pushing it, why didn’t we tell the DA about the letter again? We could have sent her to jail, isn’t that the point of jail to keep the dangerous people away from the general public. Well Frannie is dangerous, do you think she’s going to visit dad?”

Charlie snorts, “God no, she doesn’t have the right outfit,” Charlie says and Quinn and her laugh at the idea of their sister visiting their father in prison, Frannie might be a suck up but even she wouldn’t be caught dead in prison.

Santana rolls her eyes because she hates being ignored, “Charlie, I need a change of clothes,” she states and Charlie finally turns to her and her smile fades a bit not because she’s upset but because Santana has that effect on her. “Since you don’t like me going through your stuff anymore—”

Charlie had pulled away from her twin, “You can—I mean we can find you something else to wear if you want—you don’t need to change do you? I mean I can help you get out of that dress and—”

“Door open Charlie,” Shelby calls to the teenager though she doesn’t actually suspect that Charlie has the courage to actually try to do anything with the Latina and she still has that grand romantic
gesture she has planned for Santana. She wonders when she’s going to inform Rachel of her plans for Santana.

“Right door open,” Charlie agrees following Santana who is now leading her upstairs.

Quinn shakes her head, “You know that’s not actually going to stop Santana right?” She asks Shelby, not if Santana really wants her anyway.

“One can hope that they have restraint right?” Shelby says smiling.

Rachel takes a seat by Quinn, “You never told me you could play piano,” she says sniffing dramatically.

Quinn blinks and leans into Rachel, “I don’t really do it anymore, you saw the piano that we had, our dad liked to show it off and it was important that I knew how to play for appearances. It wasn’t my favorite thing to do or anything,” she explains to Rachel.

Rachel nods trying to understand, Leroy and Hiram had never pushed her into Broadway she had wanted to be on Broadway ever since she could remember. “And since we’re on the topic of you not telling me things, why won’t you tell me when your birthday is? As your girlfriend this is information I need to know.”

Quinn paused, for a moment, “We stopped celebrating our birthday when we were fourteen, our dad would make it some huge affair, and he’d invite his old friends and they’d get us stuff, because we weren’t really all that popular and we didn’t really have that many friends growing up. Exchanging presents at midnight the next day has always been our thing. It’s just a day where it wasn’t about us, but about stuff and we never really needed more stuff, and the people he invited didn’t really know us all that well, so we got some stuff that we’d never use. But Charlie always got me the best gifts, which she’d wrap herself—badly I might add. Thoughtful gifts, you know something that each other needed or something that we wanted that no one else knew about. It’s our thing I guess. We never make a big fuss over it, because it was never about us to begin with.”

Rachel bit her lip, and she understood, “I kind of understand, I never had a lot of friends or any to have a party so my father’s just bought me anything and everything I wanted. They couldn’t buy me friends though—I really wanted a friend.”

“I had Charlie,” Quinn says simply it was enough having her twin before. She studies her girlfriend who looks a bit guilty and a bit shamefaced, “You looked on Charlie’s driver’s license didn’t you?”

Rachel nods, “You wouldn’t let me celebrate it last year and now you’re my girlfriend and I wanted to throw a party with all your friends. But if you guys don’t like it we can still cancel. I’d still like to give you my gift though—”

Shelby just happens to turn around as Quinn leans in and kisses Rachel firmly, “You can throw us a surprise party and I promise to act surprised, and I won’t tell Charlie,” she says and Rachel lights up. It’s different now, because she has all these people who care about her now, it’s not going to be rich people who she doesn’t know giving her things that she doesn’t care about. It’s going to be her friends.

Shelby breaks the moment, because Charlie and Santana should be down by now, “Which one of you wants to go see what’s taking them so long?” she asks them.

Rachel looks to Quinn who immediately shakes her head and she can’t help but roll her eyes a bit
because Quinn’s being far too dramatic and it’s only been five minutes so she heads upstairs, their
doors open, she can see the light from the staircase. And she takes a quick peek inside prepared to
avert her eyes if they are doing thing sexual but Santana is sitting on the ground with Charlie in
sweats and one of Charlie’s baggy shirts with Charlie’s headphones on her head as Charlie shows
her what Rachel can only imagine is a new mix. It’s a moment between the two of them that she
doesn’t want to interrupt.

“What if I fade in a bit of bass here?” Rachel hears Charlie ask Santana. She doesn’t wait to hear
Santana’s answer and she slips back downstairs.
“It’s only till next week Rachel, all we have to do is win regionals and we’ll be back on the team. Sue’s just throwing a fit because she didn’t get her way and Coach Roz was making fun of her. Look chances are she’ll forget all about this vendetta of hers by Sunday and we’ll be back at the glee club on Monday.” Quinn attempted to explain to Rachel, who was very irate with her. She couldn’t really blame her, actually she blamed Finn who had told her before she had a chance to explain the situation to her.

“It’s the principal of the matter! Sue kicked you off the team last year and glee has always been here for you—I have always been here for you,” Rachel said the last part was a harsh whisper. “You shouldn’t have to leave glee because someone told Sue no. She’s a menace, and she wants to shoot Brittany out of a cannon. You’re her friend and the leader of the Cheerios, you should have stood up to her. You have the power in this relationship not Sue, you three are her best Cheerios she can’t actually win regionals without you. You guys are needed in Glee club we can’t do it without you. Sue constantly cuts you down and makes you feel horrible about yourself with those diets she puts you on, and she’s never satisfied.”

Quinn sighed, because she really didn’t want to have this conversation. It was for one week and they’d be back. “It’s regionals Rachel, just think of it as me taking a short leave to prepare for competition—”

“She’s shooting Brittany out of a cannon,” Rachel says, “She is the best female dancer we have and an excellent choreographer, and we’re going to need her for sectionals. We’re going to need every one of you at Sectionals Quinn. You don’t even like the routine you’re performing you told me it was way too overproduced and out of touch with what cheerleading was all about.”

Quinn winced she hated the number it was the most expensive thing that they had ever produced, it was overdone and over produced, but the Cheerio’s budget exceeded nearly every other budget at regionals and with Santana, Brittany and her they’d still probably still take the win. “We’d still win and then we can head off to nationals.”

Rachel rolled her eyes and slammed her locker shut, “And then what? What exactly is the plan? Sue hates the Mr. Schue, so the next time they clash what’s she going to do? She’s leaked our set list, she’s done everything in her power to sink the glee club from day one. What if she demands that you not go to Regionals? Are you going to choose Cheerios over glee again?”

“It is one week Rachel, and I’m not choosing anything I like cheerleading—”

Rachel frowned because Quinn hadn’t been happy on the Cheerios for the entirety of the year, she had been happy being back in charge again. “Glee club is something that we do together and it makes you happy, Quinn and you get to sing and dance and your friends are there. Your friends are there with you, I get you have Santana and Brittany on the Cheerios, but Sue’s going to have Brittany killed or maimed and we need all of you. Every last one of you. Santana’s voice, Brittany’s dancing and we need you. You’re like the secret co-captain. I’d like for you to choose me for once,” she mumbles the last part before she walks away leaving Quinn Fabray standing there.

“It’s one—”She begins but Rachel is gone and Quinn gets annoyed because Rachel doesn’t get it. It’s not just about popularity there are responsibilities, there are three girls needing to get to Nationals because their scholarships depend on it, she has her mom breathing down her neck about
her popularity. Quitting the Cheerios would be another death sentence to any chance of her doing anything in this school again, and Sue would come after her for letting her down again. It was just one week.

“Why am I back in the show choir room? I’m not being forced to join the glee club again am I?” she asks, at least she doesn’t mind the idea of a half-time show routine. It makes sense to her, randomly breaking out into song and dance in the middle of a bathroom doesn’t.

Finn looks at her and rolls his eyes, he’s too irritated at the situation to be upset with her presence, “We don’t have enough regulation players and you know that, and no one is signing up. There won’t be a championship game at this rate.”

Puck pushes her, “You know you want to join us, you’re the only person not in glee club who stayed, just join already.”

“Why did you stay, I thought you hated the glee club?” Artie asks her looking up at her.

“Yet I come to all your performances,” Charlie pointed out wryly. “What I hate is the fact that I can’t go to the bathroom without someone bursting out into song and dance like it is perfectly normal behavior. Or I can’t eat my lunch in peace without someone singing about what tater tots, or how terrible there day has been. Or you know the assemblies that are incredibly sexual. I don’t like the fact that I’m currently living in a musical,” Charlie explains.

“Whatever it’s not like it matters we’re going to have to forfeit the game,” Finn says he’s irritated because it’s his time to shine he finally gets to play in the big game and he can’t because they don’t have enough players.

“Why can’t we let them back on the team just for this game?” Sam asks Coach Beiste.

“No. We carry this thing through, even if it means having to forfeit the game,” Shannon replies firmly.

Rachel inhales sharply and gets up and walks to the front of the classroom, “That’s why we want to join the team.”

Charlie stares at Rachel for a moment because Rachel’s her friend but she can’t possibly be serious. “When you say we—who exactly are you talking about.” She’s not religious, she doesn’t really pray but right now she’s doing an internal prayer that Rachel isn’t seriously considering joining the team. Because she knows that Quinn’s going to blame her for this, and if Rachel gets hurt Quinn is going to kill her.

“All us Glee girls,” Mercedes says standing up and joining Rachel at the front. “Well except Dani, she was all for the idea when Coach Roz heard about it and said something about how if Charlie dies she needs a champion caliber striker.” Charlie made a face of course Roz would say something like that, and she didn’t blame the soccer coach for one moment, because it was stupid to risk both of your star players in something as stupid as a football game.

“We want to join the football team, and we want to play in the championship,” Rachel says as the rest of the glee girls join her up front.

“Come on, guys.” Sam says not believing this for a moment.

Puck nods because this is a terrible idea and he is imagining a very angry Quinn Fabray murdering him as well, he can see it on Charlie’s face, “Stop screwing around.”
“It’s not cool,” Mike says looking at Tina and shaking his head.

“What’s not cool is you guys not respecting women enough to realize we’re perfectly capable of playing football. And don’t forget who the state champ in Greco-Roman wrestling is. I’ve got offers from three different professional wrestling organizations for after I graduate, so Rachel, have you actually seen a tackle football game? When they tackle you, it hurts.” Lauren says standing up to go stand with the glee girls.

Charlie is quick to nod her ascent, “Yeah. It hurts every single I get tackled, why do you think I run so damn fast away from the big scary men who are trying to tackle me?” she says, because she needs to put this idea out of Rachel’s mind before Quinn hears about it. She wonders if she should even tell Quinn to begin with, better to beg for forgiveness than ask permission.

“We thought about that. But the truth is, is that you guys don’t really need us to play. You just need enough players out there to field a regulation team. So when they snap the ball, we’re just going to lie down on the ground.” Rachel says, “Besides it’s not unheard of there already is a girl on the team,” Rachel says looking at Charlie, and suddenly all eyes are on her.

“Not the same, she’s actually played football before,” Mike points out, “She knows the rules and the regulations.”

“Yeah and there is the fact that she has a dick,” Puck added. He mutters something under his breath about Charlie’s size but Charlie reaches up and smacks him upside the head. “What it’s a compliment?”

“Stop talking about my dick dude,” Charlie says firmly and looks at Rachel, “This is one of those things which nothing I say or do will convince you to not do what it is you have planned right?” Charlie says.

“Nope,” Rachel says because there is nothing that Charlie can offer that will change her mind.

“I will join glee club if you put a stop to this idea right now,” Charlie says and everyone turns to her. “Seriously for the rest of the year I will join this musical cult thing you have going on and I will hum in the background and Mike and Brittany can teach me how to dance.” Charlie nearly raises her fists in victory because Rachel is thinking about it, and she can see that the diva wants to say yes.

Rachel doesn’t budge however, “We’re just going to lie there. We’ll be fine Charlie,” she promises the soccer player whose face falls.

Lauren Zizes snorts, “Well, I’m not. I’m going to bring the pain.”

Puck gives her a grin and winks at her and Charlie smacks him upside the head again, “Oh come on dude! With Lauren on the team we might stand a chance.”

“I’m not smacking you because of that, I’m smacking you because we shouldn’t be encouraging this at all. We should be pretending that we were trying to be the sole voices of reason but everyone else lost their minds,” Charlie says to Puck, and he gets it, because he doesn’t want to face the wrath of Quinn Fabray.

Puck shrugs, “They won’t get hurt if they stay down,” he says. “Which means stay down Jew Princess, seriously stay down.”

“Okay, what do your parents have to say about this?” Coach Beiste says accepting the girls on the team.
“We all have signed permission slips from them.” Mercedes says holding out her permission slip.

“It took some convincing, but they understood what it means to all of us,” Rachel said, she had been on the phone for forty-five minutes with Hiram and Leroy, and she was sure Hiram had nearly had an aneurysm.

The night of the big game was here and Charlie was helping the glee girls put on their football equipment, making sure that everything was secure and that they were wearing everything correctly. “Are you sure you want to do this?” She can’t help but ask Rachel as she adjusts the diva’s helmet, “This isn’t like—ballet or dancing or whatever else you do,” she says patting Rachel’s helmet. “This is football, you know three hundred pound monkeys attempting to crush each other on the field.”

Rachel rolled her eyes, even though she was touched by her best friends concern. “You said cheerleaders liked football players, besides the same can be said about you, and you seem perfectly fine.”

“Rachel I have a penis and I produce testosterone, and Santana wasn’t impressed with the fact that I joined the team. Brittany thought it was hot, but then she didn’t after I got tackled in my first game. I think I saw Quinn holding Santana back from rushing onto the field.” Charlie points out.

“It’s a dangerous game, I mentioned the three hundred pound linebackers that are going to be attempting to crush you right? You don’t have to do this, you’re the smallest person out there, and we have enough players without you. No one would fault you.”

“I’m making a point—”

“Of course you are,” Charlie says with a sigh interrupting her, “Look just do exactly what the guys talked about, because if you get hurt, I get hurt and my sister slaps are painful.” She whispers to Rachel bumping her helmet gently before looking at Mercedes, “Let me help you with that,” she says moving over to help the R&B singer.

“Thanks, Charlie,” Mercedes says as Charlie begins to help her.

“Seriously though—are you sure you people want to do this? Hell I would quit right now, except I’m pulling like triple duty, running back wide receiver and kicker,” Without Azimio and Karofsky having her back, to give her enough time to get enough distance. She couldn’t blame Dani for totally bailing and thinking about her soccer career.

“You’re a girl, you should respect us—”

“I’m all for women empowerment, I am a girl Zizes. But at this point in time I’m being realistic and there is a chance that any one of you could get hurt. Rachel weighs like a hundred pounds and lacks the upper body strength that you have and those guys have, and none of you know anything about football.” Charlie interrupts. “Seriously you can get hurt out there.” The door to the locker room slams open and Charlie winces when she sees her sister flanked by the unholy trinity.

“Rachel. What. Are. You. Doing.” Quinn says and everyone in the locker room turns to look at her. There’s a fire in her eyes and Charlie takes a step back because Quinn is extremely angry and she doesn’t want her sister to remember she exists right now.

“I’m having a bit of courage and standing up for what I believe in,” Rachel says firmly, “You quit the glee club. Sue Sylvester is a tyrant and that stunt that she’s forcing Brittany to do is going to hurt her. You know she’s gone off the deep end. You don’t even want to go, you just want to
remain popular.”

“It’s one week Rachel, I—We’ll be back by Monday, and everything will be back to normal,” Quinn says because they’ve been having this argument all week.

“And what if it isn’t what if she makes you choose. Like actually choose.” This gives Quinn a moment to pause because she’s not sure who Rachel is referring too at this point. “We’ve been here for you through everything Quinn, and this is important to the guys, they get so much crap for being on the team, but they still stay. They still made the choice to be here to remain here, this isn’t sophomore year all over again Quinn. We’re a team, we care for each other and popularity doesn’t matter.”

“Speak for yourself hobbit this is high school it’s the only thing that matters,” Santana says with a roll of her eyes.

“She’s planning to shoot Brittany out of a cannon, it’s not worth Brittany dying.” Charlie points out in sardonic tone, and it seems to alert her sister of her presence. Because Quinn turns on her twin who takes a step back because Quinn is furious. “Don’t you dare blame this one on me; I offered to join the silly little musical cult that you call glee club if she would drop the idea. She didn’t this one is on Rachel,” Charlie said. “You try talking her out of it.”

Quinn turned to Rachel, and her HBIC face is on and it’s focused on Rachel who stands her ground, “You can’t bully me into doing what you want, you made your choice and you chose popularity over your friends Quinn Fabray. Now come on girls we’re going to be late,” Rachel says as she pushes by Quinn and the rest of the unholy trinity. “Don’t worry about me, we’re just going to lie there after the snap.” She throws over her shoulder.

Charlie looks at her sister for a moment before putting her helmet on and trying to follow Rachel and the rest of the glee girls. “Charlie.” Quinn says and Charlie winces and turns to her sister, who looks furious that she isn’t getting her way. “Get me some dam football gear, and a uniform.”

Santana’s arms drop from her chest, “You aren’t serious,” she says in shock. She half expected Quinn to march out there and drag Rachel back kicking and screaming she didn’t expect Quinn to attempt to join the football team.

“I’ve watched the damn sport enough to know how to play it and our father taught us the rules when we were kids,” Quinn says if Rachel is going to put her neck on the line then so will she.

“I can’t Quinn you don’t have permission and there is no way that Judy is going to let you play in this game, and Russell is in prison.” Charlie says and Quinn grabs the front of Charlie’s helmet and she gives her sister a death glare. But Charlie just stares blankly at her because there is literally nothing she can do. Not that she’d actually support Quinn’s mad attempt to join the football to sub Rachel out.

“She can’t go out there Charlie, what if she gets hurt or injured or something.” Quinn says after a moment as she lets go of Charlie’s helmet.

Charlie looks at her sister, “Well Quinn. Rachel is a football player now who plans to lie on the ground to prevent injury. And Puck keeps swearing that cheerleaders dig football players.” Charlie says gently. Charlie turns to Brittany, “Doesn’t Rachel look hot in her uniform?”

Brittany nods, “Totally,” she says with a smile. Because really she doesn’t want to die but if Santana and Quinn are going she’s going to follow them. It had sucked without Quinn being on the team last year and she wasn’t going to do it again.
Quinn is having a massive internal debate because she knows that Judy won’t be pleased with this decision and she really doesn’t want to drop down to the bottom of the food chain once more and she can’t ask Brittany and Santana to go with her, but—

“Quinn I have to go,” Charlie says and nudge her sister and puts in her mouth guard before she walks out she pulls off her helmet and taps her cheek. “For luck?” She says and Brittany smiles and kisses her cheek and Charlie looks at Santana who rolls her eyes and does the same on the other. “Now I’m totally going to kick ass,” Charlie says smacking the top of the door frame on her way out.

“So what are we doing Quinn?” Santana asks after a moment, she’s still bottom of the pyramid and she doesn’t really want to go to regionals, she likes glee club and leaving left a sour taste in her mouth. But she also liked being popular. Santana Lopez had made quite a few enemies, she really didn’t want to be slushied.

Quinn looked at Santana in surprise, she hadn’t expected the Latina to support whatever decision she was going to make. “Do you want to go to regionals?” she asked both of them.

“I’m still bottom of the pyramid and I really don’t want to see Brittany get hurt or lose her legs in some freak cannon incident,” Santana answered honestly.

“I don’t want to die remember,” Brittany said.

Quinn nodded, she’d deal with the Judy issue later, “We’re going to find the actual football players, we’re going to be the most popular girls in school and make them get their asses into gear so Rachel doesn’t get hurt. Then we’re going to quit the Cheerios, and get ready for the half time show.”

“Finn’s going to be the starting quarterback for this game,” Shannon announces and Sam’s face falls and Charlie makes a face, Finn just stares in surprise he hadn’t been expecting to be named the starting quarterback. “Evans you’re faster than he is and you have better hands and Charlie can’t play three different positions, she can’t be the running back and the wide receiver. So you’re going to be the wide receiver, Fabray you’re going to keep the running back position.”

Finn looks at Charlie and makes a face which Charlie returns, “Dude’s call a truce for this game. It’s the championship game and we need both of you so stop being idiots. Once the game is over you two can back to wanting to kill each other,” Puck snaps at the two of them.

Charlie snorts and looks at Finn, “Whatever just don’t choke Hudson,” she snips at him.

“Same Fabray,” Finn says crossing his arms over his chest.

Puck rolls his eyes, because he had hoped that they’d shake hands or something but it seems like it’s as good as he’s going to get, and he goes back to listening to Coach Beistes instructions for the game.

Charlie closes her eyes as she watches the girls take their position and she realizes that they’ve never been to a football game before and she winces because she realizes that without Azizio and Karofsky, Shane, Strando and everyone else on the team she’s got zero protection except for Lauren and Puck and she feels very exposed and she has a feeling that Sam does as well as he gives her a look and nods.

The ball is snapped and Charlie does something stupid and tries to protect Finn Hudson from getting sacked, pushing away the defensive lineman that has stepped over the girls who had done
exactly what they said they were going to do and hit the ground the moment that the ball is snapped. It gives Finn enough time to throw the ball to Sam but it gets intercepted. Charlie takes off after the guy but it’s too late and he runs the length of the field, scoring a touchdown. Charlie turns to Finn who looks just as peeved as she feels. “I said, don’t choke Hudson.”

Finn takes a step towards her and Charlie takes a step towards him, but Puck is there immediately putting his body between the two of them, “I said call a truce, we’re on the same team.”

“He’s choking already,” Charlie says in her defense.

“I’m trying my best,” Finn snaps back, because he’s basically playing with no one to protect him but Charlie and he’s not stupid they hate each other.

“Try harder,” Charlie says as they go line up again. It goes like that with Charlie trying her best to protect Finn but the other team has figured it out and Charlie gets tackled every time with Finn. And by the end of the first half it’s 17 nothing, with three minutes left on the clock.

Charlie grimaces as they huddle up again and she remembers why she hates football. It fucking hurts to play and Finn’s doing a terrible job as quarterback and Sam’s a pretty crappy wide receiver. “How’s everyone holding up? Finn asks and he’s met with groans.

Puck pats Charlie’s helmet and nods to the crowd and she sees Santana, Brittany and Quinn and Charlie straightens herself up a bit and fixes her jersey because she looks like a mess and you know Santana’s still in her Cheerios uniform. “Come on we can still do this,” she says with false cheer and everyone looks at her. “I’m allowed to be optimistic,” she says with a roll of her eyes. They break and Charlie grabs onto Rachel’s face mask stopping her and tilting her head to the crowd so she can see Quinn who waves at her. “Told you that football players get the cheerleader. Don’t do anything to try to impress her she’ll blame me,” Charlie says, leaving Rachel stunned as she looks at Quinn.

Rachel quickly follows after Charlie, “Do I look okay? I thought she had to go regionals with the Cheerios what is she doing here—”

“Looks like she quit,” Charlie says as they line up again, “Don’t do anything stupid Rachel,” Charlie says and she turns to Finn, “Don’t choke Hudson,” she says but it lacks any of its usual venom, she’s much too tired to care and Finn rolls his eyes at her. It’s a truce of convenience, but when the ball snaps, Charlie is a bit slow to get to him and he gets sacked and the ball is knocked out of his hands. Charlie tries to move to get to the football but she’s taken out by a linebacker and the ball bounces in front of Rachel.

Number four is about to get his hands on Rachel when Charlie cuts hard in front of him letting him slam into her hard knocking her down, but it creates enough space for Rachel to get a touchdown. Charlie lays there as the crowd erupts and even though she’s happy they’re finally on the board she’s still bitching out Rachel for doing something stupid in her head. Mike sticks his hand out for her and hauls her up and she dusts herself off.

“The Unholy trinity has finally managed to rouse the troops,” Mike said, “Karofsky’s still out, nice
“Charlie did she see?” Rachel asks as she jogs up to Charlie who glares at her, “don’t give me that look, I got a touchdown,” she says with a grin, as she tries to look over Charlie’s shoulder to get a look at her girlfriend. This was her moment and she wanted to run up to Quinn right now and talk to her.

Charlie stares at Rachel for a moment because that smile on her face is infectious and then turns to look over at Quinn, Santana and Brittany who are still in their Cheerios uniform trying to get the crowd pumped and she looks at Rachel again, “Cheerleaders dig football players,” she repeated and Rachel high-fives her. “Am I still kicker?” she asks Mike who nods. Charlie twists her back a bit till she hears the pop, “Well now that we’ve eaten enough dirt can we finally kick some ass?”

“Hell yeah,” Mike says and they bump fists.

Charlie bumps her head against Rachel’s helmet gently, “Your job is done, go get ready with the rest of the girls for the half-time show.”

It’s after the half-time show that Rachel finds out how much Puck’s hypothesis is right, even with their zombie make-up on it doesn’t stop them from going at each other, “What about the Cheerio’s?” Rachel asks and Quinn’s make up is all smudged and she imagines hers is too.

Quinn winces, “We quit. It was very dramatic and we had an epic storm-out. You would have been very proud, but you were right. I still have the glee club, and with the performance and the fact that you scored the first touchdown you probably bought glee cub a bit of credit,” Quinn says and kisses her again. She tries not to think about what Judy will say when she finds out that she quit, or the fact that she’s once again hiding under Charlie’s arm for protection. But she shoves those thoughts aside for now and just enjoys the moment, because Brittany was right Rachel does look hot in her uniform, and even though she’s not currently a Cheerio, she’s still Quinn Fabray and she’s probably always going to be Rachel’s personal cheerleader.

Rachel pulls away for a moment, “So did you see my goal?” she says excitedly.

“Touchdown,” Quinn corrects and Rachel shrugs because it really makes no difference to her. “Yes and I nearly died of a heart attack when that guy nearly got his hands on you. What were you thinking?”

“I was thinking that cheerleaders really dig football players,” Rachel said repeating what she’d heard from Puck and Charlie, and she sees Quinn groan and shake her head because it’s really not the best reason to do anything. “And I had my eye on the prettiest cheerleader on the squad,” Rachel says seriously trying not to smile.

Quinn rolls her eyes, “I’m not a Cheerio anymore,” she admits.

“Well until you take that uniform off, you still are,” Rachel says and Quinn laughs and shakes her head before kissing her again pushing her up against the lockers.

Charlie groans as she peels off her football gear at the end of the game. She’s by herself using the locker room long after all the glee girls have left, she glances down at the football and smiles at it, reaching her hand to touch it for a moment. Finn hadn’t choked, which had surprised her and he had handed her the ball in a perfect handoff and she’d scored the last touchdown, getting tackled into the end zone. They had won and Shannon had said she could keep the ball. She spat out her
mouth guard and looks down at her battered body, and winces poking at a fresh bruise.

“For someone who hates this sport, you sure didn’t mind risking your body for a hobbit,” Santana comments and Charlie looks up. “You looked good out there Fabray,” she says but she keeps her distance. She half expected Charlie to close the distance she wanted her to, but the soccer player didn’t instead she just looked at her.

Charlie looked at her and grins at her and runs a hand through her hair, “Is this a cheerleader dig football players moment?” she asks and Santana rolls her eyes.

“I quit the squad, remember? Or did you rattle your head on that last tackle,” she asks disappointed because Charlie isn’t doing anything. She hadn’t done anything, she’d been broken up with Dani for two weeks and she expected Charlie to do something. She had seen the blue-haired soccer player talking to Charlie and they had looked cozy.

Charlie smiles at her, and opens her duffel bag and pulls out her letterman jacket and looks at it before tossing it to Santana, it’s not a proposal and she goes back to stripping out of her football gear. “It’ll be nice seeing you in street clothes at school,” she said after a moment.

Santana holds the letterman jacket, “Are you asking me out Fabray?”

Charlie looks at her and smiles, “If I ever ask you out, you’re not going to ask that question Santana,” she said, “You offered me yours when I joined the football team, and I’m returning the favor,” she answers.

Santana looks away disappointed because it was a simple gesture of friendship, she wonders for a moment if she had pushed Charlie to far the last time, so she watches as Charlie pulls on her sweat pants and a baggy hoodie, her back is to Santana.

“You know Quinn isn’t going to be happy,” Charlie says after a moment and Puck, Mike and Sam look at her. “You also know that I’m going to blame this on you if anything goes wrong,” Charlie adds after a moment. “Kidnapping is a felony,” she says after more quiet from them.

Sam who is in the car with Puck and Mike rolls his eyes, “She scored a touchdown Charlie, she should totally be made into an honorary bro,” Sam points out.

“I’m not against Rachel spending time with us or even becoming a bro. Hell she’ll probably give us some actual decent advice on girls, so we don’t have to depend on Mike all the time for good advice,” Charlie says as she grabs some water from the fridge. “I’m more against the idea of interrupting a planned date with my sister and her girlfriend. Quinn gets—irritable when her plans with Rachel get interrupted.”

“Well is she there right now?” Mike asks.

“Well no—” Charlie begins.

“Then we aren’t technically interrupting anything,” Mike interrupts and he hears Charlie sigh, he’s made a valid point. “We even bought her some vegan snacks at the grocery.”

“Well we aren’t kidnapping her. I can ask—she’ll probably be into it,” Charlie says after a moment, “I’ll see you guys in ten minutes,” she says and takes a sip of her water before heading up the stairs to Rachel’s room and knocking on the door, before peeking her head in. “Want to be kidnapped and spend some time with the SSBs? Charlie asks the diva who is busy writing something down in a notebook of hers, she’s been doing that a lot and she always closes it when
Charlie gets too close.

Rachel blinks because Charlie’s never asked her to spend time with her and the guys before—it’s an interesting change of events, and it’d be a good time to connect with other members of the glee club. “I would love to but I have a date with your sister planned, we plan to go to the zoo in Toledo today and—”

“Can I see your phone for a moment?” Charlie asks cutting Rachel off and the diva looks puzzled but hands Charlie her phone.

“What do you need my phone for—” Rachel realizes that handing Charlie her phone was clearly a mistake when she sees Charlie tap the screen and call her sister, she reaches for the phone but Charlie dances away from her, and she’s taller than the diva and has a longer reach. “Charlie Regan Fabray!”

“Hey sis.” Charlie says with a smile on her face as she twists out of Rachel’s grasp again dodging her with ease with little to no effort as her best friend tries to get the phone back. “Rachel’s fine, well for now anyway. I’m kidnapping her so you’ve got to make other plans for the day.” Charlie says laughing as she dodges the pillow that Rachel has thrown at her.

“Quinn don’t listen to her I—”

“I don’t care if you have plans you always get to spend time with her, go have fun with Santana and Brittany, I’m sure Britt’s will love to go to the zoo with you,” Charlie informs her sister, she listens for a moment, “No. I get a day with her she’s my best friend and I’ve given you to months of blissful alone time without interrupting. So I’m announcing that today is best friend day, so go have fun with your best friends and do some girl things, like go shopping and talk about—I don’t know how to rule the school when you’re not on the Cheerios.” Charlie says and ends the call, as Quinn begins to yell at her sister. Charlie smiles at Rachel, “She gave her blessing.”

Rachel stares at Charlie for a moment not believing that for a moment, “Charlie while—”

“Come on Rachel, it’s been forever and you know you want to hang out with us and have a relaxing day just chilling out and eating junk food and playing video games and whatever else we need plans with. Valentine’s Day is coming, and Mike has a girlfriend and Puck might want to ask Zizes to be his girlfriend. Think of it is as bonding with several members of glee club and your best friend,” Charlie says trying to sell Rachel on the idea.

Rachel pauses for a moment because it does sound like a lot of fun, “Well—alright but I need to be the one to tell Quinn who is probably rushing to get over here to rescue me,” Rachel says and Charlie hands her back her phone.

“The guys will be here in like five minutes, so put on some sweat pants and meet me downstairs,” Charlie calls over her shoulder and heads down the stairs humming to herself.

Rachel grins and calls Quinn back, wincing when she hears the harsh tone in Quinn’s voice. “Charlie I swear I will hunt you down—”

“It’s me, your twin gave me back my phone,” Rachel said laughing at how protective Quinn is being and even though they’re on the phone she can feel Quinn relax, “She really wants me to spend time with her today, and I have been sort of neglecting her for my favorite Fabray,” Rachel says and she hears Quinn grumble.

“She knew we had plans—” Quinn begins, “Do you want to hang out with them?”
Rachel bites her lip, “Sort of, I’ve never one of the guys before and it sounds like fun. I want to go to the zoo with you though,” she hears Quinn sigh. “I’m really sorry she just sort of came into the room and asked—”

Quinn grumbled because she sort of knew she was being unfair, she had taken up a lot of Rachel’s time lately most of the time that Rachel and Charlie had spent together and Charlie had never really complained before. “Fine, but only this once. Santana and Brittany have been wanting to spend a day together, and I probably should you know thank them for quitting the Cheerios with me,” Quinn says. “Just—you be careful, as in ninety percent of Puck’s ideas are terrible.”

Rachel laughs as she hears the doorbell go off, “I’ve got to go, and I promise not to do anything to dangerous. I love you,” she says before she hangs up and she pauses because she’s never said that to Quinn before it had just slipped out and she panics because Quinn hasn’t said anything back.

“I love you too Rachel,” Quinn says after a moment and Rachel breaks out into a wide grin as she hangs up her phone and heads downstairs to meet the guys, Mike and Sam are carrying bags of junk food and Puck has his gaming console, and he’s carrying soda in his free hand. “So what are we doing today?” she asks bouncing up and down.

“Hey Jew babe,” Puck greets as they head into the kitchen and put the snacks down. “Snacks, videogames, movies, girls. In no particular order.”

Charlie has opened a bag of Doritos and pours it into a bowl, “It is nearly valentine’s day.”

Rachel crinkled her nose, “You guys don’t like talk about sex do you?” because even though she’s not the only girl she lacks the equipment that Charlie has.

“No—unless you have something to share, that can go into my spank bank,” Puck says with a grin and Charlie reaches over and smacks him upside the head.

“Still gross, still my sister,” Charlie says and grins at Rachel, “Feel free to do that whenever,” she informs Rachel and glares at Puck who rolls his eyes.

“I haven’t decided what I’m getting Quinn for Valentine’s yet,” she admits and Charlie gasps.

“You’re not prepared weeks in advance?” she asks, and Rachel smacks Charlie’s arm gently.

“Well—don’t propose to her,” Sam says trying to be helpful.

Charlie snorts and turns to Rachel, “He’s right don’t do that.” She agrees, “It doesn’t have to be a gift, just show off your cooking skills that Shelby has imparted on you, if you haven’t made her food. It’s supposed to be romantic just don’t get each other gifts it’s uninspired.”

“You only say that because you don’t have a girlfriend. Girls go crazy for this sort of thing,” Puck said before flicking his eyes at Rachel, “No offense, I’ve got to get my reservations for breadsticks now, and I plan to show Lauren a good time,” he insists.

Charlie tapped her fingers on the table as she ate a chip, “Actually—” she begins.

“Charlie Fabray if you asked a girl out and didn’t tell me—” Rachel begins and Charlie rolls her eyes.

“You asked out Santana?” Sam asks in surprise, “Dude!”

“Bro congrats!” Puck says raising his hand up.
“I haven’t asked her, yet. I’m trying to make Santana feel special. Like—the most beautiful girl in school. I want to do it right this time,” Charlie says rubbing the scar on her hand.

“Dude I told you all you have to do with Santana is ask her out to Breadstix,” Puck said with a roll of his eyes there was no need to make such a fuss over it.

“I for one applaud Charlie’s effort to put a bit of effort, in her attempt to woo Santana. What do you have planned so far, of course if you need my advice or help—” Rachel begins.

Charlie smiled and rubbed her head, “I’m going to sing a duet with her—”

Rachel’s mouth dropped, because she’d been trying to get Charlie to sing since freshman year. Freshman year. There had been many arguments there had been may foot stomps, there had been many tantrums. “You’re what?”

“I—yeah she wanted to earlier and I said no—and I picked out the song and I’ve been getting vocal lessons from your mom. You were busy with Quinn and I didn’t want to take up your time and I want it to be a surprise but then I realized she might not know the lyrics and I don’t know how to like be discrete because I don’t do subtle, and she sort of needs to learn the lyrics. So I figured I’d take a page out your musical cult and sing my feelings.” Charlie makes a face at this, but Santana does actually like glee club.

Puck grinned, “I was going to woo Lauren the same way,” he said proudly. “I was going to sing her Fat Bottomed Girls—”

Rachel look horrified at this idea, and she quickly realized what Quinn said about Puck was accurate. “Puck that’s offensive.”

“No it isn’t—”

“Yes it is,” Charlie agreed.

“They have a point,” Mike said and Puck’s fell, because there went his idea.

“I can help you pick out a song,” Rachel offered, “I am sort of the expert on love songs,” she said with a smile and patted him on his shoulder.

Sam rolled his eyes and turned to Charlie, “Is the offer still on for any girl in school?”

“Yes?” Charlie says frowning her face.

“I want to ask Mercedes out.”

“So do it,” Charlie says with a shrug, “All you need to do is—”

“I want to sing her a Justin Bieber song,” Sam adds.

“Not be lame,” Charlie finishes and stares at him as everyone looks at him in shock.

“Just Bieber gets girls,” Sam argues immediately.

“We’ve had this conversation with you a million times. Justin Bieber is lame.” Puck says.

“You’ll see when I have a girlfriend by the end of next week, then you’ll all be trying to join the Justin Bieber experience,” Sam says crossing his arms over his chest.
Rachel smiled, “I think it takes a very confident man to do something that other people find lame, I’ll gladly help you, with your vocals if you want.”

“Thank you Rachel,” Sam says and looks at his bro’s, he’d show them all that he was right. “Don’t be upset when all your girlfriends think I’m amazing,” he says.

Puck rolls his eyes, “I’ll believe it when I see it,” Puck says and shakes his head.

Rachel laughs when Sam shoves him, and looks over at Charlie who tosses her some of the vegan snacks that Mike got for her, she’s impressed that they remembered that she was vegan. “I think she’s really like it. I think she really likes you.”

“Really?” Sam asks smiling, and Rachel nods, “When we’re not busy fighting over the solos we do talk a bit and she does talk about you.”

“So you think she’ll say yes?” Sam asks hopefully.

“I think she’ll say yes,” Rachel says with a smile, this really wasn’t so bad.

Charlie makes a face, because she’s terrified that Santana will say no, “Well since we’ve talked about the girls in our life—”

“Not so fast, you still haven’t told us what you plan to sing for Santana and what you plan to do,” Rachel says and Charlie grumps. “And Mike hasn’t spoken about what he’s going to do for Tina.”

Mike smiles, “Romantic dinner, I’m making her dinner, my mom’s helping me.” Mike admits, “I can’t really sing all that well, so—”

“I can give you vocal lessons,” Rachel says excitedly ready to help Mike out.

Mike gives Rachel a smile, “I’d like that. I was going to ask you for a bit of help, because I want to get better. I don’t want to be known as that dancing Asian guy. And I really want to win at nationals.”

“I’m sure we can find some time to give you the proper vocal lesson’s,” Rachel says and she wants to grab her calendar to find some time to pencil Mike in, she has a feeling something is going to give, with her schedule but she wants to help him. She hadn’t expected them to take it so seriously. Perhaps selling the glee club her idea for original songs wouldn’t be as she thought it would be. Rachel flicks her eyes to Charlie, “You don’t have to go to my mother to get proper training.”

“You make out with my sister all the time, and I wanted piano lessons as well, so I could play her the song,” Charlie says throwing her hands up, she was doing Rachel a favor.

Rachel was still slightly offended that Charlie hadn’t come to her, “Now you’re going to tell us your plan for Satan—I mean Santana.”

Charlie rolls her eyes, “I want her to feel like the most wanted girl in school, so I’m going to start a week before Valentine’s day, she’s going to get flowers, she’s going to get chocolate and some sticky-notes I guess, and she’s going to get these guys” Charlie nods at Puck, Mike and Sam, “serenading her in front of everyone, and finally on Valentine’s day I’m going to—well ask her by song. I think she’d like it.” Well she hopes that Santana will like it, there was always a chance that Santana would say no. She really hopes that Santana doesn’t say no.

Rachel sees the worry flick through Charlie’s face, and smiles, “Don’t worry I can be discrete,” Rachel begins and everyone turns to look at her because Rachel Berry didn’t do discrete either.
“What I can be, I just prefer to be upfront—Stop giving me those looks,” she says getting annoyed, she could so do discrete.

“Or—you can ask Quinn for help,” Sam says looking at Charlie.

"Yeah doesn’t she give Santana a ride in the morning? Just have that song playing on the radio a few times,” Mike said with a shrug, “Not that many times but enough so she has about three weeks to finish learning it.”

“I can be discrete,” Rachel says, she had already devised a perfect plan too.

“Yes but you avoid Santana like the plague,” Puck points out, “You start offering—”

“I was going to suggest that you two sing a duet, I will suggest that song and say you two can perform it on Valentine’s day.”

“I—that’s actually not a bad idea,” Charlie muses and Rachel grins.

“See—that what you don’t have to worry about her not knowing because she’s going to expect to sing the song with Puck but she’ll be singing it with you. And when you sing it in front of the glee club—”

“I’m not, I don’t think she wants to be out yet,” Charlie says and rubs her cheek, “So I’m going to do it in private so I have the auditorium booked.”

“Wait so we don’t get to hear you?” Sam asks.

“No you don’t get to hear me sing,” Charlie says and smiles at them, because if Rachel was already this gung-ho about her joining glee club she shudders to think what will happen when everyone else starts ganging up on her.
Russell Fabray was not a man who was meant to rot away in prison, he had been a good man. He had been a pillar of the community. He had done everything right, he had worked hard nearly every day of his life, and now he was here. Sitting in prison, a place where he didn’t belong, prison was for people who were a danger to the society who had contributed nothing, druggies and murderers, he was a job creator, he was wealthy. The rules shouldn’t apply to him, and he had done everything right. He shouldn’t have gotten forty years, not for what he did, he had punished his child as he saw fit. It was his right as a parent.

But here he was sharing it in a small jail cell that housed him, one which he shared with another man. He hadn’t even shared a room back in college and yet here he was sharing a room with some druggy degenerate. The food was awful, and he was surrounded by all these colored people who were probably been leeching the government for all its resources or worse had voted for the current president. His wife had sold him out, forsaking the vows to him and was now trying to get her hands on the money that he had earned, the money that she didn’t deserve. She had saved herself instead of standing by him, it was her fault that he was in there, and he’d be damned if he was going to give her half of his fortune.

Then there was Frannie, who he had thought was his perfect little angel, and she had been, daddy’s little girl. He had been furious when she had dropped out of school, he had watched her spending the money he had given her like it was infinite, trips, vacations, expensive cars, shoes, clothes. She had burned through the money in her mad attempt to find a reasonably wealthy husband. He had expected her to be by his side, and she had done what he had asked of her, but she had never visited him. She turned her back on him just like everyone else had, and it didn’t matter if she had testified. He knew she was only there to kiss the ring, hoping that he’d die soon so she’d get her inheritance.

“Mail.”

Russell looked up from what where he had been sitting, the orange jumpsuits didn’t look good on him, orange had never been his color, and was handed a letter, it had been opened of course, everything that was sent to him was screened, and he hated the lack of privacy. He hated being treated like he was nothing more than a common criminal, he was Russell Fabray. Russell studied the letter, he already knew who it was from as there was only one person writing to him in prison and he tucked the letter under his mattress. There were four unopened letters all written, from the only one person who wrote to him. They had started to come suddenly and he had been surprised when he received the first one. He didn’t want to read Charlie’s angry diatribe. He didn’t want to hear the words of the person who had taken his only son away from him.

“Got a letter from your kid again?” Russell flicked his eye toward his cellmate, and didn’t answer. He said he was only in there for getting caught with a bit of weed. At least that’s what he claimed, Russell hadn’t shared what he was in for, he didn’t deserve to be here and he didn’t deserve to be stuck with a degenerate like him. “You’re luck you’ve got someone who writes to you. Forty years is a long time—”

“I didn’t ask for your opinion,” Russell cuts him off harshly. Because this man isn’t his friend, he’s just some nobody. He can’t even remember his name, at this point even though he’s been sharing a cell with this man for a few months. He shifts on this thing they call a bed, and he misses his bed. He misses the high thread count sheets.

“Just saying—I wish I had someone writing to me,” the man mutters and Russell doesn’t reply and
He goes back to doing what he was doing.

He’s lost weight since he’s been in here, he’s lost most of his gut, it’s probably because he doesn’t eat much, the food is simply atrocious and he’s starting getting these pains just under his ribcage, he imagines it’s an ulcer. Being around all these criminals, having to learn who to befriend and who to avoid is difficult, he had been beaten the first day he had arrived. He was a grown man who had been assaulted by some black thugs. He had been beaten again when he tried to point out who had done it. He had learned after that to keep his mouth shut and his head down. “I’m going to the chapel,” he says after a moment, it’s their free time and he’s been trying to get closer to god. Maybe if he prays hard enough he’ll be saved. He had always been a religious man. It’s the only place he finds comfort in this ungodly place. He has seen things that he had never wanted to see, sick things. He has watched men beaten, he has seen them commit carnal acts on each other. It sickens him and all he prays for these days is the chance to go home, for them to overturn his conviction. He has meetings with his lawyers three times a week, if it’s not his divorce lawyers, then it’s his criminal ones and if it’s not them then it’s someone else. They are his only visitors and he has to pay them, truthfully he feels like he’s paying for one the prostitutes that he paid for Charlie. He had simply wanted to make his son a man. He had made his son a man.

And then there was Quinn, she was supposed to be his sweet angel, she had worked so hard to please him. To keep him happy, and yet she had gotten pregnant, cheating on her boyfriend like a slut and with a Jew no less. He had expected great things from her, she had done so much work to make him proud of her and she had thrown it away, like the ungrateful child that she was. He had raised her better than that, perhaps if he had been harsher with her she wouldn’t have acted out.

The chapel is usually empty and when he sees someone in there and he frowns because he doesn’t want to deal with any of the criminals. The man looks up at him and he can see that he’s the chaplain. Though he doesn’t look it, he’s got a beard, and Russell can see the tattoos running over his arms, and he looks dirty with his beard and his long hair. He had probably been one of those criminals who turned to god in here. The man looks at him and smiles, “Afternoon, name’s Peter,” he says stretching his hand out but Russell doesn’t take it.

“I’m just here to pray,” He says firmly because that’s not what he wants to do. He doesn’t want to talk to this—false prophet.

Peter nods and it looks like he’s about to leave him alone, but he stops, “Can I pray with you?” he asks, because Russell looks defeated and broken and angry. Peter sees a lot of anger on Russell’s face. He also thinks Russell looks a bit sickly but it’s probably the horrible food that they serve.

Russell looks at him for a moment, but decides to ignore him and he gets down on his knees and begins to pray. He stops for a moment because he can feel Peter beside him and he’s on his knees as well. “What are you doing?”

Peter looks at him and he smiles again, “You never said I couldn’t. Don’t imagine you like to talk much, which is fine. But I like to think that the only person who can judge you for anything is the big guy upstairs you know, but he also forgives. He’s big on that—the forgiveness.”

Russell explodes he’s angry because this man thinks that he knows him. “I don’t need to be forgiven, I haven’t done anything wrong,” his voice is raised and he expects Peter to back away like his degenerate cellmate. But Peter doesn’t flinch and instead pats him on the back.

“Russell Fabray was it?” he states because he makes it his mission to know everyone in the prison, every photo every name. He reads their files, he learns everything he can about them so he can help them, and he wants them to heal. He wants them to get better. “He forgives you for everything all you need to do is ask.”
Russell wants to punch him but he refrains because he’s not an animal and he won’t let this place make him into one. “You don’t know anything about me.”

“I know your name, I know that you’re going through a lot of things and that you’re angry. I can tell that you’re angry, and lonely and that you want to go home,” Peter says carefully, “And I’m here to talk when you feel like it, and pray with you. When you feel like it.”

Russell didn’t feel like doing anything, and instead he said his prayer and he left, looking at Peter once more before he left, the man smiled too much and he couldn’t entrust his eternal soul to. And it went like that, Russell got a new letter each week, he put it away, never opening it. He wasn’t interested in what Charlie had to say, his visits with his lawyers got fewer and fewer in between, instead of three times a week it slowly whittled down to one, finally he saw them once a month. He still prayed he still saw Peter who would smile and wave at him whenever they met in that chapel. He was still losing weight and he imagined his ulcers were getting worse, but he didn’t trust a prison medical care system to deal with his medical needs, so he kept quiet the last thing he needed was to be seen as weak. He didn’t have much of a choice when he collapsed early November, it was when he had gotten the news. They had wanted to call his wife, but he refused he wouldn’t give Judy the satisfaction.

It was like god was punishing him, and he hadn’t done anything wrong. And he was angry again, angrier than he had ever been, and this time there was no alcohol to fuel it, he didn’t deserve to die in prison. He had been a good man, he had gone to church every week—Russell couldn’t remember how he ended up in the Chapel again, he had no idea how long he had stayed on his knees, how long he had begged god to answer his prayers to let them call him back in and tell him that it was just a mistake. He was Russell Fabray. Men like him didn’t die in prison, they didn’t go out with a whimper but with a bang.

And slowly the anger slipped away, leaving him with a feeling of despair, and he cried. He was a grown man, and he couldn’t remember the last time he had cried. He had beaten his son for the same crime, but he cried because he was dying, and there was nothing that he could do about it. All the money and the power that he had acquired throughout his lifetime wouldn’t help him. It was how Peter found him, on his knees sobbing, and the man sat with him, because he had heard the guards talking about it. Talking about the diagnosis, wouldn’t be long till everyone knew. “Why?” he found himself asking “I was a good man.”

Peter didn’t say anything for a moment, “Good men aren’t generally found in prison,” he said bluntly and shrugged. “Unless you’re telling me that you’re innocent,” he said and looked at Russell. He knew he wasn’t innocent, he had read the files, he knew it had been Russell.

Russell bristled, “You don’t know anything, and she took my son away from me. She killed him —” he said as he explained. He told this stranger everything, because he had to understand that he was being mocked by the face of his dead son, that Charlie had taken away his happiness, had taken away his hopes. The Fabray name was to live on, he was going to take over his company he was going to expand it make it a global empire. But she had taken away all of that. She was just a girl.

Peter listened and he tried not to judge, “Your son isn’t gone,” he said gently. “Just the idea is gone. You lost an idea, and the future you had envisioned, and you took it out on the wrong person.”

“He’s—”

“Writing you letters, dead people don’t write letters,” Peter said bluntly. “It sounds like God gave you something precious, something precious and special and you didn’t know how to handle it, and
he’s given you time to learn to appreciate it, to correct your mistakes. It’s limited but you can’t stay stuck here being angry and bitter. You have two daughters who need their father, one that sounds like she just needs her dad to tell her that he loves her. Another one that just needed her father to be there and be her support when she was lost. And you have a granddaughter, who will never know her grandfather Russell.”

Russell frowned because he had thought that this holy man would see his point of view, “How can you stand there and say that. She’s an abomination and the other one had a child out of wedlock.”

“I can stand here and say that I don’t think God makes mistakes, and he made her that way. I can stand here and say that he loves all his children, and it sounds like Lucy was it? Made a mistake, a simple one and she learned the consequences of those actions, and the consequences of those actions of those actions was that you got a new member of your family, a granddaughter. Mistakes happen, you learn to deal with them and make the best of the situation.” Peter said, “You were there father it was up to you to lead them into the future to help them and mold them. Children make mistakes all the time, teenagers make mistakes, adults make mistakes. No one is perfect. And if you were a good man you wouldn’t be here Russell. God’s given you an opportunity make the best of it,” Peter said simply.

It wasn’t what Russell Fabray wanted to hear. He was a good man, he had done everything right. Except he hadn’t. He thought he had married the right woman, but Judy had abandoned him in his moment of need choosing to save her own skin.

“You got mail Russ. I think it’s from your kid again, left it on your bunk.”

“It’s Russell,” Russell snapped at his cellmate, who held up his hands again. He had no idea why his cellmate had started calling him Russ. Russell picked up the letter and stared at it for a moment, his son was dead, but the writing had remained the same. His son had always had terrible writing. So Russell opened the letter, much to the surprise of his cellmate. He didn’t expect a few pictures to fall out, and land on the ground. Russell bent down to pick them up and there was several pictures of his granddaughter with his Lucy. He hadn’t thought she kept it. He looked into the envelope and pulled out the letter. It was short, and he could barely read it at times, but he got the message, and he felt the tears spring to his eyes again. Because he could remember his son making the same promise, to take care of Lucy, his Lucy and now his granddaughter Beth.

Russell’s hand shook as he traced the faces of his granddaughter and his daughter. Beth was beautiful and she looked just like Quinn did at that age, he didn’t expect to see the gentle look on Quinn’s face as she looked at her daughter this was not what he expected. He held the photo to his cellmate, “My granddaughter, and my daughter,” he said proudly. He didn’t know why he was showing this degenerate. The man looked at him, surprised that Russell was talking to him, he was even more surprised that Russell had opened a letter. He had at least eight of them by now. But he hadn’t read a single one of them, this was the first one. He had heard the news, his cellmate wouldn’t be his cellmate for long. “Good looking kid you got there,” he said and flicked his eyes to the baby in the picture.

Russell didn’t say anything but gathered the rest of the pictures and looked at them one by one, there was no pictures of Charlie just of Beth or Lucy. He pulled the mattress up and grabbed the seven other letters and began to open them one by one. Struggling to read Charlie’s scrawl, there were a few more pictures of Quinn and Beth. Some of the letters were short, others were pretty lengthy. There was an unwritten plea, in her letters, like she was begging for his approval, for his acknowledgement he had seen it at the trial, and he saw it now. The silent plea for his approval. Russell didn’t know how to give it, he didn’t know what to say to his daughter.
And so the letters came, once a week, like clockwork. She didn’t miss it one, and Russell found himself looking forward to Charlie’s letters, some had pictures others didn’t. “Lucy is in love, and Charlie says that she thinks that it’s special because they treat her with respect and love and Beth loves them.” Russell paused for a moment, Charlie had moved away from pronouns, and he frowned because it sounded like Charlie was trying to subtly tell him that Lucy was gay. He clutched the letter tightly, “I—think Lucy is a lesbian.” He stated to Joel.

Joel studied Russ for a moment, “Does it matter? She’s still your daughter. And isn’t your other daughter dating a girl?” he was confused.

Russell frowned for a moment it was different for Charlie—it was but he was much too tired and the disease was progressing rapidly, it wouldn’t be long till he was moved to the medical wing full time, “No—I don’t think it does matter. You know her first boyfriend was an idiot. He was the quarterback, decided to tell us by song that he got my baby pregnant.”

Joel snorted, “You’re shitting me?”

“I’m not, it seems that Charlie approves though, this girl whoever she is taking good care of my daughter.” Russell said, but he talked with Peter about it the next time he saw him, because he had wanted Lucy to marry a good husband and have children.

Peter scratched his cheek, “God loves everyone Russell, her liking women doesn’t make her any less your daughter.”

“The bible does say—” Russell began because he had been to church he knew it was a sin.

“I have a question for you—when you thought Charlie was a boy would you sacrifice him?” Russell frowned at the question, “I mean if you knew that sacrificing him would mean that there would be peace on earth, no more wars, no more poverty, the ultimate utopia?”

“No he was my son,” Russell said bristling, he would never sacrifice his son for anything.

“You know that famous verse, everyone knows it. *For god so loved the world.* I think that more than anything the most important part to take from the bible is that love, is important. There’s not point judging others, there’s no point in being angry or hurt. She’s still your daughter Russ. It doesn’t matter if she loves someone of the same gender, it doesn’t bother you that Charlie does.”

“That’s different—”

“Is it?” Peter asked, “Charlie isn’t your son. She’s your daughter. The fact that she can get another girl pregnant does not mean that she’s any less a female, and you didn’t have this crisis of faith for her, and from what I can tell whoever this person is, from your daughter’s perspective she loves and cherishes Lucy. Lucy is happy, and given the circumstances—don’t you think she deserves that?”

Russell paused for a moment, he hadn’t given her enough time to pack her things he had just thrown her out of the only home that she had ever known, he hadn’t even thrown Frannie out of the house for dropping out of school. He had loved Frannie even though he had been furious with her, he had supported his daughter as he watched her burn through the trust fund he had set up for her, he had given her more when she had asked. “I want my daughter’s to be happy,” he said after a moment.

“My daughter joined the football team,” he stated one day and Joel, his cellmate’s name, looked at him.
“She did what?” Joel asks looking at him mostly in surprise, he had to admit he liked this version of Russell, he had stopped being angry all the time, and even allowed him to call him Russ. “What position?”

“Running back, I was the quarterback back in the day. I don’t think their team is any good, though. But my girl will bring them to the championship,” he said, “She’s a champion you know. Plays soccer, captain of the team. Two time MVP, they’re state champions. My girl doesn’t do anything in half measures. She’ll drag them kicking and screaming to a state championship. You mark my words.”

“Aren’t you worried?” Joel asks, “She could get hurt. They’ve got to be bigger than her on the team.”

Russell frowns because he hasn’t thought of that, “No, she’s always been—tough for a girl. The other one is the head cheerleader. They are probably ruling that school you know.” He says proudly, because while he would have preferred his son to be the quarterback. Charlie had hated football with a passion he remembered how he had tried to get his son to play the game and they had argued over it—he had hit him over it. He wondered why she had done it. “Besides it seems like Lucy isn’t pleased with Charlie, I’m sure that she’ll keep her safe.” He never had made Lucy promise to take care of her older brother and maybe he should have.

“If you’re sure Russ,” Joel said with a shrug of his shoulders. “Sounds pretty dangerous.”

Russell snorted, “My Charlie used to get into fights all the time defending her little sister, took on boys twice her size,” he boasted.

He had his up days, and his down days. But he always took one of the letters, and the pictures with him when he went for his chemo. The chemo made him feel awful, he had already lost most of his hair, it wasn’t to cure him or to kill the growing sickness in his body, and they just wanted to shrink the tumor down so they could remove it safely. But it wasn’t working and the holidays came and he watched as everyone else received a package but he didn’t. He was disappointed, he had hoped—he had wanted to show off his family. He hadn’t written back he still didn’t have the words.

He had expected a letter, he hadn’t expected to find a package that contained a few of the latest books the next week with a letter and an apology, there were at least twenty photos this time, of Christmas with the Berry’s, and there were various pictures of a bunch of teens, with names written on the back and he stopped on one with Rachel and Quinn, and he knew who it was that Charlie had been writing about. Quinn’s secret love. He could see it in Quinn’s face that she was in love.

Russell turned to Joel, “You know the two of them were always by themselves growing up, just the two of them. I think I was fine with that, but they have so many friends now. Take a look at them, I’m not pleased with the idea that this guy knocked up my daughter, but at least he seems to be taking responsibility.”

Joel flicked through the pictures with Peter, “How come I never see any pictures of Charlie?” he asked, or his wife or his other kid.

“I don’t know,” Russell answered honestly shivering as he adjusted the blanket he was always freezing or to hot and it bothered him.

Peter nodded, “Why haven’t you written to them yet?” he asked looking at Russell who coughed and winced.

“I don’t know how to say anything to them, I try and write things down—but it doesn’t sound right.
It sounds fake. It sounds like the pleas of a dying man for forgiveness."

“You are a dying man begging for forgiveness,” Joel says.

Russell nods, because he is, “But I don’t deserve it. I haven’t done anything to earn it,” he admits. He hadn’t expected this act of kindness, he hadn’t expected Charlie to reach out first. Out of all his children she’s the last one he expects to reach out to him. He had thought that maybe it would be Quinn, maybe if Frannie was in the mood it would be her. He had been a good father to his eldest daughter, he had tried. But he’s being selfish and really he just doesn’t want the letters to stop, he’s afraid he won’t get to see any more pictures of Beth or of Quinn and he still hopes to see his middle child. He doesn’t think he’s a changed man, he’s just dying and he’s tired and he’s sick and he doesn’t really have it in him to judge anymore or be angry. “They’re both aiming for New York,” He says after a moment. “Charlie’s looking at Columbia, Yale, Cornell, and NYU. Quinn’s aiming for Columbia, Yale and NYU. They’ve got the best grades in their year and they have so many things that they can add to their transcripts.” He brags, because they’re his kids and he doubts that they’ll do anything less than succeed.

Through the weeks Charlie had never once sent him an angry letter they were all somewhat positive like she’s just giving updates to her dad, till the very next week. There has always been something hopeful, something hoping that he’d write back. That she was doing something that pleased him. And her words are cutting and she’s angry at him, for ruining their family, because Judy has a new man in her life and Russell gets angry because Judy let another man try and parent his children. That she’s using the money that he earned to buy things for this new man.

Charlie’s upset that he isn’t there, that she can’t go back and it’s the first time that she tells him that she can’t go back to the house. That she can’t do her job properly because he broke her. And it rips him in too, because he can barely remember that night, he remembered hurting her. He’s sorry that he hurt her but it doesn’t seem to be enough to just say, sorry.

She’s broken and damaged and she’s angry and hurt because she can’t function like other people can. She’s upset because she bossed Quinn around, she’s upset because Frannie’s coming to visit and she hates her older sister, and the only person who could reign her in, is locked in a state penitentiary. She’s upset because she doesn’t want to be Russell Fabray, she doesn’t want to be angry and hurt the people that she loves. She doesn’t want to lash out at Lucy or her friends. She just wants to be normal.

She’s furious because he hasn’t written back and she needs his advice, she wants her dad’s advice. Because she doesn’t know how to properly woo a girl, and out of all the advice that he’s ever given her from the suits to how to hunt, he probably should of imparted that bit of knowledge. She’s angry because she doesn’t know when to push and when to pull back, how to be in a healthy relationship, how to be the person that they need. She doesn’t know how to treat a woman without making her seem like a whore, without buying her love because she doesn’t want someone like Judy in her life. She’s scared because she doesn’t know what to do if the girl turns her down, because she knows it’ll hurt.

She’s angry because she feels useless, and like she’s lonely because no one really gets it not really and they keep wanting her to be angry at him. But she loves him, and it confuses her because she thinks she should hate him. So she tries to just remember the good because she doesn’t like to think about the bad things that’s happened to her. She can’t look in the mirror or her hands without thinking about all the bad things. She can’t forget, and she can’t ever forget the things he’s done.

Russell Fabray doesn’t finish the letter because he doesn’t like the damage that he’s caused, she hasn’t forgiven him she’s just—confused, and angry and she wants the person that he used to be,
she wants her dad back. She doesn’t want Russell Fabray she just wants to go back to a time when he was just her dad.

Russell Fabray hasn’t changed a bit, not really. He’s just a dying man and he’s looking back at his life. He’s not a good man, he was never a good man. He was a drunk and a bully, and he used money to hurt those around him, and shower those that he loved and cared about. He still isn’t a fan of colored people. He still really doesn’t like women, but he loves his daughters. He’s still homophobic sometimes. It still is all about appearances to him. He’s still a religious man and he knows he’s dying and he doesn’t know if he wants to make amends because he is a selfish man or because he is trying to be a good man.
“Ow! Quinn come on Rachel had fun yesterday,” Charlie said wincing as her sister fixed her tie for her. Quinn had managed to get out of church this morning, and she had been staying away from the house because Frannie was around.

“You kidnapped my girlfriend,” Quinn hissed as she straightened Charlie’s tie a bit forcefully. “You called me at seven in the morning and told me you were kidnapping my girlfriend so I had to cancel my plans with her.”

“Rachel had fun hanging with the guys. You know she’s never played video games before? It was a travesty that needed to be corrected, and she did get a touchdown,” Charlie insisted, “Besides you got to plan world domination with Santana and Brittany. What could be more fun than that?” Quinn gave her sister a look and Charlie gave her a grin, “Well you two haven’t had sex yet, so clearly it’s not that.”

Quinn flushed at this and smacked her sister’s arm hard, “Is that all you and Santana think about?”

“Well and Puck. He may have decided to impart a few wise words of wisdom to—” Charlie began and grinned as Quinn’s look of indignation quickly morphed into one of horror. “I’d like to tell you I’m kidding but I’m not. When you do have sex, I’m sure you will be—OW! Stop hitting me,” Charlie said moving away from Quinn. “Oh come on it’s not as if Brittany and Santana haven’t given you advice on how to have sex with Rachel.”

“It was unsolicited advice,” Quinn snapped angrily, “You gave my girlfriend sex advice?”

“Please that would be creepy and gross,” Charlie said making a face, “Puck gave advice, Mike gave some tips. Sam’s only had sex once so he basically wrote them down for his next time. Rachel has been doing—‘extensive research’ so I imagine she’ll—” Charlie grinned dodging when Quinn threw one of her pillows at her head.

“She’s not allowed to hang out with you anymore, you’re corrupting her—” Quinn began, because the last thing she needed was Rachel thinking Puck and Charlie had good ideas.

“Corrupting her? Rachel asked. By the way if you two could abstain from having sex for another two weeks, I’ll totally win the pool,” Charlie said cutting Quinn off.

“You’re betting on my sex life?” Quinn asked her twin who shrugged and gave her a small teasing smile.

“You’re betting on my sex life?” Quinn asked again angrily. “You’re my twin, shouldn’t you be—”

Charlie sniffed, “I’m betting on the fact that you had sex with Sam two months into your relationship, taking his virginity, in some poorly thought out plan to prove that you’re straight. I think he’s over it now, I think he’s over you and he wants to see how things work with Mercedes, who I’m pretty sure is straight. So you’re thinking you want to make this the most special night in Rachel’s life or at the very least something she’ll always remember. Truthfully I don’t actually care when you do it, do it when you’re ready to, but seriously though… just wait two more weeks
and do it whenever you want and I win eighty dollars.”

Quinn didn’t say anything her mind racing, “Rachel asked?” she said quietly because Charlie was partially correct in her assessment, part of it was crippling fear that she’d be terrible at it, and she wanted Rachel to like it, but if Rachel was asking—

“Rachel is asking because she has this thing about being prepared, she wants to be prepared for you. Tip, if you’re feeling worried about it, then chances are Rachel is too. Communication. At least that’s what my therapist says. I pointed out that most of my potential partners don’t have my history so the things I worry about are probably not the same—” Charlie began going off on a tangent, there was a knock on the door and both twins looked at it and Rachel peeked her head in her hand covering her eyes.

