

# ZOE CHAPTER TWO

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Zoe and her new friends make a pact to stay friends forever after both Crystal and Zoe get to see how mean Miss Hardman can be. Zoe returns home for the holidays.

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During the early hours of the next morning I was the only one awoken by Laura's gibberish in her sleep. She was having a nightmare. I sat up and watched her as she tossed and turned around in her bed. I stood up and went over to her side . I placed a gentle hand on her shoulder, "Laura, it's me, Zoe, are you OK?" I asked softly with concern.

Laura tossed and turned in bed. Sweat ran down her face. "Get away from me, please, stop, get away from me, Brad, get away!" she cried loudly, jolting up from her bed her body trembling.

"Laura," I said, placing a hand on her shoulder, which made her jump and turn to me with fright. Her turquoise eyes were wide and frightened looking.

I had never ever seen anyone look so petrified before. Laura stared back at me, her eyes scanning my face for any recognition.

"Zoe?" she said softly.

"Yes, Laura, its me, Zoe. Everything is all right, you're safe," I told her, I put an arm around her and we both looked at each other and smiled. Laura suddenly hugged me taking me by surprise but I hugged her back and a friendship had formed.

I quickly went back to my bed before Miss Hardman came to our bedroom to check we were all sleeping.

We were awoken at seven amby a loud whistle that Miss Hardman had around her neck. She came into our bedroom and yanked the bed sheets from us and threw them onto the floor.

"Now, before your classes start at nine o clock, I want you all to make your beds, clean the toilets thoroughly and the bathroom sinks so I can see my face in them," she ordered.

When none of us moved she shouted, "MOVE!" her eyes flashing with anger.

That made us move very quickly.

It took us two hours to make the beds, clean the disgusting, smelly toilets and bathroom sinks. Now we were totally exhausted.

When Miss Hardmsn came in to check on us again she didn't look less than pleased at what we had done. "Get up you lazy girls and go and do the toilets and bathroom all again now!" she ordered us like we were her slaves.

Bethany, Laura, Liz and I all grunted and groaned as we slowly hearded towardss the toilets but Crystal stood exactly where shewas with her arms folded across her chest.

"What did I just say, Miss Simpson? Move your lazy little black backside and go and clean them toilets and sinks again before i do something I might regret," her small grey- brown eyes flashed with anger.

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Crystal just blinked her eyes at her and stood confident. Whereas I, I don't know if I would of been so brave. "No," Crystal said firmly.

Miss Hardman's face reddened with anger. She marched across to Crystal and towered over in a threatening stance with her height and angry face. Miss Hardman lowered her face down and hissed, "I have always disliked black people and now because of you I hate them even more. You go and clean those toilets with your friends."

"No," Crystal stubbornly said.

She forcefully turned Crystal around so her back was facing her now and not her face. Miss Hardman held the back of her neck tightly that made her yelp with pain; With the other hand Miss Hardman smacked Crystal's bottom so hard it made her cry.

Bethany, Laura, Liz and I looked at each other in horror at what we were witnessing.

I felt anger raging through my veins. I couldn't just stand there and watch my friend being abused by the teacher. So I yelled without thinking about the consequences, "leave her alone!"

Miss Hardman turned around and faced my angry face. A cruel smile spread across her ugly face. "Who's going to stop me? You and your little friends?" she laughed evilly.

"Yes, we don't need horrible people like you around teaching us. The place you should be is in a cave." I knew I should've stopped there and then, but I was just so angry. "You're crazy, Miss Hardman, an ugly and cruel woman who abusing children to their own delight. You should be locked up in jail!"

With that Miss Hardman turned on me like a big cat that had caught its prey and was ready for the kill. She grabbed hold of the back of my long blonde hair roughly with one hand that made me cry out in pain.

Tears ran down my cheeks as she dragged me down a dark staircase into a dark cellar.

Miss Hardman pushed me to the floor and I fell to my knees. She stared down at me for a moment like a demon from hell. She shut the door to the cellar and locked it. I heard the loud sound of her heels clicking away and the sound of her set of keys swinging against her hip as she walked away.

I pulled my knees up to my chin and sobbed quietly. My head was still hurting from Miss Hardman grabbing hold of my hair. I truly hated her.

I glanced down at my grazed, bit bloody bony knees and just cried some more.

Just to make the situation a lot more worse than it was - a big and black rat came scurrying across the filthy concrete floor towards me. I inched away from it and watched as it stopped and stared up at me with its big, black eyes. I threw a bit of cracker I had in my pocket to it and it munched away.

For four long and tiring hours I was trapped inside the dark, dirty and smelly cellar until Miss Hardman thought it was enough punishment for me and came back to let me out. She stared down at me with her hard eyes but they softened slightly. Probably feeling guilty, I thought hatefully. I threw her a dirty look as she let me go but she grabbed hold of my arm to spin me around to face her.

"I'll be watching you like a hawk from now on, smart ass," she said, squeezing my arm tightly. She smiled and then let go.

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I ran all the way back to my dorm room where my friends waited anxiously for my return.

They all looked up and saw how dirty I was.

"Are you, OK?" asked Liz with concern.

I smiled at her and said, "I'll survive," my gaze fell upon Crystal and I touched her arm softly. "How are you? Does it still hurt?"

Crystal nodded "a little, but I'll survive," she said.

Liz began pacing around the room and then suddenly stopped "I say we make a pact," she said.

Laura, Crystal, Bethany and I looked at each other and then turned back to our friend.

"A pact? For what Liz?" asked Bethany.

"To stay friends forever," Liz replied with a smile.

I turned to Laura and we all looked at each other and joined hands and threw our hands up in the air and shouted together "FRIENDS FOREVER."

The first half term soon came to an end quickly but we were all made to work extremely hard in classes and doing the cleaning and scrubbing down floors until our hands had become chipped and nasty looking. But that didn't stop Miss Hardman feel sorry for us it just made her lash out because we were slacking if we moaned. No one dared to go and tell Mrs Peacock the headmistress because they were too afraid of what Miss Hardman would do to them.

The half term week holiday finally came and we were all going back home.

My friends and I waited outside the front entrance of the school in the pouring rain underneath our umbrellas waiting for our parents and grandparents to come and pick us up.

A black car pulled up and Bethany walked over to it then turned back to us. "Have a nice holiday and see you when we come back, bye," she waved bye from the car as it drove off.

Ten minutes later Crystal and Liz's parents drove up and then left. It was just Laura and I left standing in the rain.

There was a slight awkwardness between us when she cleared her throat grabbing my attention.

"I'd like to thank you, Zoe, for that other night when you came to see if I was alright when I was having a nightmare," she said and smiled. I smiled back and we hugged.

Just then my Grandmother Maxine arrived so I skipped a bit to the car and then turned back to Laura and waved.

"Have a great holiday, Zoe," Laura said.

"You too," I said, before entering the car. I looked back and saw my friend stepping into a black car that had pulled up.

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"So how was your first half term?" asked Grandmother Maxine excitedly as she drove back out the school gates and was heading towards the main road.

"Oh, it was great," I lied through my teeth. "But I made terrific friends called Laura, Bethany, Liz and Crystal. That was Laura I said bye to just now."

Grandmother nodded her head whilst concentrating on the road. "That's great, honey, are you enjoying your classes as well?"

I nodded "I love English," I said.

We drove through beautiful countryside with horses galloping around in fields and big green fields that seem to sprawl out for miles around.

I sighed heavily with happiness as I was heading home in St Tintagel, North Cornwall, where my little brother, Gene was. Maybe Papa would be back as well.

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