



Fate AND Faith

DELIGHT ADISA

Fate AND Faith

Delight Adisa

Copyright © 2020 by Delight Adisa

Printed in Nigeria by

+234 903 517 1408

email:buksmiinchrist@gmail.com

ISBN Number (Print)

ISBN Number (Ebook) 978-978-991-629-0

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system in any form or by any means electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without prior permission of the copyright owner.

Acknowledgment

I want to express my deepest gratitude to God for the idea that he deposited in me to write my first book. It has been a beautiful and smooth journey with the Holy Spirit throughout the making of this book.

My special appreciation goes to my parents and family for their love, contribution and support. They have been my number one fan and a great encouragement. Special thanks also to my one and only brother who has always had my back from day one. I love you all dearly.

This will not be complete without expressing my sincere gratitude to my dear man of God, Rev. Dr. Chris Oyakhilome, D.Sc, D.D, for his investment in my personality through the word of God.

Special appreciation also to all my amazing friends who have in one way or the other, helped and supported me in making this book a huge success. God bless you all.

TABLE OF CONTENT

CHAPTER ONE – ‘ The New Girl ’-----	1
CHAPTER TWO – ‘ Dodge Ball ’-----	12
CHAPTER THREE – ‘ Shocking News ’-----	24
CHAPTER FOUR – ‘ Food Fight ’-----	38
CHAPTER FIVE – ‘ Breakdown ’-----	53
CHAPTER SIX – ‘ Calm before the storm ’-----	66
CHAPTER SEVEN – ‘ Troubles ’-----	79
CHAPTER EIGHT – ‘ Best Friends ’-----	95
CHAPTER NINE – ‘ Faith Prevails ’-----	106
EPILOGUE - -----	119

Chapter One

Chapter One

THE NEW GIRL

It was a mundane Saturday morning in Los Angeles, the largest city in California. The sun was shining, birds were chirping and the city was busy with people roaming and vehicles hooting. It was a weekend, a day to laze around.

It was 9am in the morning but Justin was still in bed, snoring and oblivious to the world around him. He was in what you would call 'La La Land.' Meanwhile, his brother, Jordan was wide awake and plotting how to wake his twin brother. They were identical twins so it was not a surprise when some of their teachers could not distinguish one twin from the other and this was an advantage to them when they decided to play pranks.

Justin was a deep sleeper so he was unaware at the time Jordan came into his room with a bowl of water filled with ice blocks. Splash! Justin jumped up immediately the freezing water touched him. He spluttered, looking around to find the culprit. Alas! He saw it was his twin brother, who was laughing his butt off. Justin glared at him but got a smirk in return.

"Why did you do that?" Justin growled.

"You were not planning on getting up anytime soon so as the good brother that I am, I offered to help", Jordan replied snickering.

"Seriously, you call that helping! You know I am not letting this go, so watch your back!" Justin exclaimed.

"You've got my back bro, I don't need to watch it", Jordan replied with a smug smile.

"Get out of my room" Justin deadpanned. However, Jordan jumped on his bed and got comfortable.

Justin sighed, walking into the bathroom. Immediately, an idea came

to him. Grinning, he fetched a bucket of cold water while Jordan thought he was using the bathroom. Ignorant of Justin's plan, he turned his back to him and was busying himself with a book lying on the floor. Concentrating on the book, Jordan did not know when his twin brother got out of the bathroom with the bucket of water. Justin dumped its content all on him and Jordan's expression made Justin burst into fits of laughter right on the floor.

"I've always got your back bro but between you and me, you've got to watch out for yourself". He said running downstairs, before it could turn into an all-out water prank war.

"Morning Mum, morning Dad." Justin greeted with a kiss on their cheeks.

"Finally, you are up. Did you sleep well"?

"Yeah mum I did, well, until your other son decided it would be a good idea to almost drown me in water but I got him back" he ended with a smile.

"Oh please, stop exaggerating little brother; it was just a little cold water. Yours was a large bucket of freezing water." his twin, who came out right behind him, retorted.

"You are only two minutes older, Dan", his smile still on his face.
 "Exactly why I said little brother"
 Jordan said with a smug smile.
 The twins' parents, Mrs. Mia Anderson and Mr. Zach Anderson were renowned business people who were the owners of Diva Company. They owned lands, estates and fleet of cars; they dealt in manufacturing cars, gadgets, food items and

...*They were one of the wealthiest people in the state but unlike most rich people, they were not snobs...*

clothing. They were one of the wealthiest people in the state but unlike most rich people, they were not snobs and they did not train their children that way either.

"What are your plans for the weekend?" their Dad asked.

"We are just going to hang out with our friends", the twins chorused.

"Alright, we would not be home till evening because your mum and I have some things to sort out at the company." their Dad said. The twins nodded in unison.

"When I get back, we'll sort out your clothes for school." Mrs. Anderson added.

"Thanks Mum" they chorused again.

Mia Anderson was also a renowned fashion designer and she took charge of the twins' clothing. They never had to go to malls to shop for their clothes and shoes, because they had their personal designer already.

"Will you guys be going out now?" Mr. Anderson asked.

"No Dad, we will invite them over and have a sleepover." Jordan answered.

"Please do not turn the house upside down; I purposely did not employ any help so that you guys would learn how to do things for yourselves. You would clean the house if you mess it up."

"Yes Dad", said Justin.

"Ok Dad" replied Jordan.

"Alright, we would be off now. Take care of yourselves." their Mum said.

"Bye, see you later" said the twins.

Few minutes after their parents left, the twins called their friends

over.

They were a group of six- Jordan, Justin, Josh, Steve, Sophia and Madison. The twins were best friends with Josh, Sophia and Madison since childhood while they became friends with Steve in sophomore year.

They were very close friends who had each other's back but were not Christians, although they had heard about God before. Their friends arrived in their sleek cars and with smug looks and smiles on their faces when they saw the twins. The guys did their bro hugs while the girls hugged.

"I still can't get over your house bro, it's a freaking mansion", Steve said in wonder.

"I know right, mine is not as big as this but it is close", added Sophia.

"Alright let's go already, the weather is warm and I want to go swimming." Josh hurried them inside. Few minutes later, they were all in the pool laughing and splashing.

Hours later after the sun had gone down and the moon had replaced it, the twins parents came back.

"Hi, Mr. and Mrs. Anderson", they chorused.

"I told you guys to call us by our names" their Mum reprimanded them.

"Sorry", they smiled sheepishly, "Hi Mia, hi Zach"

"I'm surprised to see that the house is still standing in one piece" Zach smiled at his sons.

"Dad" the twins groaned "We are not children, we are 18."

"Really" Zach sounded surprised.

"Stop teasing the kids" Mia smacked her husband's arm lightly.

"We are not kids mum, we are adults", they grunted.

"Oh I'm sorry, since you guys are adults; you are in charge of dinner tonight."

With that, they went upstairs to change and freshen up while Jordan and Justin went to the kitchen, accompanied by their friends to start dinner. One hour later, food was ready to be served.

"Hmm, this is really delicious", their Dad commented.

"You see, we can take care of ourselves." Jordan said with a huge smug smile.

"I never said you couldn't but tell me the truth, who helped you with this?" Mia asked.

His friends snickered beside him.

Justin gasped, "Mum, don't you trust us?"

"Just tell me", their mum insisted.

Sophia pointed to herself, Madison and Josh. "We did it Mia; they had no idea what to put in the pot first."

Their parents laughed.

"I know my sons, they can't cook to save their lives." their Dad said with a smile.

Justin and Jordan huffed. "Traitors", they said glaring at Madison.

"Your twin telepathy never ceases to amaze me" said Steve.

"I haven't gotten used to it and I've known them since diapers" Josh laughed.

The twins cleared the plates and put it in the dishwasher after everyone had finished eating. Their friend helped them in drying it and putting it in the racks, then they spent the rest of the evening watching movies and playing video games.

As they went to bed that night, little did they know what was coming their way in the long run.

The weekend passed by in a blur and soon, it was Monday; time for school. Citadel High School was one of the best private schools in the state. It was where the children of the elites went and the only children who were not of the high class that attended this school, were those given scholarships as no average person could afford the fees.

Like most high schools, there was a hierarchy and unsurprisingly, the twins and their friends were on top of it. They had the latest cars and were regarded as the most attractive guys and girls in school.

The twins both had hazel eyes and dark brown hair but Justin had highlights in his hair. Josh and Steve were however, blondes; Josh had blue eyes while Steve had deep brownish eyes. On the other hand, Sophia was a brunette with long curly hair and light blue eyes while Madison had short blonde hair with honey eyes. They were really gorgeous, no doubt.

Immediately they entered the school premises, all eyes turned to them and they were very aware of the attention. They loved every bit of it although they pretended to be irritated by it. With their smug looks, they sauntered into the school hall. After checking their schedules, they agreed to meet during lunch since they all had lunch period at the same time.

Justin and Jordan had similar schedules with the exception of Math and Calculus. They were pretty excited about this as they would see each other often.

Finally, it was time for lunch after the long boring lessons and cracking of brains to answer questions. The six friends entered the cafeteria with relief on their faces. They got their various varieties of food and settled down on their personal tables preserved for them.

"I can't wait for today to be over", Josh groaned.

"What is the rush?" Madison asked. "I would like to take it slow seeing it is our last year together in school.

"Maddie, we would not be separated from each other after high school, we still got college." Jordan told her.

As they were still discussing plans of college and whatnot, a girl with ombre hair and dark blue eyes walked into the cafeteria with charisma and elegance. Immediately, murmurs echoed throughout the hall.

"That is the new girl" someone whispered

"She is different from what I expected"

"Who is she?" another said with a snort.

Justin looked up from his conversation with his friends and met her eyes. She walked towards their table and gasps filled the air. It was not every day they got to see something like this. There was a reason the twins and their friends had a personal table and no one was allowed to invade that space, not even their team mates. It was an unspoken rule that the rest of the school had come up with and the six friends went along with it as they couldn't be bothered.

They waited in silence until she reached them.

"Hi, I am Olivia" she greeted with a smile "I saw you in English class" she said to Madison.

"Oh hi, yeah I remember, It's nice to meet you", Maddie replied.

"Won't you introduce us, Maddie?" Justin asked, staring at Olivia

"She has introduced herself already, J but anyway guys, this is Olivia and Olivia this is Justin, Jordan, Steve, Josh and Sophia.

Greetings were exchanged and the other students sat still, baffled at what had transpired before their eyes. Finally, one of them found the courage to walk up to their table.

"Hello" she snorted, looking at Olivia "Since you are new, I will be

lenient with you. No one sits at this table with them and absolutely no one talks to them like that.” She said haughtily to Olivia. “It’s a rule”

“That is ridiculous, says who Brittney?” Sophia asked with the same tone.

“This has been the rule for years” she said blushing out of embarrassment.

“Rule changes now Brittney, we sit with whoever we want to sit with and there’s nothing anybody can do about it, got it?” Justin glowered at her.

This was the first time they stood up for anyone but then, nothing like this had ever happened before since they all kept to their cliques.

Brittney nodded hurriedly and ran out of the cafeteria sobbing quietly.

“High school drama never gets old, sorry about that Olivia” Josh sighed.

“It’s all good”, she said. “I’ll be right back”. She walked out of the cafeteria and went after Brittney.

“Hey, where are you going?” Justin called after her but she was long gone. He got up and walked out briskly after her, to see what was going on.

He saw her talking to Brittney while the latter was glowering and rudely talking back to her. Meanwhile, Olivia was responding to her in a calm manner. However, when Brittney raised her hands to hit her, she caught her hands.

“Do you have an inferiority complex?” she asked calmly still holding her hands.

“What!!” Brittney thundered.

“You act in an aggressive manner and it seems you do that to hide what you truly feel.”

"Don't talk like you know me!" She yelled.

"I'm sorry; I didn't mean to upset you. It's just that I used to be like you but that changed when I gave my life to Christ." Olivia explained "What are you talking about?" Brittney asked, snatching her hands back.

At that point, Justin walked away seeing that it turned personal. He wondered how any person could behave like she did. She went after someone who looked down on her to find out how she was doing, he could not imagine anyone, not even himself doing what she did. Minutes later, she walked back to the twins' table smiling.

"That was unexpected, what happened?" Maddie asked surprised "Oh it was just a little misunderstanding, we cleared it up" she replied with a smile. 'I just won my first soul to Christ in this school.' She thought happily.

"I saw what happened back there, why did you do that?" Justin asked baffled

Olivia shrugged **"Christ said to repay evil with good, besides I understood her so I didn't need to act out too."**

"People will take you for granted and think you are a pushover" he argued

"I am a Christian but being a Christian does not mean allowing others take advantage of me or take me for granted. I can stand up for myself when the need arises."



Later that day after school, when the twins were at home, Justin was still thinking about Olivia and how different she was from other girls he knew. Just that one encounter changed how he viewed her.

"J, that new girl is something else, isn't she? Jordan asked him.

"You noticed that too. Yeah she is" answered Justin.

He went to bed that night with one thought on his mind.

"Who is this Christ that Olivia talked about with so much confidence?" He had heard of 'Christ' before, as a side comment but did not think much of it; he was still surprised she acted in that


..she was not good enough so this made her feel insecure and because of this, she developed an inferiority complex but this all changed after her encounter with Jesus Christ.


manner. "Is it because of Him that she behaves the way she does?" He thought out loud.

Olivia and her mum, Miss Lily Jones, had moved from Denmark to Los Angeles in California. Their lives had not always been blissful. Her dad left when she was thirteen and as a result, her mum became miserable. Money was scarce because it was always used on alcohol. Olivia was always bitter and thought that she was not good enough so this made her feel insecure and because of this, she developed an inferiority complex but this all changed after her encounter with Jesus Christ.

She was coming back from school

one fateful day, when she saw a Church; the people in it were praising and worshipping the Lord. She felt a pull towards the Church and decided to go in. It became the turning point of her life and the beginning of a new life. She received Jesus as her Lord and Savior and her life changed forever.

When she got home, she found her mum sober and sat her down to talk to her. Emily, her mum, gave her life to Christ that same day and the broken pieces of her life were replaced with a complete brand new life. She started a business and it blossomed to the point that she had to open new branches all over the state.

Whenever Olivia remembers her turning point in life, tears of joy streams down her face and she praises God all over again. She made a promise to God that she would help other teenagers like her out there, come to Christ.

This was the reason she went after Brittney that day even though she was haughty and rude. She was taught that good always prevails over evil and those who practice evil, are weak. Gradually, she became good friends with the six friends and little by little, she began impacting their lives positively.

Chapter Two

Chapter Two

DODGE BALL

The next day at school during Math period, Olivia was seated beside Justin while the class was ongoing. She was paying attention but the lesson sounded like Greek to her and she did not understand Greek. The question was asking her to find x and y; she did not see the point in having to find them. She was good with the other courses but Math was one subject that was gibberish to her especially the equations. However, one thing she failed to do was talk to the Holy Spirit about it.

She sighed deeply, "Justin, do you have any idea of what is going on in this class? I have been trying to understand this lesson but to no avail"

Justin laughed "I'm not trying to boast but I am the best in Math in the class. I can tutor you but only if you ask nicely"

Olivia rolled her eyes in amusement "Justin whatever-your-middle-name Anderson, please can you kindly help me so that I can graduate from this school with you guys."

"That was not nicely done, try again."

"Seriously J?"

"Yeah, seriously Ollie."

"My name is Olivia not Ollie"

"It's my nickname for you."

"Mr. Anderson and Miss Jones, would you mind sharing with the class what you two are discussing" Mr. Johnson, the Math teacher, called out.

"Yeah we would mind" Justin said under his breath

"Shut up J" Olivia nudged him "We are sorry Sir. I was just asking him to tutor me in this course." She told the teacher.

"I'll pardon you only because I'm in a good mood today." He said to them. Then turning to Justin, he smiled "It's nice of you to want to help Miss Jones, Justin." He said dropping the formal tone with

Justin.

"I did not accept to help", Justin murmured.

"What was that?"

"Nothing sir"

"Now pay attention. I want less talking and more listening". He said turning back to the board.

"Pssst" Justin beckoned to Olivia

She ignored him

"Hey Ollie."

"Shhh. Keep quiet J. He said no talking"

"Noooo, he said less talking".

"You can be infuriating at times"

Justin smirked, "Does that mean you don't want me to tutor you"

Before she could reply, the bell rang and she dashed out of the class before anyone could. Justin went after her to the Gym, which was their next class together with Jordan and Madison.

"Ok guys today we would be playing dodge ball and the guys would pick a girl to partner up with", the teacher announced.

"Ollie, you are with me." Justin said with a smug smile.

"Only on one condition" Olivia said

"What is it?"

"You have to tutor me"

Justin scoffed in amusement "Fine. You have a deal"

"Yo bro!" Jordan shouted from across the gym where he was warming up.

"Yeah"

"You want to bet on who would win?"

"Sure, what have you got?"

"You have to do the dishes and my chores for a month." Jordan beamed in satisfaction.

Everyone laughed.

"Same goes for you."

"Be prepared and watch out, J", Maddie said.

"You guys do chores?" Olivia asked surprised.

"Yes, my parents thought it would be a good start for us to be responsible and not end up as spoilt brats", Justin groaned.

"Wow, that's smart of them."

"Of course you would support it."

"Alright, it's time to play. Partners get ready! May the best team win!" the Gym teacher announced.

Later on, whoosh!! Olivia found herself on the floor when the ball hit her right on her nose.

"Olivia, are you alright?" Justin, Madison and Jordan came running to her.

"Yeah, I'll be ok" she grunted with blood dripping from her nose.

"I'll take her to the nurse's office" Justin said pulling Olivia up.

They got to the nurse's office and she was being attended to, while Justin paced the floor.

"Relax J; it's just a little blood. It's healed already"

"Yeah right" Justin snorted. "Next time, just leave the dodging to me, ok?"

Olivia scoffed "Alright, sports are not my thing anyway"

"No kidding", he replied with sarcasm.

Lunch period came by quickly and the six friends gathered around Olivia fussing over her.

"Guys, chill, I'm good". She said. "Have you guys never been hit by a ball before"

"No we have not. We are athletes and sports people. It's our thing" Josh smirked.

"Great! Maybe I can share your enthusiasm now that I'm friends with you guys". She said sarcastically.

"Your sarcasm is not needed" Justin grunted, sulking from losing the bet.

"Don't be a sour patch. It's only for a month you have to do the

chores. The last time we had a bet and you won, I had to do it for a whole year." Jordan reminded him.

"You are way too nice for your own good Jordan." Maddie said.

"I'll feel sorry for him, you know I have a soft spot for him" Jordan said smiling.

"Aww!! Twin love! Justin, you should learn from your brother. Be nice" said Olivia with a smile.

"He has no choice, he came out before me" replied Justin. Just then, he felt dizzy. He gripped the table, shaking his head to clear the haze he was seeing.

"Are you ok?" Steve asked, concerned.

Justin nodded when the room had stopped spinning around him.

"Yeah, I'm just tired. I guess I played really hard during gym class"

Justin assured him.

"Sports bring out the competitive side of him but he still lost today."

Jordan added laughing.

"It was Olivia's fault, she just had to feel sporty at that moment"

Justin whined

Olivia scoffed. "I'm sorry for trying to participate in the game and in the process getting hit."

Sophia checked her wrist watch and cut in before anyone could get a word out, "Alright! I think we should go home now before you guys decide to have a brawl." She laughed.

