

Oakwood Academy: Blood in the hallways #1

from Cevil

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Introduction

Holly isn't used to the sound of the wind and the pattering of rain. She doesn't feel comfortable at her new boarding school. Especially when a teacher is found dead on the stairs.

Chapter 1

Holly followed the matron up the stairs. It was around midnight, and the academy was shrouded in shadows. The only light was a small oil lamp that the matron held tightly. Holly held her bag close to her chest as the stairs ended and a long hallway stretched out in front of them. She remembered this hallway from the tour a few weeks ago, it led to the dorms. The matron halted suddenly, and opened a door.

"This is your dorm." She said.

Holly nodded, and went inside. The room was lit by a window in one corner, which the light of the moon shone through. There was a bed in every corner of the room, along with a small bedside table, a chest of draws and a chair. In the centre there was a rug, although the colour was indistinguishable in the half light. The matron pointed with a bony finger to the bed in the far corner, tucked away in the shadows. Then, without another word, she turned and as she left the room, she flicked the door shut behind her. Holly gulped, then made her way across the room to her bed. She placed her bag on her chair, took off her shoes and socks and slid into bed. The mattress was hard and bumpy beneath her. Slowly, she slid into a restless sleep.

Sunlight shone through the window, revealing the colour of the rug to be dark green with silver patterns. Holly sat up. A girl with blonde hair sat on the bed nearest to Holly's, she was staring down at a book while running her fingers through her hair. On the other two beds sat another two girls; one with brown hair and another with black hair. The door opened suddenly and the matron bustled in, staring at everyone in turn, then smiling.

"Come down for breakfast." She said, before turning and shoving her way out the door. Holly scrambled out of bed and realised, in horror, that she would have to undress in front of the other girls. Taking a breath, she pulled off her shirt and quickly replaced it with a fresh one. Five minutes later she had dressed and brushed her hair into a plait, and was following the other girls into the corridor. A few others were ahead of them, and a short girl waddled behind them.

"I'm ginger." The girl with blonde hair informed me.

"No, you're blonde!" Laughed the girl with black hair.

"Shut up, Melody." Ginger pulled a strand of hair away from her face.

"Yeah, shut up, Melody." The brunette snorted.

"And, you know who Melody is." Ginger smiled, "That's Isabelle."

The girl with hair the colour of chocolate waved.

"I'm Holly." Holly smiled. "Pleasure to meet you."

"Fancy Pants!" Melody giggled.

Chapter 2

Melody was definitely the most popular girl in the group. As they walked into the dining room, almost everyone turned to look at her.

“Wow, Melody sure is popular!” Holly whispered to Ginger.

“Yup.” Ginger nodded, her ponytail swinging. “Hey, Mel!”

Melody lifted her head and smiled, “What?”

“You’re popular, right?” Ginger asked casually.

Melody didn’t reply, but instead she got up and glided over to another table. She murmured something to the girls sitting there before walking back over to the table. The girls she had spoken to were whispering and gaping in awe.

“Popularity is my thing.” Melody adjusted the sleeve of her blouse.

“What’s your thing?” Holly turned her head and looked at Isabelle.

Isabelle smiled, somewhat sadly, “I’m injury girl.”

“You are so much more than that!” Ginger put in, “You’re the friend! You only get hurt because you’re stupidly selfless!”

Isabelle didn’t say anything else.

“And you, What’s your thing?” Holly questioned Ginger, trying to change the subject.

“I don’t really have a thing,” she held up her hand as Melody tried to interrupt, “I don’t want a thing?. I’m equally good at everything.”

“And you seem to be an optimist.” Holly took a bite of toast.

“How can you tell?” Ginger reached over and stole some of Melody’s bacon.

“You said “Equally Good at everything, rather than equally Bad at everything.”

“Wouldn’t most people say that? Good at everything, I mean?”

“Well, most people are optimistic rather than pessimistic, so yeah. Most people would.”

“I can already tell what your thing is.” Isabelle spoke up.

“You can?” Holly sipped some orange juice.

“You’re going to be the smart girl.”

Chapter 3

~ Six weeks later ~

Holly copied down the sum on the maths board into her notebook.

'Who has an answer?' Miss Carson looked across the class. 'Jane, you can answer.'

