

Addie's 18th Birthday

A Bonus Scene from Jake's Perspective

This is a work of fiction. Similarities to real people, places, or events are entirely coincidental.

ADDIE'S 18TH BIRTHDAY

First edition: February 21, 2018

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Note: This is a bonus scene told from Jake's perspective of Addie's 18th birthday. There is no version of this in any of the Hidden books.

“What the fuck are you watching?” Connor asked in disbelief and I winced. It wasn’t like I was embarrassed about my movie choice, but I could have happily avoided Connor’s questions.

“Sixteen Candles with Molly Ringwald,” I answered shortly, not glancing up.

“Why in God’s name are you watching a Molly Ringwald movie?” He shot back to my irritation. I sighed and gave in, pausing the movie so I wouldn’t miss anything.

“It’s a favorite of Addie’s,” I replied, my jaw working as I prepared myself for whatever Connor was about to say.

The silence dragged on for a few seconds and I turned to stare at him.

“What?” He said in response to my glare, looking mystified. I shook my head lightly.

“No comments?”

“About what?”

“The fact that I’m watching a chick flick because Addie likes it,” I shouted in exasperation. It’d taken me a while to hunt the movie down, but I’d managed to find it finally and stream it from one of the movie channels.

“Well, it’s Addie. What else would you do?” Connor said, sinking down on the couch next to me. “You’re so in love with her it’s not funny.”

I couldn’t deny that as I turned back toward the TV. “What are you doing here?” I asked since he’d let himself into the apartment.

“Jules is working late,” Connor answered with a huff as he settled in.

“I’m watching the movie,” I warned him, going to press play.

“Yeah, that’s cool. Maybe it’ll give me some brownie points with Jules. Women love that shit,” Connor grumbled and I shook my head, wondering once again why I’d agreed it was a good idea to let my best friend date my sister.

An hour and half later, the credits were rolling and Connor looked over at me.

“Damn, dude.”

I glanced over at him, lifting my eyebrow in question, as my mind started making plans.

“The dude’s name is Jake. Like there was no way, she wasn’t falling for you. You think she already knew? Like asked herself as a little girl

who she'd fall in love with and after that kept a look out for any Jakes?" Connor asked, his expression awed at the idea of Addie's ability.

"You're an idiot," I answered instead, pushing myself up from the couch as I considered what I needed to do next. "By the way, don't mention we watched this to Jules. I've got an idea and I don't need you spoiling it."

"I'd never," Connor protested, turning his head to keep me in sight, but not bothering to get up. "What's the plan? Maybe I can help."

"Addie's birthday is coming up," I answered with a pointed look at the television. "I want to surprise her."

"Ohhhh, major brownie points if you can pull it off," Connor snickered as he caught on to what I intended. "Think Jules would like it?"

"Do not copycat me with my own sister," I growled at him in warning and he held up his hands.

"Fine, but where you gonna get a car like that?"

I smiled, crossing my arms over my chest as I considered him. He frowned, and my smile widened. "Doesn't your Dad have an old Mustang?"

"No, dude!" Connor was shaking his head adamantly. "He won't even let me drive it!" He pointed at the screen. "It's not even the same car," he added desperately.

"Close enough. It's red and old," I answered him and Connor's eyes widened.

"Do NOT let my dad catch you saying that. He will never let you touch it," Connor warned and my smile brightened. He caught sight of it and groaned. "Do you know what I'll have to go through for him to let me borrow it?"

"Nothing I wouldn't do for you," I promised and then added my ace in the hole. "Like date my sister."

Connor flinched and shook his head. "I knew that was gonna bite me on the ass," he grumbled under his breath.

"Her birthday is tomorrow," I reminded him and he glared at me.

"You owe me, man. I mean it. Don't get me wrong. I love your sister, but this is a 1969 GT500 Convertible in candy apple red. It's worth more than my life if something happens to it." Connor leaned forward, his hands dangling between his legs as stared blankly at the television. "You

remember that time Mom caught the kitchen on fire? Dad ran out the house, and straight to the garage, and drove Sally out of harm's way." Connor shook his head as I fought the urge to laugh. "He slept in that car for a solid month, Mom was so mad."

