

## Chapter 7

Kylie's POV

When I nally reach a wall, I nd a door and use my shoulder to push through it, nding myself outside, but at a different entrance than I can in from.

Stumbling slightly as I step through the door, my heel turns and I start to fall, dropping the two glasses so that I can hear them shatter at my feet.

Shielding my face with my arms, I wait for the pain from the impact of hitting the pavement, but instead, something hard wraps around my waist, jerks me back upright and presses me against a wall.

Slightly shaking, I lower my hands and pull my hair out of my face to see who saved me from my inevitable faceplant.

But as I push my hair away, I nd that I am not staring at a wall, but a broad chest.

My eyes lifting upwards, my knees go weak as I look into the ercest blue eyes that I have ever seen.

Also just might be the most intimidating eyes that I have ever seen.

"I would release you, but I am afraid that you might tumble right over again."

His voice is dry, and my cheeks burn as I realize that I am fully depending on his arm to hold me up still while I continue to lean against him.

"Sorry." I mumble as I push off him, straightening up and avoiding his beautiful eyes.

"You're bleeding."

I look down and sure enough, a long, red line is going down my leg, just under my knee.

A piece of glass most have got me.

Closing my eyes, I sway a little again.

I never could handle the sight of blood.

Mr. Van Kerr grabs my waist again.

Even in my woozy state, I cannot help thinking that I hope Staci doesn't decide to choose this moment to come outside looking for me.

With a sort of harassed sounding sigh, Mr. Van Kerr bends and scoops me up into his arms, holding me against his chest.

"Oh! You don't have to, I am ne..."

His mouth is thin as he jerks his head at someone and I look behind me, and to my horror, see three more men with him, all looking highly amused.

They walk around us and go into the building while Mr. Van Kerr makes his way to a bench a few feet away.

He places me, more gently than I would have thought, on to the seat and sits beside me, pulling my leg onto his lap.

I quickly move my hands to the hem of my dress and tug, trying not to completely expose myself.

He gives me that annoyed look again and grabs my other leg as well, so that I can keep my legs together.

"Better?"

"Yes, thank you."

He stares at me for a moment, almost looking confused, then looks down at my leg.

"Not too deep."

"It's ne."

I don't look at it, anywhere but at the blood.

"You don't like blood?"

I shake my head and look at the wall behind us.

He grunts and I look back at him to see him shaking his head.

The door reopens and one of the men that was with him hands him a white rst aid kit and leaves again.

He opens it and I watch his handsome face, his eyebrows pulled together as he searches through the box.

"I am just going to clean it and put a band aid on it for you. That is about the extent of my medical abilities."

"You don't even have to do that, really."

He ignores me and tears open an alcohol swab pack and I turn away again.

He rests one hand on the top of my foot as he uses the other to run up and down my leg.

Staci would literally die if she saw this right now.

She would just love to be the one practically sitting in Mr. Van Kerr's lap with his hands on her bare skin.

But I just feel awkward and embarrassed, and my thoughts stray to Dean, his arms wrapped around the tall and beautiful Cindy.

Why am I even here?

I am so in over my head already.

Maybe I was wrong to think that I could be on my own.

A lump starts to form in my throat and my eyes begin to burn with hot tears.

Mr. Van Kerr's hand pauses on my leg, but I refuse to look at him.

"That should do it."

His voice is a little softer, but I still cannot look at him.

His hands wrap around my legs, then spin them around to place back on the ground.

Then he is gone.

With a groan, I lean forward and bury my face in my hands.

I just want to go back to my new home and go to bed.

This was a complete mistake to come here. Talk about a disastrous night!

"Kylie? Kylie! What is going on, are you okay?"

Staci is hurrying towards me, a concerned look on her face, her heels clicking loudly as she moves.

"Kylie?"

I lean back slightly and swipe at my cheeks.

"I'm ne."

Her eyes move downward and pause on my leg where the band aid is.

"Did...did Mr. Van Kerr give you that?"

Her face is tight.

Shit.

"Um...well, someone with him gave it to him, and uh...yeah, then he gave it to me."

She inhales through her nose and then gives a sharp nod.

"He told me that you might need me out here."

