

“Oh it’s probably nothing” is what they said. Now they were having secret meetings and whispering about it hoping nobody would catch them. Its funny really, how now those beautiful liars are making new secrets while the old ones aren’t going away. None of them expected it to get as far as this. Not the beautiful, skinny girl playing the lead in the school play; ot the nerdy-cute tech-wiz who was the sophomore class president; Not the sporty girl that did swimming and lacrosse year round; Not the slightly creepy girl that was most likely to be found walking alone on Saturday evenings. But most definitely not the witty, fearless, group-leader that was a bit overprotective of her friends. McKenna Beinty stared at her phone incredulous of what was happening right now. “Hacker.” She whispered to herself as her knees buckled under her.

Just a few days earlier everyone was fine until the hacking started. McKenna just thought that their teachers were fooling around with their school email accounts, since they could get onto them so easily. Little did they know that it was a hacker, a hacker that was targeting them. McKenna sat down in study hall with her four best friends. Wylee had already grabbed a laptop and was preparing for her next class president speech she had to make at the sophomore assembly next week. Sophia was admiring her newly done french manicure and was running through her lines for this years production of *“The Sound of Music”* . Karen was trying to catch up on sleep since she was up all of last night swimming. McKenna found her seat next to Chelsea Parker who was writing a paper on her account on the school website. After setting her things down on her seat, she walked up in between Sophia and Karen and whispered “chat?”. Automatically Karen woke up from her almost-nap and Sophia put down her script to get a laptop. They logged onto their five-way document to talk about...well basically just girl stuff that Chelsea and Wylee were involved in, just not wanting to talk about at the moment. As they logged on Karen grunted and went to get another computer. She did this process multiple times while muttering things like “My bad luck is acting up today” or “This is just fantastic, isn’t it?”. McKenna and Sophia continued with logging onto their chat. They were just innocently talking about the cute boys in the room when it all started. Everything that had happened after that started with this event.

Karen logged onto the chat.

Sophia and McKenna stared at Karen cursing at the laptop cart, then back at the chat where “Karen” had just posted a new message.

“Heeeeyyy guys, *what's up!!!*” Fake-Karen had said. Too scared to reply, McKenna and Sophia had just shut their laptops off and put them away. “Seriously guys?” Karen complained as they shut the laptop cart.

“Karen, someone just hacked your account” Sophia whispered as they sat in front of the cart.

“Y-You're overreacting, Sophia, it was probably just a teacher wondering what the document was for” McKenna stuttered, clearly freaked out.

“Karen said hello to us McKenna, and we all know that wasn't Karen.” Sophia said while nervously chewing on her cheek.

“I'm with Sophia on this one. Teachers don't do that McK-” Karen was cut off by Wylee who was summoning them to look at something. When all three of them and Chelsea were gathered around her computer she opened a document titled “*Its not a coincidence girls*”, all of them shuddered after reading it. The actual document was worse. Before opening it, Wylee assured everyone that she hadn't written it and that it had been written while she was working on her speech. They read it wide-eyed and curious. When they were done they weren't so much curious as scared.

*One pretty actress and one sporty liar  
One lonely fighter that's never a cryer  
One president with no family to stand beside*

*But don't forget the leader that's got "nothing" to hide*

*We've all got some loose screws, don't worry, I won't tattle*

*Unless you tell about me, then things will rattle*

*Now don't just stand there like you were attacked*

*Because all your doing is being hacked*

The only one brave enough to talk was McKenna. "All of you are sleeping over tomorrow night, no arguing". Then she walked off with the sound of the bell. Karen and Chelsea walked off together leaving Wylee and Karen sitting there, stunned. Their next class was right across the hall so they slowly put away Wylee's computer. Wylee ran over today's events in her head. Just this morning in home room she had been working on her speech and had gotten another document from the hacker. It had said, clear as day, "You and your snobby friends are going to feel my wrath." She had honestly thought someone had just written that on her computer while she was in the bathroom, since she and her four friends were the prettiest and most popular girls in school, it was common for nerds to do pranks like that. Although it seemed cheesy, the five of them were without a doubt the "It girls" of Dixfield Prep High School in Maine. The town honestly consisted of mostly average-looking girls-there weren't any ugly ones around here- but they still beat out the rest with the help of McKenna, who would take down any potential threats to their popularity. She had figured that each of them had their own secrets just as she did, but she hadn't thought too hard about that until the hacker had confirmed it.

