



A WAVERLY OWL IS ALWAYS POLITE,
EVEN TO TOTAL STRANGERS.

Tinsley Carmichael glanced back at the sparkling Hudson River. The roar of her family's orange seaplane lifting back into the azure sky announced her return to Waverly Academy, the exclusive upstate New York boarding school she'd been unceremoniously kicked out of last spring. The *pop-pop* of her pencil-thin heels on the steps of Dumbarton Hall reminded her of flashbulbs, and Tinsley felt her classmates' eyes on her, peering out of the dorm-room windows above her head. She shook out her mane of long, purpley-black hair and turned her head to give her fans her best side, anticipating their hungry questions: *Ohmigod, where have you been? How come you're back? Weren't you kicked out? Were you in rehab? Is it true you threatened to burn down Stansfield? And finally: How come Callie and Brett didn't get into any trouble and you did?*

Tinsley would simultaneously deny everything and fan the flames of speculation. She'd especially enjoy encouraging the theory that she'd selflessly taken the rap for Callie and Brett after all three of them were caught on E last spring, the spring of their sophomore year. Her two best friends would be more than a little shocked to see her. She hadn't spoken to either of them over the long summer, and she still had no clue why *she* was the only one actually expelled for the whole 'incident', unless one of them had ratted on her. But now that the summer was over – a *phenomenal* summer at that – and she'd been readmitted, she was feeling generous and willing to forgive and forget, as long as Callie and Brett provided the requisite profuse apologies and a healthy dose of ass-kissing.

With its pristine, ivy-covered brick buildings and undulating green playing fields, Waverly Academy looked like the gingerbread-cookie version of Brown or Princeton. As Tinsley clicked her way down the hall to Dumbarton 303, she recognized the familiar smell of Callie's coconut-scented Bumble & Bumble detangler and Le Petit Prince baby perfume mixed with the stale stench of Parliament cigarettes. She smiled as she pictured what would happen next: she'd waltz into their triple dorm room and throw herself across her old bed just like she used to do after a long, boring lecture in Hunter Hall or Mr Farnsworth's calc class. Callie's little pink mouth would drop open and she'd try to say something cool but choke on her words. Brett would be amazed and astonished and totally speechless. Then both

girls would begin squealing like baby piglets, flinging their slender limbs around Tinsley's neck. Well, at least that's how she imagined it.

She flipped her white plastic aviators up on her head and readjusted the bleached-leather hobo bag Chiedo had made for her while they were on safari outside of Cape Town. The memory of summer in South Africa made her chest ache – the parties at CapeRave with Chiedo and his friends, watching the sun rise over Table Mountain, and *Where I've Been I Would Not Go Back*, the heartfelt documentary about the people of South Africa that she and her father had made over the course of the summer. She touched her shark-tooth necklace (Chiedo again, sweet Chiedo), flipped her long, shiny dark hair behind her shoulders, and flung open the dorm room door. *Ta da!*

The silence she'd expected was of the stunned variety, not the where-the-fuck-is-everyone variety. But where the fuck *was* everyone? Tinsley surveyed the landscape: the view of the sparkling Hudson River through the wide casement windows, Brett's blue-and-white Nantucket beach etching sitting on her dresser, the litter of empty Diet Coke bottles on the floor next to Callie's bed, the ashtray full of Parliament butts on the windowsill. But no Callie and no Brett.

She wrinkled her nose, detecting a scent she didn't recognize – could it possibly be White Petals, a Chanel knockoff that stunk up Greenmarket Square in Cape Town? She sniffed, tracing the smell to a waterfall of unruly brown curls hanging off the side of her old bed. *There was a girl*

in her bed. The girl shifted in her sleep. Tinsley kicked the antique-oak bed frame with her well-heeled foot. ‘Who are you?’ she demanded.

‘I’m Jenny.’ The girl sat up abruptly, her eyes darting wildly around the room as her ridiculously huge boobs bounced. ‘Who are you?’

Tinsley threw her bag down at the foot of the bed, her nose still wrinkled in distaste. Definitely White Petals. ‘Where are Callie and Brett?’

‘They’ – she started, rubbing her big brown eyes – ‘were here a minute ago. What time is it?’

‘Time for you to get out of my bed,’ Tinsley announced coolly.