“We’re decent,” Quinn said and Rachel’s hand dropped and she looked at both sisters and the pillows that littered the ground. “Charlie was telling me about how much fun you had yesterday hanging out with her.”

Rachel grinned, “I played a video game, and it was really fun and I beat Puck and Sam on my first try right Charlie?” Charlie nodded and Quinn smiled, “They said I could hang out with them again and Mike asked me for help with his singing and he’d said he’d help with my dancing, and Sam is going to sing a Justin Bieber song for Mercedes so I said I’d help as well. They even remembered that I’m a vegan so they bought me vegan snacks!”

“She was Kirby,” Charlie offered even though she doubted that Quinn knew who Kirby was.

“He was so pink and so cute,” Rachel gushed, “And they even did Karaoke with me,” Rachel said with a grin before looking at Charlie, “Well Charlie just sat and watched, but we had fun, maybe you could—”

“Rachel, you can’t invite your girlfriend,” Charlie said immediately cutting her off and looked at her sister, and Rachel’s face fell but she nodded. “It’s a girlfriend free zone.”

“Apparently you can’t come its part of the rules,” Rachel explained to Quinn who glared at her sister.

Quinn couldn’t help but smile, because it really did seem that Rachel did have fun and she did need more friends—at least she could trust Mike to be the sole voice of reason in that group. She made a mental note to talk to him a bit more. “I’m glad you had fun, but please don’t start calling yourself a Super Smash Bro, because despite what Sam says. It’s really sort of lame.”

Rachel didn’t say anything for a moment and looked at Charlie who grinned at her before looking back at Quinn a sheepish smile on her face. “They offered to let me join them Quinn! They said I could be codename Kirby and—”

Quinn’s mouth dropped, “You recruited my girlfriend to join you?”

Charlie nodded as if it was the most obvious thing in the world. “What? Kirby’s an excellent codename, he’s pink cute and really tiny. It was between that and jigglypuff so you really should be glad she chose Kirby instead.”

“Yes once they explained to me what the various powers were, I didn’t want to put people to sleep with my music,” Rachel said as if it were the most obvious thing in the world.

“You gave her a codename?” This was clearly worse than she thought it was, Charlie was corrupting Rachel, and it didn’t matter if she thought Rachel’s enthusiasm was adorable.
“Yes? Sam’s going to get her a pin to put on her bag tomorrow at school,” Charlie said. “She’s Kirby, I’m Charizard, Mike’s Lucario, Sam’s Link, and Puck’s Captain Falcon. Pay attention Quinn this is important. Besides Rachel was on the football team, and she wasn’t dating any of us, or about to date any of us. So she’s in,” Charlie said in the same tone as Rachel’s.

“I—that means you’re going to have less time to spend with me?” Quinn said looking at Rachel who gave her a guilty look.

“It’s only once a week? And it’s really fun and—maybe we can make it Saturday nights? Sam’s going to ask Mercedes out and Puck has Lauren and I’m sure we can do group dates! That will be fun. I don’t think Tina or Mercedes will tell anyone about us,” Rachel said biting her lip because she hadn’t actually thought about the idea that she’d be giving up one day away from Quinn and they could finally do things in Lima without it being suspicious with it being just the two of us. She really wanted to be able to go to places with Quinn. “And it’ll give you a reason to become closer to Mercedes and Tina—”

Quinn raised a brow, and stared at Rachel who began to fidget nervously before she smiled and kissed her girlfriend on the forehead, “Fine but I’m not calling you Kirby. It’s probably for the best, you’ll probably keep them out of too much trouble,” she said. She wouldn’t have depend on Mike to keep them out of trouble. Rachel lacked testosterone, so there was a good chance she wouldn’t do anything stupid.

“Really and we can tell Tina and Mercedes about us?” Rachel asked hoping that Quinn would say yes.

“I—” Quinn said it was basically like coming out to the entire glee club.

“Mercedes best friend is a gay man, and Kurt already knows or suspects I imagine,” Charlie threw in.

Quinn nodded for a moment, but if Sam was going to be with Mercedes then she needed to have him stop being her beard. She imagined that Mercedes probably wouldn’t mind letting her borrow him for lunch every now and again, but she didn’t want to cause a problem in her relationship.

“Alright—we might as well. Mom’s going to flip when she finds out that I’m not on the Cheerios anymore and while she has that news, I might as well tell her that I dumped Sam,” Quinn said after a moment.

Rachel frowned a bit, “You’re coming out to your mother?”

“I will—but not now. This is just a lot to take in, she’s going to be disappointed and with Frannie there. It’s going to be an eventful lunch,” Quinn says blowing a strand of hair out of her face.

“She’s going to point out that Frannie was prom queen and she wants me to carry on the family tradition, her mother, our grandmother, was prom queen, I think. It doesn’t really matter to me, one way or another but it would have made her happy.”

“No one says you still can’t be prom queen right Charlie? You’re still one of the most popular people in school and according to—”

“I quit the Cheerios who lost at regionals, which really is the only good thing about having quit, because now the most popular girls in school are—” Quinn pointed out, interrupting Rachel. If they had won without the unholy trinity, Sue would have made their lives a living hell until they graduated.

“Shit.” Charlie said as it dawned on her that they were entering a new day, she hated being in
charge of the school, last year she’d had Santana for help, she had hated doling out punishments. That had been Quinn’s job.

“The girls’ soccer team. Charlie gets a double shot because she was on the football team. The football team is on top though right now because of the most recent win,” Quinn explained, and once again she was going to need Charlie’s protection to keep her from being slushied.

Rachel looked at Charlie and then back at Quinn, “I don’t think you’ll be as unpopular as you were last year. You did say no to Sue Sylvester, and you quit the Cheerios right before a major competition and they lost, you three are the stars of the Cheerios, and everyone knows that. And your twin is the most popular girl in school, surely that must count for something.”

“I’m sure I’ll be fine no one is going to slushy me or Brittany—Santana on the other hand,” Quinn makes a face because Santana has made a lot of enemies. “Just mom’s going to be disappointed and I’m sure Frannie’s going to point out how she was head cheerleader at her old school from junior year till she graduated. Popularity is everything to someone like my mother and Frannie.”

“Frannie doesn’t have a national title win under her belt and you won in freshman year, and you got named head cheerleader a year earlier than she did,” Charlie pointed out.

“And really Frannie didn’t have a Sue Sylvester as her head coach, she wanted to shoot Brittany out of a cannon. She’s left you and your Cheerios stranded in the woods before and made you find your way back home. She’s given you Special Forces training,” Rachel added trying to cheer Quinn up. “And quite frankly out of all the Fabray siblings, I like you the most. Actually I hate Frannie, it’s not even a contest. You two are my favorite Fabray’s. And you take first place.”

Quinn smiled and leaned into kiss Rachel again as Charlie rolled her eyes, “Come on Quinn we’re going to be late and I don’t want Frannie to start bitching at us when we get there.”

Quinn ignored Charlie and deepened the kiss as she wrapped her arms around Rachel, “You’re my favorite Berry,” she says after a moment. “I like you better than I like—”

“If you two are going to be all gross and loving and make out and stuff, that’s fine but get out of my room,” Charlie cuts Quinn off and Quinn sends a look at Charlie who shrugs. “We’re going to be late, so give her a kiss and let’s go Quinn,” Charlie said impatiently.

Rachel pouted, “Can’t you just—not go?” she asked Quinn, “We could do something together!”

Quinn thought about it, she really did want to stay. She wanted to finish what they had started on Friday night before they were forced to separate, what they would have continued if Charlie hadn’t kidnapped Rachel. But leaving Charlie in a room with Frannie and Judy by herself was a disaster waiting to happen. It wasn’t an issue of what would go wrong, it was an issue of when it would go wrong. Besides it was best to get all this information out now, she wouldn’t be able to hide the fact that she was leaving the house in her normal clothes instead of the Cheerio’s uniform. At least with them in public Judy probably wouldn’t make a scene. “If I don’t go Charlie will probably end up killing our sister, and I really don’t want to go visit her in jail. Orange isn’t our color.”

Charlie studied Quinn for a moment, “You can stay if you want after all you didn’t make the promise to attend every single Sunday. I promise I won’t you know kill Frannie. I can handle it. We both know that if I hadn’t promised to be there I wouldn’t go.”

Rachel nodded, “See she promises that she won’t kill your sister, so stay. I’ll even let you pick the movie.”
Quinn looked at Charlie, “Do you promise not to stab Frannie with a fork?”

Charlie made a face, “Eh,” she said with a shrug.


“No, to kill her,” Charlie pointed out, Rachel gave her a look and she grumped, “Oh come on you’ve met her. That was her being polite,” Charlie said throwing her hands up. She was practiced in the art of restraint, she didn’t attack Finn every time she saw him, just half of the time. Frannie would probably say something in first five minutes that would piss her off.

“She’s not joking about the polite thing Rachel.” Quinn said with a sigh, “I’ve got to go but we can do something tomorrow after glee club tomorrow,” she promised.

Rachel pouted and nodded, maybe one day both twins would actually let her take a peek into their world. Brittany had done it, Santana, Sam, Dani, even Puck seemed to understand. She wanted to go and support Quinn and Charlie, but she watched as Quinn fuzzed over Charlie’s tie again and Charlie swatted at her sister’s hands as they left Charlie’s room. Well at least they gave her time to plan their ‘surprise’ party on track.

Quinn tried to pat Charlie’s hair down, because it was wild and untamed and Charlie smacked Quinn’s hand away, “Why do you even care Quinn. This isn’t Russell, its Frannie.”

Quinn tried to comb out her sister’s blonde locks with her fingers wishing that Charlie had at least run a comb through it or pulled it into a pony-tail she needed another haircut. “Frannie was perfect to our parents. They didn’t see her as doing anything wrong,” Quinn pointed out. “Frannie was prom queen, she was popular, she had a boyfriend that mom and dad approved of, she was the head cheerleader, and she’s an excellent cook and housewife—”

“Frannie wasn’t perfect and you know that,” Charlie pointed out smacking Quinn’s hand away again and running a hand through her hair trying to tame it to keep Quinn calm. “Frannie’s well Frannie and at least we don’t have to deal with what’s his name you know her husband? I’d have to actually remember his name and that’s too much of a hassle.”

“It’s—”

“Don’t care,” Charlie said interrupting her. “Do you really want to be prom queen?” she asks after a moment.

“No, I don’t. Not it if Rachel isn’t beside me,” Quinn answered honestly, she paused for a moment, “I’m thinking that you were right—about everything. At the end of the school year—I think I’m going to move back in with Santana, I talked to her mom last night and she said that was okay with them. I want to be out with Rachel, and I’m tired of not being able to hold her hand or having Finn sing her love song after love song in glee. I just want people to know she’s mine.”

Charlie hummed in response as she found a place to park, “Why the sudden change of heart?”

“She wants to send me to an all-girls’ school. She was talking about it with Pastor Hawthorne, and I overheard her.” Quinn admits.

“I thought she suspected that you were a lesbian—how would sending you to an all-girls school help?” Charlie asked dryly, before snorting.
Quinn bit her lip, “I don’t know I just think that he wants me out of the way, you’re probably right about the money. They were getting close to finalizing it before our father decided to throw a wrench in that plan this week, and they’re back to fighting over the details.”

Charlie was quiet, “I may have written to him about our meeting the Pastor, that’s probably why he’s throwing a fit. The idea of Judy spending his money on some young man, must piss him off. You can trust Russell Fabray to be a bit of a hypocritical ass.” At least it was confirmation that he was getting her letters and reading them.

Quinn flicked her eyes to her sister, “You told him?” Charlie didn’t respond, and Quinn frowned for a moment because Charlie wouldn’t meet her in the eye. “What did you do?”

“Nothing—I haven’t done anything Quinn, I’m just keeping him informed,” Charlie said but Quinn wasn’t having it.

“Charlie.”

“Quinn, I haven’t done anything. I write to him, I tell him things, I tell my dad things. I haven’t done anything, and you can write to him if you want, maybe he’s finally gotten over the fact that you let Puck get you pregnant,” Charlie says firmly.

Quinn frowned, “He beat you—”

“She made you get a nose job at fourteen,” Charlie responded as they left the car.

“He put you in the hospital Charlie, and you can’t forgive her. She didn’t even touch you.”

“He’s in prison, he’s going to die in prison. Or he’s going to get out when he’s eighty-nine. The average life expectancy for men these days isn’t even that long.” Maybe if Judy was serving an eight year sentence I’d be more inclined to forgive her, but that clearly wasn’t the case. “Judy wants to force me to get an elective surgery that I don’t want, sort of like how she did with you.” It was the same argument that they’d been having since Christmas.

“Charlie he hurt you, he hurt you badly,” Quinn said quietly as they entered the restaurant, they had arrived before Judy and Frannie. “He’s not our dad anymore, he hasn’t been our dad in years. You know this better than anyone, you can’t make him into something he’s not.”

“I know, I haven’t forgiven him. I’m never going to forgive Russell I still have nightmares sometimes, and I still have to take the long way to Santana’s house because I can’t pass down our street, without feeling all panicked. I know what he did to me, I have the scars, I’m aware that I’m broken,” Charlie said as they took a seat beside each other.

Quinn sighed, “You aren’t broken—” Charlie flicked her eyes to her and gave her a look of disbelief, “Even if you think you are, I don’t see why you aren’t blaming him. Why you don’t hate him. You hate Frannie and you hate Judy. I didn’t help you either, you hate Judy because she didn’t save you. I didn’t save you either.”

“No you didn’t, but you were also a child, it wasn’t your responsibility to save me, it was hers. If she wants to be miserable with this Hawthorne dude, then fine. It’s her life and if she needs a man to define her, then she needs a man to define her. Good for her. Let me live my life, she should let you live your life. We’re turning seventeen on Tuesday. We’re practically legal adults.”

“This doesn’t explain why you’re willing to make amends with our father and not our mom—” Quinn began because she still didn’t understand.
“This coming from the person who wants to move out?” Charlie said dryly and Quinn’s mouth slammed shut because Charlie had made a very good point.

“It’s different,” Quinn protested quickly. “She’ll never accept Rachel or me.”

“No she probably won’t,” Charlie said quietly, “But Russell never accepted me and Judy doesn’t really accept me and look where we are. I’m doing—fine. For once I can say that and mean it. I’m getting better I’m figuring out who I am instead of going through life trying to be a good person by thinking what would Russell do—and then doing the exact opposite.”

Quinn sighs, maybe she could move into Santana’s house a bit earlier because it isn’t getting better, and maybe she needed to do what Charlie was doing with Russell. Which was saying what needed to be said before making any more steps. “It’s my home.”

“A home is somewhere you feel safe and secure,” Charlie began about to go into the same spiel she always did about the difference between a house and a home, but she shut her mouth when Judy and Frannie walked in and she felt Quinn tense beside her because Frannie had that look on her face. Truthfully her body still hurt from football and she didn’t really feel like getting into it with Frannie.

Frannie Fabray-Harkins looked at her twin sisters and her face twisted into a frown, they used to be terrified of her, which was something that she enjoyed. She had liked it when they were scared of her but they weren’t children anymore and she wasn’t bigger than they were. Now they were mouthy teenagers, at least they had both disappointed Russell so badly. “Charlie. Lucy.”

Quinn smiled at her, “Frannie, I told you I like to be call Quinn now,” she said calmly as she smiled at her mother. She elbowed Charlie.

“Mother. Frannie,” Charlie said and picked up her menu again, she was in the mood for some ribs and it was messy enough that it would bother Judy’s delicate sensibilities.

“I see you’re still trying to be a boy,” Frannie sneered at Charlie, who didn’t really look up at her or acknowledge her further.

“Where’s husband number one?” Charlie asked and Quinn poked her in the side causing her to jump back a bit.

Quinn sighed because she already knew that it was going to be a long lunch, “What she means to say is, Jason won’t be joining us today?” she asks keeping her voice perfectly neutral.

Frannie took a seat across from Charlie while Judy took one across from Quinn, “No dear, he’s on a business trip, and Frannie thought that she’d come visit us for the weekend isn’t that wonderful? My three girls, back together again. It’s like we’re a family again.”

“Except we’re not a family without my father,” Frannie said and all eyes went to her. “You all sold him out—”

Judy frowned at Frannie, “Enough Frannie. He cheated on me, anything he got he deserved.”

“Right because that’s why he deserves to be in prison,” Charlie retorted in a dry tone before picking the menu up.

Quinn sighed and looked at Charlie who was busy studying the menu like she would be tested on it later, “Charlie’s got another state title under her belt,” Quinn said and Charlie flicked her eyes at her, “The titans, won and she was a fantastic running back. She scored the last touchdown.”
Judy’s face soured, “Well now you can put that nonsense behind you, and focus on other things like Quinn here.” Judy says looking at Charlie who shrugs. “How was regionals Quinnie?”

“Didn’t you hear mom? It was all over the news. They didn’t even place at regionals, it was a disaster,” Frannie crowed.

Charlie placed the menu down and was about to say something when Quinn stepped in, “I quit the team right before regionals. She wanted to shoot Brittany out of a cannon, it was a dangerous stunt, and in all of its practice runs the mannequin exploded. Brittany is my friend and she needed my support. I didn’t want her to die in front of me,” Quinn said.

Judy stared at Quinn because that was a little unbelievable that Sue would shoot a student out of a cannon, but when she had met the woman she did seem a bit off, “Well what are we going to do about your prom queen campaign? At least you still have Sam, and he’s popular.”

“And I dumped Sam,” Quinn added wincing at the look of horror and disappointment that flicked across Judy’s face.

Frannie laughed, because there seemed to be more to the story than Quinn was telling her. “It was probably the other way around, football players only date cheerleaders. Face it mom, she’s not going to be the prom queen.”

“Why, he was the quarterback——” Judy had thought he was a much better version of Finn, someone to use for the title until someone better came along.

“Finn was the quarterback in the last game and we’re not going through that again,” Charlie corrected coming to Quinn’s aid.

Judy made a face, because she absolutely agreed with Charlie. “Well if you’re no longer the most popular girl in school then maybe you can befriend her, use her for her popularity.”

Quinn turned to Charlie who looked back at her, “Can I use you for your popularity,” Quinn asks.

“I suppose so,” Charlie drawls and Judy’s eyes widen because she had expected anyone other than Charlie to be named.

Frannie scoffed, “There’s no way the school tranny is the most popular kid in school.”

“Charlie is on two championship teams, the football team and the girls’ soccer team. Championship teams rule McKinley,” Quinn explained and she saw Judy turn to Charlie studying her middle child. Even Frannie was looking at Charlie.

“Well then perhaps we can still have a Fabray win prom queen after all,” she said with a smile as she looked at Charlie, it could still be a Fabray win. She hadn’t expected this twist, but with a bit of work they could add another tiara to the display case.

“All because she’s supposedly the most popular person in school doesn’t mean that people will vote for her,” Frannie protested trying to stop the idea that was forming in Judy’s mind. “She’s the school tranny, she’s a freak mom, and what’s worse is that people know. They know that she’s a freak.”

“The school loves Charlie, she has a fan club——” Quinn said ignoring the fact that Charlie was poking her in the side, and the fact that her twin had a murderous look on her face.

“Let me guess the ugliest girls in school who can’t find a proper date?” Frannie said.
“If Dani just got rid of the blue hair she would have been quite the looker,” Judy mused still studying Charlie.

“You found someone willing to date you? With that thing between your legs?” Frannie asked making a disgusted face.

“That thing between my legs, is—” Charlie began at Frannie.

“Charlie!” Quinn hissed because she had heard enough commentary from Santana and Brittany to hear what she was about to say. Charlie’s mouth snapped shut in response. “There’s always next year,” Quinn said, and this finally caught Judy’s attention.

“Of course not, I never thought I’d have two daughters who could run for Prom Queen, all you need to do is find the right boy. What about that Puck fellow?”

“He’s in a relationship,” Quinn said immediately. “Sam likes another girl, Finn is well—Finn and that can’t happen again. Mike has a girlfriend. All the decent looking guys are taken, or they aren’t popular enough,” Quinn stated ordering her food when the waiter came to the table. Charlie made a face, she had promised Quinn she’d have her back but she didn’t want to be Prom Queen she didn’t even have plans to go to the prom.

Frannie found this to be amusing, “So what you’re saying is that you’re going stag to the prom? I thought you were supposed to one of the popular girls,” she said looking at Quinn who burned. “I guess I was right about how no one would want you now that you’ve got some—”

“Frannie, don’t pick on your sister,” Judy said absentmindedly cutting Frannie off she didn’t even notice that Charlie had laid a hand on Quinn’s leg and was forcibly holding Quinn down to stop her from lunging across the table at Frannie. “Charlie why don’t you ask that Dani girl to the prom.”

“Because we broke up when school started up again this year?” Charlie responded tapping her fingers along the table. “I don’t know why you’re looking at me like that, I don’t care about popularity contests the way you do and this is just the ultimate popularity contest. I don’t want to be prom queen. I don’t want to date someone just so I can be prom queen. And even though I’m loathed to admit it Frannie is right. I probably won’t be named prom queen. Quinn will still probably be nominated, Santana will be nominated, Brittany might be nominated, I don’t think she cares though enough to campaign and I know for a fact that Lauren wants to run.”

“Zizes?” Quinn asked looking at her. Zizes was the only female on the wrestling team and she had won states last year, yet for some reason she never got the respect of having a letterman jacket or the respect of being on a state team. “Wait how do you know this?”

“JBI,” Charlie said simply, “Rachel keeps me informed and she only reads it to make sure JBI isn’t posting lies about her, or telling people that she’s dating him,” Charlie pointed out. “She was going to tell you this morning.”

Quinn was stunned, “I’m going to be nominated?” she hadn’t expected this, and it wasn’t like she was trying very hard she mostly forgot about it at school it was just a stupid title. Just like being head cheerleader, she had plenty of real friends now, not just the people who wanted to be her friend because she was popular. “Who’s in front to be named prom king?”

“Finn,” Charlie said and Quinn and Judy’s face twisted into a look of irritation, “He was the quarterback, Puck’s in second, no word on the third nominee. But Santana’s single, you’re single, Zizes is technically single. Really you don’t have to have a boyfriend,” Charlie said tapping her
fingers along the table and she flicked her eyes at Judy watching the gears turn in her head.

Frannie looked at Judy as well, “You’ve got to be kidding? You’re not actually suggesting that she go alone are you?”

Quinn turned to look at her sister, there was no way that JBI didn’t have a third person named for prom king. “It’s the 2011 Frannie we don’t live in a time where a man needs to define us,” she said looking over at her mother and Charlie snorted at this as it went over Judy’s head entirely.

“When are nominations announced,” Judy asked.

Charlie shrugged suddenly more interested in the food in front of her, “These are prospective nominations though, Finn will probably be nominated, Puck will probably be nominated. Despite the fact that you aren’t a Cheerio anymore, you and Santana will probably be nominated. Nominations begin on Valentine’s day they don’t get announced till a week before prom,” Charlie specified.

Judy looked at Quinn, and gently placed her hand over hers, “We’ve still got time and if you managed to take Santana down to become head cheerleader. She’ll be just as easy to take down this time. Especially since she isn’t dating anyone.”

“I’m not going to backstab her for a second time mom, she’s my friend,” Quinn said, “It was a mistake to do it at the beginning of the year.” And that wasn’t just because Santana had kicked her ass, Santana had been there for her, and she was her friend.

Judy frowned, “It’s for the title of prom queen sweetie, Santana will—”

“Not be happy,” Charlie finishes for Judy and gives Quinn a pointed look as she cut into her food.

“Understatement,” Quinn said looking at Charlie who grinned at her, she wasn’t going to hurt anyone if the school voted for her for prom queen then they would do that, if they didn’t her life would still go on.

The twins had never really had a proper birthday party neither had she but she knew what she had wanted, and it was a small party with really their closest friends. She didn’t want any of the news getting back to Charlie, Quinn already knew which upset her but Rachel had prepared an extra special surprise for Quinn. She had planned it perfectly, Charlie had soccer practice so she had told the soccer player that Puck was giving her a ride home. Quinn had made some excuse to stay at school and they would be coming home together.

“She didn’t even complain when I had my usual bacon wrap this morning,” Charlie said as she opened the front door, holding it open for Quinn. “She even offered to pay for it. Are you sure she doesn’t know what today is?”

Quinn shrugged as they entered the dark kitchen, “How would she know it’s not like I told her. She probably—”

“SURPRISE!” It was a loud yell that made both twins jump back in surprise, as the lights flicked on revealed their closest friends, Sam, Rachel, Santana, Brittany, Puck and Mike.

Rachel was vibrating in excitement as she looked between both twins who were looking at her, “Happy seventeenth,” she said walking over to Quinn and kissing her, “I know you weren’t surprised but I hope my gift more than makes up for that.”
Charlie looked at her twin and then the decorations, it wasn’t overly decorated just a simple banner with the words Happy Birthday on it and a few balloons and there were two decent sized cakes. She turned to Quinn, “She raided my wallet didn’t she?”

“Yes, I’ve known for a while,” Quinn admitted as she wrapped an arm around Rachel, “I didn’t think you’d mind. It’s never been just about us has it?”

Charlie shook her head, and looked at her friends, watching as Santana and Brittany approached her with their gift, “No it hasn’t.”
Chapter 39

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

It was a week before Valentine’s Day when Santana Lopez found the first rose taped to the inside of her locker with a small bag of chocolates just sitting on top of her books with a small sticky note attached to it. She blinked and closed the locker making sure it was hers, because no one gave her roses or did anything like this before at least not before Valentine’s Day. Especially not since she had quit being a Cheerio, Sue had put dirt in her locker though. She looked around nobody was paying attention to her and she pulled out the note. They were song lyrics and she couldn’t help but smile.

You was always the cheerleader of my dreams

To seem to only date the head of football teams

And I was the class clown that, always kept you laughin’

We, were never meant to be baby we just happened

It was signed with an X and she found she couldn’t recognize the handwriting at all, well it looked familiar but not nearly as familiar as she would like. It certainly wasn’t Charlie’s messy scrawl but all that meant was that Charlie had become aware that she had the messiest handwriting in school and had asked someone else to do it. It wasn’t Brittany’s handwriting because Brittany only used crayons to write. It certainly wasn’t Quinn’s or the Hobbits, and it was much too neat to be Pucks handwriting. She smiled though it was a sweet gesture.

“Someone gave you a rose?” Brittany asked as she made her way up to Santana’s locker. “And they gave you chocolate, can I have one San please?” she asked they were her favorites and Santana handed her one.

“Is it Charlie?” Santana asked Brittany handing her the note, “I thought she wasn’t interested anymore it’s been weeks since she broke up with the blue haired wonder over there, and all she gave me was her stupid letterman jacket,” she hadn’t needed it. After Karofsky had slushied her, and she had cursed him out in the hallway publically, making him nearly wet himself no one had tried to do it again.

Brittany shook her head, “Nope, it’s too neat to be Charlie’s handwriting,” she pointed out and handed the note back.

“I know but she’s smarter than that,” Santana said and thought back, she’d had her first two periods with Charlie who hadn’t left class at all, she hadn’t moved from her seat and she had walked with her to their next period. Charlie hadn’t had time to plant the present.

“Not really Santana, Charlie is kind of really dumb with this kind of thing remember? She needed Missy and Marissa to help her with Dani she couldn’t do all this by herself. But if she did you could probably get it out of Rachel,” Brittany said.

A wicked grin formed on Santana’s face, it was time to go Hobbit hunting. She only hoped that she wasn’t near Quinn because there was no way that Quinn would let her torture the hobbit for information. Not that she had to Rachel was scared of her. “You’re right you think she’d be at her lockers—”
“Santana I was looking for you,” Rachel said smiling at the Latina who jumped back. “I found a duet for you and Puck to sing for glee club next week. As you know its Valentine’s Day and—who gave you the rose?” Rachel asked curiously staring at the taped rose in Santana’s open locker.

“Like you don’t know Hobbit, I know it was Charlie so just admit it,” Santana sneered.

“If Charlie did do this, I know nothing about it. When we went shopping for Valentine’s Day presents, she got a pack of those valentine cards with various super heroes on it, when I asked her if that was it she said it was. This is Charlie we’re talking about, she didn’t even know she had a date when Dani asked her out, and I didn’t see her with any roses or any chocolates or anything nor did we stop anywhere on our way to school.” Rachel said scratching her head.

Santana’s face fell because she had been sure it was Charlie but Rachel was incapable of telling a lie, “Fine whatever what’s this duet you want me to work on with Puck,” she said and took the music from Rachel and read it over, and frowned a bit at it. She didn’t want to sing this song with Puck of all people. “Are you—”

“After your performance at sectionals, I thought that we should indeed mix it up a bit and I thought of you and Puck. If you’re not interested I could always see what Mercedes or Dani is interested.”

“Hold up Yentl, I’ll do it,” Santana said looking at the song lyrics.

“Perfect, I’ll let Puck know you agreed to it,” Rachel said with a smile as she walked away.

“So it wasn’t Charlie?” Santana asked as she looked at the rose, well maybe it would spur the soccer player into action but the idea that she had someone out there who would do more than just ask her to Breadstix and expect her to put out did make the situation—interesting.

“What do you want to do about it?” Brittany asked as Quinn walked up to them joining them. “Santana got a rose but it’s not from Charlie.”

Quinn flicked her eyes to the red rose and then to the opened bag of chocolates and raised a brow, “Was there a note?” she asked and Santana handed it to her. “Song lyrics? No way is this Charlie, she doesn’t do songs for feelings remember something about how her life is already a musical.” Quinn stated firmly. “Besides—Charlie wouldn’t know romance if it hit her in the face.”

“That’s what I said,” Brittany said with a smile.

“Well then who is it? I don’t have some creepy stalker like JBI do I?” she asked no one in particular as she watched Charlie walk past her talking to Missy and Dani, the soccer player didn’t even look at her as she walked by.

It happened in Shelby’s English Lit class on Friday, Santana was sitting in between Charlie and Brittany. Charlie had her head down and was doodling on the side of the page. Her twin was sitting in front of her next to Rachel it was the only class they shared together. It happened during the last five minutes of class when, both Puck and Sam walked in with a guitar in their hands.

“Excuse me, what are you two doing in here?” Shelby asked the two of them.

“We both got paid fifty dollars to serenade someone in your class,” Puck answered ignoring the fact that all eyes were on them.
Charlie let out a loud groan, and sunk into her chair, “God damn musicals cults,” she bitched mostly to herself.

Shelby looked at the time, “Fine, I was done teaching anyway,” she said taking a seat watching as Sam and Puck walked straight up to Santana who turned to Charlie, who looked annoyed by the whole thing. If she had suspected Charlie before, it certainly wasn’t her. Charlie hated glee club there was no way that she’d hire Puck and Sam to serenade her in class.

“When I wake up, well, I know I'm gonna be
I'm gonna be the man who wakes up next to you
When I go out, yeah, I know I'm gonna be
I'm gonna be the man who goes along with you
If I get drunk, well, I know I'm gonna be
I'm gonna be the man who gets drunk next to you
And if I haver, hey, I know I'm gonna be
I'm gonna be the man who's havering to you
But I would walk five hundred miles
And I would walk five hundred more
Just to be the man who walked a thousand miles
To fall down at your door’’

Sam and Puck sang while Charlie grumbled and bitched the whole time looking at Santana in annoyed fashion until they were done. “What the hell does haver even mean?” She asked.

Shelby spoke up, “The Scottish term basically means babbling,” she said informatively.

“They gave me a note to give to you,” Sam said and pulled the rolled up piece of paper out of his pocket and handed it to her.

“Santana you have to read it out loud,” Rachel said loudly looking at Santana.

“Calm down Yentl,” Santana said having no intention of reading it out loud.

“Yeah Santana you’ve got to read it out loud,” Brittany said clapping her hands.

“I especially am slow
But I realize that I need you
And I wondered if I could come home”

Santana read out loud and there was an aww that went around the classroom, while most of the boys rolled their eyes. Charlie however looked furious and Santana glanced at her a small smirk playing on her lips. Because it was more proof that she was liked by someone other than Charlie, someone who was willing to go great lengths to impress her.
“What the hell is that?” Charlie asked frowning at Santana.

“I’ve got a secret admirer,” Santana said with an amused grin at Charlie. She’d been getting romantic things all week, each time with a note that had lyrics printed on it. Charlie had never been around when the notes were delivered and this was the first time that Charlie had actually seen her receive anything.

“Who?” Charlie demanded to know.

“It’s a secret admirer Fabgay, emphasis on the secret. What’s the matter jealous?” she taunted Charlie.

Charlie searched her eyes for a moment before crossing her arms over her chest, “No, why would I be jealous of some babbling fool,” she said but her tone was sullen. The bell rang and Charlie got up, and pointed at Puck and Sam, “Who gave you the money?” she asked loudly.

Puck shrugged, “Found it slipped in my locker with some typed instructions,” he said. “Same with Sam.”

Charlie looked at Santana who gave her a smirk and made a face before storming out of the English Lit class.

“Told you it wasn’t my twin,” Quinn said after a moment.

“She has been working on her storm outs though,” Rachel added in an impressed tone.

Sam Evans hadn’t expected Charlie to hand him and Puck fifty dollars each, to go serenade Santana. They would have done it for free, but Charlie had insisted that they really should think about cashing in on the Valentine’s season and make a bit of extra cash. She was just their first customer, and by the end of the day she was right. At least ten different guys came up to them and had asked them to serenade their girlfriends.

Puck had charged twenty bucks a song, and just like that Sam had made a hundred and fifty dollars. He was grateful because as Charlie and Puck had griped, going on dates and wooing a woman was expensive business and with his dad out of a job, he wasn’t getting his weekly allowance anymore, and the Evans family as a whole was tightening their belts. He had heard his parents arguing about the fact that they soon wouldn’t have a home if neither one of them could find a job. He couldn’t afford to have a girlfriend now, and he really liked Mercedes, his family came first. He was already having to spend more time babysitting Stevie and Stacey afterschool as his parents pounded the pavement.

“Have you chosen a Justin Bieber song yet?” Rachel asked him, “I have listened to all his songs extensively, and I do think that if you performed his hit song Baby she would respond favorably to it,” Rachel said, “I’m sure that with a bit of practice this Friday we can have it ready for Monday.”

Sam smiled at Rachel, she had been extremely enthusiastic about the whole thing, Charlie was busy focusing on getting her love life in order and Puck had been rejected by Lauren, apparently singing Fat Bottomed Girls to Lauren had been a disastrous idea, and he had offended Lauren. “I can’t come this weekend I need to babysit the twins—my brother and sister,” he said clarifying.

Rachel’s face fell because she had really wanted to give him vocal lessons. “Well maybe you can ask Puck if they can come. I don’t think Charlie or Mike will mind, they love kids. Though I think Puck is a bit heart broken, even though it’s his own fault. I don’t know why he thought that it was a good song choice for Lauren.”
Sam smiles, “I’ll ask him, if it’s cool,” he says and Rachel smiles. He regrets making such a big deal about asking Mercedes out, he can’t afford it and he’s been applying for jobs, but no one is hiring a fifteen year old kid. Puck isn’t hard to find, especially in the empty hallways, and just as Sam is about to greet him, he watches as Puck pulls out a wad of cash from inside one of his textbooks and pulls the money he received today and places it on the wad.

Only drug dealers carry around that kind of money and Puck had sworn he had left the life behind. He had promised his friends, and he had said that he needed to be there for his daughter. It pisses Sam off because everyone had gone to bat for him, Charlie was forced to see her mother every Sunday, Rachel had convinced the Griffins to give him another chance, everyone had helped Puck and he was throwing it all way. So he shoves him as he puts the book back into his locker. “Dude, I thought you quit dealing—everyone went to bat for you!” Sam says beginning his angry tirade. Puck was going to fuck it all up and he wouldn’t get to see his daughter anymore.

Puck winces at the shove, “I’m not dealing,” he says firmly as his shoulder hits the locker. He had quit after he had been arrested.

“Right then how’d you get all that cash?” Sam says, even though he knows that Puck does a lot of things but he doesn’t really lie. He isn’t a liar. “There is no way you’re getting paid that much doing something legal,” he snaps at him.

“The business is none of your business,” Puck snaps back shoving Sam off him. The last thing he needs is Charlie hearing about it, she thought he was done with Sandy Ryerson but fight club was easy money, and he made more money betting on the fights than actually fighting in them.

“It is my business because you’re supposed to be staying out of trouble Puck. We need you for regionals, Beth needs her dad, and you’re like my best guy friend. What the fuck man? How’d you get that cash?”

“I’m not going to get caught,” Puck replies his tone is annoyed, “And I’m not dealing drugs so just drop it Evans.”

“Then fucking tell me, or I’ll have to give Quinn the heads up, she should know that her baby daddy is doing something illegal again. This affects her to, everything you do affects her. Because it affects your daughter,” Sam barely has time to take a step back as Puck takes a menacing step towards him.

“You’re going to Narc on me? I thought we were bro’s,” Puck snaps angrily.

“Bro’s don’t let bro’s do something stupid, so how the fuck are you making that much cash,” Sam says as he surges forward, he’s now standing toe to toe with Puck. “If I have to get the twins involved I will.”

Puck searches Sam’s face for a bluff, any bluff but he doesn’t see it, and he punches the locker loudly, and he looks around making sure no one is around before he lowers his voice, “It’s from fucking fight club.” He had started going back the moment his community service, probation and football season was done. He isn’t even supposed to talk about it but he doesn’t need Quinn yelling at him about responsibility.

Sam blinks because he expects Puck to tell him about other illegal activities, he doesn’t expect a fight club. “And you think that you won’t get caught are you fucking stupid dude?”

“It’s four hundred dollars if you win a fight, and I double that by the end of the night by betting on fights, and I’m not going to get caught, unless you decide to rat me out,” Puck says.
“Isn’t that what you said about your dealing? That you wouldn’t get caught and then you did? What’s so fucking different this time?” Sam asks demanding answers because he can’t believe that Puck is that stupid. When Puck doesn’t answer him Sam tries to bring another person into the mix, “I’ll fucking tell Charlie—” Puck snorts at this. “She’ll be pissed at you, she’s dealing with her mother on a week to week basis because she bailed you out.”

Puck turns to him, “Who do you think helped me set it up?” Puck snaps back, his voice is a loud whisper but he’s angry now. He doesn’t add that Charlie had also washed her hands of it, and had advised Puck to do the same and moved on with her life. He doesn’t add that Charlie thought that he was finished working for Sandy Ryerson. This wasn’t something that they talked about, she would be furious if she knew he was going back to fight club, if he had managed to get himself back on the roster. He just wants to shut Sam up.

This stuns Sam because Charlie also seemed to have cash on hand as well, money had never seemed to be an issue for her. She drove a fancy car and always seemed to have cash on hand. He thought it was because she had a part time job.

“Are we done here?” Puck asks angrily.

“No.” Sam says and Puck lets out a low growl, “Take me to fight club next time you go,” he says after a moment and Puck’s mouth drops. He had seen the cash and unlike Puck, Charlie isn’t an idiot. If she had okayed this then it must have been safe. Puck looks ready to protest, “My dad lost his job, I need the money, we’re about to lose the house and this could help.” It would solve most of his money problems and it’d help his family out.

Puck stares at Sam for a moment, debating internally. “The first rule of fight club is you don’t talk about it. Ever.” Sam nods at this and Noah Puckerman knows that this is a gigantic mistake, but he needs the cash and taking Sam with him means he can still continue what he’s doing and someone will have his back.

“Is it you?”

Charlie turns her head to look at Dani, it had just been a grueling soccer practice, well for her anyway. Coach Roz was still punishing her for not quitting the football team when she had ordered her to ages ago, and she was sure that she was being punished for getting caught eating some chocolate. “Is what me?” she asks a bit confused.

“The Santana thing is it you?” Dani asks, “I know you had a crush on either Brittany or Santana last year, Missy told me all about it.”

Charlie inhaled, “Missy is going to be running suicides until she graduates,” Charlie said with a grunt, because her former co-captain has a big mouth. She looks at Dani, “No—it isn’t me,” she says after a moment, “Do I look like the type of person who would support more impromptu musical performances by the glee club?”

Dani thinks for a moment, but what Charlie is saying is actually legit, she isn’t the type of person to ask for more singing and dancing at the school. “Okay—” There’s an awkward silence between the both of them, their relationship was damaged, and it’s begun to show on the field. “The hickey’s last year was it—?”

Charlie shifts bouncing up and down, “Brittany likes making out with people, boys and girls,”
Charlie answers because this common knowledge as Brittany is currently checking off more and more people off her list even though she’s with Artie. She’s not sure if he knows or if he cares, it’s Brittany. This seems to be the right thing to say because there is a look of relief on Dani’s face.

“So why did we break up really?” Dani asks for a moment because she’s thought about it and Charlie doesn’t like talking about herself with anyone.

It’s been a month, “I wasn’t in love with you,” Charlie admits after a second, her voice is gentle. “And I didn’t want you to fall in love with me, because I don’t think I’d ever be able to return those feelings. Not the way you wanted me to—so we needed to break up.” She doesn’t add that she’s in love with someone else because she doesn’t want to rub salt in the wound.

“You were opening up to me—” Dani begins.

“No I wasn’t, not really. I was telling you things that I needed to tell you because they became a problem. I should have been more honest with you, and it’s easier to hide things that you should know. You don’t know any better. I’m really good at hiding things, I’m really good at not being completely honest with people and pretending to be something I’m not…and maybe if we had met when everything was going down and you knew things or were there to know things. But you weren’t and even though I’m getting better I’m not there yet. I may not ever be. So I’m sorry for not realizing this sooner and letting you know. I am, I’m sorry if I hurt you,” Charlie says rubbing her scarred hands. “I really would like to be friends though, because I really do like playing soccer with you,” she admits, even though she knows that she can’t be friends with Dani for a good long time.

Dani frowns because she does actually miss Charlie’s blundering around, she misses the little things that Charlie would think of all on her own and grin at her proudly like she had just solved all the world’s problems. But the end of the year is rapidly approaching and even if she did start something with Charlie again it would come to an end and she’d move on to bigger and better things. “I got the scholarship to UCLA,” she admits and Charlie grins at her. “Thank you—for that game. I don’t think I told you how much it meant to me,” she adds. “When you’re in my position next year, I’ll put in a good word for you,” she promises, “And maybe we can play again.”

“I’m glad you got it, but I think this—playing with you was a one-time deal with me. I don’t think I’m UCLA material,” Charlie admits, she likes being the one and only star on the team and having to share the spotlight irks her to no end.

Dani nods, “Well, we’re going to win a state championship out of this run.”

Charlie grins, “Hell, yeah we are.”

Charlie handed Santana a small envelope on Monday morning it was Valentine’s Day, “I thought of it myself,” she said, “Well Puck helped,” she added with a grin on her face.

Santana raised a brow, and opened the card and snorted because it was a simple little Valentine’s card one of the ones that kids hand out in grade school with a picture of the hulk on it and a little poem on the back with Charlie’s name written underneath the poem. “Roses are red. The Hulk is green. I’d totally smash you if you know what I mean.” Santana stared at Charlie who smiled and wiggled her eyebrows.

“It’s also imperative that you know I’m wearing the boxers that you gave me,” Charlie said with a small smile, pulling her jeans down a bit so Santana could see the green of her boxers.
“You listened to Puck for advice?” Santana asked incredulously. “He sang Fat Bottomed girls for Zizes,” she said as if listening to Puck for advice was the worst thing in the world. Sometimes it really was.


She had expected Charlie to put a bit more thought into it and maybe she had been wrong and had pushed Charlie to far, “I’m meeting my secret admirer at lunch,” she stated. Clearly she wasn’t the school slut to them, and this had hurt.

Charlie’s face fell, “I thought you’d find it funny,” she admitted, it had been clever and she had laughed for a good long moment.

“I thought you liked me,” Santana replied coldly handing the card back and walking away.

Charlie Fabray looked at the card and laughed because she had thought it was hilarious, before flicking her eyes to Santana’s retreating form. She really needed to stop spending time around Puck. She pocketed the card before walking away to give the rest of her cards out, she still had to give one to Brittany.

Rachel took the little card Charlie had written her name on, and rolled her eyes, “How angry was she? I told you it was a bad idea to listen to Puck.”

Quinn who was holding Rachel’s hand, “You listened to Puck?”

“Oh come on it was funny,” Charlie protested laughing mostly to herself because she had found it hilarious as she fixed her red skinny tie. “Anyway like I promised, you two get the house tonight,” Charlie said with a smile, “Thanks for the assist.”

“You could have entrusted me with your whole plan, you know.” Rachel said with a huff, she had thought that Charlie actually had some competition. “I’m a fantastic actress.”

Charlie grinned at Rachel, “You’d have cracked the moment Santana gave you a look. It had to be all hush-hush. Need to know, you didn’t need to know then and I told you after she grilled you.” Charlie said.

Quinn rolled her eyes, “She’s been talking about her secret admirer non-stop for the entire week,” she looks at her sister and sighs before fixing her collar for her. “Don’t mess this up,” she warns her.

Rachel look scandalized and gave Charlie a smile, “You’ll be fine, she’ll say yes. What girl wouldn’t say yes?”

“Santana?” both twins said at the same time looking at Rachel.

“Well she looked really happy, and I think she loved the fact that most girls in the school are currently jealous of her.” Rachel said with a sniff looking at Quinn who turned to glare at her sister.

“See what you did? All the guys in school hate you by the way, saying you’re setting a ridiculously high and expensive bar,” Quinn said with a shake of her head.

“You’re taking your girlfriend to Broadway, I’m just trying to match that, level of romance,”
Charlie said as Rachel grinned at Quinn. “What if she says no?” she asks after a minute, and she’s nervous.

Quinn rolls her eyes but secretly she hopes that Santana does, “Santana isn’t going to say no, right Rachel?”

“Right,” Rachel agrees, and she watches as Charlie turns to look in the mirror again fixing her hair and straightening her tie a bit before taking a breath and leaving the bathroom. Rachel waits until the bathroom door is closed before wrapping her arms around Quinn’s waist and leaning up and kissing her. “She’s giving us the house to ourselves tonight,” she murmurs to Quinn. “I can finally give you my present,” she says.

Quinn bites her lip, because she’s been looking forward to it all week. They hadn’t had time to themselves lately, with Charlie always coming directly home from soccer practice. “Does it have to be a surprise?” she asks with a small whine in her voice.

Rachel nods, after a moment, “It does,” she admits kissing Quinn’s pout away. She had been planning this night for weeks, she knew Charlie would have given them the house anyway, just like Charlie knew that she only had to ask them for help and they would have done it.

Santana was early slipping into the empty auditorium, it was only a few minutes early but still she wanted to know who this person had been, she’d received a bouquet of roses in the class before lunch much to the teacher’s annoyance and it had made every girl green with envy, that she was getting all the attention. Whoever it was, was clearly someone who had excellent taste. She sat at the piano that was out on the middle of the stage and waited. When she heard footsteps coming from behind her she turned around smiling only to frown when she saw that it was Charlie. “Go away, I told you I was waiting for my secret admirer.”

Charlie raised a brow, “Well I thought I’d wait with you, I’m not losing out to a little punk,” she said calmly taking a seat at the piano.

Santana frowned, “You’re going to ruin it,” she hissed at Charlie who continued to sit there and the soccer player shrugged. Santana was angry because she had done everything to break Charlie and Dani up and every time Charlie had told her no. Had rejected her, time and time again. “You told me no several times when you were with Dani, you told me you wouldn’t want to be my dirty little secret. I thought you liked me.”

“I do. I wrote you a poem,” Charlie insisted. “I thought about it—“

“Someone at school has been pulling out all stops to get my attention and you come up with a stupid poem that basically says you want to fuck me. If you wanted a quick fuck—” Santana began getting more annoyed.

Charlie tapped a note on the piano for a moment, “I already told you I don’t want to be your sex toy Santana. I never wanted just a quick fuck from you. The moment I laid eyes on you I thought you were the most beautiful girl I’d ever seen.”

Santana was quiet for a moment, “Right so what was with that stupid poem? Is that really the best you could think of to get my attention? You listened to Puck—Puck of all people? What the hell Fabgay, I know Brittany said you were terrible at romance but that bad?”

“Truthfully I thought you’d like it, and laugh. Cause I was the class clown that always kept you laughing,” Charlie sang gently and Santana froze recognizing the lyrics from the first day but she
had never actually shared the notes with Charlie just Brittany and Quinn.

She was stunned that Charlie had even sung the line to begin with. Charlie Fabray didn’t sing, she just stared at people or shook her head or outright lied about her singing capabilities. Santana was stunned to even hear that she could sing. She thought Charlie’s singing abilities were a myth like Bigfoot. “How did you—” Santana began.

“Mike and Puck planted the notes. Mike wrote them so you wouldn’t be able to guess from my hand writing, Puck just broke into your locker. I thought I was giving you hints throughout the entire thing, really. It was easy enough to convince them to serenade you in class and really everything else just fell into place. The song was performed by twins. Rachel never knew my whole plan but I entrusted her with the most important part, secretly teaching you the lyrics to the duet that we’re about to sing, because you wanted to sing a duet with me. Speaking of which,” Charlie said swallowing as she looked at Santana who sat there and she began to play the piano. She hadn’t counted on her nerves being this high and she messed up the first bar but she continued anyway. Santana seemed to recognize the song.

“I know you’re scared, I can feel it

It’s in the air, I know you feel that, too

But take a chance on me

You won’t regret it, no

One more ‘No’ and I’ll believe you

I’ll walk away and I will leave you be

And now’s the last time you’ll say ‘No’, say ‘No’ to me”

Charlie looked at Santana Lopez and prayed to a god she didn’t believe in that Santana would sing back. Because Santana was staring at her, and she was sure that she saw Quinn, Rachel, Sam, Puck, Mike and Brittany slip in. She heard the door open again and when she glanced over she saw Shelby Cochran standing beside the teens. They were in the back row, she kept playing and she was about to sing the part when it seemed that Santana snapped out of it.

“It won’t take me long to find another lover but I want you

I can’t spend another minute getting over loving you”

She sang back and Charlie Fabray at her and relaxed a bit, ignoring the audience that was watching her as she continued to play the piano singing with Santana, their voices harmonizing at the right time, Charlie finished the song slowly, on the piano her finger hitting the last note as she looked at Santana. Thankfully no one clapped just yet and she could imagine her audience was holding their collective breaths. “Santana I really like you, like a lot and I’m not very good at this whole dating thing. Actually I’m downright terrible at it but I really want you to be my girlfriend—” Charlie babbled because her nerves were completely gone and she couldn’t remember how to be smooth and sophisticated and the girl she really liked was staring at her and everyone was staring at her and if Santana said—Santana leaned in and kissed Charlie, it was gentle and different from all their other ones but the result was still the same. Charlie saw the fireworks and kissed Santana back. When the Latina pulled away Charlie sat there stunned for a moment, “So that’s a?” she needed to hear that yes.

Santana smiled and rolled her eyes, “That’s a yes.”
Finally the audience in the back row burst into applause and Charlie just stared at Santana and broke out into a giant grin. “You said yes,” she said her tone was light, and she pulled Santana back in for another kiss, “I want to get it right this time,” she mumbled against her lips. This was right, she could wait for the day that Santana was ready to announce to the world that she was her girlfriend.

Puck turned to Rachel, “She needs to join glee club,” he said quietly to the diva.

“I know right?” Rachel said, “You’ll help recruit her?”

Puck nodded as did, Sam and Mike.

Quinn didn’t know how she had managed to end up covered in flour, or how Rachel had managed to end up being covered with an equal amount of flower. Or how the blender had seemingly exploded all over the ground. Rachel had insisted that her cooking lessons with Shelby had been going well. Yet here they were in a completely messy kitchen, in which there was food everywhere. Quinn flicked her hazel eyes at Rachel who was looking at her sheepishly. “I thought you said you could cook,” she said in an accusing tone.

Rachel gave her an indignant look, “I can,” Rachel insists, “You distracted me,” she says in an accusing tone.

“How did I distract you?” Quinn argues back looking at the mess, this wasn’t her fault. She hadn’t done anything. All she could remember was kissing Rachel, she looked adorable in her little apron.

“You’re the one that knocked over the blender,” Rachel said indignantly, she certainly hadn’t been the one to do it. She had been the one to accidentally knock over the bag of flour which had hit the ground and sent an explosion of flour into the air which is what had caused them to separate.

“I didn’t do that you did,” Quinn said in an accusing tone as she took a step to get past Rachel and grab a towel, she didn’t mean to slip in the tomato paste, she pitched forward in a completely ungraceful way and managed to collide into Rachel, luckily they were close enough to a counter and Quinn was graceful enough to grab onto it pinning Rachel to it.

There was a brief moment of silence and Quinn smiled and began to laugh at the situation because it had been funny. It took Rachel a moment because she had practiced making this meal for weeks, using Charlie as a guinea pig until the soccer player had complained about the lack of culinary options that she was being forced to shovel down, but at the last moment she began to giggle, because it was sort of ridiculous. This was not how she had imagined her romantic night to go.

The laughter died down for a moment and Quinn realized the position they were in, and she flicked into Rachel’s eyes studying her for a moment before leaning in and kissing her gently, it was soft and even with the flour that coated Rachel’s face and lips the kiss still very—right. It just felt right being there with Rachel at that moment. It still baffled her and she wondered why it had taken her this long to get to this point with Rachel, to be able to kiss her whenever she wanted. It took a second, she might have caught Rachel off guard but the diva was kissing back gently at first. It was only a moment before things immediately began to heat up, and the romantic dinner that Rachel had planned was forgotten.

The kissing lasted for what seemed like an eternity before it was Rachel who pushed a bit, she was ready, and she had wanted Quinn for weeks, just kissing wasn’t enough anymore she wanted to
take that next step. She had once wanted to wait till she was twenty-five especially after the incident with Jesse. Finn hadn’t done anything to make her change her mind about it but she wanted to with Quinn, she needed to take that next step. This wasn’t her ideal location, but sometimes you just needed to go with the flow. Her hands slid under Quinn’s shirt resting on her stomach, she didn’t push not right away instead she slowly moved her hand upwards, resting on Quinn’s bra and Rachel shivered when Quinn didn’t stop her. She personally didn’t know what to do that would make her feel nice so she groped and squeezed and was rewarded with a low groan into the kiss. She freezes when Quinn pulls away from her lips and she thinks that the ex-cheerleader is about to tell her she’s not ready yet. Rachel doesn’t expect Quinn to lean in brush away her hair to whisper in her ear, words that hit her directly in her core, and she’s soaked with arousal.

“If we start, we’re going to finish.”

Rachel lets out a strangled groan because she hadn’t been expecting permission, and the situation between the two of them heats up. Trying to remember all the research that she had done, all the tips that Mike and Puck had passed onto her, and tilts her head so that she can kiss Quinn but instead decides to land on her neck and she wants to mark her girlfriend in a public way, but she can’t anymore. Not while Quinn was still living with Judy.

The heat that was radiating from Rachel’s body spurred Quinn to action, because she wanted to just as much as Rachel did. She wanted it just as much as Rachel did, even if she was nervous and had no idea what to, but she felt a strange surge of confidence Quinn managed to get Rachel’s animal print sweater to the ground letting it soak up some of the tomato paste, and quickly more clothes quickly hit the ground leaving them both in their underwear after a few moments. Quinn didn’t know what possessed her to tug Rachel’s panties down her thighs but she did and she swallowed knowing that she should have probably listened to Santana’s and Brittany’s unsolicited advice. She knew that she wanted to bring Rachel pleasure, and she looked at Rachel carefully for permission to touch that little bit, and Rachel responded with a small nod.

Quinn swallowed as she delicately explored Rachel’s slick folds, and letting her fingers play with Rachel’s wetness, she really had no idea what she was doing and she imagined that her movements felt as clumsy to Rachel as they did to her, as she slowly circled Rachel’s clit with her wet fingers. She really tried to remember all the unsolicited advice from Santana and Brittany, and wished she’d talked to them before she had embarked on this quest because she really wanted to make Rachel feel good. Spreading Rachel’s legs a bit more provided Quinn with ample opportunity to figure things out, but she did remember that Brittany had said that she enjoyed a mouth—down there. She’d never experienced that pleasure, Puck and Sam had gotten straight to the chase after a bit of fondling and some kissing.

So Quinn Fabray took a leap of faith and pulled back from Rachel leaving the diva confused for a moment before dropping to her knees and pulling Rachel forward as she tilted her head up, and slowly flicked her tongue out tasting Rachel’s wetness with her tongue. She was surprised to find that she really enjoyed the taste of it. And she took another leap of faith and leaned in burying her face between Rachel’s thighs.

Rachel Berry didn’t normally curse finding it to be rather uncouth and unnecessarily vulgar, but the sudden pressure and the feel of Quinn’s tongue, made her buck her hips against Quinn’s face and exhale the breath she hadn’t known she’d been holding. “Fuck,” it came out a low moan, as she grabbed onto the edge of the counter leaning back into it as she felt Quinn’s tongue flicking across her. Each flick of the tongue getting bolder as the seconds passed, Quinn listening to every intake of breath, using every buck of Rachel’s hips to learn what the diva liked.
This wasn’t the romantic night that she had imagined where she had needed to get dressed up, there was no Celine Dion playing in the background, she hadn’t been taken on her bed as she lay amongst rose petals with candles surrounding her. And Rachel Berry found that she hadn’t really needed those things, this was something that she was sharing with Quinn, and she loved her. She loved Quinn Fabray. She felt a sudden pause of the action and she looked down thinking that she had done something terribly wrong.

“You love me?” Quinn asked suddenly shy, because Rachel had said it out loud.

Rachel flushed red, because once again this wasn’t how her plans were supposed to progress. She wasn’t supposed to blurt it just out, but it was out and she couldn’t take it back and she could only hope that Quinn felt the same way about her. “I do,” she said trying to keep the embarrassment out of her voice.

Quinn didn’t answer right away and instead looked down at the mess that they had made at what she had just been doing. She was horrified that she had given in to her baser desires, it was so wrong, and Rachel had been a virgin and she had just— they had just in this mess. “I’m sorry I—”

Rachel felt her heart shatter, thinking that once again that she had put her faith in the wrong person, and she mentally berated herself. She had tried to get it right this time to not be crazy, to not do the calendar’s, to show up unannounced to let Quinn dictate the pace that they were going at. Sure she had pushed a bit, but she had always respected her wishes, and Quinn had made her feel like no one else ever had, “It is okay if you don’t—” she begins her voice breaking and Quinn’s looking at her.

“That’s not—I just you know and we’re having sex, and I wanted it to be special and proper. Unlike mine, like on a bed, because I love you too,” Quinn said as she realized that she hadn’t said it back, she hadn’t told Rachel how she felt back. “I love you too,” she repeats firmly, because she does and she wonders how badly she messed up. “I wanted it to be special for you.”

Rachel sees how distraught Quinn looks, and she believes her, this wasn’t how she had planned it either. She didn’t have the right set of lingerie on. Brittany had helped her choose it out this time, and they weren’t in her bed. It wasn’t how she had envisioned her first time, but she had liked it. She had liked the feel of Quinn’s tongue on her and her fingers, Rachel swallowed and she kissed Quinn who immediately responded, and her voice is low as she murmurs against her lips. There was something important that she needed to remember but for the life of her she couldn’t remember what. Her other hand was resting firmly on Quinn’s ass and she grabbed at it firmly, Quinn finally breaking the kiss to let out a low moan. Charlie reversed their positions immediately twisting around and pressing Santana against the door, she was breathing hard as she looked into Santana’s brown eyes.

Feelings made things better, the fact that Santana was hers made things better. The kiss was fierce, and she felt Santana’s hands tangling in her hair, her back was against the door, she had no idea how they’d even made it this far into Santana’s house. Or even to her room, well she hoped it was Santana’s room she didn’t want to break the kiss to check and make sure, as her hands slid under Santana’s shirt, pushing the bra up as she touched at her breast expertly. There was something important that she needed to remember but for the life of her she couldn’t remember what. Her other hand was resting firmly on Santana’s ass and she grabbed at it firmly, Santana finally breaking the kiss to let out a low moan. Charlie reversed their positions immediately twisting around and pressing Santana against the door, she was breathing hard as she looked into Santana’s brown eyes.

She felt fingers on her shirt unbuttoning it quickly and Charlie moved her hand to stop Santana
from removing her shirt completely, still trying to hide her scars from view. “All of it, all of you,”
Santana ordered and Charlie dropped her hands immediately. And just like that Santana had pulled
Charlie’s shirt off, and ran her fingers along Charlie’s stomach causing the taller girl to shiver.

“Fuck,” Charlie groaned, letting Santana control how fast they went, she knew that she was
forgetting something, it was important and the moment Santana unzipped Charlie’s jeans did
Charlie remember, “Santana—fuck we’ve got to stop.”

Santana Lopez let out a frustrated sound, because if Charlie was playing one of her games again
she’d be pissed. “Why?” she demanded.

Charlie briefly forgot why again and blinked a few times, “I haven’t taken you out on a date yet—
and I want to do it right,” she says. “I don’t want to be like everyone else,” She admits and it’s hard
to say that because she’s only wearing a sports bra and her jeans are unzipped, and she’s oh so
hard, and it’s very hard to think. Because she really wants Santana at this moment consequences be
damned, and Santana makes it very hard to think sometimes.

It’s not what Santana expects to hear from Charlie, she had expected it to be some other reason.
But no one had ever stopped before, not like this, to make sure that she didn’t feel like a quick
fuck, “That can come after,” Santana states and pulls her shirt off.

Charlie stares at Santana for a moment, feeling Santana grip the front of Charlie’s boxers and pulls
her back, and they’re kissing again, and Charlie once again forgets her objections because it’s heat
of the moment and it’s been building between them for months now, and Charlie pulls back again,
“Santana—” she says in a husky voice, she really wants to continue but she wants to make sure it’s
right this time. She takes Santana out on a proper date, and it’s not just sex between the two of
them. They have a habit and Charlie wants to break it. “Stop,” she says again, and she pulls
Santana from her neck where the Latina has been sucking on hard and Charlie knows she’ll find a
mark the next day. She shivers at the thought, because she doesn’t mind being marked by Santana.
She likes the idea of being hers.

Another frustrated groan from Santana and she looks at her girlfriend frustrated, but she finally
pulls back, opening the door and stumbling inside her room. She flicks her eyes back at Charlie
who has messy hair, and marks all over her neck, she wants the soccer player now. She does but
she’s curious because Charlie seems to be serious about the no-sex thing. “So you’re going to take
me to Breadstix—or?”

Charlie looks at herself and wants to will her body to go soft, but it’s been primed and ready to go
and she makes a mental note to start wearing compression boxers daily because Santana will be the
death of her, and she doesn’t want to go around school with a perpetual hard-on all the time, it’s
embarrassing and she’s mortified that she can’t control her body around Santana. “I’m not taking
you to out tonight,” Charlie admits. “It’s packed tonight and it’s Valentine’s Day, people are going
to assume we’re together and I thought you didn’t want to be out in front of the entire school.”

Santana takes a seat on her bed, and watches Charlie for a moment, “You made a huge show of
asking me out, how do I explain that?” she asked, because while Charlie had completely distanced
herself from the situation the acting people expected someone to show up on her arm.

“Saying it was some freshman, and you are Santana Lopez who doesn’t date freshman, and you’re
going to be like he was a sweet kid so I’m not going to name, names,” Charlie stated simply as she
finally managed to tuck herself back into her hulk boxers and zip her pants back up without hurting
herself. Thinking of Finn Hudson making out with Quinn always did that for her. It was almost as
effective as taking a cold shower. She flicks her eyes to Santana, “I’m willing to go at your pace
with the coming out thing,” she admits after a moment, because she can see the unasked question in
her eyes. She had made the right decision in stopping the action, they had to talk. They had needed
to talk for ages.

Santana frowned at this, because she had no idea what made Charlie change her mind, Dani was
still out and open and she saw the looks that Dani still shot Charlie. Dani still touched Charlie,
finding every excuse to touch the soccer player. “What made you change your mind?”

“The people who matter know,” Charlie answered truthfully. “I don’t actually care what the
entirety of the school thinks most days, my friends know, my sister knows. The people whose
opinion’s matter to me, know. I don’t care if you’re not ready for the school to know,” Charlie
answered. “I think a bit of it was that I cared—I cared about the idiots opinions of me. I wanted
them to know that I wasn’t just some school freak and that I was capable of being with the most
beautiful girl in school and that was egotistical and I’m sorry.”

Santana is quiet, grateful that Charlie doesn’t really want to push the issue, and she pauses because
she doesn’t know what to say. “You weren’t just a warm body to me—and I may or may not be
sorry for making you feel like one,” She says and Charlie shoots her that crooked grin of hers.

“Okay, I am sorry for making you feel like one, and the Finn thing and trying to make you jealous
and—” she begins she has a lot to apologize for.

“The reason I left last year was because I had feelings for you and I thought you were in love with
Brittany and it hurt. I couldn’t sleep with you anymore just being your friends with benefits random
hook up, person. I really wanted to be with just you,” Charlie said looking away. “Brittany always
said it was better with feelings.”

Santana smiles a bit at this, because it did feel good with feelings involved. “Want to see how
good?” she teases and she watches as Charlie squirms a bit.

“I want to do it properly this time, not rush into sex with you, even if I really want to,” Charlie
admits because she does. “You know take it slow.”

Santana pauses for a moment because Quinn had said something eerily similar, “We’re not going
to—be like them are we?” she asks because the last thing she wants is to be that nauseating couple.

It takes Charlie a second but she shudders as well, “No. Never,” she promises because she’s not
Quinn and she actually does like sex, “I said slow, not glacial speeds,” she says and there is a
flicker of relief on Santana’s features. Charlie doesn’t even think she can resist Santana for five
months. It’s only been a day and she just barely managed to keep it together.

Santana studies Charlie and reaches for one the deep scars on her back, she’s never seen it up close
before and she pauses for a second, “Can I?” she asks and she studies Charlie’s face because
certain things still trigger her. “You’re not allowed to hide from me Charlie,” she says quietly. She
doesn’t want Charlie to hide her body from her, or anything else for that matter.

