

Dark Secrets

By

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Chapter One

Lexa

Lexa Goodman gripped the handle on her suitcase tightly and looked up at Withdean Manor. Set in grounds of twenty acres, the imposing house didn't seem as enticing as her friend had told her. In fact, one could almost call it sinister. Even the taxi driver hadn't hung around. Once she'd paid him, he'd left without a backward glance.

She squinted from the bright sunshine and raised a hand to shield her eyes. Elizabethan in style, the house looked to contain at least twenty bedrooms. It was massive. The grounds were neatly kept with flower borders and perfectly trimmed box hedges. The only sounds around were coming from the buzzing of insects and the birds singing. It was certainly peaceful.

Lexa rummaged inside her pocket and pulled out the booking form that her friend, Lisa, had given to her. She'd told her it was the best holiday she'd ever had, which is why she'd treated Lexa to the same for her birthday treat. Now that she was here, she almost wished she wasn't. What was she thinking, going on holiday on her own? She'd be bored senseless after a couple of days. She surveyed the surroundings. Countryside stretched in each direction. So apart from walking there, it didn't look like there was much else to do. But Lisa had assured her that she would love it.

She sighed. Oh well, a free holiday was a free holiday – might as well make the most of it. She walked over to the long stone staircase and looked up at the double doors. They didn't look very welcoming. No one seemed to be around, either. She put her foot on the first step and stopped in her tracks as a sudden shock wave rippled right up her leg, up her spine and almost made her hair stand on end. What the hell? Before she had time to recover, the front door opened and an irate woman stared down at her.

"Well, don't just dither, girl, get a move on!"

Lexa frowned and looked over her shoulder to see whom she could be talking to, but there was no one else there, apart from herself. She looked back at the woman in shock and pointed a finger at herself. "Who, me?"

"Yes, you! Hurry up, now. I haven't got all day!"

"Excuse me? Who do you think you're talking to?" Lexa could feel her heart pumping erratically. She hated confrontations and certainly hadn't expected one today. She reached for her phone in her jeans pocket, deciding there and then to call the taxi back but gasped aloud when she realized she was no longer wearing jeans. Her head whipped down and studied her attire. In place of her jeans was a short tartan skirt and her strappy top was now a long-sleeved white blouse with a school tie. Her sneakers were replaced with shiny black shoes, complete with knee-high socks.

Before she had time to ponder over that little shock, the indignant woman appeared by her side, anger written all over her face. "You'll pay for this, you impudent girl." The woman grabbed her by the ear and began pulling her up the steps towards the front door. "My name is Miss Withers and I expect your full obedience whilst in this school."

The pain was unbearable, and Lexa found herself having to comply at the same time as trying to prise Miss Withers' hand off her ear. But she seemed to be uncommonly strong.

"I have no idea who you think I am but, I can assure you, I am supposed to be here on holiday! Ouch!" Lexa tried to explain whilst wincing.

"Holiday? *Holiday*? This is no holiday, my girl. Far from it!"

They reached the top step and Lexa found herself inside the big house. Miss Withers walked over to a large wooden door and knocked loudly before finally releasing Lexa's ear. Lexa rubbed it vigorously whilst glaring at her. Old witch!

She rubbed her forehead and closed her eyes. What the hell was happening here? Was she dreaming? She pinched her forearm and grimaced. No, she was very much in the present. So why the devil was she wearing a schoolgirl uniform? How the hell could that happen? Had she blacked out? She frowned and thought hard. No. She hadn't bumped her head. She looked up again when she heard a deep voice came from within.

"Enter!"

Miss Withers turned the knob and half opened the door. "In you go! Mr. Willows will deal with you."

"I don't want to see a Mr. Willows. This is all a big mistake!" Lexa tried to dig her heels in but Miss Withers was pushing her hand into the small of her back and steering her forwards.

"Come on! Hurry up! He's a very busy man and hasn't got time for your dithering!"

Lexa shook her head and turned around to face her. "Will you shut up? You can't talk to me like that! If I don't want to do something – I won't! Comprenez?"

The woman's jaw dropped and she stepped back a little before shifting her gaze over Lexa's shoulder. "Mr. Willows – did you hear her impudence?"

Lexa spun around to find a tall dark-haired man in the doorway. He was simply gorgeous. Sporting a dark suit, she could still see his well-defined muscles beneath. Wow.

