

C H O I C E S

pay back

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 **SADDLEBACK**
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chapter

1

Rae walked down the hall at school. She was on her way to class. Then she saw Jess. Jess was her best friend.

Rae wanted to talk to Jess. So she hurried to meet her.

Rae yelled, “Jess, wait for me!”

Rae looked very mad. And she sounded very mad, too.

Jess stopped and waited for Rae. “You look mad, Rae. What’s wrong?” Jess asked.

Rae hissed, “You’d better believe I’m

mad. I'll pay her back. I promise!"

"Why are you so upset, Rae? And who do you want to pay back?" Jess asked.

"Torie," Rae said. Torie was in her science class. Rae didn't like Torie.

"What did Torie do?" Jess asked.

"She had a date with Chance last Friday night. I just found out about it," Rae said.

Rae and Chance had gone on a few dates. And Rae liked him a lot.

Jess said, "Calm down, Rae. It isn't a big deal."

"It is to me. I like Chance," Rae said.

Jess said, "Don't worry about it. Torie likes Brad. So I don't think she'll date Chance for long."

"I don't care. She shouldn't have dated Chance at all," Rae said.

Rae still looked mad.

Jess said, "Rae, Torie really likes

Brad, not Chance. So you are getting upset about nothing.”

“I’m not upset about nothing. And I’ll pay Torie back,” Rae said.

“Forget about it, Rae. It’s no big deal,” Jess said again.

“It is to me. Just you wait and see,” Rae said.

Jess looked worried. “What are you going to do, Rae?” she asked.

“Torie likes Brad. I’ll get Brad to ask me out on a date. And that will pay Torie back,” Rae said.

“You don’t even like Brad. You’ve never wanted to date him before. So why do you want to date him now?” Jess asked.

Jess was right about that. Rae didn’t like Brad. And she’d never wanted to date him before.

“I just told you why I want to date

Brad. I want to pay Torie back. She dated Chance. And I have to get even with her," Rae said.

"Forget about it, Rae," Jess said.

Rae said, "I don't care what you think, Jess. I'll get Brad to ask me out."

"Don't do it, Rae. You don't even like Brad," Jess said.

"So what? I just want to date him," Rae said. "I don't want to *marry* him," Rae said.

"But it wouldn't be fair to get Brad to date you. You wouldn't want a guy to date you to get even with another girl. Think of how that would make you feel. And Brad would feel that way, too," Jess said.

"He won't know the reason why I want to date him," Rae said.

"But someone might tell him," Jess said.

“You’re the only person who knows. And you won’t tell him, will you?” Rae asked.

“No. But he could still find out,” Jess said.

“No way. Only two of us would know. You are my best friend. You won’t tell him. And I sure won’t,” Rae said.

“Don’t do it, Rae. Think about it some more. Think about how you would feel,” Jess said.

“Don’t try to make me feel bad, Jess. I’ll get a date with Brad. And I’ll pay Torie back. Just you wait and see,” Rae said.

chapter

2

Rae hurried into the lunchroom. She got her lunch. Then she looked for Jess.

Rae saw Jess sitting at a table. Rae hurried over to the table. And she quickly sat down. Rae looked at Jess.

“I have a plan. And I can’t wait to tell you about it,” Rae blurted.

“What kind of plan?” Jess asked.

“A plan to get Brad to ask me out on a date,” Rae said. She had a big smile on her face.

Jess said, “Forget about Brad. And

forget about your plan, Rae.” Jess looked worried again.

“No way, Jess. Don’t you want to hear my plan?” Rae asked.

Jess said, “Not really. But I guess you’ll tell me anyway.”

“I found out Brad will be at the pep rally tonight,” Rae said. The school had a football game the next night. And the school always had a pep rally the night before.

Rae said, “Brad is going by himself. And I’ll go without a date, too.” She laughed. “I’ll get my dad to take me. That’s the first part of my plan.”

“Do you want me to go with you?” Jess asked.

“You can ride to the pep rally with me. But we can’t stay together once we get there. You’ll have to find your own way home,” Rae said.

Jess asked, "Why? Did your dad say he couldn't come back and get you?"

"No," Rae said. She laughed again.

"Then why would I need to find my own way home? Is there a reason why I can't ride home with you?" Jess asked.

Rae said, "Yes. I told my dad that I didn't want him to come back for me."

Jess looked surprised. "Why did you tell your dad that?" Jess asked.

"I told you. I have a plan," Rae said.

"So what's your plan?" Jess asked.

"I'll look for Brad at the pep rally. Then I'll get him to take me home," Rae said.

"A lot of people will be at the pep rally, Rae. You might not see him," Jess said.

"Don't worry about that. I'll find Brad. You can count on that," Rae said.

"Maybe. But you can't be sure that he'll take you home," Jess said.