Charlie rotates her body to look at the scar she wants to touch and nods, letting Santana touch it,
and she shivers because she doesn’t like anyone really touching them. She doesn’t like anyone
seeing them. She doesn’t like looking at them, they make her feel ugly and damaged, and people
naturally ask questions that she doesn’t want to answer. Being this naked around Santana makes her
feel exposed and vulnerable but she nods. “Okay,” she says after a moment. “It’s—hard for me
sometimes. To talk about things sometimes a lot of the times, but I think I’m getting better at it. At
least with people I trust—I told Mike some of it. Why I lived with Rachel, and I told Sam without
being prompted. So I’m getting there.” Charlie admits.

Santana hadn’t expected it to happen overnight but she is impressed that Charlie has taken steps to
fix it, and is working on it as best as she can. “And I’ll be right here, don’t justify it to yourself, and
don’t overthink it. If you think it’s something I’d be interested to know then tell me.”

Charlie is quiet for a moment and bites her lip, “I write to my dad every week,” she says after a
moment. She can see that Santana doesn’t looked pleased with this information, but the Latina lets
her finish.“About everything, I wrote to him a couple weeks ago about how angry I was at him for
breaking me. That I liked this girl and I didn’t know how to ask her out, or not treat her like a
whore. You know how to make her feel special, I don’t know how most times. Whenever Judy was
mad at him for something or another, he’d buy her something expensive and she’d shut up about it.
So I’m going to make a lot of mistakes, and I might make you feel like one accidentally, it’s not – it
will never be my intention. So tell me? And explain it to me cause I’m really not that smart when it
comes to these things and really most of my ideas about romance come from the many romantic
comedies that Rachel has forced me to watch.” Charlie admits with a flush, and she wasn’t a fan of
most romantic comedies.

Santana doesn’t know what to say to that because it’s reasonable and Charlie is making a huge
effort and they’re both trying to be honest. She wants to ask about the letters, but she doesn’t
because it isn’t the time. They have time to talk about, she can wait for Charlie to open up about it.
Russell is in prison, it’s not like he can do anything to her. He can’t hurt her anymore. She kisses
Charlie’s cheek but she wants to do more, “Why do we need to be a boring couple?” she asks
Charlie after a moment, they’d had sex before. Not doing it when they wanted to was going to be
annoying.

“Because, I don’t want to be like Puck,” Charlie explains, “I don’t want to take you to some crappy
motel like Finn. You deserve more than that and I don’t want you to wake up next to me and feel
hollow on the inside.” Charlie admits running a hand through her hair, Santana deserved to be
wooed just like everyone else. Rachel had insisted there was a proper etiquette for this sort of
thing. Rachel was still a virgin so Charlie took that information with a grain of salt. Charlie felt
slightly uncomfortable under Santana’s gaze, “Plus I need to order my condoms in bulk now,” she
said trying to lighten the mood and Santana snorted.

“You don’t need condoms anymore Charlie,” Santana pointed out shaking her head, she’d been
having sex for two years without a pregnancy scare.

“Quinn thought ‘trust me’ was an effective form of birth control,” Charlie replied and Santana
began to laugh. “I’m being careful! Sexual health is important and—oh god I sound like Rachel,”
Charlie said falling back onto Santana’s pillows.

Santana grins and straddles Charlie, “So we’re still allowed to make-out right?” she asks with a
wicked grin as she watches Charlie swallow and nod, because

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Quinn is leaving Rachel’s place a grin plastered on her face when she sees the glow of Charlie’s
headlights as her sister parks her car and Charlie exits her car and looks over at her twin. Quinn
waits until Charlie approaches her and takes a good look at her twin, under the glow of the porch
light, she sees a bruise on Charlie’s neck and she smiles and looks at her twin, “Good night?” she
asks.

Charlie flicks her eyes over her sister, there aren’t any visible bruises anywhere visible but Quinn’s
grinning like an idiot and Charlie can’t help but wonder if here sister finally did it with Rachel,
“Yeah it was. You?” she asks.

“Perfect,” Quinn says in a tone that makes her twin shiver.
“Did you?” Charlie asks studying Quinn, slightly creeped out by the grin on her face as it dawns on her that Quinn is wearing one of her hoodies and her sweatpants.

Quinn doesn’t dignify that with an answer because it’s none of her twin’s business and she’ll think what she wants. But she can understand why Santana, Brittany and Puck are all sex fiends though because it does feel really good and she wants to do it again and again.

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Chapter End Notes

By order of appearance songs used in this chapter:

1. Keri Hilson – Knock You Down
2. The Proclaimers – I'm Gonna Be (500 Miles)
3. Bright Eyes – First Day Of My Life
4. Maroon 5 – My Heart Is Open
Every morning like clockwork, Quinn would pick up the other members of the unholy trinity and they would drive to school together and today she had to school her features, she had to keep the smile that had been on her face since yesterday off her face. Santana could smell blood in the water and Brittany was extremely observant and she wanted nothing to do with their inevitable teasing. She wasn’t going to let Santana ruin it, or make it something dirty. What she and Rachel had shared was something special and she wasn’t going to spoil it by talking about it with her friends.

Santana came out a few minutes late like she always did, and the Latina slipped into the car. She was about to give Quinn her usual greeting when she paused, and studied Quinn who kept her face as neutral as possible, but her body was relaxed and she had a Mexican third eye, so she just sort of knew. Santana felt three emotions simultaneously, jealousy, Quinn had gotten laid before she’d done it with Charlie again, anger that she now owed Charlie twenty dollars, and finally she was impressed that Quinn had managed to stop being a prude enough to swipe the hobbit’s v-card.

“So,” she said with a smirk.

Quinn looked at Santana and groaned she hadn’t managed to hide it well enough she could at least turn this around on the Latina, “Since I have you in the car, and my sister is clearly some secret masochist, I’m telling you this once Lopez. Hurt her, cheat on her, mess with her head or do whatever it is you do with half the people you play with and you’re dead. She likes you despite the fact that she knows how you like to mess with people and play with their emotions,” Quinn said without bothering to look at Santana who was glaring at her. “She isn’t your toy Santana and the moment I even suspect that you’re up to your usual crap, like I suspected the first time I caught you in bed with her. I’ll tell her exactly what you did back in freshman year, the deal we made.”

Santana Lopez met Quinn’s harsh look with one of her own, she wasn’t going to be pushed around by Quinn Fabray. “Fuck you Fabray,” she hissed. She had been a freshman things were different now, and Charlie would understand. She didn’t even understand why they were friends half the time.

“I’d rather you didn’t, and you didn’t sleep with my sister either,” Quinn said coolly as she drove to Brittany’s house.

“I thought that fucking the hobbit would remove that giant stick out of your ass. I suppose it’s jammed up in there to tight. Or she was actually fucking horrible in bed, which is a shame because I thought that she’d be some freak in bed or some shit. So desperate to please—” Santana pitched forward a bit as Quinn hit the brake suddenly.

“You don’t get to talk about her like that. She hasn’t done anything to you. You’re just upset that
Charlie didn’t have sex with you last night,” she said in an accusing tone.

“Please I had your sister on her knees begging for me,” Santana sneered, suddenly glad that they were in a car and Quinn couldn’t get slap her. “And did she ever beg,” she wasn’t going to let Quinn have the last word on this. She wasn’t going to let Quinn win this one.

Quinn was about to say something when Brittany pulled the door open and slid in. She was about to say something when she felt the tension in the car and the smile on her face faded a bit, she hated when the two of them would go at it. They were supposed to be friends. “What are you two fighting about?” she asked.

Quinn looked back at Brittany and smiled, “Nothing we’re done now, isn’t that right San.”

Santana stared at Quinn for a moment before exhaling and turning to Brittany, “We’re okay now Britt. Q here finally managed to swipe the hobbit’s v-card.”

Brittany brightened immediately, she liked talking about sex, “How was it? Was she good at lady sex? Did you remember what I told you?” Brittany asked excitedly. Brittany wasn’t stupid, she knew that they both tried to protect her, and she’d find out what it was later like she always did, but right now she wanted to know about Quinn’s first time with someone she actually liked. “How many times did you make her—”

Quinn flashed Santana a dirty look and the Latina smirked, that had been as easy to get the last dig in, and make Brittany happy all in one go. She wasn’t going to give Quinn the satisfaction of beating her. Not this time.

Charlie had always had this strange urge to punch the people who had slept with her sister and then had the audacity to grin about it in front of her. She had wanted to murder Puck for getting Quinn pregnant, she hadn’t punched Sam because she had felt sorry for him. It had probably started with Finn, and that dopey grin of his, that made him seem like a constipated baby. He hadn’t even slept with Quinn but she still wanted to punch him in the face. Which presented a problem because right now, she was studying Rachel who hadn’t complained when Charlie had switched the radio station from the channel that played show tunes to one that played top 40. She hadn’t complained when Charlie had ordered a bacon breakfast sandwich. In fact she had been smiling the entire time and it bothered her. If it had been anyone else that Rachel had been with, she would have held her hand up for a high-five, but it was Quinn. It felt awkward and weird congratulating her, and Charlie really didn’t have the urge to punch Rachel she just wanted the diva to stop smiling.

Rachel could sense Charlie’s discomfort and she didn’t really care, “It was perfect,” she stated after a moment.

Charlie Fabray just made a face and she sniffed, “You know now the only person apart from me in the SSB that hasn’t slept with my sister is Mike.”

“Well the only person in that group that hasn’t slept with Santana apart from me is Sam,” Rachel retorted quicky and grinned at Charlie.

“Touché. Rachel. Touché.”

They had struck when she had least expected it, she had trusted them. They were supposed to be her bro’s, the brothers she had never had. Hell Sam could easily pass as her brother. She had let her guard down and it had all been a trap, one bloody trap to get her to join their little musical cult. She
really should have known better. She really need to take some sort of self-defense class because it was ridiculous how easily they had overpowered her. She made a personal note to once again to look into self-defense classes. Because this couldn’t happen again, she couldn’t be sitting here tied to a chair with duct tape covering her mouth to keep her from calling for help. She had tried to free herself but Puck knew a lot about knots and that was worrying in and of itself.

Santana spoke first grinning at her girlfriend, “Wanky.” Charlie gave her a sardonic look and Santana smirked, because she could have a lot of fun with this if she wanted to, and torturing Charlie had always been sort of fun. No not sort of fun, it was fun.

Rachel however looked horrified, yet made no move to actually untie her best friend. “When you said you’d help recruit her, I didn’t think you meant kidnapping her, and tying her to a chair. I just meant—bribery or something. She responds well to bribery.” Rachel looked over at Santana accusingly, “I’m sure you could have found some way to bribe her into joining the club without all this.” Santana shoots Rachel a smirk.

Sam rubbed his bruised shoulder where Charlie had managed to kick him in her mad attempt to get break free from them. “Well, we didn’t think she’d come willingly. So Puck grabbed her arms and I got her legs,” he had definitely drawn the short straw on that one. “We managed to get her to the chair and Mike tied her legs down and then Puck got her arms behind her back and we dragged her back here.”

Quinn studied her twin, who had a murderous look on her face, and she tilted her head. It would be a really bad idea to untie her. She almost felt sorry for Charlie, almost. Mostly she felt sorry for Mike, Sam and Puck, she had no idea what they had been thinking when they had forcibly abducted her sister, “I think, for your own safety that you need to be gone when we finally let her go.”

Rachel nodded and turned to her girlfriend, “Should we remove the duct tape?” she asked and Charlie nodded, but Rachel ignored her. She had never kidnapped someone before and this seemed to be normal for everyone involved in the room. She didn’t really want to know who they had kidnapped before, and she didn’t want to be that person who ruined the fun. Besides her methods of asking Charlie to join hadn’t panned out and it had been a year and a half, and she needed the soccer player for her original songs idea.

Quinn studied her twin for a moment, she could imagine the slew of curses that she had ready to hurl at Sam, Mike and Puck, and the threats. “Nope,” she said popping the ‘p’. “Well we gave her a year and a half to join willingly,” and her twin had ran away each and every time. “Do you want her to join?” she asked Rachel who nodded and Quinn looked at her twin because after last night she was quite willing to do anything to make Rachel happy, “You’re joining glee club, I did tell you I’d make you join kicking and screaming if I had to.”

Rachel shot a guilty look at her best friend, “I didn’t ask them to kidnap you,” she said clearly, still not making a move to free her. “I suppose I should thank you though, she wouldn’t have come back into this room unless we forced the issue. Now she can’t hide her talent anymore.”

This was not the response that Charlie wanted to hear and she began to struggle against her bonds again, trying to get her hands free but Puck was good with knots and she couldn’t break free. So she settled on giving them each a dark look. She would remember this.

The rest of the glee club slowly filtered in after that, Dani stared at her ex-girlfriend who was giving her a pleading look, “Is this more of the glee drama that I was warned about?” she asked and everyone nodded. “So ignore her?” They nodded again and Dani left Charlie who looked scandalized at the lack of care for her wellbeing.
Mercedes was next and stopped “Do I—”

Quinn smiled at Mercedes and shook her head, “It’s nothing terrible, Charlie’s basically a part of glee club anyway, and we’re just making it official.”

Mercedes stared at the soccer player and then at her boyfriend who was rubbing his shoulder, “Did you have anything to do with this?”

Sam gave Mercedes a sheepish look, “I heard her sing and she’s really good and she’s friends with most of us anyway, we’re just giving her a little push. It’s cool though, she’ll probably forget all about this by the end of the day.”

Mercedes took one look at Charlie and somehow doubted that she would just forget about being tied up like this. This was the most interesting thing to happen in glee club and Mr. Schue was still thinking about Journey songs that they hadn’t done. Charlie also had the power to slushy every last one of them, and she could see Charlie ordering the hits, so she apologized in advance, “Sorry,” she said shooting the soccer player her best apologetic look. It wasn’t as if she could do anything anyway.

Artie wheeled in with Tina and looked at the odd scene in front of him, and decided not to ask wheeling to go sit by Brittany. Tina following his lead.

Lauren Zizes just took one look at Puck, “You?”

“Yep,” came Puck’s reply, Charlie had head butted him on his chin, but he had managed not to drop her.

“Should have come to me, I could have helped,” She said with a shrug and Charlie let out a strangled sob.

Finn was last, “Do—”

“Leave it alone Finn,” Quinn said quickly before he could say anything or do anything that would ruin this.

“Really Finn she’s already got a long list of people she wants to kill once we let her go—who’s going to be the one to let her go?” Sam asked and everyone froze because they hadn’t thought of that.

“I will,” Santana offered after a moment, it was a rare opportunity and she didn’t plan on letting it go. Besides Charlie probably wouldn’t come after her or Brittany so they were safe. Everyone else on the other hand, Santana smirked.

Finn eyed Charlie for a moment and also decided to leave her in her current predicament. They weren’t friends and she probably did something to deserve it.

Finally Mr. Schue entered the room and stopped for a moment, “Uh—guys?”

“Charlie’s going to sing a song and join glee club,” Rachel said with a smile.

“We can’t force kids to join—” Charlie looked at Mr. Schue brightly finally an adult would set her free and she could begin her crusade for vengeance against those that had wronged her.

“When you hear her sing you’ll totally change your tune,” Puck interrupted.
Mr. Schue looked at the tied up teenager who was glaring at him, it didn’t look like she was hurt, she just looked angry. He really should have put a stop to this but he had planted some weed on Finn to force him to join the glee club. “Well alright, let’s hear what you got.” Charlie’s face fell because that was the last thing she wanted.

Quinn gently pulled the duct tape off her twin’s mouth, “For me?” she asked her twin gently looking at her. She was met with an annoyed look, well she had tried to do it gently.

Charlie felt all eyes on her as she spit out the taste of sticky adhesive that was currently on her lips, and stared at Mr. Schue. “Ribbit,” She said in a completely sardonic tone.

Everyone stared at her for a moment not getting before Mike Chang began snorted and began to laugh, with everyone turning to stare at him, not understanding what was so funny but Charlie turned to him and shot him an amused look.

Turning back to look at Mr. Schuester, Charlie adopted her most innocent look which given the fact that she was dating Santana Lopez, wasn’t all that innocent at all. “I can’t actually sing—”

Quinn rolled her eyes and adopted her HBIC tone of voice, “I have absolutely no problem telling them not to untie you.” Charlie snorted and looked at her sister not believing her for a moment.

They had to untie her eventually and all she had to do was wait them out, “Good luck with that,” Charlie said relaxing in her chair, the position was uncomfortable but she could totally wait them out.

And I won’t bake you brownies ever again,” Rachel added after a moment.

“We’ll have to revoke your membership to the Super Smash Bro’s,” Sam said solemnly.

“I won’t teach you how to dance,” Brittany said, “It’s really important that you know how to dance Charlie,” she lectured.

Quinn turned to Santana giving her a look and the Latina rolled her eyes, things had at least returned to normal between them. “I’ll totes go all Lima heights adjacent on your ass,” Santana said she could see Charlie’s lips twitch upward, apparently the threat was no longer a valid one. She was sure if they had just given her two minutes in a locked room with Charlie, the soccer player would have agreed to come to glee.

One by one all of her friends basically sat there, trying to extort her cooperation with Charlie being stubborn about it, someone would eventually come looking for her. Quinn would probably let her go to class and she’d be able to find Sam and Puck and make them rue the day that they dragged her into the show choir against her will.

“If she says she can’t sing she probably can’t. Why are we wasting time on her? We already have enough members on the team to go to regionals. We don’t need her.” Finn asked no one in particular and Charlie turned to him glaring. “She’ll probably choke anyway when we get on stage.”

Charlie’s rivalry with Finn Hudson flared hot for a moment, they had managed to keep some sort of truce going where they both simply ignored each other in the hallways. His popularity had hit a resurgence after winning being the quarterback for the last game of the season where they had finally won a state championship. Getting flattened together had built up something of some sort of grudging respect which vanished the moment he had decided to goad her. She wanted to shove her fist in his face again. “I don’t choke Hudson that’s you,” She sneered and jerked on her hands
again. “I just didn’t want to embarrass you in front of you little musical cult. But since you asked so freaking nicely I’ll do it.”

Quinn sighed, maybe they should have let Finn poke at her a bit and she saw the football player shoot her a satisfied smug look, and she had to admit that he was impressed that he had managed to play on their rivalry enough to get Charlie to budge. She was slightly disappointed that Charlie had lost her head for a moment and had proceeded to fall right into his trap, but a win was still a win.

Charlie turned to her sister, “I’ll sing you a song, under protest. I just want my hands free.” No one moved to free her and Charlie let out a frustrated growl, and turned to Mr. Schue. “What do you want me to sing?” she asked.

“All you want,” Mr. Schue said.

“Are you not going to tell them to let me go?” she asked him incredulously.

“Well—I’m sure they’ll let you go eventually,” He replied with a shrug. “You will let her go right?” he asked turning to Quinn, because he probably could get into a lot of trouble for this.

Quinn gave him an innocent smile, “Of course, as soon as she sings.”

Charlie thought for a second, running through the list of songs in her head trying to think of a song that she’s currently working on at home, and then she turned to what songs she had currently been listening to on the radio and finally her iPhone. Running through songs at a quick pace. She wasn’t as good as Rachel, or Santana, Mercedes or even Dani. Well if they wanted her to sing, she would sing.

You say

Sing, sing to me

Sing me something I need

Sing new, sing good

God I wish that I could

She pulled the song out of her ass, and was currently rearranging the song in her head as she sang the lyrics starting with the chorus and breaking out into the proper song, it was hard to do while being tied up, but she managed to remember most of Shelby’s strict vocal lessons. She ignored the stares that she was getting, she had used that song as a dig to her so called friends. “Now. We’ve seen that I can indeed carry a tune. You’ve got your proof may I please get out of here? Before I start feeling the urge to break out into song and dance at the most inopportune times.” Charlie asked.

Mr. Schue nodded, extremely pleased another voice type had emerged, Dani would be gone in a few months and they’d lose a girl who could sing possible rock songs. “Let her go, and welcome to the—”

Charlie frowned, “I never said I’d join. I was told to sing and you’d let me go. You all seem to forget that I don’t want to be a part of glee club.”

Quinn frowned because Charlie had a valid point forcing her to sing was one thing, and it probably fell under the whole I’ll do it when I want to, and not a moment before thing that she had going on, and she turned to Santana because if there was anyone who could Charlie to do what she didn’t
want to do, and with a smile on her face it was Santana. “I’m sure you can make her see reason,” she stated simply and Santana looked at her and then back at Charlie.

“Really you’re asking Santana to torture me?” Charlie asked horrified at the fact that Quinn would totally sell her out. What happened to familial bonds, what happened to them being sisters? They were blood. Quinn was supposed to have her back, and she was sure she’d enjoy Santana torturing her, but Quinn was supposed to be on her side. It was the principal of the matter.

“But we need you for my regionals idea,” Rachel protested.

“If this is about you getting another solo—” Mercedes began slowly changing the subject.

“I was thinking about original songs,” Rachel informed her and everyone paused and looked at her, even Charlie calmed down for a moment and turned to Rachel, “We have several talented people in the glee club. Quinn is talented with writing poetry, it shouldn’t take her long to write something. Charlie has a talent when it comes to mixing music. We’ve got some powerful voices, we’ve got some excellent dancers. We could win with two original songs.”

Quinn turned to her sister, “Rachel, I’ve never wrote a song,” Quinn pointed out immediately because she hadn’t and that was an incredible amount of faith that Rachel was putting on her.

“I’m not that good at mixing,” Charlie said immediately. “And it’s a hobby.”

“You told us you couldn’t sing,” Mike said and Charlie glared at him because he was on her list as well, and he immediately shut up. “If it makes you feel better I believe you when you say you can’t dance,” he added after a moment.

“It’s not that she can’t, she just doesn’t know how,” Brittany said with a shrug.

Mr. Schue frowned, “Original songs are a lot of work Rachel, and it’s a gigantic risk.”

Rachel frowned for a moment she needed to swing people to her side, and she pulled out her phone and dialed Charlie’s phone number. There was a buzzing sound that filled the room and Charlie glanced down at her pocket and her phone started to ring playing before the remixed version Charlie had done of Defying Gravity. “Charlie did that, she remixed me singing Defying Gravity, and I may have snooped on her computer and she’s got a whole folder of mixes, and I’m sure she could create something completely new if we gave her enough time. And I’ve read some of Quinn’s poetry—”

Quinn blinked, “When did you?” she asked before turning to look at Santana because she was the only real snoop. Rachel flushed a bit, Santana had wanted to find Quinn’s diary to read out loud, she really hadn’t meant to snoop on purpose. It had just fallen in front of her and she may have picked it up, and she may have read a few pages.

Mr. Schue shook his head, “We’ll need to vote it’s a gigantic risk Rachel, it’d be best to play it safe. All those in favor of doing an original song raise their hands.” Mr. Schue had expected it to be only Rachel Berry who raised her hand but almost immediately Quinn, Santana, Brittany, Sam and Puck raised their hands surprising him. After a moment Mike raised his hand which surprised Tina but she held her hand up after a moment.

Rachel turned her head to Charlie, “Charlie,” she hissed she had expected her best friend to side with her. It didn’t matter if Charlie was currently angry with her.

Charlie gave Rachel a look, “One. My hands are currently tied behind my back. Two. If you wanted my help with that, kidnapping me wasn’t necessary. By the way, I should all have you
arrested, you committed like five different felonies. Three. I’m not actually part of glee club.”

Mr. Schue nodded at her, the only people who weren’t raising their hands were Finn, Artie, Mercedes and Lauren, but after a second Mercedes raised her hand and the peer pressure kicked in and Artie and Finn raised their hands as well leaving Lauren who shrugged. “Show Choir is stupid,” she pointed out.

“Well I guess we’re writing an original song then,” he said, not knowing how this had happened or when Rachel had managed to convert most of the club to her side.

Charlie pulled on her binds again, “Now that you’ve gotten what you really wanted, which was a Fabray team-up, can you finally let me go?” she questioned. But once again everyone ignored her.

Rachel grinned, “I thought if you had a bit of incentive,” she said with a bit of a smile. “I know I’m going to be amazed by what you two come up with. Everyone else who wants to can write a song for the solo. We still have about a month to regionals.”

Charlie grimaced because their tournament started about two weeks after regionals, “Rachel, I’ve got three girls depending on me for a scholarship, including Dani. You need to understand that soccer comes first, and Roz will murder me if I miss any practice this year. As it is I’m running wind sprints till I hurl.”

Dani winced because Charlie had indeed hurled, punishment for being caught eating some brownies. It didn’t matter that she had insisted that they were vegan and thus were ‘healthy’ and fell under Roz’s insane list of acceptable foods. “She’s on a diet again, and Roz does seem to be cracking down hard on everyone.”

Santana’s eyes flicked to her girlfriend, because she had taken a good look at Charlie’s abs, her girlfriend looked to be in tip top shape. “Why is it only you?”

Charlie shrugged, “She caught me last week with one of the big bag of Doritos, and soda,” Charlie said for the life of her she couldn’t figure out why this was a terrible meal choice. This wasn’t her getting over the fact that she hadn’t been working out like last year, she had been at the gym nearly every day, she was still in condition and Biste had put her through the ringer during football practices and she still had managed to drag her ass to soccer practice. She was probably in the best shape of her life.

“And with an empty container of Ben and Jerry’s, and you told her that was your lunch,” Dani said, she had watched Charlie demolish the bag of chips.

“I still maintain that the Ben and Jerry’s wasn’t mine, and I said it was a snack,” Charlie snipped at Dani but she smiled because it was totally hers, but she just hadn’t been the only one to finish it. Missy and Marissa had totally helped her and then half the girls on the team had helped themselves, she’d only eaten about a quarter of the ice cream. “So I’m back to eating unnecessarily healthy, and cleaning out my system for the tournament.” She really wasn’t she was still eating what she wanted. “Something about how you don’t put regular gas into a Ferrari,” Charlie flicked her eyes at Santana. “I stopped paying attention. So if you do this then you need to give me time, this can’t be one of your last minute projects.”

Rachel nodded, “I think I have a song ready for you,” she said she had completely forgotten about Charlie’s schedule change, she should have mentioned this months earlier. But at least Charlie wasn’t doing soccer and football. “I will of course continue to write new songs, I have plenty of new,” Rachel smiles a bit and struggles not to look at Quinn, “experiences to write about.”
“Lovely,” Charlie says dryly and everyone turns to her, “Can you please fucking untie me now?” she asks, not at all impressed by what was going on around her. She is once again ignored, and was forced to sit with the glee club and listen to Mr. Schue drone on. She didn’t even pay attention when he went on in Spanish class, she had tried speaking Spanish to Santana once and the Latina had laughed at her, and told her in no uncertain terms that Mr. Schue was a terrible teacher.

“You could have given me a bit of warning,” Quinn said with a sigh, she hadn’t liked having her writing called out in glee club like that, “I’ve never written a song before,” she admitted as she watched Rachel who was currently writing in that notebook of hers.

Rachel looked at her, “You have plenty of practice, and I’ve seen your poems well at least a few of them. I’m sure what you write will be better than my first attempts of writing a song Quinn, I believe in you. Just like I believe in your sister to pull through.”

“You’ve written some songs?” Rachel nodded and tapped her notebook, “Can I see?” Quinn asks and Rachel flushes.

“I’ve written about twenty songs and I only have one that I want Charlie to put music to, and I plan to give her that tonight when she comes home from soccer practice—”

“She’s going to take Santana home, and they’ll probably be awhile. You probably should have told her that you needed her for this before she asked Santana out,” Quinn said making a face.

Rachel caught the look, “Well I’m not exactly sure what Charlie see’s in Santana, and I was hoping that she’d choose Brittany. She did choose Santana, and I thought she was your best friend, and you did give her permission.” She didn’t seem to understand the attraction and suspected that it had more to do with the Santana of it all. Even Rachel couldn’t deny that Santana was beautiful, and fiery, but her personality left a lot to be desired, and truthfully Santana scared Rachel. She had hoped that Charlie would have fallen in love with Brittany.

Quinn frowned, she hadn’t wanted Charlie to date either of them. Brittany while she loved the dancer had currently been sleeping with Santana while she was dating Artie, and she still slept with other people. But Charlie had been really into Santana since freshman year. “So I can keep an eye on their relationship,” she admitted. She wasn’t going to let them date in secret, she didn’t trust Santana not with Charlie. “Let me see your songs,” she said changing the subject.

Rachel paused for a moment, “You have to promise not to laugh,” She said, “I didn’t have that many life experiences and I wrote what I could—you can’t laugh.” Quinn rolls her eyes, because it can’t be that bad and Rachel opens her notebook, “There you rest, with all the rest, of my accessories on my night stand,” Quinn paused when she heard a strangled giggle erupt from her girlfriend. “You said you wouldn’t laugh,” she said indignantly.

Rachel pouted, “It started off really good,” she said trying her hardest not to giggle again. Quinn bit her lip, “You have to promise not to laugh,” She said, “I didn’t have that many life experiences and I wrote what I could—you can’t laugh.” Quinn rolls her eyes, because it can’t be that bad and Rachel opens her notebook, “There you rest, with all the rest, of my accessories on my night stand.” This caused Quinn to stop laughing and look at her, flushing as Rachel gave her an amused smile, “A sexually charged song while it may wow the audience might cost us in the long run with the judges,” she explained.

Quinn eyed Rachel, “You said that on purpose didn’t you?” she said and Rachel gave her an innocent look. Quinn was quiet for a moment there had been a change in the relationship and she did really want to go back to what they had started last night before they had realized that they needed to clean the kitchen before Charlie got home.
Rachel just shot Quinn a grin, “I was hoping that we can actually make it to a bed today,” she said shyly and she watched as Quinn’s eyes darkened. She had been right at the beginning of last year, girls did enjoy sex just as much as boys did, so long as it was done right and despite Quinn’s inexpeirence, it was done so right, she didn’t have a doubt that Quinn was just going to keep on getting better.

“I like that idea,” Quinn admitted, and looked at the time, they had several hours before Charlie came home. She planned to make the best of it.

Chapter End Notes

Marianas Trench – Sing Sing
Chapter 41

Judy Fabray, had been a year sober. She hadn’t had a single drop of alcohol to drink in a year, some of it had been forced sobriety, but she still hadn’t had drop of alcohol to drink. She slipped. It’s not as if she had gotten drunk or anything, but one glass of scotch couldn’t hurt. It had just been so stressful, with the divorce being stalled once again by Russell’s lawyers. She was entitled to half, she had been married to the man for twenty-seven years. He had cheated on her with a stripper, if she could take him for everything she would, but everything was in his name. They only had one joint account, it was how he had controlled her, she knew better now. Pastor—Chris Hawthorne had been a great help ministering to her daily.

He was unlike Russell, he had actually treated her with respect. He didn’t expect her to serve him and he never talked down to her. He hadn’t meant to pour her a glass, but he had simply forgotten. It had just been one drink and he had apologized for it but the glass had already been poured and there was no point in wasting it. It was just one, and it was rude to not drink with a partner. Russell had never ever poured her a glass, instead he expected her to refill his drink for him. Chris had been such a great help with advice for Quinn, and she had given it a lot of thought. She would need to find someone for Quinn if she were to ever win prom queen.

Judy turned past the Lopez’s house, they would need to do everything to beat Santana Lopez and—Judy hit the brakes, in the driveway was her daughter’s black Lexus even though it was rather late in the evening. She would recognize the car and the license plate. She stopped and stared at the car for a moment wondering what was going on because from what Quinn had told her she normally drove the Latina home not Charlie. She parked the car and waited it was getting late and she wondered where the Lopez’s were, they should be home supervising their wild daughter. It was only after seven, and finally the porch light flicked on and her middle child stumbled out of the front door having being been pushed out the door by Santana who had a smirk on her face. Charlie was laughing and she turned to look at the Latina before leaning into the house and kissing the Latina who kissed back, before firmly pushing Charlie back.

Charlie seemed to say something to the Latina who smiled but then shook her head and Charlie threw her head back and let out a frustrated groan before leaning in to kiss Santana one more time before walking back to her car, looking back as Santana finally shut the door. Charlie stood at her car as if having some sort of internal debate, turning her head to the Lopez house a few times. It was then that Judy decided to get out of her car and confront her daughter, getting out of the car and storming off towards her. Charlie who tilted her head towards the sound of approaching footsteps.

“Charlie Reagan Fabray,” Judy hissed at her daughter keeping her voice down, the last thing she wanted to do was make a scene, and she watched as Charlie turned to look at her mother. “What are you doing here?”

Charlie gave her mother a dull look and once again Judy placed her hands on Charlie’s chin trying to force it up but Charlie slapped her mother’s hands away. “It’s none of your business—” Charlie paused and leaned in taking one sniff, and her eyes flashed in annoyance. “You’re drunk,” she hissed at her mother.

Judy wouldn’t be bullied by her daughter anymore, “Nonsense, it was one drink. Don’t you dare change the subject—” Judy began frowning as she attempted to grab at Charlie’s chin again. It had been Santana back on the soccer field that day, she just knew it.

Charlie wasn’t having it, “It wasn’t just one drink. You’re not supposed to have anything to drink.
And I know you, it’s never just one. How long has this been going on?” she demanded to know.

“I’ve not had a drop to drink in about a year. Pastor Hawthorne—”

Charlie pinched the bridge of her nose, she wasn’t going to do this tonight. Not with Judy and especially not in Santana’s driveway, “This isn’t one of our scheduled days. You can’t pretend to be my mother whenever you want Judy. I’m seventeen, I’m allowed to date who I want, and I’m allowed to kiss who I want. You are not my mother—you will never be my mother, so I can continue to pretend with you on our scheduled days but we both know I’d rather not, and I don’t think you want to pretend anymore. I’d rather you didn’t barge into my life with unsolicited advice, with your fake care and concern. Go home Judy. Sleep it off like the rest of the drunks do,” Charlie said as she opened the door to her car and climbed in closing it forcefully as she started her engine and waited until Judy pulled away from her car before she pulled out of the driveway and left. Leaving Judy standing there perfectly scandalized, she debated walking up to the Lopez house and demanding that Santana stop corrupting her daughter but she thought better of it. She’d need to have a talk with Quinn about it, find out what she knew maybe they could use this to her advantage, maybe her daughter could still win prom queen.

Rachel’s hands were currently working on the front of Quinn’s jeans as she kissed her, they had just finished their homework together and it was finally time for—there was a sharp knock on the door and both girls pulled away from each other as Charlie who hadn’t waited for an answer strolled in.

“What the hell are you doing here?” Quinn hisses at her sister who gives her a dull look, it didn’t matter that they’d been at each other nearly every day for the past two weeks, she still loved feeling Rachel against her, and tasting her and making her moan, Quinn shivered.

“Once again Quinn, I live here,” Charlie says in an annoyed fashion she’s been in a mood since her run-in with Judy earlier. “What are you doing here?” she asks her sister. “Avoiding Judy being drunk?”

Quinn frowned at this, “She just got her one year sobriety chip the other day—” Quinn began sitting up forgetting all about Rachel for a moment and what they had just been up to.

Charlie gives a derisive snort, “Well she’s going to need to hand that back. She caught me leaving Santana’s might have seen us making out before Santana kicked me out of her house because her parents were actually going to come home. She tried to see if I had any hickey’s on my neck.” She did she had taken to wearing under armor and turtlenecks. She had to go out and buy the turtlenecks but it was an investment she hadn’t regretted so far. It was still cold outside, she could still pass it off without people getting to suspicious though Santana was going to have to find more interesting and discrete places to mark her. She certainly had to. “Either way when she got close to me I smelt it. Boozy Suzy strikes again,” Charlie said.

Rachel frowned, “Was she drunk and driving? Charlie that’s irresponsible—”

“She said she just had one. I don’t know if believe her or not, but she seemed to be able to walk just fine and I didn’t hear her slurring her words. But I’m letting you know, that she’s probably at home right now wondering where you are.”

Quinn rolled her eyes, “I told her I was working on a project for glee club with you and Rachel—” Charlie raised an eyebrow and gave her a dull look, “Oh don’t give me that look that you’ve been
better.”

“I haven’t had sex with Santana if that’s what you’re asking. We aren’t going at it like rabbits like some people are,” Charlie said with a sniff and she turned to Rachel. “By the way, you need to take a look at what I did, and I talked to Brad,” He had taken over her piano lessons teaching her what Shelby couldn’t, she needed the skill and she planned to pick up guitar in the summer to help her with her mixing. Brad was quiet and precise and she had been surprised to find out that he was amazing at rearranging songs on the fly which he was teaching her.

“Brad?” Quinn asked.

“Piano guy,” Rachel supplied, “You know the guy who follows us around everywhere waiting for us to burst into song.”

“Yes him—you should at least thank him every once in a while,” Charlie lectured, “because he helped me come up with your song, I still need you to sing it a few more times so I can refine it, and add a drum track to it and tweak it a bit. You’ll have sheet music by the weekend.” Charlie said, she had been swamped with glee kids handing her music. Some of it really wasn’t that good. Most of it wasn’t really that good, but she had enjoyed working on Mercedes and Dani’s music ideas.”

Rachel smiled at this, “And the completion?” she asked furrowing her brow. “Who do you think I have to worry about? Mercedes?” she asked seriously.

Charlie made a noise, “No, her song is fun though, like really fun I had fun making it with her but your song is better,” she said with a shrug and Rachel grinned.

“Well how about Santana?” Rachel pressed, the only person who had heard the completed songs was Charlie.

“Isn’t taking it seriously, and wrote a song about Sam’s lips in class the other day,” Charlie admitted with a grin.

Quinn blinked, “Is that why you couldn’t stop laughing in Hagberg’s class?” Charlie snorted and nodded a pleased grin on her face.

Rachel frowned, “Well then who is my competition?”

“Dani,” Charlie said after a moment, and Rachel’s eyes widened. “Is really good at writing songs. I spent Saturday after practice with her, putting them together at her place—” but the teenager wanted nothing to do with entering the competition.

“Santana let you go to Dani’s place?” Quinn said in a disbelieving tone.

“Santana knows that I’m not going to cheat on her, she can and probably will kick my ass—”

“What do you mean she has two songs?” Rachel said and sat up completely.

“She has two songs, and she worked on most of them with me, so it’s like a joint collaboration. They’re both really strong on their own but—”

Rachel pulled herself away from Quinn who shot Charlie a dirty look as she went to her desk and pulled out her notebook. “I only have one,” she said, “And I need to sing that solo.”

“Competition is a good thing Rachel, it’ll make you better,” Quinn says but quiets when Rachel
shoots her a look.

“I need to think of another song,” she states and both twins groan.

“Rachel, I still need to finish your song and my twin and I need to come up with your group number,” Charlie points out, “Regionals are in two weeks and Brittany and Mike still need to come up with choreography. I have the first game of the tournament in three weeks, Roz is putting double practices until then. I’m already copying all of Quinn’s homework as it is.”

Quinn sniffed at this, even if she didn’t mind, they did it on occasion but lately Charlie had basically copied everything that she could to save time. “Well maybe if you stopped spending all your free time with Santana getting your ‘mack’ on with Santana, you’d be able to do your own homework. Time and place for everything.”

Charlie paused because Quinn had been making those comments a lot lately, little digs about her relationship, they hadn’t even had sex yet. Charlie waved her hand towards Rachel’s bed, “Pot meet the kettle. You don’t have a song for me because you’re too busy having sex with Rachel. I can at least keep it in my pants,” Charlie responded looking at her twin. “Look I want to finish Rachel’s song tonight, start working on my English paper so I can have it finished by the due date, and I still need to finish reading that musical theory book that Brad gave me. You need to finish writing that song Quinn.” She was swamped with work and apparently she wasn’t allowed to chug Red Bulls in her spare time, Roz may have had another long winded speech about it.

Quinn winced she didn’t know what to write about, and none of the songs that she had written were any good, “I don’t know what to write about,” she admitted, she didn’t even know how to write a song. Yet Rachel seemed to think she could do it. It was more difficult to create a song for a group.

“Maybe you should brainstorm ideas with the glee club. Mr. Schue wants an anthem for us to sing, it’s supposed to signify something we all have in common.”

“You’re in a musical cult?” Charlie offered and both her sister and Rachel turned to glare at her, “I was trying to be helpful,” she muttered. “Come on Rachel, I don’t have all night,” Charlie said after a moment, turning to look at her sister. “You’d actually better get home, you know how she is. It’s never just one with her,” she reminded Quinn there was annoyance in her voice.

Quinn couldn’t remember a time when it was just one with her mother, she had always matched Russell drink for drink most days. “People slip sometimes Charlie, if it was easy then everyone who wanted to do would get clean. I’ve been to one of her meetings for support, even people who have been sober for a long time still slip,” she said defending Judy. There was no way that Judy would ever live up to Charlie’s incredibly high standards.

Charlie paused for a moment, “I don’t care about other people, I don’t even care if she wants to be an alcoholic and spend the rest of her life staring down an empty bottle. I care about you—”

“Not enough to come back,” Quinn muttered cutting Charlie off.

Charlie paused for a moment and she opened her mouth to defend herself but she shook her head, “Come on Rachel, I don’t have all night,” she repeats again turning to her friend, her eyes flicking over to Quinn one more time.

Quinn loathed when Charlie could accurately predict things. People slipped when they were in recovery, she knew that and she knew that her sister knew that too. Judy was human, she got
stressed out just like everyone else did, and there were things that would send her right back to the bottle, stressors. Yet Charlie would stand judging Judy, looking at her with contempt.

“Quinnie?” Judy slurs her name and Quinn sighs and pulls the glass away from her mother. Scotch it was Russell weakness and she didn’t even know that they had any alcohol left in the house. She’d read the pamphlets though and sometimes it was difficult to let go. “Is your sister home?”

It’s pitiful and it breaks Quinn’s heart just a bit, because all Judy wants is to be a family again and maybe with Charlie helping, being there and supporting Judy like a good daughter should, “Not tonight,” Quinn says softly and she feels anger towards Charlie for pushing their mother back into this.

Judy laughs and it rings a bit hollow in Quinn’s ears, “I slipped,” she states and there are tears in her eyes now. “I’m sorry Quinnie, I slipped,” she begins to berate herself and Quinn rubs her back gently.

“It’s okay, everyone slips now and again,” Quinn says with a small comforting smile and she’s tired because she can’t do this by herself. “We’ll just make sure it never happens again.” Judy is promising her things now, promising that it won’t happen again but Quinn doesn’t really believe her. It’ll probably keep happening until Charlie comes home.

“She’s with that girl, Quinnie, I saw them. I saw them together,” Judy’s babbling now, like she’s trying to make Quinn understand.

“I know mom, I know,” Quinn’s voice is soothing and she’s helping Judy to the couch to sleep it off and she wonders how harsh her sister was with Judy this time. Why can’t her sister see that her mother is lonely? That she needs them as much as they need her. But she’s Quinn Fabray and even though she knows her mother is going to slip again, that this isn’t a one off, she’s going to stay and make sure her mother gets the help she needs. Judy is family, she’s only parent that Quinn has left and all Judy has ever wanted was the best for her. Maybe winning prom queen will help right the ship a bit, it’ll buy her some goodwill for when she finally comes out to Judy. But her plans are changing she can’t move back in with Santana anymore, not while the Latina is still dating Charlie, the Pierce’s have no room and she doesn’t know where to go anymore. She doesn’t know who will take her in and she’d rather not depend on anyone else. She doesn’t want to leave her home anymore.

Charlie hopped over the vomit on the ground and winced, that was the third person today who had hurled. It smelt like booze and the smell turned her stomach a bit. Booze had never been a problem at McKinley, not really, sure there were parties and sure there was drinking but nothing like this. Well at least the janitors were being put to use. She placed her lunch tray on the table and slid into an empty space beside Santana.

Quinn flicked her eyes at her sister, “How can you eat that?” she asked again looking at the slop on Charlie’s plate that looked very similar to the vomit on the ground, and made a face as she watched her sister pick up a spoon. “Especially with the smell,” she added crinkling her nose.

“Do you know what Roz had me eat for breakfast? Some disgusting wheatgrass thing, and then I’m allowed to eat a freakin granola bar for a snack. One, granola bar Quinn, and I’m supposed to have a salad for dinner. I’m fucking hungry,” Charlie griped shoveling the tasteless goop into her mouth.
Santana snorted and handed Charlie her pudding cup with a roll of her eyes, “The best thing about being off the Cheerios, is that we can eat whatever we want again,” she said.

Quinn nodded and turned to Charlie, “You know if you ate like a normal person Roz probably wouldn’t be on your case about your eating habits,” she pointed out.

Charlie grunted, “Could be worse, Missy and Marissa had a hangover today at practice, they’re still running suicides. Where is all the booze coming from?”

“Where we’re going this Friday night,” Santana said and Charlie flicked her eyes at her girlfriend. “A new place in the warehouse district opened up, weekends are open to everyone. They don’t card anyone, and you can dance and drink—”

“We can go dancing,” Brittany said with a pleased grin.

Rachel blinked, “They don’t card you? Isn’t that against several laws? What if they get caught selling to minors what if—”

“Chill out Yentl, it’s safe, they offer you a taxi service. One of the girls on the team handed me a card, you pay entry and you pay for the alcohol, and once you’re done partying they bus you back home,” Santana said and turned to Charlie, “I wants to get my dance on.”

“I can’t dance,” Charlie pointed out looking at both Santana and Brittany. She had said once a month, clearly Sandy was doing his own thing and it was getting ridiculous. What he was doing was increasing the risk of getting caught and she was so glad that Puck was done with him, the last thing she needed was for him to get into anymore Sandy related trouble.

“We'll teach you duh,” Brittany said as if it were the most obvious thing in the world.

Santana looked at Quinn, “Who knows a bit of booze might help the hobbit pull the stick out of your ass.”

“What if you get caught?” Rachel said trying to talk some sense into Santana. This seemed like a bad idea all around.

“Trust—”

“The last time someone said ‘trust me’ to me, I ended up pregnant,” Quinn pointed out. “It’s some sketchy place in the warehouse district, most of those places are crack houses. The last thing I need is a crack addiction or to be arrested for being near a crack house.”

“You worry too much, come on Hobbit, you said you wanted to find some inspiration and most of the great writers did it while they were on booze or something else, its good experience. Plus you get to dance with Quinn. She does occasionally have some moves. Its dark no can see you and no one cares, you two could have a lot of fun. It’s a night out with no one watching.”

Rachel hesitated and looked at Quinn, she did really want a night out with her and she could see that Quinn was considering it. “No one will know?”

Santana shoots her a wicked grin, “No one will—”

Charlie sighed she had hoped that Quinn would have managed to curtail the curiosity and convince Santana what a terrible idea it was, she was wrong. “We’re not going to the Warehouse,” she really didn’t want to be the buzzkill but she wasn’t going to get tangled up in another Sandy Ryerson scheme if she could help it. They looked at her and Charlie made a face, “Sandy Ryerson runs it,
you know the perverted old head of glee club? The drug dealer Sandy Ryerson? The guy who currently wants to have a NAMBLA moment with me?"

Quinn gave her sister a suspicious look, “How did you—is that where you and Puck were off to most of the summer? Did you?” She asked keeping her voice down.

“Did I sell drugs with Puck god no, do I look stupid?” Charlie said and turned to Santana, “I’d like to take you dancing so you can teach me how to dance,” she said to Santana who look slightly irritated that her plans were dashed. “But we can’t go to the warehouse,” she said, they had kept things as low key as possible, they ordered in, it would be a lot easier to take her to places that she wanted to go if Santana would just stop worrying that everyone was going to judge her. Not to mention it’s not like the entire school didn’t suspect that Santana was gay, she still walked down the hallway sometimes linking pinkies with Brittany. “I’m sorry but we can’t.”

Brittany pouted, she had wanted to go dancing with her friends, and go out and have fun. She and Artie didn’t really do much and he played an awful lot of video games and he just sort of lay there during sex.

Rachel bit her lip, “Shelby’s going to be out of town this weekend and my parents are never around, we can throw a party for certain members of the glee club, you know the people who already know about us,” she said looking at Quinn, “I’m sure that Puck has a fake ID, or maybe he knows where we can get one.”

Charlie shifted a bit and Santana turned to her girlfriend, “You know—?”

Charlie grimaced and realized that hanging out with Puck was quickly making her into an accomplice for most of his terrible ideas and sort of a criminal. She wonders why she befriended him. “Zizes sells really good fake ones for a hundred dollars. According to Puck she makes the best ones, which is why her prices are so high.”

Quinn sighed, because the last thing she needs is for Puck to go back to his detention center. “He’s the father of my baby, he can’t go to prison again.”

“Puck’s been buying booze since he was fifteen they don’t even card him anymore,” Santana said with a roll of her eyes. “This party better not be lame,” she said to Rachel, being off the Cheerio’s meant that they hadn’t been invited to any of the parties that happened, and Charlie rarely showed up or checked her Facebook or did any of the things other people did. She smirked at her girlfriend who looked displeased by the idea that there was going to be a party at Rachel’s house, “Now you don’t have an excuse to not learn how to dance.”

Charlie looked at Quinn who shrugged, Judy was going to spend the weekend with Frannie, though she imagined that it wasn’t Frannie who Judy was visiting. “I’m in but it can only be people that we trust,” she said to Rachel who nodded.

“You know, most of dancing is having a bit of confidence in yourself,” Quinn offered her sister who had a bottle of water in her hand and was currently sitting on the couch watching as Brittany and Santana tore it up. She wondered if Charlie was jealous or bothered by how close and how sexually charged their dancing was. They had attempted to teach Charlie to dance for a solid twenty minutes as they drank but gave up when the music began to play.

Charlie glanced at Quinn, “Where’s Rachel?” she asked after a moment, scanning the room before
spotting Rachel talking animatedly with Kurt and Blaine. “No wine coolers for you?”

Quinn made a face at this but rolled her eyes, “I’m apparently the type of drunk who makes terrible life decisions,” she admitted and looked over at Santana, “She hasn’t started to get all emotional yet?”

Charlie glanced over at her girlfriend. “She’s only had a few so far,” Charlie admitted, but there was nothing to get emotional about so far, and she was fine with watching everyone drink and have a good time. The twins were quiet for a moment just taking everything in. “I like her a lot you know,” Charlie says after a moment her eyes still on Santana. She doesn’t notice the look on annoyance on Quinn’s face even if it was there for only a moment. But she wants them to get along better.

“I’m in love with Rachel,” Quinn says turning to her girlfriend instead.

“You better be, I’ve walked in to many times to you two about to start getting busy for you to say you don’t love her,” Charlie teases as she pushes herself up, she’s going to try this dancing again because she really wants to dance with Santana. “So I just have to have confidence in myself?” she asks her sister again.

Quinn studies her sister, it’s not like they’re doing complicated steps, and Charlie has just always never liked making a fool of herself in front of Santana or Brittany. But Charlie looks unsure of herself and Quinn’s reminded of the fact that she’s never really danced with any girl before or any guy, always to afraid that someone would find out her secret. So she offers Charlie the best advice she can even though she really doesn’t need the imagery in her head, “It’s like sex Charlie, but with your clothes on,” she says and she watches as Charlie lights up because she can do that.

“It’s like sex?” Rachel asks and Quinn tilts her head up to her girlfriend who is smiling at her, she’s not sloppy drunk yet and looks just a bit buzzed. Rachel looks over at Charlie who is now dancing with Santana, there is still a nervous look on her face but at least she’s moving her hips with the music this time. “Why aren’t you drinking?” she asks after a moment, “Puck wants to do body shots, except I told him I didn’t know what that was,” she admits, but she had declined when he had offered to show her.

Quinn glares at Puck, his general level of perversion is slightly more intense when he drinks, but he isn’t paying her any attention and is currently talking to Brittany, probably hoping to do a body shot off her. “I’m the make terrible life choices drunk. Brittany is the stripper drunk, Mercedes and Tina are the happy drunks. Mike and Sam look to be the reckless drunks, Puck is the sleazy drunk and Blaine looks to be the sloppy drunk.”

“And what am I?” Rachel asks taking a seat on Quinn’s lap and leaning in to kiss her.

Quinn kisses back, “I don’t know yet,” and she hopes that Rachel isn’t the horny drunk because that would make things extraordinarily difficult for her.

“Well I expect you to dance with me,” she demands in a bossy tone and Quinn can only smile, “I was promised sexy dancing,” she nods her head and gets up off Quinn’s lap and pulls her girlfriend up by the hand and pulling her onto the makeshift dance floor.

Quinn can’t help but smile because she does actually like dance even if she’s no Brittany and Santana and she dances with Rachel.
The night wears on and Santana has pulled Charlie away from talking to Tina, and she’s kissing her hard now, it’s possessive and controlling and Charlie lets her. It frustrates Quinn to no end because she doesn’t know why her sister can’t see that Santana is Santana and this relationship will never work out. “You know I had hoped for a Charlie Brittany pairing myself,” Quinn flicks her eyes to Kurt. “I don’t want to get sloppy and I’m the designated driver,” he explains.

Quinn smiles at him and he takes a seat beside her on the couch and the two of them watch their respective significant other singing a duet together, “How’s Dalton treating you?”

Kurt shrugs, he doesn’t really like it there he likes being an individual. He’s like being his own shiny star, and he wants to come back but not with Karofsky still hanging around the school not with that threat hanging over his head. “I miss you guys,” he says and he studies the room, it’s not the complete glee club, Artie and Finn are noticeably missing and he sighs, he had told Finn he was going to a Dalton party and he’s tired of Finn moping around because all of his friends are gone. He’s gotten better, he’s learning. “You know he forgives you right? Finn?”

Quinn nods, “We talked about it,” she admits, taking a sip of her water. “Rachel wants to tell him so he leaves her alone, but he still has his temper and he’s still got his issues with Charlie to deal with. They still hate each other. But it’s like the cold war, it gets hot only some of the time, and right now it’s just that cold.”

Kurt is quiet because he’s heard Finn going on about how Charlie has taken everything from him, how she humiliates him at every turn. “Maybe you can talk to her, he misses hanging out with the guys. He misses feeling included, I think they could be good friends if they got over whatever it is that they don’t like about each other.”

Quinn looks at him and then looks at Charlie who is saying something to Santana, “I don’t know why she hates him as much as she does,” Finn sleeping with Santana might have something to do with it. But Santana had played the situation to her benefit, she had played Charlie. It hadn’t been Finn’s fault, he hadn’t approached the Latina. “And I know you didn’t sit beside me to talk about Finn.”

Kurt grins at her because no one is as sharp as Quinn is, it’s refreshing at times, “You’re right, Rachel and you—I wasn’t surprised when she told me. I sort of knew, but how are you taking it—the being a lesbian part of it? At least you haven’t started to invest in flannel shirts,” Kurt crinkles his nose and looks at Charlie, at least she had moved on from the shorts all the time phase, he’d still die if he could give her a makeover.

“I slept with Sam in order to prove to myself I was straight,” Quinn admits. “I think I’m okay with things now, I still don’t want to tell my mom, she doesn’t—I won’t take it well.” The last thing she wants is to send her mother back to the bottle like Charlie does.

“I kissed Brittany,” Kurt says, he never had any intention of sleeping with her but he had done it nonetheless. He’s happy with Blaine but he wonders if Dave had simply tried like Quinn had, if he’d be dating his former tormentor. Rachel seems happy though and Quinn is a changed person.

Quinn watches as Rachel finally catches her eye and motions for her to come over so they can sing together and Quinn grins and looks at Kurt, “You know, Charlie does probably need help finding something to wear for prom.” Kurt’s eyes light up and he studies the other Fabray with a predatory look on his face. Quinn takes that moment to get off the couch and get onto the makeshift stage with Rachel.
It’s the smell of Taco Bell that wakes Santana up in the afternoon, and for a moment she doesn’t know where she is but she sees an Iron Man poster on the wall and she smiles as she flicks her eyes to her girlfriend who currently is sitting at her desk in only a pair of fitted Spiderman boxers and a tight fitting black shirt, her hair is wet and it looks like she just had a shower. A quick look at the clock tells that it’s past noon and Charlie had probably been to soccer practice in the morning. Her head hurts but Charlie is sitting in relative darkness, with her blinds closed with only a table lamp on.

Charlie hadn’t realized that Santana was awake just yet and it gave her a moment to study her girlfriend. She’d been in this position many times before, waking up in a strange bed after a night of partying, most times they are in a hurry to get her out of the room, other times they think they’re smooth enough to try for seconds. Most people would have demanded sex from her, and yet here was Charlie still trying to treat her like she was the most special person in the world. Trying to be different, trying to show her with every little thing that she did, that she was important. It didn’t matter if Charlie couldn’t dance to save her life or got horrendously awkward at times, and was a ‘secret’ nerd, or, to Santana’s mounting frustration, they hadn’t had sex yet.

She can’t help but wonder if things would have been different if she had made a different choice back in freshman year. Charlie had protected the hobbit, even though Rachel had insisted on joining glee club. She had protected her the best she could from Quinn’s attention. And maybe things would have been different for Charlie, she would have found out sooner rather than having her girlfriend show up at her door beaten and bleeding.

“If you feel like crap there’s a bottle of Gatorade and an aspirin, on the nightstand and I got you some Taco Bell,” Charlie says without looking at her as she flips the page.

Santana lets out a low groan, and finally sits up, “How did you know?” she asks after a moment, because she had been silent.

Charlie finally looks up at her and there is a playful glint in her eyes, “You stopped snoring about five minutes ago,” she admits and watches as the pillow that Santana threw at her falls onto the ground in front of her. “I thought it was cute,” she admits after a moment. “I tried to wake you up earlier to tell you that I had to go, but you were out like a light, so I left a note.”

She looks at the sticky note on the Gatorade, her handwriting is getting better and she grabs the bottle as she takes the pill and swallows it. She lets out a grunt because she needs her dose of caffeine and she studies Charlie for a moment. “How was practice?”

Charlie made a face, “Roz is going to be the death of me,” she admits after a moment, “I have half a mind to threaten to quit again, but I think I can only pull that once a year,” she’s griping but there is a smile on her face as she finally puts the comic book down and gives Santana all of her attention crawling onto the bed beside her.

Santana nods and opens the bag and smiles because Charlie has picked up all her favorites, “Thanks,” she says and presses her lips against Charlie’s cheek causing the soccer player to grin happily. She eats in silence for a moment before reaching into the bag and pulling out a taco and offering it to Charlie, “Relax I’m not going to rat you out to Roz,” she says because Charlie has been beyond good with her diet and a little cheating never hurt anyone. It’s worth it to see the soccer player grin and bite into the taco generously and let out a moan. Parts of the night before are fuzzy and she can’t remember if she had bawled like she normally did.

“You’ve got something on your mind,” Charlie says after she inhales the taco. Because normally Santana would have made some cracks already.
She doesn’t know if it’s still the alcohol in her system that is making her feel vulnerable but she pushes through, “Did you want me just because I was a cheerleader? Back in freshman year?”

“No. I liked how protective you were over Brittany, I loved how you terrified the student body, I liked that you aren’t afraid of my sister. I would have liked you even if you weren’t wearing a cheerleading uniform every day,” Charlie says gently. “I liked going to the duck pond and feeding the ‘water rats’ with you,” she admits after a moment.

Santana winces even though she smiles at her affectionate term for the ducks, she would deny it but she had been afraid of Quinn. She had seen what Quinn had done to Rachel, she had been terrified to be on the receiving end of it, to be with the rest of the losers. She wants to admit her transgression but Charlie’s looking at her with that loving look of hers, like she can do no wrong and she just feels sick. Even though it’s become easier to read Charlie like a book, she can’t predict what Charlie would do if she found out. So she puts it away for now, Quinn won’t say a word not about this and no one other than Brittany knows.

“You’re thinking of not going back to the Cheerios?” Charlie asks and it brings Santana out of her thoughts.

Truthfully she hadn’t given it much thought, Sue would be desperate next year for the unholy trinity to return. She wanted to avenge her loss at regionals and she’d probably be more tolerable at least in the short term. But she nods, because Charlie can’t even begin to suspect what went on.

“Yeah, still going to think I’m hot if you’re not dating the head cheerleader?”

Charlie snorts, because she thinks Santana looks beautiful without the Cheerios uniform and she’s enjoying seeing the Latina in street clothes at school. Kurt had been on her to change her wardrobe to at least look like she could pass as Santana’s girlfriend. She was beginning to think he may have a point, “Of course I will. Besides it’s not the uniform that makes you a badass, it’s you. You’re the badass. You know Rachel still honestly believes that you carry razor blades in your hair?” Santana laughs at this and Charlie grins.

“Still if I’m not a cheerleader then what can I do?” Santana asks after a moment and Charlie crosses her legs.

“I’d say join the soccer team, but I’d be your captain and I don’t think you’d like me bossing you around—” And there was the unfortunate thing where Santana hated being second to anyone and it seemed that Charlie had the same competitive streak. She didn’t share the spotlight well when it was on her.

“Wanky,” Santana interrupts and grins when Charlie flushes, it’s easy to wind the teenager up and Charlie shoots her a heated look. “I also can’t dance like you can.”

“I can teach you this summer,” Charlie offers if she can teach children how to play soccer she’s sure that she can teach Santana enough to get on the team, “But I think you like dancing more than you let on, and there isn’t any real dancing in soccer,” though she’s studying Santana and the Latina knows Charlie’s imagining her in a uniform.

“You can start by teaching me that roll that you do,” Santana says and Charlie laughs, “I don’t know how you can’t dance you’re graceful on the field, and you’re really good at sex, these are things that should translate well to dancing.”

Charlie gives her a small smile, because she gets nervous dancing in front of Santana, not wanting to embarrass herself, and then she gets distracted, and the next thing she knows she’s tripping over her feet. It’s a vicious cycle and she does end up with the Latina laughing at her, but she finds she
doesn’t necessarily mind, “Thinking that dancing is like sex gives me a whole new set of problems,” she admits. Having Santana grinding on her like last night—

“Early arrival problems happen,” she said and Charlie gave her a look of mock annoyance as Santana smirked at her. Santana patted Charlie’s knee.

“I don’t have early arrival problems,” Charlie gripes crossing her arms over her chest. “You know I don’t,” she adds in a firm tone, because like hell she’s going to be compared to Finn Hudson. But the annoyance is gone after a few seconds. And a quiet forms over them.

“You know—you could have last night,” Santana says after a moment, but Charlie gives her a look, “It’s not like you’d have been the first. I already told you that you had full visitation rights, and we’re not Quinn and Rachel, we’re not that nauseating.”

Charlie says nothing for a moment and the conversation has taken a deep turn, “I’m never going to have sex with you when you’re drunk and I’m sober. I don’t drink Santana, the fact that I get urges when I feel upset is bad enough but I can’t be like my parents with a drink in my hand. I know a few drinks won’t turn me into them but it probably started with social drinking and then it spiraled into what they are now and that’s not healthy I imagine. And if I’m with you, I want you to know it’s me. I want you to remember that we have sex, so I’m never going to take advantage, ever.”

Charlie’s convictions give Santana pause again, and she wonders how different the past would have been if she had told Quinn to go fuck herself all the way back in freshman year. But instead she leans into Charlie who wraps an arm around her.

Charlie takes a breath, “Judy caught me—at your place the other day,” she admits and she feels Santana stiffen. “I don’t know how, I think she might have seen my car. It’s not like she’s going to tell anyone, I don’t think she has any friends left,” Charlie says quickly. “I’ll be more careful, and I’ll switch cars with Quinn.

The last thing that Santana needs is another wild card Fabray in her business, “What if she tells my parents?”

Charlie is quiet for a moment, “I’ll kiss the proverbial ring then,” she says without hesitation and Santana can see the light dim from Charlie’s eyes. “If she brings it up again, then I’ll figure out something to give her so she’ll keep quiet about it,” it’s a promise and Charlie begins to wonder what she can still give Judy.

“No. You’re not giving up anything else,” she says and Charlie looks at her confusion on her face, “I’ll handle it.” Charlie opens her mouth to protest, “I’ll handle it,” she repeats firmly. Her parents are never home anyway and her parents want nothing more to do with Judy and Russell Fabray it will be difficult.

“Congrats on giving Charlie a heart attack last Friday,” Quinn says to Santana who rolls her eyes. Charlie wasn’t the only person whose heart had skipped a few beats. Quinn had felt terrified for Brittany as well.

Santana made a face because Charlie had decided to hole herself up in her room all weekend in an attempt to make sure that she didn’t accidentally get her pregnant, they hadn’t even done it yet and she had been working on getting Charlie to not worry about condoms while with her. “Your sister overreacted,” Santana said sourly.
“I think it had more to do with the fact that Brittany thought that a stork would deliver a baby than anything else,” Quinn said shaking her head. While it was amusing in hindsight, Charlie had pointed out bluntly that she’d had sex with Brittany before and it could have been her kid.

“She made me and Britt sit through one of Rachel’s sexual health PowerPoints Quinn. Do you know how detailed it was?” Santana griped. Charlie had been there as well being a nerd about it. “This is all your fault you know, if you hadn’t had your lizard baby, none of this would have happened.” Charlie wouldn’t have freaked out, she wouldn’t have overreacted, and they would probably be skipping glee and having sexy times at this moment.

“If you hadn’t told her that Brittany was pregnant none of this would have happened. You know how much Charlie loves her,” Quinn said as they entered the choir room where Charlie was setting up her equipment.

“I still need a song Quinn,” Charlie says without looking up. It’s the contest to see who will get the solo and there were only three contestants. Rachel had finally calmed down enough after Charlie had admitted that the diva had the better song.

Quinn made a face, she did have a song but it was a duet. It was a duet for her and Rachel and she wanted her sister to help her put the music to the words. Writing an anthem was difficult, and she’d finally caved and admitted to Mr. Schue that she needed help. “I have something—but it’s not what we need,” she admits.

“Well then I’ll take a look at it later,” Charlie promises and looks at Santana and gives her a sheepish look. “Rachel may have mentioned that I acted like a jackass this weekend, and I’m sorry. It’s just—I’m already an aunt, I’m too young to father—mother, whatever, a child. Beth is enough for me right now,” she admits biting her lip. Santana gives her a dry look, “I promise not to have Rachel give you any more PowerPoints on anything and I’ll make you the best dinner you’ve ever had.” Charlie offers.

“Well then I’ll take a look at it later,” Charlie promises and looks at Santana and gives her a sheepish look. “Rachel may have mentioned that I acted like a jackass this weekend, and I’m sorry. It’s just—I’m already an aunt, I’m too young to father—mother, whatever, a child. Beth is enough for me right now,” she admits biting her lip. Santana gives her a dry look, “I promise not to have Rachel give you any more PowerPoints on anything and I’ll make you the best dinner you’ve ever had.” Charlie offers.