She assumed that the hacker had just hacked their phones and everything to find out their deepest secrets that they had thought were gone for good by now. She was snapped out of her train of thought by Karen telling her that they had to leave for math class. They walked slowly across the hall as passing students waved and whispered about them. After all, being the prettiest girls in school came with all the gossip. The four other girls could mostly tell that Karen seemed to have been dragged into being popular by them. Well it was mostly McKenna who had just

insisted that they needed a fifth person in their group about three months after they had established that the four of them were going to be best friends. So, McKenna had gone and found herself a new friend. She went and plucked up Karen from her sporty crew and dragged her into fancy clothing and the older kids parties. Sometimes the girls would see a spark of Karen's old self, but then McKenna would stomp on it to put it out. Now they had been best friends for five years and Karen had just accepted that she couldn't dump McKenna, nobody did that. Ever.

McKenna wasn't one of those bossy leaders that acts like a complete tyrant. She treated the other four like they were all equal to her, but the other four could tell she had secrets that she was really good at hiding. Everyone at Dixfield Prep knew that McKenna was probably going to be famous someday, maybe an actress or a singer. Although this made Sophia really envious, it also made a tighter bond between the two of them. Whenever they were together it was like Sophia's expression said *"We're both gonna be famous one day, yeah, i know."* and McKenna always had a look like they were both on the red carpet and she had a sick expression that bragged *"Yes, yes, Sophia is my favorite, now stop asking me all these questions!"*. In fact, that was how McKenna had met Sophia, the first one to join McKenna's five friends. Then there was Chelsea, who had only seen McKenna around school and had never really spoken until they met at the hair salon. They had bonded while waiting and looking at cheap magazines in the waiting area. McKenna added Chelsea to her list of friends due to her shyness with boys, which McKenna saw as her only flaw, and the one thing that she could definitely fix. Chelsea still had that problem. That's when McKenna decided that those two weren't enough so she went for Sophia's old best friend that she had dumped for McKenna. After she got dumped, Wylee decided to become a straight A student with incredible fashion sense that was about to win the 6th grade class president vote. That brings us back to the last one to join the group, who happened to be three months late, Karen.

The bell representing the end of the day rang. Chelsea, being the only one with her drivers license, drove all five of them home every day. She had bought a real van with the help of months and months of bake sales. They all piled into her glamorously decorated van.

“Do you think the Hacker was bluffing?” Karen asked in a hushed tone, as if anyone is hiding in the van. She had always been kind of the mother of the group, trying to protect everyone from danger. Whereas McKenna protected everyone too, except she normally just walked up to the problem and slapped it in the face. Mostly slapping “it” in the face meant McKenna tracking down naughty boys. This problem was different.

“Could we stop calling it The Hacker, give it some sort of name.” McKenna said in an irritated way.

“How about Bob?” Chelsea suggested. McKenna gave Chelsea a look and then turned to Sophia and rolled her eyes.

“Lets call it Virus.” Sophia said confidently. Everyone agreed with that. There was a long pause. Nobody wanted to admit what Virus has found out about them. Finally, McKenna broke the silence.

“So who are we going to tell about this. We can’t just keep this to ourselves, we would be in over our heads.” She said.

“I don’t know about you guys, but I really don’t need everything that happens on my phone posted all over school.” Wylee retorted as McKenna twirled her hair around her pinky. Nobody said it, but everyone was thinking it. Everyone knew that McKenna didn’t care who knew about Virus because she was the one who was really good at hiding secrets. She was the only one that Virus has nothing on; mostly because she kept all of her secrets in her head.

The next day flew by without notice. Before they knew it, everyone was at home finishing up some homework or showering before going over to McKenna’s house for their pre-scheduled sleep over. They came one at a time and sat quietly before McKenna came down to the living room where everyone was waiting for her. She spoke quietly in a hushed tone as she told them to follow her. She guided them slowly up her polished wood stairs into her room the

size of a horse barn. McKenna floated almost ghostly over to her computer and everyone followed her. Then she just stood there for a second as everyone watched her.

“Just look at the computer” McKenna half growled-half squeaked. Everyone read the message that was put on McKenna’s personal email account. This definitely wasn’t a teacher.