"Are we still on for next weekend?" she asked smiling. They had invited Olivia to join them earlier on.

"Yeah" they chorused. Everyone was excited about the weekend break next week and they looked forward to it with anticipation. Then Justin remembered he had to begin his tutor lessons with Olivia, he turned to her "Ollie when do you want to start the lessons?"

"What lessons?" said Jordan

"I'm tutoring Ollie in Math"

Olivia thought about it; she had to help her mum out with some work at the company so she wouldn't have time for anything else. **Though she was still 17 years old, she was smart enough to help out at the company and she was glad that she was given the opportunity to do. Some might say that it wasn't a big deal since her mum is the owner of the company, but to her, it was a big opportunity she was excited to have because not every parent would entrust the kind of responsibilities given to her, to their children.** She also had one or two assignments to finish up so her schedule was full for the rest of the day.

"I have things to do later today and probably the rest of the week so we can meet up next week" answered Olivia

"Ok then, see you tomorrow" They all said their byes and went home.

Justin had felt uneasy after the game they had in gym class but he played it off as having been too competitive, besides he did not want anyone to be worried especially when he was sure it was nothing.

"Justin", Jordan called out to his brother who was in his room.

"What?"

"It's time to do the dishes, come on out", he said laughing

"Give me a break bro, I'm busy", Justin bellowed

Jordan ran up the stairs to his twin's room.

"You can't possibly still be sulking" he said to Justin with a note of laughter in his voice.

"I am, because it was Ollie's fault, not mine." Justin said while facing the wall and throwing his basketball. He disliked doing the dishes; he could deal with any other house chores but dishes. It was times like this that he wished his parents had hired someone to help out in the house.

"Don't be a cry baby! You guys were partners, you picked her

yourself so deal with it."

"I know" Justin turned to face his brother with a pout. "Can't you let me off the hook?"

"No can do, you did not let me off the hook when you made me do the chores for a whole year."

Justin laughed. He remembered that moment; he had made a deal with his brother on who could hold his breath underwater for as long as possible. He emerged as the winner and he really did make his brother do the dishes for a whole year.

"Forgive and forget man" he pleaded.

"Oh I have forgiven but not forgotten. Go and do the dishes now before Mum and Dad get back." He concluded and went to his room. Justin was exhausted after doing the dishes and he felt a mild ache in his chest but played it off as nothing again. The pain had been off and on for several months but he did not say a word about it to anyone. Immediately his head touched the pillow, he went into dreamland.

"Justin, Jordan come downstairs, your Dad and I want to talk to you." Mia shouted.

Jordan came down immediately but Justin was still asleep.

"Where is your brother?" his Mum asked

"He is still sleeping."

"That is new, since when does my son sleep when it is still bright outside."

"We played a game of dodge ball in gym class today."

"I am surprised he is sleeping when he doesn't do so even after his matches" Zach, his dad, said surprised.

"I'll go wake him up" Jordan said and ran to his brother's room.

"Justin get up, mum and Dad want to talk to us", he shook his brother till he got up.

"Are you alright bro?" Jordan looked at his brother's sleepy face.

Justin yawned "I'm ok, I was just tired."

They went to the living room where their parents were seated.

"Mia and I have some business to do in England so we would be away for a week and you guys are 18 already so you are old enough to take care of yourself." Their dad said immediately they were seated.

"A week? Dad, you will miss my match on Monday" Jordan cried out.

"But Dad, you will miss Jordan's match on Monday" Justin said at the same time with Jordan.

"Oh! It skipped my mind" Zach groaned "I have been really busy lately. I am sorry son but I cannot reschedule." He told Jordan in an apologetic tone.

"You have never missed my game Dad; it's just one day, why can't you move your trip? After all, you are the owner of the company"

"I am signing a contract with a company in England, your mum and I have to be there. I really am sorry."

"It's fine Dad, go for your trip and enjoy yourself." Jordan jumped off the chair, ran to his room and slammed the door.

"I'll go check on him Dad, he always listens to me. Don't worry mum", he told them when his mum attempted to go upstairs.

He went to Jordan's room and tried to open it but it was locked.

Jordan, bro open up, it's me"

Jordan unlocked the door, pulled his brother in and locked it again. It was what they always did to each other since they were kids, whenever they were upset with someone.

They sat on the bed facing each other.

"Talk to me" Justin beckoned to his brother

"I know I acted childish but I'm just really upset" Jordan said in a sullen tone. "Dad has never missed my game, if he is already forgetting it because of his business, then how many more things will he forget to the point that he misses our birthdays, graduation even weddings because of his 'business'." He finished his rant and threw his pillow at the door.

"Are you listening to yourself right now? That is the most ridiculous thing I've heard in my life.

If anyone heard you, they would think it's a five years old throwing a tantrum." Justin said with a small smile. "Really Jordan, our birthdays, graduation and wedding, could you not think of anything less absurd?"

"What? It's possible. He could claim 'it skipped his mind and he could not reschedule' again." He said while making quotations with his fingers.

"That is not fair, besides he really is the owner of a huge multimillionaire company and he is human, he is allowed to make mistakes." Justin frowned at his brother.

"Are you on his side J?"

"I'm not picking sides here, but what you just said is not fair on dad" Justin continued. "I know you are angry but it's just this one time Dan. You know Dad loves us and He will never do anything intentionally to upset us. He has never missed a game, you said it yourself so don't be too hard on him. Dad does not even come to my games all the time; maybe it's because it's basketball and he is not a huge fan of it but I don't give him a hard time for it." Justin was getting upset at this point.

"But he loves football and I am his son" Jordan replied, not getting the point.

"And I am not? Are you being serious right now, Dan?" Justin bellowed. He took a deep breath, "You know what, when you are calm and start thinking again, you can come find me, right now I can't talk to you." He said angrily and walked out of the room slamming the door after him.

"Mum, come and talk to your son. I cannot handle him right now" Justin beckoned to his mum. "I am going to Josh's house. I'll be back before 9." He told his Dad and ran out of the house to where his car

was parked, without waiting for his parent's response.

He got to Josh's house, still fuming from the argument he had with his twin.

"Hey man, what's up?" Josh greeted, when he opened the door "Why are you here alone, where is your other half?" Josh asked but he saw Justin's face and beckoned him inside.

"You want to talk about it" he asked after they had settled down.

"Nah, it's just stupid." Justin said but ended up telling him what happened.

"Wow, it's weird seeing you guys upset with each other." Josh said after listening to the story.

"I am the one upset with him not the other way around; he shouldn't have spoken like that. It's not his games that Dad misses sometimes, he goes for literally all his games but just this one time Dad says he forgot, he blows up and acts like he is the only child." Justin ranted.

"Justin, who are you really angry with? Is it your brother, your Dad, or both?"

Justin grunted "I'm not upset with Dad, it is Jordan that's pissing me off especially when he said all those stuffs about Dad missing everything about his life and he is his son so he should never miss his game as if he is not my father too. If I am going to act like Dan, then Dad should have come to my games as much as he goes to Jordan's games because I am also his son and he is supposed to watch me play what I love not because he is a fan of the sport but because I am his son and need his support. I don't give him a hard time for that because he tries, he comes for most of my games but just this one time Dad said he would not be around for Jordan's game, he goes and whines about it like a baby." He concluded his rant pulling at his shirt, finding it difficult to breath but he blamed it on being too upset so he began taking slow deep breaths to cool off.

"Chill out bro, don't get worked up over this." Josh said.

"He knows Dad and Mum gets busy like this especially when they

have to work with other companies, he should understand. I love him but he can get really annoying at times and people say I am the childish one. They have not met him yet." Justin chuckled, already calming down.

Josh grinned "Good! You are laughing already. Laugh it out. You know what they say; laughter is the best medicine."

"I have gotten it off my chest so I feel better now." Justin checked the time and saw that it was almost 9'o'clock.

"I have to go. I promised my Dad that I'll be back before 9."

"Did you drive here?" Josh asked skeptically

"Yeah, I'll be home on time."

"You drove in that state of mind?" Josh hissed

This time, Justin laughed out loud.

"Honestly, you behave like my mum at times."

"I don't even know why I bother" Josh sighed.

"I'll see you tomorrow; tell your parents I said hi."

"Will do. Goodnight and talk to Jordan again, tell him what you said to me."

"Thanks" Justin said with gratitude and went to his car.

He got home and immediately he entered, he was bombarded with questions

"Where have you been young man?"

"Do you know how worried I was?"

"Where did you go without telling me?"

He almost burst into laughter but when he heard the last question, he felt like pulling his hair. He took a deep breath and answered their questions one by one.

"I told you where I was going Dad"

"I'm sorry mum but I thought you heard when I told Dad where I was going to, or that He would have told you."

"Jordan, are you kidding me? Did you expect me to talk to you when I was angry with you? I said to come find me when you were calm,

not that I was going to tell you where to find me."

Jordan sighed. He did not like when he and his brother argued.

"I'm sorry J, I acted very foolishly"

"Indeed you did"

"I apologized and talked to Dad and we sorted it out"

"Ok. So?"

"It's cool for Dad to go on his trip, I know he gets busy and I should have been more understanding besides its just one game and it's not even finals."

"Awesome! I am glad you settled that. Now I want to tell you why I got so upset." Justin told his brother and parents what he told Josh.

"I did not know you thought that way son. I'm sorry." Zach apologized.

"No Dad, it's really okay. I was never upset at you." Justin told his father. "You come to most of my games so it's cool."

"Why don't you guys involve me in any of your games anymore?" their mum questioned.

"Mum, you know the reason why. Five minutes into all the games you ever attended, you fall asleep and when the cheering and hooting gets too loud for you, you go to the car to continue your beauty sleep. I don't know how you're able to sleep through the noise; it's like sleeping through the noise of a train passing directly under your house. You are like Olivia when it comes to sports except she actually cheers when we score." Jordan reminded his mum snickering.

"Thank you for that detailed information. We have all had a busy day and a good night rest is needed, so I am off to bed." Mia's cheeks were flushed and she quickened her steps to her room. Laughing, the twins chorused. "Goodnight mum."

Jordan turned to his brother "Justin, are we cool?" He asked in a desperate tone to reconcile with his twin.

"We are cool." Justin hugged his brother. "Goodnight Dad", they said and went to bed.

Chapter Three

Chapter Three

SHOCKING NEWS

Yearly, Citadel High organizes school events on the first Wednesdays of school. These events include competitions among the different sport teams and clubs. However, the events are not for the whole day, but begin after few classes and the students have a light lunch. The twins always look forward to this time of the year because they emerge winners in most of the competitions.

After about three or four classes, all students were instructed to go for lunch. Olivia got to the cafeteria and saw her friends already seated.

"You guys are quick" she said, wondering how they got in so fast with that entire crowd.

"It's not our fault they usually wait for us to get here first before coming in" Steve indicated to the students that were rushing in.

"Speechless is not even the word to describe how I feel." "This", she gestured to everything around her, "is ridiculous."

She sat down and brought her lunch out of her bag. She loved her mom's cooking and at times she brought her lunch from home. As she prayed over her meal, Madison watched her like a hawk. Once she was done praying, Madison said, "I always notice you mumble something before eating, what do you say?"

At that question, the whole table turned to look at Olivia. "I was just praying over my meal", she said blushing because of the number of eyes on her.

"You pray over your meals too?" Sophia asked surprised.

"I thought you only pray when you want to ask God for something." Steve added.

Olivia laughed at their statements.

"I pray anytime. It could be a prayer of request, thanksgiving, intercessory prayer or a prayer of faith." She explained.

"Is it not tiring having to do it all the time?" one of them asked

"Do you get tired of talking to your friends and family every day?"

Olivia asked them.

"No, that never happens" Sophia responded

"Exactly, it's like that with prayer, it is communication and fellowship with God. I am talking to my heavenly father and I never get bored or tired of it rather my communication with him increases because He talks back to me."

"Wow, I never saw it that way." Josh said stunned at the revelation.

"This happens between God and his children. If you are not His child and you pray, it's like talking to a stranger. At first if they talk to you, you may respond out of courtesy but do you also respond to strangers who talk to you like they know you, when they don't?"

"No that will be freaky, I'll run away." Maddie said.

"You see, it's the same except God does not freak out and run away."

●●● ————— ●●●
*...with prayer, it is
 communication
 and fellowship with
 God. I am talking
 to my heavenly
 father and I never
 get bored or tired
 of it rather my
 communication
 with him increases
 because He talks
 back to me."*

●●● ————— ●●●

They chuckled at that. "You have to be born again to be a child of God and I don't mean going into your mum's womb and coming out again after nine months."

They laughed out loud at her statement.

"I am talking about confessing with your mouth that Jesus is Lord of your life and believing in your heart that God raised him from the dead. When you do this, you are saved, separated from darkness and brought into the kingdom of light where there is joy, peace, divine health and many more blessings."

"This is my very first time hearing someone talk about God this way"

Justin said baffled.

"I am glad to be the one bringing this message to you." Olivia said with joy.

"But I don't quite believe there is a God. In fact, I think I'm an atheist. He proclaimed proudly.

Olivia scoffed "That is nothing to be proud of. The Bible explains that if God is not in you, then the devil is. Whether you believe it or not, there is a God and devil and either of them lives in a person. The devil's job is to steal, kill and destroy but **Jesus came to give us life; eternal life and I advise you to choose life.**" Olivia told Justin. "Everyone, it is time for the event, please move out gracefully." The principal announced before anyone could get a word out.

"We will continue this intriguing conversation later." Josh said to Olivia.

They went out together to the field that had been prepared for the event. Many had started their warm-ups while some were making small talks with their friends.

"How many of you are competing?" Olivia asked them.

"We all are." The boys raised their hands.

"I told you we are the athletes and sportsmen." Josh said.

"We girls are sitting out of this one, this year." Maddie told the boys

"But it's our last year in high school" Jordan complained

"Still sitting out" Olivia said.

"I get why you are sitting out Ollie, you got yourself a nosebleed during dodge ball after all." Justin mocked.

"Quit being mean J," Sophia defended Olivia. "Go and warm up or something."

The boys left the girls to do their warm-ups. Soon, it was time for the race competitions among the different sport teams.

Justin represented the basketball team while the football team was represented by Jordan, Steve represented the swimming team and Josh represented the hockey team. They were representing their teams for the 200m race.

The referee called them out and said, "On your mark, get set, ready and go!"

They took off immediately with Justin leading as usual. They were about to run the second lap when Justin stopped. He suddenly felt nauseous but he blamed it on the food he ate. He tried running again but could not, this time he felt so dizzy that he collapsed on the grass.

His brother and friends including Olivia and the girls gathered around him. They were talking to him at once but he could not see or hear a thing because his head was in a haze.

They called the ambulance and it came at once and soon, he was at the hospital with different machines attached to his body. He passed out few minutes later.

When Jordan saw his brother stop, he slowed down and turned to go to him but when he collapsed, he felt his heart stop and he sprinted back to him along with his friends.

"Come on J, wake up."

"Justin, what happened?"

"Don't mess with me J."

"Please, talk to me!!"

"Oh my God, please be alright J."

"Justin, can you hear me?"

They all spoke at the same time. Jordan was getting agitated but Olivia saw to it that he remained calm.

"Jordan please calm down, he is going to be ok. I promise". She said and hugged him.

When the ambulance came, he entered it and pulled Olivia with him because he needed to remain calm for his twin and Olivia had a calming presence. Their friends followed them in their cars.

The ambulance and the others arrived at the hospital and the doctors quickly rushed Justin into the emergency room and after

carrying out some checkups and procedures, they rushed him to the operating room with some machines attached to his heart and body. Jordan started panicking when he saw the machines. The nurses rushed him out so they could attend to Justin properly. One hour later, the doctor came out to meet him.

"What is happening to my brother? What are all those machines for?" Jordan cried out.

"Please calm down, where are your parents? We need to speak to them." The doctor asked.

"They are not available right now. I am 18 and old enough for you to talk to me." Jordan replied.

"Follow me to my office please." The doctor beckoned to Jordan.

"Olivia, please come with me." Jordan asked Olivia who immediately went to him.

"Only family allowed please" the doctor told Jordan

"She is family" Jordan glowered at the doctor daring him to oppose him.

"Alright then, let's go" the doctor said after seeing the expression on Jordan's face. He knew he was hurting and did not want to aggravate him any further.

When they were seated, the doctor told him that Justin was showing signs of coronary heart disease and he had angina out there on the field. "It is rare for a young person to have this disease, that's why it is usually labeled a disease of senior people. In Justin's case, we discovered that he has coronary artery anomalies so we performed coronary angioplasty, which is a procedure used to open clogged heart arteries and improve blood flow to his heart. When your parents arrive, I would explain more extensively to them about his case." the doctor explained. To say Jordan was shocked would be an understatement, he was speechless and when he came to himself, the only thing he could mutter was a quiet 'what?'

"Did you notice anything at all before this happened", the doctor

questioned him.

Jordan suddenly remembered the past few months when he would see his brother clutch his heart in pain. He remembered what happened after the dodge ball game; how long Justin had slept when he came home and how he would catch his brother blinking his eyes repeatedly like he was trying to focus. He told the doctor everything and suddenly felt very guilty for not saying anything.

"It's entirely my fault", he repeated to himself.

Olivia was shocked and began praying and speaking in tongues under her breath.

"I need to call my parents," he told the doctor and Olivia and rushed out of the office like it was suffocating.

Olivia ran out with him to make sure he was handling the news well enough not to do anything stupid.

Jordan called his parents and broke the news to them while sobbing. His parents immediately booked a flight to return to L.A.

Josh, Sophia, Madison and Steve were sitting at the reception oblivious to what was going on and were patiently waiting for the news. When Jordan and Olivia were done with the doctor, they met up with the others and broke the news to them. They were stunned and tears filled their eyes.

"What? How did... What?" Josh stuttered. He could not believe what he just heard. They were talking about Justin, his best friend since forever. There was no way Justin was diagnosed with a heart disease; he rarely got sick and had been the healthiest out of all of them in the squad. While they were still trying to digest the news, the doctor came out to tell them that Justin had woken up but they could only see him in twos.

Jordan went in alone first and when he saw his brother, the tears he had been trying to contain streamed down his face. He got a hold of himself and hugged his brother as carefully as he could.

"Don't ever do that to me again J." He said with tears in his eyes.

"I'm sorry." Justin apologized in a somber tone.

"Why didn't you tell me? I felt so guilty when I didn't say anything even though I suspected something was going on but I thought you just needed enough rest."

"I did not know what was going on with me; I didn't want anyone worrying about me especially if it turned out to be nothing."

"But it didn't turn out to be nothing. You have a freaking heart disease."

"I know Jordan; this is difficult for me too. I am the one with the disease."

Jordan sighed dejectedly. "You scared me J. I did not know what to think when I saw you like that; I literally felt my heart stop."

"I'm sorry Jordan". He apologized again. "Where are the others?" He asked.

"They are waiting outside. Doc said we could only come in twos but I wanted to see you alone first. Dad and Mum also booked a flight to come back; they said they would be here in about three and a half hours." Jordan explained to him. They talked for a little bit more before Jordan told the others to come in.

Josh and Steve went in and came out with sad smiles on their faces then Sophia and Madison went in next but came out with tears in their eyes. Lastly, Olivia went in.

Justin looked at her with a smile on his face when she came and she returned it with a grin.

