

Chapter 27: Derivative or Defective!

Good afternoon, everyone. I know you've had a pleasant start to the semester and would like to continue enjoying your newfound freedom and party with your friends. Unfortunately, for you, I take the quality of your education seriously. Today, I've handed out the first math assignment, and I want to emphasize its importance. This assignment may appear challenging at first glance, but remember, it's designed to stretch your intellectual boundaries. Now remember, I am here to help. If you're struggling, I encourage you to seek assistance during my office hours. During our next class, I'll be selecting random students to discuss their thought process and approach to the assignment. This is to ensure authenticity and that there is no plagiarism. Also, I will be assessing your level with this and failure to submit the assignment would mean an F. So be careful. Now let us continue..."

Nora looked down at the first problem on the assignment sheet that the professor had given out and almost fell to the floor. The entire topic of Derivatives had been going over her head and now this.

'Consider the function $f(x) = 2x^3 - 5x^2 + 3x - 7$. Calculate the first and second derivatives of $f(x)$, and then analyze the critical points, inflexion points, and intervals of concavity of the function.'

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She did not even understand the first question, how was she to look for an answer? Suddenly it made her realize that she was in hot waters. The two math experts in the class happened to be the two people who hated her the most.

Sara and Antonio had quickly become the star couple at the university. Sara had an outgoing personality and looks that matched her. She had quickly become friends with everyone, effectively isolating her. Antonio, on the other hand, had become the perfect adoring boyfriend to Sara, enjoying and reaping the benefits of her fame.

Thankfully, they had at least not tried to cross paths with her, but she could already feel Antonio's smug gaze on her. She had never been very smart with numbers, but she would have been better at it if Lara Anderson had ever let

her study. Her formative years had been spent doing the bare minimum to pass school and handling all the household chores that her mother had said were her responsibility.

Professor Thomas had almost finished the problem on the board, and Nora realized with a jerk that she had missed the entire explanation! Oh gosh! She was going to go crazy!

Finally, the professor left, and she quickly started to pack for the day, stuffing the assignment sheet into her bag. Maybe she could look for a tutor who could help her with this. Yes, as if she hadn't been looking already. But every senior who could help her had already refused her. Professor Thomson said that she could go to him for help, but it was an open secret among the students that Professor Thomson was as prejudiced as a judge who would rule a person guilty before even start of a trial. If she exposed her weakness, she would forever be failing this class.

Distracted by these thoughts, she failed to see Sara approaching her. As she picked up her bag, she heard the girl's sweet voice," Nora."

Nora raised her eyes and felt anxiety as soon as she met Sara's eyes. She was definitely up to something. Nora quickly scanned the classroom and noticed that most of the students had left while the others were leaving. Giving her a strained smile, Nora nodded at her," Sara."

"How are you doing, Nora? Do you need any help?" Nora almost laughed out loud at the question. She still could ask that so innocently.

Sara had offered her help a few years ago as well. And feeling hopeful of getting her sister's love, she quickly agreed to receive help. Only to be humiliated in front of the entire school when the headmaster made her read out her foreign language essay in front of the entire school with a translator. Instead of their topic about nature, Sara had... made her write about... Biology.

"I'd sooner eat a bucket of nails than accept your assistance," Nora replied with a perfect smile. Anyone looking at them from a distance would assume that they were having a pleasant conversation.

"Of course, you would want my husband to help you." Sara taunted with a glint in her eyes.

"Your husband. Tsk tsk tsk. At most, he is your boyfriend." Nora taunted with a grin.

"Those are semantics! If you had done something so insidious, we would have been married. To me, he is my husband and to him, I am his wife."

"Alright. But why are you telling me this?" Nora asked with a shrug.

"Because I don't want you to try and get him back. Look, Nora, I don't have any personal grudge against you. Whatever I did in the past, it was because Mom told me to. But I genuinely love Antonio and I don't want to fight you. But if I have to, then I will leave no stone unturned. I will forget that you are my sister!"

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Nora rolled her eyes internally at that. Did Sara even remember they were sisters? But the girl seemed to have selective memory. She'd suddenly started to believe that she had been only obeying their mother when she had made her life a living hell. Maybe Sara had developed some mental problems. However, she had no wish to entertain her drama.

Stepping aside, Nora spoke softly, "I'd prefer getting lost in the desert without water than getting his help."

Finally, having said the last word, Nora made her escape. Outside the room, she sighed in relief. It had been difficult for her to confront Sara. She'd half been expecting Sara to use her old tricks and try to bruise her arms or hurt her where it would not be visible. This time she would have used a small move of small defense that she had been learning over the weeks.

With a sigh, she imagined throwing Sara towards the back of the classroom, where she would then stick to the wall like a cartoon character before slumping to the floor. Grinning at the image, Nora quickly walked outside, ready to get to the cafe where she worked as a waitress.

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Author Note: Since my awesome readers are not reading my notes, I have to add an explanation here! If you are not from a maths background, then let me tell you a bit about Derivatives! This is one topic of Mathematics that you do not want to mess with! This and the other topic is Integers! To anyone who

has studied these in detail, I bow down! By the way, I hated Derivatives and Integers during my university years with a passion and still do! And my professor dared to suggest that I should take Math as my major! As if! For mini theatre between myself and the characters, do keep an eye on Author notes! Ps: This is a free chapter so I am rambling here! Drop a scolding comment if you have a problem with it!