

Earlier that day: Olivia: The Bridesmaid

Earlier that day, Olivia, tasked as a bridesmaid, navigates the periphery of a wedding marquee with the intention of becoming as inebriated as possible. Her method involves consuming left-behind drinks from the attendees' tables, seeking to numb herself against recent distasteful recollections involving Will, another guest. A distressing dance with Will has left her seeking solitude, punctuated by his warning regarding a prior incident between them, which he ominously demands to be their last. Their shared secret adds a layer of unease to Olivia's experience, making his proximity during the dance especially repulsive.

The dance floor, overrun by guests awkwardly embracing their youth to outdated music, starkly contrasts Olivia's current state of alienation and discontent. Reflecting on her surroundings, she notes the youthfulness of some of the wait staff, perceiving their collective disdain towards the wedding party, a sentiment she increasingly shares. Olivia's discomfort extends beyond the emotional; physical encounters with overly familiar male guests add to her dissatisfaction, prompting her to sternly rebuff unwelcome advances.

Her night continues to spiral as she consumes more alcohol, striving to escape her reality through intoxication. A fleeting reunion with her cousin Beth on the dance floor culminates in Olivia's physical and social downfall as she trips and falls, an incident that feels both physically and metaphorically significant. Beth's concerned call for assistance, suggesting Olivia's condition surpasses mere drunkenness, marks a pivotal moment of vulnerability and exposure for Olivia, surrounded by a crowd yet profoundly isolated.

This chapter intricately frames Olivia's internal turmoil against the backdrop of a festive yet superficially joyous wedding setting. Her struggle with past actions, uncomfortable social interactions, and the pursuit of oblivion through alcohol paints a poignant portrait of a woman conflicted and in pain, starkly isolated amidst a sea of celebration.