The Offer

Chapter 4

Alan's phone buzzed again on the dashboard, cutting through the steady hum of the road as they headed back toward campus. He slid a groggy glance at the screen—his eyelids still heavy after the weekend at their parents' place—then read aloud, his voice neutral but edged with hesitation:



"She wants us to meet her at this address. I checked—looks like some kind of upscale bar off campus."

Madison kept both hands tight on the wheel, knuckles pale, her eyes fixed on the dark road ahead. The old Ford rattled over the uneven asphalt, its headlights sweeping over the thick hedges lining the highway.

"Okay… I really don't like the sound of this."

Alan shrugged and slipped the phone back into his pocket with a forced smile. "Relax. We grab a quick drink, say our goodbyes, and that's it. Just closing the chapter."

They drove another twenty minutes in silence while the radio coughed up local ads for mechanic shops and small-town pubs. Finally, Madison took the exit

indicated on the map. The bar sat tucked inside a quiet, upscale residential district at the edge of the college town, where old Victorian houses gave way to sleek modern homes with stone driveways and perfectly manicured lawns. She pulled into a side parking lot, their dented Ford squeezed between a polished Mercedes and a tinted Porsche. Alan noted the absurd contrast without commenting, hopping out to stretch his stiff legs.

Madison locked the car with a sharp beep, her eyes drifting warily over the lineup of luxury vehicles—silent guardians under the soft glow of streetlamps—and then toward the discreet sign of the bar shimmering beneath a warm, muted light.

They approached the entrance, pushing open a heavy varnished wooden door that opened into a dim, velvety interior: deep-colored velvet walls, soft golden lighting cast by wall sconces, and a polished marble counter lined with bottles bearing foreign labels. The air carried a subtle mix of new leather and aged whiskey, a world far removed from the noisy student pubs they usually hung out in. Before they could say a word or even explain why they were here, an employee in a crisp white shirt stepped forward with a perfectly rehearsed smile.

“Good evening. Please follow me. Your friend is waiting for you.”



Alan and Madison exchanged a quick, uneasy look, but fell into step behind him without questioning it. As they crossed the main room—where well-dressed clients murmured quietly around low tables, drinks glittering in their hands—Madison leaned toward her brother and whispered:

“I really don’t like this. What the hell is going on?”

Alan let out a low, nervous chuckle. “It’s fine, Madi…”

The server led them to the back of the bar, toward a nearly private corner split off by a carved wooden screen that softened the distant chatter. The space was intimate, quiet, with a round table surrounded by soft leather benches and a small lamp casting warm light over the empty glasses. Rebecah was already there, sitting with relaxed posture, phone in hand. The moment she saw them, she sprang up with a bright, almost glowing smile.



“Hey! Hi! You guys found the place okay? Come on, sit!”

They moved closer—stiff, uncertain—and slid into the bench across from her. The server waited politely at their side. Alan spoke first:

“Two beers, please.”

Rebecah nodded. “Same for me.”

The moment the waiter walked away, Rebecah launched into a rapid stream of words, her hands animated as if she needed to fill every possible silence.

“Listen, I really wanted to apologize for the other night. I was *way* too drunk, it was stupid. I woke up with a killer migraine and absolutely mortified. You must think I’m insane.”

Alan relaxed a little, offering a small smile. “Don’t worry. We all kind of spiraled that night. It’s forgotten.”

Madison, though, stayed guarded—arms crossed, eyes steady on Rebecah, saying nothing. But the conversation slowly picked up again, drifting onto safer ground: the traffic on the highway, the heavy autumn weather settling in. Rebecah talked fast, throwing short

questions at them that forced them to answer, never letting silence stretch long enough to turn awkward.

The beers arrived—cold, fresh, topped with a thin foam—set down on leather-embossed coasters. Rebecah raised hers in a small, almost conspiratorial toast.

“To a drama-free night this time.”

They clinked glasses, and the atmosphere loosened.

“So, how was your weekend?” Rebecah asked, taking a sip, her eyes bright with genuine curiosity.

Alan spoke first, recounting the meals, their dad’s obsessive gardening projects, and the misty coastal walk. “It was nice, actually. Peaceful. No drama, just family.”

Madison followed, short and to the point. “Yeah. Same. We recharged a bit before classes start again. What about you?”