"Hey J"

He laughed. "Why are you grinning "

"Well you are awake, so that's a relief"

"You are so different."

"I'll take that as a compliment" she said still grinning.

"You are not going to say 'Oh J, you scared me. I thought I was going to lose you *sob *sob", Justin said in a dramatic girly tone.

"Firstly, I don't talk like that." She laughed. "Secondly, I trust God and I know whatever is going on will be a thing of the past soon. We are not losing you anytime soon J." She told him with a serious face and a promising tone.

He gave a small smile and gestured for her to come. He hugged her as tightly as he could. "Thank you, Ollie. It was not a pretty scene when the doctor told me what was happening. I bawled my eyes out" He admitted in a small voice, wearing a thin smile.

Olivia held unto him "Justin, all of this is temporary. You're coming out of this situation." she assured him. Then she prayed with him and told him that a miracle would take place soon.

About four hours later, the twins' parents arrived. They talked to the doctor for a while then the doctor told Justin he could be discharged. He said, "You are cleared to go home now but I advise you don't do anything strenuous and if you are involved in any sport activity, you should quit now or else you would end up back here worse and make sure you get a lot of rest. I have given your parents a diet that you must strictly follow; make sure you follow it."

On the way home, no one spoke a word as everyone was lost in his or her thoughts. What the doctor said kept ringing in Justin's ears until he got home. Justin was devastated, he loved sports especially basketball; he was captain of his team and he always brought the cup home. Telling him to quit was like separating a mother from her baby.

Immediately he entered the house, it was like the play button was pressed and his parents rushed to him. His mum was already sobbing and it took about five minutes to calm her down.

"Mum, please stop crying. I am going to be alright", he said thinking of what Olivia had told him.

"How do you know that? You did not even know something was wrong with you in the first place" his mum sniffed.

"I believe it, ok? Olivia said it and I believe her." He knew he trusted her words but he did not know why. Whenever she spoke about prayer and God, he felt a deep longing to know more about Him.

There was only one thing Justin was happy about; that his friends did not treat him differently and he was grateful for that. On the other hand, his mum did not leave his side for a minute; she attempted to withdraw him from school and suggested that he should be home schooled. Jordan and his Dad had to convince her to let him live his life on the condition that he was extremely careful. He had missed school for three weeks to recuperate until he was well enough to go back to school the following week.

At school, he heard different versions of what happened to him at the event and why he had been absent from school. Some were funny but some were absolutely ridiculous like the one that he had gotten drunk before the event and was too hung-over to come to school. 'How would anyone get drunk and be able to run like I did.' He thought. He was baffled at how they came up with their stories but was glad no one apart from the principal, his coach and his friends knew the truth. He did not want any one treating him like a fragile thing; he had enough of that with his mum. His coach had also made up a believable story, to tell his teammates why he had to quit the team.

Remembering that he had to tutor Olivia, he caught up with her on her way home. "Ollie, you can come over to my house today for tutoring." "Are you sure? She asked with her eyebrows scrunched up." "Positive, I'll meet you there since you can't leave your car in school." Justin responded and hurried to his car.

Olivia had been to the twins' house a couple of times with their other friends to see Justin. When she got to his house, the first person she saw was his mum. "Hi Mia" she greeted.

"Sweetie, how are you?" Mia responded "If you're here for the twins,

they are not back yet”

“Oh I know Mia, I met with Justin on the way home and he said he would meet me here for tutor lessons.”

Mia nodded in understanding “what do you need tutoring in?”

Olivia smiled sheepishly and said “Math”. Mia laughed and was going into details of her high school life when Justin arrived from school.

Justin got home and saw his mum, who was back from work early because of him, chatting animatedly with Olivia. 'Hey mum', he greeted and kissed her on the cheeks. Olivia chortled, 'awing' in her mind. She thought it was cute to see Justin being so loving and cute to his mum.

“Son, how was school?” His mum asked

Justin sighed, “Nothing special, except, of course, ridiculous rumors about why I had been absent from school.” He said with a fake smile. Every time he saw them murmuring and pointing fingers at him and they noticed him glaring at them, they scurried away like rats being chased by a cat.

“Ignore them, it will pass” his mum sympathized.

Justin nodded, slinging his bag over his shoulder “Mum, Ollie and I will be in my room working.”

“Ok, take some snacks with you” his mum brought out some cookies and juice and gave them.

They went to his room but before they started working, Ollie suggested they prayed. “Dear Father, I thank you because you have given me a sound mind and a retentive memory to understand what I’ll be put through today. I declare that I will not have difficulty in this subject again. I also thank you for Justin’s life, I pray that healing is taking place in his body right now as I speak in Jesus Name.”, she prayed and they chorused together, “Amen.”

Justin was used to her praying every time but how she prayed always surprised him. He was not yet born again but he believed in God now and he was glad to be best friends with Olivia. He would have been miserable, because of what he was going through, if he did not have people that kept him going and gave him hope like she did. For the next two hours, they worked diligently and he was stunned by how fast she grasped everything. After going through everything they had done in class, they took a break. Jordan came in, after he had taken a shower from football practice.

"Ollie, there is something I want to talk to you about" Jordan asked lying on his twin's bed.

"Okay, I'm all ears"

"It's about the conversation we were having the other day at school. How do you know when God answers your prayers?"

Before Olivia could answer, Justin suggested they invite the others over and they agreed. They all arrived at the house in less than ten minutes.

They formed a circle on the floor of Justin's room. Olivia brought out her Bible from her school bag and showed them how to use the Bible, she promised to get all of them Bibles the next day. Then, she explained to them from the Bible in **1 John 5:13-15** *"These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God. 14 And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: 15 And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him."*, that when a person who believes on the name of Jesus prays according to the will of God, God hears and answers. She also gave them some scriptures to study in their quiet time; **John 16:23-24, Matthew 7:7, John 14:13-14** and all these scriptures explained that God hears and answers His children when they ask.

"Wow that is enlightening; I did not know Christians have this

advantage." Madison exclaimed and everyone nodded in agreement with her.

"That is not all, there are a lot more."

"Do share please" Sophia said.

"Gladly", Olivia thought.

"There is the Holy Spirit who guides us into all truth."

She told them about how Jesus was filled with the Holy Ghost and with power and He went about doing good, healing the sick and casting out devils. Jesus promised his disciples the Holy Spirit before he ascended to heaven and indeed His disciples received the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost and they spoke in tongues. From that day on, they preached the Gospel with boldness and they performed miracles just like Jesus. She also told them that this same Holy Spirit lives in her because she received Him. She gave them scriptures again to study; **John 14:15-31, John 16:5-15.**

She said that the reason she could speak in tongues was because of the Holy Spirit in her. "Tongues are of the Spirit", she explained. "My understanding is unfruitful meaning I can't use my mind to understand what I am saying but my Spirit prays. I am talking to God in mysteries which no man can understand except he has the gift of interpretation of tongues. Read 1 Corinthians 14 and you will get a better understanding of what I am talking about."



They listened with rapt attention when she spoke for they had not heard anything like that before and they were eager to know more.

"Another important thing to note is the words you speak, you have to be careful to say only uplifting and positive words." She advised them.

"What if what you say is really what is happening like how I am sick?" Justin argued.

"It may be a fact but it is not the truth. In church, my pastor told us a

●●● ————— ●●●
"There is the Holy Spirit who guides us into all truth."
 ●●● ————— ●●●


*Words are alive;
they do not die
unless you utter
another word that
cancels what you
said so speak only
positive words."*


story of a man who died of cancer but God opened his eyes to see that the man did not have cancer in his body but because of his words and what he believed, he died of that cancer. Facts can be disproved but truth cannot be disputed. The fact is you have a heart disease but the truth is Christ has made you well." Olivia explained. "Words are powerful so it's important to be mindful of what you say because you will give an account for every word

that comes out of your mouth. Words are alive; they do not die unless you utter another word that cancels what you said so speak only positive words." She concluded looking at Justin.

Meanwhile, behind the closed door, Mia, the twins' mum was listening attentively to what was being said. She even got a chair to sit down when her legs got tired. She had been brought up in a religious family so she had heard about Jesus but she was never born again, she just always went to church on service days and after that, she returned to her life. When she got married and had children, she got too busy to go to church. She never got to know the Lord for herself but listening to Olivia brought tears to her eyes, she got a glimpse of what Christianity really is.

On hearing the kids packing up to go home, she rushed downstairs with the chair she was sitting on and put a poker face on when they came downstairs.

"Mia, we will be leaving now", Olivia said
'Be safe guys. Bye!' Mia waved.

After they had left, the twins and their mum went to their rooms to ponder on what they heard.

Chapter Four

Chapter Four

FOOD FIGHT

Pranks were a norm in high schools but Citadel High was clearly not made to be like other high schools. This was a school for the elite's children who were supposedly spoilt brats and could not be caught getting stains on their clothes or breaking a finger or toe nail, according to the outside world. They were to be perfect so imagine the shock when the principal heard that her students were having a massive food fight which had the school turning upside down but she was not so surprised when she found out the culprits who started it- the twins also known as the pranksters.

It all started in English class during one of the readings of Shakespeare, the tempest. Jordan and Justin had done their part of the reading in front of the class with all the dramatics and whatnots. The class had erupted into laughter as they always do when the twins get into their acts but afterwards, the class had gone back to their quiet and gloomy selves thinking of what they would rather be doing than sitting in class in boredom. The twins could not stand the atmosphere of the class so they thought to lighten it up. Jordan brought a rubber spider out of nowhere and placed it on the teacher's desk when he had dozed off.

"Mr. Miller, there is a huge spider on your desk", Justin yelled out in mock horror.

Mr. Miller, who was in his early forties, jumped out of his chair and ran out screaming 'spiders' repeatedly. Everyone in the school knew that spiders were a terror to the forty-two year old teacher.

It was probably not a very nice thing to do but in the twins' defense, the class needed a lively atmosphere and Mr. Miller was one of their least favorite teachers, so they did not feel too bad.

In chemistry class, the twins were lab partners, why the teachers put them together knowing that it would be a terrible mistake, only God knows but they probably used their charm to get through, seeing as

the teacher was a young woman in her late twenties. They mixed chemicals that produced a skunk smell and the whole class had to leave until they got it under control.

Finally, during lunch, Jordan suggested they liven up the cafeteria. "Lunch is always the same old same old eating without any fun", he told his friends

"What could possibly make eating fun?" Josh asked confused, "You just eat, bro."

"Exactly, you just eat. It's boring" Justin agreed with his brother.

"I still don't know how I'm friends with you people" Olivia sighed.

"Your life will not be the same without us" Steve said with a smirk.

"Oh definitely it won't. It would be so much better." Sophia retorted and smacked him on the head.

"Owww, for a girl, you've got a strong hand" Steve pouted rubbing the sore part of his head.

"Ok, if you guys are done, I would love to tell you my plan of how to make an interesting lunch." Jordan said rubbing his hands and jumping from anticipation.

"Are you that excited?" Maddie asked.

"Very" Jordan responded. He carried his plate of spaghetti and meatballs and dumped its content on Josh's head. "Now, that is the plan" he said and dusted his hands, grinning.

Josh sat in shock for a brief moment before he jumped out of his chair, shaking himself to get rid of the mess as much as he possibly could.

"Seriously Dan, a little warning would have been nice" Josh glared at him while the others burst out in laughter.

The whole cafeteria became silent when Jordan dumped his food on Josh, then suddenly; someone shouted "food fight" and the food war begun. Olivia, Madison and Justin got food on their faces and in their hair while Jordan, Sophia, Josh and Steve had it worse. Their whole clothes and faces were covered with all kinds of food, they

were a whole mess. The whole place was like a stampede, not of people but food.

"What in the world is going on here?" a teacher bellowed.

"What does it look like?" one of the students retorted.

"Who said that?" The same teacher yelled, his vein already bulging out of his forehead. He looked like he was going to burst from anger.

Suddenly, everywhere became silent when the principal barged in.

Her eyes roamed about till she met the twins gaze.

She sighed deeply, "Jordan, Justin get up and follow me". They sat still, staring at her. "Now", she yelled. They jumped to their feet and hurried after her.

If there was anyone else they listened to apart from their parents, it was Mrs. Davis. Before they could enter her office, she turned to them "Please go and get yourselves cleaned up and you have five minutes to do so." She said and walked into her office muttering "They are older than my twelve year old kids but they behave exactly like them."

The twins hurried to get cleaned up and when they got to her office, they sat down with their heads bowed.

"I was beginning to wonder when you would act up, you were getting too quiet." Mrs. Davis stood crossing her arms.

"Your wish came true." Justin said under his voice.

"What was that?" She looked at him.

"I said we are sorry ma'am."

"Yeah right, you guys are never sorry when you do this kind of thing."

She sat down glaring at them. "I don't know why I was surprised in the first place when I have students like you." She turned to Justin and her expression softened, "Justin, I know you are going through a lot but I won't stand for this kind of behavior, do you understand, both of you?"

"Yes ma'am", they chorused.

Justin appreciated that the principal did not treat him differently, she acted the same way she always did towards him.

"I certainly can't let you go scot-free, so as your punishment, you would clean up the mess you started." When she said this, the twins put up their hands to object. "It's either this or you have detention for a whole week" she warned. The twins' hands shot down as fast as it came up. She smiled at the action. "Now, kindly leave my office and please if you are bored..." she stopped. "...well, if you are bored, that is not my business, this is a school and you get bored at times so deal with it." She concluded.

They left the office and hurried to the cafeteria to get done with their punishment before meeting up with their friends who had cleaned up and were waiting for them by their cars.

"Did you get suspended or expelled?" asked Josh, immediately he saw them.

"Seriously Josh, the principal loves us besides we are one of her best students." Jordan said.

"So, did you get suspended or expelled? You did not answer the question." He asked them again with a blank face.

"Neither, Josh. Shut up. We just had to clean up the cafeteria." Justin grunted.

"You are in a lovely mood today." Josh continued.

"Yes and I would lovely design your face with my fist." Justin walked up to Josh but Olivia intercepted him.

"Guys!" she pushed Justin away from Josh gently, "I brought the Bibles today." She told them and distributed it.

"Thanks Olivia", they said.

"Can we spend the weekend at the lake house?" Sophia suggested. "I need my beauty rest before exams come up"

"Whose lake house?" Olivia asked.

"Oh it's Steve's', well, his parents' actually. We make use of it when we want to take a break. "

"I'm definitely in" Olivia raised her hands.

"Great, Maddie you are helping me sort out things- food, cleaning and the rest." Steve told Madison.

"Yes great one, at your service. Your wish is my command." Maddie replied sarcastically.

"Sorry, please Maddie, help me out." said Steve sheepishly.

"Honestly, I don't know how you guys survive without me." Maddie said.

"Actually, without us" Sophia pointed to herself and the girls.

"The only guy here who can afford to look after himself is Josh. The guy can cook and clean. The rest of you are bah!" Sophia made a barfing sound.

The guys except Josh grunted.

"I'm honored to be counted worthy." Josh said smirking.

Olivia laughed.

"So it's settled then." Jordan said. "Olivia would ride with us since she doesn't know the place", he said looking at Olivia, "We'll meet up at my house." He told Olivia.

"Alright! No problem." replied Olivia.

Off they went to their various homes.

At home, the twins' Dad was waiting for them with an anxious face.

"What is it Dad?" Justin asked with apprehension when he saw his Dad's expression.

"I have been calling you for a while now" Zach said worried.

Justin checked his phone and saw that it was off.

"Sorry Dad, I guess the battery ran down"

"You too, Jordan?"

"I must have switched it off. What happened, Dad?" He asked worried.

"I just wanted to check on you and when you were not answering your phone, I thought-" their dad stopped unable to continue. He

was so worried he would receive a call to find out his boy was in the hospital again. Since the doctor told him that his son would have to live on medications for the rest of his life because there was nothing more they could do as there was no cure for the disease, he spent his whole time worrying. Most times, he got more involved in his business just to get his mind off it.

"Dad" Justin called softly. He knew his parents were worried about him but he did not know his Dad was this upset; it hurt him to see his Dad like this.

His Dad looked at him, "I can't....no...I won't lose you. I'll make sure of it.", Zach said firmly and went back inside the house. He planned on calling every famous cardiologists and cardiac surgeons he knew and could find. He was not going to let anything happen to his boy. The twins were still stunned at their Dad's reaction. They knew their Dad to be strong and great at hiding his emotions so for him to show this side to them, they knew it really bothered him.

Jordan was sure he was worried about his brother more than anyone else, although he tried to hide it but seeing his Dad react that way, he saw that it really bothered him more than he let on and why would it not? His son and his only brother had a disease which was sapping his life.

Justin had never planned or even thought that this would happen to him. He saw this kind of things happen to people on TV in movies or in the books he read but he never expected that it would happen to him. Sometimes, thoughts about why God would allow him go through this when He claimed to love him, came to him and he would have doubts about accepting Christ but the more he listened to Olivia, the more he put these thoughts aside. Remembering the Bible Olivia gave him; he took it out and began to study the scriptures she talked about. He stumbled on **1 Corinthians 13** that talks about love and he was completely baffled. He never thought of love that way, he thought it was just some feelings people claimed to

have for each other. He read it again and again and finally made up his mind that if this was how God loved his children, he would definitely accept him as the Lord of his life. He went to his brother's room to tell him his decision.

Knocking, he said "Jordan, I need to talk to you."

"Come in J"

He walked in and sat on his bed.

"What's up?" Jordan asked.

"I have been thinking lately"

Jordan gasped in mock surprise, "Really, that's new"

Justin smacked him on the head "I'm serious Dan"

Jordan chuckled "Ok, sorry, I'm all ears"

"As I said, I have been thinking and I want to try this Christianity stuff. It may be what I have been looking for y...you kn...ow...to get rid of this disease." He said stumbling on his words.

"Hey, I get it ok and I also want to give it a try. **Where science has failed, perhaps God will come through.**" Jordan said hopefully.

"This weekend will be the best time since we would all be together."

Justin nodded agreeing with him. Jordan hugged his brother, "Don't worry, it will work out well J."

"I hope so", Justin said with a faraway look on his face.

The weekend they had been waiting for finally arrived. The Lake House had all the luxuries you could imagine; it had a heated pool, a lounge and a pretty looking fireplace.

Olivia had carpooled with the twins and they arrived later than the rest of their friends.

"Finally, we have been waiting for hours." Josh complained when he saw them.

"Stop the exaggeration Josh; it's only been a few minutes." Madison scolded.

"Hmph!!" Josh huffed.

"Sometimes I wonder if you are a baby in a teen's body." Madison

said.

Josh stuck his tongue out at her.

"This proves my point." She said shaking her head.

Olivia laughed.

"This place is amazing." She said.

"I know I still try to get used to it." Justin said.

"Welcome to my abode." Steve announced when he came out.

"Come on Ollie, we'll show you around." Sophia said and dragged her and Madison inside leaving the guys outside.

"Great, I have been waiting for them to leave." Josh grinned rubbing his hands together.

"What are you up to?" Steve asked. "Please whatever it is, refrain from thrashing this place or else you are paying for it." He warned.

"Your wish is my command but you will love what I have planned out."

"Let's hear it." Justin said.

"We are going to surprise the girls. I brought some balloons and water guns."

They understood where he was going with that and they all grinned.

They filled up the balloons with water. "Let's use up the balloons first" Jordan suggested.

