

Framed at Thirteen

Handcuffs pinch my wrist and the police twist my arms backward. "It wasn't me!" I scream, "I swear it wasn't me!" Tears of anger stain my eyes as I stare at the dead body of Lori Gardens. They think I killed her, I didn't. She killed herself, and framed me for it.

It's dark, my 10 by 10 cell is pitch black. No lights, just a bed and a desk. It's 1:13 according to the glowing clock over the cell across from me. Recently, I have been a night owl. Soon I will have to leave this place. I am turning 18 in November, so then I go to the real jail to finish the last 3 years of my 8 year sentence. But, I plan to break out.

Many kids have been caught breaking out, and they were sentenced to death. I know that once I get to real jail, there is no hope for me to break out. The cell next to me holds a kid about my age. He will turn 18 in October, so we have to get out before then. We are leaving together.

Sirens blare and my ears are dying. The practice fire drill has the little kid across from me crying. We were told they were having a practice one today, but the way the officers slapped cuffs on kids and dragged them away told me something was going on. Now I can smell it, the smoke, the lung-squeezing smoke.

In the cell next to me holds my break out buddy, Rye. Rye gets yanked out and soon I too have cuffs pinching my wrists. This is it, we are leaving now. I look at Rye and he knows what I am thinking. The kid that was crying looks at us, she wants to go with us. Rye looks at me as if to say "No. Absolutely not,". Then, I grab Rye's arm, fling him over me and his cuffs snap off. He does the same to me and we run, but as fast as I can I grab the little girl and scoop her up. The guards are yelling at us and chasing us. We turn a corner and freeze. We're face to face with another guard, and this one is growling and pounding his fists.

BOOM! I'm back in a cell. Rye and the girl are back in their old cells like me. I stare at the girl and mouth "Name?" to her. She stares back and uses her arms to spell out O-P-H-E-L-I-A, then mouths it, Ophelia. I nod, turning to the loose brick between my cell and Rye's. I then push it into his cell and whisper, "Her name is Ophelia". Rye says back "Nice, now what are we gonna do?" I sit back and think, "what are we gonna do?"

“HELLO CHILDREN!” the booming voice of the headmaster says.

“Hello Mr. Boysenberry,” all the children respond.

“GUARDS GET THE THREE TROUBLE MAKERS!!”

Ophelia, Rye, and I are picked up and dragged to a dark room. Rye is the first one to be pinned to the wall.

“RYE!” I yell.

“It’s ok Cora.” Rye mutters.

The guard unties a giant hammer and lets it swing toward Rye. It slams against him and he crumples to the ground.

“NO!” I scream.

Ophelia is grabbed and placed on the wall.

“No! Please don’t, it’s my fault.” I plead.

“I’m sorry Cora...b-b-banana.” she says the code word and I bolt.

The last thing I hear is the hammer slamming against her.

With tears streaming down my face I run through the empty halls. I hear the guard running around looking for me, thank goodness I’m small. I pry open the vent and crawl into it. I close the grate behind me and crawl away. I finally reach the vent above Rye’s cell and drop down. I shove his cot aside and pull open the piece of tile, reaching for the backpack he told me to get if anything happens. I toss the backpack back into the vent and stand on the cot to hoist myself up. I drop into my own cell and grab my backpack and then notice a small stuffed animal on Ophelia’s cot. I crawl back through the vent to get it.

Hours later when I am miles away from the prison, I decide to go to the library. I get on one of the computers and search “Ophelia Rose.” It turns out her parents are millionaires and she was arrested for robbing a jewelry store. So I write a small note and leave it and the stuffed animal on her parents house stairs. The door starts to open and I run. I duck into some bushes and hear a lady open the letter and start to cry. I run away from Ophelia’s house and go to Rye’s, which just so happens to be right next to mine. I drop the backpack on the stairs to Rye’s house; grab the letter sticking out from the top with my name on it and run into my backyard. I rip open the letter and read.

“Cora, if you are reading this something bad happened to me. I want you to know you are my best friend forever and always. Stay safe -Rye Wishbone.”

Tears are streaming down my face as I walk out of the backyard only to see my mom standing in the doorway. Her hair is gray and her eyes look sad and lonely.

“Coraline?” she asks hopefully.

“Mom?”

“I can’t believe you’re here”

“I can’t either, please don’t tell anybody.”

“Oh baby, I’m so sorry I had to...”

That’s when the cuffs pinch my wrists and I’m taken back to the prison; back to the dark room where Rye and Ophelia lay crumpled on the ground. The hammer swings at me and I fall to the ground. Darkness creeps around me and the last thing I see is Rye’s eyes blinking open.