Rebecah shrugged, casual but dropping little clues without realizing it. “Nothing crazy. Hung around town, saw some friends. My driver dropped me off for brunch Saturday, then I spent the afternoon wandering around downtown shops. Sunday was spa day—just relaxing after the party.”

Madison caught the words—*driver*, *spa*—each one hinting at a life way above theirs, but she didn’t push.

Still, the question gnawed at her:

What exactly are we doing here?

Rebecah was bubbly, magnetic, almost radiant, her politeness wrapping everything in a warm, inviting tone. She bounced off every anecdote, asked precise questions that made them talk without thinking, steering the flow like an invisible choreographer. Cool, charming—almost *too* charming—leaving barely any room to stop and think.

Time slipped by in that velvet-wrapped cocoon, their beers emptying at the pace of Rebecah’s breezy anecdotes. She drifted into a story about a last-minute trip to Paris the month before, casually mentioning how she’d “rented a suite overlooking the Seine just for the hell of it,” dropping those details like shiny beads meant to remind them how far her world sat from theirs. Alan laughed out loud; Madison nodded with a polite but stiff smile, her mind already drifting back to the pile of notes waiting for her at home.

Soon enough, the glasses were empty. Rebecah set hers down with a soft clink and tilted her head.

“So… another round? Same thing, or should we go stronger?”

Madison opened her mouth—*finally* ready to say “Actually, we should get going”—the words already formed on her lips, when Alan cut her off with a way-too-eager:

“Another beer for me, please.”

He waved at a passing waiter, completely ignoring the murderous look Madison shot him.



Under the table, Madison kicked him in the ankle—clean, sharp, and absolutely clear in its message: *What the hell are you doing?*

Alan barely flinched, so she forced a tight smile and added through clenched teeth:

"I'll have a Coke, thanks."

The waiter nodded and disappeared, leaving behind a brief silence Rebecah filled with a soft, stifled laugh. She'd caught their little exchange and her eyes gleamed with a flicker of amusement—there was something mischievous in the way she watched them, as if the dynamic between the siblings entertained her.

The drinks arrived quickly: a fresh beer for Alan, a fizzy Coke for Madison, and an elegant cocktail for Rebecah with a thin slice of lime drifting at the surface. They raised their glasses halfheartedly, and barely after the first sip, Rebecah fixed them with a new look—direct, focused, like she was dropping a mask she'd been holding up all night.

The atmosphere snapped.

The air thickened, charged, the background murmur of the bar fading to a distant hum.

She cleared her throat and set her glass down with careful precision.

"Alright, I'm gonna be blunt. I lied earlier. At the party, I wasn't drunk. I actually wanted to sleep with you. Both of you. And I still do."

The words slammed into the table.



A silence dropped on the group—heavy, suffocating.

Madison felt her stomach twist and exploded first, her voice rising, eyes stabbing her brother:

“See? I fucking told you! Alan, I *felt* this coming!”

Alan froze, his glass suspended mid-air. Shocked, disappointed, blindsided—he blinked like someone had just slapped him.

“Wait—what? Seriously, Rebecah? That wasn’t just some drunk joke?”

Rebecah lifted both hands in a soothing gesture, wearing a calm, almost gentle smile.

“Hey, relax. I know you’re not into it, okay? I’m not forcing anyone.”

That caught their attention—the shock cracked just enough for a thin thread of curiosity to slip through.

She continued without hesitation, her tone soft but firm, almost rehearsed.

“But I’ll be honest: I think you’re both gorgeous. Really. And… yeah, the fact that you’re brother and sister? That’s hot to me. It’s that forbidden thing, you know? Makes everything more intense.”



The words hit like a punch.

Alan let out a stunned, “Holy shit, you’re serious?”

Madison snapped, “That’s disgusting! What the hell is wrong with you?”—her cheeks burning with anger and disgust.

But Rebecah didn’t waver. She brushed aside their outrage with a simple flick of her hand, like it was background noise.

“Look, everything in life can be bought. Everything. And what I want right now is simple: I want to see you two kiss. Just that.”

Madison almost shot out of the booth, struck to the core by how filthy that sounded.

“Absolutely not! That’s insane! We’re not fucking objects!”

Rebecah didn’t blink, her stare steady.

“Two thousand dollars. Just for a kiss. Each.”

It rattled them.

Silence seeped back in—slow, poisonous.