*My sweet, sweet little girls  
the ones who keeps her hair in twirls  
Its such a shame to see you go  
But I’m targeting you first lets see what you know*

“What is that suppose to mean?” Sophia said a little more sarcastically than she meant to.

“This should tell us.” Chelsea said as reading a new text on her flip phone-she didn’t socialize much. The text said:

*Marlee Mulkin- I know that name sounds familiar to you.  
Its either her secret gets revealed or yours.  
Toodles,  
-Virus*

*P.S. I just adore the new nickname*

“No. Way.” Karen said sounding astonished. Back when the girls were in 8th grade, they were making a group project. There had to be groups of six, so they decided to include Marlee, her being the sixth prettiest girl in the class and all. The six of them had gotten along really well

until they found out what Marlee had been hiding. One day McKenna had invited them all to come over and “work on the project” really meaning to play in her new giant pool. Everyone got in the pool except Marlee. Finally, McKenna got sick of teasing her and just pushed her into the pool. That's when her lustrous brown wig fell off. Ever since then they just avoided Marlee, and Marlee avoided them. It was a bullet-proof plan. Until now.

All night long the five of them stayed up discussing what they should do. Chelsea kept on leaning toward telling everyone about Marlee, since she was convinced that the secret on the line was hers. That was probably true. At about four in the morning they all came to a conclusion that they would have to tell Marlee's secret. After all, wasn't Chelsea more important than her?

Wylee sat on her bed on a Monday afternoon. It was just today that she had let McKenna go on the morning announcements where she had, in the ever most politely manner, said “Excuse everyone, attention. I would like to announce that Marlee Mulkin's hair.....” McKenna took a deep breath. “Is a wig.” She finished. Marlee called her mom to drive her home early that day. The rest of the day the five of them got mixed emotions from everyone else in school. The desperate-to-be-cool freshman would come up and congratulate them on exposing the big secret, as if it was that big of a deal. The boys that had secretly admired Marlee gave them high fives and fist bumps all day long like they were their heroes. All of McKenna's sort of friends shot them tiny devious smiles in the hallway. Everyone else in the school tried to stare McKenna down. People had been trying to do that ever since McKenna let the class frog loose in 3rd grade and it just didn't work.

McKenna figured that everyone of her was friends were asleep by twelve at night on a Monday and they were. But she wasn't. McKenna was up because of the seven cups of coffee she drank earlier to make sure nobody snuck into her house while her parents were on business trips and her sisters were over at friends houses. Everything, every code, every essay, every conversation, every phone call was online on her accounts. Any information, including her

address, could be found online. What if Virus came to her house to murder her in her sleep? Well then she just won't go to sleep, jokes on Virus.

1:00. 2:30. 3:00. The time flew by as McKenna sat on her bed nervously looking around like a bird hiding from its prey. Finally something interesting happened. McKenna's phone buzzed. Once. Twice. Three times. Then four. Four new messages. Who on earth would have texted her four times this early on a Tuesday Morning. She checked her phone. The messages were from four *different* people. It was all the same message too.

*I found out your secret sweetie  
and I'm not going to hurt you physically, at least not yet.  
I am just going to ruin you psychologically.  
Good Luck with your "older man" darling. I hope you have fun.  
- You know who I am.*

Wow. Just wow. McKenna couldn't let this happen. Nobody was suppose to know. Everything got darker. She hit the ground with a thud. She thought her secret was hidden from everyone. Now it wasn't.

Now Wylee looked outside of her window. Except, no, her window was cracked open. That was just completely wrong. Her family had the newest up-to-date alarm system that covered the windows and doors. She remembered perfectly last summer when her family and McKenna's family had bought the most expensive system in Maine just because they could, them being two of the most wealthiest families in Dixfield. You had to enter a passcode to unlock anything and that passcode was stored on her.....oh.....computer. She realized it as a new message popped up on her phone. It was from Karen.

*See what I can do with my talents?*

*-It's not from Karen*

Totally. Creepy. Wylee was so freaked out to see a message so vicious meant to be from one of her friends. It just didn't seem right. She walked over and closed her window. It wasn't open wide enough for anyone to get through. Besides, she doubted that Virus would risk getting caught like that. Or would they?