Meanwhile, the girls were making smoothies for themselves and the guys. Oblivious to the plans being made against them, they strolled to the lounge with the smoothies in their hands when suddenly, 'Splash!' they were met with water balloons. They shrieked and tried to look for cover, however, the boys had them cornered.

"Seriously, don't you guys ever get tired of pranks?" Madison yelled.

"Nope, we love it. In fact new ideas come to us every day." Josh responded.

"Ugh!! You are so infuriating." Maddie grumbled.

While Josh was still making smart remarks, Olivia saw a hose behind her. She quickly ran to turn the water on and sprayed it on Josh then

the rest of the guys.

Madison and Sophia whooped. "That's our girl."

It turned into a full water fight that lasted for hours.

When they were exhausted, they went to the heated pool to warm up.

Later that afternoon, Justin had dozed off on the vibrating massaging chair and was now snoring while the others were at the lounge except Josh who was with Justin in the living room watching a movie he missed.

"Jordan, how is Justin really?" Olivia asked concerned.

"I'm worried about him. I see him trying to hide the pain and pretending that he is alright. Mum suggested admitting him in the hospital but he outrightly refused, saying that he was not going to spend his life in the hospital. He would rather live his life the way he wants, than stay in the hospital even if it's not likely for him to live beyond thirty years." Jordan said with tears in his eyes.

"What!!?" Maddie exclaimed in shock.

Jordan's eyes widened. He was not supposed to tell them yet, Justin decided he would tell them when he was ready.

"Damn! I wasn't meant to tell you guys, please don't let Justin know that you are aware." he pleaded. "The doctor told our parents when they got to the hospital and our parents told us when we got home. They said the doctor did not tell us because of the state we were in and they were not with us at the time."

"We are his best friends, why did he not tell us?" Sophia sobbed.

"Probably because it's bad news and he did not know how to tell us." Olivia said wiping tears from her eyes, "Guys, we will do something about it."

Jordan wiped his tears and said, "Enough of this mood dampener, Justin would hate this. Let's do something fun."

They went inside to get Josh and Justin. They had decided to have a

swimming match with Justin being the referee.

"What kind of style are you guys doing?" Justin asked.

"Breast stroke" said Madison

"Freestyle!" Jordan exclaimed.

"Back stroke", said Olivia.

"Anyone is ok", said Steve who was the captain of the swimming team in school.

"Butterfly stroke", said Sophia.

"Let's do all the styles", Josh said.

They all responded at once.

"Guys, freestyle is the fastest, so it will determine which one of us is faster." Jordan suggested.

"Josh, this is a friendly match, we won't do all the styles." Justin told Josh.

"Come on, it will be fun!" Josh whined.

Justin sighed in response "How many rounds?" He asked.

"4 rounds! That way we would do what everyone wants. Freestyle should be the last round since it's the fastest stroke like Jordan said" Steve suggested.

"That's perfect." Josh grinned.

"Thank you" Steve gave a deep bow.

"Alright, get in your positions. We are starting with back stroke." Justin announced.

They all lined up sideways and got in their positions.

On your mark, get set, ready and go! Justin blew his whistle.

They dived in immediately. Few seconds later, Steve emerged the winner followed by Josh, Jordan, Madison, Sophia and lastly Olivia.

It wasn't surprising since back stroke was Steve's specialty.

"Don't get too excited Steve, there are 3 more rounds to go. It doesn't matter that you are the captain of the swimming team."

Jordan told Steve.

"I'll like to see you try, Dan" Steve said with a smirk.

"Ollie, it's a miracle--", Justin started, intending to tease Olivia about coming in last place.

Olivia interrupted him, "Don't start with me J, swimming for me is an exercise not a competition."

"Why did you participate in the first place?" Jordan asked

"Because." She replied

"That's not a reason or even a reasonable response." Justin said.

"Well that's my response, deal with it." She glared at them.

"Ok" Justin said putting his hands up in surrender.

"Let's finish up then", Steve said.

They got in their positions again with Olivia still participating. On the second round, Jordan emerged the winner of butterfly stroke and he was not quiet about it, until the third round where Madison surprisingly was the winner of breast stroke. The guys kept their mouth shut while the girls whooped and celebrated with Maddie. In their minds, they thought "How could a girl beat us, we are guys!" but they never dared to say that out loud.

The final round came about and Jordan said looking at Olivia, "The person who comes in last place in this round will do the dishes for the whole weekend."

"Deal" everyone chorused except Olivia.

"What is it with you and dishes?" Olivia huffed.

"I don't like doing dishes" Jordan simply replied.

"Why did you look at me?" Olivia glared at him.

Jordan gulped, "No reason."

"I'm not going to finish last, just watch out." She promised him.

Justin announced, "The last round is the freestyle, the winner gets to order the others around in addition to the last person doing the dishes of course."

"Come on!" Olivia exclaimed "We did not agree to that."

"We just did now besides I am the referee so my word is final." Justin said grinning from ear to ear.

"Look at how excited you are. You are really enjoying this, aren't you?" Olivia asked.

Justin gasped, "How can you tell?" He laughed, "Yeah I am enjoying it."

"Doofus" Steve teased.

"How could you?" Justin said dramatically. He turned to his brother, "Jordan, deal with him." he whined and pouted.

Jordan laughed and smacked Steve on the head. "Don't say such things to my brother, dork."

"You guys are unbelievable." Madison said.

"You love it." Jordan said

"I wonder why." She replied rolling her eyes.

"Ok guys", Justin grabbed a hairbrush, "Time is ticking, who is going to be the 2019 winner of the global swimming competition?" he said talking into the brush pretending to be the host of the event.

The others got into play with him. They jogged on the spot doing some stretches.

Justin continued, "The competitors are on fire tonight, ready to be crowned. They are lined up in preparation to overcome and emerge the winner. Competitors! On your mark, get set, ready, GO!"

They dived in immediately. Steve was leading until Olivia surprisingly and shockingly overtook him.

Everyone gaped at Olivia with their mouths wide open. Olivia came out of the water flipping her hair from side to side.

"What in the world just happened?" Steve asked shell shocked.

"Don't be so dramatic" Olivia guffawed. "I have been swimming from my mother's womb so naturally I'm a born swimmer." She laughed alone at her joke. "You get it?" she asked them, "born swimmer?" they nodded their heads sideways.

She sighed, "You guys are no fun and just because I said sports were not my thing doesn't mean I can't be good at one of them."

They stood still in shock.

"Oh come on guys, it's not that big of a deal. Snap out of it." Olivia shook each of them.

Steve was the first to recover. "I want a rematch." he demanded.

Olivia turned to him with her arms crossed "Uh uh, boy, don't be a sour patch. Just accept that I won this round."

"But that's impossible!" he exclaimed.

"Why?" she asked. She had her hands on her hips and a 'don't mess with me look' on her face.

"Umm... because I'm in the swimming team and you are not?" he gulped.

"You were not surprised when Jordan or even Madison won the other rounds." She said

"They are involved in various sporting activities apart from the one they specialize in and they are very competitive." He defended himself quickly. "You are not."

Olivia shrugged. "I put in my all and I promised I won't come in, last place. Anyway, we have spent too much time on this match and I'm hungry. Toddlers, I'm off." She said and was on her way to get food when she turned back, "Tomorrow is Sunday so we have to be up and early to go to church." She said and walked out.

"That's true. It will be the first time in several years that I would go to church." Josh said.

"Me too." Justin added.

They all joined Olivia in the kitchen to eat but because Justin was on a special diet due to his health, his meal was different and consisted of a lot of vegetables and fruits, amongst other healthy things.

The next day, they were all dressed up for the Sunday service, looking amazing.

"Wow" Jordan exclaimed.

"I know, I don't think I have dressed up this much for a church service before." Justin said.

"Have you ever gone to church before?" Steve asked

"I think so. My mom's friend had her wedding in church and we were invited." Justin replied.

"Well, this is going to be a lifetime experience". Olivia promised. And indeed it was. They received so much of the word of God and it became clearer to them.

They all gave their lives to Christ when the altar call was made and Olivia was so full of joy that her friends were finally born again.

She began teaching them the word of God, helping them realize who they really are in Christ. She told them God's plan for them is of good and not of evil and that by Jesus' stripes, they were healed therefore sickness no longer has a place in their body. She also told them to mind the words they say, admonishing them to speak only faith-filled and positive words.

Chapter Five

Chapter Five

BREAKDOWN

Exams were fast approaching and Justin was stressed out already. He never struggled with his studies and he had always been one of the best students in school but nowadays he had to put extra effort to keep up because he got tired easily and his concentration level had dimmed. On a particular day at school, Justin was in the study room with his twin, Jordan, trying to understand what he was reading, but nothing seemed to be entering his brain especially with the nagging headache he was having. He stood up and started pacing.

●●● ————— ●●●
*Remember that we
 have the Holy Spirit
 now, so in spite of
 all ..., you are
 going to do
 excellently well.*
 ●●● ————— ●●●

"Justin. Chill out man. Don't beat yourself up" Jordan said worriedly. "This exam determines whether we graduate this year or not. I can't chill out." Justin said running his hands through his hair repeatedly. Jordan sat him down, "I am not going to see you collapse again because of trivial things like this. Remember that we have the Holy Spirit now, so in spite of all this, you are going to do excellently well. Ok?"

"Yeah, ok." Justin nodded. "Do you think I should tell the guys about how long I have to live?"

Jordan sighed, "Is this part of what has been eating you up and making you so restless. J, you can live for as long as you like, your life is no longer determined by the doctor's report." He paused. "I should have told you this sooner. I already told them about it, I did not mean to but it just slipped out when we were talking. Hope you're not mad?"

Justin took it in. "I'm not mad, I'm actually relieved. Wasn't really sure how I was going to break it to them."

Then, Jordan remembered that Josh wasn't there when they were talking. "Wait, I did not tell Josh because he wasn't with us when we talked about it?"

Justin's eyes widened.

At that moment, their friends walked in.

"We have been looking for you guys everywhere" Sophia exclaimed.

"I should have known you would be here." Madison said.

"The Valedictorian twins!" Josh joked but then he saw the twins' expression. "What is it guys?"

"Nothing" Justin replied quickly.

"Seriously, what happened?" Josh pushed.

Jordan shook his head at Josh to drop the matter.

"Justin?" Olivia pressed him to talk.

"It's nothing alright, just drop it!" Justin snapped.

Olivia moved back in shock but no one seemed to notice. Justin had never yelled at her. She had a lot on her mind already, specifically the surprising call she received earlier and she did not want to deal with any drama right now so she held herself back from retorting and stayed back quietly.

Justin caught Jordan's eyes which seemed to say 'we have to tell Josh.'

"I know." He spoke out loud.

"You know what?" Josh asked confused.

Justin groaned, "Great." He looked at Josh, "Don't be mad, alright?"

"What is going on, mad about what?" Josh frowned.

"The doctor said I wasn't likely to live beyond thirty years." Justin blurted out.

Silence.

"What?" Josh thundered. He turned to his friends and saw that they were looking at him with guilty expressions on their faces. "Did you guys already know about this?" They looked away. "And no one thought to inform me about this?" He questioned.

"It wasn't our place to tell you, Josh." Sophia said softly.

Josh turned to Justin. "You told them but you did not think I needed to know?" Josh asked.

"I wasn't the one who told them, it was Jordan. I would not withhold that kind of information from any of you." Justin defended himself.

"Yet you did. Were you even planning on telling us or were you just going to throw it all at us when it was too late?" Josh said angrily.

Justin winced as if the words literally stung him. Josh noticed but he was too hurt to care.

Jordan noticed it too and he stepped in before it got out of hands.

"Enough" he shouted. "Josh, that was uncalled for. We are sorry that you didn't know about it but now you know and arguments won't add anything to his life or stop what is happening, so please, just drop it." He said, adding the last part quietly.

At this time, the library was completely empty.

"Jordan wasn't even supposed to tell us, it slipped out." Madison explained hoping it would calm him down.

"I'm sorry, I was going to tell all of you together but I did not know how. Jordan beat me to it but you were not there when he broke the news to them." Justin added.

Steve said to Josh, "Don't blame him. If I was in his shoes, I wouldn't have known how to tell you guys too. That's not the kind of thing you'll want to blurt out to your friends or anyone like that."

The anger drained out of Josh. He looked like he was going to burst into tears but he held himself. "It's okay man. I'm sorry for snapping." He thought for a second and said, "You know, I don't really care what the doctor's report is anymore. You are going to live your life to the fullest for God and we will all be there with you."

Justin broke down in tears. "You guys make me cry more than any girl I know."

They laughed.

"You guys are the best." Justin said with a huge smile on his face.

"Of course we are." Josh said.

"Group hug!" Sophia exclaimed.

"No thanks, I'm good" Justin said, slowly moving out of their reach. They ignored him and came together for a group hug forcing Justin into it. Olivia joined in the hug too because she needed it at that moment.

"This is too sappy for my liking." Justin grunted.

"Way to ruin the mood man." Jordan chuckled, not surprised at his brother's reaction.

Madison noticed Olivia had been quiet since they spoke to Justin.

"Ollie, are you ok?" She asked concerned.

Olivia snapped out of her thoughts, "Yeah, I'm fine." "You guys go ahead, I'll be right back." She said and walked out of the library briskly.

"Where are you going?" Sophia shouted but Olivia was out of earshot.

"Do you know what's up with her?" She asked the rest of her friends.

"What I know is that when a girl says "I'm fine"; it really means "No, I'm not." Jordan said.

"How in the world did you arrive at that conclusion?" Madison asked.

"I read it somewhere" Jordan replied sheepishly.

Madison sighed. "Honestly I don't know what to do with you anymore."

"But it may be true maybe not every time, but I have not seen Olivia like that before." Jordan defended.

"Did I do something wrong?" Justin asked.

"Why do you ask? What happened?" Steve asked.

"I don't know but she became quiet ever since she spoke to me, and I kind of yelled at her." Justin said.

"I don't think that's it." Madison thought. "I wonder if it has something to do with the call she received before we found you and

Jordan." She said aloud.

"Call? What call?" Justin asked.

"I'm not sure but I think I saw 'Dad' when it rang. Then, her demeanor changed." Maddie recalled.

"Sad or happy?" Josh asked.

"Withdrawn" Maddie answered.

"Ok, that's an issue then. Should we go after her or give her space?" Sophia asked.

"Let's give her some space; we'll go after her when ten minutes is up." Steve suggested.

Everyone nodded in agreement.

Ten minutes was up a long time ago and after several minutes of searching different places in school, Olivia was nowhere to be found.

"We can't find her anywhere." Sophia said.

"She definitely left school." Justin said convinced. He tried her line again but it was switched off.

"What should we do? We can't leave school now; the principal will be on our heads." Maddie asked worriedly.

"What time is it?" Jordan asked.

"1:30pm. Why?" Josh asked.

"School closes 2:30pm, we can't wait till then. We have to come up with something to tell Mrs. Davis so we can leave school." Justin said. Thoughts were running through his mind on how they could leave and if Olivia was alright.

Josh scoffed "All of us? You seriously think she would allow all of us leave?" Josh asked.

"That's true." Justin thought for a second and said, "Well then, some of you will have to stay back."

"I'm not staying back." Madison said quickly.

"Me neither." Jordan added.

"Alright then I, Sophia and Steve will stay back and cover for you guys if need be." Josh said.

"Cool. Now, what do we tell Mrs. Davis.?"

"I'm sorry to suggest this but you could use your health as an excuse." Sophia said.

"It's ok. What about Maddie and Jordan?" Justin asked.

"J is my twin, if he has to go home because of his health, I'll definitely be there with him. She can't even argue with me on that one." Jordan smugly said.

"That leaves Maddie." Justin turned to Maddie.

"I'm thinking" she said with one hand crossed while the other hand was on her chin. Suddenly, she brightened up, "I got it. I'll take care of it, don't worry." She smirked. They nodded.

"We'll meet you guys back at our house." Justin said to them.

"About our cars, can one of you take my car home for me? We would be using Jordan's car." Maddie told them and they hurried to Jordan's car.

Justin was banned from driving until 'further notice' which meant until they could find a cure or something for him, so he had been riding with Jordan to school.

After they had told the principal their sob stories which she bought or chose to believe, no one really knows, they were given exits to leave school.

"Do you guys have any idea of where she could be?" Jordan asked.

"We could try her house." Justin suggested.

"Would you go to your house if you had family issues and needed to escape for a while?" Maddie asked him.

"You sound like you know what is going on?" Justin accused.

"I told you her Dad called and her mood dampened which implies family issues." Maddie defended.

"You said you were not sure." Justin argued.

"Honestly, I don't see a reason for any arguments. Is today 'argue with Justin day'? First, it was Josh which I understand but now I don't see the point." Jordan cut in shutting them up. "Let's just go to

her house."

They arrived at Olivia's house and what happened next came as a shock to them.

"Get out" was the first thing they heard when they got to the doorstep and when the door opened, a good-looking man walked out, entered his sports car and drove off while Olivia's mom went up the stairs to her bedroom and slammed the door. All of this happened in less than a minute. When Olivia looked up and saw her friends, she was relieved.

"Hey guys" she greeted with a tired smile. "Give me a second and we'll go somewhere less intense and more comfortable." She ran up the stairs to grab her things and made sure her mom would be okay while she was out.

"Let's go" was all she said when she came down.

They entered Jordan's car and went to the nearest fast food, at Olivia's request.

They ordered their junks and ate except Justin who only had water. After they had gobbled down their food, they waited in silence for Olivia to explain.

She took a deep breath before she began. **"I never told you guys this because I didn't think it was necessary and it was my past so there was no reason to bring it up but this was what actually led to my being born again. My father left when I was 13 and I was hurt, very hurt that we were not enough for him. I did a lot of things back then when he left, hoping that would get his attention and he might come back. Nothing worked. Weeks turned into months and months turned into years. There was no sign of him but I never erased his number from my memory because I had hope. My mum and I were wrecks until one day we came to know the Lord and our lives changed forever and I let go of all the pain and anger I felt towards him and forgave him."**

Then she chuckled humorlessly, "Now, all of a sudden, my father calls me to say that he is back... and when I saw him, I wanted to run to him and hug him, telling him that I missed him but I restrained myself. Yes, I forgave him but I did not forget. I was protecting myself from getting hurt again the next time he decided to leave. My mum, on the other hand, definitely has some pent up feelings in her. She told him to get out despite his pleadings that he had changed. You know what the funny thing was, immediately my mum told him to get out, he walked out without hesitation. It was like he was trying to free himself of the guilt of leaving the first time so when my mom said to leave, he took it as 'she told me to go, I am not at fault this time' or maybe that's just how I see it. I have not spoken to him yet and I don't know when I will. Right now, I have not wrapped my head around what happened, I think I'm still in shock and I don't want to face it yet." She explained.

They reacted differently when she was done. Justin clenched and unclenched his fist, trying to control the urge to march up to her father and shake him till he couldn't feel himself. Jordan gripped the table tightly to the point of cracking it and Maddie looked like she was about to punch someone.

"I'm going to get a milkshake, you guys want any?" Olivia asked like she had not just disclosed the story of her life to them.

They looked at her as if she had grown horns on her head. When she did not get a response, she sauntered off to get her milkshake.

"What just happened?" Madison whispered.

"I think that's her defense mechanism. She is trying to hold it together." Justin thoughtfully spoke.

"Like you did when mum told you what the doctor said. You went all quiet on us and the next thing; you asked if we wanted to go to Disney land." Jordan chimed in.

