

Chapter Fourteen

A Bully Reforms

I expected trouble. George even since we were in kindergarten had always acted like he was the most superior person in the class. Whoever he considered inferior was pretty treated horribly by him and his gangs. All of the teachers knew about it and though some tried to stop it and correct it nothing work. Some of the teachers said nothing too which made his behavior over the years even worse. I had always been one of those girls who George and his gang bullied often, along with Lexi and Adrienne. We were not in his own words part of the cool kids group and thus were subjected to his bullying-which only got worse as the years went on.

I slowly approached him. Seeing his friends hang around him like they usually did only made me more anxious as I got closer to him.

“George,” I said.

“For a moment I thought you were going to forget Abby,” George said.

“Of course not,” I replied. “You do what you say you are going to do.”

“Indeed,” George replied. “I have been reminded it is one of my few good traits.”

“I did not know you had any,” I replied. Adrienne and Lexi stood close but said nothing. Neither did his two friends who just stood there listening to us talk.

“I did not know you were such a jokester,” George replied. “Everybody Abby has good and bad points. Sometimes we have to be reminded of what our good points are.”

“Something is telling me this is not one of your bullying moments,” I said.

“Bullying,” George said. “Why yes? I have done quite a bit of that too. I know I have been a jerk to many people. Both to you Abby, your friends and to many others.”

I was stunned. So were Adrienne and Lexi. I did not know what to think. George, the school bully, now having humility to realize he had been wrong. Despite his boorish behavior, George was a handsome fellow I said to myself. I blushed somewhat as these thoughts raced through my mind though I did my best to keep a serious demeanor while he continued to talk.

“And for that I apologize,” George said.

“You,” Adrienne began but I signaled her to not say anything at the moment.

“Yes, I was wrong. Buzz reminded me of how I used to be and what made me popular as we entered school. We used to have fun. Once I got to be one of the ‘big boys’ as we used to say I began to get a big head and people who I saw as threats to me I began to bully,” George said.

“You saw us as threats. You must be joking,” I said. “Look at me I am just a toothpick.”

“Not physically. I knew you were no match for me physically,” George said. “But emotionally and intellectually.”

“Oh, you were threatened by us because you thought we were smarter than you are,” I replied.

“Yes,” George said. The other boys continued to say nothing. Adrienne and Lexi watched them as George and I continued.

“I am not smarter than anyone else George. I don’t know why you saw that as a threat,” I began.

“Because you had the best grades. You had the easiest time picking up math, science, history and all that gibberish,” George said. “And I could not understand any of it. Even in kindergarten, and first grade I struggled.”

“What do you want?” I asked suspiciously still.

“To apologize and to be friends,” George said.

“Friends,” I said, as doubt entered my voice. I was afraid, but I remembered the words that my dad once told me. The best people, the most successful ones, are the people who take the chances. Chances that most would not take. That is what separates ordinary people from extraordinary people. These words continued to go through my mind and I knew that if I wanted to prove all my detractors wrong I would have to be willing to take chances even in cases where most would not otherwise take.

“Abbi,” Lexi said.

Adrienne said something too but I could not hear what she said as thoughts continued to race through my mind. For a moment I was not sure what to do but I decided what to do after hearing my dad’s kind words again in my mind.

“Friends,” I said as George and I shook hands. Both his friends and my friends, Adrienne and Lexi, were stunned. They let out a sigh of relief as they knew like I did there would be no trouble. Rather this was an unexpected but welcome change one that I would hope would keep blossoming for the better. I had always been sort of attracted to George, he was a handsome boy, but I had been repulsed by his bad behavior.

“Abby, I do have something to tell you,” George began.

“What is it?” I asked.

“I don’t know if it will help you help Mr. Mills,” George said.

“Please tell me. It might be of help,” I said, with excitement in my voice.

“Mr. Mills, did not embezzle from the school and nor was he was responsible for the burglary,” George said.

“I sort of knew for sure he did not embezzle from the school and while I believed he was innocent of the burglary case too proving it was proving to be more difficult,” I said.

“How would you know? Weren’t you one of the kids who were spreading rumors about Mr. Mills personal life?” Adrienne asked.

“I was Adrienne. It was wrong of me to do so,” George replied.

“Entonces, ¿por qué hacerlo?” Lexi asked.

“What did she say?” George asked.

“Why do it?” Adrienne replied.

“Because I was told to,” George said.

“Told, by whom?” I asked.

“By Mr. Mock and Mr. Macy,” George said.