Focusing on his face, she realized he was staring down at her with eyes of steel. It sent a frisson of alarm straight through her. She swallowed hard. "I-I...errr..." She seemed to have lost all power of speech.

He didn't take his eyes off her but said in clipped tones, "I certainly did hear, Miss Withers, and she will be punished for such rudeness!"

"Punished?" Lexa managed to breathe. "What do you mean – punished?"

"It is not for you to ask, Miss Goodman. It is for me to administer! Now, come in here immediately or will you need assistance!" He raised a stern eyebrow.

Lexa darted a glance at Miss Withers. She certainly didn't fancy having her ear grabbed again. Perhaps once inside, she could sort out once and for all where all this confusion had come from. So she found herself walking forward into Mr. Willows' room. It smelled of leather and wood, just like her old headmistress's room at Fernway School. She cleared her thoughts and tried to concentrate on how she was going to get herself out of her current predicament, but before she had time to say anything, she felt something tapping on the back of her legs. She looked down and yelped. Mr. Willows had a cane.

"Bend!" he commanded and, by the look on his face, he fully expected her to obey.

"What? Not likely!" Lexa objected. "I'm not sure what sort of place this is but let me tell you now..."

He interrupted her by raising his hand. "You will bend over and take your punishment or I will have you restrained and you will receive double!"

Lexa's heart thumped in her chest. This was real. Somehow, she was in a living nightmare. School again? At her age? She backed away from him towards his desk but he followed, his eyes dark and menacing but somehow erotic. She blinked quickly. *Erotic*? What

was she thinking?

"Bend!" he said again.

"You can't do this! For goodness' sake..."

In one swift move, he had her turned and over his desk, one hand pinned down on the small of her back. She kicked her legs and tried to get free but his strength was second to none. She felt her short skirt being lifted and then she gasped as a sudden pain hit her bottom. He had smacked her! Thankfully, only using his hand, but before she had time to recover, he did it again and again. She shrieked and bucked but he continued in rapid succession.

"That hurts! Please, stop!" she implored him, but it had no effect.

"You are an impertinent young woman, Miss Goodman. We do not entertain such behaviour in this school, do you hear?" He continued to wallop her backside with a hand that felt like iron.

Oh, God, it hurt! How had she found herself in this nightmare? She tried to turn around.

"Look, Mr. Willows. I'm not sure what's happening here? *Aooooowww...* I shouldn't even be here!"

He stilled his hand. "You are Miss Lexa Goodman, are you not?"

Lexa nodded and tried to stand up but he kept his hand firm. He leaned over and picked up a thin ledger, his crisp black trousers brushing against her bottom. She found herself slightly breathless at the contact. What was wrong with her?

"Ah, here we are. 'Miss Lexa Goodman. One week's correction.' No, there is no mistake. Girls are sent here for daily correctional discipline and, you, young lady, have been sent here for that very thing."

"Daily?" she croaked.

"Yes, Miss Goodman and, today, because of your rudeness, you will receive two sessions."

"Now listen to me..." she began, but he cut in.

"No, Miss Goodman, I will not." His tone was stern. "You are extremely outspoken and it only proves to me why you've been sent here. I suggest you refrain from further objections and take what's coming to you!"

She heard a sudden swish and then a hot stinging line of fire hit her backside. She bucked and gasped at the same time. Fuck! Before she had time to recover, another line hit both buttocks. This time, she emitted a loud cry and kicked her legs but it made no difference. He brought the cane swinging down yet again. Her face screwed up with pain whilst she fought to control the sudden nightmare she'd found herself in.

Another three strokes and he had seemingly finished. "Six of the best, Miss Goodman. Hopefully, they will help you adjust your attitude." He finally released his hand from her back and she jumped up, all the while rubbing furiously at her extremely sore bottom.

"Oh, my God! That was so painful!" she exclaimed.

"But so necessary. We do not abide rudeness in any form. Something you could take care to remember in future. Now, I shall call Miss Withers to show you your room. Luncheon is taken at twelve o'clock sharp. Tea at six. And Miss Goodman?" He took a step nearer and placed a finger under her chin. "You will not be late for either!"

His touch sent a frisson of excitement rippling through her. That, combined with his deep powerful voice. Her heart fluttered alarmingly as she found herself responding to his masculinity and dominance. His eyes, so close to hers, seemed to draw her in and, for a moment, she couldn't move or speak. Suddenly, he released her and walked to the door, opened it and called out for

Miss Withers. She was there in a heartbeat.

