

# chapter 1

CAROLINE

The lunchroom at Westgate School for Girls was like a solar system.

Except instead of being full of planets and moons, it was full of uniformed girls and tables and noise. The school went from sixth grade to eighth grade, and each grade had their own separate lunchtime. Right now, it was the seventh grade's turn, and all sixty-three girls were orbiting the twelve cafeteria tables.

Caroline Mason stood clutching her tray and watching the other girls head toward their tables, drawn by the gravitational pull of friends and laughter and routine. She felt like she was drifting in space.

Everyone had a table. Caroline *used* to have a table.

She reached absently for the pendant that used to hang around her neck — a small half circle — before she

remembered it wasn't there. She'd shoved it into the bottom drawer of the jewelry box on her bathroom counter.

Caroline knew she couldn't just stand there, so she took a deep breath and made her way to Table 12. Nobody sat at Table 12. Correction: nobody except for Caroline. She tried to keep her eyes on her tray, tried not to let anyone see how alone she felt as she walked.

But halfway there, her eyes floated up, drawn automatically to Table 7. To Lily Pierce.

If Westgate *were* a solar system, then Lily Pierce would be its sun.

With her perfect black curls and her perfect smile that seemed to make the whole lunch room lean toward her. And away from Caroline. Because everybody listened to Lily Pierce. Everybody did what she said. Whether or not they wanted to be her friend, they definitely *didn't* want to be her enemy. And Lily Pierce had told the entire seventh grade to stay away from Caroline Mason.

Lily and Caroline were at war. Only, Caroline didn't want to fight. She just wanted to go back to the way things were before. Back to before they were enemies.

Back to when they were best friends.

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