She gives a false cheery smile.

"At least I know he has a soft spot now."

I give her a half smile back.

Mr. Van Kerr told her that I might need her?

That was kind of him.

Unexpected.

"Any who." Staci keeps the smile pasted on as she talks and bends to heave me up. "You probably have had enough excitement for one night. And can't miss that curfew! Let me drive you home. Dean is, well, being Dean, so you will be waiting a very long time if you wait for your roommate to take you home."

She gives a forced kind of laugh and I stand up and let her lead me to the parking lot.

I am totally ne with going back home.

Relieved, in fact.

She points towards a golf cart as we turn the corner to the parking lot.

"The one with the pink magnet on the side."

A single headlight turns into the parking lot and heads towards us with a loud rumble so that we both step between two golf carts to let it pass.

As it does, it slows down and the man on top of the large motorcycle, wearing a tted white tee that hugs all his well-dened muscles, lifts his helmet off.

I hear Staci beside me inhale sharply.

The man shakes his head so that his straight, slightly too long, white-blond hair falls out of his face.

He turns to look at us and gives us a cocky grin.

Staci practically swoons beside me, her ngernails digging into the skin of my arm and I worry that I might need another band aid if she doesn't release me.

The man clearly recognizes the effect he has and enjoys it.

"Hey ladies, you aren't leaving so soon, are you? The party is just starting."

He gives us a wink and Staci giggles like I haven't quite heard before.

"Oh, we are just getting something from our golf cart, no worries!"

"That's what I like to hear."

He swings his long leg around the motorcycle to hop off and kicks out the stand, parking it where it is, directly in the middle of the parking lot, blocking several golf carts in.

"I'm Milo." He runs his hand through his hair and smiles in an arrogant kind of way. "Milo Kinston."

Staci nearly explodes beside me, nally releasing my arm so that I rub it with a grimace.

"Mr. Kinston! Hi!" She steps forward and holds out her hand. "I am Staci Whitt, the manager of guest services at Green Pines Country Club. So nice to nally meet you."

He moves his eyes lazily up and down Staci in appreciation.

"Nice to meet you, Staci." He grabs her hand and holds it for a moment.

"If there is anything, anything, that you need at all, I am your girl."

She bats her eyelashes at him, and his grin widens.

"I will remember that, and I am sure that I will put your talents to good use."

Barf.

Mr. Kinston's eyes swivel to me, still holding Staci's hand.

His eyebrows pull together in a small frown, and for one wild moment, I wonder if I spoke my thoughts out loud.

"That is Kylie. She is the tennis instructor at the club." Staci says quickly, in a dismissive sort of way, clearly not wanting his attention to be averted from her.

He releases Staci's hand and takes a step closer to me, making me resist the urge to step back from him.

"Have we met before?"

I nearly roll my eyes, but then I look up at him and freeze.

Those eyes...they do look...familiar.

"I...I don't think so."

He tilts his head at me, his eyes searching my face while I stare back up at him.

Finally, his face relaxes into an easy smile, and he takes a step back.

"Nice to meet you, Kylie. It just so happens that I could improve my tennis game. I will come visit you tomorrow."

"Okay."

My voice is quiet.

I feel confused.

There is some weird pull towards him that I don't understand.

"Great!" Staci has that strained, high pitched voice as she watches our interaction and steps around Mr. Kinston to pull me away from the golf carts.

"Kylie was actually just heading home, unfortunately. She has a big day tomorrow and wanted to get an early start to bed."

She turns and gives me a pointed look.

"Oh, yes. I was...?" I frown at her.

How am I getting home if she isn't taking me?

"Yes. By taking my golf cart." She digs in her tiny handbag and withdraws a key, shoving it into my hand and practically pushing me away from her.

"Shame." Says Mr. Kinston, watching the interaction curiously. "But we will get to know each other better tomorrow."

I give him a smile and lift my hand in farewell as Staci starts guiding him towards the nightclub entrance.

I climb into Staci's golf cart and just sit for a moment.

That was weird.

This place is weird.

Hell, I feel weird. Almost as if I have somehow changed in the last twelve hours.

I start the golf cart and back it out of the parking lot spot.

This has been one hell of a rst day.