"It'll be an hour, two tops," I promised, crossing my fingers behind my back. "I bet Addie will even be willing to buy scratch offs with you when she finds out how you helped a brother out."

Connor perked up at the thought, since so far Addie had been reluctant to participate in his schemes. I pressed my lips together, hoping like hell Addie wouldn't get mad about my suggestion. I was trying to win her heart *and* her mother over to my side.

I didn't mind going to Addie's house to see her, I'd gotten to know her grandpa and he was a cool dude, but I was eager to take Addie out. A restaurant, a movie, the park, hell anywhere, but her mom hadn't budged on the no dates rule. Now that Addie was finally going to be eighteen, she had no choice but to accept Addie going out with me, but I wanted her to be okay with it. And if that meant embarrassing myself with an old eighties movie, so be it.

"Ah, man. I can't believe I'm about to do this," Connor sighed, pulling out his phone to call his dad. I let out the breath I'd been holding, happy he had agreed. My plan wouldn't work nearly as well without the car.

The next day, I checked my outfit as I waited for Connor's dad to go over all the rules about Sally. It wasn't exactly the same as Jake's from the movie, but close enough. That was my motto for the entire plan – close enough. An hour later, Connor's dad finally handed me the keys, his hand lovingly stroking Sally as I slid inside. I started her up, and cleared my throat as she rumbled underneath me. Connor's dad nodded and reluctantly stepped away from his pride and joy as Con stood by, his expression vaguely panicked.

"I'll take good care of her," I called out to them, waving and his dad barked, "Both hands on the wheel, son." I slapped my hand on the wheel as Connor tugged at his short blond hair.

"Yes, sir!"

She purred as I accelerated down the street, relieved to finally be on my way. I checked the time, knowing I couldn't afford to be late if I wanted my plan to work. I pulled up to the curb of the familiar white

house, my heart pounding as I wondered if she'd get it or if I was just an idiot in love. I steeled myself as I got out of the car and walked around to the other side. I checked the car and positioned myself in what I thought was the right place, crossing my ankle as I leaned back. A second later, the front door opened and I watched her come out.

She hadn't seen me yet, too busy locking the door behind her, and I took the chance to study her. She had a pink sundress on, and she'd left her hair down for once, the brown strands catching in the sunlight and shining like copper. I took a deep breath to steady myself and waited.

She turned and spotted me, her steps slowing as she started down the porch steps, until she came to a full stop and just stared. She blinked rapidly for a second and I held still, wondering if I'd just made a fool out of myself. A wide smile broke out on her face and some of the tension melted from me. She walked toward me hesitantly, her head tilted down as she bit her lip and I groaned internally at the sight. Another reason I wanted to take her *out* was so I could kiss her properly. I guess I should be grateful to her mother for that much; otherwise, I might have had to arrest myself for indecent behavior with a juvenile.

I reached for the red rose I'd gotten her as she came to a stop in front of me. Her mouth opened and then closed as she studied the car, the rose, and finally me.

"I wasn't sure if you knew," she admitted softly, waving her hand at me. "I mean, how you looked, that you had recreated one of my all-time favorite scenes, but clearly you knew. You did it on purpose and it's incredible," she rambled until I leaned forward and cut her off with a kiss.

"Happy Birthday, Addie," I whispered, taking her hand and waving to the window where her mom stood, smiling as I helped Addie into the low-slung car.

"We're going?" She questioned, glancing back at the house doubtfully. Her mom waved at her and Addie waved back uncertainly.

"We're going," I confirmed, starting the car, the low rumble catching Addie off guard. "It's your birthday. Your eighteenth birthday," I specified with a grin, happy my surprise had worked. "I thought we'd take a ride, have a picnic at the park, maybe watch a movie at my place?"

She shot me a mischievous grin. "Sixteen Candles, by chance?"

"Whatever you want, Addie. Whatever you want," I informed her, slipping on my shades as we drove off.