“Is this like Rachel saying that she can cook? Because that was a disaster,” Quinn adds, “We ordered in.”

Charlie shoots her twin a look, and then nods at Santana and this seems to catch Santana’s attention. Charlie’s eyes are dancing with mischief, and the Latina shoots the soccer player a smirk.

“Gross,” Quinn says making a face because she doesn’t really want to know as she takes a seat in one of the chairs. It seems that Charlie is over the pregnancy scare. “Wait—where are me and Rachel supposed to go?”

“I don’t know, but I’ve let you guys have the house for months now,” Charlie said with a shrug. “Don’t care figure it out take her out to go to a movie or something, or you know use your own bed for once?” her tone is snippy and she’s irritated because she’s been more than accommodating. It was one night that she was asking for, and Quinn’s been at Rachel’s every night for the past week and over the weekends. “Besides Rachel already said I could,” Charlie said dismissively.

Quinn wants to argue with her sister but it’s not her house and Rachel has apparently given her permission, which means that the diva must have a plan for this weekend and she wants to know what it is but it’s probably a surprise. She’s going to ask Rachel when she comes in but the diva is a bundle of nerves suddenly unsure of herself. She can’t blame her, showing your vulnerabilities in a song like that in a song. Though she’s not completely sure if it’s the nerves about the lyrics to the song or whether she’s afraid she won’t win the contest is beyond her. She’s eager to actually hear Rachel’s song. She had been extremely quiet about it and wouldn’t let Quinn hear it until it was
time for the big reveal.

“I don’t see why Rachel’s mom is here, isn’t that making the competition unfair?” Mercedes ask, it’s like they all want Rachel to win and it’s not fair.

“I thought that we could have a panel of three judges, just to make sure that the best song is picked,” Will said looking at Charlie who blinked from where she was sitting.

“She’s Rachel’s best friend—” Clearly it’s true that they’re trying to tilt the odds in Rachel’s favor and it’s not fair.

“I also want nothing to do with this, I’m no judge. I just want to get the last song finished so I can focus on soccer. I’m the only person who has already heard all four songs, several times, to many times. I know I had the most fun doing your music Mercedes, I know Rachel was a perfectionist and drove me crazy with her back seat mixing, and truthfully Dani could have easily done the job that you assigned to me, I barely had to help her.”

“I do write and perform all my own songs,” Dani says and Charlie points at her.

“See. You didn’t need me you had a perfectly capable singer song writer all on her own,” Charlie gripes and slides down in her chair.

Rachel shoots her hand up, “If I may I’d like to go first,” she offers getting up before anyone can protest as she walks to the front of the classroom. There are numerous groans and Charlie nods at Brad and the song begins to play.

“What can you do when your good isn’t good enough?

And all that you touch, tumbles down?

’Cause my best intentions keep making a mess of things

I just wanna fix it somehow”

It’s not the epic love song that Quinn was expecting, and she looks at Rachel closely watching her as the diva continues to sing. She can’t help but wonder if the song was written directed at her, and for a moment she panics because she had believed that things between them were fine.

It’s Finn that asks the question and there’s a confused look on his face, “Get it right?” There is a look of hope on his face. “You want to fix us?”

Rachel makes a face because she hadn’t thought of how Finn would take it when she wrote the song, “No, Finn as I’ve told you many times, I’m focusing on my career, and my eyes are set on someone else.” She says glancing at Quinn who visibly relaxes. “I wrote it after we broke up, because it came to my attention that I’ve been putting my faith in all the wrong people.”

Even though Rachel meant it as a dig at Finn

Mama said get your ass out of bed, I said hell to the no

Said wash your grandma’s nasty hair, I said hell to the no

They tried to take away my tots, I said hell to the no
Yeah, ‘cause I'm the one that calls the shots and I say hell to the no

The song manages to get everyone dancing and moving, it’s probably Mercedes personal anthem and even Will seems impressed. But it’s clear that it’s not Regionals material and Rachel relaxes for a moment, she can win this she needs to win this.

Mr. Schuester looks around, “Those two songs were all really good,” he starts, Mercedes had been fun, but Rachel’s song would win them the competition.

Mercedes grins because she truly believes that she has this contest in the bag, “Thank-you,” she ignores the look from Rachel all together. Will shoots her an apologetic look, and she knows that once again she’s lost to Rachel Berry. “My song was amazing,” she says firmly and there is a murmur of agreement.

It’s Shelby that speaks up “I agree that it was a good song, and it looks like you had a lot of fun with it, but that’s not Regional’s material.”

“You’re just agreeing because Rachel is your daughter,” Mercedes says in an accusing tone.

“We can put it to a vote right now and Rachel would probably win, it’s a better song,” Finn says trying to come to Rachel’s defense.

“It’s not a better song—” Mercedes begins again.

“I have to go with the hobbit Mercedes, it’s a better song,” Santana says not really paying attention or caring to what’s going on.

“Rachel wrote my favorite song, My Headband,” Brittany says and Rachel turns red at the mention of the rather awful song that she wrote.

Sam raises his hand, “I like Mercedes song best—”

“And that’s only because you want to get into her pants Trouty Mouth,” Santana’s getting agitated now and Brittany looks at her trying to get her to calm down.

“It’s not regionals material Mercedes,” Will says, once again denying her the solo. “Look what’s your favorite song of all time?” he asks pointing at Santana.

“Alanis Morisette’s You Oughta Know,” Santana says without hesitation her eyes still focused on the door.

Mr. Schue points to Puck, “What’s Going On Marvin Gaye.” He responds.

“Okay and what are all those songs about?” he asks, ignoring Brittany’s raised hand he’s learned his lesson. “All those songs come from a place of pain. The greatest songs are about hurt, and that’s the side of yourselves I want you to get in touch with.”

Artie snorts, “That should be easy. Coach Sylvester tortures us for no reason and tries to get the entire school to hate us.”

Santana nodded, “Last week, she filled Britt’s and my locker with dirt,” she turns to Quinn. “What did she do to you?”

Quinn bit her lip, “Mass slushy,” she admits and Rachel gives her a sharp look. “I’ve been bringing spare clothes, knowing that she’ll retaliate somehow and she knows how much I hated getting
slushed last year.”

Mercedes frowns, “Is that it? She literally throws sticks at me.”

Shelby pauses and looks at the kids at the room and she sees that Quinn seems to have an idea, “I think my job here is complete,” she says getting up.

Will nods at her and writes on the whiteboard, “Okay, what else? What else?” he asks writing things down on the board almost as fast as Quinn is writing down song lyrics down in her notebook.

“She called the Ohio Secretary of State, saying she was me and that I want to legally change my name to “Tina Cohen-Loser.” Tina says and everyone turns to her.

Will pauses, “She did what?” he asks not believing the levels that Sue Sylvester will stoop to. Okay, and how does that make you feel?” he asks.

Finn speaks up, “Well, at first it hurts, but…Then it mostly makes you want to win,” he admits.

“I think we just found your song—”

“You wanna be a loser like me,” Quinn says humming a bit and everyone looks at her. “I think I’ve got an idea down,” she admits and looks at the scribbles on the page she’s at least got a chorus down.

“I knew you could do it,” Rachel murmurs in her ear.

Quinn looks at the song, “It still needs to be completed and Charlie won’t touch it till we have a complete song.”

It’s been awhile since the twins worked on anything together. Charlie and Quinn when they’re on the same page make an excellence team and Quinn is sitting on the ground throwing out lyrics while Charlie is at her board, creating new music, “I need a bridge,” Quinn says looking at Charlie, most of the lyrics are complete and there are hundreds of crumpled up balls of paper on Charlie’s floor.

Charlie rubs her eyes as she looks at her sister, they’ve been at this all night, and it’s currently four am, for every crumpled up piece of paper there is a digital file in the trash of Charlie’s laptop. Charlie would take Quinn’s ideas and put them to some music, she unplugged her headphones and hit the play button and let Quinn hear what she had so far, the chorus had been done, and now it was just stitching every little bit together. “Rapping is quite popular in today’s bridges,” she says after the song finishes playing.

Quinn gives her sister a look, but Charlie shrugs, she’s exhausted and wants to go to sleep and Quinn wants to continue to push her sister to get it done, but Charlie’s already used her daily allotted amount of caffeine. “No rapping,” she says and Charlie nods. “What about—a cheer? We’ve got Santana and Brittany and I’m an ex-cheerleader. It’s different.”

Charlie grunts, and looks at the music on the screen and squints at it for a moment, “I told you guys not to leave this to the last moment.” She gripes but it seems to be there thing and regionals are this Saturday, and they are cutting it close to the wire. There still needs to be choreography, they still need to practice non-stop. To get the whole number right, the bridge is the last part and a cheer sounds like last piece to the puzzle. “You’re a cheerleader isn’t coming up with a cheer your strength.” It would help with the drum line.
“Santana and Brittany are better at it than I am,” Quinn admits, yawning loudly as she stretches.

“A cheerleader who can’t cheer how quaint,” Charlie says grumpily and tosses Quinn her phone, “You can be the idiot who wakes Santana up at four am,” she wants nothing to do with an angry Latina. “Don’t give me that look I told you not to leave it to the last moment. I specifically said don’t leave it to the last minute. Here we are last moment.”

“She’s your girlfriend,” Quinn hisses trying toss Charlie’s phone back to her.

“Yes I’m aware that she’s my girlfriend that’s why I’m letting you use my phone, she’ll be slightly less irritated and she will actually pick up, might want to add Brittany to that call,” Charlie said slumping onto her desk, after a loud yawn.

Quinn curses her sister out and calls Santana who finally picks up right after the phone is about to go to voicemail. “Had another nightmare?” Santana’s voice is tired and Quinn pauses and flicks her eyes to Charlie for a moment. It’s another thing that Charlie hasn’t mentioned to her and she wonders why they were supposed to be getting closer.

“What night—never mind I need a cheer, for the song,” she says and she throws a ball of paper at Charlie’s head when she hears a soft snore. Her sister jumps up startled and flicks her gaze back to Quinn and flips her off. Quinn rolls her eyes.

Santana is quiet for a moment, “You’re calling me at 4 am for a fucking cheer?” she begins.

“The song is almost done Santana, it’s just a few lines and it’s going to be your and Britt’s solo, so just help and you can go back to bed,” Quinn says tossing another paper at Charlie’s head.

“What the fuck do you have so far?” comes the grumpy reply.

Quinn nods at Charlie and puts the Latina on speaker phone and they both sing what they have, and Quinn pulls the Latina off speaker, “Does it sound good?” she asks. Santana doesn’t answer the question she just begins to come up with a cheer from the top of her sleep deprived mind and then promptly hangs up, because it’s much too early to be dealing with the Fabray twins. Quinn looks at what Santana spouted out and changes a few things, it’s enough to be a place holder for Charlie to add the music, and she’s sure that when Santana is more awake they can fix it later.

“She got it,” Quinn says as she begins to say the cheer.

Charlie taps the beat out as best as she can, and goes back to her laptop putting the drum line in. She plays the song again but she’s already done for the night no longer caring as she saves her work and writes a note and puts it on the screen of her computer for Rachel and stumbles into her bed and falls face first exhausted.

Quinn writes the lyrics out again properly before she too finally succumbs to the need for sleep and she too falls onto Charlie’s bed. It’s how Rachel finds them the next morning and she grins and bites her lip and takes a picture of the two of them laying on the bed. Charlie’s curled into her sister’s side and Quinn’s laying on her back. She decides to let them sleep in for the day as she takes the completed project and calls Shelby to ask for a pick up.

They win Regionals with relative ease. And despite the fact that they rushed to get the group number done they still manage to bring the whole thing home. It’s the only competition that Charlie misses.
Chapter 42

Puck hissed in pain as he was slammed into the ground hard, he had no idea how the fight had got turned around on him so quickly. But whoever the Nick the Brick was, he was currently pounding on him as hard as he could. He was a Thurston academy goon, and Puck recognized him from the football team. He managed to finally shove him, he was slow in getting up and Nick the Brick was faster slamming his fist into Puck’s face. Noah Puckerman was knocked out cold as he collapsed onto the floor of the dirty arena. The last thing he heard was the screaming of the crowd.

Despite the fact that he’d gotten his ass kicked so thoroughly, Puck was up seconds later, dazed and confused as Sam slipped into the makeshift ring to help his friend out. “We’re fucked,” Sam whispered to Puck whose legs shook and he nearly went down again, only to have Sam catch him. With Sam’s help he finally managed to get Puck outside of the warehouse and watched as the mohawked man took a seat on the ground. “Shit, are you okay?” Sam asked handing him a bottle of water.

Puck took it and drank it, groaning, he’s not getting paid for the ass beating that he just took and he needed the cash badly, his surefire method to pick the winner of fights has started to cost him. He’s already down to his last hundred dollars. “No, how much are we out?”

Sam makes a face because he had been sure that this was a surefire plan to make money, “2.5k,” he admits and he sees Puck wince at the number. It had started out just fine he had money, plenty of it to help out with the folks but it dried up the moment he started to get his ass kicked. “Puck we need to get our hands on that money before the end of the month,” Sam hisses. Puck makes a face, because he’s been paying off their debts but it’s getting too much and he can’t handle it. “Do you think we can borrow the cash from Charlie?” he asks. “They’re like loaded.”

Puck winces, “Can’t I already owe the twins like fifteen thousand for getting her mother to bail me out of jail, and it was what I was planning to spend the money on. Noah Puckerman always pays his fucking debts. Look you need to win your fight tonight, so we can have a bit of cash.”

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Sam’s mouth drops, “You owe Charlie how much?” he asks his voice above a whisper because he can’t believe it. His mouth is dry and he’s nervous because that’s more money than he’s ever made, and he already owes Puck for spotting him but the money’s run dry and they’re already in the hole, but if he can put on a show tonight and get some bonus money they can put a dent in what they owe. Then all it will take is them both winning and they’ll be back in the black again. They’d be smarter this time more cautious, they wouldn’t place any bets. They wouldn’t see any of the doctors that Sandy had hired because that also cut into the profits.

The light-headed feeling has passed and Puck is standing up, “The guy you’re fighting is a bit of a pussy, so just remember what I said about him, take him out quickly, jabs and try to stop him from taking you down. Lauren warned me about him, he’s really good at submissions.” It’s the best warning that Puck can give he’s watched the guy fight before, “Rush him, and finish it quickly, you know you get bonus money if you kick his ass in under a minute.”

Sam nods, because he can do it, he can kick ass when it depends on it, and right now it depends on it. “Got it take him out quickly,” he repeats the instructions that Puck gave him. Because it’s the best advice that he has so when he gets in there he attempts to do just that. But the guy seems to know that his weakness is striking and he manages to evade Sam, the blonde becoming frustrated as the seconds tick by and suddenly he lunges for the guy. It’s a critical error and he finds himself eating mat, the guy wrapping his beefy legs around Sam’s arm slipping him into a devastating arm bar. Sam Evan’s taps out immediately because he can’t afford to go to the hospital right now with a
busted arm, they’re already getting ready to move into a one bed room motel. The fights over and Sam slams his hands onto the dirt ground hard. They needed to put a down payment down. He should have fucking listened to the advice Charlie had given him from day one, hanging out with Noah Puckerman was a terrible idea. The worst idea that he had ever had in his entire life. This fight club business ranked right up there with his brilliant idea to listen to Puck.

He pulls himself up and storms out of the makeshift ring and he shoves Puck, “This is your fault,” he’s pissed but it’s his own fault for going along with this stupid idea. He had thought it was easy money but clearly he had been wrong. “What are we going to do man? We need to get the cash. What if I borrow the money from Quinn?”

“Dude we can’t go to the twins to help us out. Look Sandy isn’t going to have us beaten or anything like that we’re two good looking dudes, and he hates to hurt the merchandise, plus if we can’t fight we can’t pay him back,” Puck says. “He might get us to do some other things to make it up for him, I might have to sell some weed again but low key stuff. Only to people at school and stuff, none of the streets nonsense. We can see if we can work security at the club nights. We’ll figure this shit out,” Puck promises.

Sam calms down a bit because he’s right, they will figure it out. He hopes, maybe they can make enough money to be in the black or at least break even then he’s done, he can’t deal with the stress and he’s sure that Mercedes is starting to get suspicious.

“When I said I would wear any apron you wanted,” Charlie said looking at the batman apron that Santana had gotten for her, “I didn’t think you’d be this cruel,” she says pouting at her girlfriend. “I would have preferred to wear a pink one with frills.”

Santana grins because she had thought of that and she had found one but she had decided to go with something else entirely, they’d had to cancel their plans on Friday, both of them had practice and Charlie was too tired to even deal with attempting to cook dinner. Santana leans in and kisses her, “You promised me anything,” she mumbles against Charlie’s lips and the teenager groans and kisses back before putting on the apron. Santana takes a step back, inhaling she had been skeptical to hear that Charlie was going to attempt something in the kitchen, but the kitchen smelled like fresh bread.

Charlie ties the apron behind her back and ties her shaggy blonde hair back into a pony tail, “I promise you, you’ll never want to eat at Breadstix again,” she says mostly because she’s getting sick of Breadstix but it’s Santana’s favorite so she continues on.

“Blasphemy,” Santana says with a sniff watching as Charlie makes pasta fresh, the soccer player grins at her and she’s impressed as Charlie does seem to know what she’s doing.

“Trust me, this is about the only thing I can make really well,” Charlie informs Santana as she stirs the marinara. She opens the oven to take a look at the bread and then heads back to what she was doing as she finishes chopping up the ingredients for a marinara sauce. She moves quickly pulling out the meatballs that she had prepped the night before, and thanking god that Rachel had instilled some preparation skills for her as she places the fresh pasta in the boiling pot and pulls out the breadsticks. She had only made twenty-four and she hopes it’s enough because if there is one thing that Santana liked more than anything is breadsticks. She gently swats Santana’s hand away. “Not yet,” she chides as she stirs in the meatballs into her marinara, before tossing in the spaghetti into a pot.
“I thought you said that your father said that cooking was a girl’s job and you never learned how to cook.” she tastes the spoon that Charlie is holding out for her and she’s surprised at the flavors, and she’ll grumpily admit it is better than Breadstix frozen crap that they just heat up and serve.

“Ms. C taught me,” Charlie admits. “She freaked out when she found out that Rachel and I had been living here on our own without parental supervision. It didn’t help that you were over and I was just in a towel,” Charlie shoots Santana a look but she isn’t surprised to see the smirk on her face. “And she was even more aghast when she found out that all we ate was take-out. So she taught both of us enough so that we could cook on our own. We eat considerably less takeout now. Like once a week instead of every day. She also says I need a haircut again and she wants to take me and Rachel out to get new clothes for the summer. And she sort of nags me to do certain things and she gives me advice sometimes. And she’s the one that I went to for vocal lessons and she gave me some basic instruction on how to play the piano. She also was the one to tell me what she thought was romantic. She’s just as organized as Rachel is, it’s sort of creepy you know genetics.”

“So basically she’s parenting you?” Santana asks and Charlie freezes and she wonders if she’s said something wrong Charlie was iffy about the parenting situation. Her girlfriend doesn’t seem angry and she just looks at Santana confused.

“Is that what parents are supposed to do?” she asks after a moment tilting her head. “I just go to her for help and stuff, and she does it probably because I’m living with Rachel.” Santana sighs and watches as Charlie looks away suddenly embarrassed, “I didn’t mean to co-opt Rachel’s mom. I’ve never needed a mom, I had my dad,” she says after a moment.

“Every girl needs her mother, or at least someone who can totally tell them that wearing shorts in winter is a terrible idea,” Santana says and Charlie flushes again. “I don’t know—"

“Judy stopped buying me clothes when she found out, she focused on Quinn a lot and forgot about me. Either she didn’t know what to do with me or it was just easier to pretend that I was a problem that didn’t exist. Shorts were the only thing that I had that still sort of fit me after my last growth spurt, and sweatpants were cheaper than jeans I only had like two pairs though. Lima doesn’t really have a thrift shop so I kind of just made do with what I had,” Charlie interrupts. “All they made sure that I had was the compression underwear so no one would know,” Charlie adds with a shrug. It’s a rare bout of pure honesty from the soccer player and she pauses and looks at Santana panicked like she just realized what she said is sad, but the panic is replaced by her crooked smile. “Sorry, trust me to make the topic sad when I’m about to have dinner with the hottest girl in school.”

Santana rolls her eyes and she can’t help but wonder now would be a good time to tell Charlie about her sins, but she doesn’t want to. Charlie doesn’t see her like everyone else, she doesn’t see her as the school slut, or this master manipulator. And she’s not sure if the soccer player will even believe her, the one thing that Santana knows for certain is that Charlie is overly protective of her sister refusing to see Quinn for the bitch that she sometimes was. She wonders what to do or what to say, Brittany would hug Charlie, Rachel would go into this long obnoxious rant, Quinn wouldn’t be having this conversation with her twin. Charlie doesn’t like to be pitied, she doesn’t like people to feel guilty because they didn’t know. But she needs to say something, “You promised not to brush things under the rug anymore, if you feel sad then you need to tell me. I want to know, I’m not ever going to understand. I’m not going to pretend to understand either, but you need to trust someone with the knowledge of the bad things that happened, not just what you want people to know.”

Charlie sighs and the smile fades for a moment and then looks at the dinner and begins to plate it without saying anything further, “What I want is to have a good time with you tonight, we can
watch a movie and I’ll let you be big spoon for once, just this once though. We can talk about it some other time, I promise I’ll tell you. But I don’t want to look to my past right now because that makes me sad and I really want to do is just—be with you. Right here in the present and be happy—with you.”

Santana smile and pulls Charlie into a kiss, she can do the present. The present and being there for Charlie is important, she’d tell the soccer player eventually. Maybe after they’ve been together for a bit longer, she’ll finally have the courage to speak up.

“Can you say Rachel, say Ray-Chel,” Rachel coos at Beth who is busy eating her fists staring at the brunette but she giggles after a moment and holds her hands up. “Don’t tell Quinn but you are the prettiest toddler I’ve ever seen.”

Quinn raises a brow, as she comes back with some cheerios, “I heard that,” she snaps playfully kissing Rachel’s cheek as she takes Beth from her causing the diva to pout a bit. “Can you say Quinn?” she asks. Beth ignores her and tries to smack the bright yellow box filled with cheerios, “Oh lovely, she’s just like my twin, more interested in food than people.” Quinn says shaking the box.

Beth screams in delight and pounds on the box some more, and Quinn rolls her eyes and grabs a handful of cheerios and offers it to Beth who grabs at and stuffs it in her mouth. “Well, at least we know she has a happy appetite,” Rachel says watching Beth, she’s growing up fast, and it seems that the clothes that were bought for her need to be replaced again. “Can you Ray-Chel?” she asks enunciating but Beth is too busy stuffing cheerios in her mouth to pay the diva any mind.

“Well as long as she stays away from the Cheerios’ everything will be fine. Sue Sylvester is a menace. Isn’t that right Beth.” Beth has no idea what’s going on but just looks up at Quinn still stuffing cheerios in her mouth, and Quinn makes a mental note to stop Charlie from eating in front of her daughter. “Puck would have loved to see this,” she says after a moment.

“He’s been hanging out with Sam a lot lately, and Mercedes says that Sam’s been acting all stressed out and he won’t tell her about it. You don’t think that Puck dragged Sam into some sort trouble?” Rachel asks.

“Puck promised that he wouldn’t cause any more trouble, Beth’s the most important girl in his life. You’re his little princess,” Quinn smiles at Beth who now seems uninterested in the food. “Can you say Quinn?”

Beth just looks at her strangely and Rachel hopes that she didn’t get Noah’s intelligence, it’s not a dig at Noah, no it is; he can be so dense at times. “Try Lucy?” she says. “Can you say Lucy, say Lu-cy” Rachel tries and Beth looks at her as she repeats the words several times.

“Loo. See,” Beth repeats after a moment, before she begins to repeat it more when Rachel smiles. “Loo. See. Loo. See. Lucy, Lucy, Lucy, Lucy,” she’s moving her little hands up and down in an excited manner and in her not noticing that Quinn’s eyes are tearing up and she holds her arms out for Rachel, “A-chel,” she says and this stuns Rachel for a moment but she takes the child from Quinn gently.

It’s not the exact words that Quinn wanted to hear, what she wouldn’t give to have Beth call her mama, or mom or anything like that but Beth isn’t her child anymore and she’s grateful that Beth can now say her name. Even if it is Lucy, she’s prouder still that she can say Rachel, or a close
enough derivative to her name that Rachel understands, and she watches as Rachel begins to sing to Beth who stops and just watches Rachel. Like mother like daughter, Beth finds listening to Rachel just as captivating and Quinn can’t wonder what it would be like to raise a child with Rachel, if she had kept Beth then maybe she could have raised her with Rachel.

It’s a thought that needs to be put away because she doesn’t want to think of more kids, or the ‘what ifs’ she’s enjoying her time with her daughter, she’s enjoying spending it with Rachel. It’s a thought for something deep in the future, though even she’s not sure if they’ll be together that far into the future, high school romances fizzle out and she finds herself slowly getting terrified of the future, because Lucy Quinn Fabray loves Rachel Barbra Berry, and even though she’s said it before she’s meant it every single time she’s said it. The thought still strikes her and fills her with warmth and makes her feel light. She’s better with Rachel by her side and she doesn’t want to lose her.

Lucy Quinn Fabray doesn’t know what the future holds for her and she’s scared because anything could happen in the future, she could lose Rachel tomorrow. She could come home and find Judy drunk on the couch again because her mother’s fallen off the wagon. Frannie could leave Jason. The future holds so many possibilities, which are almost endless. She has no doubt that Rachel will make it to New York, that she’ll be a big Broadway sensation. She needs to follow her there, she needs to join her in New York or close enough that they can still continue to date.

They came back on Sunday Morning a nice little get away for the two of them to the sight of Santana Lopez wearing Charlie’s soccer jersey and a pair of her boxers, Quinn immediately covered Rachel’s eyes, “What the hell Lopez,” she hissed at her friend. It was almost as bad as catching Charlie in bed with her.

“She tore it up yesterday,” Santana said before snorting at the horrified expression on Quinn’s face. “Relax, I was talking about her soccer game,” she added after a moment.

“So she won?” Rachel asked finally moving away from Quinn, she didn’t need the blonde protecting her modesty, but one look at Santana and the sex hair, in Charlie’s shirt, made the diva blush.

“In more ways than one hobbit. In more ways than one,” Santana’s smirk only got wider when Quinn shot her a look of disgust. “Oh please you two have been going at it like rabbits, now where do you keep the bacon, all I found was this fake crap and I wants some more lady—”

“Can you be anymore crude?” Quinn asked Santana, quickly realizing that yes Santana could be cruder.

“Her stamina is amazing you know, six,” Santana watched as Rachel’s eyes widened, “That’s right hobbit, six times—”

Charlie bounded into the kitchen wearing just boxers and a shirt, “Santana I’m looking for my— oh,” Charlie said grinning at her girlfriend, “You look really hot in my soccer jersey,” she said completely ignoring the fact that Rachel and Quinn were in the room, her eyes focused solely on Santana.

Quinn rolled her eyes, “Hey Quinn. Hey Rachel. How was my niece? She was great Charlie. She said my name, I cried like a baby, and she’s crawling now. I have pictures but you don’t get to see
Charlie blinked and flicked her eyes to Rachel and Quinn just realizing that they were in the room, “Oh, hey guys,” she said greeting them before looking back at Santana, “Can you tell Judy that I have soccer practice that I can’t miss?” Charlie asked her sister.

Rachel frowned, “Do you actually have a soccer practice you can’t miss?” Charlie nods, she does because Coach Roz isn’t happy if they aren’t perfect, so the six goals shared between her and Dani were not enough if they let even one goal in. “As captain of your team it is imperative that you show an excellent example and make it on time to the practice. You have a tournament to win don’t you?”

Charlie makes a face, because she can think of several things she’d rather be doing to Santana at this exact moment, and looks at the time, it’s thirty minutes till she has to get on the road, “I have time,” she says, “I’ll pick up something at Lima Bean,” she says.

Rachel turns to Quinn who looks irritated by the display, she knows that Quinn doesn’t approve of the union but Santana isn’t just staring at Charlie with lust there is a tenderness there and Charlie is relaxed and while she has a pleased look on her face there’s something else and Rachel doesn’t one minute think that they just fucked. Not from the way Santana takes Charlie’s hand, because the moment that they don’t think anyone is looking the smirks fade and they’re only doing it to irritate Quinn. It’s adorable in its own way.

Quinn rolls her eyes, though she doesn’t see the tenderness she just see’s the Santana of it all. She knows that Charlie will inevitably be hurt. She promised to watch her sister’s back, but that was hard to do when her sister insisted on being in love with Santana of all people.

Charlie still had that gentle smile on her face as she took a seat with Rachel on the couch a bowl of kettle corn on her lap as she offered some to Rachel, it had been ages since it was just the two of them without anything to do, and Charlie wasn’t really in the mood to deal with the rest of the members of the Super Smash Bros, she didn’t want to deal with Puck’s making comments about spank banks, and Sam wanting to hear sex tips. “We can watch Rent, if you wish,” she offered causing Rachel to grin.

“Good weekend?” Charlie wouldn’t have offered to watch a musical if it hadn’t been, and the soccer player nodded. Rachel popped off the couch to go put the DVD in and came back. “Quinn doesn’t really approve,” Rachel said cautiously.

“I know, she hates the Santana of it all,” Charlie said without hesitation. “Don’t ask me to explain their relationship because I can’t. Santana has Quinn’s back most times and Quinn returns the favor they are the unholy trinity after all. But they still have this rivalry going on and probably mutual respect. I try my hardest not to get involved in their little blood feuds. Brittany is the one that manages to keep them in line, or calm them down enough to not kill each other.”

Rachel is quiet for a moment, because there is that fondness whenever Charlie talks about Brittany, “Why not Brittany, she’s considerably less scary than Santana. I was sure that it was Brittany,” she grumbles mostly to herself.

Charlie’s hazel’s eyes flick to Rachel, “I do love Brittany, almost as much as I’m in love with Santana,” she admits. “But Brittany—I don’t think she can deal with half the stuff that goes on in my mind, she might realize that something is wrong faster than anyone else and she can probably
Rachel rolls her eyes, “Brittany is the sweetest girl I know and—”

“Think about it, she can control both my sister and Santana, you piss her off and bad things happen to you because both of them will go to help her and she’s got both them—Santana more than Quinn wrapped around her finger. And she gives you this look when she’s disappointed with you and she gives you this look and it makes you feel like the crappiest person in the world. And what’s worse is that everyone thinks she’s the most innocent person in the world.”

Rachel is about to argue but she thinks about Charlie’s very valid point and she realizes that Brittany has an unprecedented amount of power. “But—she’s so innocent and—remind me to never piss off Brittany.”

Charlie grins, “It’s generally wise not to piss Brittany off, because you probably won’t see it coming. She’ll just suggest something in that monotone voice of hers and Santana or Quinn will have it done. God the three of them are terrifying together.”

Rachel agrees, “Well at least we have Sam, Noah and Mike?”

“Really that’s who you’re going with?” Charlie asks with an amused smirk on her face.

Rachel laughs, “I did say we had Mike, didn’t I?”

“I’m going to tell her,” Santana says and Quinn stiffens and looks at the Latina incredulously because she can’t be serious. “She’s not stupid and I can see it that she wants to ask me what our issue is, because you keep giving me these shitty looks like I’m not good enough—”

“You aren’t good enough for her. You chose to be popular instead of choosing to be with her once before, and you knew she liked you. You chose popularity Santana and you’d do it again and again. You knew that she liked you when you went to go get naked with Puck, you knew that she liked you when you went to go be with Finn. Finn and my sister have been going at it all year and Finn doesn’t even like you like that.” Quinn interrupts her voice is harsh and unfeeling. She’s back to being head bitch in charge.

“She told me you know about how you tried, how you were there for her in your own way. From where I stand, you were too busy the golden child and giving Charlie your scraps and keeping your nose clean. If you hadn’t threatened me she would have been free from your family ages ago. She calls me at four in the morning when she has nightmares, she’s chosen me and I still have no idea why you can’t stand it. Yentl has forgiven you for much worse than whatever I did.”

“Do you even remember freshman year? You did everything to get at me, to shake me up you wanted to be head Cheerio so badly and then Sue chose me and the next thing I know you’re in bed with my twin. I know you did it to get at me, it was a low blow and you know it was. You used her like you’ve used nearly everyone at the school the fact that you’ve magically developed feelings
doesn’t change the fact that you used her in an attempt to become popular, so yes I threatened you because she’s my freaking twin and you’re one giant blind spot for her. You want to tell her how you used her in an attempt to get at me, how she was simply just the first notch in your bedpost. Be my guest. You know how she will take it, that you slept with the school freak, that once you become popular again it’s only a matter of time that you’ll find some football player to keep your interest. And there is no proof that it’s not something you wouldn’t do. That it’s something that won’t happen again. She’s your dirty little secret,” Quinn snaps at Santana.

“You’re not out with—” Santana begins because she’s tired of the hypocrisy, she’s tired of Quinn lording it over her.

“I’ve already given Rachel a date, it’s going to be on the last day of school, right after nationals. We’ve talked about it, and I don’t want to hide her. I just can’t deal with everything and my mom on top of that, she needs me right now and Rachel agrees that she comes first. All because you have zero issue with her body Santana doesn’t mean that you deserve her or that you should be with her. At this rate Dani was a better fit for my sister than you ever will be. And you never denied using her, using her to get to me.”

Santana doesn’t say anything after Quinn’s venomous words lost in thought and she can’t deal with having to defend herself anymore to Quinn and if this argument continues, she knows it’s only a matter of time before Charlie finds out anyway. The urge to control the story that comes out is important to her but neither one of them is innocent, but at least Quinn has the argument that she was only protecting her sister. She didn’t have an excuse and Quinn was at least partially correct, she had went to Charlie in an attempt to get back at Quinn.

She had known that Charlie as sleeping with Brittany and the two of them had shared everything since they were in kindergarten. Charlie had made sure it was alright with Brittany before she had even done anything, before she had taken her virginity. She had asked her throughout if things were okay, if she was okay. Truly she hadn’t expected Charlie Fabray to be just into sex, after all it was what Brittany insisted it was, but she had liked the teenager. She seemed to get Brittany and was just as gentle with the dancer as she was, doing everything that she could not to hurt the dancer’s feelings. She hadn’t judged either of them, or their relationship. Charlie hadn’t been afraid of her, true she might joke about being afraid of the Latina mostly for appearances sake but she had never been afraid of her. She couldn’t pinpoint the exact moment that she had figured out that she liked Charlie as more than a friends with benefit situation but she had. And now here she was stuck with past sins, and she just wanted to move on and try and right the ship.

“So does this mean that we don’t owe you anything?” Sam asks hopefully, maybe Mercedes inadvertently managed to save his and Puck’s collective asses, they’d been on a losing streak as of late and they hadn’t managed to scrounge up the funds needed to pay off their respective debts.

Sandy gives Sam a smile and places a hand on the boys shoulder feeling the muscles, he ignores Sam’s uncomfortable look, and Puck’s grimace. “I may have smoked a lot of weed prior to this little night, and Aretha might be a weakness of mine but you still owe me money. Two thousand five hundred was it? Plus twenty-five interest and it comes up to 3125 dollars, but since I did smoke enough to make me just pay off the glee club’s debts, I’ll tell you what I’ll do. I’ll freeze the amount you owe me for another month and let you boys get back to winning and we can put this whole mess behind us.”

Puck lets out a sigh relief because they can earn that money if they bust their asses and manage to put a few more wins in the win column. “Thanks we won’t——”
“Of course there are other ways that you can pay off my debt, I’m opening a new business venture, male strippers. I’m sure that you two will make enough money in a few days to pay off your debts and then some. Think about it and give me a call,” with that Sandy walks away having put both boys on notice.

There’s a frown on Quinn’s face as she passes Sandy on her way to the choir room, and she spots both Puck and Sam conversing secretly. She can already sense the trouble, and she doesn’t want to get dragged into it. Puck had promised that he was done dealing and it was highly possible that Sandy had just been attempting to cope a feel on them. “Hey we’re going to check out Charlie and Dani’s soccer game, it’s the last twenty minutes of the game and they’re currently up by two against Carmel.”

Sam gives Quinn a weak smile, “Great, we’ll meet you out there,” he says and he notices the suspicious look that Quinn gives him before shaking her head and walking out. Sam waits a moment, “I cannot be a male stripper to some grungy old men Puck.”

“Relax we have a month to raise the funds,” Puck says in a soothing tone of voice.
Chapter 43

Santana Lopez was coming to realize that for the most part the entire Fabray clan was fucking insane and way to invested in what Charlie did or didn’t do in her spare time and who she was dating, or sleeping with. She sort of understood Quinn’s near psychosis when it came to being protective of Charlie she was over correcting the problem, trying to stop any pain that Charlie might accrue because hadn’t managed to stop the possible abuse. At least that’s what Santana expected and she wasn’t sure if she could truly blame Quinn for her craziness, she wasn’t exactly working with a clean slate. Judy on the other hand had no right to interfere with Charlie’s life she hadn’t interfered when it actually mattered when Charlie had actually needed her.

Which was why Santana was currently standing on the doorstep of the old Fabray residence, she didn’t understand why Quinn would insist that moving back in with Judy was a good idea. The house gave her the creeps, all the horrors that had happened here. She couldn’t blame Charlie for never wanting to stay away. So she rang the doorbell and waited till Judy Fabray opened the door. Santana was sure she smelt booze, but she ignored it for now. “Mrs. Fabray—Judy I’m just going to call you that. I think we need to talk.” Santana said ignoring the look of confusion on Judy’s face.

Even though Finn has his locker a few lockers away from hers, she really doesn’t expect to see him standing next to her locker, there’s a sad look in his eyes and Quinn remembers the conversation that she had with Kurt. He’s lonely and maybe it wouldn’t kill Charlie to lay off him completely, she makes a mental note to ask her sister to actually make an effort to build a bridge between the two of them. Finn would fit right in with their little Super Smash bros club, so would Artie. “Finn?” she asks as he moves away from her locker so she can get inside it. “Look if Charlie’s been slushying you again—”

Finn shakes his head because he’s been actually slushy free for a few months. There haven’t been any slushies thrown and he had half expected Charlie with all the power that she had in a school to start a slushy war between the two of them. But it seemed that their rivalry had cooled down significantly, which was something that he was happy about. She still hadn’t stopped calling him Sasquatch, but it did lack the usual bite that it normally did. “I was just wondering what you were doing for prom?” he asks.

This causes Quinn to look at him, “I was going with Rachel,” she admits with a shrug of his shoulders. It’s not like Finn is going to put together that she was going with Rachel to the prom. “Why?” she asks.

“She kept saying no, and I’ve asked her a million times, I got her flowers. I even got her some of that vegan chocolate that she likes. I just—I was hoping that maybe we could have run for prom king and queen together. I really want to win you know, prom king. And you used to talk about how important it was to you, and you’re still like really popular.”

Quinn is surprised that he had even listened to her going on about prom queen, but she pauses for a moment because it sounds like she’s his second choice and she gives him a look, “Rachel said no so you decide to ask me?”

“As friends. You could be prom queen and I could be king like we always planned you know. I mean you don’t have a secret boyfriend like Rachel does do you?”
Quinn raises a brow, “No I don’t have a secret boyfriend, but I already made plans to go with Rachel and a few friends Finn. And I don’t—” she wants to tell him that she doesn’t want to be prom queen but her mother’s getting anxious and she’s showing her old photos of Frannie’s prom where Frannie had been named prom queen. Maybe being prom queen would help stave off the drinking for a bit, make her mother happy again. It would put her in a good mood so when she finally did tell Judy about Rachel—it was a terrible plan and she knew it but it was the only thing that mattered. At least Judy would be proud of her for a little while before the crushing disappointment of finding out that both two out of three of her daughters were lesbians.

“You don’t?” Finn prompted but when Quinn doesn’t answer right away he presses forward. “Look I know I’ve been a bit of an ass and your twin hates my guts but it would just be as friends, and it would mean something. I guess, I lost Rachel to this mysterious guy that no one knows anything about. I sort of messed a lot of my relationships, and I just sort of want to win at something. I’m sorry, I called you a slut and I said shitty things about you, I was—upset. I was hurt and upset and humiliated and angry, I was really angry at you for a long time. And I’d really like us to at least be friends.”

Quinn winces because she suddenly feels really guilty, because she did sort of take the person that Finn was clearly in love with, and she had lied to him, she had cheated on him, and maybe he really had changed. Still she was looking forward to going with Rachel, even if it was just as friends they could still dance together without drawing to much suspicion. She’s about to tell Finn no but when he lights up she turns around and looks at Rachel.

“What’s going on here?” Rachel asks a smile on her face when she looks at Quinn.

“Finn was just asking me to run for prom queen with him as king,” Quinn tells Rachel, expecting her girlfriend to back her up and give her an easy out that won’t crush him.

What Quinn doesn’t expect is for Rachel to look at Finn, “That sounds like a really good idea, I know how much being prom queen means to you,” she glances at Quinn who can’t believe that Rachel just sold her out to Finn Hudson of all people.

“Really? You don’t mind? She said she was going to go with you and some friends,” Finn said in surprise. “Are we going to finally going to meet this mystery guy?” he asked a hint of jealousy in his voice.

Quinn rolls her eyes and grabs Rachel by the arm, “I’m sure you’ve already met this mystery person,” Quinn says and looks at Rachel, “Come on Rachel we need to talk about what we’re going to wear to prom,” she gives Finn a tight smile.

“So is that a yes?” Finn asks confused.

Before Quinn can respond Rachel is nodding her head, “It is.”

“Rachel,” Quinn hissed before shooting Finn another tight smile as she practically drags Rachel into the girl’s bathroom. “What are you doing?” she asks. “We were supposed to go—” she pauses and checks to make sure that the bathroom is empty before finishing, “together. We were supposed to go together. We could have danced together.”

“We can still dance together, it’s not like you have to dance with your date the entire night, besides you were telling me how much it would mean to Judy if you won, a part of you really wants to win, just so you can make your mom happy. It’s one night Quinn and there is always senior prom. If you think this will make it easier for your mom to swallow that we’re a couple land have been for quite some time then I think you should do it. I know you’re going to win.”
Quinn sighs, suddenly realizing that maybe waiting to the end of the year wasn’t a good idea, “This isn’t some passive aggressive way to punish me—” she begins, because it is Finn she’s been asked to spend the night with and even though she has forgiven him, it’s not like she’s going to get stimulating conversation from him and he’ll probably step on her toes or something like that.

Rachel shakes her head and wraps her arms around Quinn feeling the taller girl relax a bit, “I just want you to be happy and I think that this will make you happy. I know you say it doesn’t mean anything to you but I think it does a tiny bit. And it means a lot to your mom, and I just want to help. Besides he said it was just as friends right?”

Getting a call from Santana Lopez is always something to be proud of, it generally means that you’re going to get laid and even though he didn’t actually want to sleep with the Latina, he isn’t going to let this opportunity pass him by. “I knew you’d ask me out eventually. I’m kind of Duke Stud at McKinley.”

Santana rolls her eyes, the biggest stud at McKinley was currently her girlfriend and was going to be extremely annoyed with her. Better to ask for forgiveness then ask permission. She needed to keep Judy Fabray away from Charlie, because she knew her girlfriend would do something in order to protect her secret. A beard was exactly what she needed. “Give it up. I know.”

Dave scoffed, “Know what?”

She really didn’t want to play this game with Dave Karofsky of all people she wanted to get this over with, “That you’re gay,” she states bluntly.

Dave grows pale and looks around to see if anyone heard her. “What? Who told you that?”

“No one had to tell me. First of all, I saw you checking out Sam’s ass the other day. You know, you really need to be more careful with your leering,” Santana tapped her fingers along the table. She was annoyed already.

Dave flushed, “I didn’t. I was just seeing what jeans he was wearing.”

Santana let out a derisive snort. “Like that’s any less gay. Second of all, I know about you and Kurt. Remember last week before the benefit? About you being worried about “the truth” getting out. Guess what. It’s out.”

“Whatever they told you is a lie to mess with me. I’m going to kick their asses…did the twins tell you?” Dave asks making a point to have a chat with them they had promised.

“Wait—Charlie wasn’t kidding when she said that you asked her out was she?” Dave flushes and it answers Santana’s question. She stores that away for now, “Okay, you know what? Why don’t you just settle down and let Auntie Tana here tell you a little story. It’s about you. You’re what we call a “late in life gay.” You’re going to stay in the closet, get married, get drunk to have relations with your wife, have a couple kids, maybe become a state senator or a deacon, and then get caught in the men’s room tapping your foot with some page, and you know what? I accept that about you.”

Dave squirms in his seat as he looks at Santana, “Why are you doing this?” it comes out as a low whine. Too many people know now.

“Because I need you, and you need me. We play on the same team,” Santana says with a shrug.
Dave had heard the rumors but they had just been rumors, because Santana had been with enough guys on the football team and several guys at school. But they had just been rumors. “You’re—?”

She shoots him a dry look, because he can’t even say the word lesbian. “I’m dating Charlie. Look, I’m not ready to start eating jicama or get a flat top yet, either. Maybe in junior college,” she waves it off. She’s going to need to come out soon but she’s terrified of telling her Abuela, she wonders if her parents will kick her out. The fears that they won’t accept her and everything will change resonate in her head.

“This is garbage. I’m not gay,” he says and moves to get up, because he can keep denying it.

“I’m trying to help you out here. Have you ever heard of the term “beards?” It’s when a gay man and woman date each other to hide the fact that they’re gay. Like the Roosevelts. So you and I are going to be each other’s beards, and then we’re going to win prom king and queen and rule the school.”

“We’re going to pretend date? What about—Charlie?” He sees the look on Santana’s face. “You haven’t even told her you’re here doing this have you.”

“She knows I’m not ready to leave the closet and clearly she knows that you’re gay so she isn’t going to be upset that I’m with you, she’ll forgive me,” Santana says dismissively. Well she hopes so, this relationship hasn’t started on the best foot.

Charlie hadn’t ordered a slushy attack since she had been made the unofficial female top gun of McKinley. Jacob had stayed out of her way for the most part and she had gone back to remembering that Finn Hudson was a real person. Throw in the fact that she had consistently been in a good mood ever since she had started dating Santana there hadn’t been a need to exert her will over the school. She hadn’t needed to control the football jocks and she had let them run rampant for the most part. They were for the most part leaving the glee club alone so she didn’t need to get involved and after the first slushy attack on Santana Charlie had personally had a little chat with Karofsky about manners.

But today was different, it was a day after a near call with Carmel High, and one more game before they were state champions and she was personally on edge. And Santana had been busy for the past couple of days making the situation more aggravating. So when Jacob Ben Israel was caught trying to take an up-skirt photo of Rachel Berry, Charlie ordered her first slushy bath. It was overkill and for the most part Charlie had always kept her hands relatively clean of the slushying ordeal, only dirtying them when she needed to make a statement. Which was why she currently had Jacob by the shirt balancing him on the edge of the dumpster that was filled with slushy. “What did I tell you about harassing Rachel? Or any other girls in this school. What did I say Jacob?”

JBI winced he hated slushy bath’s more than anything, it was worse than a regular slushying or even a mass slushing because the ice cold slushy would get everywhere. It was almost worth it to get a look at what undies that Rachel Berry was wearing, there had been a rumor that the diva was wearing more risqué lingerie to school and he just had to know. “Not to?” he squeaked out.

“Exactly and I’ve been ignoring most of your other activities because it didn’t bother me before now and maybe that’s why you decided to get a little bold. You probably thought that I wasn’t going to punish you or I’d just empty a slushy on your head and call it a day. And any other day I might have done so but you unfortunately caught me in the worst moods so today you get to be the unlucky sap who gets a slushy bath.” Charlie is about to shove him into the dumpster when a voice
stops her and she grimaces and turns around keeping a firm grip on Jacob with one hand, it allows
the boy to teeter on the edge of the dumpster.

“Let him go,” the crowd that had gathered parts and Charlie looks at Santana in her red uniform
and her little beret. She’s standing with Dave Karofsky who is wearing something similar.

Charlie stares at Santana for a moment, taking in what she’s wearing and raises a brow at her
girlfriend. Santana doesn’t have the juice to order her around, she doesn’t have a letterman jacket
but the rules seem to be shifting. “Excuse you? You’re coming to his defense? What’s with the—
what the hell are you wearing?” Charlie asks keeping her hand firmly on Jacob as she stares at
Santana and flicks her eyes to Dave, who looks like he’d rather be anywhere else but here.

Karofsky says in a mechanical tone and Charlie flicks her eyes towards him, and he shifts a bit
because one too many people know his secret. “I want Kurt to feel safe to come back, which is
why Santana and I have started a new club—The Bully Whips.”

This is not the best test case for Santana’s new anti-bullying campaign, Charlie doesn’t just go
around slushying kids because she can, and the last person she wants to come to the aid of is Jacob
Ben Israel even if it would be beneficial to her to win prom queen. “Everyone deserves a safe
school environment. Don’t pick on Jewfro. It’s not cool, and we need to put a stop to the bullying
that goes on in McKinley.”

Charlie just stares at her girlfriend, and any other day she would have done what Santana asked
immediately but today wasn’t the day and she was confused as to what was going on, so she tips
Jacob over a bit more, but keeps a firm grip on his shirt to keep him from falling in completely.
“Okay—one, I’m not bullying Jacob here. We’ve always policed ourselves, he broke the rules. He
was caught taking up skirt photos again. He was a pervert, you know like usual, so whatever this
is. He deserves whatever I choose to dole out as punishment and today I’m in the mood for a
slushy bath. Does that sound fair Jacob?” Charlie doesn’t even look at him, instead she pushes him
in a bit more causing him to grab onto her arm and squeak.

Jacob looked at the hand that was firmly on his shirt keeping him from a slushy bath and then he
looked to Santana mouthing the words ‘help’ to her. She rolled her eyes at him in response causing
Charlie to turn to look at him. “It does, totally fair.”

“So, I’m being reasonable,” Charlie says and looks back at Santana, she’s about to let him go, and
walk away glad with the punishment that she’s doled out but she doesn’t.

“I’m trying to get Kurt back to McKinley, and one of his biggest beefs with you is that the elite
have too much power and they use it based on their whims, so I need you to let him go.” Santana
meets Charlie’s gaze and it’s a power play between the two of them, but Charlie gives in first
pulling Jacob from the dumpster roughly. The boy lands on his feet hard stumbling forward, but he
chooses to wisely keep his mouth shut in case Charlie changes her mind.

Charlie waves the rest of the girls’ soccer team away and watches as the crowd clears and Jacob
runs away, before she runs a hand through her hair and gives Santana an annoyed look, “What is
this about, because you know as well as I do that Jacob deserves whatever he gets and then some.
And what are you doing with Karofsky? How’d you manage to drag him into—she found out
didn’t she?” Charlie asks flicking her gaze to Dave.

Dave winced and nodded, “Look, this wasn’t my idea, she said she’d tell everyone.”

Charlie snorted because Santana wouldn’t have told a soul and she looks at her girlfriend, she’s
torn between being impressed by the Latina’s natural Machiavellian machinations and annoyed that
she couldn’t get out her frustrations on Jacob. She glances at Santana who looks guilty and Charlie knows that she isn’t going to like what comes out of Santana’s mouth next.

Santana on the other hand is debating how to break the news to Charlie, “Karofsky is my beard, we’re going to become prom king and queen together,” blunt was always better. Charlie would appreciate her not beating around the bush. It’s confusion first, and then annoyance, with a dash of hurt before Charlie’s face returns to its neutral mask.

She knew she wouldn’t like what Santana had to say so she turned on her heels, ignoring the Latina who is calling her name. Whatever Santana’s grand scheme is, she doesn’t want any part of it.

“I don’t know why you volunteered my sister to spend time with Sasquatch,” Charlie grumbled as she sat down beside Rachel.

“You didn’t see her face, she felt a bit guilty, and maybe Finn deserves a bit of a win, he’s not been the most popular person this year you know and I did say no to him several times. The drama with Beth, the fact that we’re together. I think it was the best choice given the situation. He gets to be prom king, it’s a win for him,” Rachel replied. “I think he’s changing, Kurt says he’s just really lonely.”

Charlie made a face because she didn’t really care if Finn Hudson was lonely or anything of the sort, at least Rachel has mellowed out a bit, a year ago she would have been freaking out and coming up with some crazy plan. “At least I know it’s a fake date,” she says after a moment at least that makes her feel a bit better and really she doesn’t care one way or another anymore. “How did we end up dateless to prom?” Charlie asks and Rachel gives her a look. “You didn’t hear? Santana’s taking Karofsky.”

“The Bully Whips thing? I can’t believe she’d take him of all people to prom. You know what he did to Kurt was unforgivable and the things he’s said to you—”

“The sole purpose of the Bully Whips, is to get Kurt to come back to McKinley. I imagine Santana is also doing this in an attempt to win prom queen to one-up my sister though. It’s not like we could have gone together but I would have been happy with one slow dance.”

Rachel looks at Charlie, “I thought you were adamant that you weren’t going to go?” she asks her friend who grumbles and looks away.

“Did you know you can’t get refunds on the stupid prom tickets? I didn’t even want to go to prom to begin with,” she gripes pulling out her wallet and pulls out two tickets. “I was going to ask her after the game on Thursday,” Charlie tosses the tickets on the coffee table and looks irritated at the turn of events.

Rachel smiles and nudges her best friend, “Being in the closet sucks.”

Charlie grunts in agreement, “Everyone at school already suspects Santana is at the very least bisexual, the way she is with Brittany, and Brittany is openly bisexual. No one cares anymore, but she doesn’t want it to get back to her parents or her Abuela,” Charlie rubs her head. “I know I said I reconsidered the whole dating in secret thing, but it sucks you know. And now she’s going to go in front of the school and say that Karofsky is her boyfriend and that sucks to. I’d probably be angrier if it was someone else, at least I know that Dave bats for the other team.”

“You don’t trust her?” Rachel asks and she looks at Charlie curiously, “Finn bats for the same
“I trust Santana just fine, but I’m not stupid or blind, she has a reputation and some guys at that school will think that just because she’s by their side, means that she’ll want to have sex with them, at least I have something on Dave to keep him in line not that I think he’s stupid enough to do anything,” Charlie says in a grumpy tone.

“It’s junior prom, Quinn will be out in time for the senior one, and that’s the one that truly matters anyway,” Rachel says with a wave of her hand, she can wait a whole year to get that moment, maybe they could campaign together. “Shelby was looking forward to going dress shopping with me, and she wanted to know if you wanted to come so we could get you fitted for a tux. But if you’re not coming—”

“I already told you, that the tickets are non-refundable, do you know how much the bloody things were? Seventy-five dollars each, I’m going to the stupid thing and the food better be the best fucking thing I tasted for that kind of money.”

Rachel laughs wondering how Charlie became such a miser, “We should go together,” she says after a moment and Charlie looks at her best friend. “As friends,” Rachel adds, because Quinn would flip out and so would Santana. “Brittany doesn’t have a date either and I want to go have fun and have a good time with my friends. We don’t have to dance or anything, I know how bad you are at it, but at least neither one of us will go alone. It’ll be fun. I have to go anyway, the glee club is doing the music anyway so I have to go. Besides Santana and Quinn both have dates who aren’t us.”

Charlie pushes a ticket towards Rachel, “You owe me seventy-five dollars,” she says and Rachel rolls her eyes. “What you’re not my date after all, if Santana and my twin gets irritated with me this is my defense,” Charlie points out. “You paid for your own bloody ticket. I want this to be the farthest thing from a date that is humanly possible and apparently since I have a dick I’m supposed to pay for everything.”

“Hey, Lucy.”

Quinn’s back stiffens at hearing her name and she turns to look at Lauren Zizes slipping her HBIC face on, she doesn’t need this not now. “What did you just call me?” Her tone is cold, the coldest it’s ever been and she expects Lauren to flinch back but the wrestler doesn’t seem to be scared instead she seems to have a smirk on her face.

“Well, that certainly got your attention. Can we speak privately?” Lauren asks trying to keep the smug smile on her face off. Catching Quinn without her bodyguards had been a blessing, she didn’t want anything to do with the unholy trinity but picking them off one by one would help bolster her chances to win prom queen. Quinn follows her into an empty classroom and Lauren pulls out a chair for her. “Well, you may want to have a seat.” She’s not surprised when Quinn chooses to stand crossing her arms over her chest. Lauren shrugs, “My dad’s college roommate was G. Gordon Liddy—”

“Unless your dad is in his late seventies, he wasn’t college roommates with G. Gordon Liddy,” Quinn says interrupting. She’s not going to let Lauren win at whatever game she’s playing at and she doesn’t have time to deal with gross exaggerations. “Get to the point Lauren I don’t have all day.”
Lauren frowns surprised that Quinn knows who he even is, but she is tangling with the best student in school and she shouldn’t be surprised by the fact that Quinn knows who he is. But someone needs to take the ex-cheerleader down a notch. “He said the key to any campaign is digging up dirt on your opponent, so I did a little digging.”

“My family was in the papers for the past year, so all you needed to do was pick up a newspaper, or look it up online. None of what you’re saying is impressing me and finding out that my first name is Lucy doesn’t take that much effort. So once again, get to the point.”

“You moved to Lima after eighth grade, right? With your sister, from Toledo right?”

“Again none of this is a secret, if you plan to tell the school about the court case I have zero problem having you called in for contempt of court. Jacob tried this stunt last year, besides my sister doesn’t have that many secrets left and she can handle herself. But if you did find something that Charlie doesn’t want out I will end you Zizes,” Quinn says she’s bluffing, Charlie has secrets that is better left unsaid.

“This isn’t about your twin, I have no beef with her. She isn’t in the running to be prom queen. I called your old school, nice place ritzy as hell. The uniforms were cute, your twin hasn’t changed much though but you Lucy—”

Quinn stares at her, the horror creeping in as it sets in as Lauren picks up her bag and pulls out a poster, “You didn’t.”

It’s the fear that Lauren enjoys and she sees it on Quinn’s face, “I did. And you know what? They didn’t have a record of anyone named Quinn Fabray either. They did, however, have someone named Lucy Fabray—Lucy Q. Fabray, to be exact, and she looked like this.” Lauren rolls the poster out and lets Quinn see a picture of her former self. “You can kind of see the resemblance if you look past the nose job and subtract, eh, 70 pounds.” Lauren grins because she sees the defeat on Quinn’s face as the ex-cheerleader deflate, she’s won she’s taken down one of the unholy trinity. She’s gone toe to toe with the best and she’s come out on top.

“Stop, okay? That’s me. My middle name is Quinn. I stopped going by Lucy because kids made up a mean nickname. Lucy Caboosey. I hated the way I looked. I had zits. I was chubby. You have no idea Zizes growing up in that house. I’m sure you figured it out with the research you did. Charlie and I didn’t have any friends. The only person who would talk to me was my twin, we did everything together from dissecting frogs to playing together. It was just me and my brother—sister. It was always just me and Charlie. Then we found out that Charlie was a girl and things went to hell at home. My mom put me in ballet, lost a little bit of weight, found out I was athletic, joined gymnastics, then cheerleading. Went on Proactiv for my acne. My mom suggested that I should get a nose job and I agreed with her, she wanted what was best for me. We needed to leave Toledo because of my sister, she couldn’t keep pretending to be a boy with her breasts coming in. So we left and when they were doing the paper work I asked them to call me Quinn.”

Lauren shrugged she didn’t care to hear the details, “I don’t care if you hate yourself.”

Quinn stared at Lauren, “I love myself Lauren. I’m done being that girl, I’m done depending completely on my twin for friends. I’m not going back to the only person in my life being Charlie. We were both miserable and I don’t think we knew it. So I don’t care if you found out, I didn’t even want to be prom queen but this, all you’re doing is making me want to beat you. You had no right to invade my privacy like this. Out of the three of us, I am still the most popular. I’m going to beat you Lauren, I’m going to become prom queen just to rub it your face.”

Lauren scoffs because it’s over for Quinn, all she needs to do now is bring down Santana and she’ll
be in the clear to take home the crown. “Yeah. See, I wouldn’t be so sure about that. You think everyone’s going to vote for you because they want to be like you. Well, I don’t know if they’re going to want to be like you when they find out that you’re a complete fraud. I got the rest of the wrestling team to put up about a hundred of those posters all over school. And the bell rings for the next class in 5, 4, 3, 2—” The bell for the next period class rings and Lauren grins as Quinn runs out of the room.

It’s a face that Charlie hadn’t seen in a while, not really she looks at Quinn every day but it’s Lucy and she looks happy. It’s before her Judy got her hands on her, when Lucy was still Lucy. She had loved that person she still loved her it was back when Lucy was still innocent and times were better. Charlie touches the poster for a second fondly because it’s her sister but the moment passes quickly and she rips it down. Because this is Quinn’s most closely guarded secret. She turns to Missy and Marissa, “Get the girls find every last one of these posters and rip them down and burn them. I want this taken care of,” her voice is cool and annoyed and Missy and Marissa look at each other for a moment. “Now,” Charlie orders in her captain voice, one that leaves little room for questions and she watches as they scamper off pulling posters off the wall. Charlie goes through the list of people who would benefit from humiliating her sister like this.

The only two candidates for prom queen are Zizes and Santana. Santana and Quinn might be in some sort of on and off again feud for head bitch again, but this isn’t something that Santana would condone. They are still friends and this would wreck her sister, if she was behind this then Charlie would never be able to forgive her. Which means it has to be Zizes and unlike Santana she doesn’t have very much to lose. Charlie crushes the poster in her hand and begins to hunt down the wrestler.

Finding the wrestler doesn’t take her long and she’s talking to Puck who seems annoyed with her, at least Charlie won’t have to go after him. “Zizes,” she’s calm eerily so. She has no intention of getting into a physical altercation with the wrestler but she knows it may eventually come to it.

Lauren turns to Charlie and frowns because the other girl is relatively clean, and telling people that she got abused will only make her look terrible, “I didn’t break any rules,” she says immediately, because there are rumors surrounding how Charlie managed to keep everyone in line when Quinn was pregnant.

“My rules are simple, they have always been simple. You leave glee club alone, you leave my sister alone. What do you think this is? You attacked my sister Lauren for what? A tiara? Really I thought you were above such things.”

“You’ve got to be kidding me your sister is a bitch, she was a tyrant during freshman year, she was a tyrant back before Puck knocked her up. She—”

Charlie’s heard enough and there is a crowd gathering and she looks at one of the students a freshman by the looks of it, “Do you know who I am?” the kid nods and Charlie smiles at him.

“Good, the contest for prom queen is between Santana Lopez and Quinn Fabray. You spread that around, I imagine Zizes over here will vote for herself—but if I find out that more than one person has voted for Lauren I will find them, and there will be a slushy bath with their name on it. They will become a social pariah. Do I make myself clear? Spread it around school. Hell, tell JBI to post it on that stupid blog of his. Everyone is to know that Zizes has just idiotically pulled herself out of
the competition.” The boy nods and Charlie sees several people with their phones out texting away. The message is out and Charlie turns back to Zizes. “You don’t fuck with my twin Zizes. You never fuck with Quinn ever.”

Lauren looks on as the sound of cellphones going off with Charlie’s proclamation are going around school and she looks at Puck, “Do something,” she says.

Puck looks at Charlie and then at Lauren, “She’s the mother of my kid,” he says and goes to stand beside Charlie. He had been confused and then furious and then he had panicked because he had nothing to do with this.

“Lesson learned?” Charlie asks taking a step closer to Lauren who shoves her back. Charlie takes a step back and drops her bag. She had been raised as a boy, and part of her belief system was that she was never allowed to raise her hands against a woman. The belief never changed once but Lauren outweighs her by a good hundred and fifteen pounds and Charlie isn’t in the mood to just stand there and take it from Lauren so she shoves back, using most of her strength but Lauren is expecting it and instead slams Charlie into a locker, hard. There is an ooh that goes around the crowd as Charlie pulls herself off the lockers slowly, Roz will kill her if she hurts herself but right now she doesn’t care and she lunges at the state champion in Greco roman wrestling. It strikes her as a stupid choice seconds after she’s done it as her shoulder connects with Lauren’s gut, but she doesn’t want to punch the girl.

It’s Santana and Brittany leaving halfway through class that catches Rachel’s attention. Both girls checking their phone before Santana stands up and tells Ms. Hagberg that duty calls and nods at Brittany. Rachel can see the concern on Brittany’s face and the fierce determination on Santana’s face and they leave before Ms. Hagberg can deny them what they are looking for. It’s a moment before nearly everyone’s cellphones go off and Rachel picks up her phone and looks at it. The text is brief but Rachel immediately packs her things and gets up without even asking permission from Ms. Hagberg.

With the unholy trinity mobilizing and Charlie giving off orders it’s obvious that someone has launched an attack on Quinn. The moment she hits the hallway she’s nearly bowled over by someone who is carrying a bunch of posters in her hand. Rachel recognizes the blonde hair as Marissa who shoots her an apologetic look. The soccer player doesn’t realize that one of the posters has fallen to the ground because she’s running to look for more. Rachel picks it up looking at it curiously.

Vote for Lucy Caboosey, it’s cruel and it’s an attack on her girlfriend and she wants to storm off and give Lauren a piece of her mind but she knows she needs to find Quinn who is probably freaking out at this exact moment. She decides to check the bathrooms because that seems to be where they have all the meetings, she finds Quinn with her arms wrapped around herself, she’s not paying attention and she’s biting her thumb. “I didn’t know you need glasses,” Rachel says holding out the poster carefully.

Quinn whips her head to Rachel surprised to see her out of class, and her face falls because her worst fears have come true, Rachel has seen it and she’s going to recoil in horror. She was hideous back then and now she wasn’t. It’s not the look, but she had never really told her how much she had changed. She doesn’t want Rachel to think that she’s shallow that she changed her looks because she was ugly. “You saw—I didn’t want you to see. You wouldn’t have noticed me if I didn’t look like this. I didn’t hate myself,” she says firmly. “I did it because I needed to. I wasn’t happy with the way I look people were bullying me—Charlie was getting into fights to protect me.
She told me that I was beautiful—"

Rachel looks at the poster and she looks back at Quinn, “She was right, you were beautiful.”