"Are you serious?" Olivia sniggered behind them startling them.

Madison squeaked, Jordan jumped and hit his knee on the table

while Justin choked on the water he was drinking.

When the coughing fit subsided, he croaked, "Damn woman, don't sneak up on us like that."

"It wasn't my fault you guys were so engrossed in your conversation." Olivia teased, sipping her chocolate milkshake. "But you seriously said that?" she chortled.

"It was the first thing that came to my mind." Justin shrugged.

"Unbelievable", Olivia shook her head. Then she said quietly without looking at them, "Thanks for coming".

"No problem at all" They chorused.

"It's the least we could do compared to what you've done." Maddie said.

The twins nodded in agreement.

"How did you guys leave school?" Olivia asked.

"We cooked up a story." Justin answered.

"Meaning you lied?"

"When you put it that way, yeah." Jordan said.

"We were worried. You were not answering your calls and we did not have any clue of what happened to you." Justin stated.

"Thanks guys. I needed you here. What happened to the others?"

"To make our story believable, we suggested they stayed back."

Maddie explained.

Olivia checked her time and saw it was getting late.

"I've got to go; my mum should have cooled off by now."

"Me too, our parents would be worried." Jordan said.

They paid for their lunch and dropped Olivia at her house before going home with Madison since the rest of their friends were coming over.

"Finally, we have been here for hours." Josh said once they got in.

"As usual, the drama king speaks." Maddie teases.

"So what happened?" Sophia asked once they settled down.

Justin explained while Jordan and Maddie chimed in at some points.

"Wow, that's a lot." Steve remarked when they were done. They were still talking when the twins' parents showed up.

"Hey mum, dad." Justin greeted. "You're back early"

"Yeah. We wanted to see how our sons are doing."

"Hello Mr. and Mrs.--", their friends were about to greet when their mum cut in.

"Don't finish that. I told you to call us by our names." Mia remarked.

"Sorry", they said sheepishly.

"Son, we want to talk to you for a bit." Zach, their dad said to Justin.

"I'll be right back." Justin told his friends and left with his parents.

"We booked an appointment with one of the best cardiologist for you tomorrow." His dad went straight to the point.

"But Dad I'll miss school. What of the weekend?"

"My son's health is more important than school right now besides you're smart so you'll catch up." Zach said.

"It's getting hard to concentrate." Justin muttered under his breath but his mum heard him.

"That's the more reason you have to see the doctor soon; the earlier, the better."

"Ok. Will Jordan be there with me?"

"No sweetie, he has to be in school." Mia answered.

Justin wanted to argue but he clamped his mouth shut.

"I'm not getting admitted no matter what."

"We'll talk about that after your appointment and I'm hiring a help for the house so you don't have to strain yourself. Ok?" Zach said.

Justin nodded and went back to the living room where his friends were scattered on the couch and floor talking.

"I won't be going to school tomorrow." Justin announced.

"What! Why?" Jordan questioned.

"Dad booked an appointment with the doctor."

"No school for me then." Jordan smiled.

"Sorry to burst your bubbles but Mum said you have to go to school."

"Aww come on" Jordan complained.

Maddie threw a pillow at him. "Please, shut up."

"Meanie" he retorted.

"We'll come see you after school with Olivia." Maddie said.

Justin nodded. "Lord, I know you always hear me. Thank you for all things work together for my good. I'm going to graduate with my friends this year and I am living in perfect health in Jesus Name. Amen." He prayed in his mind.

"Dad is also getting a help for the house." He told his twin.

Jordan whooped. "Yes! Finally!!"

"Tchh! Lazy bones." Steve drawled.

"You are not the one cleaning your house so don't say a word. You don't know how tiring it gets."

"Are you guys planning on sleeping over?" Justin asked.

Josh stood up. "Nope, I'm not. It's a school night and my parents want me home tonight. As a matter of fact, I have to get going now. Bye guys."

The others said they had to leave too and informed the twins' parents that they were leaving.

When they left, Justin called Olivia to find out how she and her mum were doing.

The phone rang once, twice, thrice. Justin was about to cut it off when Olivia picked.

"Hey J"

"Ollie, I thought you were not going to pick up."

"Sorry, I just got to my phone."

"Are you ok?"

"Yeah. My mum and I talked and have decided to see my Dad."

"That's great, right?" Justin asked unsure.

"I think so."

"I'm not coming to school tomorrow; I have a doctor's appointment. I really don't want to go because of what the doctor's report might

be." He confided.

"J, irrespective of what anyone might tell you, it's only what God says about you that is true and that is what matters. Things may seem like nothing is working out because that's how the devil works, he likes to instill fear and doubt in people especially Christians, but you must stand firm in the word and build your faith up."

Justin was quiet for a while then he chuckled. "You always know the right things to say."

"I know I'm a boss like that." Olivia laughed.

"Sure" Justin drawled. "Hey, I'm sorry for snapping at you earlier" he apologized feeling guilty about it.

Olivia responded "It's okay J, I know you didn't mean it and you had a lot on your plate then." Justin nodded then he realized she could not see him. "Thanks for understanding." He said.

"Goodnight J, I'll come see you after school."

"Goodnight Ollie."

●●● ————— ●●●
*it's only what God
 says about you that
 is true and that is
 what matters.*
 ●●● ————— ●●●

Chapter Six

Chapter Six

CALM BEFORE THE STORM

The next day, preparations for exams were on, full mode. While students of Citadel High were in the libraries studying and the classrooms for tutorials, Justin was in the hospital trying not to claw out the eyes of the doctor who was sitting in front of him, staring at him with pity in his eyes. He was supposedly the best cardiologist in the state and one of his father's acquaintances. "Justin", he said not bothering to use a formal tone. "It would be best for you if you got admitted to the hospital. Your health is deteriorating at an alarming rate." He said after he had carried out series of tests on Justin.

"No thanks. I'm good." He replied with a fake smile.

"Justin, it's for your own good." His Dad pleaded beside him.

"Dad, you promised I wouldn't be admitted if I didn't want to."

"I didn't promise. I said we would talk about it after your appointment."

Justin huffed and slouched in his seat. He did not want to have this discussion with his Dad again.

"It's like you don't care what happens to you." His Dad snapped. In his opinion, Justin was indifferent about his health and this bothered him a lot more than he let on.

"Of course I care Dad. I just don't want to spend my time in the hospital where nothing is going to work."

"Don't say that." His Dad countered.

"It's true Dad." He told his Dad in a soft tone, and then turned to the doctor "I have been told there is nothing the hospital can do for me again and it's okay because my trust is not in you guys." He said to his Dad, "There are better places to spend your money besides I believe God for a miracle. --"

"There is a new drug trial I want to test on you. I am hoping it will work since ordinarily, there is no cure for this disease but it can be managed if you have a proper diet and the right medications." The

doctor cut in.

"I am not going to be your experiment." Justin said calmly.

"Justin!" Zach rebuked.

"What if it makes things worse, Dad? I supposedly have few years to live; I don't want it to be cut down. Are all the drugs I have been taking not enough?" Justin argued.

"He's one of the best doctors, J. You can trust him, your mum and I do."

"Yeah, I'm sure you do but I don't. It's not like he is God."

"Why hasn't this God that you trust so much healed you yet?" The doctor asked.

"It's a work in progress which is faster than any progress you'll make on me." Justin retorted.

"If you just stop being negative about this, maybe we'll make more progress."

"There you go again with your 'maybes'; I don't trust you with my life, Doc because you people are full of uncertainties. You were the same set of people that determined how long I have to live as if you have any right." Justin said angrily and stormed out, slamming the door behind him.

His Dad ran after him. "Son, is that what this is all about?"

"What are you talking about?" Justin heaved.

"The number of years you have to live?" Zach stated.

Justin slid down to the floor and wrapped his arm around himself. "I don't want to die, Dad. I still have so much I want to do."

His Dad hugged him. "I know. Look at me" Justin looked into his Dad's eyes. "Nothing is going to take you away from me, absolutely nothing." He said with conviction.

"I am trusting God with you, J." Justin looked at his Dad, shocked. Zach chuckled. "Your mum and I talked one night and she told me how Olivia spoke to you guys about Christ. We gave our lives to Him that same night."

"Look, I trust God for a miracle but let's also try this drug trial, ok?"

Justin looked at Zach for a minute and said, "Let's make a deal?"

"What deal?" Zach asked cautiously.

Justin smiled. "It's nothing serious. Just allow me to finish my exams first. After that, I promise I'll get admitted."

His Dad thought for a second. "Deal. Don't go back on your words J."

"I won't, I promise."

It was after school when six teenagers lined up in front of a mansion ringing the bell of the house. Justin opened the door and saw his twin and best friends with a huge smile on their face and chocolates - his favorite chocolate- snickers dark chocolate.

"Guys!" Justin exclaimed.

"I know, we are the best." Maddie grinned.

"You guys know me so well."

"Where are mum and dad?" Jordan asked realizing that Justin was home alone.

"They are at work."

"Work? I thought you had an appointment"

"Dad took me to the hospital. He had to go to the company later to resolve some issues."

So what's the verdict?" Josh asked referring to his appointment with the doctor.

"Same old, same old except they have a new drug trial they want to test on me." He sighed.

"Drug trial? What happened to all the ones you've been taking?" Olivia asked.

Justin replied in an exasperated voice. "That's what I said but apparently this one is the real deal." His voice dripped with sarcasm.

"Ok" Olivia said lost in her thoughts.

Maddie noticed Olivia's faraway look, "What are you thinking about?"

"Oh nothing. It's not important." Olivia responded, not wanting to

voice her thoughts. She was thinking about the agreement she had with her mum to give her father a chance.

"When are you meeting with your Dad?" Justin asked as if reading her thoughts.

She stared at him in shock but quickly masked it. "Next week."

Josh looked at her in surprise, "What! You are meeting with him? I thought-"

Olivia cut in, "My mom and I decided to do so. I don't want to have regrets later." She kept it short, not wanting to delve into the whole matter.

Josh nodded in agreement. "That's understandable"

"I have a question" Jordan suddenly said.

"That's so random" Josh said

Jordan ignored him and continued, "Do you think we could be just like Jesus was, when He walked the earth?"

"What brought about this question?" Olivia asked.

"I have just been having so many thoughts lately" Jordan replied vaguely.

"I mean, Jesus actually died for people that did not know or care about him and the same people that saw his tremendous miracles and compassion for others were the same set of people that said He should be crucified. Apart from not understanding the wickedness of man, I certainly cannot

understand how God loved them so much that He allowed His only son to die for them." Jordan continued.

Olivia smiled. When she was still a babe in Christ, she had these kinds of thoughts too. "It's because of that love that He allowed it to happen. You should read **1 Corinthians 13** in various bible translations, and then



*It is also because
of Jesus'
resurrection that
we can receive
salvation and have
eternal life*



you would understand God's love better." She spoke with certainty. "It is also because of Jesus' resurrection that we can receive salvation and have eternal life. It was necessary for Him to die for us to live. The Bible also says that as Jesus is, so are we in this world so to answer your question, we can be just like Jesus."

Later that day, after the twins' friends had all gone home, the twins sat down to talk.

"When I was having fellowship with the Holy Spirit yesterday, I had a vision" Jordan started

"A vision?" Justin asked "About what?"

"You"

Justin became quiet. "What was it about?"

"Your healing" Jordan smiled.

Justin lit up, "Really? That's great"

"Yeah and I believe it, so no matter what the situation looks like, I'm going to hold on to this and believe you're coming out of all this."

Justin nodded.

"I promised Dad that after exams, I would get admitted."

"How do you feel about it?"

"I have mixed feelings, I guess. I don't want Dad getting so worried about me but I also don't want to spend any time in the hospital besides hospital food tastes horrible."

Jordan chuckled. "I agree but it might help" Justin opened his mouth to argue but Jordan cut him off. "I know but just hear me out. All this right now is hectic for you and you need proper rest."

"I am getting enough rest here"

"Yeah right, what time do we come back from school?"

"2.30"

"Nope, that's when school closes. When do we actually get home from school?"

"Umm 4?" Justin asked unsure.

"Close enough and when you get home, do you sleep?"

"I do"

"When?"

"What's up with these questions?"

"My point is, you are supposed to be resting but you don't. I think being in the hospital will help you better because you won't be doing anything but resting and eating healthy."

"By healthy, do you mean veggies, fruits and whole grains because that's not food. I haven't eaten proper food for months."

"You get my point anyways." Jordan said.

"Point taken but I won't be thinking of any of that until after my exams."

"That's alright with me." Jordan stood up. "I'll take my own advice and go to bed early. Goodnight J, sweet dreams."

"Sweet dreams? You never say that. Get out Dan, stop being creepy."

Jordan gasped. "Creepy? I'm just trying to show my love for you."

"Please, get out." Justin threw his basketball at him while Jordan ran out cracking up with laughter.

Exams finally arrived and Justin was very calm compared to the day before, when he almost had a panic attack because of nerves.

Normally, he never gets nervous due to his confidence in his smart brain but nowadays he wasn't so confident. Today, however, he was sure of himself because he had faith in God that his sleepless nights will not be in vain.

Every paper was a breeze for him and he walked out with a huge grin on his face.

His twin, Jordan came out after him. "How did it go?"

Justin laughed. "I'm graduating Dan. Careful, I just might be the valedictorian of our class."

"In your wildest dreams J, but it won't be surprising if you are."

"Of course it won't." Justin smirked.

"You're so full of yourself." Maddie said behind them.

They both jumped.

"Eavesdropping is a bad habit." Justin reprimanded.

"It's not eavesdropping if you are talking loud enough for anyone to hear you." She retorted.

"I'm not doing this with you, I'm too hungry." Justin said and walked off to find something to eat.

"Hungry? That's a good sign, right?" Maddie asked after he left.

"Yeah, it is. He hasn't had much of an appetite lately." Jordan replied.

"I don't blame him, if I had to eat only veggies, I wouldn't have an appetite either." She said.

Jordan smiled but it didn't reach his eyes.

Maddie noticed his expression, "I'm so sorry. That was insensitive of me."

"It's okay, Maddie. It's not that, I just remembered he is getting admitted soon and it really dawned on me that he might stay there for a while."

"Admitted? When?"

"I don't know but he promised Dad it would be after exams."

"Where are the others anyways" Jordan asked changing the subject.

"They should be getting out anytime now."

Olivia and the others walked out right then with smiles on their faces.

"I take it that it went well." Jordan asked. They all nodded.

Just then, Justin called. "Hey, where are you? I turned back to see that you guys were not there. I'm at Starbucks by the way."

"Sorry, we were waiting for the others. We'll meet you there in a minute."

"Alright. Hurry up." Justin said and the line went off.

"J said we should meet him at Starbucks."

"Good, I'm starving" Josh said.

"When are you not?" Maddie asked

Josh stuck out his tongue at her

"Very mature" she drawled.

"As much as I love you guys bickering, J is waiting for us." Sophia said.

"I don't bicker" Josh argued.

Everyone walked away, ignoring him.

Five minutes later, they were seated with their orders.

Justin got a low-fat blueberry muffin, Jordan ordered a cinnamon bun, and Josh and Steve got a chocolate croissant while Madison and Olivia got a double chocolate chunk brownie. Each of them had coffee with the snacks.

"When you said you were hungry, this was not what I was expecting." Jordan told Justin

"It's not my fault I was craving this", he said stuffing his mouth with the muffin.

"Besides our exams which we did great on, who has any news?" Sophia asked.

"Girls and their gossips." Steve said shaking his head

Sophia rolled her eyes. "Shut up"

"I have good news. My mum and I talked with my Dad and we sorted things out." Olivia said smiling.

"Really, that's great." Maddie exclaimed.

"So will he be staying with you guys now?" Justin asked.

"No, they are not opening that chapter of their lives again but I'm cool with it because he has me during some weekends and holidays."

"Are you sure you're cool with it?" Jordan asked.

Olivia chuckled. "I really am. I can't force them to get back together, they both closed that book a long time ago but they have sorted out their differences and are friends I guess. If along the way, they decide to develop feelings for each other and get together, that will be great, but for now, I'm really okay with it."

"Wow" they chorused.

Olivia laughed.

"There's something you guys should know" Justin said when they

quieted down.

"What is it?" Josh asked.

"I'll be staying in the hospital for some time."

"Oh..." Olivia mumbled, "When?"

"I'm not sure, next week...maybe"

"That's a dampener." Josh said.

Justin chuckled without humor. "Yeah, yeah it is."

"Come on guys, cheer up. Don't let this dampen our good mood; we know that J will get better." Sophia spoke up.

"She's right guys." Olivia added then she turned to Justin, "We'll come see you everyday so you won't ever be bored, in fact, you'll get tired of us and when visiting time is over, we'll look for a way to sneak in and have a sleepover." She finished with a smile.

They laughed.

"Tell me you're kidding" J asked

"Not at all" She replied smirking.

"We'll make it happen, trust us. We are prank masters after all, so a little bit of sneaking in should not be difficult." Jordan smirked.

He bumped his fists with Justin's.

"Sure" Justin replied. Then, he stood and clinked his half empty cup of coffee "Now that we've gotten that out of the way, I'll like to make a toast to 'being a graduate'." He said in a formal fake British accent. His friends joined him and clinked their cups, "to being a graduate", they hailed.

They walked out laughing and shoving each other while the rest of the customers looked at them like they had grown horns.

They went back to school to pack up their things from the lockers since school was unofficially closed till the graduation ceremony.

"We need a week off to relax before Justin goes to the hospital which reminds me... will you not be around for graduation then?" Steve asked.

"Of course I will. Nothing is stopping me from attending my own

graduation where I'll in fact be the valedictorian."

"I concur except with the last part."

"This is 21st century Josh; no one uses the word 'concur' anymore."

"No, you don't use the word 'concur' but I do because I am a very formal person"

"You are far from being formal." Maddie argued.

"Guys!!" Olivia huffed. "You tend to steer away from the main topic a lot."

"Sorry" They smiled sheepishly.

"Where are we going? The Lake house again or...?" Olivia asked.

"We'll think of something" Justin replied.

"Okely dokely" Josh grinned.

They turned to look at him.

"What? It sounded funny in my head" he defended.

"It's okie-dokie not whatever you said. If you're going to say stuff like that, at least get it right."

Maddie, as usual, retorted. "And keep it in your head because we definitely do not want to know what goes on in that brain of yours."

"Neither do I" he grumbled then thought about what he said, "Wait, that came out wrong. I want to know what goes on in my brain-" he droned on while everyone else ignored him.

It was the usual banter for the two. Josh says something ridiculously stupid and Maddie tries to keep him in check.

"-don't you?" Josh asked but the others had blocked him out.

"Yeah sure" Jordan replied not caring to ask what his question was.

Josh grinned, "See, he cares." he said to Maddie. Maddie rolled her eyes in response.

The others snickered. They were used to him being like this, he was more 'not normal' than he was normal and they didn't mind one bit. Josh's jovial attitude- the fact that he could light up a room with a word- was what drew them to him when they were kids.

"What were we talking about again?" Sophia asked Olivia beside her.

"Our relaxation spot."

"Right. Does Justin seem okay to you?"

"What?" Olivia asked quietly in a panicked tone so that the others would not catch on. "Did you notice something wrong?"

"Relax. I'm just saying because he is starting to look kind of pale or maybe it's just my eyes."

