

Chapter Four

Abbi Investigates

Adrienne and Lexi came to my immediately after school the next day. I had pretended nothing was on my mind, even though all I could do was think about the case. Even Mr. Weller said nothing as neither me nor Lexi said anything to disrupt the class. As soon as we got to my house Adrienne broke the silence by stating what Lexi and I were dying to hear.

“And guess what I heard today,” Adrienne began.

“What?” I asked.

“The administration and the police think the perpetrator is someone at the school,”

Adrienne replied.

“¿A quién sospechan?” Lexi asked.

“Their primary suspect is a man named George Mills,” Adrienne said.

“Mr. Mills, why do they suspect him?” I asked.

“Rumors have it that Mr. Mills is having marital problems and that unless he comes up with a ton of money they will foreclose his home,” Adrienne said.

“¿Anular una hipoteca?” Lexi asked.

“It means Lexi, Mr. Mills will lose his home to his creditor,” I replied.

“And most likely sell it an auction,” Adrienne added.

“So, you think that they are thinking that Mr. Mills’ hardships would give him a reason to go rob 125 dollars from the school cafeteria. Seems hardly worth it to me,” I replied.

“Desperate times calls for desperate measures,” Adrienne said.

“Maybe. But something tells me that is not likely to be the case. I mean if I was Mr. Mills, and I was needing a ton of money I would be more inclined to rob a bank or even a

supermarket store where I know more money would be at. Schools don't usually have that type of money," I said.

"Convenido," Lexi added.

"Point well taken Abby. So what do you want to do," Adrienne asked.

"Investigate," I replied.

"Us investigate. I think we should leave this to the school people and police," Adrienne said.

"Why not? We all have talked about making a difference and being the Three Musketeers as Mr. Weller called us. Why not show them that we can work as a team and accomplish this task," I said.

"I get it Abby. You want to be a detective. I am just not so sure we should get involved. What if the person involved is a really dangerous criminal?" Adrienne asked.

"Sí," Lexi added.

"Then that is one major creep off the streets," I said. "Helping solve this case is in fact helping people which if you remember Adrienne is part of our creed. Helping those in need."

"Yeah, but I am not sure," Adrienne again replied.

"Come on Adrienne. Where is your sense of adventure? I mean it will be fun and besides do you want someone to get away with stealing from our school," I said.

"True. Alright," Adrienne said after a moment to think. "Let's try to keep it on the low. We do not need anyone suspicious of what we are doing."

"Especially Mr. Weller," I began.

"O señor Macy," Lexi added.

"Oh yeah him too," I said.

“Alright my friends. We know what we’re going to do. Now, let’s get it done,” Adrienne said as we nodded in agreement.

I was excited. Adrienne, Lexi and I were going to help investigate the theft at the school. So far, we knew when the theft occurred-at night when people were away from school, we knew how-he disabled the cameras and security system and used a tool to break in-I found this out from my dad who told me not to tell anyone which I had not yet, and we knew what he ultimately did-steal one hundred twenty five dollars from the school cafeteria. Questions of who and why still needed to be answered and once we answered them we had our mystery and case solved.

Given that Adrienne had a slightly different schedule than we did for this year-no thanks in part to Mr. Weller who wanted to separate us-she had more opportunity to quietly ask questions among the staff who might know what happened. Of the ‘Three Musketeers’ Adrienne was the one we knew would draw the least suspicion. She was reasonably popular among the staff and most would not mind answering any questions she had. At least we continued to hope that was the case as the day went on.

My day for the most part went as it typically did. Long and boring except for the short time at lunch when I sat down beside some boys who were chattering about the case. I, as I usually did, said nothing but listened as they talked.

“Geeze Buzz, did you hear about who the school and police suspects committed the theft,” one boy asked.

“No George. Who did they think,” the second boy replied.

“They think it is old man Mills,” the first boy said.

“The computer geek,” the second boy said.

“Yeah,” the first boy replied. “They said Old man Mills is having trouble at home. Said his wife is wanting to get a divorce. Heck, I even heard he may lose his home.”

“But how can they be sure that he is the one who stole the money?” the second boy asked.

“Because the devices used to commit the robbery could only be used by someone technologically sound,” the first boy said.

“But that could be any of the tech people George,” the second boy said. “How do they know it is Old man Mills? I mean the man is so nice. I like him. He is always so quiet and cheerful. I personally have a hard time seeing him doing it.”

“Suit yourself Buzz. That is just the latest update we have,” the first boy said.

“Pardon me,” I finally said after I mustered enough courage to speak.

“Ah, look Buzz. It is Abby. The girl who rarely speaks. What do you want,” the first boy began to taunt. “Freak.”

“George, that is enough,” I said sternly. George was a little bit taller than I was but was just as slender. He had dark red hair and dark brown eyes with a freckly face. Me and him rarely talked in part because of his part taunts and making fun of me and my friends Lexi and Adrienne. “I just want to ask a question or two.”

“You hear that Buzz. She wants to ask me a question,” George said.

“Well, hear her out then,” Buzz said. Buzz was a short heavysset boy who had short dark brown hair and equally dark brown eyes. He appeared to be lighter in skin tone than George who if you were to look at him you could have sworn was at the beach constantly.

“Thank you,” I said as Buzz nodded in acknowledgment.

“Well then what is your question?” George asked.

“What was the type of devices that the crook was supposed to used?” I asked.

“What are you supposed to be now? A detective,” George roared with laughter.

“I asked you a question bonehead,” I replied.

With this George’s façade of trying to pretend nice fell apart. George was one of those kids that people would call bullies and I was not the type to put up with their behavior either. I called him for what he was acting like at the moment a bonehead.

“You dare to-,” George began.

“I did mister,” I sternly replied. “Now what do you know?”

George again looked at me for another moment. I one look at my frown told him that I was in no mood to play.

“He used a camera jammer and some kind of device to fool the security system,” George replied.

“Do you know where he might have gotten such devices?” I asked.

“I thought you said one question,” George said.

“Or two,” I replied.

“How should I know? All I know is what I heard from Detective Wilson and Sergeant Marley,” George said.

“Thank you for your time,” I said as the began ringing. “Ah, look time to go back to class. Have a nice day.”

George’s face was boiling red. I had never seen him as angry as he was at the moment but I did not care. I got what I needed and plus I finally stood up to him which I had never done

before. In the past he had always bullied and intimidated me but not any more. Now, he and others like him would now know I would no longer be a pushover. I felt good. Part of being a detective meant commanding respect from others even if they did not like you. This, I said quietly was a start in that direction. I just had hoped that Lexi and Adrienne had good luck as I did. Soon, I thought to myself, I would find out and hopefully begin piecing this jigsaw puzzle together.