“Don’t placate me, look at me, I was chubby, and I had zits and don’t tell me that you would have looked at me on the first day that you saw me and you would have had a crush on me. You thought I was the prettiest girl you had ever seen when you first saw me. So would you have noticed me? Would we even be together—if I still looked like that? Pretty people are noticed.”

Rachel winces because maybe she wouldn’t have noticed Quinn, and it irritates her that she is just as shallow as most other people. First impressions are important and Quinn wouldn’t have made a good first impression. “I’m not against you eating better and exercising to lose weight, the body is a temple and I still don’t understand how your twin can eat the way she does and not put on any weight. I’m not against you being the best person you could be but you were also thirteen when all this happened. You didn’t need a nose job, I think it’s cute and you don’t need to hide the fact that you need glasses. Maybe I wouldn’t have noticed you but I’d like to think that if we had gotten to know each other—I still would have fallen for you. Because this person wasn’t who you were in freshman year, she wasn’t the person who went after me in sophomore year either. I’m in love with who you are Quinn, it’s about who you are in the inside.”

Quinn scoffs, “Look at me Rachel, look at who I was—”

“My nose is too big, and many people have suggested that I get a nose job. I’m sensitive about it, I’d actually like to have your nose. I’m aware of my faults Quinn, I know what I could change to make myself a more conventional beauty and—”

“I like your nose, I love everything about you,” Quinn says immediately stepping closer to her, because she doesn’t understand how Rachel can’t see how beautiful she is.

Rachel smiles, and holds the poster up again. I would have loved everything about you even then. Because you’re kind and you’re loyal and you’re fierce and you have a giant heart and you love me, and I love you. I’ll love you even when you’re old and grey, and have hundreds of wrinkles on your face. I’ll love you Lucy Quinn Fabray. It doesn’t matter what you look like.”

It’s always dangerous doing things in school, neither of them are sneaky like Santana who knows the school’s best hiding places. But it doesn’t matter because Quinn really just wants to kiss Rachel so she does, and it’s a gentle kiss, one that’s filled with all the love that she feels for her. Because she wants to grow old with Rachel Barbra Berry as well.

Quinn finds Charlie who is currently laying down in the nurse’s office an arm resting on her forehead and her eyes are closed. Quinn takes a seat beside her twin. The scene is familiar how many times had they been here before and Charlie opens an eye and looks at her and gives her a crooked smile like she always did whenever they had been in this position before. “This is familiar.”

Charlie lets out a hum, “Last time we were in this position, I had broken my wrist. Plus side to all this, Jamie had a broken nose, I think my elbow got him,” she reminisces.

“You getting your ass kicked and sent to the nurse’s office trying to protect me is not something to be proud of. If you’re going to insist on getting into silly fights at least win. You broke your wrist last time Charlie, and you got lucky that Zizes didn’t murder you.”
Charlie doesn’t say anything, “It’s not silly if it’s you, though you are right about winning fights. You would think with all the ass kicking’s I receive I would have invested in a martial art of some sort. I would have made time to learn a few martial arts, maybe this summer,” Charlie shrugs, she doubts she’ll actually go through with it. “Might not though, Tyler wants me to come on tour with him for a bit during the summer, so I can get some real practice doing clubs and stuff and a few events. I haven’t decided if I want to go. Doesn’t matter though I took away what Zizes wanted, no one is going to vote for her.”

“I would say that you should undo that order but she was going to go after the rest of the unholy trinity but you probably put a giant target on your back,” Quinn watches as Charlie’s jaw tightens. “She’ll probably find something about you—but even she isn’t stupid enough to break a court order. I’ve got your back so you don’t have to worry about Zizes. I’m not going to let her win again.”

Charlie studies her sister for a moment. “You’re oddly calm even though your secret is out.”

“I didn’t want Rachel to see it, this will probably blow over by Monday. I just didn’t want Rachel to see what Lucy looked like. Thanks for the assist by the way they managed to get the posters down for me, Santana and Brittany helped once I texted them. She—still thinks we would have gotten together, if she had gotten to know me. Maybe we would have gotten together sooner. Maybe she wouldn’t have had a crush on me right away but it’s something.”

Charlie nods and sits up wincing a bit, Roz was going to murder her for getting into a fight, this hadn’t been one of her wiser ideas. Actually it was a stupid idea confronting Zizes like that, but nothing she could do about it now. “You’ve got a keeper,” Charlie says and Quinn smiles at her twin. “Well I’m glad she thinks you looked pretty, forget the fact that I told you that I thought you were pretty back then as well, and any guy would be lucky to date you. You still went ahead and changed, just to please her.”

“Which part bothers you the most the nose job or the fact that I lost weight, I like dancing and I lost the weight naturally, I was just as athletic as you are. Maybe I shouldn’t have gotten the nose job but it made me happy. It meant that you wouldn’t have to get yourself killed trying to protect me. Not all of it was our mother, some of it was what I wanted. It made me happy—”

“No it didn’t, it made you popular. Someone who was happy with themselves wouldn’t have ruled the school with an iron fist like you did. So maybe you were happy that you couldn’t be picked on—but you weren’t happy. You were just as miserable as I was,” Charlie says and Quinn stares at her sister. “It’s different now, we have friends and people who care for us. People who have our backs. You’re happy now, and I am too. Because it’s different. It’s not just—us anymore. We’re not alone anymore Lucy.”

Quinn doesn’t say anything because she’s told herself that she was happy so many times, a lie till she can say it and believe it, but she smiles and touches her sister’s hand. “No it’s not just us anymore.”

Charlie lays back down and relaxes, only to open an eye when the curtain is pulled back and Santana strolls into the room, the soccer player looks at her and then Quinn who is rolling her eyes, whatever there issue is at least they’ve put it down for now. Santana looks has a look on her face that is a cross between angry and worried, though she’s probably pissed because she hasn’t been answering her calls. “I’m fine mostly a bruised ego,” she says before Santana can say anything, she doesn’t want to talk about it.

“One. I told you that you need to actually talk to me you don’t get to run just because you don’t like what’s going on or it hurts your feelings. Two. He’s gay.”
Charlie rolls her eyes, she’s not mad she just can’t deal with Santana and do everything else that she needs to. “You could have talked to me about it first, told me your grand plan I probably would have been okay. You don’t spring something like that on me, I get it you want Kurt back and you want to be prom queen and one up Quinn. These are all things I am okay with, I just don’t like being surprised when one of your machinations is sprung on me. Speaking of surprises, since you’re both here. I’m taking Rachel to prom.”

Quinn turned her to twin, “You’re what?” all the warmth in her voice gone as the jealousy flares up.

“Oh come off it Quinn, your date is Finn, and you’re taking Karofsky. Rachel didn’t want to go alone and I already bought the stupid tickets. This isn’t a date, she paid me the seventy five dollars. We’re going as friends, we’re going to dance we’re going to hang out with other people. We’re friends, both of you can enjoy your crappy dates while I enjoy a good time with my best friend.”

“You’re taking the hobbit?”

“Well the girl I wanted to go with is going with someone else. So yes I’m going with Rachel,” Charlie says in a snippy tone. She glances at Quinn, “What am I going to do to Rachel? Really Quinn? I’m her friend. So stop plotting my imminent demise and stop being jealous. This was her idea, I just said yes because it’s not like I had anything better to do that night,” Charlie points out.
Technically I have up to chapter fifty finish, I just feel like there is something missing from these chapters. I don't know what. Something might have gotten deleted somewhere along the line.

“Stacey and Stevie can’t see this shit Puck,” Sam said letting out a hiss of pain as he put a bit of pressure on the dirty rag, which Puck kept at the back of his truck, pressing down on the deep cut on his forehead. He had never been opened like this before, there had been so much blood. He had nearly freaked out and it hadn’t stopped bleeding. It had coated his face.

Puck grimaced as he looked over at Sam, “We need to get you to a hospital—”

“We don’t have any medical insurance anymore, and I can’t afford those prices. We’ve got to figure out something else—do you know anyone who knows basic first aid?” Sam asked. Puck knew all sorts of sketchy people. “Your mom is a nurse isn’t she?”

“Are you fucking with me? My mom can’t see you like this she’ll be all disappointed and the guilt and she’ll want to know what’s going on. My family can’t afford the type of money we owe to Sandy, we don’t have three thousand dollars just lying around,” Puck said wincing at the amount of money that they owed.

Sam swore and leaned back, maybe Stacey and Stevie would be asleep when they got back to his motel room. Both his parents had the night shift at a call center, it didn’t bring in a lot of money but it was something. Sarah, Puck’s sister had agreed to babysit for them. “Puck we need the cash otherwise the debt is just going to keep growing, we should tell someone. You said Charlie knew about fight club she’d get it.”

Puck shifts a bit nervously, “She really did help create it and the club but she was only involved so that I wouldn’t get caught. She wanted nothing to do with it in the long run she just wanted to make sure I didn’t go to jail. I think after I got caught dealing she assumed that I broke away from Sandy completely.”

Sam stiffens and looks at Puck his voice low and cutting because this is also new information. He had thought that Charlie had given Puck her blessing, “She has no idea?”

Puck winces and shakes his head as they park in front of the motel that Sam’s staying at. Puck gently grabs the dirty rag and peels it off Sam’s forehead so he can take a look more blood just drips down Sam’s face. It hadn’t stopped bleeding yet and in the light he’s sure that he can see Sam’s skull. The blow had caught him good and he has no idea how to stop it. “I’ve been careful to not show my injuries to her and she’s been so caught up with soccer, helping the glee club and well fucking Santana that she hasn’t been paying attention. I’m sure that if she did she would have already figured it out by now.”

Sam grabs the soaked rag and places it back on his forehead, “Quinn knows how to give stitches,” he said after a moment his voice quiet. He had heard about it, Charlie had eventually shared with him some of the things that had went down when she had explained why she lived with Rachel.
“Charlie will bail us out, we’re her bros. We’ve tried to do this on our own and look at where we are. We owe Sandy a lot of money and I don’t want to sleep with him to clear our debt, or whatever perverted thing he wants us to do. If they help us out then we’re done Puck, I’m done. I can’t keep getting my ass kicked. I can’t hide this from Stacey and Stevie let alone my parents for much longer. Look at me I’m covered in blood, and I’m pretty sure that I need stitches of some sort.”

Puck looked at Sam for a moment, they should have gone to the twin’s ages ago. “They’re both going to be pissed. You haven’t seen Quinn pissed yet.”

Sam winces and nods, “They can kick our asses we probably deserve it, but right now we need their help.”

This year was turning out to be the best year of Charlie Fabray’s life, she was free of the Fabray drama, she’d made friends, she had won two state championships in one year, and most importantly she currently dating the hottest girl in school. This was her year, sure there were things that she wished were different, she wished that she could hold Santana’s hand in public, or kiss her. She wished that she was running for prom king while Santana ran for prom queen. She wished Quinn would move out of the Fabray house, but all she had to do was wait for the summer months and Quinn would be free of Judy Fabray’s clutches. And maybe next year when Santana saw how no one cared about Quinn and Rachel being out, she’d be open to it as well.

Charlie Reagan Fabray was happy in general and it had absolutely nothing to do with the fact that she just had sex with Santana Lopez. A goofy smile appears on her face, as she pulls Santana closer to her cuddling the smaller girl in her arms. They had made up sort of, at least they had talked about it there wouldn’t be any more going behind the others backs and asking for forgiveness instead of permission. It was something that was new to the both of them. Though she wasn’t completely sure what had been figured out, and she was sure that there was something that Santana wasn’t telling her because all she can remember from that argument was the mind blowing sex that happened afterwards.

Charlie gently nips the Latina’s shoulder before trailing another light kiss on the Latina’s back. Even though they’d been at it for a few hours she can feel herself getting aroused again and she can feel Santana stirring in her arms.

“Fuck Fabgay, you’re going to be the death of me,” came Santana’s low complaint as she finally managed to turn over to look at Charlie who still had that goofy smile on her face. The sex was phenomenal, it had been phenomenal with Charlie always bringing her ‘A’ game every single time. The soccer player was eager to please her, and she’d always been a thoughtful lover but this was something else entirely.

“We don’t have to go again,” Charlie admits after a moment but she’s still smiling because she doesn’t doubt that Santana will be up for the challenge. And sure enough Santana begins to move and Charlie reaches for where she’s stashed a pack of condoms, when she hears her cellphone go off. It’s Captain Falcon’s theme song and she frowns because ever since she missed Quinn’s call that fateful day she’s been iffy about missing phone calls, which is why she’s insisted that people only call when it’s absolutely important.

“Who?” Santana asks as her fingers trail down Charlie’s chest and onto her abs, despite how much Charlie had complained about the diet she’d been on her abs had become more well defined.

“Puck,” Charlie replied with a grunt as she begins to move to pick it up. “I need to—” her words
are cut off when Santana ever so gently brushes her fingers against her dick. Charlie groans lowly, and she eyes her pants that currently seem miles away.

This causes Santana to frown, “Is it important?” she asks.

Charlie thinks for a minute, Puck has a tendency to forget that calling her is for emergencies and she shrugs, the last time he had called her he had gone on about Mario and some Nintendo thing that had caused her to hang up on him after two minutes. “I—don’t know,” she admits and she decides that she can check back on it later, so she ignores it, and leans in to kiss Santana as her phone stops ringing. She only gets a minute before her phone vibrates again and this time another theme song plays and its Sam and she pulls away from Santana. Because unlike Puck, Sam has never once called her before. She lets out a low irritated groan as she grabs her pants and fishes out her phone answering the call as she turns back to look at Santana who looks slightly irritated that they were interrupted.

“What?” it’s harsher than she intends but there is a beautiful woman waiting for her, and if this is some stupid thing about the Super Smash Brothers she’s going to be more than irritated.

“She picked up! I told you she wasn’t busy with Santana—” Puck’s voice filtered through the phone.

“I was. I am. I told you to call me for emergencies only,” Charlie snapped at him. She pinches the bridge of her nose because she doesn’t want to deal with this now, “Hanging up now, Puck.”

“No! Wait. Sam’s been hurt, we sort of need you right now. We can’t go to a hospital.” Puck spits out quickly.

This catches Charlie’s attention and she flicks her eyes to Santana, “Where are you?” she asks as she grabs her boxers and slips them on. Puck spits out the name of the motel that they’re staying at. “I’ll be there in fifteen.”

“You’ve got to be fucking kidding me,” Santana says and Charlie shoot her an apologetic look. “Seriously what the fuck Fabgay, you’re leaving?”

Charlie hops over to Santana as she slides on her pants and kisses the Latina on the forehead. “I’m really, really, really sorry. I promise to make it up to you,” she says as she zips up her jeans and buttons them as she looks for her sports bra on the ground and pulling on her shirt. But before Santana can realize what’s going on she’s hopping out of her room closing the door as she does.

“Seriously?” Santana says after it kicks in that her girlfriend has literally just walked out before they had just continued having sex.

Lucy Quinn Fabray was confused, well no she was happy but she was also confused as she watched Rachel Berry baking. The only time that Rachel baked was when she had something to apologize for, to bribe her twin, or when she was emotional about something. There were close to a hundred sugar cookies all around the kitchen in various stages of cooling. “I know my sister is a bottom less pit and she’s lost weight—but isn’t this a bit much? What are you trying to bribe her to do? Wear a dress to prom?”

Rachel looked around the kitchen and flushed, because she did have a specific reason for making all these cookies, and that was to help Quinn Fabray make prom queen. Quinn had been insisting for months that she didn’t want it, that she hadn’t wanted the prom queen title. But now that the
cheerleader was incredibly close to being crowned queen, and the diva could see how much she enjoyed shaking hands and talking to the ‘little’ people. The Zizes drama that had happened hadn’t affected her poll numbers at all and had secured her several key votes. Quinn had been in her element and Rachel had enjoyed watching her, “I’m baking you sugar cookies to hand out tomorrow at school.”

Quinn blinked at her girlfriend, this was not the answer she was expecting. But she smiled anyway, Rachel’s competitive spirit was coming into play, the diva paying more attention to the polls than anything else. She had even dragged Kurt along now that he was back at McKinley in finding the perfect green dress that matched her eyes. She picked up a cookie ignoring the indignant look on Rachel’s face. “You didn’t have to make me several—batches of sugar cookies to hand out in order to help me win prom Rachel.”

“It can’t hurt, Santana might be trailing you in the polls but you know how sneaky she is and her bully whips thing is actually working. Bullying has all but stopped at McKinley, and Jacob is openly backing her because she just happened to save him from a slushy bath. He’s been trying to get Charlie on record saying who she’s going to vote for, because it will help swing the vote. She isn’t going to say and she’s already told me she isn’t voting because it’s a terrible idea for her to get involved, but I told her to vote for you of course. You are her twin.”

Quinn rolls her eyes and takes another cookie dodging Rachel’s attempt to swat her hand away. It was a domestic moment between the two of them, “You just want to say that you’re dating the prom queen,” she teased and Rachel flushes. She had nailed the reason and she rolled her eyes playfully. “No really what’s the real reason you’re so into making me prom queen.”

Rachel flicks her brown eyes to Quinn and gives her an exasperated sigh when she sees that Quinn is on her third cookie and is reaching for her fourth, she should feel slightly proud that her cookies are like crack for the Fabray twins, even if Quinn denies she has a problem, but the rate that this going Quinn would demolish a tray and she’ll have to make more. “I think even if you don’t really want to be prom queen for yourself, you want it to make your mother happy,” she wants to point out that Quinn has been spending an awful lot of time at her place these days, not that she personally minds they are dating after all. But the last Fabray that had sought refuge at her house ended up being abused. She knows it’s nothing of the sort, because she’s seen Quinn naked quite a few times a week. But she suspects that there is something going on and part of her wants to ask Charlie if Quinn has mentioned anything. Both of them are notorious for not talking about their home life, or what it’s like to live in that home, and despite her natural inclination to be nosy, years of dealing with Charlie Fabray had taught her to be weary when it came to dealing with Fabray drama.

Quinn makes a face at the mention of her mother, the divorce still isn’t going well, and the lawyers are still struggling to figure things out, her father refusing to sign any documents if there was even one thing that he didn’t agree to. Plus her mother’s lawyers had hired several investigative accountants to see if Russell was hiding money. It was getting more complicated as the days passed by and Judy was drinking more and she had stopped attending AA meetings in general. She was still spending an awful lot of time with that pastor. “We’re going to get my prom dress fitted this weekend, once again,” it’s about the only time that she isn’t drunk and she looks forward to these small moments of mother-daughter bonding.

“We’re going to the mall this weekend, my mom has been really excited to help me get a dress. Plus once she found out that Charlie will be my escort she took an avid interest in what Charlie was wearing, you know she’s basically leaving everything to the last moment,” Rachel said with a shake of her head.
Quinn smiles, “You just want help trying to get Charlie into what you want her to wear,” Rachel laughed. “You’re so easy to read,” she tease and smiled. There’s a quiet for a moment and she can see that Rachel has that concerned look that’s been on her face lately, and she sighs because Rachel is incredibly perceptive. “She’s been drinking on and off,” she admits after a moment. “This isn’t something that you can tell my sister, because she’ll demand I move out sooner. Our mother hasn’t once raised her hand against either of us. She just gets a bit weird, I’m not in any danger. She’s my mom and she’s just fallen off the wagon, it happens. Maybe if I win prom queen, it’ll be enough to—”

Rachel is quiet, because it’s a difficult topic to have an opinion on, “It’s not your fault or Charlie’s fault that your mother drinks Quinn. She’s got a problem and maybe it’ll be enough for her to stop, maybe it won’t but it’s not your job to take care of her—” She’s interrupted by Quinn’s phone going off.

Quinn frowns for a moment, as Charlie tells her what motel they’re at and she wonders what trouble they got themselves into and she looks at Rachel, “I know the place,” she looks at Rachel and sighs. “I’ve got to go—” she stops and just decides to stack the cookies in her hand.

“Those are for your campaign!” Rachel yells as Quinn smiles at her. “Where are you going?”

Quinn thinks for a moment, because Charlie hadn’t given her a plausible excuse to use. “To see my twin, I’ll try and be back as soon as I can and help you with these,” Quinn says.

Rachel rolls her eyes, “Yeah help me finish eating them,” she mutters under her breath smacking Quinn’s hand as she tries to start on another tray. “Go help your twin.”

Quinn winced and looked at her twin after studying the cut, “He needs a doctor. Can’t you see if Dr. Lopez can do it for free?”

“We’re trying to keep this in house, and quite frankly I don’t want Santana’s father to think I’m a criminal, or worse a moron who does stupid stunts,” Charlie said bluntly. “Fight club really? What did I tell you about Puck’s brilliant ideas?”

Sam winced as Quinn motioned for Charlie to help pouring the vodka onto a clean towel and using it to dab the wound. “That it is a bad idea. He said that you helped him create fight club though, so I thought you knew about it.”

This caused Quinn to give Charlie a look, “I told him from day one that it was a terrible idea, all I did was help him minimize the risk, and then once school started I dropped it. I thought when he got caught dealing drugs it would be the end to this whole lets be badass criminals thing,” Charlie said defensively.

“You helped Puck set up a criminal empire?” Quinn asked incredulously.

“No I helped Puck, help Sandy set up a criminal empire, and then walked away,” Charlie said as if
“According to Puck, she’s the one that thought of the club—” Sam began but swore loudly when Charlie slammed her foot into his shin.

Quinn inhaled as she began to stitch Sam up, she’d deal with her twin later. She ignored his wincing as she forced it close and then tied the ends tightly. “Hand me the tape, you’re going to want to keep it dry, and find someone who can do a better job than that,” she said.

Charlie looked at the dark stitches, “People are going to notice,” she said after a moment. “Especially your girlfriend,” Charlie took a seat on one of the beds, Puck had taken the twins out to get something to eat, giving them space to work and getting Puck out of her sight before she kicked his ass in front of his sister.

Sam swallowed, “How did you hide it?”

Charlie and Quinn exchanged looks for a moment, finally understanding why they had insisted that it was just the twins that came. “I had a bottle of Percocet that I only used when I absolutely had to, and Russell was smarter than that. Never hit me where anyone could see—not until the last time anyway. This is visible and it’s not like a black eye where some very creative make-up will fix. So you’re going to need to think of an excuse.”

“And your excuse?” Sam asked and Charlie rolled her eyes as she stood back up.

“I fell,” Charlie says dryly tilting his head up so she can take a look at it. “You’re going to need to stay away from Brittany like the plague though. She’ll figure out you’re lying in a moment. As for your excuse you just tell them that you cracked you were running after Stevie and tripped and cracked your head against a coffee table. As for the poor stitch job, you can just admit that you don’t have health insurance and didn’t want to go to the hospital. It’s a stop gap measure either way, best if you go to Puck’s mom tomorrow and see if you can get her to stitch you up properly, at a normal hour. Puck can pass it off as helping out a friend in need.”

Quinn nodded, “It’s the best I can do, for right now. I’m not a doctor and it can still get infected especially since you put a dirty rag to your head to stop the blood flow. What were you thinking everyone in school knows that Puck gives the worst advice and ninety percent of his ideas are poorly thought and stupid and occasionally very criminal.”

“Look at where I’m living it was supposed to be easy money to help my parents out at first so we wouldn’t lose the house. It was good money but I started to lose more than I was earning and we owe Sandy a lot of money.”

“So you turned to a life of crime to pay to keep your house? What part of Puck has shitty ideas do you not understand. He was arrested for dealing, he thought that dealing drugs was a good idea,” Charlie snaps at him.

“You two don’t get it, you’re never going to know what it’s like to be homeless or not be rich. Everyone at school knows you’re like Bill Gates rich. You don’t know what it’s like to skip a meal, to lose your house, to have everything ripped away from you. For people to look down at you because you’re poor,” Sam Evans snaps back looking at both twins angrily.

Quinn looks at her twin who pulls back, “One, our father isn’t a billionaire. To billionaires our family is just upper middle class. Two, you’re right I don’t know what it’s like, but my sister was constantly out of the house because our father was using her like a whipping post. She did miss meals, there are some times I don’t even know where she slept some nights when she wasn’t at
Rachel’s or at home. She didn’t choose to do something stupid she just got to work. Three, we’re not personally rich our parents—well my father is.”

“You both have trust funds,” Sam pointed out and both twins shrugged.

“We don’t have access to that till we’re twenty-one,” Charlie said. “I haven’t touched a dime of my parents money in about two years, the only thing that I have that’s in my name that I didn’t go out of my way to buy is my laptop and my car.”

“It’s a seventy thousand dollar car,” Sam hissed, “And he bought you two of them because he could, I doubt he even financed it or whatever. My parents couldn’t even afford to get me a used car. You both belong to a country club, you used to live in a mansion; so don’t you dare judge me for turning to crime to help my family out.”

Both twins looked at each other and Charlie rolled her eyes, “Right let’s piss of the people whose help you need. We were born, our father is rich. We can’t help it, with the exception of the cars we don’t go flaunting it. I work for most things and if Quinn wants something she babysits.”

Quinn nodded, “We’re your friends and we would have helped you anyway that we could have. We’re not judging you, we’re just questioning why you needed to turn to crime. You wouldn’t come to us if you didn’t need money so how much do you owe Sandy? This is to keep Puck out of jail and out of trouble almost as much as it is to help you out. You’re our friend you’re like family, we stand by our family.”

“Even if they do incredibly stupid things,” Charlie said and Quinn smacked her arm, “How much?”

“3125 dollars,” Sam said and saw both twins wince. He was about to say more when Puck entered the motel room with Stevie and Stacey in tow.

Quinn smiled at them, and grabbed Charlie by the arm and dragged her out of the motel room. “We’ll be right back. I just need to talk about it with my twin. You’ll get what you owe, I promise,” she gave a sharp glare at Puck before pulling Charlie with her.

Charlie looked at her twin who looked at her furiously, “Really you’re a criminal now? What were you thinking Charlie?”

Charlie rolled her eyes, “I didn’t do anything. I just made sure that it was safe for Puck to work with Sandy. He has a thing for dolls how the hell was I supposed to know he was going to be able to run a criminal empire? I never got paid, I don’t want anything to do with Sandy. I was helping out my friend. The father of my niece to stay out of jail. I thought after he got arrested that would be the end of it. I only heard that the club was up and running because Santana told me.”

Quinn tapped her foot against the ground and crossed her arms as she calmed down a bit. “He’s the father of my child, and despite his idiocy, I am going to keep bailing him out for the rest of his life so Beth can have him in her life. He loves her. Plus he got Sam involved and I still feel guilty for you know—things that went down between us. I owe him, I did the best that I could with the stitches and hopefully they’ll hold but he needs to be careful. I can maybe pull out five hundred without mom noticing it. I’ll just say I got a new phone. How much do you have?”

Charlie looked up at the dark sky, and did a mental calculation in her head, “I’ve got about one grand free right now,” she admits, but her sister scoffs at her.
“I don’t believe that for a moment, you’re just as cheap as Russell is. He is our friend Charlie, how much money do you have in total Charlie?” Quinn asked.

Charlie made a face, “Judy’s given me close to eight grand, she’s taken to just giving me lump sums of money instead of buying me things that I end up selling anyway. I don’t use it, it’s just there. The Berry’s gave me a credit card which I’ve never used. I’ve been picking up extra shifts at the store for a bit of extra cash my next paycheck comes in tomorrow for like a hundred and fifty.”

Quinn frowned, because Charlie hadn’t answered the question. “What’s the total?”

“Doesn’t matter I’ll just take the money out of what Judy’s given me, not like she has access to it. They’ll have to pay me back though, I plan on handing that money back to her when I graduate. Every last penny,” Charlie said irritated. She hadn’t touched what Judy had given her because of her fear that Judy would expect something from her.

“Rachel said that she was at the men’s warehouse,” Quinn said looking at her phone.

Judy glanced at her daughter, and sniffs, “She’s wearing a tux to the prom?” there was a tone of distaste and judgment in her voice as she speaks.

Quinn shakes her head, “No, Rachel got a dress, it’s beautiful I helped pick it out. Charlie on the other hand is going with a tuxedo, I think Rachel and her mom are just there to make sure that it ends up matching with what Rachel’s wearing. I don’t think Charlie thought that far ahead,” she ignores the look on her mother’s face as she pulls her towards the store.

“I don’t see why it has to match your dress. Look at me Rachel even you can’t deny that I look fucking hot in this. Don’t I look hot in this Ms. C? It’s Vera Wang Rachel, I don’t want to go CK, let me have my Vera Wang tuxedo. My tie can match your dress, but look at me.”

“Language Charlie,” Shelby said with a sigh but she did look at the soccer player and she had to admit the slim fit did end up looking good on her, but she was going to need to get a proper hair cut this time not a little off the top like she normally did.

Rachel huffed and turned to look at some more tuxedos that they had laid out, hoping that she could still convince Charlie to pick something else, when she spotted Quinn with Judy entering the store. “Quinn! Maybe you can convince Charlie to listen to my advice when it comes to tuxedos. I have done extensive research—”

“Ignore her Quinn, look at me!” Charlie said in an excited tone. “I look fucking—”

“Language.”

“Sorry Ms. C. Amazing!” Charlie said shooting Shelby a contrite look, as she stepped in front of Rachel. She didn’t even like shopping for clothes or going to the mall in general but she was uncharacteristically happy. “Hundred percent wool, flat-front slacks that are lined to the knee, notch lapel, side vents. If—” Charlie trailed off as she finally caught sight of Judy, and she deflated a bit.

Quinn did indeed take a look at Charlie and smiled at her twin, Charlie did look pleased to be in her tuxedo and she looked at Rachel, “She does look really good,” she said with a shrug.

“I simply prefer the CK version,” Rachel said with an indignant sniff but she smiled at Quinn.

Judy simply stared at her middle child, and walked up to her touching the lapel on Charlie’s jacket,
“You need a haircut,” she said after a moment. “If you’re going to insist on being a boy, then you’re going to need a haircut. I can book you an appointment at my salon.”

Charlie looked at Quinn for help dealing with Judy but her twin was watching this unusually gentle interaction between the two of them, Charlie hadn’t pulled away just yet. And maybe it was progress. “She’s right, you can’t wear that with your head looking like a lion’s mane.”

“You’re one to talk, I’ve seen your bed head,” Charlie snipped but she bounced off to go get changed back into her street clothes. “I’ll get this one, Rachel tell them to get a tie that matches your dress,” she called from the changing room.

Judy glanced at Shelby, “We were just about to get lunch, would you like to join us?” she asked.

Shelby glanced at Rachel who had wondered off with Quinn and they were looking at the brightly displayed ties and nodded, “I’d like that, but Rachel is vegan.”

“Yes I remember, there’s a Thai place that serves vegan food,” Judy said with a smile. “Now if you’ll excuse me I’ll talk to that fine gentleman about purchasing that tuxedo for my daughter.”

“She was just going to rent it—” Shelby began, but noticed the look of disgust and horror on Judy’s features.

“Nonsense, Russell purchased all his own tux’s and suits,” Judy said haughtily, Charlie shouldn’t be slumming it renting tuxedos. “Yes, I’d like to purchase both of them the one in black and grey how much?”

The man blinked, “That’s eight hundred each, just for the tuxedos that doesn’t even come with the shirt and the tie and the shoes—” the man stopped talking when Judy Fabray handed him a black centurion card. Most people didn’t go to fancy parties and they only needed to rent tuxedos, but if the lady was paying then he had no problem ringing up everything.

“Anything she wants,” Judy said as Charlie came out wearing her street clothes. “You’re going to need shoes, and several shirts, and perhaps a bow tie.”

Charlie paused for a moment and looked at Judy who still had the card in her hand, “I can buy my own things—” she began annoyed that Judy was attempting to buy her affection again. She didn’t want anything to do with her mother’s money it came with strings.

Shelby intervened immediately trying to stop an argument before it began, “Let’s go look at shoes then, you can’t wear sneakers to the prom,” she said with a smile as she gently led Charlie away, speaking to her quietly, “It’s very generous of your mother to purchase these things for you. Even if she is trying to buy your love, so just say thank you and be grateful.”

Charlie nodded mutely still irritated but she did as Shelby suggested letting the old Vocal Adrenaline coach help pick out shoes that she could wear.

Quinn sighed and looked at Rachel giving her a small smile as she picked up a tie and held it out for the Diva to look at, “This looks like it matches,” she offered gently. Their mother only wanted was best for them—she wondered how many times she could keep lying to herself before it was true. There had been no need to make an excessive purchase and it hadn’t been done for anyone’s benefit but Judy’s.
“Why are we meeting in the girl’s locker room Wheezy?” Santana asked in an annoyed fashion. She was mildly curious but at the same time irritated that she was dragged in to this girls meeting.

“The latest rumors that Quinn is cheating on Rachel with Sam, they were seen at a motel together,” Mercedes turning to Rachel. “Sam’s been acting weird all week, and then they saw him at some motel with his ex-girlfriend. I think he’s cheating on me with Quinn.”

“Quinn wouldn’t cheat on me,” Rachel says confidently.

“Please. Because her track record is spotless? She cheated on Finn with Puck. She cheated on Sam with you, face it Berry when Quinn gets tired of your hobbit ways she’ll cheat on you with someone else, it’s what she does,” Santana scoffed. She turned her attention back to Mercedes before Rachel could respond, “Why am I here? Charlie isn’t going to cheat on me, she didn’t cheat on Dani with me when she had the chance. She isn’t going to cheat on me with someone else.”

“Has she been acting strange?” Mercedes asked, there were rumors flying around about Charlie.

Santana is about to roll her eyes but Charlie and her haven’t had sex all week and the last time they did Charlie had walked out on her. She was still peeved about that, “Maybe, but I know Charlie doesn’t cheat. Once again case in point, she wouldn’t fuck me while she was with Dani.”

“There has to be a perfectly reasonable explanation—” Rachel began.

“And then there was this cut on his head which he said he got tripping and hitting a coffee table—he had stitches—” Mercedes paused as Santana and Rachel exchanged glances. “You know something?”

Rachel winced, no wonder the twins were being so secretive about the whole thing. If Sam was being abused it was their modus operandi to shut down, and deal with it in secret. “Have you noticed anything strange about Sam, any bruises any stories that don’t make sense?” she asked gently.

Mercedes nodded, “I saw a bruise on his hip the other day but he told me he got that at the gym and he has been a bit of pain lately,” she admits and pauses as she finally realizes what Rachel is getting at. “I’ve met his parents, they seem like such nice people. I don’t think Sam’s being abused and what does that have to do with Quinn meeting him in a motel room.”

Santana frowned, she didn’t really want to bring Mercedes into the fold she was the biggest gossip in school but if Sam was being abused and the twins were helping him, she would need to know. “Listen up Wheezy, we’re going to tell you something and you have to swear on your life not to say a word about it to anyone. There are only—seven people who know this and most of them don’t even know the whole story. This isn’t something you tell to Porcelain, and if I find out you’ve been blabbing I will ends you,” she threatened.

Mercedes nodded, “I swear I just want to know what’s going on,” she admits.

Rachel looks at Santana who gives her a nod, “Children—who are different are more likely to be abused. Charlie lives with me for that very reason. When she didn’t show up to school last year for a couple of weeks? Her father put her in the hospital—Sam does know about it at least enough of it. So if he is being abused the best people to help him would probably be the twins.” Rachel said.

Mercedes didn’t know what to say to this new information but she wasn’t going to blab this wasn’t some juicy high school information, this was real life and it was none of the school’s business. “I want to help him and be there for him.”
Santana who had pulled out her phone held a finger up, “Give it a moment, we’ll ask Charlie,” she said.

Rachel blinked, “Charlie doesn’t talk about things, and what makes you think she’s even going to come just because you called. I’m sure that I can get Quinn to tell me the information just as quickly as you can get it out of Charlie,” she huffed.

Santana rolled her eyes, “Care to put your money where your mouth is?”

Rachel swallowed, and nodded, because she was sure that if she asked Quinn nicely that the ex-cheerleader would tell her. “Yes, if I win you have to call me Rachel for an entire week, no more nicknames.”

Santana rolled her eyes, “Fine but if I win you get your clutches off my girlfriend, and she ends up matching with me.”

Mercedes stared at the two of them, “This is serious, Sam could be getting abused and you’re making bets about who can get the information first?”

“Relax Mercedes, if he is the twins would have immediately put a stop the situation, they’re probably paying for the motel room,” Santana said with a dismissive wave of her hand as Rachel texted Quinn.

It was exactly five minutes before both twins entered the bathroom together, “What are you doing here? Use another bathroom,” Quinn hissed at her sister.

“I’m not here to take a—” Charlie began trailing off when she saw that there were three girls staring at the two of them with expectant looks on her face. She peered at her girlfriend, “I thought we talked about this—the whole asking permission thing which we’re supposed to do when one of us has a crazy plan. And in case you didn’t notice,” Charlie tilted her head at Quinn who rolled her eyes. “Quinn’s here,” she whispered loudly.

“Is your mind ever out of the gutter?” Quinn snapped at Charlie who turned to her sister an amused look on her face.

“Is yours ever in the gutter? I’m sure Rachel would appreciate a few more dirty thoughts—” Charlie begins.

“What is with you people and trying to give me sex advice, I satisfy my girlfriend just fine,” Quinn says her frustration mounting as she flushed. “And I have plenty of—” she pauses and looks at the three girls who are just staring at them. “You called us here for something important?”

Rachel nodded as Santana walked up to Charlie with a predatory grin on her face and the soccer player was quickly backing up till her back was on the wall, “What’s going on with Sam? Mercedes thinks that you’re having an affair, I told her that it couldn’t be because I trust you—”

“Santana there are people here,” Charlie hissed quietly and everyone turned to the two of them as Charlie went a bright red. “One of them is my sister,” Santana didn’t seem to stop whispering whatever it was she was whispering into Charlie’s ear.

“Moving on, I said that you would gladly tell me why you were with Sam at a motel,” Rachel continued.

Quinn blinked and stared at Rachel for a moment and looked at her twin, who was still squirming, “You made a bet? With Satan?” Rachel nods, “Sam got caught up in one of Puck’s schemes,” she
answered honestly and Santana stopped what she was doing immediately and glared at Charlie who was still flushed. “We were helping him out,” she turned to Mercedes, “I’m not having sex with Sam in a seedy motel room.”

“I’m not worried about that anymore, they told me about—you,” she said looking over at Charlie who seemed to be recovering from whatever spell Santana had cast on her and the soccer player looked back at her. “I just want to know if he’s being—”

Charlie flicked her eyes to Santana, “If he was being abused I would have told you,” she says softly.

“He isn’t it really is just one of Puck’s idiotic schemes that he got caught up in, we helped him. He’ll be back to normal but it’s a conversation you really need to have with Sam,” Quinn says.

“We handled it but you need to talk to him,” Charlie said.
“Hey, hey,” Finn snaps pulling away from Quinn as he storms over to where Charlie is dancing with Rachel. He had been furious when he had found out that they had come to prom together and Charlie was even matching with Rachel.

Charlie sighs, and pulls away from Rachel for a moment, “What is it now Sasquatch?” she asked him in a bored tone.

“You’re dating her,” Finn says shooting a hurt look at Rachel, “She’s not a guy Rachel.”

“Well thank you for stating the obvious Sasquatch,” Charlie turns, Rachel has been giving her lessons all night on how to dance properly, it’s a lot easier to dance with her then it is with Santana or even Brittany who just sort of expect her to be good at it. And she had promised to dance with Brittany later. “Like this?” she asks Rachel completely ignoring Finn for once.

Rachel winces because she thought that Finn would at least be a gentleman and stay with Quinn who has a look on her face, “Finn Hudson you have a date to this dance and if you don’t treat her with the respect she deserves—” Rachel begins and Charlie sighs and turns around to look at Finn.

“Look any other day I’d totally kick your ass but I don’t want your blood all over me. I look hot in this, I want to dance with Rachel, then Brittany. I spent an absurd amount of money on my ticket so I want to have a good time, and you’re currently supposed to be treating my sister to a good time so do that. Watch the hands, she’s my sister.” Charlie says dismissively turning her back to Finn once more.

Finn shoves her and Charlie takes a step forward before she slowly turns around only to have Rachel grab her arm, “You’ll get kicked out and Brittany will be sad,” this seems to calm the soccer player down.

Quinn sighs and she puts a hand on Finn’s shoulder, “They’re just friends Finn, so let’s go try and convince people to vote for us Santana has been working the floor all night with Karofsky.”

“Will the candidates for king and queen gather on the stage? The votes are in. This is the moment you’ve all been waiting for, where we announce our Junior Prom King and also Prom Queen. Roll the drum, please. This year’s Junior Prom King is—David Karofsky!” Figgins pauses letting the crowd cheer for Dave Karofsky who holds his hands up in victory.

Santana smirks at Quinn who rolls her eyes, she’s finally beaten Quinn at her own game.

“And now, your 2011 McKinley High Prom Queen—with an overwhelming number of write-in votes is—Kurt Hummel.” Figgins sighs as the crowd goes silent and everyone looks at Kurt.

“I was sure that you were going to win,” Rachel says to Quinn who had exited the stage, “All the polls—poor Kurt,” Rachel says after a moment. Her voice is gentle and she touches Quinn’s arm gently. “I’m sure your mom will understand Quinn. There’s always next year,” she says brightly because Quinn looks slightly disappointed and maybe if she had baked brownies instead of sugar
cookies it would have been enough to sway the masses.

Quinn sighs, her mother will be disappointed but maybe she’ll understand just how cruel teenagers can be sometimes, she looks at herself in the mirror. Before getting pregnant with Beth this would have mattered more than it does, “I didn’t want to be prom queen without you, by my side,” she admits after a moment. “I’m not that Quinn anymore, maybe a year ago this would have all mattered. It would have mattered that I didn’t win, I would have had a freak out and then a bit of a temper tantrum because my life would have been over. But—maybe people just knew that it was fake. And I’m tired of putting on those masks Rachel.” She wants to be happy, she wants to be happy she wants to be proud of who she’s with. “So next year Rachel, we’re going to win prom king and queen,” she vows.

Rachel pauses for a moment, because it does sound rather nice but logistically one of them would have to be the king. “So who’s going to be which?” she asks and she sees Quinn pause because she clearly hasn’t thought that far ahead. “We’ve got all summer to think about it, though I’ve given it a lot of thought and the thought of you in a suit—” Rachel trails off and Quinn stares at her for a moment.

“Well I’ll be king and you can be my queen,” Quinn says with a relaxed shrug. “And really you want to see me in a suit?” she says crinkling her nose as she thinks about it.

Rachel shrugs still smiling, “Maybe,” She says in a teasing tone. “Now can we still go out there and dance without anyone being suspicious?” she asks.

Quinn nods and kisses her girlfriend gently before pulling away, “Let’s go dance Rachel.”

Charlie had slipped out after the announcement and headed back to her car where she pulled off her tie and replaced it with a red one that matched Santana’s dress and headed back into the prom where she found Santana talking to Brittany. Brittany turns and takes a look at her and pulls away from Santana walking past Charlie.

“You still owe me a dance,” she says and Charlie smiles and nods as Santana turns around.

“Rachel said that you really wanted me to wear your colors tonight, so I asked Brittany for a picture of your dress and dragged Rachel and Kurt back to the store so I could make sure that it matched,” Charlie said. “Kurt then proceeded to try and take me shopping for new clothes, I ran away,” Charlie admits shyly. “Like seriously, I was like is that Patti and I pointed in a direction and the two of them turn all excited and I ran away. I don’t even know who Patti is,” Charlie finished her story scratching her cheek.

Santana laughs, “God those two are so gay,” she says and Charlie grins at her, as she takes a step towards Charlie running a finger down the red tie, “It suits you,” she says and Charlie smiles at her and wraps her arms around her waist like she had practiced with Rachel who was a terribly difficult task master.

“All I really wanted to do tonight was dance with you, properly this time. And Rachel is like really bossy. So—yeah can I have this dance?” Charlie asks swallowing. “You look amazing—like really beautiful by the way,” she adds not knowing why she’s so nervous, they can still hear the music from the gym.

“I was watching you all night, plotting ways to get rid of the hobbit,” Santana admits after a
Charlie flashes her crooked grin, “Jealous?” she asked in a teasing tone.

Santana rolled her eyes, because she was a tiny bit jealous of Rachel, just a bit. “You tell the hobbit and I will ends you,” she says quietly.

“I was planning ways to murder Karofsky, I know how to get away with it to,” Charlie admits to Santana after a moment. Santana leans in to kiss her and Charlie responds because they’re always like magic. Santana’s kisses and she feels her cells light up. She doesn’t care that they are in an extremely public area or that she’s sure that someone runs past her, or that Santana took Dave to the dance. It’s the most public they’ve been and it’s the closest that Santana has come to coming out with her.

Neither of the Fabray twins went to the prom with the person that they wanted to go with. Quinn wanted to go with Rachel, Charlie wanted to go with Santana. But both of them left with the person that they wanted to go with. It’s a magical night for the both of them and they are both—happy. It didn’t matter if Quinn didn’t win prom queen but she didn’t really care.

It's a magical night for the both of them, and it's a near perfect way to end the year for them.

Quinn gets the call first from her mother, she half expects it to be her mother asking her about the results of prom. She doesn’t expect to hear her mother crying, bawling really. So she didn’t make prom queen there is always next year. Though when her mother finally manages to calm down enough that Quinn can understand her blood runs cold and the end to the perfect night is shattered.

Russell Fabray is dead. Cancer.

It stuns Quinn and she can barely hear Rachel calling her name or her mother begging her to get in touch with Charlie. Quinn ends the call still numb and she doesn’t even know that she’s already started to cry and Rachel’s concerned and asking her what’s wrong and she tells her. But the words sound so foreign to her. And Rachel’s shocked for a moment but she’s taking charge immediately because Quinn can’t tell her twin. She can’t be the one to talk to Charlie so Rachel gently pulls the cellphone from Quinn’s grasp and calls Charlie.

Rachel finishes and she pulls Quinn into a tight hug, as Quinn begins to sob. Her father is dead, the man who she had loved and had hated. Is dead, she hadn’t spoken to him since he tossed her out last year. She hadn’t seen him since the trial where he went away, she feels guilty and horrible because Russell Fabray will never know his granddaughter, and she’ll never talk to him again. He’ll never know how much she missed him, how hard it was without him. He’ll never understand how angry she was that he ruined their family, that he hurt her twin. She’ll never be able to hear his voice, he’ll never know that she found the person that she plans to marry.

He’ll never know about Rachel, and how happy she makes her.

She’ll never know if she’d ever forgive him. He was her father, and despite everything she loved her dad. She loved him, and he’d never know that.
Charlie Fabray is talking to both Brittany and Santana, somehow she ended up with the both of them in her car. She’s promised to take Brittany home, she’d danced with the dancer like she’d asked and she hadn’t embarrassed herself too badly, she’d only tripped once. But she’s proud of herself and she plans to take Santana to the best hotel in the city tonight, she’s nearly at the Pierce place when her phone goes off and she recognizes Quinn’s ringtone.

Santana’s the one that pulls the phone out of her pocket, and she’s tempted to do something else but she doesn’t. She wants to actually make it to the hotel tonight, so she answers the phone and it’s Rachel who tells her the news. Santana looks at her girlfriend and she knows that she isn’t going to get her wish to make it to the hotel but she promises to tell Charlie the moment that they get to Brittany’s place.

Charlie gives her a confused look, but she makes it safely to the Pierce’s place. Santana tells Brittany to stay, and it worries Charlie some because Santana has a serious look on her face, and Santana is the one that tells Charlie who stares at her in shock for a moment, not believing her. But Santana’s not laughing this isn’t some unfunny joke and she tries to pass it off like it doesn’t bother her, and she wants to make it to the hotel but Brittany doesn’t budge and that emotional state lasts a minute before the first tear rolls down her cheek. Charlie wipes at her cheek and looks at the wetness a confused look on her face, her father’s words echoing in her head.

Neither Santana nor Brittany lay a hand on her, just watching her and Charlie face twists and she yells at them demanding that they leave her alone, because she doesn’t want them to see her lose it, she doesn’t want them to see her weak, but the moment Santana touches her knee. Charlie Fabray begins to cry.

Her dad is dead.
“How is she?” Santana asks Rachel, she had showed up the Berry house but no one had answered even though Charlie’s car was parked in the driveway. They had stayed at Brittany’s that night the three of them curling up together but by the time that she and Brittany had woken up, Charlie was gone.

Rachel blinks, “I thought she was with you, I was with Quinn with her mother all weekend, she admits. Judy Fabray had been drunk on Friday night, numb demanding to know the results of the prom. Quinn had simply ignored her and they had basically locked themselves in Quinn’s room. Rachel only leaving to make sure that they ate. Though most food went untouched.

Santana swears loudly, causing a few students to turn to look at her because Charlie Fabray is currently in the wind and she’s not answering her phone, “Have you heard from her?” There’s worry in her voice and she should have stayed up and made sure that Charlie didn’t go anywhere. She should have known that it would be her first reaction would be to run away.

Rachel shakes her head, “Quinn didn’t try and maybe I should have called to check in on her—but I thought she was with you,” she kicks herself mentally because Charlie is her friend and maybe she should have called Santana to make sure.

“Me and Britt’s woke up and she was gone; fucking ninja when she wants to be,” Santana admits after a moment.

Rachel sighs, she can’t blame the Latina and Charlie would probably show up when she wanted to be found. But she’s annoyed because Charlie should be around she should be helping her twin, but each person grieves in their own way so she lets it go. Quinn had insisted that she go to school. “Judy—started to plan the funeral arrangements,” Rachel says after a moment. “She wants the glee club to sing, I said I would discuss it with Mr. Schue and the rest of the glee club and get back to her today. I’ll be going there straight after my classes are done for today. My mom said she’d take me.”

Santana frowns, because she wants to be there for Charlie but with the soccer player currently in the wind that makes it impossible, “I'll swing by your place to see if Charlie’s there,” Santana pauses for a moment. “Wait Judy wants us to what?”

“At the service—I think she wants some of us to sing. Something religious I imagine, something to celebrate his life—Quinn wants me to sing and she thinks it’s a good idea. However I pointed out that due to his actions and that more than half of the glee club knows what he did to Charlie, there may be some resistance. Many people might not want to celebrate his life. He did kick Quinn out and he did well he did abuse Charlie,” she says grimacing.

“It’s hard to say where Charlie will fall on this one, she was—messed up I think she feels guilty for being relieved that he’s gone, I think she feels upset that her dad is dead, all I know is that she’ll—be there, she will,” Santana admits after a moment.

Rachel is quiet, “My loyalties are torn to, while I am dating Quinn and she wants me to sing—celebrating a man who physically abused my friend sickens me. But I will be there to support her, and if this is what she wants—I just hope that Charlie doesn’t think that I—approve that I condone his actions.”

“She wrote to him, I saw the letters every week she’d write to him. He never wrote back. But she
was sure that he was reading them. That he was so far away that no matter what happened he couldn’t hurt her again so she wrote to him. I tried to get her to stop and tell her it wasn’t healthy but she didn’t really care, because she was writing to her dad. Not the man who abused her,” Santana says after a moment and sighs. “She still has nightmares, she still has panic attacks sometimes, and there are times when she gets this—it’s like she’s lost in her own head for a bit, like she’s thinking about everything that went down.” And when the Latina pushed she’d get that crooked grin and she knew that Charlie was trying to pretend to be okay.

Rachel sighed, “Quinn’s upset for opposite reasons, she’s angry at him that he hurt the family again. She didn’t get a chance to say goodbye and he should have—told them. It came as a shock to all of them, though I suspect Judy was more worried about what this meant for the divorce than anything else. I don’t think Quinn knows how to feel I think she’s just as torn as Charlie is, her father is dead Santana. They are both in a lot of pain and I don’t know how we can help them.”

“We be there for them Yentl. Be a shoulder to cry on and make sure neither of them are alone and they know that they are—cared for.”

“Well it’s time we talked about nationals, it’s coming up within a month’s time and after the rousing success of regionals I think that we should try and recreate it with more original songs—” Mr. Schue began ignoring Rachel’s hand. “I think that if Quinn—” Mr. Schue paused because the ex-cheerleader wasn’t where she normally seated beside Rachel. “Has anyone seen Quinn? Rachel?”

Rachel stood up and she heard a groan from Mercedes and Kurt, “This is actually about Quinn and not a solo, as some of you are aware—the twins lost their father Russell Fabray the night of prom,” there was a murmur that ran through the small group. “Her mother has asked that the glee club sing at his funeral—”

“No,” Puck said immediately and everyone turned to look at him. “I’m not doing their father was a fucking asshole who deserves to—”

“Puck,” Mr. Schue said immediately his voice stern not believing what he was hearing. “Where’s your compassion, Quinn is an integral member of this group—”

Finn frowned and looked over at Puck before standing up and stepping to the front with Rachel, “I think we should do this, it’ll be good to be there for Quinn,” Rachel glanced at him and he made a face, “And Charlie.”

Artie nodded, “If my dad I’d like to think that you’d be there for me,” he adds.

“I’m not doing it, I want to be there for my baby mama and my bro, but I’m not doing that. I’m not celebrating his life or whatever,” Puck said crossing his arm over his chest.

“I kind of have to agree with Puck on this one,” Dani said speaking up, “I don’t think we should even go.”

“Guys he’s their dad—” Finn said, looking at Mr. Schue for a bit of back up. “Quinn would be there for you guys. We’re family.”

“I’m not doing it,” Mercedes said adding her voice to the dissenters.

Sam nodded, “Their father was an asshole.”
“He kicked Quinn out—” Mr. Schue began.

Rachel looked over at Santana who nodded at her. “That isn’t the only thing that he’s done and I do understand your concerns but we aren’t going there to celebrate his life. We’re going there to show the twins that they have friends who will be there for them. It doesn’t matter what he did, he’s gone. Noah don’t you dare tell Charlie that you’re glad he’s gone. She’s confused enough as it is, without you adding to it.”

Finn gave her a confused face, “Why are you so happy that he’s dead?” he asks.

“I think I deserve to know that as well. Clearly most of you know something that we don’t, because it was a perfectly reasonable request that their mother made. You Mercedes and Quinn insisted on singing to my dad even though I was very much against the idea,” Kurt points out. “So why are you so against singing to the twin’s father?”

This immediately shut the dissenters up, and Puck turned to Santana and Brittany. Santana seemed to be having an internal monologue, before she decided to make the decision, she had texted Charlie during the argument but there was still no word from her, so she made a decision. “Last year, the two weeks that Charlie didn’t show up she was recovering from injuries that her dickweed of a father gave her. I know because she’s my friend and she showed up at my doorstep a bloody mess.”

“So she’s been living with me since then,” Rachel added. “Her father, Russell Fabray is—was in prison. He died of cancer, and I understand why some of you feel loyalty to Charlie. Or that some of your loyalty is torn. I’m—” Rachel paused and glanced at Finn for a moment, “I’m friends with the both of them and trust me my loyalties are torn. Quinn would like us to do that and well—truthfully we don’t know what Charlie wants but I don’t see her as caring.”

“I doubt she’s going to show up—” Dani said.

“She will,” Santana and Brittany said at the same time.

“She was abused?” Finn repeats and people look at him.

“Children that are different—that are not what people call normal are more likely to be abused Finn.”

“I didn’t—”

“That’s the point Frankenteen, she didn’t want anyone to know,” Santana said. “I’m going to be there to support her, you don’t have to sing if you don’t want to. But I’m going to sing if it makes Charlie happy. If it makes Quinn happy I suppose.”

“I’ll sing to,” Brittany said with a nod.

Rachel smiled, “Once we locate Charlie, I’m sure we can figure out what she wants, and you can make your decisions based on that.”

Rachel sighed, Quinn still hadn’t eaten anything. “I made you a batch of your favorite sugar cookies,” she gently shook the container to see if that would help rouse her girlfriend. It had always worked for Charlie but Quinn didn’t seem interested for a moment but her stomach growls and Rachel smiles as the teenager finally moves a bit.
Quinn sighs, “Frannie’s here, with her husband they’re in the guest room. I think they’re only here because they hope that dad left them the family fortune, appearances and all that. I think my mom’s at the end of a bottle. Her boyfriend is around I guess, he’s probably going to move in now that mom’s officially a widower.”

Rachel bites her lip because it’s probably not the best time to tell Quinn her twin is currently in the wind and no one can find her. But she offered Quinn a cookie and the cheerleader looked at it before taking it and eating it. “Do you know when—”

“Friday, it’s this Friday,” Quinn interrupts.

Rachel sighs, not used to Quinn being so—a abrupt with her, but her father had just died, it wasn’t an excuse but it was excusable for now, she just needed to give her girlfriend a bit of time to grieve so she slid into the bed beside her. “I’m here for you. All you need to do is ask, if you want you can stay at my place. I understand how—tense things are with your oldest sibling, and the last thing you need right now is to start fighting with her over things. She always puts you on edge and—” she’s about to say that Charlie isn’t there because the two of them have made it an art form how they deal with Frannie. She’s heard the horror stories, she’s heard how much they hate her.

“Can we just—stay here for now? I don’t want to deal with my mom and with Frannie right now, I can’t. Mom’s running around trying to get things ready while drinking and I think that I’m going to be the one to end up—setting everything up, and I can’t—I don’t want to be the one to have to call funeral homes and we were supposed to see Beth this weekend and I still need to call them, and I have to help mom because she can’t do this on her own—” Quinn said trying to figuring out the million things she needed to do.

Rachel shakes her head, “I can help your mom, I am extremely organized and I may have planned my perfect funeral a few times.” Quinn gives her a look and she flushes, “I will be happy to offer suggestions to your mother, and help her make the decisions. I’ll also call the Griffins and I’m sure that they know what’s going on so they can change their plans if need be.”

Quinn bites her lip for a moment, “Have you really planned your perfect funeral?” she asks and Rachel gives her a look, and Quinn begins to giggle and then laugh, because it’s a very dramatic and very Rachel thing to do. “Let me guess, I throw myself onto your casket and say take me as well?”

Rachel gives Quinn a look, even though she’s pleased to see a smile on her girlfriend’s face. “Of course not, with the amount of bacon that you eat I’m probably going to outlive you by a good twenty years,” she says with an indignant huff. “And that’s awfully dramatic Quinn, I wouldn’t jump onto the casket as it’s being lowered for you, I’d simply be a mess for years. I’d never—” Rachel snaps her mouth shut and flushes.

But Quinn isn’t going to let it go that easily, “You’d never?” she prompts.

“Get over you,” Rachel says after a moment, “I’d never get over you. I’d be forced to spend the next twenty years of my long life without you,” she says and Quinn smiles at her.

Quinn is quiet for a moment, “I suppose I can cut the bacon back—”

“Excellent, facon is just as good and a healthier version of it,” Rachel says cheerfully and pats Quinn’s leg.

Quinn blinks because facon doesn’t even taste like real bacon and it isn’t anywhere near as good and for a moment she forgets about feeling upset just for a moment, “You tried this experiment
before with us and we both could tell it apart, that should tell you something,” Rachel pouts and Quinn leans in and kisses her girlfriends cheek. “Thank you,” she says after a moment.

Rachel smiles for a moment, “I wasn’t kidding about the facon though,” she says after a moment and Quinn rolls her eyes and takes the rest of the cookies from the diva.

Quinn rubs her eyes, for now she’s done crying even though Rachel probably could coordinate her father’s funeral for her she needs to be there to support her mother. “Come on let’s go find my mom and help her with the preparations and then we can do our homework together,” she needed to keep busy.

Rachel nodded, “I did take the liberty of using the Cheerios photocopier to copy all my notes, Brittany let me in, and then I highlighted the important points,” she said. Keeping busy was a good idea and it’s not as if Quinn wasn’t in the mourning process. “You don’t have—”

“Rachel I’m fine,” Quinn says but Rachel gives her a look, because a Fabray saying they’re fine is generally a sign that they aren’t and she curses Charlie for ruining things for her. “I just, I need to keep busy. I need to help out. I need to do something. I can’t just sit here. I can’t. I’ll go crazy, if I haven’t already thinking about the’ what ifs’, and all the things I don’t want to think about the fact that he died thinking that I hated him. I don’t want to think about the fact that I should hate him but I don’t and that my dad is dead.”

Rachel nodded and sighed, because Quinn was in pain and there was nothing that she could do but be there, “It’s okay—to still love your dad, Santana told me that Charlie does, that she’s just as confused as you about how to handle it. Russell Fabray a complicated man, and I know you have good memories of him. So I guess the complicated feelings about him are okay.”

Quinn sighs but she nods because maybe Rachel is a bit right, maybe she has a point. “She—mom wants me to give a speech and I still need to figure out what to say. I don’t—I can’t figure out what to say about my own father. I—”

“You have time to think about it, and you have time to write it all down,” Rachel’s tone is soothing because she needs Quinn to remain calm, about this. She has faith that Quinn will find something will write something that will sum up her feelings all together.

There’s a knock on the door and both teenagers turn to look as Frannie opens it up and Rachel wonders how Frannie has managed to fool anyone with her innocent looks and smiles and pretending to be the wounded daughter. The eldest Fabray is a terrible actor, and Rachel feels Quinn stiffen beside her.

“What do you want Frannie?” Quinn says after a moment.

Frannie looks at Rachel and frowns a bit, because the girl looks familiar and those clothes are ugly as sin, “Aren’t you my freakish sister’s girlfriend?” she asks Rachel.

“Rachel and Charlie are just friends,” Quinn states clearly though there is a cold edge to tone.

“What do you want Frannie?”

Frannie frown deepens, but Charlie’s not there to protect Quinn so she ignores her. The twins together are an annoyance but with them separated like this, “It’s a time for family Lucy, and even though I know dad was so disappointed and embarrassed because you for had a bastard child, we still need to put on a united front.”

“How dare you—” Rachel begins immediately snapping.
“Rachel,” Quinn says quietly but firmly and looks at her sister the HBIC stare on her face. “Rachel is staying. At least she’s not a vulture. And speaking of how dad was disappointed in us, let’s talk about the fact that he was so disappointed that you dropped out of Dartmouth, how you were terrified that he was going to cut you off, how you blew through your trust fund. Or we can sit and have a conversation about how your husband has a gambling addiction. Or even better yet, we can have a conversation about the fact that you’re only here because you think that dad made you the sole heir,” Quinn ignores the fact that Frannie’s mouth has dropped open. “I don’t need Charlie to deal with you Frannie, we’re not children anymore. It’s just more fun when she’s around.”

Frannie catches herself immediately and she scoffs, “I was the only one that stood by him, I am the perfect Fabray and when you lose everything, don’t you dare come to me looking for handouts,” she sneered.

“I’d rather eat dirt,” Quinn replies, looking at Rachel, “Come on lets go find my mom and help her with the funeral preparations,” she says getting up and Rachel flicks her eyes between the sisters and begins to follow Quinn who brushes past Frannie.

Rachel looks at Frannie and gives her a pleasant smile before quickly following Quinn on the staircases, Quinn handling herself was sexy—but it’s not the time and the place for such thoughts so she tables them for now. Quinn is right and Judy has a glass of scotch on the table and she’s flipping through the phonebook trying to figure out who to call next.

Judy looks at the two of them and gives them a weak smile, “Quinnie I managed to get a funeral home, and I finally booked the room. I still have people to invite caterers—”

Quinn sighs and listens to her mother and she glances over at Rachel who has pulled out a notebook from her bag and is currently listening to her mother’s ramblings intently and making notes. She should be worried about Rachel’s thing with organization but she knows it’ll probably be smoother if Rachel does help organize it, because she can’t trust her mother to do a decent job not while she’s drinking.

“Mrs. Fabray if I may,” Rachel says and Judy looks at her, “the glee club will indeed be singing at the funeral, if you have a list of his favorite songs that would be lovely—”

“I can pay you—”

“We can’t accept any payment or we lose our amateur status, and we won’t be able to go to nationals.” Rachel says quickly and Judy nods, “But since you’ve already talked to the funeral home director, perhaps arranging the flowers would be wise, followed by a catering service. And have you decided which cemetery to bury him?”

Judy looks at Quinn who is looking at Rachel with an amused smile on her face as the diva basically lists out everything that Judy needs to get done. “I—don’t,” Judy says after a moment because she’s missed more than half of what Rachel is saying.

“I have compiled a list, of things that you still need to call and a list of possible suggestions,” Rachel finishes pulling out the piece of paper and pushed it to Judy who stared at her like she was a super woman, and Rachel flushes. “I have this thing about organization.”

“Thank-you,” Judy says taking the paper from her and she looks at Quinn, and gently reaches over and touches her daughter’s hand. “We need to be a family now more than ever.”

Brittany wraps her in a tight hug the moment that she opens the door and Quinn smiles and hugs
back because there is nothing in the world like a Brittany hug. “Hey Britt’s,” she says and looks over at Santana. It suddenly clicks when Santana looks away that she hasn’t heard from her twin in three days, and she pulls away from Brittany. “Where is she?”

Brittany frowns and gives her a guilty look, “Lord Tubbington said she ran away before we woke up,” Brittany admits and Quinn freezes. “She’ll come back though—she always comes back,” Brittany said quickly.

“You let her run?” Quinn hisses at Santana who flinches.

“Quinn it isn’t her fault we didn’t plan on leaving her alone and she was cuddled in bed between the both of us and—she just sort of disappeared in the morning. We checked the duck pond and she’s not at home,” Brittany looks over at Rachel and waves. “We’ve checked everywhere, and we just need Rachel because Santana wants to break into your house to make sure that Charlie’s not hiding in there. San may have wanted to break in but I told her no.”

Quinn frowned and grabbed her jacket, “Is her car still in the driveway?” Santana nodded.

“We’ve checked everywhere, all her favorite spots, everywhere she would probably go to feel safe, we’ve checked. Puck’s out looking for her with Sam in the heights. Mercedes and Kurt are off looking near Carmel. Tina and Mike are checking to see if she bought a ticket out of here, like if she actually—ran. I told tried to locate her phone but it keeps saying that she’s in the house,” Santana said wincing as Quinn stormed by her. “I didn’t think—she promised she wouldn’t run.”

“Charlie breaks that promise all the time, she’s a runner. It’s a conditioned response, she wanted to run after she woke up last year in the hospital, I should have told you to cuff her to the bed or something—and if you say Wanky I will hurt you,” Quinn snaps at Santana.