"Show Miss Goodman her room, if you please." She felt his eyes on her as she followed Miss Withers from the room, her mind in a daze.

* * *

Lexa sat on the edge of the single bed and looked around the small bedroom. Two uniforms were neatly laid out, complete with standard navy blue school knickers. Her own clothing was nowhere to be seen but in the en-suite bathroom, there was everything she needed—toothbrush, toothpaste, moisturizers, shower gels. Everything had been provided. But she was still non-plussed how this could have happened. She didn't even have her mobile phone to contact anyone.

She sighed and lay back on the bed, mindful of her sore backside, and was surprised to find it quite comfortable. She had expected the mattress to be as hard as rock but far from it.

On the bedside table was a lamp and a pamphlet. She leaned over, picked the leaflet up, and read the heading—Withdean Manor, Correctional School. She frowned. This was nothing like the Withdean Manor Lisa had told her about. Yes, it had the same name but it was supposed to be a luxury hotel, catering for your every whim, every desire.

Instead, within an hour of entering the premises, she'd been caned and spanked and was now in a school!

What the fuck was going on?

Well, she wasn't going to sit around and take a daily spanking as Mr. Willows had planned for her. No, siree! She was going to leave.

Perhaps there was a telephone in the foyer downstairs that she could call a taxi. She winced as she moved to the side of the bed to stand up. Her bottom was still smarting. There was no way she was going to take any more! Walking over to the door, she stood still and listened intently. Silence surrounded her. Opening the door a crack, she was immediately confronted by Miss Withers. She jumped back in shock.

Miss Withers swung the door open and glared at her. "Miss Goodman. You're late for luncheon! Why aren't you down in the hall with the other girls?"

"Late?" Lexa croaked.

"Yes, luncheon is at twelve. It is now ten past twelve. Hurry up!"

Licking her lips, she began to retort but Miss Withers hand snaked out and took a firm hold on her ear. "AAaoooooww! You can't keep doing this!"

"I can, and I will." Surprisingly strong, she pulled Lexa along the corridor and then down the wide sweeping staircase until they reached a set of double doors. Pushing them open, she marched Lexa through, into a large hall.

There were two rows of long tables, and on each side, girls sat, all dressed in the same uniform Lexa was wearing. The hall fell silent as Miss Withers marched Lexa up the middle towards Mr. Willows before finally releasing her vice like grip on her ear. Lexa shot daggers at her whilst rubbing it to alleviate the pain.

"Miss Goodman, did I or did I not tell you to be punctual for luncheon?" Mr. Willows' deep voice took her attention away from the odious Miss Withers.

She glared at him. "Do a few minutes really matter?"

He fixed her with a hard stare. "Yes, young lady, they certainly do. Come here!"

Lexa rolled her eyes and sighed. "No! I'm going home!" She spun on her heel with the

full intention of heading off for home just as she heard an audible gasp from the other girls. They were all staring at her, shock written all over their faces. She smiled smugly. Obviously, no one had ever stood up to him as she just had.

But before she could revel in her success, he grabbed her by the arm and brought her back. She tried to shrug him off but his strength far overpowered hers. He stood her back in front of him and his eyes bored into hers. "Hold your hand out!"

"What?"

"Your hand. Hold it out now!"

"Why?"

"Do as I ask, this minute!" His eyes had grown as dark as coal and Lexa found herself obeying him. She showed him her hand and waited, wondering what he intended to do.

He took hold of her offered hand and raised it slightly higher. At his touch, a thrill shot through her. What was it about this man? She watched, mesmerized, as he reached for his cane.

"Oh, no!" She balked, quickly lowering her hand. "No way!" She turned to run but found her way barred by Miss Withers, whose beady eyes dared her to try getting past her.

Slumping her shoulders, she turned back to Mr. Willows. "There really is no need for this!"

"Raise your hand!" he ordered.

She licked her lips. Her heart was beating ten to the dozen. Closing her eyes, she raised her hand and waited. She heard the swish and then gasped when her palm took the full brunt of his cane. It was excruciating. Her eyes shot open and she doubled over whilst trying to massage the pain away.

"Again!" he demanded.

"Are you serious?" exclaimed Lexa, still getting over the first stroke.

