

# Chapter 53

Chapter Fifty-Three takes a deep dive into the dark and tumultuous past of Wilhelmina Calloway, the character whose background had remained a mystery until Nina, driven by curiosity and suspicion, decides to uncover the truth behind Millie's peculiar demeanor. Nina, feeling uneasy about Millie's secretive nature, hires a private investigator to dig into her past, expecting to uncover a history of petty crimes or misdemeanors. However, the reality of Millie's history is far more complex and tragic than Nina could have anticipated.

Millie's criminal record reveals a harrowing incident from her youth. At the tender age of sixteen, while attending a boarding school for troubled teens, Millie found herself in a dire situation that would change the course of her life forever. One night, upon hearing the distressing cries of a friend, she intervenes in a sexual assault by using lethal force against the attacker, a much larger peer from their school. In a desperate attempt to save her friend, Millie resorts to using a paperweight as a weapon, striking the assailant multiple times until he succumbs to his injuries before any medical help could save him.

The subsequent legal battle paints a complex picture of self-defense entangled with the brutal reality of violence. Millie's lawyer contends that her actions were purely in defense of her friend. However, the gruesome evidence, particularly the photographs showing the severe damage inflicted on the attacker, complicates the narrative, suggesting an intent to kill. Ultimately, Millie accepts a plea deal for lesser manslaughter charges, influenced by her age, the circumstances of the attack, and a desire by the victim's family to avoid further disgrace, despite their longing for retribution.

This chapter peels back layers of Millie's character, revealing a past marked by a violent, decisive moment that shaped her destiny. Nina's investigation into Millie's history not only uncovers a shocking truth but also forces readers to grapple with the moral complexities of justice, vengeance, and the blurry lines between self-defense and retribution.