Finn Hudson didn’t mean to stumble on to a very drunk Charlie Fabray swinging on a swing set aimlessly. If he hadn’t been staring out his window stuck behind a red light, he might have missed her all together and even though it’s not a secret that he’s not fond of the soccer player. He at least knows her a bit better now and her father is dead and it’s dangerous for her to be out there alone. He debates what to do for a moment, before he pulls into the parking lot that’s nearby and calls Noah Puckerman, maybe he could come pick her up. They are supposed to be bro’s, the thought makes him jealous because Puck used to be his best friend, and while it still stings, his best friend slept with his girlfriend, he misses just hanging out with him.

Puck ignores his phone call there’s been a lot of that lately, and he frowns for a moment, before making a decision and hopping out of the car and slowly approaching the soccer player who seems too caught up in her own world sipping on whatever is wrapped in that brown paper bag of hers, and he takes a seat on the swing beside her. He doesn’t say anything and she doesn’t seem to notice him at first, maybe he can just sit with her for a bit.

Charlie does seem to notice the quarterback after a moment, her words are slurred and she trips over them as she speaks. “Go away Sasquatch, not in the mood to kick your ass.”

Finn doesn’t say anything and sighs because he can smell the booze coming off her like a wave, “Let’s get you home,” he says reaching for her but Charlie twists away from him as best she can falling off the swing hard, spilling the contents of her alcohol onto the ground. Charlie swears and mumbles something about how it’s his fault and Finn sighs not knowing what to do for a moment but he makes a decision and picks her up ignoring the fact that she’s trying desperately to get away from him but he forces her into his car.
He drives her back to Rachel’s place but there’s no one home and he doesn’t know where Santana lives and he doesn’t want to take her back to the Fabray place. So he drives back home, Charlie’s passed out by the time he arrives and carrying her to his room is a lot simpler when she’s not trying to get away. He dumps her on his bed and grabs a trash bag and places it beside her just in case. She doesn’t wake up and he sits at his desk and at least tries to start his homework but the numbers don’t make much sense to him, so he gives up and he goes to play video games. He gets lost in his COD marathon when the soccer player finally stirs and is up quickly her hand on her mouth and Finn turns to her.

“There’s a bag on the bed,” he says quickly pointing to it and she grabs it and empties the contents of her stomach into the bag. Finn winces as his own stomach turns for a moment as the smell hits him and Charlie finishes and ties the bag closed.

Charlie is quiet for a moment and is taking deep breaths, before she realizes that she’s in a room with Finn Hudson and she turns to him looking around the room and then down at the bed before looking at Finn—“Kidnapping is illegal,” she says after a moment.

Finn grunts he should have known better than to expect any sort of thanks from Charlie Fabray. “You were drunk in the park and I couldn’t reach any of your friends,” he sneers the last word.

Charlie studies the boy for a moment, the last few days are a blur mostly filled with booze and walking around the city aimlessly. Her head swims again and she feels the sharp acidic taste of her vomit, “Bathroom?” she asks.

“Down the hall, second door on the left,” Finn says after a moment and Charlie’s gone stumbling out of his room. He hears retching sounds a few minutes later and he hopes that she made it to the toilet. He doesn’t get up to move though until he hears a flush. He doesn’t hear the footsteps coming back to his room so he goes to find her and she’s washing her mouth out at the sink. “You okay?” he asks after a moment and the teenager gives him a look. Yep she’s not grateful that he saved her.

Charlie finishes and grips the counter top again, to keep her head from spinning and pounding and she still feels very sick and she wonders why she was stupid to pick up drinking this weekend it went like a blur and she can’t remember what happened all she remembers is leaving Brittany’s place at the crack of dawn and heading back to Rachel’s and grabbing the rest of the alcohol a remnant of the party that they had. Her mind is still fuzzy and she looks at Finn and then at herself, she’s still clothed so she can’t assume the worst happened. But there’s a look of slight concern, at least she’s concern it’s hard to tell with his baby face, on Finn’s face. “It’s rude to stare Sasquatch.”

Any bit of concern that Finn had for her disappears with that comment and he just gets annoyed. “I’m trying to help you,” he snaps at her. “What the hell is your deal with me?” he’s angry now. She’s been on his case since freshman year, she’s taken everything from him, his friends, and she’s humiliated him at every turn. He doesn’t even understand why she hates him as much as she does.

Charlie doesn’t answer him, holding up her finger as she rushes back to the toilet and dry heaves into the toilet and slides down onto the ground and rests her head on her knees for a moment before looking at him, “You started it,” she manages.

“You started it, telling people about my early arrival problems—”

“You humped my best friend and arrived in your pants in front of the whole school, while dating my sister,” Charlie interrupted. “I didn’t tell anyone, it wasn’t a secret.”

Finn stares at her, because she’s being dismissive and it didn’t just start with “You’ve hated me
since freshman year and I didn’t do anything to you,” Finn snapped at her.

“You were dating my sister, and you were a shitty boyfriend,” Charlie defended herself easily as if this was the most obvious thing in the world.

Finn gets irritated because she’s defending herself, she’s made him miserable for the past three years of high school, he isn’t the bad guy here she is. “You ruined my relationship with Rachel, who won’t give me a second chance. You took my friends, you—”

“Give me a break Hudson, you lied to her. Not me, you told her that you didn’t sleep with Santana. I’m sure you lied to her plenty. You called Santana a slut in front of me, anything that happened between you and Rachel is your fault. If you had been a decent boyfriend maybe she could have forgiven you for lying to her, but you decided to act like a fucking ass. Your inevitable break up with Rachel aside, I didn’t take your friends. You stopped being friends with Puck because he got my sister pregnant. He needed you during the summer he had his child taken from him. Where the fuck were you? He’s the father of my niece. I was there for him, when you weren’t.”

Finn is stunned because he hadn’t known that he needed to be there for Puck, but he’s still angry at Charlie, and he opens his mouth. But no words came out, and he stares at her harshly.

Charlie meets his harsh gaze for a moment before pushing herself up and getting onto shaky feet. “You’re right I didn’t like you in freshman year. My best friend has this weird crush on you and my sister thought that you shit golden bricks, and you were too busy playing Call of Duty and acting like a douchebag to take good care of my sister. I didn’t start to actively hate you until after you idiotically decided to serenade my parents in a way to tell them that she was pregnant. Which,” Charlie holds her hands out so he can see the scars. “Had fucking consequences,” Finn flinches away. “Maybe not for you but for some of us it did.” She sees a flash of guilt pass over his face and he opens his mouth but she’s not in the mood for an apology, “Don’t—I don’t blame you. Not really, you didn’t know and you couldn’t have known.”

Finn stands there looking awkward, “Rachel—told us everything. I’m sorry, you know that your dad is dead.”

Charlie gives him a cool look and continues to study him for a moment and she watches him squirm a bit. Her therapist had said that she might be displacing some of her anger onto him, he was easier to deal with than Russell was. She doesn’t want his sympathy it’s still Finn and he slept with her girlfriend and rubbed it in her face. She hates him even though he tried to extend the olive branch to her, which she had promptly thrown back at him. “Don’t be, he was a prick,” she said dismissively.

Finn shuffles there for a moment, when he and Puck first met they had gotten into a fight and his mom had taken them both out for ice cream and they had become fast friends, he doubts that Charlie can stomach ice cream right now. “My dad’s dead, it’s why my mom married Kurt’s dad,” he says. “He was a drug addict and I guess getting high was more important than me—”

Charlie frowns she doesn’t want to hear a sob story, she just wants to continue hating him and move on with her life. “Don’t—”

“I don’t want you to feel sorry for me, I’m just saying he was still my dad. Even if he wasn’t around much. So I guess I get it, being angry at him. But I do have some good memories of him and I didn’t take my mom moving on very well because he was my dad,” Finn shrugs and doesn’t say anything for a moment.

Charlie stares at him for a moment and sighs, because she’s sick and too tired to keep u the charade
anymore and he’s being freakishly nice to her, “He used to be a decent human being,” she admits after a moment. “Then he wasn’t,” she says and Finn nods.

“Rachel wants us to sing at the funeral—”

“Are you going to dance too?” Finn shakes his head and Charlie shrugs, “Good he would have hated that, would have called you a bunch of liberal hippies. Do what you want then Finn,” she says her mind is still fuzzy.

Finn nods and rubs his head not knowing what to say next, because she’s not calling him names anymore and she doesn’t seem to be angry with him. “Well—” he begins she still looks a bit green and she’s still swaying a bit.

“I should go,” Charlie says because she’s spent more than enough time with Hudson. “Just tell me how to get back to Rachel’s place. I’ll walk.”

“You look like you’re about to fall over, I’ll drive you,” Finn says immediately because if people find out that he let her walk home like this.

Charlie gives him a look, “This—”

“Yeah I know, it’s just a temporary truce and when you get back to school you’ll continue hating me and plotting how to slushy me,” Finn says with a shrug. She just lost her dad and is drunk expecting her to change her stance on him is asking a bit much. “It’s a ride home.”

Charlie stares at him for a moment having an internal debate for a moment, it wasn’t what she was about to say, but she shrugs as he goes to get his keys. “Apologize to Santana,” she says when he comes back. He gives her a quizzical look and she repeats herself once more, and doesn’t say anything after accepting the ride from Finn.

Finn dropped her off and Charlie thanks him grudgingly and he nods, before she heads inside the house. It’s quiet and dark, not that she expects anything different Rachel is probably with Quinn and Santana doesn’t have a key. But the light in her room is on and she can’t remember for the life of her if she left it on or not when she left. Horrifying images of Rachel lecturing her on the importance of the environment haunt her, but she heads upstairs anyway and enters her room pausing when she sees Quinn lying on her bed asleep. Her phone and keys are exactly where she left them on her desk. She studies Quinn for a moment and she sighs for a moment before kicking her shoes off and crawling into bed with her twin wrapping her arms around her.

Quinn’s eyes flick open after a few moments and she turns to face her twin. “You ran. I needed you and you ran,” she says. She crinkles her nose because it smells like her twin has been drinking.

Charlie nods, “Sorry,” she admits slightly ashamed, “I’m sorry. I went to the house—when I woke up at Brittany’s but I couldn’t step foot on the grounds without panicking and I wanted to call you, but I didn’t—so I came home found the alcohol and the plan was to drink it and walk back.”

Quinn touches her sister’s cheek and then brushes a strand of hair out of her face. “Rachel took care of me,” she admits after a moment. She had forgotten all about Charlie, she would have warned Santana that she’d need to beat Charlie awake to keep her from running away.

“I knew she would, it’s not just us anymore,” Charlie repeats and relaxes for a minute.
“Yeah, they’re out looking for you—our friends they’re out making sure you’re not dead in a ditch somewhere. Santana is going to go all Lima Heights on you.” Quinn pauses for a minute and punches her sister’s arm. “You deserve it.”

“I know,” Charlie says and smiles a bit. “Our dad’s dead Quinn,” she says after a moment and she can feel the tears well up in her eyes. “He’s gone and he’s never going to come back—”

Quinn feels her sister’s pain and she shares it, and even though she thought she was done with crying she feels a fresh wave of tears because Charlie is hurting, and she hurts just as bad. “He’s never going to accept Beth, and he’s never going to know that I still love him even after—even after everything.”

It’s two hours later when the rest of the glee club calls off the search and comes back to the Berry residence and Rachel heads upstairs to tell Quinn that they couldn’t find Charlie and that they had checked everywhere. When she freezes because both twins are sleeping in Charlie’s bed, curled into each other. She relaxes and switches off the light and slips downstairs where Santana is in a mood.

“She’s upstairs with Quinn—sleeping,” she adds quickly grabbing onto Santana before she can go murder her girlfriend for making her worry like that.

Charlie wakes up first and peels away from her sister and glances at the time it’s nearly two am in the morning and Quinn’s still asleep and she gently kisses her sister’s forehead and slips out of bed because she’s starving. She opens the door to her room and closes it quietly. She feels better and makes a vow to never drink again because she feels like hell and she walks past the living room only to jump back when the light flicks on. Santana is laying on the couch and she’s looking at her with sleepy eyes.

“Where the hell do you think you’re going?” she demands yawning, it takes the sting out of her words. “If you think—” there’s another yawn, as Santana finally gets off the couch and walks over to Charlie and pokes her in the chest, “that you’re running again, then you’re an idiot. I will handcuff myself to you if I have to. What are you even doing up—” Charlie’s stomach growls and Santana stops and looks down at her girlfriend and then back at her still trying to get the sleep from her eyes. “Of course.” Charlie smiles and leans in and kisses her forehead, “I thought you said that you don’t drink,” Santana says crinkling her nose, Charlie smells like a brewery.

“My dad’s dead, things change,” Charlie says after a moment, “I’m sorry—I just I wanted to go see Quinn but she was in that house and I didn’t mean to worry you.”

“I wasn’t worried,” Santana lies and Charlie smiles at her, “Fine Fabgay I was a little worried—don’t give me that look, I was worried. I thought you were dead in a ditch somewhere or halfway to Alaska.”

“I hate being cold,” Charlie reminds her and Santana gives her a dirty look. “Not the point right. I’m sorry,” she repeats again and wraps an arm around her again and kisses her forehead, “I’ll try not to run again,” she promises. It’s a promise that she can’t keep and she’ll soon break.

“You’d better—” Charlie’s stomach growls again and Santana sighs and gives her girlfriend a look.

“Hungry,” she mumbles and pulls away from Santana who rolls her eyes as Charlie heads into the kitchen and opens the fridge to find a pizza box and pulls it out of the fridge, opening it and pulling out a slice and eating it happily.
Santana rolls her eyes wondering why she loves Charlie who is sitting at the island rolling up another pizza slice so she can eat it quicker. The soccer player looks up at Santana and nudges the box towards her. “I worry about you,” the Latina says shaking her head, Charlie just grins before taking another bite. Charlie says something with her mouth filled with food, “Chew. Swallow. Speak.”

“I’m sorry, I ran. I just woke up needing air, and I planned to be back—I wanted to see Quinn but I couldn’t so I drove back home planned to drink myself half to death and then walk back—”

“That’s like ten miles—are you fucking insane?”

“I didn’t get behind the wheel of the car. I walked like a mile then got lost. I just needed air and then I cried some more and then I got angry at myself and then I threw up. Then I drank some more. My dad's dead Santana. I didn't—I simply didn't know how to handle it. I wanted to go see him—I thought that he'd want to see me. I thought it'd bring me closure—I mean it's been a year. Maybe he learned his lesson—or I don't know. My dad's dead and I don't get to see him ever again. And I feel sick that a part of me is happy and relieved, he was my dad. But then I remember half the shit that he did to me and I think he deserved it but he's my dad—" Charlie babbles. She stops for a moment a frown on her face, because she can see the worried look on Santana's face. "I shouldn't have run away without telling you—I just I don't like feeling so many things at once. I'm sorry. I won't run again."

Santana sighs, "The next time you feel like that I'll go with you. You don't have to talk we can just run till you feel like talking about it or if you don't. You can't go off by yourself and not answer your phone everyone was worried about you Charlie, so promise me it won't happen again." She looks at Charlie expectantly and watches as her girlfriend chews her food slowly.

"It won't happen again," Charlie promises. It's not one that she keeps.
“My father, was a good man, who will always be remembered. He was a good father, who gave us the very best in life. The best opportunities. We went to the best schools, he was a man who believed that the best money could buy was the best. To me you are the man who loved me, who loved his family, loved Fox News and loved god. My father was a holy man, always went to church every Sunday, and never missed a single church service. Would even try and go when he was sick. He instilled that in me, that love of god and Christ.”

Quinn resisted the urge to roll her eyes at Frannie’s eulogy, money and god. It was typically Frannie and it still came off fake and money hungry. But despite that, despite knowing that all Frannie really did care about was continuing her fabulously wealthy lifestyle. Frannie did love Russell, she had been spared from his wrath for the most part, and had grown up relatively unscathed. The only time their father had been angry at her was when Frannie had decided to drop out of school, but he had still bailed her out, he had complained and yelled at her while doing it, but he had still helped her whenever she needed him.

Quinn glances around she’s supposed to close the eulogies, but Charlie isn’t around. She was supposed to be here hours ago, to help them set up but her sister is—absent. She wonders if she ran again, but Santana and Brittany don’t look worried like her mother does. Frannie just looks like she’s amused by the whole thing, like she knew that Charlie wouldn’t have the guts to show her face so she decides to buy more time for her twin. Charlie had promised she’d come, she’d promised she’d speak for her. Promised her that for one day it wouldn’t matter if Judy was slightly inebriated, or that Frannie was sort of a bitch, she’d be there for her family.

So she gets up even though it’s not yet her turn and goes to the front of the room. She shifts her papers nervously, she had practiced with Rachel and she spots the diva in the audience. Rachel smiles at her, it’s a gentle smile and she smiles back at her. “Russell Fabray was my father. He was my dad. He was larger than life sometimes and he loved Glen Beck and Bill O’Reilly and well basically—anything that was on Fox News. He believed firmly in his second amendment rights, he believed that a man should provide for his family, that’s what it meant to be a man. He loved his scotch and his cigars. He loved baseball, he loved football and at times if he was in the mood he’d watch a basketball game.” Quinn flicked through her papers carefully and looked at Rachel who nodded at her and she swallowed again.

“He liked to say that he was a self-made man, and he was. Our grandfathers company wasn’t doing so well and my dad took the company and he expanded it, he made it bigger and better. He bought out the competition and he expanded again and again. He was a ruthless businessman, he was the best businessman in the state. He knew business and his greatest dream was that he’d pass on his company to a son. He never had a son, he had three daughters. Frannie, Charlie and myself. We did—we did love him. He was a man who even though said that men don’t cry, would talk about us as children and get all teary-eyed. Because I think—our dad loved us. I think he loved all of us in his own way. He wanted what was best for Frannie, he wanted what was best for—me. He wanted what was best for my sister—Charlie but I don’t think he knew how to handle it correctly. I don’t think he knew how to separate his pain of the loss of an idea with the reality of the situation—”

Quinn wipes away a tear that’s falling and the words are getting blurrier by the minute, she hadn’t wanted to cry. But she is and she needs a moment to compose herself and she shakes her head at
Rachel because she can do this. She needs to do this by herself. She needs to say the words to her father that will make everything alright that will make everything better, the words that she didn’t want to say to him alive.

“He believed in family and he had such high hopes for us, education was important being a champion was important. He was proud of me when I was on a nationally ranked team for cheerleading, prouder still when I made head Cheerio. He would have loved Beth, I know he would have loved her. He liked children—or at least his kids. Because he showed us off, if there was a father-son bonding moment he’d take me, while everyone else was there with their sons, he’d always let me sit on his lap. He was protective over me, so he made my twin promise to protect me. Said it was the most important thing to him in the world that he—she protect me—because I was his princess. I was daddy’s little girl,” Quinn said.

“When I was born he held me in his arms, well after holding Charlie for a solid five minutes, he handed her off and he held me, because even though he wanted a son I was—just as precious to him. He wanted the perfect family and he had it. He had my mom, he had Frannie, he had Charlie and he had me.” They should have been enough for him, they had loved him despite his many flaws. Russell Fabray was a flawed man, he wasn’t a good person. He was a man stuck in his times, who loved to flash his wealth, who claimed to be a family yet had a mistress. He was a hypocrite, he was a bully, but there were parts of him that loved his family deeply that wanted what was best for them. But not every person is completely evil, not bad to the bone. He had his moments, where he wasn’t a complete asshole, when he was gentle with Judy. When his love for his children was unconditional.

“He bragged about us, all the time because I think a part of him was proud of us no matter what we did. And we all wanted to make him proud of us. He influenced me, even though he had no idea how to raise a daughter. I love my dad and I will miss him, I will miss not telling him things. I am upset that he won’t get to see Beth grow, that he never got to see his granddaughter. He is my dad—and I will always love him, I will miss him. Thank you.”

There was clapping and Quinn looked at the door to the room and saw a flash of black and her sister standing there nervously fidgeting, and she smiled because Charlie had showed up. She had kept her promise though it really did look like she was going to run at the drop of a hat. Quinn stepped down off the podium and went to go take a seat by her mother and Frannie.

Charlie Fabray walked in wearing all black with a white tie, she looked uneasy for a moment as she stepped onto the podium and leaned into the microphone. There was a bit of feedback and she leaned back a bit wincing, “Sorry,” she mumbles and she pulls a crumpled up piece of paper from her pocket. It’s the last letter she had ever wrote to her father. She hadn’t sent it yet she had gotten so caught up with prom. She looks at it for a moment and then looks at the crowd before crumpling it up and stuffing it back into her pocket. It’s to personal a letter to read in front of this crowd.

“I-” she begins and looks at her twin and she swallows. She wants to say something but she doesn’t know what to say, torn between blasting him or doing what Judy did, keeping up appearances. She furrows her brow as she looks at the audience people are looking at her expectantly and Charlie can feel her heart rate pick up. She should have thought this through. Quinn moves immediately breaking away from the family and standing beside her twin, touching her arm.

“It’s okay,” she mumbles gently. Charlie flicks her eyes towards her for a moment staring at her twin before leaning into the microphone again.
Quinn could read before me,” Charlie blurts out and Quinn turns to stare at her twin. “She could, she was smarter than me back then, still sort of is. Loved to read, I didn’t. Because she would read to me, and my dad would read to me and I think I figured so long as I had them I would never need to know how to read. I think my dad was worried that I was slow—so he tricked me into reading to him. He had these reading glasses that he used to wear and one day he hid them. He was quite proud of himself for tricking a four year old—”

“And Charlie tore the house apart looking for them, and dad faked it, he faked not being able to read without them told her that he was getting old, and she was going to need to read to him,” Quinn said smiling at her twin, she remembered the story well, Russell would bring it out in an attempt to embarrass Charlie. It always worked.

“Apparently I was horrified and I woke Quinn up and demanded that she read to the both of us, but she ignored me and went back to bed and I needed to have my story read to me. This was a life and death situation people. I would stay up every night till he came home so he would read to me. Because my dad did the voices right. No one else could do it right, no one could do it like my dad. If my dad couldn’t read to me I was sure that I’d never fall asleep again. I like sleeping, so the thought of never falling asleep again terrified me. Absolutely terrified me. So I sat there at five years old and I cried,” Charlie said glaring at Quinn who smiled.

“And remember what dad said? Men don’t cry. They just do. And then after a moment he said that men knew how to read. So he put you on his lap and he pointed at a word. You have to understand Charlie only knew her ABC’s, and how to sound things out. I thought she was slow at that age, and she still sort of is. But—” Quinn added.

“He was patient with me, and even though we were up till some ungodly hour at night I read him the entire book badly I imagine, butchering words. After I finished a sentence he’d read it back to me and he’d do the voices. Man I was such a gullible—child clearly he could read the book. It’s important that you know he taught me how to read. He taught me how to tie my shoes, how to tie a tie, how to take care of Lucy. He made me promise to protect my sisters—yes Frannie he made me promise to protect you—mostly Lucy, but he made me promise to protect you as well even though you’re kind of a—”

“Charlie!” Quinn hissed shaking her head even if it was true, she looked at Frannie who looked surprised to hear that.

“Sorry,” the soccer player mumbles and leans back. “He taught me how to ride my bike without training wheels, he taught me to face my fears, he taught me how to hunt and how to fish; both are skills which are useful in a zombie apocalypse,” this elicits a laugh from the crowd.

“I—loved my dad. I worshiped him because he was my dad and he was the best dad anyone could ever hope for. But then he wasn’t—my dad anymore he was someone else. So I’m going to try and remember my dad, I hoped that my dad would come back. I prayed to god that my dad would come back and we’d be a family again. But,” Charlie turns to look at the open casket. “That’s never going to happen, and I can’t remember my dad’s voice, I can’t remember him smiling at me, of him being proud of me— of us. But I’m going to remember the man that told me to protect Lucy like my life depended on it who taught me how to skin a fish, which by the way is disgusting and I hurled.” There was some more laughter and Charlie let out her crooked smile.

“Russell Fabray, my dad, shaped me into the person you see before you—the good and the bad. Whatever he did to me—whatever he did for me, shaped me, colored me and here I stand before you today. I would be a different person if it wasn’t for my dad—I might not care for my twin,” Charlie pauses and looks at Frannie and makes a face, “Or my sister,” Charlie pauses for a moment
and faces Judy, her eyes searching her face, “Or my mother.”

Charlie turns to Quinn, “Is that good?” she asked and Quinn nodded. “Okay. Thank you for coming to this. Thank you for being here to celebrate my dad’s life—as complicated as it may have been. Thank you.” With that she turns and hugs Quinn quickly and murmurs something in her ear before hopping down and going to sit as close to Frannie as she could stomach.

Quinn Fabray watched as Charlie stood by Frannie and her husband, relatively far away from them as possible and shook people’s hands as they left and thanked them for coming. It was ironic in a way that it would take the death of a family member, the death of the patriarch of the family to make them act sort of like a family. Family was important and for a moment even Frannie had softened and had hugged Charlie it was for a moment and Quinn suspected that it took most of Charlie’s will power not to pull away and she had even hugged Frannie back, sort of. It was more like an awkward pat on the back. She’d even stood beside their mom and had initiated the hug.

This was a family—they were a family. A united front, maybe they could do it again. Maybe it wouldn’t take a tragedy or a disaster for them to do it again, they could bond from this. They could be there for each other. Charlie might never move home but they could both be there for Judy, help her get sober again. Maybe make her a better person. If she could learn to accept Charlie—the soccer player might give her another chance, and if she accepted Charlie she’d learn to accept Rachel.

She already liked Rachel, she just didn’t like the thought of the two of them together and maybe it was better if Judy got used to the idea of seeing the two of them together. She wouldn’t just spring it on her, she’d take it step by step till her mom just got used to the idea.

“You’re changing your mind?” Rachel said quietly, “We’ve been planning this for months Quinn—you can’t just change your mind. You said you were ready, that you just didn’t want your mom to find out because she would find out. You can’t just—change it.”

“I’m not ready,” It’s a lie sort of, she’s not ready to lose her mom, she’s just lost her dad, she can’t lose more. Her mom, her home. She can’t go back to living with Santana and the Pierce’s don’t have any room for her.

“You are ready,” Rachel said, she’s been more than supportive, she’s supported Quinn’s prom run, she helped Quinn with everything. “You told me you were ready.”

“And now I’m not, I’m not ready to put everything on the line just—” Quinn catches herself but it’s too late and Rachel looks hurt she’s about to apologize but Rachel has already stormed off.

Charlie managed to separate from her family for a moment and find Santana pulling her to a corner, and she smiled at the Latina, “Thank-you. For singing—for coming really,” she mumbles quietly. “I heard that most people in glee didn’t want to support him but you said you’d come anyway and I know that you think he—” Charlie begins.

Santana winces a bit, because she had wished death on Russell Fabray a multiple amount of times, “I wanted you to be free, there’s a difference Fabgay. Look I know how much he meant to you and I don’t get it—I don’t think I’ll ever understand why he meant so much to you. But as your—
girlfriend it’s sort of my job to make sure that I’m there for you for the really important things. This was really important and I knew you’d be here. I didn’t even have to tackle you this time.”

Charlie smiles a bit. “I was outside trying to get myself ready and think of something to say. I spent all week trying to find the right words—but I couldn’t some of it would come out way to angry and others would gloss over the fact he wasn’t the best father in the world.” Charlie turns and looks at the open casket she can’t bring herself to look inside. “He gave me my first comic book you know. I don’t think he even knew what was what. It actually was a superman comic, you’d think I’d be a huge DC fanboy by now, but I’m not. Still prefer Iron Man, Thor, Hulk, Deadpool—you know the classics.” Charlie’s quiet for a moment. “He wasn’t a good man—I know now he wasn’t, I’ve known for a while that he wasn’t—but he’s still my dad Santana. Bad men still have families that love them, I guess.”

Santana puts a hand on Charlie’s arm quietly and the soccer player gives her a small smile, “Just—” Santana is cut off by a Rachel Berry storming away and Quinn calling her name. She looks at Charlie who seems slightly interested in what’s going on. “Trouble in paradise?”

Charlie shrugs, “I should go talk to her anyway, maybe you can talk to Rae,” she leans in about to kiss Santana but stops herself and gives her an awkward hug instead and a smile.

“What you do to piss off Rachel?” Charlie asks as she takes a seat by her sister undoing her tie a bit and leaning back from where she was seated on a pew.

“I can’t leave her. I can’t leave her alone in that house, she needs me now more than ever,” Quinn says and Charlie looks at her incredulously. “I’m not going to tell her about me and Rachel.”

Charlie doesn’t say anything for a moment, “Is this because our dad’s dead and you feel a bit guilty?” she asks tracing the scars on her hand.

“He never knew how I felt—he’s never going to know Beth and maybe if I had just—”

“I wrote about you a lot in my letters. I wrote about Beth, I told him that you were angry with him but I thought you still loved him. I wrote about how big Beth was growing, I sent him pictures—I told him we had friends and I think he read those letters. I wrote about me I told him how angry I was, I told him how confused I was—” Charlie pulls the crumpled up letter from her pocket and hands it to Quinn. “He’s never going to know about all sorts of things. I know it wasn’t my place and I shouldn’t have—but you were really angry at him and I could see that you missed him so I did, I let him know—because he needed to know. He needed to know how fucking amazing you are. So I think he did sort of know how you felt, and maybe he accepted Beth as well. We’ll never know,” Charlie says quietly and smiles at her sister who is looking at her stunned. “I’m tired of being a bit of a hypocrite, even though he’s gone—dead, even though he’s dead. I still feel the need to make him proud of me. And I guess that’s how you feel about Judy—but maybe the distance will be—good for you. I was looking at some songs to help me sort through my feelings. I can’t write like you so sometimes I have to other people’s words. You should have known better than to lean on me. You never thought of anyone else. You just saw your pain. And now I cry in the middle of the night. For the same damn thing.”

Quinn looks at her sister, she’s turn between being furious with her, for going above her head. For doing something that she wasn’t ready to do. That she had tried to pretend wasn’t happening. She didn’t want the same thing to happen with Judy. She didn’t want to be doing something—to be doing anything and suddenly wake up and her mother was no longer there. “It’s not the same and
“No it isn’t the same and I know that, but you can’t stop our mother from drinking—and it’s not my fault or your fault that she does. This isn’t about Rachel, it’s ultimately your decision when you want to come out—but Rachel can’t wait forever and you can’t hide a part of yourself from Judy and pretend that everything is okay between you, that you’re the perfect daughter. I can’t live my life trying to be him, or someone he would be proud of—and you can’t live your life like that either.”

Quinn is quiet for a moment, “Did you mean it when you said you cared about her?”

Charlie sighs and looks up at the ceiling, “I care about you the most and as much as we joke about her being the Wicked Witch of the East and having a house fall on her—but I don’t actually want to see that happen. Frannie’s a pain in our asses and I can only stand to be around her when she’s got her mouth shut but she is our sister. I mean she is a psychotic bitch but—I suppose I do sort of love her in the whole I’ll see you once a year smile and then kick you out of my house.”

“I wasn’t talking about Frannie,” Quinn said but she paused, “I kind of love her too—remember how we thought she was the Wicked Witch of the West first? You dumped that pitcher of water on her and she freaked out on you and chased you around the house trying to murder you because she had been trying to get ready for a date? Oh god, mom yelled at you for hours after she helped Frannie get cleaned up.”

“You dared me to do it,” Charlie says indignantly for a moment and smiles at Quinn and laughs for a moment. “I got in so much trouble for that.”

Quinn smiled, “I meant about mom.”

Charlie’s jaw sets, for a moment, “She was never really a mom to me—she basically gave me over to Russell and—you know how misogynistic he is. He would bad mouth her a lot in front of me, when he was hanging out with the guys. Telling me how she was useless and how she just wasted all his money. I suppose some of that stuck especially when she never helped me she never put herself on the line for me,” Charlie admits. “And she doesn’t accept me anyway so why should I accept her? Why should you? She’ll turn her back on you if the price was right—or if it got to difficult. You know that—I know that. So like I said your decision, I think that you’re really good with Rachel she makes you happy—Judy doesn’t and she hasn’t in a long time,” Charlie leaned in and kissed Quinn on the forehead. “Be happy. Now excuse me, Puck is going to continue to be a bad influence on me, and I suppose your dad dying is a decent reason to get thoroughly wasted.”

Quinn frowns and looks over at her mother who is talking to that Pastor Chris, “You know she’s been drinking right?”

Charlie flicks her eyes over to Quinn, she had suspected, Quinn had been spending an awful lot of time over at Rachel’s. “I did, I could smell it on her when I hugged her. I’m not going to become an alcoholic Quinn, I just—I want to forget sometimes.”

Quinn nods slowly, still slightly concerned because she’s sure that’s the reason Judy drinks as well, it’s a form of running away and Charlie is finding new and inventive ways to do that. “Just—don’t make it a habit Charlie.” Charlie flashes her a smile and heads off with Puck. Quinn makes a mental note to check in on, to make sure that Puck knows to stop giving Charlie terrible ideas. She didn’t fault Puck he probably thought he was helping. He needed to stop helping.

Quinn sighs as she watches Charlie talk to Puck, she wants to be happy, and she is happy with Rachel but she can’t just leave Judy—she can’t just leave her mom. She’d be happy if they were a family and her mom accepted Rachel, then she wouldn’t have to leave. They were a united front
right now? Why did it have to end?

“I don’t even know why you’re in the closet, everyone at school suspects. No one is stupid enough to actually mess with you, they’re terrified of you,” Rachel says in an annoyed fashion and Santana wonders why she was the one that was volunteered to talk to Rachel. “We already had everything planned out, we decided that to preserve our relationship that it would be best if we didn’t live together—though prior to her father’s funeral Quinn was practically living with me. I suspect she simply didn’t want to deal with her mother’s drinking again.”

“It’s a funeral Berry, she just lost her father and she feels guilty. Quinn is probably feeling all fuzzy and warm that the family is back together again, and she wants that feeling to last for as long as possible. I give it to the end of the weekend. Quinn can’t stand Frannie for long periods of time, and she’s under the delusion that being the best daughter in the world will magically cure her mother’s alcoholism.”

Rachel lets out a frustrated sigh, because she knows that it won’t, “I am aware that it’s selfish but I really want to be able to walk down the halls with her, maybe it’ll stop Finn from asking me out every few days. It’s just I really want—it’s not that she’s not ready—she just doesn’t want to lose her mother,” Santana doesn’t say anything letting Rachel make the next logical conclusion. “And I can’t ask her to turn her back on her mother—when she just lost her father,” Rachel makes a face and sighs and looks at Santana. “Why aren’t you out yet?”

“My parents aren’t around much and the person who raised me, was my Abuela. I suppose I already know what her reaction is going to be, and I really don’t want to be alone. My parents will probably be okay with whoever, they don’t care much anyway and my dad likes your dads. I care about what other people say about me behind my back—”

Rachel sniffed, “They’re terrified of you, Jacob won’t post any rumors about you because it’s suicide, and the vast majority of people don’t actually care or already know. You mean to tell me that Charlie doesn’t care at all if you’re out.”

Santana winces and thinks back to the fact that Charlie had just wanted to kiss her publically. “She does, but she also doesn’t ask me when we can be out.”

Rachel sighs, dating a Fabray is like a minefield of figuring things out, “You need to tell her about the why then, because even though she said that prom was stupid and even though she forgave you for going with Karofsky. She really wanted to go with you, she wanted to have the prom experience with you. I don’t think she understand why.”

Santana makes a face, talking about things was boring when there was much more interesting things that she could be doing with Charlie. “We talk about things—just not that. She gets it, she does. She said she’d wait until I was ready, and she hasn’t pushed. She thinks I don’t understand—but I think I do a bit more than she gives me credit for.” Her Abuela had hated the fact that she wasn’t feminine enough that she could beat up anyone who dared to pick on Brittany. Yet she still sought that approval out like the plague.
Frannie and her husband were grinning smugly. Judy had made sure to break out the brandy, before they had left. Quinn was surprised to see Charlie already waiting there talking to Rachel. Quinn frowned a bit she hadn’t talked to Rachel since the funeral.

“Moral support,” Charlie said cheerfully at Quinn’s look in her direction. Truthfully Rachel moping around the house had been driving her crazy, and she had dragged the diva along to join in on the family drama.

Frannie frowned at her sister, “What are you even doing here?” she asked coldly. Everyone knew that Russell had ended up hating her sister. There was no more making nice with her siblings, it was every one for themselves. Not to mention Russell would be horrified to see the type of company her sisters were keeping a Jew and a Latina. But it’s not like Judy was a decent mother to begin with, even Jason had commented on her drinking. She sniffed, they had lost their standing in the community, there father had been to jail, people knew about her freakish sister, they were now barely a step up from trailer trash. Jason was talking about how her family was making him look bad. She needed the money, they were currently in a massive amount of debt.

Judy was the one who spoke up, “Frannie, be nice she’s here to support family. This is a family event,” she eyed Rachel and narrowed her eyes at Santana.

Charlie flicked her eyes to pastor Hawthorne who was lurking behind Judy, and she rolled her eyes and turned to them, right family. “So—just people we’re dating then or are married to? Great I’m dating Rachel, let’s get on with it,” Charlie said as Judy’s mouth dropped and Rachel turned to Charlie, who seemed bored with the whole thing.

“A woman?” Jason, Frannie’s husband, asked a look of disgust on his face as he looked at Frannie and shook his head. “Mother was right when she said that your family was middle class,” he sneered at her.

This caught both twin’s attention and Quinn immediately spoke up before Charlie could try and slug him, “This coming from the guy with a gambling addiction and is currently broke—” Jason wheeled around at her and Quinn gave him her best HBIC stare, “You really should conduct your business out of earshot. Hoping that this will pay off your gambling debt. Especially after mother cut you off—”

Frannie flushed and glared at Quinn as Charlie stepped forward and placed a hand on Jason’s shoulder, “Hey Jerry!”

“Jason,” the man spat out glaring at Charlie as he tried to curl away from her,

Charlie ignored him, “Whatever, husband number one—Frannie is our sister, so you say something that hurts her feelings again and I will personally kick your ass,” Charlie said patting him on the shoulder roughly causing him to wince. “Frannie—if you do end up getting it all, do me a favor and divorce this guy. We’ve got to do something about the Fabray women picking out men who don’t treat them right. Finn, Jerry over here, the creepy pastor who’s boning our mother,” Charlie said and smiled as she the receptionist came back and motioned for the group to follow them.

Rachel leaned into Quinn, “I thought you hated Frannie?” she asked keeping voice low.

Quinn shrugged, “We do—but she’s our sister and we’re the only ones allowed to torture her,” Quinn informed Rachel glancing at Frannie who was still a bit red-faced. She eyed her husband she had never really liked him and she wondered just how badly he was treating her.

Quinn sat down first with Charlie taking a seat beside her and Rachel taking the other side, she
wasn’t aware when she linked hands with her twin but she did. She didn’t even know why she was nervous, they both still had trust funds, it wasn’t about the money—but maybe Russell had said something to them. A message, last words.

Robert Keyes stepped into the conference room and blinked there were certainly more people than he thought would show up, he looked at the twins, it had been ages since he had seen a picture of them—things had certainly changed. “Judy,” he said with a tense smile. Things had changed—he hadn’t really expected the stories about his former friend to be true, that Russell Fabray could have done half the things he did, but the proof was there. He had admitted to most of it when he had visited the man in jail to get his will redone. “The will—he changed it Judy before he died.”

Judy frowned, because with Russell’s death she wasn’t going to get half of what he owned. Everything had been under Russell’s name the only thing that they had shared was a joint account, which after a year of her currently throwing money at her problems was dangerously close to empty. Russell had always been a vindictive man. But maybe he had changed in his dying days. “It’s okay

Robert nodded and pulled out the legal document, “I, Russell D. Fabray being of sound and disposing mind and memory, do hereby make, publish and declare this to be my Last Will and Testament. I revoke all wills and codicils that I have previously made.” Robert began as he took a seat across from the Fabray clan. “I declare that I am married as of the date of this Will and that my wife’s name is Judy S. Fabray. I further declare that I have three children, namely: Frannie M. Fabray, Charlie R. Fabray and Lucy Q. Fabray. I further declare that I have a grandchild, Beth D. Griffin.” Robert looks up, “You do need to pay taxes on this but all the taxes will be paid from the estate.”

Quinn froze in her chair and stared at him, “Did you say Beth?” she whispered and Robert nodded. “He—Beth?” she looked at Charlie who looked just as surprised as she did. Neither of them had expected Russell to ever acknowledge Beth.

“I give and bequeath all of the tangible personal property that I may own at the time of my death, which is not otherwise specifically bequeathed under this Will, including my personal effects, jewelry, household furniture and furnishings, garden and lawn furnishings and equipment, books, silver, china, glass, rugs, art objects, hobby equipment and collections, wearing apparel, automobiles, and other personal articles, to my daughter, Charlie R. Fabray.”

Charlie blinked as everyone looked at her, because she hadn’t been expecting that at all. “I—what?” she asked Robert who smiled at her.

“How about we finish reading the will first,” Robert suggested, and he was met with a mute nod from Charlie. “I give and devise to my daughter, Lucy Q. Fabray, absolutely free of trust, all of my right, title and interest to the residential real estate located at 457 Dunn Street Lima, Ohio. I give and devise to my daughter, Charlie R. Fabray, to all other residential real estates that are in my name. Together with all property or liability insurance policies relating to such residential real estate.”

Charlie turned to Quinn who was sitting there stunned, he had given her the house—it was her house. She could feel Frannie and Judy looking at her. Frannie with an angry expression on her face, and Judy with a confused expression on hers.

Robert continued, there was still more to read, a lot to read. “I give and bequeath to my daughter Frannie M. Fabray the sum of ten million dollars.”

“That’s it?” Frannie hissed and turned to look at the twins, “What did you do—you disgraced the
family name—and you’re the freak of the family. Why is he giving you two everything—”

Robert Keys continued, listing off the main points of the will. Russell had put money in a trust for Beth, which was equal to their own, twenty million dollars. Quinn had gotten forty percent of all the money and Charlie had made off with the lions share, with sixty percent, plus she had picked up shares of his company. “Your father has given me permission to look for an appropriate executor off your trusts for the two of you, since you are both underage. There will be quite a bit of paperwork for the two of you two to sign.”

Quinn looked at Charlie who was still sitting there stunned, and she looked at the distraught look on Judy’s face and the pissed off look on Frannie’s and her husband’s face. Russell was a bastard who had divided the family again, if he was looking up at them from hell, he was probably laughing his ass off.

“He was sick—he was very sick when he died, can we contest the will?” Jason asked immediately. “One of the previous wills—”

Judy frowned, “It wouldn’t have changed much,” she spoke up and Jason looked at her, as did her children. Her voice was shaking as she spoke, though she wasn’t sure if she was furious or not with her dead husband, he had cheated on her and he couldn’t even—she deserved half. She had earned half of everything he had. She had been married to him for twenty-seven years. She was entitled to half. “He didn’t change anything that he gave to Charlie—it was in his last will, Russell only looked at his will every ten years since the twins were born. Both Frannie and Quinn were to split the difference, what he gave to Beth was meant to be my share. My share was always going to be a million for each year we were married.”

“Wait what—I thought he hated me?” Charlie sputtered.

Judy glanced at her middle child, “Clearly not, the last time he changed the will was when you were ten before all this. Before Beth, before we found about—your condition.”

Rachel looked at Quinn and touched her hand, “I don’t understand—”

Charlie was quiet for a moment, “How much was he worth when he died?” she asked after a moment and everyone turned to look at her, there was a hard edge to her voice.

“At the time of his death, we looked at all his accounts, and he had a net worth of approximately two hundred and fifty million dollars. If you take away what he gave to Beth—”

“So what if he gave me a hundred and thirty-five million dollars and he thinks that’s what? I’ll forgive him because he threw some money at me. Do I look like Frannie?” She hissed the last part ignoring Frannie’s look of outrage and shrugging off Quinn’s arm on her shoulder. “This isn’t what I wanted from him, I didn’t want his stupid money, I just wanted him to—” Charlie gesticulated wildly. She could have just done with a letter that said he was proud of her. That’s all she wanted.

“Right, this is what you wanted from him,” Robert said placing four letters on the table. In manila envelopes, Charlie’s and Quinn’s were the thickest, while Frannie’s was equally of medium thickness and Judy’s was just lying there. Robert pushed each envelope to its respective owner. It had their names in Russell’s familiar hand writing. “He read all the letters you wrote to him—he read them all and even though he was dying he talked about you like he used to. Going on about how proud he was of you—” this seemed to be the magic words and Charlie deflated. “How sorry he was that he couldn’t hold his granddaughter.”
Frannie sneered, “So that’s how you sucked up to dad, and you call me the kiss-ass?”

“I just—my therapist said it was a good idea to write to my dad, she didn’t think I was sending it and I just wanted him—I—just,” Charlie said looking at the letter like it was going to bite her. She felt the swell of the emotions and the confusion and the anger and it hurt all over again and she was about to get up when she felt a hand on her knee. She looked over at Quinn.

Quinn however was looking at her twin, “Explain.” She demanded she wasn’t going to let her twin get out of this mess. How had she made him—change his mind about Beth, she didn’t think he’d ever accept her. She was part Jewish and her father was a racist. At least Puck was white, she shuddered to think of what Russell would have done if she’d been impregnated by a man of color.

“I told you back at the funeral,” Charlie explains, “I wrote about you a lot. All the time, I wanted him to be proud of me Quinn—I just. I needed him to see that I was still the son that he raised—that I was still just Charlie. I just wanted him to see that I was still Charlie,” Charlie repeats. “I didn’t do it for the money, or the will, I wanted him to write to me and just see me. Just—to see me.”

Quinn stared at her twin who was agitated and was looking at the letter in front of her, “It wasn’t your place to tell him about Beth or me, or anyone else in the family. I was angry at him for what he did to you—for what he’s done to this family. We aren’t a family anymore, and sometimes it’s not even you and me anymore—you disappeared when I needed you Charlie. You promised you’d be there when I needed you and you keep running.”

“I always came back! I’ve always come back, even when I really just wanted to stay away. I always came back—”

“Then why haven’t you come home. I need you at home, with me right now. I need you there, not a few miles away. It’s supposed to be the two of us and we can be a proper family again. You can come home now, he gave me the house and it’s too big for two people. Stop being selfish and just come home, please.”

“I can’t.” Charlie said. She had tried. She tried every single time that she went to Santana’s she tried to step out but it was crippling the fear that took over her body. Her increased heart rate. She couldn’t. “I can’t,” she repeated again. She still had nightmares she still woke up in a panic sometimes, there were things she couldn’t do, there were things that Santana couldn’t do to her unless she was very much awake. She would never be normal. She would never be like everyone else. Quinn didn’t understand.

“As lovely as you two going at each other is, if Charlie is deciding to be an ungrateful brat about what our father gave her then she should pass it on to someone—” Frannie interrupted.;

Quinn sighed their family was broken, shattered into a million pieces there was no going back. Russell Fabray had destroyed them. Judy was an alcoholic—Frannie was well Frannie, and Charlie was damaged—she was broken and she didn’t want to try and fix herself. “Frannie—shut up please. We get it you’re mad because dad cut you off finally. That he didn’t reward your loyalty. He probably explained why in his letter.” Quinn said picking up her

Quinn stares at the letter with Rachel but she places it down for a moment, and sighs for a moment and looks at her girlfriend, it’s been a taxing day.
“When Charlie invited me to see how crazy your family, I thought she was kidding,” Rachel admits. “I don’t know if she was trying to scare me off or show me how much you needed my sanity,” Rachel says with a smile.

Quinn laughs, “I think—I’m sure it was a bit of both really. I’m glad you haven’t run away screaming yet,” she turns the letter over. She doesn’t know what she wants. “I—I’m sorry,” she says after a moment turning to look at Rachel. “For changing my mind I’m sorry. I just lost my dad—I can’t lose any more of my family member’s so soon. I love my mom and I never got to tell my dad, I can’t imagine he’ll ever accept you. You’re Jewish, you have two gay dads, and you’re a girl. I mean you hit like all of the big things, and your dad is black. It would have given him a heart attack if I brought you home to meet him. But I’d like to think that if anyone could change Russell Fabray’s mind it is you. You are incredibly persuasive.”

Rachel smiles, “Well—Charlie managed to do a decent job on her own. He acknowledged Beth—he gave her a lot of money. She is set for life,” Rachel says. “Plus he gave some money to the Griffins to help raise her.”

Quinn is quiet, “It doesn’t change anything though, and he’s still dead. Charlie’s right it just seems like he was trying to—buy us off. Restitution, and it doesn’t change the fact that he kicked me out of my house when I needed my dad to tell me that everything was going to be okay. It doesn’t change the fact that he nearly killed my twin in his rage. Or that he cheated on my mom. Frannie is the only one who didn’t—I mean she got him angry at times she did drop out of school, but he was never brutal with her.”

Rachel perked up at the words brutal, “Did he ever—?” she asked concern in her voice.

“He spanked me a few times, a few swats never anything to extreme, Charlie always got the worst of it even as a kid. He didn’t spank her. Because she was a boy and she was showing signs that she was a girl. It was always with the belt. It crossed the line between corporal punishment and abuse a few times but it was never—he never drew blood until after he found out. And I don’t understand why she’s not that angry with him. Why she insisted on writing to him—writing about me and Beth—she had no—”

“Charlie doesn’t talk about herself, not to anyone except Santana and Brittany or unless she has to. She talks about you, she told me about you, about her sister every time after I was slushied and I was sure that you were just a bully. She loves you, a lot and she loves Beth and I think—she wanted him to love you again. I’m sure Charlie wants his attention, but him loving you—I think she really wanted him to love you again and love Beth. Because what’s not to love?” Rachel says with a small smile.

Quinn looks at Rachel and feels guilty because Rachel was trying she was really trying to be the best girlfriend that she could possibly be. And she loved the diva a bit more for it. “I think—I know I just want to be happy. And I’m happy with you,” she admits after a moment. “Plus—the house is mine—she can’t kick me out. I can’t be kicked out of my own house. So I guess it’s still on, you know. The coming out, and I really would like it if you were there with me when I told her,” she says. “Just—I know you love to sing but don’t break out into song. Even if you find the perfect song—it’s not a good idea.”

Rachel laughed, “I think I can convince your mother that dating you is a good idea, but aren’t Frannie and your mother contesting the will?”

“They will be—but I don’t think there is anything that they can do. All the paperwork is in order, and he has a bunch of people and doctors saying that he was off sound mind. If my dad was going to make a will he’d make sure he’d do it properly.”
Quinn looked at the will again, “I—don’t think I can read this now,” she admits after a moment. It hurts to badly right now and the pain of losing her father still hurts. She’s also tired of crying, it’s exhausting to cry and even though she wants to know what went through her father’s mind—she’s terrified that maybe he did lose his mind a bit. Maybe the fact that he didn’t really change and this was all part of some plot to punish their mother.

“You can do it when you’re ready,” Rachel says gently.

“So he wrote you a letter—isn’t that what you wanted?” Santana asked gently watching as Charlie stared at her letter.

Charlie shrugged, she didn’t know what she wanted anymore, “Keep it,” Charlie said. “Read it—burn it, get rid of it, I don’t care I don’t want to know anymore,” she stated dropping the two letters on Santana’s bed. “I can’t live my life under his shadow anymore, I can’t keep hoping that he’ll accept me. I can’t. He still has way to much control over my life. I just want to be—me it’s not like he can see me anymore.”

Santana looked at the letters, “I’ll give them to Fuckerman, he does like to burn things,” she lied and Charlie nodded. She knew better, she would keep them until Charlie was ready.

“Good let’s go feed the water rats with Brittany,” Charlie said looking at the letters once more. It was the right decision this part of her life was over.
Charlie read over the lyrics, and sat in her chair pushing back grabbing her keyboard and plugging it into her laptop, “This is really good,” she says lost in thought as she runs a hand through her hair, “And you put some music to it so I don’t have to basically pull everything out of my ass. It’s good that you know what it sounds like. I can have this back to you in a day or so,” Charlie spins in her chair and looks at her sister. “What’s it called?” she asks.

Quinn thinks for a moment because she hadn’t thought of a title, “Real Again,” she says after a moment’s hesitation. “That’s how she makes me feel, I don’t really care about the stuff that I used to care about, I thought things like prom queen would make me happy. I thought being popular would make me happy, but none of it did. She’s there and it feels like it is okay to just be—”

“Lucy?” Charlie supplies and Quinn nods and smiles.

“I feel like it’s okay to just be Lucy. I’m Lucy Quinn Fabray, nothing is going to change that. I think Quinn suits me more now. I’m not that kid that I was back in junior high Charlie, I don’t actually care if people call me a slut to my face, not anymore. Or they think I’m a bitch, I don’t care—I care what she thinks of me. I’m still—Lucy I’ve just grown up. I think I needed to be Quinn for a while. To find myself, not just be that kid who would cry because kids made fun of her. I didn’t do anything back then I just let you handle it, I’ve been letting you handle things and that can’t happen anymore. I’m not a damsel in distress Charlie, I can handle myself now. You don’t have to protect me.”

Charlie is quiet for a moment and spins in her chair for a moment, and studies her sister for a moment brushing the hair out of her eyes, as she studies Quinn. “You’re still my little sister, I’m always going to protect you,” she says laughing.

Quinn scowls, “By five minutes. You are older than me by five minutes,” she says and Charlie grins at her, because Charlie won’t ever let her forget it.

“Makes all the difference in the world baby sis,” Charlie teases and laughs for a moment, it’s been the first time since their dad’s funeral that she’s laughed like this. The laughter dies for a moment, “I’m happy that Rachel was able to bring back my sister,” she says and then sniffs. “You better marry her,” Charlie says and gives her sister a grin. “Because I don’t think I’ll like anyone as much as I like Rachel, and if you do anything to ruin my supply of sugar cookies and brownies I will never forgive you.”

Quinn rolls her eyes but smiles, “Good to know that you want me to marry someone who can do something for you.”

Charlie shoots her a teasing grin, “I give you my blessing, though you should probably ask Hiram and Leroy and Shelby for permission first.”

“I’m seventeen Charlie—I’m not even ready to move in with her,” Quinn says because Charlie sounds like she’s already planning the wedding.

“I’ll walk you down the aisle, Beth can be a flower girl. I’m not wearing a dress though—and Rachel is my friend and really I should totally be her best man. But you’re my sister, so I’ll totally walk you down the aisle. My tie will match your dress. I’m debating between a black tuxedo—”

“Charlie I’m seventeen—and I like you better in the grey ones,” Quinn says and Charlie grins at
Quinn shakes her head she shouldn’t be encouraging her sister at all, “Plan your own wedding.”

“Eh, Mike’s going to be my best man. Or Sam,” Charlie says.

Quinn blinks, “I thought you promised that spot to Puck.”

“I did then I realized that he’s seen Santana naked and has slept with her so he gets booted down to groomsman,” Charlie said with a sniff. “I’m completely practical when it comes to these sort of things. I’m sure Santana will be beautiful and Puck being Puck will make some comment about it going in his spank bank—so because I don’t want to murder anyone on my wedding day, I’ve thought this through. It doesn’t matter what the wedding looks like to me.”

Quinn swallowed, because she still didn’t approve of the union. Santana had lost Charlie, she had chosen popularity over her twin, she had used her over and over again. Plus it was Santana. “What was the last thing she did for you?”

Charlie paused at that question, and shrugs, “I assume that you don’t mean sexually and since I’m not in the mood to regale you with our very vigorous sex life,” Charlie begins smiling at Quinn’s annoyed expression. “I feel safe—with her. She’s honest with me—she doesn’t treat me like I’m crazy, or weird or some sort of freak. Sure there will be hiccups, but she’s not gentle with me. I don’t want people to treat me gently. It’s why she started calling me Fabgay, there are other nicknames but I made her promise to never speak them out loud in public. Santana has a reputation, but behind closed doors—it’s different. She’s different and I’m fine with that.”

“Being behind closed doors? Really?”

“Well I expect that after you and Rachel come out, Santana will see that no one cares and she’ll be okay to come out as well. I can wait a couple more months. Besides she’s out with her friends, she’s out with people that she cares about—that we care about. I’m just—I can’t wait for that day when I can hold her hand going down the hallway, or you know having to stop myself from kissing her in public.” Charlie admits a smile on her face. “She’s going to be like a famous singer—or an actress or something. I think Rachel might have a bit of competition, because Santana’s just as talented as she is and just as good as she is, without all the work.”

Quinn blinks because Charlie’s talking about the future, “And you?”

Charlie looks at her keyboard, and presses a key on it, “There are so only stars to go around, you’re going to be a writer, and you’re going to write screen plays and novels and stuff. Rachel’s going to be huge on Broadway. Mercedes is going to be a famous R&B singer. Artie’s going to be like a director, Kurt’s not going to make it on Broadway but he’s going to be huge in the fashion world, you know he makes his own clothes. Puck can get a full ride scholarship and he could be a football player. Brittany and Mike are going to be choreographers to the hugest stars. I think our year is going to be massive, and it’s overcrowded with over achievers already—”

Quinn looks at Charlie and frowns, “You’re going to be a DJ, and you’re going to produce music for Rachel when she goes to try and win a Grammy and for Mercedes. Our year is going to take the world by storm and put Lima on the map.”

Charlie laughed, “I’m not that good of a DJ, Tyler keeps telling me that I still have a long ways to go before I can be anywhere as good as people like Tiësto, Armin Van Buuren, you know the greats. I’m really not that good,” she says before tapping on the keyboard again. “Alright Quinn let’s get your song ready, so you can serenade your girlfriend at nationals.”
Quinn sang, pouring all the emotion she felt all the love that she felt for Rachel into the song that she and her sister had created for Mr. Schue. She finished the last few notes as the music slowly began to fade away and she looked at him expectantly swallowing. She knew Rachel might possibly freak out if she didn’t get a solo, but all they needed to do was make the top ten to get to the second round. Rachel could shine when it really mattered.

Mr. Schue clapped loudly when she was done, “That’s a great song Quinn, brilliant. A love song is sure to get the judges on our side, and the emotion that you sang it with, you have someone very special in your life. However I think that Rachel—”

“I didn’t write this song for Rachel to sing, I was thinking that I could sing it at Nationals,” Quinn admits, it’s selfish and it’s a risk but she’s confident that their song will pull them through to the finals.

Mr. Schue is quiet for a moment and shakes his head, truthfully he had been looking for a duet between his two best, and strongest team members. Rachel and Finn. The song is good but Quinn doesn’t have the vocal strength to beat back Vocal Adrenaline, even with an original song like this. He was going to go with a sure thing, he was going to go with Rachel and Finn. “I’m sorry Quinn—but we can’t risk it. Maybe next year at sectionals, we need to go with our strengths and Rachel and Finn are the pillars of this team.”

“Finn isn’t our best male singer, Artie is, Sam and Puck are just equally as talented as Finn is,” Quinn pointed out she didn’t want Finn Hudson singing anymore songs to her girlfriend.

Mr. Schue frowns at this and shakes his head, “Finn is the Co-captain of this team and is a fine leader, and an excellent singer. We’ve had proven success with him and Rachel Quinn, they harmonize really well. Plus Finn already submitted a fully written song that is a duet that he wrote with Dani. It’s called pretending. I’m sorry Quinn but I’m going to have to go with that song.”

Quinn’s gives Mr. Schue a tight lipped smile, but she nods, all that hard work and nothing came of it. She wants to throw the song away in a fit of petulant rage but she doesn’t because they had both worked hard on it and it was a good song. It was probably miles ahead of whatever Finn Hudson came up with.

“What do you mean it’s an amazing song?” Quinn it was petulant and perhaps that she was more annoyed at the fact that Rachel would be singing yet another love song with Finn Hudson.

“It’s an amazing song Quinn, it’s really good. Truthfully I’m as surprised as you are, to see such a softer side of Finn,” Rachel said missing the tone of annoyance as she packed her bags. “I know we can win at Nationals with that and Charlie had a point when she said that she wasn’t the only one capable of producing music for our original songs. Dani is just as musically inclined, it’s both a shame and a blessing that she was more interested in soccer with Charlie than trying to compete with me for a solo. If she had competed in our contest, she might have won. I’ve seen some of her music it’s really good.”

It was a dangerous topic trying to tell Rachel to let someone else have a shot at the glory, despite the fact that she had chilled out considerably, there were still certain things that would set her off into a spiral of insane competitiveness. It’s why neither twin would mention that they thought people were equally as good as Rachel. Mostly because it generally ended badly for the both of...
them. There isn’t a gentle approach to slowly bring Rachel down to earth after she worked herself up thinking that into a tizzy. And part of this was her fault for encouraging the belief that she was a better singer than anyone else in glee club.

So she tried another tactic, “Why Finn though? It’s another love song that he’s singing to you,” Quinn points out. “Haven’t you shot him down enough for the past seven months we’ve been together? He’s doing this it in an attempt to get you back.”

Rachel frowned, because it sounded like Quinn was jealous. “He still thinks I’m playing hard to get,” she admits but smiles at Quinn and kisses her cheek. “But after we come out I’m sure he’ll stop after he gets over it and finally moves on. We probably should have told him earlier; however, with his previous behavior regarding informing people’s personal lives it was wise to keep it from him.”

Quinn sighed, “He wouldn’t have taken our relationship seriously and would have done it anyway,” she says. “It’s been seven months of him serenading you every other week, can’t you suggest letting one of the other guys shine? Puck has never had a solo in the competition. They can sing you love songs just fine and I don’t have a problem with it, Finn has feelings for you it’s different.”

Rachel sighed, “If he was doing it while actively knowing that we were in a relationship then it would be considerably disrespectful and rude. He thinks that I have a crush on someone, well it was some new mystery guy, well he did until prom now he thinks I have a crush on Charlie. He is now pointing out constantly that Charlie will never love me because everyone in school knows she’s in love with Brittany or Santana.”

“You’ve told him no and you’ve asked him politely to stop singing you songs, you’ve said that it makes you feel uncomfortable several times and people have told him to knock it off but he’s not listening. He wrote this song for you. I don’t want you singing it with him Rachel.”

This catches Rachel’s attention, because she can’t believe that Quinn is telling her not to do something. “You still talk and hang out with Sam—”

“Which is different because he doesn’t have feelings for me,” Quinn points out angrily. “He really likes Mercedes.”

“He proposed. You have a history—” Rachel immediately quiets down. “You have a history of cheating. You cheated on Sam with me.”

Quinn winces because it’s a fair point even if it is a low blow, “But I haven’t—I love you,” she says. “I trust you. It’s Finn I don’t trust as far as I can throw him and I’ve learned my lesson from cheating. Every single time I cheat bad things happen. I get pregnant, or we stop talking for a few weeks, there are consequences to cheating. Besides Sam didn’t know any better, and he doesn’t sing me love songs or keep giving me yearning looks in every single class. Every single class, all throughout every single glee club.”

“You don’t trust me—” Rachel began angrily, because how was this fair. She wasn’t the person who had a history of cheating.

“This isn’t about you, it’s about him. Santana trusts Charlie—she doesn’t trust Dani to not hit on her girlfriend. Dani still hits on Charlie—if my sister wasn’t incredibly dense or blind, she would have noticed it by now. I trust you—I trust you to not cheat on me, I don’t trust him with you. Hell I trust Jesse St. James more than I trust Finn at this point. You are aware that Finn is in love with you. Or at least he thinks he is. I don’t want you singing that song with him.”
Rachel rolls her eyes, “Despite Finn’s lack of understanding of the terms I’m not interested, and its one song Quinn. I can’t decide now that I’m going to throw one of my patented diva-fits and say I’m not singing it with him. It’s highly unprofessional and it’s not like I’m going to fall madly in love with him and leave you. It’s Finn.”

Quinn sighed, because Rachel did have a point it was one song— and then afterwards she’d tell everyone at school that Rachel was off limits because she was hers. Finn would have to back off eventually, and even though she didn’t like it and wanted to sing her song to Rachel it was probably a safer bet that they trust the lead vocals to Rachel and Finn—after all what was the worst that could happen.

Judy Fabray smiled at her middle daughter, who had called her to switch their scheduled Sunday lunch to Saturday morning. It was a surprise, any other time and she suspected that Charlie simply wouldn’t have shown up. However with Quinn out of the house she had invited Pastor Chris over the previous night and had invited him to the breakfast. Unfortunately Charlie didn’t seem rather pleased with it, she’d get used to the idea of having him around. Since the house now technically belonged to Quinn, it rankled at Judy’s nerves that she had to ask her youngest daughter if she could move her boyfriend into the house. There was a good chance that she would say no. Judy caught Charlie staring and smiled at Charlie, hoping that she could be happy for her.

Charlie sniffed as she looked at her menu and tapped the Belgian waffles debating whether she wanted that or the lumberjacks breakfast, occasionally flicking her eyes to her mother and her new boyfriend. He had his arm around her, and it looked like he stopped caring about appearances. She wished that Quinn was here to act as a buffer, she didn’t even know what to say to Judy. “So. You two are dating now? Like officially?” she asks deciding on the Belgian Waffles, she’s already gained back all the weight that she lost from her last insane diet and with school almost out she’d be hitting the gym daily with Sam and Puck like usual.

Judy smiled because it sounded like acceptance, or at least Charlie was apathetic to do anything about it, “Yes, we’re going to talk to Quinn about letting him move in with us. It’d be nice to have a man around the house again.”

Charlie frowned at this, and looked from her menu, “What?” she asked not at all pleased with this new information.

“Quinn has seemed rather positive with the idea, I think she really does want me to be happy, and she was talking about how even though the house was in her name it was still my home,” Judy continues.

Charlie stared at this and looked at Pastor Chris who looked quite proud of himself, she had thought that once he had found out that Judy wasn’t going to be nearly as rich as he had assumed that he’d eventually leave Judy and maybe Judy would find a decent person. “When you say man of the house—”

“I’m not here to take your father’s place,” Pastor Chris said immediately as if that would assuage any of Charlie’s worries about him. Charlie just gives him a blank stare so he continues, “But Quinn, and you are still at that impressionable age and your mother needs help so you two can be proper young ladies. Have you given anymore thought on the options your mother has laid out for you? And there are plenty of young men at my church that Quinn can meet, they come from good families and they are good boys.”
“It sounds like you are expecting to take Russell’s place,” Charlie mutters under her breath. Pastor Chris needs to go. It’s a problem that Charlie wants gone because if she can’t be there to protect Quinn from this guy then she doesn’t like the idea of having him around her sister. Especially not after he looked at Santana like he did, especially since Quinn would probably join the Cheerios again.