Jenny shook her head, trying to lift the sleepy haze from her brain. The stunning, tall girl standing in front of her was wearing a white-on-white leaf-print camisole and no bra. Jenny stared enviously at her browned shoulders and the outline of her round, perky breasts. What she wouldn’t give to be able to wear a shirt like that. The girl had long black hair and impossibly blue – almost violet – eyes . . . Wait a second, *her* bed?

‘You’re Tinsley!’ she squealed a little too emphatically, bouncing up and down before remembering she was wearing the soft, super-thin white Constance T-shirt she liked to sleep in. She hoped her enormous breasts didn’t look too ridiculous as they bobbed and settled back into place.

‘I don’t remember you.’ Tinsley folded her arms across

her chest as if to imply that Jenny had better put her boobs away before she hurt someone with them.

'I'm new. I transferred from Constance Billard.' Jenny pointed at the capital letters emblazoned across her T-shirt and then remembered her boobs again. 'In New York City,' she added hopefully, as if the fact that she was from the city would lend her an air of credibility or at the very least a remote hint of cool.

'I know where it is,' Tinsley snapped as her white aviators slipped down off her forehead, landing perfectly on the bridge of her tanned, pert little nose.

Jenny could feel her glaring intensely from behind her sunglasses. She'd worried about meeting Tinsley since Dean Marymount announced her return to Waverly last night. But now that she was here, Tinsley was even more intimidating than Jenny had imagined. And she was supposed to live with this girl?

'You mind?' Tinsley asked, opening her cool, beat-up-looking leather bag and pulling out a clove cigarette.

Jenny shook her head and offered up the Powerpuff Girl Zippo she'd bought in Chinatown that she used for lighting the apple cinnamon candle she kept by her bed. 'Wake and bake, right?'

'It's not pot.' Tinsley pushed her sunglasses up again. 'So what year are you anyway?'

'Sophomore.' Tinsley blew a smoke ring like the caterpillar in *Alice in Wonderland* and Jenny remembered what Sam, the boy on the train when she first came up from New

York, said about Tinsley going to parties at Bard and the rumors she'd heard about Easy and Tinsley hooking up behind Callie's back last year. Jenny imagined boys drooling over Tinsley's smooth tanned shoulders and her wild violet eyes and girls hating her for the same reasons. Jenny would have hated her too if she didn't feel simultaneously scared and infatuated by her.

'So you're the new roommate, huh?' Tinsley examined Jenny as if she were a vintage fifties housedress from Goodwill that could either be an incredible find or, on closer inspection, just pit-stained and worthless.

'Yeah. Callie and Brett are awesome,' she replied with a borderline squeak, hoping to let her new roommate know they were part of the same fold now. After all, she'd made friends easily with Callie and Brett. Well, sort of easily. Callie had kind of bribed her into letting the Disciplinary Committee believe Easy Walsh was caught in their room on the second night of school visiting her rather than Callie, his girlfriend. In the end Easy took all the blame, and part of Jenny thought maybe, just *maybe*, it had something to do with her.

She shot her feet out from under her scratchy baby-blue wool blanket and shuffled over to her antique oak bureau. She grabbed a bottle of Pantene de-frizzing serum and squirted a dollop into her palm. It made a little farting sound and Jenny muffled a squeal of discomfort. Then she turned to the mirror as she smoothed out her long brown tendrils, grateful that at least she didn't have any embarrassing morning whiteheads around her nostril creases.

‘So—’ She turned around, freshly de-frizzed.

But all she saw was the door closing. It slammed angrily, and Jenny couldn’t help but jump back a step. Hello, that was not a real fart!

Outside the casement windows the first leaves were beginning to turn orange and red and the Hudson River rolled along, smooth and sparkling under the morning sun. A feeling of dread settled in Jenny’s stomach. Was it just a bad first impression, or was the famous Tinsley Carmichael kind of . . . well . . . a *bitch*?

**OwlNet**

Instant Message Inbox

SageFrancis: She's baaaaaaack . . .

CelineColista: What r u talking about?

SageFrancis: TC! She's returned from exile in Africa or wherever the hell she was. I heard her father had to promise Waverly a new performing arts center to get back in.

CelineColista: No waaaaaaaay . . . Do you think they'll kick J out of 303?

SageFrancis: I heard they're ALL staying. Do you think she'll clash with T?

CelineColista: Who knows, but if they do, I want popcorn and a front-row seat!