"Knowing J, he would not exactly say when he is feeling off so I'll take your word for it. We should suggest going home so he could take a break, I'm pretty sure, this week has been a work load for him."

"Alright."

Just then, Jordan noticed them. "Hey, what are you guys whispering about over there?"

"I was saying we should get home since it's getting late." Olivia replied. Sophia looked at her but Olivia shook her head silently telling her to keep their conversation to herself.

"Aww come on, we deserve to stay out late. Exams are over, people." Sophia pinched him.

"Oww! What was that for?" Jordan pouted.

"Some of us are tired and need our beauty rest besides we are meeting up soon so what's the rush." Sophia said emphasizing on 'tired'.

"Right."

It was at that point that Justin stumbled but Steve was there to keep him from falling.

"Hey, you ok?" he asked worried.

"Yeah, I'm good. Just tripped over something I guess" he said in a convincing way, however, none of his friends bought it.

"You could have fooled me." Jordan muttered. Everyone looked at Justin with worried expressions.

"Come on! I'm fine, it's nothing serious." Justin whined.

"That is not a risk we are willing to take" Jordan bit back.

"You need to chill Dan" Justin snapped.

"Okay, that's enough" Josh cut in between them "Seriously, you both need to cut it out. Here is what will happen now, we'll all go home thankful to God about our exams then take a long nap because this week has been hectic and later on, we'll fix a date on when and where our fun will take place. Ok?" Josh looked at the twins in the eyes, daring any of them to argue again. No one was surprised by Josh's reaction because he could be very serious when he wanted to and anytime he got like this, everyone listened to him.

They nodded in agreement.

Josh grinned, back to his jovial self. "Great, I'll see you guys later." When they got home, Justin pleaded with Jordan not to tell their parents about what happened.

"I'm sorry but I can't do that. I won't make that mistake again of keeping things that has to do with your health from them."

"They would just get so worried again."

"I know and I'll prefer that happens, than you collapsing again because nothing was done." He said and left. Justin sighed and went to his room preparing for what was to come.

Chapter Seven

Chapter Seven

TROUBLES

What happened next came almost immediately. His parents burst into the room with his twin hot on their heels. The questions were thrown at him immediately.

"Sweetheart, are you ok? Do you feel pains anywhere? Are you dizzy? Do you need--"

"Mum" he cut her off, "I'm good now, okay. Please relax and breathe."

"You are going to the hospital immediately. Jordan, help him pack his stuff." His Dad said and was leaving to get the driver to help move the things to the car.

"Dad, please" Justin pleaded. "Not today, I'm okay I promise, I felt a little dizzy and it was because of the stress of exams, I'll go to bed right now but please can I not go to the hospital today? Please Dad." His Dad turned back and after staring at his son's face for a while, he sighed. "Ok but tomorrow we are going. No arguments, no complaints. You promised, remember?"

Justin started, "but-", he was cut off by his Dad's glare. "Fine, tomorrow then." He said resignedly.

"Come and eat your dinner first before you go to bed" His mum said.

"Okay mum, give me a minute." His parents left the room knowing that they needed space to talk.

Justin glared at his brother and his brother glared right back.

"What is your problem?" Jordan burst out in anger.

"My problem?" Justin scoffed. "You were the one running your big mouth to Mum and Dad."

Jordan stormed at him. "What was I supposed to do? Keep quiet and watch you suffering and smiling in pain? Well I'm not sorry that I told them because I care J. You don't know what it was like for me, to see you in the state you were on the day of the competition." He continued, his voice rising with every word he spoke. "It was shocking, J and I thought I was going to lose you so don't sit there

and glare at me like I did something wrong. You don't even talk to me about this stuff and I'm your twin. Justin, if you won't open up to me, then at least open up to any of our friends. We don't treat you differently because we don't see you differently so I don't know why in the world you won't just talk to us." He was yelling at this point. Justin sat there stunned, and then he said "I'm sorry but I just want you guys off my back."

"What?" Jordan asked quietly, shocked.

"Don't get me wrong, I love you guys but I feel like you guys hover around me too much. I just want this to be over so things can go back to the way they were." Justin said. He was always known to be strong and capable of handling anything; he was just like his father who knew how to hide his emotions and never showed any sign of weakness so what he was facing now was new to him. He disliked showing that he needed help but what he hated most was being weak even if it was to his twin- to round it up- he was an independent person who depended only on himself.

"What do you even mean by that? Get us off your back? Hover around you?" Jordan asked completely baffled. He thought they acted the same as they always did except with a little caution here and there which was obviously normal.

"Look, I don't mean this in a bad way but you guys need to give me some space" Justin stated.

"Could you please explain this to me because I'm quite lost as to what you're talking about? J, I remember you telling me that if there was one thing you were grateful for, it was that we didn't treat you differently so where is all this coming from now?"

"I know I did and I really was grateful back then but now, it's like you guys tip toe around me. I don't want to be treated like a fragile thing that is about to break. This is the reason I didn't want the whole school to know but it's what I'm facing right now."

Jordan was quiet. He really didn't know his twin felt this way. "Do

you want to call the others over to talk?"

Justin shrugged so Jordan called their friends over and they arrived in less than ten minutes.

"Hey, what's up?" Steve greeted.

"Take a seat guys, this might be a long discussion." Jordan said.

"Why is the mood like this and why do you look so serious?" Maddie asked. "Is everything alright with Justin?"

Justin scoffed, rolling his eyes. "Justin is seated right here, Maddie"

"She is just concerned, J" Jordan said exasperated.

"I appreciate it but I'm right here, is what I'm saying"

"Seriously, what's going on?" Maddie asked baffled by Justin's reaction.

"Should I do the honors or would you?" Jordan asked.

"Go ahead" Justin said indifferently. He was feeling very uncomfortable about having this discussion so he kept his mouth shut not wanting to open up.

Jordan explained to them and things got a little heated.

"Are you kidding? You're saying being worried about you is a burden for you?" Madison flared up.

Justin snorted, "No, I'm saying I need some space."

"What kind of space?" Maddie asked with exasperation.

Olivia got up, went to the kitchen and brought a cup of cold water.

She gave it to Madison and said "Calm down Madds, I'll talk to him."

Maddie complied. Then turning to Justin, Olivia crossed her arms, staring at him "It's clear that this has been on your mind for a while and I'm sorry we made you feel this way even though I'm not sure where all this is coming from, but I want you to see things from our own perspective too."

"I'm listening" Justin said.

"Justin, we are your best friends and Jordan is not just your family but practically your other half and we care about you a lot so when we found out what the doctor said, it wasn't easy for us to take in. It

didn't just hit you hard J- it hit all of us. So forgive us if we're not behaving the way you want us to but we are not going to stop making sure that you're alright, even if it means hovering over you and 'not giving you space', whatever that means." Olivia stated frankly.

Justin was quiet for a while, thinking about what she said. Then he turned to all of them sighing "I'm sorry. I didn't mean it that way. I'm honestly so thankful to you for everything, the thing is, this is so embarrassing and I don't want you seeing this side of me. I just want to forget that this is happening and shut everything out." He stated. Jordan walked up to him and slung an arm around him "We are your family and best friends. You don't have to hide anything from us. Embarrassing? You have done a lot of embarrassing things that are unreasonable and alarming, but this... this is about your health and it is the least embarrassing thing."

"Another reason why I don't say anything is because I am learning to speak only positive words." Justin added.

"No one is telling you to speak negative words, J. Of course, you should speak positive words but there is a way you can say things without using words that are not in line with God's word." Olivia said.

Jordan added "Take what happened today, for instance, you could have said 'Dan, bro, whatever you want to call me, the exams were awesome and as much as I love spending time with you guys, I need to get some rest so I can function properly-'"

Justin cut him off "Function properly? What am I? A robot?"

"Whatever, you understand what I'm trying to say. It's necessary for you to do word therapy J, but don't ever shut us out please." Jordan pleaded.

"I won't. I promise."

"Great, now let's go eat and after that, you should be snoring while I play video games and surpass all your high scores." Jordan grinned.

"I don't snore" Justin pointed out.

"Yeah, sure." Josh said.

"Mum sent me a text earlier to make sure all of you have dinner with us when we are done talking" Justin stated.

"Awesome, I love your mum's food" Steve said.

They all rushed downstairs and had a hearty meal before going to their homes.

It was late that night when Justin woke up with a sudden sharp pain in his chest. It was unbearable. He cried out in pain and his twin came rushing into the room.

Jordan was shocked to see his brother in so much pain with tears running down his face.

"J, what happened?" he panicked.

Justin cried out in response finding it hard to breathe.

Jordan ran to his parent's room praying under his breath.

"Mom, Dad, hurry! Something's wrong with J"

When they got to J's room, he was gasping for air while clutching his chest.

"Oh God, please don't let this happen." His mum cried out.

His Dad rushed forward and carried Justin down the stairs and into the car with Mia and Jordan hot on his heels.

He called the doctor to get a room ready for him. They got to the hospital within minutes. Jordan, still panicking, decided to video call his friends. They picked up and when they saw Jordan's expression, they bombarded him with questions.

"What's going on?"

"Is Justin okay?"

"Where are you now?"

"Is it Justin?"

"What's happening?"

It was like déjà vu all over again. He explained to them and they all wore stricken expressions.

●●● ————— ●●●
*Worrying is not
 going to make a
 difference here, but
 prayer sure would.'*
 ●●● ————— ●●●

"We'll be right there" Olivia responded.

"It's already late guys; I just thought you should know. You can come tomorrow."

"You are a joke if you think we would go back to bed after hearing this."

Madison said.

"Like I said, we'll be right there."

Olivia said again and they got off the line.

Justin was connected to various machines, even more than the first time he collapsed. He had an oxygen mask attached to his face and was unconscious at this point. Mia was sobbing uncontrollably while Zach was barking orders at the doctors, to do something about his son. Meanwhile, Jordan was speaking in tongues under his breath. They had to stay in the waiting room until the doctors were done with Justin. After a while, he went to calm his parents down and asked them to pray instead of worrying. "Worrying isn't going to make a difference here", he told them gently "but prayer sure will." About ten minutes later, after his parents had gone to see the doctors, their friends arrived. "Jordan" Maddie yelled from the entrance and ran towards him.

Jordan looked up; saw his friends and the tears he had been trying to hold, burst out.

They rushed to him and hugged him.

"Hey, hey it's going to be okay." Olivia consoled. "We'll get through this together"

When he had gotten a hold of himself, Sophia asked, "Is he awake?"

"No"

"Where are your parents?" Steve asked

"With the doctors."

"Can we go see him?" Olivia asked

"I think so. You guys go ahead, I'll wait here."

"What? Why?" She questioned, completely baffled.

"I can't see him looking like that, I just can't bear it. When he wakes up, I'll go see him."

They nodded and left.

Seeing him lying there and connected to those machines, with IV fluids in his vein, brought fresh tears to their eyes. However, they held it in, linked their hands together and began praying quietly in tongues while Jordan continued praying outside.

Meanwhile, in the doctor's office, the twins' parents were discussing the best option for their son.

"It would be best if he were admitted immediately so that we can begin the drug trial." The doctor advised.

"Will that help? We've been told nothing more can be done. It's not even cancer so how can nothing be done at all?" Mia asked, sniffing.

"Calm down madam. That's why we are going through with this drug trial. We are hoping it will bring about the desired result."

"Okay. We'll give it a go ahead but I want to know what triggered tonight's incident."

"From my reports, it shows that he suffered from hypotension, that is, low blood pressure which was caused by a lot of stress on his body and lack of adequate food in his body."

"Great!" Zach grumbled. "Our son has not been eating too and we don't even know about it."

"He takes his drugs so are you saying he takes it on an empty stomach?" Mia asked.

"Not necessarily, he may have taken a bite or two to put something in his stomach but it's not sufficient. Since he'll be staying here, we'll take care of it. Don't worry." The doctor assured them.

On their way to check up on Justin, they met their children's friends.

"What are you doing here?"

"Do your parents know you are here?"

They asked at the same time.

"Hi Mia, hi Zach", they greeted.

"What are you guys doing here at this time? Do your parents know you're here?" Mia asked again, alarmed.

"Yeah they know we are here and they send their regards." Josh replied.

"We could not go back to bed knowing Justin was here." Olivia answered Mia's question.

"Thank you for coming. He would be so glad to see you guys."

Just then, the doctor came to tell them that Justin was awake.

Justin opened his eyes and blinked to clear the haze. His parents' faces were the first thing he saw, followed by his twin and then his best friends. The doctor removed the oxygen mask and replaced it with a nasal canal to aid his breathing. He left the room to give them a private moment together.

"Hey J, how are you doing?" His mum asked softly, pecking his forehead.

"Mum! What happened?" Justin asked confused.

The doctor had told them that this might happen; he would feel disoriented and they needed to take it slow with him.

"It's okay sweetheart. You had a long stressful night but it's all good now."

"Why are all of you here?"

"We came to see our favorite person. Can't we at least do that?" Josh joked.

Justin managed a weak chuckle.

"How are you doing bro?" Steve asked.

"I'm good, I guess. It's kind of fuzzy up here though." He replied groggily tapping his head.

Jordan who had been quietly standing by the corner turned towards the door and briskly walked out.

Justin sighed "Can someone check up on him please?"

Olivia volunteered "I will go." She stepped out to see Jordan slide down to the floor with his head buried in his hands.

"Hey", she said softly, joining him on the floor.

He turned to her, "Hey Ollie." Jordan mumbled.

"Talk to me. What's up?"

"I'm good, just needed to take a breather."

"How are you feeling with all of this?"

Jordan chuckled without humor, "How do you expect me to feel? I can't wrap my head around the fact that this is happening to J. I only see these things happening to other people, why is this happening to him? It's unreal."

Olivia reached for him but he pulled back "I can't do this anymore Ollie, I'm tired of all this. Where exactly is God in this matter and what is He doing, watching all of this happen?" He sniffled. "I'm done Olivia; I can't watch Justin like this." He said with a defeated tone.

Olivia looked at him for a moment, before saying "**God is seated right on His throne and He is watching to see how you're going to handle this, because He has done his own part of sending Jesus and has given you everything you need to change any situation.** You have the power and authority in the Name of Jesus to effect changes so it's up to you to do something with all He has

●● ————— ●●
*You have the
 power and
 authority in the
 Name of Jesus to
 effect changes*
 ●● ————— ●●

given you. Your brother is in there still holding on and He's not giving up until he gets what he wants so don't think about letting go now Dan." She said firmly.

Olivia reached for him again, and this time she didn't let him pull away. "We have the victory already no matter what it looks like now, because the

devil has failed concerning his health so stay strong in faith. Okay?" She encouraged.

Jordan nodded, closed his eyes and took a deep breath. Then, getting up, he turned to Olivia

"Let's go", he said to her. "That's more like it" Olivia grinned.

She walked back with him to Justin's room and just as they were about to enter, the others came out.

"Your brother is waiting for you two." His mum, Mia said.

They nodded to her and walked in. Jordan looked around the room without meeting his brother's eyes.

"Hey" Justin greeted softly, trying to gauge his twin's reaction.

Jordan ignored him and Olivia shoved him, 'talk to him' she whispered.

"Come on, talk to me" Justin whined.

Jordan gave him the stink eye in return and Justin chuckled.

"You can't ignore me forever besides I am the one who needs pampering here."

"It's not a laughing matter J. I don't like this at all."

"Neither do I but I'm going to get through it so don't back out now."

"I'm not planning on."

Justin looked at him for a minute and said softly "We all heard what you said outside, Dan."

Jordan looked shocked for a second but his demeanor changed in that second, that Justin and Olivia thought they had imagined it. He looked at his feet with his fists clenched tightly by his side.

"Hey, it's okay" Olivia said beside him, holding his hands to get him to unclench them.

Jordan sighed. "I didn't mean what I said. I was just upset."

"I understand Dan, I really do. I have had those thoughts before but I didn't let them rule my mind, plus I know you're never going to back out because we are in this together." Justin stated. Jordan nodded in understanding, "Thanks J."

Then turning to Olivia, Justin said with sincere gratitude “Thank you Olivia, I heard what you said too and it uplifted me.”

Olivia beamed “You’re welcome J”

“How are you really feeling J?” Jordan asked.

“Better. I remember what happened now.”

Just as Jordan was about to respond, their parents walked in with the doctor.

“The doctor said that a pacemaker has to be put on your heart to regulate your heart rate.” His Dad said immediately.

“I have no idea what that means but it can’t be good, right?”

“It’s getting worse, we read your heart when you were rushed in and it’s a lot worse than before. Apart from the disease, you have an enlarged heart and unstable angina.” The doctor stated.

“Oh really, what else?” Justin asked indifferently.

“Justin!” Jordan scolded.

“What? The only thing these people seem to bring is bad news but I refuse to accept it. I know the life that I have and it’s not this life so excuse me if I’m not reacting the way you want me to.”

The doctor sighed, “I’ll leave you guys to talk but Justin has to stay here to at least prolong his life.”

“You don’t determine that.” Justin shot back.

The doctor sighed again and walked out. He did not know where Justin got his confidence from because his patients become cooperative and do everything they are told when they hear this kind of news.

“Don’t get mad at them J, they are just doing their job.” His mum said patting his arms.

Changing the subject, Justin asked “Where are the others?”

“They had to go home, their parents called for them.” Mia said

“At this time?” Jordan asked

“Don’t worry, their drivers came to pick them up and they promised

to call when they got home." His Dad told him.

"What about you, Olivia?" Justin asked.

Olivia who had been quietly observing the drama that unfolded suddenly stood up. "Me? I'll sleep over tonight. I called my mum earlier and she's cool with it."

"Sleep over? Here?" Justin asked

"Yeah, why?"

"Can she do that, won't these people complain?"

"Don't you know who your parents are, J? She can sleep over besides we are all staying the night." His Dad said

Justin grinned "Cool."

"Get some sleep, tomorrow is going to be a long day." Zach told him and left the room with Mia. They were going to arrange a room for them and the kids to stay over.

Justin felt drained from all the talking and drama. He stood up for the first time since he was rushed to the hospital, and tried to get his phone from the table beside him but his legs gave way.

"J!!!"

"Justin!"

Jordan and Olivia rushed to him in panic.

"Hey, relax. I'm alright. My legs just need some exercise."

"Are you sure? Should I get the doctor?" Olivia asked already on her way to the door.

"Is that even a question? We are getting the doctor." Jordan said, going for the door too.

"Guys!!" Justin reacted. "Please, don't. I'm good, I promise."

"I don't believe you." Jordan said. "Why? You may ask, because you tend to keep these things to yourself."

"We talked about this, Dan."

"Yeah, we did and see where it landed you. Talking is not going to cut it anymore, J."

"Can't you trust me?"

"No I can't, not when it comes to your health."

"Okay!" Olivia raised her voice. "You guys need to chill."

Jordan stormed out before anyone could say anything. He saw the doctor and his parents together and told them what happened. Their reactions were expected. They rushed back to Justin's room with the doctor shouting orders to three of the nurses with him.

"Sweetheart, are you okay?" Mia rushed to his side.

"I'm fine mum. Jordan was making a big deal out of nothing."

"We'll see if it was indeed nothing when the doctor checks you." His Dad retorted.

The doctor sighed "This is not surprising at all. Weakness or coldness in the leg is also a symptom. The fact that your heart is getting worse makes matters worse too."

"Oh my God" Mia cried. "What will happen to my baby boy?"