A tall girl with blonde hair squinted through wide, circular glasses.

'Five-thousand, Six-hundred and Thirty.' She said confidently.

'Wrong.' Miss Carson scowled. 'Holly?'

'Five-thousand, four-hundred And twenty.' Holly didn't look up from where she was doodling on her paper.

'I was trying to get your attention, not make you give us the answer!' Miss Carson tutted.

'Sorry!' Holly lifted her head and self-consciously covered the doodles with her hand. 'Oh wait, it's Five-thousand, four-hundred and thirty.'

'Holly!' Barked Miss Carson. 'Please, this is the fourth time you've said the answer when it wasn't your turn!'

'Said the answer 'out of my turn', Miss Carson.' Holly realised her mistake as soon as the words escaped her lips.

'Out! Out of my Classroom! Go! Go to your dormitory now, young lady!' Miss Carson hissed, her voice lowering.

Holly scrambled up and gathered her things, horribly aware that the whole class was watching her. Embarrassment flooded through her as she left the room, it was a relief to shut the door and know that nobody was watching her. Holly noticed that nobody at all was watching her. The whole corridor was empty.

'Everyone's in lessons!' She muttered under her breath as she trudged down the hallway. Holly turned a corner and screamed, dropping all her things.

There, sprawled on the stairs, was Miss Carson.

Chapter 4

"But how?" Melody asked from her bed. "How could she have left the classroom and got to the stairs before you, and how did she die?"

"I told you, I don't know!" Holly scowled.

"Well, everyone thinks it was you, somehow." Ginger slid into the dorm, shutting the door behind her.

"What are they saying?"

"Holly is a murderer, Holly can't be trusted, and so on." Ginger sat down on her bed.

"I trust you, Holly." Isabelle said from where she was standing.

"At least you guys think I'm innocent, right?" Holly's voice shook.

They all nodded.

"We should go outside. Clear our heads." Melody changed the subject.

"Sure."

A cold wind wrapped around the foursome as they huddled against a wall. The great bulk of Oakwood Academy for Girls shielded them from the worst of the gale, but even the stone couldn't save them from the torrential rain.

"Why did we come out here, again?" Isabelle raised her voice against the howling wind. "This isn't clearing our heads!"

A door opened behind them, and the matron yanked them inside, before anyone could reply to Isabelle's question.

"What do you think you're doing? One of you is a murder suspect and the rest of you..." the scowl on the matron's face was deadly.

"We should go to our dorm!" Squealed Ginger.

"You girls are coming with me." Holly felt matron's hand on her back, and she scrambled forwards, rain dripping off her hair.

Chapter 5

They were bundled into a wash room, where maids scrubbed them and brushed them, until they felt like they couldn't get cleaner. Then their hair was slathered in soap then rinsed thoroughly.

'God, that was awful!' Melody complained from inside her cloak of towels.

'Don't use god to describe your anger!' Isabelle cried, a hand reaching up to her neck, where she was wearing a cross.

'Sorry, girl.' Melody blinked apologetically.

Holly wrapped the towel around her as tightly as she could. It was cold in the hall, a few windows letting in droplets of rain and chilly breezes.

'Get dressed!' A sharp voice said from the door. Four labelled packages were thrown into the room, before the door shut again.

Ginger handed them out, before taking her own and running into a shady corner. Melody and Isabelle took turns holding a towel up for each other, while Holly awkwardly changed under her own wet towel.

'Mr Saunders has been murdered.' Melody announced, sitting down in a chair.

'How?' Holly stabbed a potato with her fork.

'Same as Miss Carson, although I don't know how she was killed.' Ginger informed her, sipping on some water.

'At least nobody thinks it was me.' Holly sighed, then felt guilty about sighing over a death.

'Well, the headmistress is thinking of closing the school to stop the murders.' Isabelle glanced around, 'I think it's because she is the murderer.'

'If she was the killer, why would she want to close the school?' Melody rolled her eyes.

'I think Isabelle might be on to something. Acting all innocent and helpful, the perfect disguise for a murderer!' Holly felt excitement bubbling up inside of her.

'We can't say anything, though.' Ginger, who had been quiet for a while, said.

'Of course not!' Isabelle and Melody said in unison, before giggling at the amusing event.