Her moment comes when Judy excuses herself to go to the restroom, “Charlie—please behave?” Judy asks the soccer player who gives her a noncommittal grunt in response. It’s as good as she’s going to get and she knows that.

“I’m sure I can handle her,” Pastor Chris says laughing and looks at Charlie with that fake smile on his face.

Charlie waits for Judy to leave the table watching her go before turning back to Pastor Chris, “A quarter of a million dollars,” She states plainly.

Pastor Chris looks up at the teenager and smirks at her, he had heard about her fortune that was an insignificant amount compared to what she could give him. “I love your mother,” he states. “She’s a good woman who knows that you need a man—”

“I’m going to pretend that you aren’t just another misogynistic prick, one thing Russell did teach me is that everyone has a price. I don’t care if you date my mother, she’s an adult who can make her own poorly thought out decisions. I don’t want you moving in with Quinn, you are not—our father. You have no right to be in her home. A home is a place where you should feel safe, and between Judy’s binge drinking and you perving on my sister, she’s never going to feel safe in her house. Don’t give me that look of outrage, I saw you peering down the top of our waitress. She’s just sixteen, I’ve seen at McKinley. Name your price.”

Pastor Chris smiles and it’s a smug smile like he knew she was going to offer him money and Charlie frowns because it doesn’t look like he’s going to take it. “Your mother is a good woman, Charlie, who is just a bit lost. With my guidance—”

Charlie frowned at him, “Your price,” she states again firmly.

“I love her—”

“Price.”

Pastor Chris laughs inwardly, because he has her where he wants her, he could still have his payday. “Ten million,” he states in a bored tone, like he doesn’t expect to get it.

Charlie snorts loudly and derisively, and wishes that the Fabray women picked better men. Quinn, Frannie, Judy. “No.”

Pastor Chris frowns because he had expected to start a negotiating but Charlie doesn’t seem to be biting and before he can argue with her, Judy’s back at the table.

Judy studies her daughter and for a moment from her posture and the look on her face she see’s flashes of Russell Fabray again. “Charlie—”

“I’m thinking of moving home,” Charlie blurts out, it’s what Judy wants. She wants the perfect family and its just for one year. Just until she graduates.

Pastor Chris eyes widen at this and he looks at Judy desperately as she lights up, “You are—and the surgery?”
“I said I’m thinking of moving back in,” Charlie repeats slowly, “Quinn wants me home and you’re right we should try and repair this family. Time is short, and anything could happen. I would like—to give you another chance,” she nearly chokes on the words but she keeps her voice steady and strong.

Judy reaches and touches Charlie’s hand and the soccer player doesn’t flinch away, “Of course one step at a time, I’ll do anything to earn your faith in me again.”

Charlie eyes Judy carefully, “I can’t move in with Pastor Chris there,” Charlie states bluntly. “I can’t be near someone who believes in corporal punishment for children,” Charlie adds. “I don’t want you to stop dating him—I don’t care I just don’t want him—living with me.” Judy pulls her hand away from Charlie’s and Charlie knows immediately that once again Judy is choosing someone else—a new boyfriend. This time and Charlie stiffens. It hurts for a moment but she’s used to this.

“Charlie—with your father gone, it’s time that I focused on me. You and Quinn are all grown up now, you can’t—”

Charlie’s jaw sets and her eyes harden, she can’t deal with Judy’s excuses. The decision should be simple even if they don’t have the best relationship. Judy should have picked her. “Two million.”

“I wasn’t expecting you to take me to New York Charlie, you didn’t have to pay for my ticket, it was very generous of you,” Shelby Cochran says. The last thing that she had expected was Charlie Fabray to call her up in the middle of a Saturday, and tell her that she was going to go to New York to watch the New Directions and help them with their poorly thought out plan of waiting to the last minute to compose an original song in two days. She had expected two economy tickets but Charlie had paid for two first class tickets, the teen had been quiet.

Charlie who had been quiet as she slid her bag into the overhead container looked at Shelby and smiled, “My father owned a Yacht and I sold it,” she said with a shrug, no one in their family actually went on the Yacht, it was just a sign of Russell’s wealth, which he had used to show off to business clients. The moment Charlie had taken possession of it, she had put it on the market, and made enough money to pay for her entire college education. She had donated half of it to various charities that would have her father spinning in his grave, including the Democratic Party.

Shelby was quiet for a moment, “Is that what you’re going to do? Sell all of his worldly possessions?”

Charlie shrugged, “I don’t need a yacht. The upkeep of one is insanely expensive. Frannie couldn’t afford it, Quinn didn’t want it, and Judy—” Charlie stopped speaking and made a face. Judy hadn’t wanted it either so she had sold it. The money hadn’t gone into her trust which she had expected and now Charlie was sitting on quite a fair bit of money.

“Judy?” Shelby prompted. “Didn’t want it either?” Charlie nodded and took some of the warm nuts and began to eat them quietly and Shelby saw the turmoil that was written on the soccer player’s face. “Your mother would have appreciated going on a trip like this, you know you could have connected—”

“If I offered you five million dollars to stop seeing Rachel—to leave and never come back would you take it?” Charlie interrupts. “Walk away and never come back?”
“Rachel—even though we met very late in life is my happiness. She makes me happy and no amount of money in the world would ever make me want to leave her, not again. I learned my lesson the first time. I’m her mother—and it doesn’t leave you. Not ever, I thought about her every day. I wanted to know what she was doing, what her first words were. I missed so much.” Shelby says firmly and studies Charlie who is listening to her. “What did you do?”

Charlie is quiet for a long moment, she isn’t sure how to explain it. “Judy’s boyfriend—I asked him specifically and he said that as the man of the house and the new man in Judy’s life it was duty to help her manage unruly children. Quinn—lives with her and he was going to be moving in and I can’t—I’ve tried a hundred times to go back. To be there and I have flashbacks or panic attacks. So I offered him a quarter of a million dollars to leave my mother.”

“You offered him money to leave?”

“Yes. He didn’t take it. When Judy came back to the table, I offered to come back home on the condition that Chris wasn’t there. If she wanted to be with him that was fine—but not at the house. Never at the house. I thought maybe she really did want me back but she said that it was unfair and that I was leaving in a year anyway. I wasn’t enough—and I got angry and I thought of what Russell Fabray would do to handle it and I offered her five million dollars, and the penthouse apartment I own in Chicago. I saw that she wanted it—so I sold it to her. She didn’t have any friends left in Lima, and this was a one-time offer. She could start afresh, be popular again. She took it. She—took it. I already called the Berry’s and I explained it to them and the money will be transferred into her account on Monday and she will be signing a contract with certain stipulations.”

Charlie’s face and tone was cold as she spoke about what she had done, and Shelby was almost afraid of what stipulations the soccer player had added. “Like?” she prompted.

“The apartment is still in my name, they can live there rent free for as long as they want. Judy can still remain in contact with Quinn and Frannie, but when she does visit Quinn, she can’t bring him along. He’s not allowed anywhere near my sister. She doesn’t contact me, period, I don’t want to hear from her ever again. Whatever other stipulation my lawyers think of. I suppose,” Charlie said with a shrug, but her face falls because she knows it’s what Russell would have done. “Did I do something unforgivable?” she asks looking at Shelby a pleading look on her face. She had just wanted to protect Quinn and since she couldn’t be there in person—she had just really wanted to protect Quinn.

Shelby is quiet and makes a face, because Charlie can’t go around trying to buy people off, or use money to solve all her life problems. It’s unhealthy attitude to have and she’ll forget who she is in the process, she doesn’t for a moment think that Charlie did it for selfish reasons, “I think you did it for the right reasons—but it was the wrong decision to make,” Charlie’s face falls and she looks distraught, and Shelby continues. “You can’t go around buying people off, or looking at people like they have a price. And you should have talked to your sister about it, because ultimately it impacts her life. She will probably be very angry with you, but I think you were trying to protect your twin, because your mother wasn’t being a very good parent. It’s your duty as a parent to make sure that the new partner isn’t a danger to the children.”

Charlie sighs, “I didn’t like how it made me feel to buy people like that,” she admits. “To find a price where people would do whatever I wanted them to do.”

Shelby nods, well at least she won’t have to worry about Charlie going around buying people off, and she can see that Charlie is lost in thought, and she’s probably beating herself up about it and she needs to know if it was purely altruistic on her part or if she’s just masking it under something
else. “Are you upset that Judy has moved on? From your father that she’s bringing home someone new and it hasn’t been that long?”

Charlie flicks her hazel eyes to Shelby and shakes her head, “I was upset in the beginning, when I first met him. I get why she left him, my dad’s a hypocrite of the highest order, and cheated on her. He also treated her like she was a dumb blonde and constantly talked down to her. I just don’t understand why she needed another man. Why she couldn’t just be a good mom to my sister who really wants her mom in her life. I thought that maybe—if Russell could change even a little that maybe she wouldn’t walk away from me again. But I was wrong—people don’t change.”

Charlie: Can you get away from the musical cult?

Santana blinked, it was the first message from Charlie all day and she looked at the room as people kept trying to come up with songs. She was terrible at song writing, and there was like zero inspiration cooped up in this room.

Santana: Yep

The response was instantaneous, Charlie had clearly typed it out quickly.

Charlie: We need to talk

Santana frowned, nothing good came after those words, and she nearly put her phone down and simply ignored it. There was a creeping fear that Charlie was going to break up with her, she’d been distant, but Santana had merely chalked it up to the fact that her father had just died. “I’ll be right back,” Brittany shoots her a look but doesn’t say anything because the song she’s working on is like the best song in the world. Santana slips outside the hotel room and dials Charlie’s number.

“Hey,” Charlie’s voice filters through the speakers.

“We need to talk?” Santana asked. “If you are breaking up with me by phone—” Santana begins getting annoyed there is that fear that Charlie will leave her. “If you think the distance will save you, I will hunt you down and go all Lima Heights on your ass,” she threatens. But Charlie doesn’t respond and for a split second Santana fears the worst because she truly thinks that Charlie Fabray is going to break up with her. A tap on her shoulder makes her wheel around angrily, “Can’t you see I’m on the—”

Charlie grinned at her and leaned in and kissed her quickly cutting off the words, as she pulls back, “I’m not breaking up with you,” she says quietly. “I am however in New York, though. Surprise,” she grins at Santana. “And I have my own room, Ms. C has her own,” Charlie says with a laugh pointing down the hall. “I managed to snag the last rooms in the hotel,” Charlie says proudly. “Now we’re in New York what do you want to do first? We can go to the ballet, they have a performance tonight. We can maybe see the Lion King, but we’d have to go with Brittany, she’d be sad if we left her out. We can go see the empire state building or go make fun of all this contemporary ‘art’, or maybe I can take you out for the best pizza in town, by that I mean we’ll stop at every pizza place and I’ll determine which the best pizza is—”

Santana blinked as Charlie went on excitedly, talking about all the places that she could take Santana. She frowned, “Actually Fabgay, there was somewhere that I wanted to go to while I was here, but it’s a surprise, and I’m taking you out.”

“It’s a surprise,” she repeats again and Charlie puffs her cheeks out and sniffs.

“The last time someone said they were taking me out for a surprise it was Quinn trying to get me to get a haircut,” Charlie groans.

Santana glances at her girlfriend’s shaggy hair and bites her lip, because actually that is a good idea, Charlie does actually need a haircut, she always needs a haircut. “I promise that I’m not talking you to get your hair cut.”

Charlie smiles at this, “Is it food then? They have like a million Italian places here, I’m sure we can find a really good one that’s better than—” Santana gives her a look and Charlie smiles, because anything is better than Breadstix. “You said that you loved me making you Italian, and that it may be better than Breadstix.”

Santana rolled her eyes, “You were just wearing an apron, of course it was better than Breadstix,” Santana smiles and looks back at the room. “I want you all to myself for a bit, so meet me downstairs while I make my excuses.”

Charlie salutes her and pauses for a moment, “Really that’s the only reason it was better than Breadstix?” she asks. Santana smirks at her and Charlie grins and heads to the elevators as Santana heads back into the room.

Santana looks around where people are still writing, “I’m heading outs, I’ll be back she announces.”

Rachel frowns and looks at her, “Charlie is expecting a song by tonight Santana, and even if you are going out. You have to have a buddy, this is New York—”

“Chill out Yentl, I’m going to go look for some inspiration, I’ll be back in a couple of hours,” Santana says grabbing her bag and smiling at Brittany whose eyes widen for a moment and she smiles back, immediately knowing where Santana is going.

“Alright Fabgay you can open your eyes now,” Santana says and Charlie opens her eyes. “Forbidden Planet I was going to—” Santana gets cut off when Charlie kisses her, it’s a brief kiss because Charlie has forgotten but it’s not like someone here is going to tell her Abuela. They’re in a place where no one knows them and it’s okay to be seen holding her girlfriend’s hand.

Charlie pulls back, as she remembers just what she’s done and flushes, “Sorry—I—” Santana kisses her again and Charlie smiles when the Latina pulls back. Charlie glances at the store and sniffs, “This is like the most magical place on the planet—how did you—is that a she-hulk collectible?” Charlie says grabbing Santana’s hand and pulling her along eagerly.

“We can’t stay here all day Fabgay,” Santana says reminding her girlfriend. “And no you can’t live here,” she adds after a moment because she knows that Charlie would ask.

“But Santana—it’s magical,” Charlie insists pointing at a Cable collectible and pouting. The Latina gives her a look and she goes to the clothing section and lets the Latina pick out more boxers for her, while she finally decides on a new Spiderman graphic novel. “Really Captain America
“boxers?” she asks. “Might as well call me a nerd,” she says with an indignant sniff.

Santana turns to look at her girlfriend who has her arms crossed and is standing there pouting, it was adorable in its own way, “Char,” the nickname immediately caused Charlie to flush and look around embarrassed. “You are a nerd, you even have a few pairs of suspenders which you really should wear sometimes—”

“You told me that was a gag gift,” Charlie protested, still a deep red.

“I also said that you looked really hot in them when you tried them on, and they were perfect for when you weren’t wearing a tie,” Santana pointed out casually as she paid for the things Charlie picked out.

“I—” Charlie begins, but she doesn’t really know what to say that so she smiles as they leave the store, “love you,” she mumbles, because even though Santana is teasing her, and making her feel a bit silly she likes it. “I love you,” she repeats again.

Santana freezes for a moment and for a moment Charlie looks at her expectantly but when she doesn’t say it back the soccer player flushes and pulls away a bit.

“Oh, look Go burger, come on Santana I’ve always wanted to eat food that was made in a truck,” Charlie says trying to forget that Santana hadn’t said it back.

Santana watches for a moment, she’s no longer stunned. She hadn’t expected Charlie to tell her that she loved her because she couldn’t. The soccer player couldn’t love someone like her, especially not after what she had done to her, “I love you too,” she mumbles even though Charlie can’t hear her. She needs to let the soccer player decide for herself even though she suspects that it isn’t going to end well for her…but Charlie said that she loved her. So maybe—“Charlie, you can’t order four burgers for yourself,” Santana says as she listens to her girlfriend order an obscene amount of food.

“I wasn’t. One was for you,” Charlie said as if it was the most obvious thing in the world. She grins at Santana when she groans. Maybe she had rushed it a bit, saying it. Santana wasn’t ready yet.

They found themselves alone when they got back, Charlie had no idea where everyone else was but she was in the mood to cuddle with her girlfriend, she wrapped her arms around Santana after dropping off her things into her room and kissed her cheek, she did notice that Santana stiffened under touch and the soccer player immediately backed off and sat down on the bed. Thinking that she had ruined things by saying the three words.

Santana gave her a grateful smile she needed to get this out before she lost her nerve but she didn’t know where to start, “Look Fabgay—” Santana was interrupted by the door opening and the rest of the glee club began to filter in.

“Charlie?” Quinn asked stunned and looked at Santana who immediately looked away.

Charlie looked at Santana for a moment, before looking at her sister and the rest of glee club, “Surprise?”
They had been working on the song for a couple of hours, with Charlie just getting the intro down when she looks at the time and then back at her sister who is still adjusting the lyrics. “Quinn—you need to get out of here or you’re going to miss your big date night. You’ve been looking forward to this for ages, don’t worry I have this and Dani is just next door and she can help.”

Quinn looks up and winces when she sees the time, she had bought those tickets thinking that they’d just choose a song and just need to worry on the choreography, she hadn’t thought that they would be writing a song from scratch once again at the last minute. Rachel had been incredibly high-strung about the song and she was currently patiently waiting in the other room for them to unveil the song. She had been checking on them every five minutes till Charlie had threatened to sic Santana on her. Quinn rubbed her eyes, “We’ve still got—”

“Lucy, I’ve got this and there is a room filled with people who are just as musically inclined as Rachel and we have Ms. C around so I can ask her if I really need help, so go. You’re in New York, this is Rachel’s first time so even if she doesn’t want to go, drag her kicking and screaming,” Charlie says reaching toward her table and pulling out the keycard to her room and flicking it at her sister. “And I don’t mind sleeping between Santana and Brittany tonight,” she winks at Quinn who flushes. “Just tell them to change the sheets, in the morning.” Charlie begins to pack her gear up, so she can move it into another room. If her relationship with Santana was over that was one thing but she was going to make sure at least one of them had a girlfriend at the end of this trip.

It was late when they finally managed to get back to the hotel. Quinn hushed Rachel, as they arrived on their floor because they had been laughing and talking animatedly the whole way going over what had been an amazing night. Rachel pouted at the thought of this night ending, she didn’t want it to end it had been a magical night. A Broadway show, she had seen a Broadway legend. Perhaps if they had time—maybe after nationals they could get some more free time. Quinn’s hand caught her wrist and Rachel looked down as the cheerleader put her hand to her lip and looked down the hallway in a sneaky fashion before motioning for the diva to follow her.

Rachel watched as they passed their room and Quinn fumbled with the keycard slipping it into the door and opening and pulling Rachel in. “Isn’t this—”

“She gave it to me—for the night, said she hadn’t even touched the bed yet,” Quinn explains quickly, suddenly extraordinarily grateful that Charlie was letting them use her room for things—

Rachel makes a note to bake the soccer player a tray of brownies and sugar cookies for her generosity as Quinn kisses her, letting the thought fly from her head as she kisses back, it almost feels as if this one is better, that this kiss is the best kiss that Rachel had ever received in her life. It’s hungry and passionate, and soon they’re pulling at each other’s clothes.

Rachel doesn’t know when they finally broke apart, the kiss had dazed her, she was breathless and a very naked Quinn was on sitting on the bed with a knowing smile on her face, pulling her onto her lap, and Rachel was straddling her, it was her favorite position and they were kissing again, it was just as intense as the last one had been, and Rachel’s hips moved in a jerky fashion against Quinn.

It’s always a struggle to keep her voice down in these situations, not that Quinn has ever minded and her room is soundproof, so it’s not like the neighbors can hear, but they aren’t in Lima and their classmates are down the hall. So she leans in and breathlessly whispers in Quinn’s ear, “More.” It’s a plea, it’s a demand, it’s anything that Quinn wants it to be, but the cheerleader shudders eagerly, as Quinn’s fingers quickly slip into her, so easily.
Rachel’s hips bucked against Quinn’s hand and she let out a low moan into Quinn’s ear, as she rode on Quinn’s fingers. It was perfect, this moment was perfect nothing mattered more than what was going right now, it was the perfect way to end the night. It didn’t matter if she was slightly tired, this night was perfect, and this is where she belonged.

The emotions that she felt were just as raw just as passionate as their first time and Rachel knew, she knew that she didn’t want to be anywhere else but in Quinn’s arm. Their bodies fit perfectly together, Quinn wasn’t freakishly taller than her and she didn’t doubt in her heart that Quinn loved her.

Rachel pulled away a bit and kissed Quinn again, just as hungrily as it had been every time that night, she wanted her. She wanted all of the cheerleader, never in her wildest dreams did she actually think that most of her fantasies could have come true, every single time they had sex it was like an explosion of disbelief and for her own fortune. Quinn was perfect, every last bit of her was perfect.

She wanted to mark the ex-cheerleader and she nearly did as her lips slowly traveled from her perfect lips to her neck, but the small professional part in her knew that it would be a terrible idea, that they couldn’t hide the marks. Even though she wanted everyone, to know. She wanted everyone to know that Quinn was hers, it was such a shame that it wasn’t professional. Well they had after nationals for that, Quinn would be hers completely.

It was perfect they were perfect together, nothing could go wrong between them.
Shelby Cochran had been to a lot of national show choir competitions, she had won three of them and she had brought Vocal Adrenaline close to winning several times prior to that. Yet never had she seen such a display of affection and she winced. The song had been perfect, Finn had somehow managed to hold his own, and her daughter had been perfect. They could have taken nationals, if Finn hadn’t managed to blunder it all by kissing Rachel, it was highly unprofessional and worse off it was awkward, it was clear that Rachel had been taken by surprise and she had been stunned for a moment before recovering and kissing back. And when the kiss had ended she had looked annoyed and uncomfortable.

She studied Quinn who had walked onto the stage as the kiss was happening and for a moment she had seen pure rage on the ex-cheerleader’s face. For a brief moment Shelby was certain that she was going to snap but Brittany gently touched her hand and shook her head and smiled at her as they turned around. At least there wasn’t another disaster, but all their hard work, even if they had somehow managed to pull a perfect performance the points wouldn’t add up in their favor. “The kiss cost you nationals,” She says quietly to Will Schuester.

Charlie sniffs beside her and tilts her head, and Shelby can tell that she’s studying her twin, and made a mental note to find a country that didn’t have an extradition treaty because she knew her sister. She knew how possessive that Lucy Quinn Fabray could be. Her eyes flicked to Santana for a moment and made a note to find a country with nice beaches, because Santana Lopez was probably going to help her sister. Finn Hudson was a dead man walking. She actually felt sorry for him, he shouldn’t have kissed her, she had been telling him no for months, but Quinn was terrifying when she was that pissed and while she personally found Santana’s anger to be sort of hot as long as it was directed at other people, she actually did feel sorry for the guy.

Charlie, Shelby and William Schuester came out to Brittany, Sam and Mike trying to prevent Puck, Santana and Quinn from lunging at Finn. Puck managed to get free and he shoved Finn.

“You kissed her dude what the hell is wrong with you?” Puck snarled at him, as Sam grabbed him and pulled him back.

Finn looked proud of himself, “Dude, you’re just jealous. Jealous of what we have, what we shared with the entire audience, because it was shared between two people who love each other. It was the Superman of kisses. It-It came with its own cape, right, Rachel?”

“Finn for the past several months I have told you consistently told you that I wasn’t interested in you. What you did may have very well cost us—” Rachel took a step back as Quinn broke away from Mike. “Quinn—don’t.”

It was too late, as a loud crack was heard. Quinn Fabray had just slapped Finn Hudson across the face. This seemed to calm both Puck and Santana who stared at Quinn. “She’s my girlfriend you son of a bitch, and she’s been telling you for months to leave her the hell alone,” Quinn raised her hand again.

“Charlie,” Brittany’s voice cut through and Charlie managed to get to her sister and pull her
roughly away from Finn who was standing there stunned, whether it was from a patented Fabray slap or the fact that Quinn had just announced to the whole world that she was Rachel’s mystery lover.

Charlie kept a firm grip on her twin, Quinn pulled against her trying to get at Finn but Charlie kept a firm grip on her. “Let me go—you can’t be seriously defending this piece of shit. Forcing himself on her like that after she’s told him for months to leave her alone.”

Charlie flicked her eyes to Finn who still had the stunned expression on his face and tightened her grip on her sister. “I don’t think that Beth would appreciate both of her parents being thrown into jail for killing Finn. He kissed your girlfriend, I get it. Trust me, I get it. But you didn’t let me kill him then. You don’t get to kill him now.” Charlie said to her sister.

Finn turned to Rachel the shock twisting into anger, “You’re dating Quinn? She’s not even—you turned my girlfriend? It’s Quinn Rachel, she probably brainwashed you or something—”

“Rich coming from the people in a musical cult,” Charlie commented, no one paid her any mind.

“She was a bitch to you in freshman year,” Finn points out. Quinn looks at Charlie who shrugs, it wasn’t like Finn was wrong. Quinn had been a bitch to Rachel in freshman year. “She isn’t capable of loving you Rachel not the way I can. She lied and used me—”

“Like you did to get a music scholarship?” Rachel says irritated. “I am in love with her. We’ve been dating for seven months—”

The number stuns Finn, “Seven months?” he says and he realizes that no one except for Mr. Schue looks surprised. “Who else knew?”

“Everyone?” Charlie supplies unhelpfully and Rachel shoots her friend a withering look. “Except Artie—?”

“No I knew—it was kind of hard not to notice them, people seem to forget that I’m in a wheelchair and they’re always like staring at each other all the time,” Artie said with a shrug.

“You didn’t tell me? I thought we were friends?” Finn says because he’s feeling betrayed and he looks at Kurt.

“It wasn’t my place to tell you,” Kurt shrugs, “And I told you several times to move on from Rachel, everyone’s told you that it was best to move on from Rachel. You didn’t listen.”

Rachel shakes her head, “You slept with Santana and proceeded to call her a slut, I didn’t trust that you wouldn’t break my confidence and tell the entire school. I don’t trust you Finn you lied about Santana, who knows what else you lied about—”

“I didn’t—” Finn begins, “Rachel I love you—you just need to give me a chance.”

Rachel sighs, and flicks her eyes to Charlie who is still holding her twin back, she’s going to need to talk to Quinn and quickly and attempt to calm her down because she doesn’t completely trust Charlie to not let go. “I did give you a chance Finn, you lied to me about the Santana thing, you took credit for things you didn’t do. I thought I could trust you, but your behavior while it has improved is still immature. You kissed me after I told you no, you probably cost us national’s with your selfishness. I didn’t have to tell you anything, it’s my life and I told you several times to leave me alone.”

Finn frowns and takes a step to Rachel, “Rachel—you and me we’re endgame,” he says firmly. “I
love you and I support your dreams to go to Broadway—I wrote that song for you. I waited for you, I thought all it would take was for you to stop being mad. I’ve changed.”

Rachel swallows and she’s annoyed now because maybe Quinn had a point, singing with him had been a terrible idea. “You just kissed me on stage—”

“I was trying to show the world what we have—you felt it too. You had to, it was the superman of all kisses—” Finn began smiling at the memory.

Rachel lets out a frustrated sigh, “Finn—I didn’t feel anything when I kiss you. I understand that you may think it was difficult for me to move on with my crush—” Charlie coughs and Rachel shoots the soccer player another look. “With my feelings for you, and I thought that maybe we could be friends, but you were incredibly selfish today and you’ve been incredibly selfish when it comes to me. I’m with Quinn, we were going to come out in a couple of days once we had won nationals, but you’ve effectively ruined everyone’s dreams.”

Finn wasn’t buying it and took another step towards Rachel only to have Sam immediately shove him away, “Dude she said she wasn’t interested and Rachel’s one of the bro’s,” he said. “You’ve done more than enough damage for the day.”

Finn shot one last glare Quinn before storming off slamming his foot into a chair on his way past, Mr. Schue quickly following him.

Charlie sniffs and finally let’s go of her sister who has stopped squirming, “And to think—you both dated him,” she says ignoring the dark look on Quinn’s face, “As fun as watching you test all the training that Sue gave you on how to get away with murder—you have just made a huge scene in front of a lot of people and you would be the number one suspect,” She leans in and whispers into Quinn’s ear, “Proper etiquette is to make sure that your girlfriend is okay before you murder the person who did what they did.”

Quinn blinks because she had been so caught up in her anger she had forgotten to check on Rachel, walking over a slightly embarrassed look on her face, because Rachel looked unamused. “You know I don’t believe in violence,” she said with a huff. Though she’s more annoyed at herself because Quinn had been right.

Quinn leans in and kisses her forehead, “I’m sorry—but as Charlie says I showed remarkable restraint?” she says and she sees her twin wink at her and smile, Quinn’s about to look back when she sees the smile fade quickly and Charlie touching Santana’s arm, and then Brittany’s giving them a small smile before walking outside with them.

Rachel sighed but smiled, “I did think that you were going to kill him on stage,” she admits as she pulls her girlfriend away, because she needs to make sure that Quinn isn’t furious at her for kissing back. She has seemed to calm down significantly. “I will inform Mr. Schue that I can no longer work with Finn as the main lead,” she offers Quinn hoping that she isn’t mad.

Quinn smiles, “You kissed him back,” she says slightly irritated.

Rachel makes a face, “I know, but what was I supposed to do, I had to sell the kiss, otherwise it would have made it look worse, I hoped that if I didn’t it wouldn’t affect our overall marks, but I guess the judges found it to be too much. I suppose making it look awkward might have actually saved us. I can’t believe that he just kissed me in front of all those people—” she’s getting annoyed now and Quinn can see she’s very close to one of her temper tantrums.

“I wrote a song for you,” Quinn interrupts, “I wanted to sing it at nationals for you but Mr. Schue
said no that my voice isn’t a strong enough lead. Charlie put it together—it was supposed to be a
surprise but he said no. Said that you and Finn were a proven thing. I argued with him but he told
me that Finn had written a song, a duet for the two of you. Said we needed to go with our best
singers to win nationals. I liked Finn’s song—but I would have preferred if you had sung the song
with anybody else.”

Rachel blinks, “You wrote a song and didn’t show me? If anyone could have convinced Mr. Schue
into doing anything it’s me. With my input you might have carried us into the second round and—
you wrote me a song and you haven’t sung it to me yet?”

“It was supposed to be a surprise—”

Rachel doesn’t look particularly impressed, “You should have showed it to me—it could have
prevented this disaster and—”

“It was a song for you, Rachel. I wanted it to be a surprise. I didn’t want you to get tired of hearing
it over and over again and me practicing it for you till it met your high standard,” Quinn says.
“Besides it was selfish of me to put everything on the line because I wanted to sing to you—if we
hadn’t made it to the second round everyone would have blamed me.”

“You have a lovely voice Quinn and with a bit of vocal training, you could have carried us to the
second round.” Rachel states.

“I thought that you would—get upset—that you weren’t getting the solo,” Quinn says and Rachel
gives her a look.

“I made amends with Sunshine in the bathroom before the competition, I admitted that I was
jealous that she was extremely talented. I still want the solo’s I’ll still fight hard for them, and I still
think I’m the best singer that we have on this team even if Santana and Mercedes have plenty of
talent. I just don’t think I’m going to be sending anyone to abandoned crack houses.”

“So if I say that I want to have all the solos—?” Quinn pushes and Rachel gives her a dry look
because it’s not particularly funny but Quinn smiles anyway and kisses Rachel again, “I still can’t
believe he kissed you in front of all those people,” she says in a grumpy tone getting annoyed
again.

“I can’t believe that you haven’t taken me home and sung me that song you wrote for me,” Rachel
says changing the subject.

Charlie is sitting with Brittany and Santana outside, “We should go to Central Park, I’m sure they
have a duck pond there,” she says leaning back.

Santana flicked her eyes to Charlie who looked tired and guilty and why hadn’t she noticed the
guilty look before? “What happened Fabgay?” She said nudging her girlfriend who brightened at
the familiar nickname.

Charlie laughs, but it rings hollow to everyone’s ears and Brittany poked her causing the soccer
player to sigh, “I did something—that I don’t regret. But Quinn’s going to end up really mad at me
and I sort of deserve it because I should have asked her first. I should have talked to her about it—”

Santana frowned because Charlie makes it seem like she murdered Quinn’s dog or something
ridiculous and she’s stalling. “Spit it out Charlie.”
Charlie makes a face and sinks lower on the step, “I paid Judy off—she’s moving out of Quinn’s house—she wanted to move that Pastor Chris guy in and he believes that hitting kids is okay, and I can’t go there to protect her and he’s a pervert. I tried to pay him off but he wanted some ridiculous sum of money, so I told Judy I’d return home—if he’s out of the house. I can’t be around someone who thinks it’s okay to hit children and she gave me some excuse—about how Quinn will be leaving soon and Russell is dead—and I paid Judy—five million to go away.”

Santana stares at Charlie who hasn’t met her eye, focused on the ants on the pavement, “What is with you Fabray’s and offering people impossible choices,” Santana grumbles under her breath but this catches Charlie’s attention.

“What are you talking about? The choice was simple. Quinn—if she wasn’t going to do it for me. It should have been to keep Quinn safe. It was always about Quinn being safe. She might not stand for Chris putting his hands on her but I don’t trust him, not near Quinn and I’m okay with being hit to some degree I can take a beating—but Quinn isn’t me. It wasn’t an impossible choice, the answer—was Quinn.”

Brittany frowned, “I thought you couldn’t go back to that house?”

“I can’t,” Charlie admits, but she would be willing to work on it daily. Just to protect Quinn. “I would have found some way to do it. She texted me before you guys went on that she was already done packing her things, and she’s signed the contract I paid some lawyer to draft up.”

“Wait so you just offered her money and—”

“I offered her a fresh start with plenty of money in her bank account. She could live the rest of her life on that money, if she spends it wisely, and cuts back. She won’t—but that’s a problem for another day and it becomes Quinn’s problem because Judy isn’t allowed to contact me.”

“What becomes my problem?” Quinn asks holding Rachel’s hand watching as her twin freezes, completely and both Santana and Brittany grab onto her to prevent her from running. Charlie’s running was getting to be problematic and she’s suddenly glad that both of them were there.

Charlie bites her lip, it’s not like this is something she can hide. The moment that Quinn gets home she was going to find out and it was better to get it over with now and give Quinn a cooling off period so they could talk about it. She had done it to protect her twin—even if Quinn said that she didn’t need her protection anymore that wasn’t true. “Did you tell Judy that it was a good idea for Pastor Chris to move in?” she asks slowly.

Quinn nods and shrugs, “He makes her happy Charlie—I know you don’t like him but—”

Charlie exhales and then tells her twin everything, detailing the conversation, telling her twin exactly what she had done in her attempt to protect her getting annoyed that Quinn could put herself at risk like that. She didn’t even know the guy and she was letting bring in a guy who wanted to try and take the place of Russell Fabray. But the anger fades as the horror of what she’s done sinks in and Quinn’s face turns from shock, to hurt to annoyance and finally to rage. It gets stuck on rage. Charlie flinches when Quinn start’s yelling but a calm word from Rachel is all it takes.

“We just talked about this—we talked about the fact that you can’t protect me anymore—” Quinn snaps at Charlie.

“I’m your older sister Quinn, I’m always going to protect you and what you did—was stupid. He wants to replace Russell and he’s a homophobic asshole who thinks of you as an unruly ungrateful child. If you want Judy to stop drinking best thing to do is separate the two of them, he’s like all
the worst parts of Russell combined.”

“You were born—five minutes ahead of me. You are barely older than me, and it’s a stupid argument to begin with because you don’t know more than me. You took away my mother, Charlie—because you hated her and—”

“I didn’t take away anyone, she chose to leave. She chose to get up and walk away from you Quinn. I thought she’d stay for you—I thought she would honest, but she made excuses. And I just—she doesn’t want me but I thought she’d want you. He’s a misogynistic asshole Quinn and I did it to protect you—because you wouldn’t have been safe,” Charlie said trying to justify her actions.

“I know it wasn’t the right thing to do but, you were going to let him into your house—you were basically giving her permission and him permission to try and replace our father. We’re nearly eighteen he doesn’t have that right, we aren’t children anymore Quinn. This is what she does—she walks away when things get difficult. She’s done it for the entirety of our lives—I always thought she’d stay for you. That she’d do anything to protect you. I didn’t mean to be wrong,” but Quinn is storming away from her twin with Rachel in tow.

Santana is up and is walking after her, because Charlie hadn’t exactly done anything—not really sure it wasn’t the right thing to do but she hadn’t put a gun to Judy’s head and made her take the payout and Quinn was being a hypocrite. She had pulled the same stunt numerous times without the remorse behind it without the guilt. Charlie felt guilty she felt bad about what had happened.

“Oh come off it Quinn, if your mother took off with her new boyfriend then all that proves was that she was a shitty mother. Charlie did you a favor and you being upset with her is beyond hypocritical.”

Rachel frowns and tries to step in front of Quinn because the last thing she needs is for the two of them to go at it, “What do you mean hypocritical?” she asks, wondering who Quinn paid off to stay away from Charlie.

Quinn frowns because they weren’t supposed to be talking about it like that, “That was different I didn’t pay anyone off, I offered you a choice. You only slept with her to get at me you know this and I know this. You were going to hurt her and you did. You used her, just like you used everyone else.”

“Do you remember how terrible you were to fucking hobbit over there, there was no way in hell I was going to go through what you did to her because you were a vindictive bitch. You were going to kick me off the Cheerios, because you were a fucking bitch, you were going to try and turn Brittany against me. I chose popularity over your sister and—”

Quinn who had been meeting Santana’s anger with her own, hadn’t noticed the door open, hadn’t noticed her sister standing there listening to the yelling till she rolled her eyes. Her eyes widened because there was hurt on Charlie’s face, this was not how the soccer player was meant to find out. “Charlie—”

The words die on the Latina’s

Santana turns around and freezes as she looks at Charlie, “Charlie I—?”

Charlie’s eyes narrow just a bit, “Is it true? You slept with me to hurt Quinn—I mean I knew you were using me back then—but you told me it was because Brittany had told you that I was a
perfect person to use to lose your virginity to.” Santana swallows and she sees Brittany about to say something but Charlie raises her hand, she wants the Latina to answer the question.

Santana swallows, “I did—but Char—”

Charlie shakes her head, the hurt back as she takes a step back away from Santana feeling like an idiot, feeling like she’d been used. She had thought that Santana had liked her but it was probably just another one of her games that she played with Quinn. “Don’t—you can’t call me that anymore. I thought—you liked me,” she snorts in derision at this because now she just feels stupid and swallows.

“Charlie—” Santana begins taking a step forward as Charlie takes another step back, she’s closer to the door and Santana pauses because Charlie is insanely fast when she wants to run and she doesn’t want the soccer player to run.

“Is that why you don’t want anyone to know about me? The school—it’s just another game to you?” Charlie accuses, her voice not raising as she speaks.

“No—” Santana begins but she can see that Charlie doesn’t believe her.

“So tell everyone—let everyone know, choose me. I am so sick of people not choosing me,” Charlie demands, she doesn’t care if it’s selfish. “We can come out when Rachel and Quinn do—” Santana looks away and any hope that Charlie had fades to nothing. “I just want someone to choose me,” she pleads. Santana had chosen popularity before, and she’s doing it again. Karofsky, the stupid prom with the stupid seventy-five dollar tickets.

The only person who has been there in her life consistently is her grandmother. She had helped raise her, she loves her parents but they aren’t around, too busy with their own careers to ever think about her feelings and she can’t be alone. She can’t lose her grandmother, “I can’t.”

Charlie looks at her twin and then back at Santana for a moment and the despair turns to anger quickly, because she refuses to cry in front of Santana. She won’t give her the satisfaction of seeing how hurt she is, and she nods and licks her lips. “We’re done,” she whispers.

Rachel winces because even though it was a whisper it was said with such finality that it didn’t leave room for argument. “Charlie—you’re upset but don’t make a decision till you—”

“Don’t—just don’t,” Charlie snaps at her angrily, wincing at the harshness of her words. Rachel’s choosing Santana over her. The diva was supposed to take her side. Brittany tries to intervene next touching the soccer players arm in an attempt to calm her down but Charlie twists away and Brittany sighs because Charlie isn’t going to listen to anyone. “I’m done—with you,” she says to Santana who flinches back and Charlie turns her attention to Quinn and she feels the anger towards her twin. “With this stupid family drama. With you. I’m done with you. You promised to have my back.”

“I was trying to protect you—”

“No you were trying to protect your popularity just like Santana was. This was just another game to you wasn’t it? You chose being popular over me, not because you cared. I did what I did because Chris Hawthorne believes in corporal punishment and is a fucking homophobe. You can be as mad as you want at me but I did it because you’ve got this stupid idea in your head that we can be a family. That Judy can get better and I can move home and everything will be alright. Judy chose money and a new man over me—I promised to come home if she didn’t let him in the house. Into your house and I know you, you would have let him move in to keep mom happy to stop her from
drinking. But it won't work because Judy Fabray is a piece of shit who turned her back on me over and over again and you don’t care because she took you to the fucking spa and made you into little Ms. Popular. Guess what Quinn—she turned her fucking back on you to, for five million dollars. That’s all it took. I’m done—with Judy, with Frannie with you. I can’t deal with our shitty family anymore. I can’t deal with you,” Charlie snaps at her twin harshly and she turns and before anyone can stop her she’s out the door.

Quinn frowns and takes a step forward, but Brittany’s already out the door and is watching Charlie, “She’s just in her room, she needs time to calm down,” Brittany says, she’s going to need to step in and talk to Charlie. “She doesn’t mean it Quinn, she’s just mad.”

Rachel turns to Santana, “I told you that you needed to have that talk with her,” she says pointing out.

Santana’s not in the mood to listen to Rachel’s I told you so. She wants to curl up and cry but Quinn’s right there and Rachel’s right there and she can’t do it until they leave. “Her dad died hobbit, I’ve been a bit busy with the fact that Charlie like your idiotic girlfriend, seem to think that the universe revolves around their shitty parents. At least Charlie is getting over it and is trying to not be him. What’s your excuse—this is your fucking fault.” Santana snaps turning on Quinn.

“She’s just in her room, she needs time to calm down,” Brittany says, she’s going to need to step in and talk to Charlie. “She doesn’t mean it Quinn, she’s just mad.”

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Santana’s not in the mood to listen to Rachel’s I told you so. She wants to curl up and cry but Quinn’s right there and Rachel’s right there and she can’t do it until they leave. “Her dad died hobbit, I’ve been a bit busy with the fact that Charlie like your idiotic girlfriend, seem to think that the universe revolves around their shitty parents. At least Charlie is getting over it and is trying to not be him. What’s your excuse—this is your fucking fault.” Santana snaps turning on Quinn.

“Me? You’re the one who treated my sister like one of your disposable boyfriends—”

“I’m in love with her,” Santana yells back, “I was going to tell her, I was going to handle the situation. If she didn’t feel this insane and unhealthy urge to protect you from your own stupidity then she wouldn’t have—” Brittany has her arms around her and Santana breaks down and begins to cry.

Quinn is stunned for a moment and she backs away from Santana she’d never seen the Latina cry before and suddenly Rachel’s by her side, “I—” As it slowly hits her, Judy’s gone, her father’s gone and Charlie just walked away and she feels her test tightening as she realizes that her twin is gone. That Charlie had just walked away from her. It was supposed to be the two of them—Charlie wasn’t allowed to break their bond, it was against the rules. They fought but it always got better, she was always forgiven, Charlie had never said that she was done, not now, not ever. “Rachel—she’s gone—” it’s like getting hit in the face.

Rachel is rubbing Quinn’s back, “Charlie always comes back. She just needs to calm down—she always comes back. She’ll be back with some food, like it solves all of life problems you two will talk it out like you do, you will bicker like children and it’ll be you and her again like always. Maybe we can see if she’s calmed down enough to talk.”

Quinn nods and wipes away her tears because she needs to stop Charlie from running the situation is ripe and Charlie needs to stay—because she can’t lose her. She can’t lose the last family she has, not now—she can’t be alone and she needs her twin. They’re twins it’s supposed to be just the two of them, they had never been apart for anything more than a week or two—they saw each other every day at school. “You’re right—she just needs to calm down—” Quinn says trying to be strong as she steps around Santana and Brittany, she’s about to leave when she slams into Puck who was about to knock. “What the hell do you want Puck?” she snaps at him.

Puck winces and peers at the room and notices Santana crying and the look on Quinn’s face, “I was going to ask why my bro had all her crap with her—she looked to be in a mood.”

Quinn freezes, “Where?” she demands.

Puck shrugs, “I saw her getting into a taxi before I came up, I called out for her wanted to see if she
wanted to sneak into a club with me—but she didn’t even seem to see me. What the fuck is going on?"

Quinn’s heart falls because Charlie is gone—her twin is gone.

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Chapter 50

Chapter Notes

Officially this is the end of ‘season 2’ I sort of have the next five chapters all in some sort of developmental hell, I haven’t looked at them for months. But then again I’ve had up to chapter fifty since I took down Family Portrait to begin with. Maybe and I do mean maybe I’ll start chipping away at them. I’d certainly need to look at them again.

It’s a good sign when they pull up to the front of the Berry house and Charlie’s Lexus is still parked in the driveway, and for a moment it’s reassuring because Charlie just needed to get out of New York and the soccer player is probably just chilling out in her room. But the house is dark and all of Charlie’s things from New York are put neatly on the ground near her bed. Including the stuff that Santana got for her. It’s been two days since she left New York, and on her desk is her car keys.

“She took off,” Santana says picking up the Charizard pin on Charlie’s dresser. “She’s gone—”

Rachel shakes her head because she needs to believe that Charlie wouldn’t just take off, “She wouldn’t leave most of her stuff—where would she go? Her car is still here. She can’t have gotten too far? Maybe she’s just decided to stay at a friend’s—”

“Sam lives in a motel, Puck hasn’t heard from her, she’s not with Brittany, and she wouldn’t go to Mike’s house either. She’s gone,” Quinn repeats. She’s numb because she can’t believe for a moment that Charlie would just take off and tries to figure out where her twin would go. She had the means to literally disappear off the face of the earth or start all over again. “She’s gone Rachel—”

“She’s got several job’s lined up and Charlie—” Rachel began because it was inconceivable that Charlie would take off without a note, she should have been back by now.

“Sold the Yacht the moment the title switched into her hands, she’s got at least a quarter of a million dollars in her account, she doesn’t need—to work anymore. It was probably easier to leave things here then to drag it to wherever she headed off to. She—”

“She’ll be back—” Santana says quietly cutting Quinn off and the ex-head cheerleader turns to her, “Charlie is a cheap ass, most days when it comes to spending money on herself. She wouldn’t leave her gear—she wouldn’t leave her DJ gear. She’s going to come back.” She doesn’t know if she’s lying to herself or its false hope but she has to believe that Charlie wouldn’t just run away with no plan.

Rachel looks at Charlie’s laptop which is the only thing that Charlie set up and took a seat at her desk and types in her old password, but it doesn’t work. “Iron Man doesn’t work,” she states and looks over at Santana.

Santana’s mouth twitches upward at the memory, “You won’t get into it—she changed it after I may have made all her homepage gay porn,” she says.

Quinn turns on Santana immediately, “This is your fault,” she hisses shoving Santana.
Rachel is up and steps in between them, because the last thing she needs is the two of them going at it. Charlie was a runner, she’s always been a runner, and blaming each other won’t solve anything. “Santana’s right Quinn, Charlie will come home when she’s ready. Even if we find her—she’ll just run away again. She doesn’t like being forced to do anything. We all know this, so all we can do is wait. She’ll be back—you know this Quinn you two are twins and Charlie always forgives you. She’s just angry right now.”

“We haven’t been apart for anything longer than a week without seeing each other——” she admits it’s been a long time since she’s not seen her twin nearly every day of her life.

“So give her a week before you panic, Charlie always comes back,” Rachel says firmly, because Charlie can’t stay upset indefinitely, things even seem to be cooling down between her and Finn even though she still calls him Sasquatch whenever she sees him.

Quinn turns to look at her girlfriend, “What if she doesn’t?” she asks. Charlie had promised to have her back she had pinky-promised to have her back and she was gone. This wasn’t supposed to happen.

“I’ll find her—we’ll find her and bring her back. She just needs a bit of space, she’ll probably be back by the end of the week,” Rachel says with a smile. “She’s got a few jobs lined up for the summer she wouldn’t just bail like that,” Rachel says firmly, she’s never wrong about these things.

Quinn nods, but she no longer has the faith in her family as she once did. She wanted a normal family where her mom didn’t abandon her for some dude, and her twin didn’t pay off her mother to leave her. She wonders why she can’t have a normal family.

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“Quinnie—he makes me happy and with you about to go off to university—it just doesn’t make sense for me to hold you back. Besides you spend most of your days and nights living with that Rachel girl—Charlie was willing to come home you know—maybe with me gone,” Judy’s voice comes through the phone and Quinn grips her cellphone tighter in her hand because she can’t believe it. She can’t believe that her mother wouldn’t just give back the money to Charlie and come home.

“Charlie’s—” Quinn frowns because it’s been two weeks with still no word from her twin and now she’s working from the mantra that no news is good news. Because she’s close to simply reporting Charlie missing and letting the police search for her. But she doesn’t because she doesn’t actually think her twin is dead in a ditch somewhere. So she changes the subject because it’s best to not think too hard about it. “I need my mom,” she says. “Please come home,” Quinn pleads.

“Quinn, Chris is a good man, he treats me right and if I don’t—”

“You can move back in with me, the house is too big for one person,” Quinn interrupts, there is a silence on the line and Quinn can imagine that her mother is thinking about it. “You’d just have to give Charlie the money back—she’ll probably understand, we can be a proper family.”

Judy pauses because she doesn’t want to give back the money, but she does miss Quinn. “Perhaps if you can convince your twin that you need me, I can come back. But she doesn’t want me—”

“She doesn’t want Chris around she wants you here, she wants you to come back and I think she wants a family just as much as I do. She wants to be happy—just as much as I do and you’re my mom and I love you. And you can’t leave me here—everyone has left. But I don’t care—I just want my mom back and we can figure something out,” Quinn’s crying now because she’s alone.
Her family has abandoned her the cracks in the picture are too great for even her to fix. Charlie’s gone, she’s gone and it’s been two weeks. It’s the longest they’ve gone without seeing each other. Her mother left, abandoned her for a man she’s known for a little over a year and is a bit of a chauvinistic asshole. She doesn’t even know what’s going on with Frannie at this point.

“Quinnie—your father is dead. I understand this may be a huge adjustment but—for far too long I was that man’s wife and I should have divorced him years ago. He cheated on me, he treated me like I was his trophy to be shown off to all of his friends. This is my shot at happiness—and I understand that you may be frustrated. I understand that it may be difficult for you to understand but I think that Pastor Chris is my shot at happiness. He’s kind and a gentle man. It’s a fresh start away from the whispers and the fact that all my friends have abandoned me. Maybe you can move here—you aren’t dating anyone and the fresh start will be good for you. No more Sue Sylvester, no more bad influences. There’s an excellent private school just around the corner from where we live. We can have a fresh start together, we can be a family. You’re not dating anyone and I’m sure you can make new friends here in Chicago, the contract never stipulated that you couldn’t come with us. It just stated that Chris can’t be near your house.”

Quinn pauses at this because she wants her family back but not that badly, she can’t leave Rachel, “I can’t mom—all my friends are here, Brittany, Santana, Mercedes, Puck—Beth, I visit her every month and she’s getting so big now mom, I can’t leave.”

“Nonsense you can fly out to see your daughter, friends and twin every month until you’re ready to graduate. Unless you’ve managed to find yourself a boyfriend—is that why Quinnie? Tell me about him—” Judy says getting excited.

Quinn is stunned for a moment because that’s not why she has no intention of going—she can’t just uproot herself—she can’t leave Rachel. Rachel makes her happy—and she loves her mom—she loves Judy, but sometimes it’s really hard, sometimes she wishes her mom wasn’t a drunk, wasn’t dating some random dude, was just her mom. “I’m not dating a boy;” she states calmly, she was planning to tell her mother anyway. She had expected to have this conversation with her mother face to face. But clearly the circumstances had changed.

“Then there is nothing keeping you—”

“I’m dating Rachel. I’ve been dating her for about eight months now,” Quinn says cutting Judy off, she had expected Rachel to be here while she told Judy but it’s not like Judy could do anything to her. “I love her mom, I’m in love with her.”

“I knew it,” Judy hisses and Quinn is taken back by the venom in her mother’s voice. “Pastor Chris was right—I was much too permissive, with Charlie’s behavior and you simply thought that the behavior was acceptable. You were surrounded by so many of their kind, of course you think that it’s normal. Don’t worry—”

Quinn stares at the phone in shock though she doesn’t know why she’s so surprised it’s not like Judy didn’t make her distaste for Charlie’s sexuality clear, how she wanted to make Charlie into a proper woman. But her mother had never—she had never really been this angry before. She had always been more passive to Russell’s desires than anything else and Quinn never really thought her mom believed all the stuff that Russell spouted.

“Pastor Chris knows of several camps where they—”

“No,” Quinn says immediately, “No. I’m not going. I’m not going to any camp—I’m not going anywhere, I’m going to stay here and maybe Charlie was right—to make you choose—I’m glad to see where your loyalties are. I’m your daughter, you’re supposed to love me. You’re supposed to
be here with me but all it took was a few million dollars and a shiny new apartment—I get that you and Charlie have difficult history but I thought you’d at least try and get to know her better show an interest. But I never thought you’d turn your back on me.”

“The camps can help—we can still find you a good husband—” Judy begins because that’s important, she needs to make sure that her daughter is taken care of.

“I’m a lesbian mom, I’m not going to be sad and unhappy and depend on a guy or anyone to make me feel happy. To make me feel whole on the inside. Rachel makes me happy—she makes me incredibly happy and I plan to marry her someday,” Quinn says before hanging up. She doesn’t care to hear what her mother has to say next. She glances at her hand she’s shaking and she doesn’t trust herself to drive over to Rachel’s house. And she’s all wound up, so she tries again to call her twin. The voicemail picks it up and she hears Charlie’s voice again and she smiles. The beep sounds, “You were right about mom—is that what you wanted to hear—you can come back now. I told mom—and I need you. I need my twin back you’ve been gone for two weeks. It’s time for you to come home now so we can talk about this. We need to talk about this. You promised that you’d be here when I needed you—I promised I’d have your back but I can’t do that if I don’t know where you are. So come home—or call or something please Charlie come home.”

“Are you sure you don’t want to move in? You practically live here already Quinn, we have the room and it’s not like my dads are here to enforce the open door policy they instituted. I can understand the hesitation with moving in with a partner it is—a big step. But your house is considerably bigger than mine is, it’s a big house and it must be rather lonely.” Rachel says as she relaxes in Quinn’s arms.

Quinn sighed they’d been over this, “Rachel we can’t move in together—your dad’s still come to the house, your mom still checks in on you, they won’t approve. Besides this is still Charlie’s home, and she is already annoyed by how much time I spend here as it is. I was thinking of selling the house and moving into my own apartment—around here maybe. Except I need Charlie to sign off on it because she actually owns most of the furniture and stuff. Mom’s not coming back—not after I told her I was a lesbian. Charlie isn’t ever coming back—”

“It’s been a month Quinn she’s probably—”

“It’s been a month Rachel. It’s been a month, let’s look at the facts. My mom is in Chicago, my sister is married to a gambling addict, and my twin is who knows where. We aren’t a family, we aren’t anything right now. My family has all up and abandoned me. The moment my dad died everything came to an end and all I wanted was my family back.”

“My dad’s aren’t around, Santana’s parents aren’t around much—even Kurt basically says he has the house free with his dad running for some state office or something. They raised us to be self-sufficient. Charlie will come back, your mom might get over it—you’re not even really fond of Frannie to begin with. But maybe all you need is a fresh start. I’m not going to—”

“Until you do,” Quinn interrupts bitterly. “You’re going to get upset with me or angry with me something’s going to happen and then you’re going to leave too.”

Rachel sighed, Quinn had been clingy lately, she didn’t normally mind and given the circumstances she could understand but the ex-cheerleader refused to move in with her, refused to do anything she was just stuck in her mood. So she kissed Quinn, and it seemed to settle her down a bit. When and if Charlie Fabray did return Rachel was going to give her a piece of her mind. A month without as much as a hello.
“I think I’ve found the solution to your house problem, Sam told the SSB last night that he was moving to Toledo, his parents found a good job there. Except Sam doesn’t want to leave McKinley—and you have all that room in your house. While normally I would be against any boy that you’ve dated living with you, Sam might have broken up with Mercedes but that was only because they were going to be at different schools. If you let him stay he can have his true love and Mercedes can be happy. It’ll be a good fit and I’d feel less inclined to worry if you had someone with you when you were at home. Sam is a good friend and he assures me that he’s quite over you. Mercedes parents wouldn’t allow him to move in with them because he’s dating their daughter but you’ve got like six empty bedrooms don’t you?”

Quinn stares at her girlfriend, for a moment, “You want me to move in with Sam Evans? Like he’s going to be my roommate?” Rachel nods.

“He needs a place to stay Quinn or we’re going to lose one of our friends. He’s been a good friend to you and Charlie. It would be doing him a huge favor, we may have lost nationals last year but with Sam and a few others—it’s the perfect fit. You know him better than I do—and Charlie might still come back and even though we can clear out another guest room—you have room for him Quinn.”

“You’re all alone in that house to Rachel—” Quinn begins to point out.

“But Charlie’s coming back, and I have my mom coming to check in on me. And Santana is afraid that she might be kicked out of her house because she is coming out to her parents. Sam’s already asking his parents, your house could become like the safe haven of the glee club. Sam’s getting a job and he plans to help out around the house. It’s a good fit,” Rachel said. “And I’m sure that Charlie won’t mind if he uses one of the cars so you don’t need to shuffle him around. Plus after the issue with fight club it’s probably not a good idea to put Sam and Puck together.”

Quinn blinks, it would be nice to have someone in the house again, “Why don’t you just move in with me,” she asks the diva. “We have plenty of room and you can pick your own, we don’t have to be sharing the same bed. I don’t mind if Sam lives with me but maybe until Charlie comes back—you can stay here with me?” she asks.

Rachel balks at the idea, she has a perfectly acceptable room that is already sound-proofed, and she needs to practice every day. “I’m not—” Rachel pauses because she suddenly realizes that while she was pressuring Quinn to move in with her she’s not ready. They’re not ready for that. They have extended sleepovers, but Quinn always eventually goes home. It’s a big step and she’s not sure that they’re relationship with all the upheaval that Quinn has gone through will be able to support the weight of another big change.

She still doesn’t even know what Quinn’s plans are for after graduation. They still need to talk about these things and maybe moving in with each other isn’t the best option right now. “I’m not ready.”

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Santana Lopez had cycled between several emotions over the past two months as her hope that Charlie would return and things would return to normal between them faded. Despair, anger worry, and sadness. She had bombarded the soccer players phone with texts and calls after the first month till one day the voicemail was full and every day after that when she called she’d get the same message. She’d even tried to find Charlie’s phone on the computer but that had been switched off on her phone. She had cursed the soccer player for being difficult. She had yelled at her on the
phone, she had done everything to get her to come back but she wasn’t answering texts, she wasn’t listening to voicemails.

She had expected the teenager to be mad at her, to be thoroughly pissed off at her, she’d even sort of expected the break-up but this was far crueler. At least with a break up she’d still see Charlie around—she’d just pretend she’d be visiting the hobbit, she didn’t even know where Charlie was right now. And that bothered her. She had asked Puck but he didn’t know where she was either, she wasn’t picking up for anyone. She had gone to every glee club member and asked to borrow their phones just to see if it was just her and Quinn who were getting the freeze out—it was everyone. She was in the wind.

She felt like a creeper with Charlie gone, the soccer player’s favorite jersey had been left in her room and it still smelled like Charlie. But she had worn it to bed until the scent faded—so she had maybe gone back to Rachel’s place and maybe bitched at the diva to let her in and maybe stolen a few of Charlie’s other’s shirts. It’s not like Charlie was using them but eventually she had returned each one. She missed the soccer player badly, she missed that stupid smile. She missed how she would geek out about the stupidest things—she missed the gentleness or how Charlie would light up whenever she walked into a room, how’d she’d still get nervous at times how despite everything Charlie still tried to impress her. How hard she tried to make her laugh and smile. How it hadn’t mattered who she had been with—and she had thought it didn’t matter what she had done in the past—but it had.

Brittany had been there as much as she could be, with her motocross events, but she was still lonely and she didn’t really didn’t want to deal with Quinn because the cheerleader still blamed her—like she didn’t have a role to play in Charlie up and leaving. Damn Fabray’s with their idiotic family drama—it was almost enough to stay away from them all together but she missed Charlie more than anything.

Brittany had assured her that Charlie was just upset that it would get better when she got back but that was nearly two months ago and no one had heard from her. Quinn had said straight up it was the longest they’d ever been apart and she wasn’t even sure if Charlie was going to come back. She had torn through Charlie’s things despite knowing how much the soccer player hated that. She needed to know where she had gone, she’d go there herself and drag Charlie back despite what Rachel said. But there was nothing—Charlie had cleaned up after herself, she’d just taken a few clothes and a duffel bag.

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It was the last day of summer—and she didn’t know why she was sitting here across from her parents. It’s not like Charlie was coming back. No one had heard a peep from her for the past three months. She’d been gone for three months. She was gone. Even Brittany no longer believed that the soccer player was coming back. Rachel was sitting at home with Quinn it was like a vigil for the wayward soccer player. But there had been no texts no calls.

“Mami, Papi—I’m a lesbian,” she blurted out wincing as she said it as she closed her eyes, waiting for the yelling to start.

Maribel glanced at her husband who looked relieved, when Santana had called a family discussion both of them had worried that she’d gone and gotten herself pregnant with Noah Puckerman’s child. She didn’t want to be dismissive of the fact that her daughter had just come out to her—but they had suspected that Santana wasn’t completely straight since the girl was thirteen. “Well, now you can stop sneaking Charlie out of your room at some silly hour in the morning,” Maribel said after a moment.
“You knew?” Santana sputtered.

Miguel shrugged, “We’ve suspected since you were thirteen, we knew when you started dating Charlie—she was spending an awful lot of time here, parents talk. We had some concerns of course – with her history, but you seemed happy and she did seem to be treating you right so we didn’t see any reason to stop it. She’s considerably better than that Puckerman fellow that you brought around all the time.”

“You knew?” Santana repeats, because this entire time she’d been slightly worried that her parents who did attend church when they could would

“Is that why you haven’t told us because you thought we’d kick you out? I like Leroy and Hiram they have a lovely family,” Miguel said shaking his head at his daughter. “That girl of them can give you a run for your money in the singing department,” he admits.

“I’d keep this information away from your Abuela though, she’s not as—progressive as we are about these things,” Maribel adds and Miguel looks at her because that’s his mother and she can’t help but shrug. “You know she isn’t.”

Miguel frowns and sighs, he loved his mother—but he knew who she was and what she stood for. “I agree—for now it’s best to keep this information from your Abuela.”

Santana stares not knowing what to say, for a moment and Maribel decides to ask more question. “So—when can we finally be properly introduced to Charlie again as your girlfriend?” she asked her daughter who suddenly looked crestfallen.

“Charlie’s—gone she’s been gone for the entire summer. She broke up with me—”

“She did what?” Miguel asked and then peered at Santana carefully watching as his daughter squirmed.

So Santana tells them everything from what had happened in New York to the fact that Quinn was now living with Sam, she tells them how she used Charlie to get at Quinn, how she lied about it, how she used the soccer player while she was still seeing Puck. She tells her parents everything. “She was really angry—and hurt and she kind of ran away—”

Maribel stares and pinches the bridge of her nose, “And none of you thought to call the police? She’s still underage—”

Santana sinks in her seat, “She always came back before—we thought it’d be a week or so. But with school and everything we don’t think that she’s coming back anymore. I mean she’s run before—after prom when she found out that her dad died, she was gone for the entire weekend and Monday—but she came back. She always came back. She promised to always come back—she also promised to not run anymore.”

Maribel inhales a bit, “Do you think she’s coming back?”

“I don’t know—it doesn’t matter she hates me.”

“Don’t be dramatic dear, she doesn’t hate you,” Maribel said with a roll of her eyes, “She’s angry and hurt and given what you told me, she lost her father, she lost her mother, even if she didn’t like Judy, she lost her mother, her twin went behind her back to interfere with her life, it was a lot to take in and it’s part of our original concern. She’s a lot more fragile than she seems to be—”

“She’s not fragile,” Santana says immediately. “She’s not fragile at all,” she repeats and for a
moment her faith is back that Charlie will be back. Charlie isn’t fragile, she isn’t weak and she most definitely is much too cheap to go out and buy her own gear.”

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She grimaced as she was lifted up and slammed hard against the mat, the wind leaving her lungs with the sudden attack, it stunned her and she let out a ragged breath, before she began to try and push off the big meaty guy on top of her that didn’t work so she began to rain down heavy elbows and blows onto his protected head catching the helmet that protected him again and again. She felt him return the blows just as quickly to her side. It hurt—but she pushed past it, and when he finally moved to get a better position he freed her legs and she smirked as she brought her knee up fast as he tried for side control catching him in the jaw.

“Break,” almost immediately the action stopped and Sergei rolled off her rubbing his jaw and scowling at her but he got to his feet and he helped pull her up.

“Must you always do that?” Sergei asked his voice thick with annoyance as he shoved her playfully.

“You always drop your head when you’re going to side-control, and I still haven’t figured out how to get you off me, or protect myself from your submission maneuvers—basically I’m fucked whenever you get me on my back—” Sergei laughs at what she just said and she shoots him a crooked grin.

“Are you sure you don’t want to stay? In a year and a half you can go pro, you’re a quick study,” Sergei asks as she slips out of the ring and rubs her side.

She’s quiet for a moment as she gulps down her water and then dumps the rest on her head, running a hand through her short hair and smiles at him. “You just want to kick my ass some more,” she says and laughs.

“You can keep working at the club, the people there love your shit, and I hear that you can get a few gigs down in Miami when you finally hit eighteen. I’ve got a spare bedroom, and there’s a decent school nearby, and you can pick up some extra work at the gym,” Sergei says trying to sell the teenager who smiles at the thought.

She scratches her head and pulls off her sweaty gear and dumps it on the ground and smiles at Sergei, a bouncer at the club she had been working at, the big guy had immediately taken her under his wing, when she had arrived in Tallahassee with Tyler a few months ago. She pulls off her gloves and lets them fall to the ground and she exhales. She had been thinking about it for the past two weeks—ever since Sergei had made his first offer. “I can’t keep running away from my problems every single time something bad happens,” she says after a moment. “I think I need to go home—I’ve made a lot of people upset with me, and I need them to know that I’m alive and I’m okay. I’ve done a lot of shit that I need to apologize for. But we’ve got tonight right? I’ve got one more show to give, so I’m going to bring the house down and then I’m going to fly out first thing in the morning.”