"We have to test the new drugs on him. There is a 50/50 probability that he will get better or worse." The doctor explained.

Zach turned to him, "I wasn't told this part about it making him worse."

"You have to understand" The doctor started, "his body system may react to it, but this is his only chance at all of getting better."

Justin was about to retort but Zach motioned him to keep quiet.

"Fine. Talk about me like I'm not even here." Justin muttered sulking.

"Don't I get a say in this? It concerns me after all", he asked out loud.

"Let the parents do the talking, Justin." His Dad said.

He grumbled and leaned on his pillow behind his back.

Olivia winked at him behind his parents back and signed 'we'll talk about this later'. Justin nodded and gave a little smile but when his eyes caught his twin's, he dropped the smile and turned his face away from him.

"Let's talk more about this in my office." Justin heard the doctor say to his parents when he turned back to their conversation.

His parents turned to Olive and Jordan. "We've got your rooms

prepared. When you're ready, let the nurse on duty know and she'll direct you to your rooms." Mia told them.

"Thank you Mia." Olivia responded.

"Thanks Mum." Jordan said

"Don't go to bed too late and Justin, the drug trial will start tomorrow so get ready." Zach told them and left the room with the doctor.

When they had gone, Jordan turned to Justin "That was real mature what you did back there."

Justin completely ignored him and turned to Olivia instead, "I don't want to do the drug trial. Why should I be used as an experiment for something that is not completely safe?"

Olivia responded, "I don't care what the doctor says, all I know is that you are coming out of this completely free."

Justin bumped his fists with hers smiling. "You also need to settle your issue with your brother. Talk to him."

Justin pouted and nodded his head sideways.

"Grow up and settle this now." Olivia said firmly.

Justin sighed in return and turned to his brother.

"Thank you. Now J, I did what I did because I don't want a repeat of what happened at the field that day and last night. If you are going to be mad at me for doing that, fine, but I'll do it again if need be."

Jordan told him in one breath and took a deep breath.

Justin clicked his tongue and said "I'm not mad at you because of that. It's because you said you can't trust me. We talked about this yesterday and we settled it but coincidentally it was the same night the issue occurred. I promised not to keep anything from you."

"Then why did you do what you did." Jordan said.

"How was I to know that my legs would give way? Besides, I just got up after having been in bed all night." Justin said in an exasperated feeling of annoyance.

Jordan chuckled "It is normal not to use our legs when in bed all

night because we are asleep J, well except for those that sleepwalk."
"Really, that's what you're going to dwell on now." Justin asked baffled.

Jordan smiled "Fine. I'm sorry I said I don't trust you."

"Apology accepted."

Olivia clapped her hands "Great, now that this is over, we need to gather everyone together to pray."

"Great idea. These negative vibes these people here are giving is not helping matters." Justin said

"I'm sure by the time they see the miracle that will happen here, their mindset that 'there is no God and it's only science that exists' will change." Jordan added.

"Now that that's settled, I am going to bed, it's quite late." Olivia said.

"See you tomorrow J."

They said their goodnights and went to bed.

Chapter Eight

Chapter Eight

BEST FRIENDS

The next day, their friends arrived as early as 7'o'clock. They could barely catch any sleep last night as they were eager to see Justin. Olivia and Jordan updated them when they arrived on what had been going on.

"Whoa!" they reacted. "What now? He's going to be in the hospital and on drugs for God knows how long." Maddie snorted.

"We are definitely not going to let that happen." Olivia said.

"It's why we are going to spend time to pray." Jordan told them.

So for the next one hour, they spent time in a secluded corner of the hospital speaking in tongues and declaring healing for Justin. They decided to do this exercise everyday till a change happened.

Afterwards, they settled down in Justin's room.

"Dude!!!" Justin exclaimed when he saw his friends.

Maddie snorted "I'm not a dude, dude!"

"Neither am I." Sophie and Olivia said together.

"Anyways", Steve cut in before any argument could start, "Justin, we got you a little something"

"Really, what is it?" He asked eagerly.

Josh brought out two packs of chocolate and before he could speak, Justin grabbed it from his hands bouncing up and down on his bed.

"Snickers!!!" He exclaimed cradling the packs of chocolates. "I love you guys" He said in a sing song tone.

His friends looked at one another in amusement and surprise.

"Is he on something?" Madison asked amused.

"Yeah, I think the doc gave him some painkillers." Olive gave a little laugh.

Josh chuckled in amusement. "No wonder." He went closer to Justin and took the bag of chocolates from him. Justin whined trying to reach for the bag while Josh dangled it in front of him.

"Wait, is it okay for him to have chocolates?" Sophia asked.

"Come on, the young lad has been eating hospital food for days, the least you could do is allow him enjoy some sweetness." Josh urged still playing cat and mouse with Justin.

"Josh, stop teasing my twin. Let him be."

"Don't be a sour grape. This is fun. I should take a video of this, he will be so embarrassed." Josh laughed.

"I read online that people who eat more chocolates have lower rate of heart attack or death than those who rarely eat it." Josh said.

"As far as I know, Google is not a doctor and neither is any of us, so why don't we ask the real professionals." Maddie suggested."

"Fine, ask away." Josh said shooing her away.

Madison stuck out her tongue at him and left.

She came back almost immediately with the doctor and the twins' parents' right in tow behind her.

"Parents!!" Justin exclaimed again when he saw his parents.

His friends burst out in laughter. The doctor managed a smile. "We started the drug trial this morning and gave him some painkillers to go with it." He explained Justin's behavior.

"Is it okay for him to take chocolates, we brought some." Madison asked.

"Sure but it's advisable to stick to dark chocolates because it offers cardiovascular protection."

"I told you so." Josh hummed.

"Are you sure you understood what he said?" Sophia asked hiding her laughter behind her hands.

"Pronounce C-a-r-d-i-o-v-a-s-c-u-l-a-r." Maddie teased.

Josh ignored all of them.

Olivia laughed and turned to the twins parents, "I have to go home now because of my mum but I'll be back later in the day."

"Sure, go on sweetie." Mia said.

"Thank you for staying over." Zach said.

"It's no problem at all. Bye guys." She said and left.

"Why don't you guys get something to eat because I'm sure you rushed here without eating, right?" Mia asked.

They all nodded in affirmative.

"We need to run some tests on Justin so you guys can go out and get some air." The doctor explained

"Ok, no problem. When will he be available?" Jordan asked pointing to his brother.

"We would be done in about an hour."

"Whoa! That's a long time to run some tests. Are you sure he's ok?" Josh asked

"Josh!!" Sophia scolded.

"What? I'm just making sure, alright."

The doctor smiled and responded "The tests we need to run will take some time." He left leaving the question of whether Justin was ok or not unanswered.

At about 12'o'clock, after Justin was back to normal and resting in his room with his friends gathered around him, Olivia showed up.

"Lily!!" Josh exclaimed when he saw Olivia at the door. He happily jumped up and pulled her to them.

"That's my name now?" Olivia asked chuckling.

Josh smiled in response.

"How's he doing?" She asked about Justin

"He should be up any moment from now." Jordan replied looking at his brother.

"Ok" she nodded.

Five minutes later, Justin woke up.

"You're up." Sophia said snacking on gummy bears which Olivia brought.

"Where's Mum and Dad?" was the first thing Justin asked when he opened his eyes.

"Something came up, so they had to go to the company. They said they'll be back in the evening." Jordan explained.

Justin finally looked around and saw his friends. "Hey guys", he greeted.

"You notice us now?" Steve asked.

Justin yawned. "Sorry", he smiled sheepishly. "So what have you guys been up to?"

"Nothing much. Want some gummy bears?" Sophia asked.

"Sure" Justin replied taking the pack from her hand.

"Guys, graduation is in two weeks!! Are you ready?" Josh said.

Maddie nudged him so hard to the point that he fell off his chair.

"Ouch!! Maddie, what did you do that for?"

Maddie looked at Justin and quickly turned back to Josh.

Josh saw her movement and immediately grasped the situation.

"Ohh!" he said.

Maddie hit her forehead with her palm, "For someone so smart, you can be dumb at times." She mumbled.

"You realize that I'm seated right here and can hear and understand what you are saying, right?" Justin said still munching on the gummy bears. He was not sure he would make it to graduation since the doc had decided with his parents that he would stay in the hospital for as long as there was an improvement. He also knew his friends were being very careful not to talk about graduation especially considering that he was the valedictorian. He was so excited when he found out from his twin but now he might not even be at his own graduation.

"It's alright, you don't have to. You can talk about it; it's your graduation too." He smiled trying to mask what he was truly feeling.

"Is there anything special that you guys planned for?" he asked.

And like that, they spent hours talking about graduation and whatnots.

"Yo! J" Josh called out when the others went to get lunch.

"I'm right beside you. You don't need to yell."

Josh chuckled "Right. Sorry. It's just that we haven't spoken for a

while."

"What have we been doing then?"

"We have been chatting with our friends, not with each other alone."

"Ohh" Justin mumbled.

"Yeah. So what's up with you?"

"I'm pretty sure you know everything that's going on right now."

"We all do but not just with your mind."

"We are not girls Josh. I'm not going to sit here and pour out my heart and soul to you."

This got Josh laughing. "Whether it's the drugs or some other thing that's making you cranky, I don't care, so I'll appreciate it if you stop acting like you're on your period man."

Justin sighed. He knew that when Josh got like this, he wasn't letting go till he got what he wanted.

"Fine. What do you want to know?" "How I'm feeling?" "What I'm thinking?" or -"

"I know you feel like nothing is working out for you right now-" Justin rolled his eyes mumbling 'why did you ask if you're all knowing' but Josh continued ignoring his reaction "-and it doesn't help matters that the doc keeps getting on your nerves with the news of your health not improving even with the new drugs they're trying but you'll pull through J. It's one thing I'm sure of and if you really want it, you can make it for graduation despite the doctor's words. All you have to do is have faith J. Faith works all the time if you put it to work." Justin relaxed.

"Thanks Josh" Justin said with all sincerity.

Josh gave a bow, "My pleasure".

"What are you guys talking about that Justin looks so serious?"

Madison asked when she entered with the others.

●●● ————— ●●●
*All you have to do
 is have faith J.
 Faith works all the
 time if you put it to
 work.*
 ●●● ————— ●●●

Josh jumped, "Don't sneak up on us like that."

"I didn't. You were too engrossed in your conversation to notice us when we came in." Maddie defended.

"We were having a tete-a-tete." Justin said smiling.

"Without us?" Jordan asked pouting. "That hurts right here" he touched his heart.

Justin scoffed then his stomach grumbled. "I'm hungry, what did you guys get?" He asked rubbing his grumbling stomach.

"No, no, no. You are on a strict diet so you're not getting any of these goodies." Maddie said opening the boxes of pizza and coke bottles.

"Come on man. A guy is hungry." Justin whined.

"And a girl isn't giving away her food to anyone named Justin." She strutted to the chair close by. "But I brought you veggies and fruits."

"I feel like a cave man eating only plant related food." Justin complained. He was tired of eating the same thing over and over again.

"Don't worry. It's only a matter of time before you start pigging out, eating all the McDonalds and Chick-fil-A and Wendy's and Burger King and Subway and don't forget Starbucks and -"

"Please Maddie" Justin pleaded, patting his grumbling stomach.

"You're not helping matters so stop talking."

"Awww, hungry J is a cranky J." Maddie sang.

"Maddie!" Jordan intervened. "Let him be." He turned to his twin

"Here, eat this for now" he said giving him a pack of spaghetti and meatballs.

"Should he be eating that?" Olivia asked

"Don't worry. It's a special one. I present 'whole wheat spaghetti with marinara and turkey meatballs' which is an ideal recipe for a heart-healthy meal. Our dear parents got the chef to prepare it with the permission of the doctor of course."

"I love you so much right now, Dan." Justin said already gobbling down the food.

"Slow down J, the food isn't running away and you're welcome."

"Twin goals" Josh coughed.

Jordan flicked him on the forehead

"Ouch! Can you guys please refrain from hitting me?" Josh complained, rubbing the sore spot.

"Then don't do or say things that require you getting hit." Maddie said.

Jordan cut in before any drama could start "Anyways, we are having a sleepover tonight so y'all get ready."

"We are always having sleepovers. It should be our thing" Josh said grinning.

That same evening, Justin returned to his room after going through various tests, to find his friends sharing their experiences as Christians.

"It's been awesome." Steve said. "From the moment I received

●●● ————— ●●●
*From the moment I
 received salvation,
 I got this peace
 that I never felt
 before and things
 that I had to
 struggle for before
 have become so
 easy especially in
 my academics.*
 ●●● ————— ●●●

salvation, I got this peace that I never felt before and things that I had to struggle for before have become so easy especially in my academics. It is evident in my family too. I told them all about this new life we have in Christ and their lives have been from glory to glory since they received Christ" Steve concluded smiling

"Wooah, that's awesome" Olivia exclaimed. "You guys already know the testimony that happened with my parents and honestly, things have been so great with us."

Jordan bumped fist with her. "Did I

tell you guys that my parents are in Christ? It happened the day we were closed up in Justin's room talking about Jesus. **Mom was listening to us and she said that was the day she gave her life to Christ, she talked to Dad after that and He gave his life to Christ too." He continued, "I'm so glad they did so, because it gives them hope that Justin will be okay in spite of all that's going on."**

At that point, the thought that all his friends were enjoying themselves in Christ while he was in pain and wondering if he will make it out alive came to Justin but immediately; **he rejected the thought and channeled his mind to faith-filled thoughts.**

"Hey, don't leave me out." Justin joined them and sat on his bed.

"Honestly," he started, "at first, it was hard to believe because it seemed as if nothing was working out, no matter how much I prayed about my health, but **the more I dwelt on the word and discovered who I am in Christ and what He has given me, my mindset changed. I also came across a scripture in the Book of Acts; Acts 9:34, where Peter said to Aeneas 'Jesus Christ makes you whole: arise and make your bed' and it touched me deeply. I meditated on it so much and I confidently know now, that Jesus makes me whole so I live in divine health continually. This is why I refuse to accept the doctor's report, and I put my gaze on Jesus and Him alone irrespective of the news I hear."**

"That is great news J. I was worried about you but you're alright and have really matured in Christ" Olivia said happily.

About twenty minutes later, the twins' parents arrived.

"Justin" His mum called from behind the door.

Justin rushed to open the door "Mum, Dad! I missed you."

"We've only been gone for a few hours." His Dad said.

"Exactly, it's been too long."

"Is he on something again like last time?" His mum asked his friends checking Justin from head to toe.

They laughed out loud.

"Muuuum" Justin whined "Please don't embarrass me in front of my friends."

"Ohh, she doesn't need to do that, you do that all by yourself." Josh laughed.

Justin took his pillow and threw it hard at Josh's face. Josh crackled.

"You never learn, do you?" Maddie said to Josh.

"We'll be right back; the doctor should have your tests result." Zach told Justin.

Justin nodded opening the door for them. Once they stepped out, he shut it and turned to tackle Josh to the floor.

They rolled on the ground for a few minutes and stood up dusting their clothes.

"That was really mature." Jordan said sarcastically.

"He started it." Justin reported pointing at Josh.

"Your dramas are really entertaining." Olivia stated.

"You must be feeling good now for you to do that?" Steve asked.

"Yeah, I actually do feel better." Justin replied.

Then, the doctor and his parents walked in. His parents had smiles on their faces.

"I guess you finally have good news, right?"

"As a matter of fact, I do." The doctor said. "It seems like the drugs are effective because you are surprisingly getting better."

"Why is it surprising? Did you not expect me to get better?" Justin could not help but ask.

"Justin!! You can't say that" His mum scolded.

"It's ok" the doctor said to his mum then he turned to Justin, "I did say that it was a 50/50 chance of you getting better or worse"

"Exactly, If I had a 50 chance of both, why are you surprised that I'm getting better. You don't believe in your medicine right?"

"Justin, let's talk. Please excuse us." His Mum said to the others and dragged him out.

"What's the problem?" His mum asked concerned.

"What are you talking about?" Justin asked feigning ignorance.

"Don't do that with me, young man" Mia reprimanded sternly.

"I'm sorry mum." He apologized soberly. "I don't mean to be rude to him all the time."

"Then what is the matter?"

Justin sighed. "The first time we met him, he made me feel hopeless. He kept going on about the little time I had left and was asking where the God that I keep looking up to is. It just pissed me off." He said looking at his feet.

His mum lifted up his chin to look at her. "He was doing his job, okay. He may not have gone about it the way you wanted but he is older both in age and experience. I always taught you and your brother to respect others so you have no excuse to be rude. You have got to apologize to him, alright?"

"Yes mum. I will."

"Concerning what he said about God, he will come to understand and know that **there is a God with whom all things are possible** and I know you are getting better not just because of the drug trials but because you have been speaking the right words and putting your faith to work."

Justin cracked a smile. "Thanks Mum."

When they went back to the room, the doctor had left so Justin went looking for him.

His parents also went home to freshen up. Meanwhile, his friends were preparing to pray for one hour just like they had been doing for days.

Chapter Nine

Chapter Nine

FAITH PREVAILS

A week to graduation, the girls went out to buy their dresses, perm their hair and do all the things girls their age do when preparing for a 'big day' while the guys, on the other hand, went to get their suits and shoes ready. They had all decided to get their stuff the way normal teenagers do rather than having other people prepare it for them without lifting a finger.

Justin was permitted to go with the guys since according to the tests, he was getting better. "You have to be very careful, we don't want a relapse." The doctor had warned.

"Let's go to Fred Segal" Josh suggested.

"Dude, if I wanted to get some high quality designers stuff, I would have just asked my mum. We planned to go to normal malls with normal average teenagers." Justin said.

"It's not safe, someone might recognize us and the paparazzi would be all over us in the twinkle of an eye." Josh continued.

"He's right J, we don't have body guards with us and we are not going to be in the premises of school or our home. It's risky." Steve supported.

"Come on, we already planned to do this. I'm sure the girls are having a great time. We have our phones so if anything happens; we can always contact our parents." Justin pleaded.

Jordan, Steve and Josh came together, whispered to each other, and then Jordan turned to Justin "Fine." He continued, "but any suspicious thing or person we see, we are out of there."

"Sure." Justin replied bouncing on his feet.

Off they went to a big mall for regular kids. Justin was so excited he was practically leaping for joy.

"Justin, chill. Someone will think you have been locked up for years and are seeing the world for the first time." Jordan said.

"It's somewhat true. I have never been in here before, dude." Justin defended.

"Don't make it so obvious, we don't want to draw attention to ourselves." Steve said.

"This is not a spy movie Steve, live a little. I'm so going to tell the girls about how you guys are behaving." Justin snickered.

Suddenly, a girl around their age walked up to them "Hi there, I haven't seen you around. Are you new here?"

"Yes we are." Jordan answered.

"Cool, would you guys like to hang out with me and my friends sometime later?" She asked, pointing to her group of friends standing not so far from them. "We could show you around town."

"No, we're good but thanks for the offer." Jordan said sharply and dragged the others with him.

"What was that for? She was just being friendly." Justin scolded.

"Yeah until she discovers who we are and what school we attend." Jordan replied.

"Our school is not for rich spoilt brats who can't do anything for themselves." Justin defended.

"Well, try telling them that and see if they welcome you with open arms." Jordan sighed. "Look, I'm just looking out for us."