Alan didn’t say a word. He just stared at his beer, his mind spinning around the number—two thousand, for a kiss?—but his lips stayed sealed, his face tight with embarrassment.

Madison shook her head, even harsher this time.

“You’re nuts. Completely nuts. Alan, we’re leaving.”

But Rebecah didn’t budge. Her voice dropped lower, heavier, calculated.

“I’ll give you the two thousand right now. As proof I’m serious. And I’ll give you three thousand more each after the kiss.”

Madison didn’t even think.

“No. Absolutely not. We're done. We’re leaving.”

She was already half-standing when Alan spoke—soft, hesitant:

“Madi…”

A pause. Thick. Loaded.

Then, barely above a whisper:



“It’s… five thousand dollars.”

He looked away immediately, cheeks flushing red, eyes dropping to the table as if it could swallow him whole.

Madison froze.

For the first time, she actually *considered* it.

Just for a heartbeat—where the numbers flickered in her mind: five thousand could cover months of rent, wipe out debts, change a lot of things.

She looked at Alan, opened her mouth to snap back—but nothing came out. Only a breath, thin and stuck halfway.

Finally, she muttered, weaker now:

“You’re insane…”

Rebecah tilted her head, a crooked smile curling at her lips, though it didn’t dull the sharp determination in her eyes.

“Maybe I’m crazy. I don’t care. But what’s even crazier is turning down that kind of money… for a single kiss.”

Madison fell silent instantly, the words stuck in her throat like something bitter she couldn’t swallow. She slowly turned toward Alan. Their eyes met—an unspoken clash of emotions: Alan’s worried frown, Madison’s widened shock, the disgust twisting both their stomachs… and that faint, poisonous spark of greed flickering behind it all. What five thousand dollars could change in their tight-budget lives hovered between them like a whisper.



Without another word, Rebecah tapped quickly on her phone, her manicured nails clicking against the screen with cold efficiency. A second later, Alan’s phone buzzed on the table, breaking the silence with a discreet chime. He grabbed it automatically, eyebrows knitting at the notification:

PayPal – +$2000

He lifted his head, stunned, his heartbeat thudding harder.

“There. For you,” Rebecah said flatly, as if she’d just paid for a coffee. “I don’t have Madison’s number, though. Can you give it to me? So I can send her the same—gotta keep things fair.”

Madison hesitated, her mind racing—

Just the two thousand, she told herself. *Only that. It covers the late rent, this month’s rent too. No strings. That’s free money. That’s harmless.*

Trying to convince herself it meant nothing, she recited her number in a dull, robotic tone, refusing to look at Alan. Rebecah typed it in with an approving nod, and moments later, Madison’s phone buzzed too:

PayPal – +$2000



It was real.

She stared at the screen, the number burning into her brain like a physical weight. A rush of relief hit her—two thousand dollars right now, wiping out the nights she'd spent panicking over unpaid bills. She sank back into the booth with a long exhale, shoulders slumping, as if gravity suddenly doubled.

Rebecah sensed the shift—she knew she'd won. A shiver of excitement pulsed through her, a private thrill she didn't bother hiding. She stayed quiet, though, watching them like a cat watching prey inch closer on its own.

Alan finally broke the silence, his voice low, gentle, cautious—like he was dipping a toe into dangerous water.



"You wanna do it?"

Madison shrugged, embarrassed, her cheeks flushing under her brother's gaze. She avoided looking at Rebecah altogether, shifting in place, her Coke sitting forgotten on the table.

Rebecah leaned in slightly, her tone soft but unmistakably insistent.

"Remember—there's three thousand more each. On top of the two you already have. You kiss in front of me. Not just a peck, either. I want something… real."

Madison cut her off, irritated but resigned.

“Yeah, yeah, we got it.”

They looked at each other again, holding the stare this time. The whole bar—its chic décor, its distant murmurs—faded into nothing. There was only the two of them, suspended in a moment too absurd to fully believe.

Then Madison breathed out, barely louder than a whisper:

“Oh, fuck it…”

She turned toward Alan, searching his eyes for one last confirmation.

“You okay with it?”

He nodded silently, tiny and tense, his throat tight with shame and adrenaline.

Madison inched closer on the booth, her pulse racing. She slipped a hesitant hand behind his neck, her fingertips brushing his skin, hesitant but committed now. And then, slowly—almost mechanically—she pressed her lips to his.