Adrienne, Lexi and I looked at each other for a moment. We had no doubt, as Mr. Mills had told us, that the three men had not liked each other but there was no way yet to prove any of them had acted on their mutual dislike until now. George was now saying that Mr. Mock and Mr. Macy both encouraged him to spread rumors about Mr. Mills which brought up another question. Why did they want to get rid of Mr. Mills? Surely it was not because of their mutual dislike although I could not rule that out completely too but maybe because of something he knew that he did not tell us.

“And you did it,” Adrienne said. I had no doubt she was in a less forgiving mood than I was. I did not care where it came from, I wanted nothing more than the truth. My dad even told me a few times that the truth sometimes come from unexpected sources, and coming from George this was quite unexpected, but that no matter where it came from good investigators allowed the truth to guide their decisions.

“Like the coward I was,” George said.

“Cool it Adrienne for right now,” I said as I continued to gather my thoughts. I stood there not saying a word for a few minutes before turning to George again. “George, did Mr. Mock or Mr. Macy tell you to do anything else?”

“Yeah, Mr. Mock told me to do what I could to stop you and to interfere with you and your friends,” George said.

“When did he say this?” I asked. I was intrigued.

“He told me this once the investigation had begun and once he and Mr. Macy realized you were trying to investigate the crime. For some odd reason they seem to be determined to make sure you don’t become a detective,” George said.

“They would not be the only ones,” I said.

“Does Mr. Weller have anything to do with this?” Adrienne asked.

“Not that I am aware of. I know he can be a mean old booger but he hates gossip. Quite frankly I never see him at any of the faculty meetings. Always prefers to stay alone,” George said.

“What that rules him out,” Adrienne.

“I wish I could be more help,” George said.

“¿Qué vamos a hacer? ¿No hemos encontrado nada que nos pueda ayudar?” Lexi asked.

“Oh yes we have Lexi. We have found plenty,” I said before turning back to George.

“And believe it or not you have been a tremendous help.”

“I have,” George, appearing as stunned as his friends were. Lexi and Adrienne were equally stunned by the revelation as they were.

“Yes,” I said, before giving him a slight kiss on the cheek. He blushed for a few moments. Adrienne and Lexi were just as blushing as he was as was his friends.

“How? How,” George stuttered.

“You have just given me a motive for Mr. Mills being framed,” I said.

“But until you can prove who was at school the night it was robbed all we have at best is a circumstantial case. It will help him concerning the embezzlement case but not the burglary case” Adrienne said.

“And since both were in the Navy as was Mr. Mills, that would be difficult to prove who it is,” I said.

“True, but what if you could prove the burglary was meant to cover up the embezzlement?” George asked.

“Good question and that certainly would get Mr. Mills off the hook completely,” I said.

“Abby, have you forgotten that the police already talked with him. We are not likely finding out anything what they did not know,” Adrienne said.

“Don’t doubt me Adrienne and I am not so sure the police checked up on it. My dad was surprised by some the things we were told after we talked to Mr. Mills. And initially Mr. Mills was not even a suspect but that changed during the time we were suspended,” I said.

“Just within those three days,” Adrienne asked.

“Yeah,” I said.

“That is odd,” Adrienne said.

“Perhaps not,” George said. “During your suspension I got in trouble myself.”

“You did?” Adrienne asked.

“I know it is hard to believe but I did. Mr. Weller sent me to the office and while I was in the office, I overheard Mr. Mock making several calls some of which I knew was to the police department,” George said.

“He might have been the one to make the anonymous statement saying Mr. Mills was the guilty party,” Adrienne said.

“Maybe. But still circumstantial,” I said to myself.

“We still need to prove he has the gear and that he was the one at the school that night,” Adrienne said.

“I have an idea Abby. It may sound crazy,” George began.

“Anything is better than nothing at the moment,” Adrienne said.

“My friends and I can get in trouble and distract Mr. Mock and Mr. Macy long enough for you to check their offices,” George began.

“For evidence, often times the places we least expect it is where we will find it,” I said.

“Good idea but there are other people in the office besides those two,” Adrienne said.

“Leave that to me,” I said. “I have a feeling that the evidence we need to really secure this case is in their offices. George, you and your friends do your distraction. Adrienne and Lexi you just do what you normally do. I will go in and take care of this myself.”

“Are you sure?” Adrienne asked.

“I am sure. Everyone knows what to do. Now let’s begin Operation Mills Freedom,” I said. We shouted in agreement as we knew what we needed to do. Instead of being a group of three we were now a group of four and I smiled knowing that if we solved the case it was not because of me but because we worked together as a team. Having friends and people working with you makes all the difference especially in cases like this.