Justin replied "You know if they find out about us, they wouldn't be surprised because we just behaved the way they would expect people like us to behave."

Josh cut in "You're right J but we didn't come here to make friends so let's just go look around, and we are definitely not buying anything from here because we've got to go for our graduation looking like Kings, meaning your mum is sorting out our clothes for us so we are only sightseeing, okay?"

Justin pouted "You guys are mean. They might just have our taste here. While you guys are being sour patches, I'll take a look around by myself."

Before anyone could react, Justin took off. He went to the male section and tried on different suits and shoes but none was to his

taste. Josh was right all along. He was so used to designer's wear that anything less than that was not an option. He tried retracing his steps to where he last saw his twin and friends but discovered that he was lost. He checked his phone to try calling his brother but it was dead. "Great", he thought. He was still deciding what to do when suddenly the fire alarm rang out.

In that moment, everyone was in a frenzy of panic and there was a lot of pushing and shoving and Justin was not left out of this. He tried pushing his way out but there were too many people. He wondered where the mall staff were and what they were doing to control the crowd and move everyone out safely. He noticed a door with a sign "For emergency only" and went for it but it was locked. Again, he wondered why anyone would lock a door that was for emergencies, especially when this was one.

While looking for a way out, he saw the girl that he and his friends had come across.

"Hey" He called out waving his hands frantically to get her attention. Finally, she looked his way and recognition flickered on her face. They struggled through the crowd to get to each other.

"Where are your friends?" Justin asked.

"I lost them in the crowd. What about your twin and the other two guys?"

"I also lost them. Are there any back doors we can use to get out of here?"

"Not that I know of. I'm just a customer not a staff."

"Right" he said. Then he brightened up, "do you have your phone with you?"

"Yes"

"Great, can I make a quick call?"

"Sure" she said and gave it to him. He dialed his twin's number and it went through. "Hello" Jordan said.

"Dan, its Justin"

"J, where are you? I have been trying your line, you had me worried."

"I'm good for now. I didn't plug my phone so it's flat."

"That's just great, J. I'm outside with the others, where are you?"

"Sarcasm isn't needed now. I'm not sure where I am and the crowd is so much." Justin said, looking around for an exit, then caught a whiff of smoke. "I think the fire is spreading" he coughed. "Call Mum first, I'll try to find a way." He said and cut the line before Jordan could respond.

"Thank you." He told the girl. "I didn't catch your name by the way"

"The name is Maliya"

"Nice to meet you. We can go through the pleasantries later when we get out." Justin said

"That's fine by me." She responded.

By now, the crowd had reduced but the fire was spreading rapidly now and they could see it.

Justin spoke in tongues under his breath while hurrying to get out. Halfway to the main door, a part of the ceiling of the mall collapsed in front of them. More pieces kept falling.

Maliya screamed while Justin grabbed her and ran for cover. "Hurry" he shouted to her trying to get to a door he found but along the way, another part of the ceiling collapsed and so they were stuck in the middle while debris kept falling and the fire, spreading.

The smoke was thick at this point and they were both coughing.

Justin was injured and was finding it hard to breathe but he persevered.

Justin was no longer praying under his breath but speaking out loud.

Maliya, in the midst of tears, was baffled at what he was saying because she could not understand.

"What are you doing?" She yelled. "We are about to die, this is not the time to go insane"

"I'm not crazy and we are not going to die."

"There is no other place to go." Maliya cried.

"I know but don't worry; we'll come out of this alive."

"How are you so sure?"

"Because there is someone who cares and loves me more than anything so He won't let anything happen to me."

"Is it your parents or your twin?"

"No, it's someone much greater than the universe. His name is Jesus."

"Who?" She asked confused.

So right there in the midst of the fire and the falling debris, Justin told her about Jesus with so much passion and admiration that Maliya wanted to know more about Him.

"How do I get to know Him and be saved?" She asked sniffing both from the words she heard and the situation they were in.

"If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord of your life and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." He said and led her to Christ right there in the midst of trouble.

"Thank you Justin." She said and lost consciousness.

The whole roof finally came apart and Justin used his body to shield Maliya while it fell on him. The last thing Justin remembered was the voice of his twin calling out to him.

It felt like déjà vu to Jordan and his friends, except this was way worse than before. When the firefighters finally arrived, they put out the fire and brought out some people on stretchers while some walked out with mere scratches. Jordan, Josh and Steve were waiting to see Justin walk out unscathed but what they saw made their hearts sink. Justin and the girl they recognized from the mall were

●●● ————— ●●●
*"If you confess with
 your mouth that
 Jesus is Lord of
 your life and
 believe in your
 heart that God
 raised him from the
 dead, you will be
 saved."*
 ●●● ————— ●●●

brought out together. They saw that the girl was in a better shape than Justin. She had a few bruises and was unconscious, the paramedic concluded that it was nothing serious but Justin was a different story. They were surprised that he was still alive. When Jordan heard what they said, he went blank. Everything moved in slow motion but his eyes remained on his brother. Suddenly, he rushed to Justin shouting his name but the paramedics kept him at bay.

"He is my brother." Jordan yelled, trying to push past them.

"I figured seeing as the resemblance is striking, but please stay calm. We are doing everything we can to keep him alive. You can ride with him to the hospital." One of the female paramedics told him in a calm tone.

Jordan entered the ambulance after he told Josh and Steve to meet them at the hospital. Jordan explained Justin's condition and told them the hospital he was admitted.

They got to the hospital and Justin was rushed to the ER. Jordan called his parents and the girls and in few minutes, they were in the hospital.

"This cannot be happening again." Mia kept murmuring to herself. "I shouldn't have allowed him go out." She mumbled pacing the floor.

"Mum" She did not answer. "Mum!" Jordan called again.

She looked up. "Please don't lose hope. We haven't." He said referring to his friends. She broke down in tears and Zach carried her in his arms.

The doctor came out "He needs to undergo surgery." He said immediately.

"I thought he couldn't undergo surgery again." Zach said

"We are not performing one on his heart but because of the injuries he sustained, he would need surgery."

"Will he be okay then?" Mia asked still crying.

"We can only hope but we'll do our best. You need to sign the

consent form to undergo surgery." He told the parents and they left with him.

Jordan sat down with his head buried in his hands. Olivia sat beside him "Jordan" she called softly. Jordan lifted his head up to look at his friends gathered around him. There was a glint in his eyes "We've got to put our faith to work. Justin will be perfectly alright without any scars and his heart will be normal with no signs of abnormalities." He said with conviction.

They held each other's hands and began praying in tongues and declaring God's words concerning Justin.

Four hours later, the doctor came out. They rushed to meet him and he looked at them with a somber look "I'm sorry but he's in a coma."

The words 'he is in a coma' kept ringing in Jordan's ear.

Mia laughed without humor "I refuse to believe that. You think after all he's been through, coma is the end result? You are mistaken, absolutely mistaken if you think I'll accept that."

"Ma'am, please calm down."

"Ohh, I'm calm, alright. I'm very calm. Where is my son now?" She asked.

"We moved him to the room he was in before this happened."

She marched to the room along with the others. When they saw him, they faltered.

Justin had a tube placed in his windpipe through his mouth and hooked up to a ventilator.

The girls sobbed but Mia said strongly "Now is not the time to cry, we have got to act. Join hands and stay in a comfortable position because we are going to pray till we effect a change."

They all lined up in his room with determined faces. They were not planning on leaving until there was a change.

They joined hands together and Olivia laid her right hand on Justin's heart from the left side of the hospital bed where she was standing.

They began praying both in tongues and in their understanding.

About an hour later, while they were still praying, the heart monitor indicated that he had flat-lined. Silence and shock filled the room and everyone held his or her breathe waiting for something- just anything- to happen. They refused to believe that he was gone just like that after everything they had done.

●●● ————— ●●●
*Their faith had
 produced their
 desired result*
 ●●● ————— ●●●

Suddenly, the heart monitor started beeping again, very slowly at first, then it got faster and Justin opened his eyes.

Breaths of relief filled the air. It was a moment of worship, tears, and gratitude to God. Their faith had produced their desired result. The doctors came in and were stunned. They could not believe their eyes. In all their years of practice, they had never seen anything like this. Justin was not supposed to have come out of that coma. They removed the tube from his mouth but still monitored his heart.

"Mum, Dad" Justin called out.

"We are right here sweetie" Mia said with tears.

"What happened?" Justin asked. Then he remembered Maliya who was his first soul. "How is Maliya?"

"Who?" The girls asked.

"She is the one Justin saved with his body, and as a result, he got hurt." Jordan answered.

"She is the reason why you are here?" Mia asked, ready to look for the girl who hurt her son.

"No mum, it was because of the fire Maliya and I got hurt, don't listen to Jordan. Maliya is the first soul I won to Christ." He said proudly.

"Wow. That's amazing" Olivia said in awe.

Even Jordan was surprised. "In the midst of all that, you led a person to Christ?"

"Yap" Justin smiled

"Wow." Jordan said. He wore a proud look on his face. What surprised him was not that Justin won a soul but that while he was in danger, he preached the Gospel to someone. "You are full of wonders."

Justin laughed. He was feeling stronger than he had ever been. The doctors were astonished that he was talking and laughing like a healthy person would. 'He should not have the energy he has right now to speak, not to talk of laughing', the doctor thought.

"We would need to run some tests on him", the doctor said baffled.

They ran multiple tests on him but they could not find a single trace of any disease. It was like his whole system had rebooted.

"Oh God, thank you so much. You are awesome." His mum cried out when the doctor broke the news that he was completely healthy.

His friends could not stop crying especially Jordan. They were all on their knees with their hands up in worship to God.

"Is this possible?" The doctor asked again, amazed.

"With God, all things are possible." Olivia responded.

"Do you know where Maliya is?" Justin asked.

"I'll find out" Zach said and left the room.

"Can I eat now?" He asked the doctor who could not believe his eyes still.

"I think so. I'm not sure." He said confused on what to do in this situation. "I'll be right back" he said finally and left.

●●● ————— ●●●
"Is this possible?" ...
"With God, all things
are possible."...
 ●●● ————— ●●●

They burst into laughter. "I'm so grateful to God." Steve said.

Josh exclaimed "You're coming for graduation our dear valedictorian!!"

Justin stood up without removing the wires connected to his chest which were monitoring

his heart and gave a bow.

"Thank you very much." He said in a formal British tone.

Zach entered the room. "I found Maliya" he said. "She is in this hospital."

"Really?" Justin asked, already removing the wires attached to his body. His Dad nodded and gave him the room number.

"Thanks Dad" he said giving his Dad a hug. "Let's go." he told his friends.

Maliya was reading a bible when Justin knocked on her door. She opened it and saw someone that looked like the guy that saved her literally and brought the message of salvation to her but it couldn't have been him because last she heard, he was in a critical condition. She saw that the person in front of her had some bandages around his head and arms. She assumed he had gotten the injuries from the incident that happened in the mall.

"Are you Dan, Justin's twin?" She asked softly, thinking he came to give her an earful for causing Justin to get hurt.

"How do you know the name 'Dan' and 'Justin'?" Justin asked curiously, remembering he did not introduce himself to her at the mall

"I heard him talk to you on the phone; he mentioned his name and yours." She explained quickly.

"I see."

Then she burst into tears "I'm sorry. I passed out and did not know he saved me. I'm sorry" she said repeatedly.

Justin was shocked "Hey, hey", he said moving towards her. "You did nothing wrong and I'm sorry you feel guilty for something you had no hand in."

She looked at him in surprise "You're not mad at me?" She asked confused.

"Why would I be? You did not start the fire, did you?" He asked.

"Of course not" she responded

"Then I'm not mad. I'm perfectly alright too so there is no need to beat yourself up." He said smiling. Her eyes widened in shock.

"Justin?" She asked surprised.

"Yeah, it's me." He said, "Guys, you can come in now." He called out to his friends.

They all came in smiling. "Hello" they said in unison.

Maliya waved, too stunned to speak.

"She's in shock, give her a minute." Justin laughed.

Maliya regained her composure, "Hi, I'm Maliya. Nice to meet y'all"

They introduced themselves but when it got to Jordan's turn, he was fidgeting.

"Dan?" Justin called "what is it?"

"Nothing" he said quickly but Justin saw right through him.

He chuckled "Forgive my brother for his manners", he said to Maliya.

"I believe he is sorry for how rudely he spoke to you when we first met."

Josh and Steve snickered behind Jordan. Jordan turned to glare at them and they shut up immediately.

"Sorry for my behavior." Jordan apologized to Maliya.

"It's okay. Now that I've seen you guys, I understand."

"What do you mean?" Madison asked.

"Honestly, my sister goes to your school. I didn't know at first that you were the ones she talked about all the time especially you, Olivia. Does the name Brittney ring a bell?"

"Yeah, I remember. She was the first soul I won when I came to school for the first time."

"You mean that bratty girl that came up to our table?" Jordan asked

"Jordan!" Olivia scolded, looking to see Maliya's expression.

"Oops! Sorry" Jordan said and snapped his mouth shut.

Maliya chuckled in response, "Don't worry, I thought like that too, before she was born again. I didn't believe then in Jesus but today, it's a different story." She smiled at Justin.

"I decided to attend a regular school because I didn't want to become a brat like my sister was and as a result look down on others. However, you guys are different; maybe it's because you are Christians but I was wrong about you being like the rest of them."

She explained. "I'll introduce my friends to you when they get here."

"Why are you still here? The paramedics said you were not seriously injured. You ought to be discharged by now." Josh asked.

"It's because of him." She pointed at Justin. "I pleaded with the doctor to tell me what state he was when I found out he was in this hospital. At first, they wouldn't tell me but I explained that it was my fault he was hurt and they told me he might not survive. Imagine the shock when I heard the news." She stated.

They nodded in understanding. "I have received my healing. I'm perfect now. There is even no sign that I was sick before, I have been made completely whole." Justin said with joy.

"Are you serious!?" She asked completely overwhelmed.

"Yes. This is the result of being born again and putting my faith alongside my family to work" He said, referring not only to his family but also his friends.

"Wow." She exclaimed.

"What she said!" Josh laughed. The others joined in.

While they were joking around, Maliya's friends walked in. "Maliya!!" they rushed to hug her but faltered in their steps when they saw she had company.

"Umm hi" one of them said

Maliya said "Hey guys, this is Jordan, Justin - they are twins obviously- Olivia, Steve, Josh - he is the goofy one in the group - Madison and Sophia." She introduced each of them. Josh did a curtsy when he was introduced and Maddie smacked him on the head. "Girls do the curtsy, stick to your bows." She said.

They all burst into laughter.

"I like them." One of Maliya's friends said to her. "Would you do the

Epilogue

Epilogue

Graduation day was here!! The joy and excitement in the air was evident for all to see. Justin was so excited. There were no words to describe how he felt at that moment when he was called upon to give his speech as the Valedictorian of the Leo class. He made up his mind to use this opportunity to share the Gospel with everyone.

"Good day Ladies and Gentlemen." He started. "Thank you for coming and welcome to this magnificent gathering. Special thanks to Mrs. Davis, our wonderful principal and all the teachers that made it possible for us to be at this ceremony today. It has been a long journey but it's been worth it. We have come this far but we still have a greater future ahead of us. I remember the memories we've had together. We joked around, laughed, argued, cried and we are still here together. As some of you know, there were some days I missed school not because I was drunk and was recovering from a hangover like some of the rumors suggested, neither is it because I was a spy and needed to go for missions." Many of them laughed at this. He continued "I had a heart condition" many gasps filled the air "but I'm perfect now." "I gave my life to Christ, thanks to Olivia." Olivia gave a little wave. "And it's been an amazing journey; I got healed and had the opportunity to share with others about Christ." "I'm saying this because some of you may not know what you want to do or where you want to go from here. We are about to enter into another phase of life and we need guidance. The best guide there is, is the Holy Spirit." He explained who the Holy

●●● ————— ●●●
*The best guide
 there is, is the
 Holy Spirit.*
 ●●● ————— ●●●

Spirit is and what He can do in a person. He went ahead to talk about the love of God and how God sent His only Son, Jesus to die on the cross for us so we can have eternal life and the only way to receive eternal life is by believing with the heart and confessing with the mouth that Jesus is Lord of your life.

The crowd was captivated by his words. He led them to Christ and ministered the Holy Spirit to them and many gave their hearts to Christ and received the Holy Spirit

He concluded by saying **"Congratulations!!! Now you are born again and have eternal life. Be conscious of this and allow the Holy Spirit guide you and lead you in all things and you will see your life moving upward and forward.** Congratulations on being a high school graduate. Go forth unto the next stage and win!! Thank you!"

Everyone stood up and gave a rousing ovation. His parents, twin and friends including Maliya and her friends who came rushed to hug him.

Jordan clapped his twins' back "We did it." he said.

"How did you survive it?" One of his mates walked up to him and asked.

"I did not allow fate determine how my life should turn out instead I turned to God, gave my life to Christ and built my faith and it produced the desired results." He replied.

"That was mind blowing J. You're now a preacher of the Gospel."

Jordan said with all seriousness.

"I'm proud of you" His parents said to him.

"Pastor Justin!!!" Josh joked.

Olivia patted him on the back, "well done" she said.

"Whoa! I have never heard anything like that before" Maliya and her friends commented.

Everyone was full of excitement. Teachers came to shake hands with him and Mrs. Davis said "You were one of my best and favorite students. Don't be a stranger."

"I won't" Justin promised.

Zach and Mia invited all of Justin's friends to a banquet party which they organized and there was eating, drinking and dancing.

Later on when they got home, Justin scrolled through his mail. "Dan, come here!" Justin yelled. Jordan appeared beside him in an instance. "Guess what?" he didn't give his brother the opportunity to respond before he continued "I got an acceptance letter to ..." He didn't get to finish his statement as Jordan grabbed the MacBook from him.

"Really? Our dream college?" Jordan jumped on Justin. Justin nodded in response carrying Jordan on his back and running round the room jubilating. His parents were jumping up and down like little kids.

"Check yours, Dan" Justin said when he dropped his brother.

Jordan quickly opened his Mac Book and went to his mail.

'Congratulations, you have been accepted ...' He stopped reading after that and screamed like a little girl. He grabbed Justin and jumped round in circles with him. "I got accepted, I got accepted" he sang and danced.

Just then, the bell rang and the maid opened the door to see the twins' friends with smiles on their faces.

"We all got accepted into the same college" they chorused and jumped on the twins. Screams of joy and laughter filled the air and they all went down on their knees praising and worshiping God who orchestrated and planned this.

"Faith indeed works and without faith, it is impossible to please God" were the thoughts that went through Justin's mind as they continued praising God.

Justin went through thick and thin in his health but he overcame by his faith. How wonderful it is to live by faith in God's word and not leave things to fate.

●●● ————— ●●●
*"Faith indeed works
 and without faith, it
 is impossible to
 please God"*
 ●●● ————— ●●●



FATE AND FAITH

Wealthy parents, a loving family, great and loyal friends and an exciting school life; Justin seems to have everything going for him, but when the troubles of life hit him, how will he overcome? Will his new found faith in Christ overcome the troubles or will he be left in the hands of fate?

"A must read for everyone who wants a taste of the miraculous."

Delight is a law graduate of Babcock University, Nigeria. In this maiden work, Delight has excelled in portraying true love and friendship and the importance of having faith in God.

Available At:
books.com
amazon.com
kobo.com

ISBN 978-978-991-629-0



9 789789 916290 >