His answer was to grab her hand again and pull it towards him. Before she had time to pull it away, he had delivered another stroke. This time, she jumped away from him and howled, placing her hand between her legs and hopping from foot to foot. "Ohhhhhh!" she moaned.

"Now, Miss Goodman. You will take a seat at the front here so I can keep an eye on you and you will never be late again. Do you understand?"

She nodded and sat where Miss Withers put her. The pain was diminishing now to a dull tingle. Bloody hell. She never knew a hand caning would be so excruciating. She became aware that some of the girls were staring at her with a sympathetic expression so she smiled tentatively back.

She realized she was quite hungry when she was handed a plate. The food was quite delicious, more restaurant class than mere school dinners. A bell rang out, indicating luncheon was over, and the girls traipsed out, single file, to the playing fields.

The neat lawns and hedges that Lexa had seen on her way in to the hotel were nowhere to be seen. Withdean Manor was still exactly the same; it was just the setting that had changed. Whilst she stood there pondering the last few hours, a girl ran up to her and handed her a sealed envelope.

Lexa was just about to ask her whom it was from when she ran off. Intrigued, she quickly opened it and read the contents.

Dear Lexa,

By now, you're probably wondering what's happening to you. Am I right? The holiday you thought you were on has changed into something entirely different.

Withdean Manor is a special place, a dark secret I discovered a while ago and have

chosen to share with you. It takes your innermost thoughts and desires and turns them into reality. It will only last the week so enjoy the fantasy while it lasts!

Your best friend,

Lisa xx

Enjoy? She'd just had her hand caned and her backside tanned that morning. Enjoy? What was Lisa thinking? She frowned and sat down on the grass with a thump, quickly rolling onto her side when her tender bottom zinged into life. *Innermost thoughts and desires*. She raised her eyebrows. Well, she supposed she had fantasized about being spanked by a headmaster whilst wearing a schoolgirl uniform. And Mr. Willows was one hell of a sexy man, the sort who takes your breath away and fills your head with lustful thoughts with just one look. Just thinking about him sent a shiver rippling through her. But how the hell could this be real? She glanced back down to Lisa's letter. That was definitely real.

Well, this was only the first day and, already, she had a sore bottom and hand. What the hell would tomorrow bring or the rest of the day, come to think of it?

The bell rang, registering the end of lunchtime, and Lexa made her way back inside the building. She had no idea where she was meant to be. Was she supposed to take lessons with the other girls? If she didn't, would that be classed as bunking lessons, in which case, she was bound to receive another thrashing. She ran a hand over her buttocks. She certainly couldn't take anymore today. She caught up with another pupil and, before long, she found herself seated at a desk, taking part in a biology lesson. She tapped the desk with her fingernails, deciding that, for today, she would abide by the rules. But tomorrow was another day!

* * *

The following morning, she awoke to the loud ringing of the school bell. She blinked blearily and glanced at her watch. Six AM. *Six!* There was no way she was going to get up that early. How ridiculous. After all, this was supposed to be her holiday. Grabbing one of the pillows, she turned on her front and pulled it down over her head, snuggling down into the soft mattress. She slipped back into sleep in the blink of an eye.

"Miss Goodman!"

"Mmm?" Lexa, still lying on her front, stretched lazily and yawned. God, what a nightmare. She'd dreamed she was in a school and she'd been spanked. Kind of erotic, really. A smile played on her lips as she recalled the handsome Mr. Willows. Now there was a catch. Why couldn't she meet someone like that in real life?

"Miss Goodman." A sharp voice echoed close to her ear.

She opened both eyes wide and quickly turned on her back. Fuck! It was real! He was real! Mr. Willows was towering over her bed, his eyes as dark as coal.

"You are still in bed and the time is nine o'clock! What time do we start lessons, Miss Goodman?"

His stern voice soon had Lexa scrambling upwards against the pillows. "I...umm...confess, I have no idea!"

"Then I shall have to find a way of making you remember, won't I? Out of bed, now!"

"But I'm in my pyjamas!" she objected.

He pointed to the floor. "I said now, Miss Goodman!"

Reluctantly, she hopped out of bed and stood next to him. Her heart was racing with a mixture of fear and excitement. Would he spank her again? She risked a glance at his face and

flushed when she found he was studying her.

"You seem unable to obey rules, little one. For special pupils, like yourself, we have a sure fire way of making you adhere to them." He grabbed her arm and pulled her down across his lap whilst sitting on the end of her bed.