Sergei laughs and pulls the soccer player into a deep painful bear hug. “Did you at least find some peace?” he asks seriously. She had been on a downward spiral when he had first seen her, when he found out that she was still seventeen he had immediately stepped in. Tyler was far from a decent role model, and he had taken pity on her and had told her he was going to teach her how to fight.

She had seemed mildly interested, for five minutes. She had changed her tune when he proceeded to trash all her junk food and then made her run fifteen miles. He had expected her to drop around
five, he had no clue about how insane Roz was. She had matched his stride for eight miles before she had started to curse him out. She had called him every name in the book and then had proceeded to get creative. She had called him every name in the book again when he finally managed to get her back to her motel room. Truthfully he had thought that he’d never see her again, but she was there at his gym two days later saying that she was clearly a masochist but she really did need to stop getting her ass kicked.

Charlie Fabray nods and relaxes into his hug, it’s the only way to breathe. “I did,” she admits.

Sergei nods, before letting Charlie drop to her feet, “Good, it’s a start.”

Charlie grins up at him and runs a hand through her hair again and looks at the gym which she had spent many hours at, she was going to miss this place. But she was serious when she said she was done running and done being scared. She was coming home.
Chapter 51

Chapter Notes

I actually sat down and rewrote a chapter. Go me. Anyway enjoy.

“Shalom blogosphere! Jacob Ben-Isreal here at McKinley High. Sudden death - big stakes senior year. Who will succeed and who will fail?” Jacob said as he walked through the hallways of McKinley. “Big news this year especially with the surprise announcement at the last day of school. Quinn Fabray and Rachel Berry are dating. Secretly for seven months—and no one knew about it. Scandalous—that’s what it was scandalous. We did manage to break the story though. So we’ll see if they managed to stay together during the summer—” Jacob paused as he spotted Finn Hudson and a grin appeared on his face.

Finn Hudson turned around from his locker only to freeze as the camera man was on him with Jacob Ben Israel pushing the microphone into his face. This was not how he wanted the school year to go especially with that irritating look on Jacob Ben Israel’s face.

It would make for a good story to interview him, “Finn Hudson. Mediocre quarterback. Mediocre boyfriend. Mediocre Glee Club lead. What do you want to be when you grow up?”

Finn flushed because he hadn’t given that much thought, he had been so focused on Rachel Berry last year he hadn’t given it much thought as to what he wanted to be. He also wasn’t a mediocre Glee Club lead, maybe he could still get that musical scholarship. “Me? Uh. Yeah, I have plans. Umm. I’m really excited about this year. It’s our year.”

Jacob gives him an unimpressed look and hopes to god that everyone else is more interesting than interviewing this guy. But maybe he could cook up a bit of drama, “And are you finally over a one Ms. Rachel Berry? How did you take that news that two of your ex-girlfriends were dating each other?”

Finn Hudson flushed immediately, not wanting to answer the question. “I—uh—I am really glad they’re both happy?” he says with his best fake smile. It’s a lie, he still wishes that Rachel would be his girlfriend, and he still thought that the Fabray twins had brainwashed her or something. He had tried to sell this theory to Artie—but he had abandoned ship as well when Rachel had invited him to join the SSB. It wasn’t fair, he had lost all his friends and was now a social pariah and he hadn’t—he hadn’t done anything to deserve it. He wasn’t even really excited about this year, but at least then high-school which was supposed to be—the highlight of his life would be over. He’d never be slushied again—maybe they’d actually win a national championship this year.

“Is it true that after last’s year debacle at Nationals, Rachel Berry demanded that she never work with you again?” Jacob asked with a smirk.

Finn winced and chose not to answer the question instead turning down to walk away. He had seen everyone else do it. What he didn’t expect was the group of football players to surround him and throw slushy in his face. He stood there shaking—he really just wanted high school to be over. It was probably a hello from Charlie or something stupid like that. He sighed and went to go get cleaned up.
Jacob leaned into the camera man and whispered, “Did you get that?” The camera man nodded and Jacob grinned at him. “Good we can edit that so it’s the last point in the film. Come on lets go see if we can find what the other Gleeks are up to for this year.” With that he took off down the hall again, he hoped he would catch an interview with Rachel and Quinn, he had heard they had been holding hands when they walked in this morning. Quinn wasn’t wearing a Cheerios uniform—it was news. Perhaps she was capitulating her title of head bitch to her twin, or Santana Lopez. Jacob spots Mike, Tina and Artie near Mike’s locker and he asks him what his plans are.

“My mom still hasn’t decided if I’m going to Harvard or Stamford yet,” Mike admits with a shrug.

“And where are you applying?” Jacob asked Tina.

Tina shook her head, “I’m not. I’m only a Junior. Senior, Junior, Junior. We have all the same classes together Jacob, I don’t understand why you’re even asking.”

Artie waves, it’s his first time being interviewed and he’s not sure what to do. “Hello.”

Jacob looks at him and squints a bit, “I thought you were a senior,” he admits.

Artie smiles, “Optical Illusion. The chair adds a year,” he says and Jacob shrugs already bored with him.

He pulls away from the trio, so boring. Where was the drama that the glee club normally spewed all over the place? “We can cut that out right?” he asks his camera man who nods and gives him the thumbs up. “Good no one cares about Asian one and Asian two, and we’re after the seniors. Let’s see where we can find Rachel Berry and talk about her secret love affair with Quinn Fabray.” He finally finds her in the choir room talking animatedly with Kurt and she does look eager to be interviewed. “What are your plans for graduation?”

Rachel smiles brightly, “I’m glad you asked. This year we will both be applying to a New York based performing arts school.”

“Julliard,” Kurt says with a grin.

“Tisch and Nyada,” Rachel throws in proudly, “We’ll get an eclectic little apartment on the lower east side.”

“Think Bette and Barbara Hershey in Beaches, pre-cardiomyopathy,” Kurt throws in.

“I have no idea what you’re talking about—” Jacob begins looking at the two of them confused.

“I’ll originate a role in the new Sondheim musical, Tony by 25…” Rachel continues interrupting him as she looks at him who is grinning wide.

“We’re both going to be married by 30, legally of course.”

“Broadway, Lincoln Center, West End, a tasteful HBO miniseries. It’s all right here in my planner, you see?” Rachel holds up her color coded planner and Jacob stares and then at Kurt for a moment.

No his loyal viewers want meltdowns, they want to see the glee club downtrodden, maybe there is some drama in their life. “So you plan to marry a one Quinn Fabray?” he asks Rachel who flushes at the question. “Is she following you to New York? Does she have no plans of her own? You talked about what you two planned to do—but what about your significant others are they moving in with you?”
“Blaine is still a junior, so he won’t be coming with me to New York just yet,” Kurt says immediately trying to cover for Rachel.

“No one cares about Klaine, we all want to hear about Faberry, what are Ms. Fabray’s future plans?” Jacob said immediately being dismissive.

Rachel rolled her eyes, “Everyone cares about Klaine,” she says to Kurt gently. “Quinn and I have yet to discuss our future together, but we have an entire year to decide how our future is going to end up but we plan to make this the best year possible. We’re stronger now especially after that debacle at Nationals.”

Jacob nodded, “Of course I understand—our loyal viewers want to know—”

Rachel sighed, “Go away Jacob,” she wasn’t going to give this pervert intimate details about her sex life. She watched as the boy scowled and finally left. She glanced at Kurt who smiled at her. “The sex is amazing though,” she mumbled to her friend.

Kurt laughed at this, “Me and Blaine are waiting of course, the perfect moment has arisen yet.”

It’s Mercedes who gets questioned next, “Twitter says you’re still officially dating Sam Evans, A.K.A. Trouty Mouth, A.K.A. Hobo McBeaver. How does it feel to be dating a homeless person?”

“Honey, that is so August. Yes, Sam and I dated, but we broke up in August. But I’m gonna give you an exclusive. There’s a new man in Mercedes’ life now. And he’s my future plans.”

Shane grinned at the camera, “I’m not only your future plans, baby. You’re gonna be a star. And when you graduate and win that first Grammy, we’re gonna make beautiful cocoa babies.”

Mercedes said with a smile, she had been the one to break up with Sam, she hadn’t expected him to stay with Quinn Fabray. He had already packed up his stuff and told her that she was leaving. This wasn’t her fault. “Ohhh, baby, how you talk.”

Jacob shrugs and continues on his way, Mercedes isn’t important enough his readers want to know what the Fabray twins are up to, he spots Santana walking by herself in a Cheerios outfit, “What do you hope to get out of your last year of high school?” he asks the Latina who stops and looks at him.

Santana studies him for a moment, perhaps the little nerd had seen Charlie around he did seem to be able to find, so she answered his question. “Senior year is all about being the Cheerios’ top ho and modeling my fierceness after my numero uno Latina, Paula Abdul.”

Jacob gives Santana a look and rolls his eyes, “Paula Abdul is an Arab. Hey, has anyone seen Quinn Fabray? Or Charlie Fabray?” He asks Santana who shrugs. Brittany walks in and Santana smiles at her and they are about to walk away when Jacob remembers that he should probably ask Brittany as well. “Oh, Brittany! What are your plans for the future?”

“Wait, are you working on a time machine too?” She asks completely serious and Jacob just rolls his eyes and walks away to find a one Quinn Fabray he finds her talking with Puck and Jacob smirks because this seems to be good.

“Quinn Fabray?” Quinn turns to Jacob and gives him a look. “My loyal viewers wants to know, what your plans are for after school.”

Quinn studies a Jacob for a long moment before remembering that the camera is rolling so she plasters a fake smile on her face and looks at the camera, “I’m applying to several universities,”
“And the fact that you’re not a Cheerio anymore, and is it true that you have no dreams of your own and are simply going to bask in the glorious light that is Rachel Berry while you hold her back from greatness? How did you feel about Finn kissing your girlfriend?”

Quinn stared at him for a long moment but Puck beat her to the punch and stepped in front of her and shoved Jacob, “Back off dude,” he snaps immediately, and Jacob hurries off. Puck sighs and turn to look at Quinn again, “I’ve combed through the entire school and all I found out was she’s still registered. But no one has seen her—I’m sorry Quinn—I think she’s gone and she isn’t coming back.”

Quinn sighed, “It’s been three months Puck—no one has heard from her for three months Puck, maybe we should call the police—”

“Give it to the end of the week, I checked everywhere. We all did she’s not in Lima. We went to all the gyms we checked sport stores we talked to like every delivery guys in Lima—she’s not here Quinn. Dude I’m sorry no one has heard from her, and I called her phone and nothing goes straight to voicemail, where it then tells you that her box is full. It’s still the first day nothing happens on the first day.” Puck patted Quinn on the arm awkwardly before heading off.

Quinn pushed the pizza around her plate, truthfully she didn’t feel like eating. In the past four months her life had gone through so much upheaval. Her mother had bailed on her for some asshole preacher. Judy didn’t even give into the pretense that they were a family anymore. Judy had simply abandoned her. There were no more calls and her mother certainly ignored her calls. She missed her mother. It angered her that she could still feel so dependent on a woman who had just left her. Judy hadn’t even made arrangements to make sure she was okay. She had just left. She didn’t have parental supervision and she certainly didn’t need it, but it would be nice. Who was she supposed to call when she had problems with Rachel, when she wanted her mom to listen to her and give her advice? The part of her that wanted to please her mother had put on her Cheerios uniform this morning—but she had removed it. She simply couldn’t do it. She couldn’t be that person anymore. She wasn’t sure if it was something she had really wanted or if it had been something that her mother had forced her into so she could be the perfect daughter.

Her father was dead. The man that had tormented her family. He had died thinking that she hated him, but what she wouldn’t give to have him tell her that everything was okay. That everything would simply be okay. His money didn’t make her feel better. It didn’t change things. The Griffin’s were grateful that her father had included Beth in his will. That he had made sure that she was cared for and truthfully she was grateful as well. It would be enough money for her college fun, to make sure that she had the best healthcare available. But it wasn’t enough. He should have been her dad, instead of the monster that he became. He was supposed to have loved her despite her mistakes, but he had kicked her out because of one stupid mistake. It felt like blood money, like he was simply trying to buy them off so that years later when they told stories about their father they would be positive ones.

Charlie had abandoned her, made her face all these changes alone. They were supposed to be a family they had promised to be there for one another. Yet her twin hadn’t bothered to pick up her phone, in months. She hadn’t called she hadn’t texted, and despite the anger there was a part of Quinn that worried that her twin was in some morgue with a Jane Doe tag on her big toe, having been hurt or worse killed. Charlie was shitty at defending herself. She hated her sister for making her worry for running away, she had promised not to. Promised that she wasn’t going to run
anymore and she had bolted. Just like Judy had, there was no sign that she would show up any time soon. She wasn’t even sure what she would do if she saw her twin again. She was torn between hugging her twin or simply throttling her. Personally she was leaning towards the latter. At least Frannie had kept the status quo, she hadn’t talked to her sister since the will reading. Frannie was possibly quite pissed that she hadn’t gotten as much money as she had wanted.

Rachel was trying working double duty to force her mind into the present to make her happy but she was struggling with it. The relationship was harder now than it had been at the beginning, with Rachel trying to keep her happy. But she wasn’t happy, but she was smart enough to know that the problem lay with her not Rachel. That hadn’t stopped her from snapping at Rachel from being harsh with the diva when she really was just trying to get her out of her own depressing headspace. She flicked her hazel eyes to where Rachel was sitting with Kurt—at another table. The distance between them seemed huge. She would have to work on that, remind Rachel that she was still—her. But she didn’t even feel like Quinn anymore. She didn’t even know who that was at this point. But the idea of losing Rachel—it was something she simply didn’t want to think about. She wasn’t sure if she could take someone else abandoning her, or simply leaving her.

Rachel turned to Quinn from where she sat her brown eyes meeting Quinn’s and Rachel shot her a small smile as she only half-listened to what Kurt was saying about their plans to dominate New York.

Quinn smiled back it was hopeful. She would fix this gap between her and Rachel. The solution was simple she would just have to be better, she was no longer the cheerleader, no longer daddy’s perfect little girl, she was no longer Judy’s pet project or Charlie’s sister, she was just Quinn. Whoever that was, she’d simply have to be better and start treating Rachel better. Except she had no idea how, or where to even begin.

Rachel waved to Quinn and Sam as she entered her house, hating how empty it felt. She wasn’t ready to actually have Quinn in her space all the time though there were days where it had felt right. But Quinn had a place and when they argued which seemed to be every other day these days she could just go home to her own house and cool off. She understood, to a degree but trying to be the supportive girlfriend was wearing on her. She couldn’t blame Quinn, not after what she had been through all the changes. She probably would have responded by trying to control every little thing. Quinn was lost and she didn’t know how to help Quinn, suggestions were quickly rebuffed and Quinn really didn’t want to talk about it. Talk about how she felt. She really just wanted Quinn happy. This would have been easier if she had an inside source and someone who knew Quinn better than her, who she could simply bribe with cookies to do what she wanted.

She missed her roommate, she missed having a best friend who she could argue with over what to watch and Charlie would always let her win. She certainly missed watching her friend sit down and eat an entire cake like it was a completely normal healthy part of her diet. Despite what Quinn believed it wasn’t just her who was affected by her twin up and leaving. Puck had lost his best friend, Santana had been more emotional lately even Brittany was sad. Their little group simply wasn’t completed without—Rachel tripped over a ratty duffel bag that had been left in the hallway. She managed to catch herself and she was pulled out of her own thoughts for a moment as she suddenly took in her surroundings. She didn’t have a duffel bag like that and she certainly didn’t recognize it. Her eyes flicked upward and she saw that the kitchen light was on, she wasn’t one to leave the lights on. She reached to the umbrella stand and grabbed an umbrella as she began to dial 911, just in case it was an actual intruder.

The plan was simple she would distract them with the umbrella and run out of the house and scream bloody murder if it was an intruder. She entered the kitchen where someone in torn jeans
that had frayed endings was rummaging through her fridge. “I’m calling the police,” she announced loudly and the intruder jumped a bit slamming their head on the fridge.

“Fuck!”

Rachel raised her umbrella only to pause because she recognized that voice. “Charlie?”

Charlie pulled herself out of the fridge a slice of vegan pizza in her hands. “What the fuck Rachel? Why the hell are you calling the police—why do you have a fucking umbrella in your hands?” Charlie said confusion on her face.

Rachel stared, she didn’t mean to. Well she did, but the girl in front of her wasn’t Charlie Fabray. There was no ridiculous blonde shaggy hair that was always a mess, in fact the blonde locks were gone, replaced by dyed black hair. The shagginess was gone as well and Charlie had gotten herself a proper haircut—well what passed as a proper haircut, she had gotten a fauxhawk, something that Rachel assumed would please Noah greatly. Her friend had lost weight, and had gotten two piercings in her eyebrows. The tan wasn’t anything new but the dark design on Charlie’s wrist caught her attention. “Did you get a tattoo?” Rachel hissed at her.

Charlie stared at Rachel for a moment, and looked down at her wrist, “Oh this? Relax its temporary,” Charlie said with a grin her hazel eyes flicking to the umbrella in Rachel’s hands. “Why do you have an umbrella in your hands? And why are you going to call the police.”

“I thought you were a thief coming to rob me—why am I explaining this to you. You’ve been gone for three months! For all I knew you were dead in a ditch somewhere—” Rachel inhaled sharply trying to calm herself. “Where were you? I called you at least three times every day this summer. I sent you over five hundred messages. You didn’t answer one of them. Where were you Charlie? Do you have any idea how worried everyone was?”

“What are you talking about I’m pretty sure I mentioned to Quinn that Tyler was doing shows and working in clubs and offered to let me assist if I wanted and I was basically his bitch for the entire trip.” Charlie scratched her head. She was pretty sure she had mentioned it. “I wasn’t planning to take the job but I took it at the last minute I needed to get out of Lima so I just—left. I spent most of the summer in Tallahassee. Florida. I mean I had a few gigs in Miami and all over Florida but we settled in Tallahassee.”

Rachel was distracted for a moment because she could swear that there was a flash of silver whenever she spoke. “Stick out your tongue—is that a tongue ring? You ran away and decided to mutilate your body?” She asked horrified. “So basically you left us all here wondering where you were, while you went to go live like a rock star in Florida.” Rachel was now dangerously close to Charlie who had backed up considerably.

“When you put it like that it sounds like I did something bad—” Charlie said. “I got you a present?” She offered but Rachel was not to be appeased by simple presents. “Rachel I was close to snapping and I couldn’t handle it. I just needed to get away, I didn’t want to deal with everyone asking me if I was okay and forcing me to talk when I didn’t want to. Your mom has already given me a lecture when she picked me up from the airport. I’m done running I promise I’m done—I just needed to get away and I really didn’t expect to be gone that long but I got another job sort of. I made a friend—big Russian dude kicked my ass a bit. I know I should have called but you probably would have driven down to Tallahassee and dragged me back and I wasn’t ready to come home yet.”

“I—have you called Quinn yet? Or Santana? Puck? Sam? Any of your friends they’ve been worried sick about you,” Rachel said.
“I thought I’d start with my best friend?” Charlie said hopefully but Rachel was already on her phone about to do a mass text when Charlie grabbed it and held the phone above her head. “Rachel—if I wanted to die tonight then I’d tell them that I was back. They’ll find out with the rest of the school that I’m back.”

“You deserve it! Your sister has been miserable without you, Santana has been difficult to deal with. Puck has been over like every day. You left me alone—and you didn’t even call or tell anyone that you were okay. That you were fine.”

“I know. Trust me I know. I just—I don’t think they’ll kill me if I’m in public and if you’re this angry I really don’t want to be anywhere near Quinn—look how about we get food, you pick out whatever Barbara movie that you wish to torture me with and I’ll sit and pay attention and listen to you talk about all the details that I really don’t care about.”

“You’re a terrible best friend,” Rachel hissed at Charlie.

“But I’m yours?” Charlie said hopefully. She was rewarded with Rachel storming off. Charlie took a bite of the vegan pizza making a face at it but she ate it anyway. “Rachel I’m sorry.” Charlie said as she followed the diva upstairs.

Quinn frowned at her phone as she walked to the door. Rachel hadn’t answered any of her texts and she was about two seconds away from calling her to check if everything was alright. She knew that Rachel didn’t have anything of her various lessons that night, and her girlfriend not answering her texts bothered her more than anything. She opened the door, hoping it wasn’t one of those door to door people who were trying to sell religion to her.

“Hey Lucy.”

Quinn froze for a moment tearing her eyes away from her phone and looked at her older sister. It wasn’t the sister that she even wanted to be there, “Frannie what the hell are you doing here?” Quinn demanded immediately. They had a status quo, she had trusted Frannie with the status quo and now her sister was on her doorstep. Quinn was quickly learning to loathe change.

Frannie studied her baby sister for a moment, this was humiliating but she needed a place to stay, and she hadn’t managed to get in touch with their mother. She didn’t even know where Judy was, and she couldn’t get ahold of Charlie not that she had expected much from her sister. She swallowed for a moment, not knowing how to even begin to say what she wanted to say. “I’m getting divorced from Jason—and I need a safe place to stay—can I stay with you for a few days until I figure it out?” Truthfully she half expected Quinn to laugh in her face and slam the door in her face.

Quinn stared at Frannie her mouth slightly opened from shock. Frannie wasn’t just breaking the status quo she was setting it on fire. They were practically strangers. But Frannie was blood and they were sisters, even though Frannie was sort of a bitch. It might have been because she missed Charlie, or it was because Quinn was slowly losing her mind, but she nodded. “Of course, we’re family.” They were family—weren’t they? Maybe Frannie understood that better than anyone else in her family. Quinn paused for a moment. Yep she had definitely lost her mind.
Chapter 52

It hadn’t even been twenty-four hours, and she already wanted to throttle another one of her sisters. She was trying to be a better person, and in less than fifteen minutes she wanted to murder her sister. Frannie may have been slightly humbled because of the loss of her fortune and her separation from her husband but she was still Frannie. An arrogant annoying bitch and Quinn wanted to smack her head into the wall repeatedly. Screw it after school today she was going to march over to the police station and get them to find her twin. She actually felt sorry for Sam, who was trying his hardest to be polite to Frannie, but even she could see that it was causing him great pain to simply not snap at her.

She had tried to remind herself that Frannie was family and she was going through a hard time with her impending divorce those thoughts usually lasted five milliseconds before she was ready to kill her sister again. Running to Rachel’s house wasn’t an option because she couldn’t leave Sam with her, that was cruel and unusual punishment even by her standards and Sam hadn’t done anything to deserve being stuck in a house with Frannie by himself. It didn’t matter Rachel had eventually texted her back saying that she was going to be busy for the night and that she wouldn’t need a ride into school this morning. Which probably meant that Kurt or Shelby had stopped by to discuss Rachel’s college plans. Quinn rubbed her temples as she walked into McKinley and headed straight for her locker, she paused and smiled relaxing when she saw her girlfriend holding two large cups of coffee. She loved that woman and she walked up to Rachel planning to kiss her and tell her about the shitty night that she had when the person who had been in the locker slammed it shut and turned to Rachel who looked absolutely irritated at the person and grabbed her coffee and took a sip of it. “Rachel?” Quinn asked and Rachel looked at her and immediately took a step back away from the tall stranger. Quinn stared for a moment at the stranger who tensed for a moment before turning to look at her. It took Quinn a moment to recognize her twin sister and she felt her mouth drop.

“Hey sis?” Charlie said with a smile on her face rubbing the back of her neck as she stared at her twin sister. “I missed you.” Charlie really should have been expecting the slap but she hadn’t been, she wasn’t even sure that Quinn knew what she was doing when she hit her. Charlie rubbed her cheek as she looked at her twin who had tears in her eyes. She had deserved that. “Lucy I—”

“Where the hell have you been?” Quinn demanded trying her hardest not to cry. Like hell she’d start bawling in the middle of the hallway. “We looked everywhere for you.”

“Tallahassee. Florida.” Charlie states simply and rubs her arm, “I missed my flight otherwise I would have probably caught the last couple of classes. Like the new look?” Charlie asks trying to bring her sister back to her. She doesn’t really know what to say and she’s extremely glad that Quinn hasn’t wrapped her hands around her neck or attempted to suffocate her with pillows, like Rachel attempted to do last night.

She was going to murder her twin, Charlie was being so blasé about the whole thing. Like she hadn’t just disappeared and been gone when she had needed her. “You were gone and I needed you. And you promised that you wouldn’t run away anymore. You promised you’d be there for me and you just—left. Without a call, without a text. I was worried you were in a morgue somewhere dead.”

Charlie shifts from one foot to another uncomfortably, until she hears a huff and feels Rachel place
a hand on her back and shove her towards her sister, “Quinn, I’m sorry. I just needed—some space and to figure things out—it wasn’t supposed to be that long but I wasn’t—in a good place when I left and it took me all three months to get back to a good place. I’m sorry that I wasn’t there—but I wasn’t in any position to help you and I was barely in a position to help myself.” Charlie grimaces for a moment as she wraps her arms around Quinn. “I should have called or sent an email—or a pigeon.”

“This isn’t time for your jokes,” Quinn hissed as she pushed her twin off her. “You took my mom away from me—” Quinn frowns and looks away she knows it isn’t fair. “You were right about her. I told her and I thought she loved me, I thought that she had changed but she wanted me to go to those stupid camps and I just—and I called you because I needed you to be there but you didn’t pick up. Our dad died and you bailed, our mom—abandons us and you bail. If I sneeze funny will you run away like a coward again?”

“Quinn I promise I’m done running, it didn’t—”

“You promised me that the last time, you promised everyone that the last time. Guess who broke that promise? Three months. The whole world does not revolve around your feelings Charlie. I can’t trust you to be there for me, and I can’t keep letting you hurt me and disappoint me. I don’t believe you, when you say you’re done running because you always say that. Nothing’s changed you’re just a runner and trying to depend on you to be there is simply a stupid idea. I’m glad you’re alive, but I can’t trust you. Not after this little stunt of yours. Three months.”

“Quinn—” Charlie began but Quinn had passed her and looked at Rachel ignoring her. “Lucy—”

“Don’t you dare call me that, it hasn’t been my name for ages and you don’t get to try and manipulate my feelings. You were gone and I’m angry at you and I don’t trust you. Why don’t you run to Alaska this time,” Quinn hissed at her twin before looking at Rachel who was looking between them not sure which side to come out on. “Can we go please?” she begged Rachel she couldn’t deal with this right now.

Rachel nodded and shot an apologetic look at Charlie as she walked away from her best friend, wrapping her arm around Quinn. Well there went any hope she had of Charlie’s presence bringing some normalcy back to McKinley.

Charlie stared at Quinn’s retreating form and looked around, and rubbed her hands before sighing. She deserved that, she knew she did but she had hoped that Quinn would simply welcome her back with open arms and things could be the way they were between them. Clearly that wasn’t going to be the case between them, and she had no idea how to fix it, to show Quinn that she was done running.

Rachel sighed as she followed Quinn watching her carefully, she had expected the anger. Quinn had a right to be angry at Charlie, she was still personally furious with her best friend for leaving. But Quinn had desperately wanted her twin to come back, and truthfully it was the most passionate that Rachel had seen Quinn in such a long time. But there was a murderous look on Quinn’s face and she really needed to know, “Are you alright? I know Charlie is quite possibly emotionally stunted and doesn’t get why you’re upset with her. But Charlie did come back. True she was probably living it up like a rock star in Florida but she does seem normal—well as normal as she can get.”

Quinn flicked her eyes toward Rachel before remembering she hadn’t told Rachel about her recent
“Charlie decides to waltz back in my life and Frannie decided to destroy the status quo by showing up at my door. I just wanted some normalcy, before people start upending my life.”

“Frannie’s in town?” Rachel said crinkling her nose in disgust. “Why? Has she run out of money again?”

Quinn raised her hands up annoyed at her current state of affairs. “Because she’s divorcing her husband and she wanted a place to stay because he’s a prick. I’m sure she’s just here to see how much money she can siphon off me, but it’s a bed to stay in and she’s my sister. And I felt sorry for her and she needed to divorce him anyway. I forgot how she was because she came to me asking for help and I forgot what a bitch she is. I remembered as soon as she opened her mouth.”

“How long is she staying for?” Rachel asked Quinn.

Quinn pinched the bridge of her nose, the headache that had started last night was flaring up again, “I don’t know how long I probably should have asked but truthfully I really just wanted her to stop talking.” Quinn rubbed her temples. “This is Charlie’s fault, if I wasn’t thinking about how everybody I love up and abandons me I probably would have laughed in her face and shut the door.”

Rachel snorted, “No you wouldn’t have. You would have let her have a bed and if she asks you for a bit money or help you will probably do what you can to help her. You’re a good person Quinn. You do love your family and you keep looking for the best in people. That’s not a bad trait to have.”

“I’m a person who lost my mind is what I am.” Quinn grumbled and relaxed when Rachel gently bumped her shoulder against hers. “Why can’t my family just be normal?”

Rachel shrugged, and looked at her girlfriend. “I can’t speak for Frannie—but Charlie is well Charlie. You’re going to need to forgive her eventually.”

Quinn muttered something under her breath, “Why didn’t you tell me she was back last night?”

Rachel flushed, “She stole my phone and then made a case about how she was far too young to die and she was sure that you were going to murder her. I told her to call you but she said she would rather just do it in person she couldn’t say sorry over the phone or if you killed her. She seems—better Quinn and you need to talk to her. You know she got her tongue pierced, and I’m sure she has a tattoo.”

“Did you say she got a tongue piercing?” Quinn asked looking at Rachel horrified and Rachel nodded.

“She put in a flesh colored one this morning—I thought she was a thief when I found her in my fridge when I got back. Trust me you’re not the only one who’s upset with her. I tried to beat her to death with a pillow yesterday.”

Quinn snorted and pictured it for a moment, “I thought you hated violence.”

“I do, but I was furious at her. She hurt you, and you weren’t the only person she abandoned. She punished everyone equally. Puck had nothing to do with it. Either did Sam or Brittany, and she over reacted. She could have kept in contact with Brittany or myself, even if she was mad at you. But she chose not to, she chose to let us worry and hope that she wasn’t dead in a ditch somewhere.” Rachel sighed, “But she came back, like we knew she would it just took her longer this time. It’s not promising not to run that you need to make her promise because it seems to be a
promise that she can’t keep, but you need to make her swear that she won’t pull that stunt next time. It was the not hearing anything that made it worse. Charlie disappears and she checks out. What she can’t do is make everyone worry about her. All I needed was a text from her that told me she was okay and she’d be back. She didn’t even us that. It was selfish of her.” Rachel shrugged, “But I’ve already forgiven her, just don’t tell her that. She already agreed to do whatever it took to make it up to me. And she still hasn’t watched every single movie with Barbara in it. And she’s going to be joining glee club full time, and she’s going to smile and be pleasant about it.” She was going to guilt her best friend for all it was worth.

Quinn opened her mouth and then closed it looking at Rachel who had a neutral expression on her face but a devious look on her face. She bit her lip and then giggled causing Rachel to stop and look at her. The giggles turned into a full out laugh and Rachel took a step away from her as her body shook and her stomach began to hurt as she laughed. Quinn wiped the tears away from her face, she had completely lost it. “I love you,” she managed to let out.

Rachel blinked but smiled it was the first time in a while she had heard Quinn just laugh, which meant she was probably going to be fine. “I love you too. Though I’m not sure if I approve that you approve that I am actually torturing your twin for you.”

The news hadn’t quite spread through the school that Charlie Fabray was back and sporting a new look. Most people simply hadn’t noticed. She was just another body at McKinley, and Quinn hadn’t spread the news either had Rachel. As Head Cheerio she should have been tuned in to the gossip at McKinley but she really didn’t care. Why should she when she had to share the title with Becky Jackson, even if everyone knew who the real head bitch of McKinley was the whole thing felt hollow. It’s not like she could rub it in Quinn’s face because if Quinn ever got her head out of her ass and decided to come back Sue would simply hand Quinn the title again.

Not that it mattered, being on top sucked when your rival had bowed out, and it was freaking annoying to deal with all the baby cheerios. The whole thing didn’t make her happy, ruling the school didn’t make her happy anymore and all the Machiavellian schemes seemed pointless. At least Brittany had decided to join the Cheerios with her. She paused because Brittany had stopped walking beside her and she hadn’t noticed too caught up in her own thoughts to pay attention to her surroundings.

She sighed following Brittany’s gaze hoping that it wasn’t something stupid that she’d need to regulate on. She was met with a pair of hazel eyes which had widened and Charlie looked like a dear caught in headlights. Santana stared at her ex-girlfriend for a moment taking in everything. A part of her hoped that Charlie would flash that stupid smile of hers, the crooked one and wink and that everything would be fine between that she’d know that they’d be fine. But Charlie seemed to tear her gaze away from her as Santana watched as Brittany launched herself onto the soccer player.

Charlie grinned widely, finally someone who seemed actually happy to see her and wasn’t going to murder her in her sleep. “Hey Britt—I missed you. I missed your hugs and going to the duck pond and talking with you and I’m sorry that I ran away.” Charlie babbled quickly.

Brittany pulled back a bit and frowned at Charlie before tapping Charlie on the nose, “You promised that you wouldn’t run away again.”

So everyone kept reminding her but Charlie smiled, “I know—and I’m sorry but I think this was the last time. I’m done running away from my problems—and hiding. No more running and
hiding,” Charlie promised. “And I’ll answer my phone when you call and I’ll be around.”

Brittany studied her friend for a moment before accepting her words and hugging her again tightly. “Where did you run to?”

“Florida—”

“Did you go to Disney world?” Brittany asked immediately interrupting Charlie. The soccer player swung her bag down and opened it and pulled out a stuffed dog, “You got me Tramp?” she asked and Charlie nodded letting Brittany wrap her arms around it.

“I didn’t actually go but I went to a Disney store and picked it up just for you,” she admits and rubs the back of her head that crooked smile on her face. Her tone was soft, she really had missed the dancer. “I got presents for people. I did miss you and I’m sorry that I ran away,” Charlie repeated the apology but Brittany it seemed had already forgiven her and Charlie smiled gratefully. One down, several more people to go. She’d still need to figure out a way to earn Quinn’s trust back.

Brittany reached and touched Charlie’s hair, “You stopped being blonde. Santana has a thing for blondes Charlie you know that—she really missed you,” Brittany said turning to look at Santana who seemed to be glued to her spot. Charlie seemed to be looking anywhere but at Santana and she sighed and grabbed onto Charlie’s wrist and dragged her to go talk to Santana.

Santana exhaled as Charlie came closer and she saw all the changes from the piercings to the torn jeans. Brittany was right she did have a thing for blondes. “I’ve got a bar of soap and a bottle of peroxide with your name on it—back at home Fabgay—we can have you looking—normal soon.” She offered the words tumbling out. She didn’t even mind the hair color change, it made Charlie look hot and like a bit of a badass but she didn’t want the new Charlie. She wanted the Charlie who ate in bed and left crumbs everywhere and ate far too much than was ever normal. And walked out the door in the middle of winter with just shorts on and thought it was acceptable. Charlie gave her blank look and Santana winced deciding to drop the jokes all together as the awkward silence filled the air between them.

Brittany rolled her eyes this was stupid, “Charlie’s sorry that she ran away. She promised that she wouldn’t do it again and I believe her. She went to Disney World and it’s like totally the happiest place on Earth and she came back looking all hot—but I told her that you prefer blondes. Say you’re sorry for running Charlie.”

Charlie blinked and nodded, “I’m sorry for running away—and breaking a promise to you that I wouldn’t run. I should have picked up my phone.”

Brittany turned to Santana and grabbed her hand and pulled her forward, she should have started carrying around the cuffs otherwise they’d never fix their problems. “Now it’s your turn San.”

“I wanted to tell you—” Santana begins not sure how to finish the rest of it.

“It’s fine. No hard feelings,” Charlie says briskly, interrupting Santana. She pulls her wrist from Brittany and looks at her friend, “I’ve got to go I’m late, we can catch up later and I can tell you about me getting my ass kicked by a Russian dude.” Charlie flicks her eyes to Santana. “I’ll see you around I guess Santana,” Charlie says before side-stepping Santana and walking away.

Brittany raises a brow, well that promise lasted exactly two minutes, but it seems she’s just avoiding Santana which she supposes is better than Charlie leaving the country in an attempt to escape from her problems. Baby steps. Though she wasn’t sure if Charlie had run away because it hurt to be around Santana or if she had wanted to simply jump Santana in the hallway. Was Charlie
angry? She most certainly was—but angry sex was still hot.

Santana turns to look at Charlie who is now practically running down the hall and she feels her heart sink and then shatter. “She hates me.”

Brittany rolls her eyes and flicks her eyes towards the soccer player, “No. She doesn’t.”

Roz stared at her captain and prayed to the lord for patience because Charlie had become increasingly difficult to deal with over the years. The stunt that she had pulled quitting for a short period of time and putting her body on the line for a sport like football had nearly cost her a state championship, one that she had rubbed in Sue’s face for the summer, but now that Sue seemed to not be insane anymore, she would need to win another state championship. She needed her captain back. Roz placed Charlie’s uniform on the desk, “Sunday morning is the last tryout, there is this new hotshot freshman who is gunning for your spot, she isn’t as good as you and has an ego. I need you to put her in her place, she wants your captaincy. She’s also the future of the team—”

Charlie stares at the uniform for a second and looks at Roz, “I wasn’t going to play this year,” she admits. “I can’t—”

Roz stares at her star player and inhales sharply, “Do you have an injury?”

“No—”

“Then you can play—”

“I’d fail your ten panel drug test,” Charlie interrupts, ignoring the look that Roz is giving her.

Roz swallows and takes in Charlie’s appearance for a moment, “Is it the crack? Or is it the black tar?”

Charlie stares confused, “I don’t know what black tar is?”

“Heroin? You’ve lost a lot of weight—is it Meth?” Roz asks because Charlie looks different.

Charlie blinks, “I went on a diet—?”

Roz snorts not believing that for a second, it was like pulling teeth to make Charlie go on a diet, and she was nearly a hundred percent sure that Charlie cheated constantly on it.

“I did—I haven’t eaten a single carb, processed sugar, or dairy in about a forty-five days,” Charlie protests and scratches her cheek. “I’m on a prescription drug for my anxiety. I asked, I’ll fail every single drug test you give me,” Charlie admits.

“It’s a prescription?” Roz asks and Charlie nods, “As long as I have a note that this is a prescription from your therapist then it should be fine—”

“And I don’t really want to play anymore,” Charlie slips in and winces because it looks like Roz has swallowed a lemon whole. She almost feels sorry for the team—but Roz suddenly smiles and it makes her feel uneasy.

“We have the last try-out on Sunday morning Charlie,” Roz says and tosses Charlie the uniform. “I heard about your father’s passing, soccer will give you something to do and you’re happy while playing it. It’s also your last year at McKinley, and you’re going to take home another state
championship, and another MVP. There are also several schools who are already interested in you. UCLA being one of them. Don’t throw away your future because you’re upset.”

Charlie holds her uniform, “I’m not—”

“Sunday morning Charlie, ten in the morning. Missy and Marissa are not captain material and I can’t entrust the team to a freshman. So Sunday morning you’re going to be here. You’re going to put the freshman through their paces. Now go to class,” Roz says dismissively.

Charlie’s mouth gapes for a moment before she sighs and gets up, “I’m not coming,” she says on her way out. She wants a fresh start and that doesn’t include soccer.

Roz snorts before going back to looking at routines for the synchronized swimming team, “Ten in the morning Charlie.”

——

Quinn found her twin laying on the bleachers on the field, it had been an accident she had only come out to watch the Cheerios practice. She missed it, she missed it and it was only the second day of school. She was surprised to see Charlie there and she frowned as she took a seat planning to ignore her twin and just watch the cheerleaders.

“I’m sorry.” Charlie said as she sat up and looked at her twin.

“I’m not talking to you go back to Tallahassee.” Quinn snipped at her twin crossing her arms over her chest. She didn’t care if it was the least mature thing she could have said she just didn’t want to deal with her at this moment.

Charlie sighed as she ran a hand through her hair. “Quinn I should have picked up a phone. I should have told you I was okay and I’m sorry I didn’t. I wasn’t thinking about you. I needed some space and I need to think and I just wasn’t thinking. Everything piled up and I didn’t know how to deal with it and I didn’t handle it well. Russell’s death, the money, Judy turning her back on me again after I got my hope up and I did. Then Santana—it caught me off guard and I just—I didn’t know how to handle it and it was suffocating. I know you felt something like it and I couldn’t help you when you needed me I could barely help me. I wouldn’t have been any good to you—for you. I didn’t stop running until I was in the middle of nowhere and I didn’t stop self-destructing until about the end of June. By the time that I managed to piece myself together, I just—I should have called but it was late and I just—I knew you’d be on the first plane or driving down to come take me home and I wasn’t ready for that.”

“You don’t get to dance back into my life after dropping off the face of the planet after promising me you wouldn’t run again. You don’t get to come back and just shrug your shoulders and tell me this time is different. It isn’t and you need to be honest about it. If you’re going to bail like everyone else in our family then tell me now,” Quinn pointed out immediately.

“I can promise that I’ll never do what I did again. I can promise that if I need to take some time I’ll tell you, if I need time to process everything you’ll be the first to know. If I need help, if I need you to be my support system then I’ll try and verbalize it. I can’t keep everything bottled up anymore. I need to communicate when I need help. I don’t have to be alone while I deal with my shit.”

It was something different and Quinn sighed, “You ran away from Santana, Brittany told me.”

“I know I did, I thought that it’d be easy seeing her but it just hurt, and I didn’t like it. I wanted her to choose me and she didn’t and I already felt—that I wasn’t good enough. I don’t want to feel like
that anymore, I’ve got to start thinking that I am good enough and treating myself better.” Charlie was quiet for a moment for a moment, “I’m sorry.”

Quinn finally looked at her twin and rubbed her head thinking. “I know you are—but being sorry and saying it doesn’t make things better. You know that. I don’t trust you not to leave again, I know you said you aren’t and I know you’re going to make an effort but I don’t trust you. I don’t trust you to be there and to simply not bail. I love you I do—but this isn’t a sorry thing.”

Charlie frowned at this, “Quinn—”

“Don’t—I just want to watch the Cheerios it helps me think, and I don’t want to talk to you. There isn’t anything you can do to fix this. There is no magic wand that will make what you did okay. And truthfully I can’t deal with Frannie and you at the same time. You weren’t the only one that felt like you were drowning. Except I don’t run away from my problems. And you’re still running it doesn’t matter whatever it is you feel for Santana or if you think she betrayed you even though it happened back in freshman year. You need to get over yourself and talk to her. I’m going to work on my relationship with Rachel and start talking about my future plans with her.” Quinn shook her head as she saw the annoyance on Charlie’s face. “You weren’t there and she tried to call you—you don’t get to have an opinion on this. I don’t care if you think she’s evil incarnate, I already know that but she’s our sister and I felt sorry for her. It’s my house and I can have whoever I want in my life. Now leave me alone.”

Charlie grabbed her bag and got up, and looked at her sister but Quinn turned her face and she sighed she had known that it was going to be difficult but she hadn't expected Quinn to cut her out completely.
Rachel placed a stack of sheet music in front of Charlie. The soccer player looked at it a frown on her face and then looked at her best friend. “You said you’d do anything to make it up to me and what I want is for you to join glee club. Permanently. Which means partaking in all the competitions and doing all assignments and singing your feelings. I find it thoroughly therapeutic, and perhaps it can help you convince your sister to forgive you.”

Charlie stared at the sheet music poking it with her pen as if it was something that would bite her. This was a terrible idea, she hated all things glee and their silly little ideas of how singing their feelings worked. She didn’t even like talking about her feelings, what made Rachel think that singing them would make her feel better. “So if I do this, you’ll forgive me? Just like that?”

Rachel took a seat on Charlie’s bed and crossed her legs, someone was going to need to make Charlie understand. “I don’t understand what was going on in your mind when you ran. I don’t know how you felt, but I do know that your life was changing just like Quinn was. I also know that you’re a runner by nature and it’s your default response to things, but you do have a support system. I know you felt that I chose Quinn over you and perhaps I have let our friendship slide a bit and chosen to spend more time with Quinn then you. But if you need to talk to me then I will be there for you, but you can’t disappear for three months without so much as a note or a message to let us know that you’re alive. That’s all I ask, if you do run again, then you have to swear that you will let me or someone know that you’re okay. It doesn’t have to be me but Puck or Brittany or anyone. Even Mike looked for you when you were gone. It wasn’t fair to punish everyone and that’s what you did even if it was unintentional.”

Charlie nodded at Rachel and picked at the songs like it would bite her, “I promise I can call, at least or text. I’ll make sure to contact you.” She flicked through the selection not liking the songs that Rachel had picked out for her, but not saying anything. “So I just have to get up and sing a song in front of the musical cult and then I’m officially a member of your cult?” The smile that Rachel gave her made her uneasy, “Rachel?”

“Well actually, there is that assembly coming up—” Rachel said trailing off.

“Rachel!”

“We are supposed to do a small selection and sing two songs. It’s a part of Mr. Schue’s recruiting drive that he makes us do every single year and well I would rather not have food thrown at me again. You’re the most popular girl in school and with your new look and JBIs blog posts you are currently also the most talked about person in school. Charlie you have a fan club and I assure you and I’ve heard some of the girls talking about you in the girls bathroom.”

“You’re pimping me out, we’ve talked about this,” Charlie hissed.

“I have zero guilt for using your current sex appeal in the school for the benefit of the glee club,” Rachel said with a dramatic sniff. “You’ll be fine, you can sing and you can make the glee club cool.”

“Rachel I don’t know what power you think I have—but I can’t make glee club cool.” Charlie interrupted, but Rachel ignored her. There seemed to be a lot of that going on.

“You were a DJ for the summer, you probably have some showmanship and I know you can sing. So yes you will be doing this for me after all it’s for the benefit of the glee club of which you are
now a member. It’s called taking one for the team. Santana will be singing, as will and I Mercedes. Though if you and Santana do a duet—"

“No,” Charlie said firmly. “I’ll sing a song in public but I’m not—doing anything with Santana.”

Rachel was quiet for a moment and studied Charlie for a moment. “She came to the house every day while you were gone, as I’m sure you’ve noticed that things weren’t exactly how you left them. She really did miss you Charlie and I’m sure if you just talked to her—Santana didn’t even call me any names and you know how she is about her nicknames—”

“Rachel I said no. Whatever I had with Santana—well it’s gone.”

“So that’s why you practically bolt the other way whenever you see her in the hall?” Rachel asked and Charlie flushed and shot her friend an annoyed look. “I was only asking if you acting like an idiot was part of the plan to convince everyone that you’re over her.”

“I am over her,” Charlie said with a frown.

Rachel opened her mouth and then closed it and just patted her best friends hand gently and gave her a look and shook her head. Well this was something for Brittany to do. Charlie was just going to deny it to her and everyone until Brittany gave her that look of hers. “The assembly is in three days—if you need my help I can give you pointers. Do you have a song in mind?”

Charlie shot Rachel a grateful smile grateful to be done with the questioning about Santana, “I think I do.”

Quinn looked at Frannie and sighed wondering if she could put Coach Sylvester’s training to the test and get away with murder. All she would need was a bucket of lye and a hacksaw.

“When is she leaving?” Sam asked, keeping his voice low as he looked at Frannie. She’d made some rude comments about his clothes and his lips. The latter was something that he was used to, he knew Santana after all.

Quinn sighed as she came out of her dark thoughts, she was losing her mind. “I don't know why you're complaining, you're going for your bro night with Charlie and leaving me with her.”

“Maybe you can come with us, we can make an exception for you. Special circumstances,” Sam offered.

Quinn shook her head, “Go spend time with Charlie, and play your games. If I need an alibi though —”

Sam grinned at her, “You got it, and we’ll say you were with us the entire day.”

Quinn smiled at him and waved him off she needed to have a chat with her sister. Though while her conversation with Charlie had hurt, and she was still furious with her twin, her conversation with Frannie was sure to be like pulling teeth. “So have you found a place to move into?” Quinn asked her sister slapping a giant fake smile on her face.

Frannie looked at Quinn, and frowned slightly. “Trying to get rid of me?”

“Yes.” Quinn answered honestly. “Don't give me that look Frannie. You're a bitch you know you're a bitch. You make Santana look like an angel and she owns the fact she's a bitch,” Quinn said immediately she wasn’t going to do this with her sister.
Frannie made a face, “I thought I could count on my sisters. Mom was helping me and then she just bailed on me. I can’t reach Charlie and I didn’t think you’d shut the door on me Lucy.”

For a moment Quinn felt bad for Frannie, it lasted a moment till Frannie called her Lucy. “The only person who gets away with calling me Lucy is Charlie and I just told her not to call me that the other day because I am pissed at her. Quinn. That’s my name now. I go by Quinn. I don’t care how butch you think it is, it suits me.” Quinn snapped at her sister. She should have gone with Sam to Rachel’s. “Look if what you want is money and go see our sister, she’ll pay you to leave. That’s what she did with our mother.”

“What?” Frannie asked turning to Quinn. “She did what?”

“I thought you talked to mom all the time how did you not know this?” Quinn asked. “I thought that’s why you were here, for money.”

Frannie rolled her eyes, “I don’t want your money, or Charlie’s for that matter. I came because I was looking for our mother. Who bailed on me, she was helping me with my marital problems and she told me I should stay because I made a vow and unless he was cheating on me or beating me I should support him while he gambled away my money. I thought you kicked her out? She stopped calling about three months ago.”

Quinn paused, Frannie had never been that good of an actor she truly didn’t know. “She’s in Chicago, with her new boy toy. Charlie paid her five million dollars to go away and take him with her. So she did, she just bailed. She left with him while I was in New York. They’re currently living rent free in Charlie’s apartment in Chicago. She stopped calling ages ago and picking up her phone.”

Frannie stared at Quinn for a moment, “Was that part of the deal?”

“The deal was that she leave Charlie alone. She was free to contact you and me if she chose to. Charlie wanted nothing to do with her. So this is on her. As much as I want to blame our sister, this is on her. She chose a man over us. Did she really tell you to stay with him?”

Frannie sighed, there was no point in keeping secrets from Quinn, “I’m not that broke but once I realized that he had a gambling problem, I began to store money away and began to make plans to divorce him. That’s when I called mom for the first time. She came and told me some nonsense about how I should stay with him. He started in on my inheritance and I immediately cut him off and kicked him out. He came back with divorce papers. There was no pre-nup, and his businesses are failing, so if anything I’m going to be the one paying that asshole’s alimony.”

Quinn stared at her sister for a moment for her entire life she had thought Frannie’s life was perfect, but she was just as fucked up by their parents as everyone else in their family. “If you need money Charlie will probably give it to you. She’s got more freedom with her account then I do.”

“I don’t want your money, I have plenty stored away. I just—I’ve got no idea what to do next. I didn’t have some huge life plan. I just figured I’d follow in our mother’s footsteps. Marry some rich guy, hope he dies early, maybe have some bratty children and spend my time drinking and gossiping with the neighborhood wives.”

Quinn opened her mouth to ask her sister if she was stupid but she paused, just two years ago in freshman year that had been her big plan. Pop out a few kids for Finn Hudson and get married to him. She had planned to have her mother’s life. Thank god she had fallen in love with Rachel. Her eyes flicked to Frannie for a moment, who was getting up. “Where are you going?”
“You don’t want me in your house and I really don’t want to be stuck with some bratty teenagers. This was a mistake, but all my friends were his friends first.” Frannie said with a sigh. She really didn’t want to be alone and she’d expected to be with her annoying sisters who had defended her if even for a brief moment.

Quinn sighed, “You can stay until you figure out what you need to do next, but you need to lay off Sam. He’s terrified of you.”

“I still can’t believe you dated him.” Frannie said crinkling her nose in disgust.

“I always preferred boys that I could control,” Quinn replied with ease.

“And now you date girls,” Frannie said crossing her legs. “Does the same apply in this case?”

Quinn frowned, “I love Rachel, and I’ve been an emo mess lately. But I’ve got to start making amends for that. If she visits then you have to promise that you’ll be on your best behavior. Because I will choose Rachel’s happiness over you Frannie. I don’t even really like you. I love her. If she complains once you’re gone, you can attempt to get our sister to talk to you. Charlie I believe would rather have her teeth pulled then talk to you.”

Finn frowned and sighed when he saw the familiar black Lexus pull into Burt’s garage and Charlie slid out of the door and glanced at him, she looked around but everyone else seemed to be busy.

“I’m not going to cut your brake-lines,” Finn said and Charlie raised a brow at this. He wiped his hands on the rag and caught Charlie’s keys as she tossed him the keys. “What do you need?”

“How long for an oil change?” Charlie asked.

Finn studied Charlie for a minute, “Twenty minutes,” he states abruptly pulling away from her.

“You can wait over there.”

“And let you cut my brake lines? What are you joking Finn, I’m standing right here and watching you,” Charlie says crossing her arms over her chest and meeting his cool gaze.

Finn grunts under his breath and mutters something but finally shrugs, if she wants to watch him change oil then she can do that. He pops the hood of her car and begins to work, “So where were you this summer?”

Charlie studies Finn suspiciously and then shrugs. “I was in Florida, working. Why?”

“I helped them look for you, it’s the most contact I’ve had with Puck in a while he was worried about you,” Finn says. “Of course now that you’re back it’s all about you again, and they’re kissing your ass.”

“What are you kidding me? Rachel’s forcing me to join your musical cult and sing at the fucking assembly, my sister is refusing to talk to me, Roz is basically forcing me to play soccer. Puck, Sam and Mike are plotting some terrible thing to torture me, the only person who isn’t planning my demise is Brittany and she’s still slightly upset with me. No one is kissing my ass Finn.”

Finn scoffs at this, because she has everything he wants. “You abandon Puck and he forgives you, but I do it—”

“I was there when Puck needed a friend he lost his daughter Finn plus I’ve bailed his sorry ass out. He’s sort of my friend for life because of that and I’ll continue to bail his ass out—what the hell are you doing to my car?”
"I’m checking the oil," Finn snaps at her.

Charlie rolls her eyes and continues to eye him suspiciously, but sighs. She’s supposed to make amends with people but it’s Finn, and he’s been a pain in her ass for the past three years. “Would you like to hang out with the Super Smash Brother’s tonight? I’m apparently buying the pizza and the beer.”

Finn nearly smacked his head on the hood of Charlie’s car and looked at her suspiciously, “This isn’t a prank where you slushy me or throw water balloons at me is it?”

“No, my new therapist is trying to teach me to let things go. So I’m trying to purge my hatred for you by offering you this olive branch. You can be Donkey Kong and I can continue to call you Sasquatch—though this invitation is based on the idea, that you’re over Rachel and ready to move on. Because I’m not dealing with added hate from Quinn for allowing you to hit on her girlfriend.”

Finn frowned he hadn’t seen Rachel not really, she didn’t talk and the glee club had events where he wasn’t invited to for the simplicity that no one wanted things to be made awkward. “I think so—there’s this girl from Carmel High who I’m sort of interested in. She comes in here a lot and she’s really nice and not as high maintenance as Rachel and she doesn’t use big words to confuse me.”

“Little words confuse you,” Charlie says and Finn frowns at her and she holds up hands. “I’m not going to stop being an ass to you Finn. I’m an asshole to everyone, just in varying degrees. Baby steps.” Finn rolls his eyes at this and she smirks.

“Just no more slushies,” Finn says after a moment and she nods.

It’s one of those nights where the Super Smash Bros are doing their thing which is probably playing video games while eating pizza and drinking beer. Somehow this had become their thing having a girl’s night. They’re at Tina’s house this time. It was supposed to be Quinn’s night to host but with Frannie around it was just better if they skipped her place for the time being. Frannie was best in small doses. Very small doses.

“So what’s everyone future plans?” Tina asks, she’s the only junior in the group and she wants to know where everyone is going. “I really want to go to Brown.” Tina Cohen Chang is met with silence from three other women in the room. “Really none of you know what you want? Shouldn’t you be picking out schools and starting the application process? The earlier the better.”

Mercedes speaks first, “I’m going to win a Grammy, that’s the only thing that matters. I’m done being the third fiddle in Glee club, all summer long I’ve been working my ass off, this year is my year to shine.”

Santana frowns and shrugs, she hasn’t given it much thought. “I don’t know whichever school has a good cheerleading program I suppose. Sue will probably write me a letter of recommendation which means full ride.” It doesn’t matter though, she has other things to worry about beginning and ending with Quinn’s twin sister.

“I think a part of Rachel thinks that I’m going to follow her to New York—but that’s not my dream it’s hers. I’m terrified to tell her that I want to go Yale—”

“Isn’t that in Connecticut? Tina asks and Quinn nods. She winces, “How haven’t you told Rachel yet? She’s going to flip out she’s already started to look at NYU and other schools for you.”

Santana rolls her eye. “Rachel can’t seriously expect Quinn to just follow her around and carry her bag while she lives her dream. She’s Quinn Fucking Fabray Former Head Bitch of McKinley. She
isn’t going to become codependent on the Hobbit. It’s just two hours away from New York, she’ll live.”

“I haven’t told her what the plan is because we all know that long distance relationships don’t work. Let alone relationships from high school. I just—this year needs to be the best year possible for the two of us. Cause next year fall, she’s going to meet someone else, she’s going to fall in love with them and she’s going to break up with me. We’re going to try and make it work but it just won’t I’ll get busy, she’ll get busy. We’ll get in each other’s way—”

“Please the hobbit is in love with you it’s so fucking nauseating how in love you two are. You two are probably going to make it work and be that couple that everyone fucking hates because you have the—”

Quinn frowned at Santana. “Don’t take your issues with Charlie out on me Santana. If you’re angry with her then be angry at her, yell at her do something. Because I am not going to be your go between for this. You need to talk to her like with words not with your clothes off.”

Santana scowled at her, “You don’t think I’ve tried that? She just makes some shitty excuse about how she has to be somewhere and leaves. Taking my clothes off will probably be more effective in making her stand perfectly still,” she mutters the last part.

Brittany sighs and looks between Santana and Quinn. “Rachel’s worried about you Quinn because you won’t talk about the future with her. She’s got all these huge plans and she’s worried that you don’t love her anymore and she’s just a phase. You need to talk to her.” She glances at Santana who crosses her arms over her chest. “Charlie’s angry with you and she ran away but she’s better now, a bit. You need to talk to her.”

Quinn shifts and looks away because she doesn’t know what to do, telling Rachel that she wants to go to Yale will probably spell the end of their relationship. She can’t stand to lose another person, another relationship. First it was Russell and then Judy, and finally Charlie. She wanted Frannie to leave, she was Frannie and difficult. Charlie had come back—like she always did and yes she was sorry that she was gone, but that didn’t make things better. Her twin hadn’t been there when she had truly needed her. She didn’t trust her twin to not take off again—to not leave her again for an even longer amount of time. Rachel was the only person that hadn’t left her side, who she hadn’t been around. She didn’t want things to end between them, and she didn’t want to give up on her dream either. She didn’t want Rachel to give up on her dream.

Santana scoffs. “What’s there to talk about? Has anyone been paying attention to Jewfro’s blog? Charlie’s moved on. She’s got herself a new look and a personality and people are all over her. Maybe I should do the same thing.” There had been photos, and Jacob himself had confirmed it with three different sources. The whole thing left her feeling on edge and empty on the inside.

Brittany sighs and for a split second she thinks she should become a therapist because she really does need to get paid for the advice that she gives people. “She’s just angry with you San, you just need to talk to her. Tell her that you love her and then you can have beautiful lady babies together. Charlie will totes forgive you, she forgave Quinn—”

“I’m her twin,” Quinn points out and Brittany ignores her. “And I haven’t forgiven her for anything.”

“She totes forgave Quinn for being a bitch, she’ll forgive you,” Brittany adds and pats Santana’s arm and looks over at Mercedes who is giving her a confused look because it’s the most lucid she’d ever seen Brittany.
Tina stares at Brittany as she turns to Mercedes and then proceeds to lecture her about dumping Shane and getting back together with Sam. “So what do you want to do Brittany?” Truthfully she thinks that Brittany would make a good therapist at this rate.

“Tish, is a really good school for dancing, and it’s in New York and Rachel said that I can move in with her and Kurt and we can be like our little pack of unicorns—even though I’m a bicorn,” Brittany says in a cheery tone, watching as Quinn studies her, she hopes that she managed to get through to her.

“Are you sure this is okay,” Finn asked as he swallowed nervously carrying the bear while Charlie carried several boxes of pizza.

“Just don’t leer at Rachel and things should be fine,” Charlie says with a roll of her eyes as she maneuvers the pizza to ring the doorbell.

Finn is about to say something when he freezes when Rachel opens the door, he hadn’t really spent any time around her. He’s not surprised when Rachel shoots him an annoyed look. “Beer?” he offers lamely and Rachel turns to look at Charlie.

“What is he doing here?” Rachel demands.

“He was looking pathetic and lonely—”

“Hey!”

“And I felt sorry for him,” Charlie admits to Rachel ignoring Finn’s outrage. “He swears he’s over you and I don’t hate him nearly him as much as I used to. Probably because you and my sister aren’t talking about him like he’s the hottest guy at McKinley. He’s not.”

“Who’s at the door Jew babe,” Puck says because Rachel’s been gone a long time but he pauses when he sees Finn who gives him a smile. “What the hell are you doing here Finn? You weren’t —”

“I invited him.” Charlie said speaking up and Puck turns to look at her.

“Yes Charlie invited him.” Rachel says not knowing quite what to do. Finn still gave her those yearning looks but he hadn’t serenaded her in glee. He wasn’t trying to break Quinn and her up. He certainly wasn’t making any comments about how she was his girlfriend anymore.

Puck turned to Charlie in shock and she shrugged at him. “Dude I don’t know what you have on Charlie—” Puck said crossing his arms.

“Like Finn’s smart enough to have anything on me,” Charlie interrupts but everyone ignores her and Puck continues as if she hadn’t even spoken.

“But it’s not cool to totally crash a party. It’s her welcome back party and—” He wasn’t welcome, it didn’t matter if Charlie invited him.

“I didn’t do anything. She came in wanting to get her oil changed, and she invited me out of the blue. We’ve reached a truce. Said I was Donkey Kong so she could keep calling me Sasquatch, and then she was gone.” Finn flushed this was a terrible idea and he knew where he wasn’t wanted it was probably yet another humiliating—trick from Charlie who looked unimpressed by the whole thing.
Rachel rolled her eyes, and studies Finn for a moment, “You aren’t going—to try and kiss me again?” she asks him and Finn shakes his head and Rachel looks at him again, she doubts that Quinn would be pleased that she was going to be hanging out with Finn but nothing is going to happen. “We’ve got a Super Smash Brother’s tournament running right now. Artie is kicking everyone’s butt.”

“It’s okay to say ass, he’s kicking ass,” Puck says reaching over to help Finn with the beer. He looks at his former best friend and shakes his head, “Welcome to the party.”

Rachel looks at Charlie who raises a brow, “Did you remember the vegan pizza?”

“Of course Rachel,” Charlie says with a sigh and Rachel takes a few of the pizzas from her. “You can enter, and we can discuss which song you are singing for the assembly.”

Charlie groans and Finn looks at her, “You’re doing the assembly song?” he asks.

“Yes Rachel’s found new and interesting ways to make me sorry for running away. I’ve tried everything to get out of it,” Charlie informs him as she follows Rachel.

“You promised you’d do anything remember, and I’m very disappointed in you. You’re hurting Santana’s feelings. I know we aren’t the best of friends but how do you think your actions are affecting her?”

Charlie blinks, “What actions?”

Puck comes back and holds his hand up high a grin on his face as she puts the pizza down on the coffee table. Charlie stares at the hand, and Puck rolls his eyes. “You can’t leave me hanging. Mack, Gabrielle Avery, a number of the Cheerios. It’s the hawk isn’t it? Girls totally dig it.”

Charlie looks at his outstretched hands and then back at him, and then turns to Rachel who is shaking her head annoyed at her. “What are you two talking about?”

“I know you don’t like to brag about it these types of things but it’s all over JBI’s blog that you’re the newest stud at McKinley,” Puck said. “Santana’s my friend Rachel but they aren’t dating she can do whatever she wants.”

“What the fuck are you on about,” Charlie demands, she hasn’t slept with anyone.

Rachel looks at Charlie curiously, “You don’t know? It’s all over JBI’s blog. That you’re sleeping with like nearly every girl in school. Or at least you’re starting to make your way through the school. There are pictures!”

“Of me having sex?” Charlie asks with a frown. Those were clearly photoshopped.

“No—but Mack had her hands all over you,” Rachel said with a frown. She hadn’t believed but the Mack had her hand on Charlie’s hips. Pictures didn’t lie.

“The Mack was patting me down for my fucking lunch money. She didn’t believe me when I said I forgot my wallet,” Charlie hisses at Rachel who flushes. “I’m not sleeping with her. She terrifies me Rachel, you know that. The Skanks terrify me, we’ve been over this. Why do you think I’d be sleeping with her?”

“Because she scared you?” Puck said with a shrug. “That’s how she got me,” he adds when everyone looks at him.
“But JBI said that sources confirmed it, three sources confirmed that they had seen you leaving the washroom looking—oh.”

“I don’t know how to get rid of her, and she’s been on my dick lately and I don’t know why. She shouldn’t even be, I’m still captain of the girls’ soccer team, Beiste wants me to be the kicker for the football team. I’m still popular, which means that she shouldn’t be hassling me but she has been. I’ve never pissed her off to my knowledge.”

“Well you should probably tell Santana that, she believes it to. That you’re looking for an easy lay,” Rachel says softly touching Charlie’s arm. The pictures had looked convincing though now that she thought about it Charlie hadn’t looked particularly interested in dealing with Mack.

“Charlie you need to talk to Santana.”

“No I don’t I can avoid her for the rest of my life,” Charlie mutters mostly to herself. It’s really easy to. She just see’s Santana coming towards her and she runs the other way. She has longer legs, she wins that race every single time. It’s not like Santana gives chase. Rachel turns to glare at her and Charlie smiles. “So Artie’s kicking everyone’s ass is he?”

“Charlie—” Rachel begins but Charlie’s parked herself in between Sam and Mike and she groans.

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