Oh, Lord. She was in for another spanking. Luckily, her bottom didn't feel as sore as yesterday but she knew for certain it would feel a hell of a lot worse after this. She was acutely conscious of his hard thighs beneath hers and a ripple of desire shot through her. She found herself growing moist as lustful thoughts entered her mind.

She felt his hands at her waist and, before she knew it, he had pulled down her pyjama bottoms. He pushed her forward until her hands touched the floor and her bottom was up high. She closed her eyes, hoping her arousal wasn't obvious, but then flicked them back open again. Hadn't Lisa said this was her innermost thoughts and fantasy? Why, then perhaps Mr. Willows would do more than just spank!

She jumped when she felt something cold settle against her bottom. Straining her neck, she looked over her shoulder and emitted an audible gasp. It was a wooden paddle. That was going to hurt big time. She struggled and tried to scramble off his lap but he slipped a hand around her waist and hugged her to his side to keep her in place.

"Be still. This is your punishment and you only have yourself to blame!"

He caressed one of her buttocks slowly moving the paddle over the soft skin, kneading the flesh in circular motions but then, suddenly, he took it away and she felt a sharp pain when the paddle made contact. Before she had time to recover, it came down again and again on each cheek alternately, and no amount of shrieking or pleading made him stop.

When her bottom was truly on fire, he stopped and threw the paddle onto the bed before placing his hand on her hot flesh. His long fingers began to knead sensuously, stroking each cheek in turn. The sensations were driving her crazy. She was so turned on. If only he would knead a little lower. Almost as though he heard her, his hand dipped down between her legs and found her little nub of desire.

"You seem to be having wicked thoughts, Miss Goodman." His deep voice seemed to caress the air, adding to her arousal.

"Mmm!" was all she could mumble, her mind awl with pleasure. His fingers were working magic on her clit and she couldn't speak. Just as she neared climax he pushed one thick finger inside her and that was it. Her world exploded. Heaven and hell in one huge orgasm. She sighed contentedly whilst reveling in the lush afterglow.

Pulling her gently upright, Mr. Willows' dark eyes assessed her. "When you are dressed, go down to the kitchens and they will provide a breakfast for you. I will expect you in class in half an hour." He stood up, towering over her. "And I don't think I need to tell you not to be late, do I?"

She shook her head and bit on her lower lip. When he had exited the room, Lexa threw herself face down on the bed and grinned wickedly. Lisa was right. This was one hell of an experience!

* * *

A few days later, and her stay was over. She sat down on the bed gingerly because her bottom had only recently been caned. She'd been spanked several times and Mr. Willows had given her several more orgasms. She almost didn't want to go home! Who'd have thought

spanking could be so erotic? It had totally changed the way she thought about future boyfriends. He would have to be a spanker, simple as!

Miss Withers appeared at the door entrance and gave her a stern look. "Stop dithering, girl. Your cab is waiting for you at the entrance and your case is in the boot already."

Used by now to Miss Withers' brusque manner, Lexa smiled. "Thank you. Can you thank Mr. Willows for a wonderful week?"

"I shall do no such thing, you impudent girl. Now hurry along before you're in trouble again!"

Lexa followed her down the stairs. Once outside, she turned around to say goodbye and found the door closed and no sight of Miss Withers. The grounds outside, once more, had returned to their original state—no playground, no playing fields, no school. Just the imposing house and its neat grounds. Her clothes were back to normal, jeans, top and sneakers. Shaking her head, she descended the steps and approached the cab.

"Ready, miss?" the cabbie asked.

"As I'll ever be!" She settled herself on the back seat, ready to be taken home. She didn't understand how that experience had happened or what magic had been used, but she did know that what had transpired had felt real.

When the cab pulled away, she glanced up at the windows and, for a moment, was sure she spotted Mr. Willows, but then he was gone as quickly as he had appeared.

Sighing dreamily, she suddenly realized how relaxed she felt. Lisa was right. She had enjoyed herself.

She sat back to enjoy the scenery on the way home and noticed something sticking out of her jeans pocket. She pulled it out. It was a business card from Withdean Manor, asking her to pass the leaflet, which she would find in her case, on to a friend of her choice. It stated that the experience would only work if the beholder knew nothing of what was to come. Lexa nodded thoughtfully to herself, so that was why Lisa hadn't told her the truth

All she had to do now was list through her group of friends and decide to whom to give the leaflet.