

## Keily | Dangerously Handsome

### Dangerously Handsome

There were three reasons I was nervous.

First, I'd never been to a house party before. I stepped inside, the pounding bass from the speakers thudding along with the beat of my heart. I looked around at everyone else dancing, drinking, and making out.

Second, *he* was here. It didn't take long for me to pick him out from the crowd. He was tall, he was handsome, he was surrounded by a group of giggling girls, and he ignored them all, because he only had eyes for *me*.

My own personal tormentor.

The third reason had everything to do with the buzz of alcohol in my head and the clothes I was wearing underneath my long coat. Or, more accurately, the clothes I *wasn't* wearing.

Mr. Hot, Tall, and Cruel constantly made fun of me because I was chubby. Called me Piggy every day. Made fun of the clothes I wore to hide my flab. Said I dressed like a nun.

I grinned, probably a little alcohol crazy, as I locked eyes with him. Underneath my coat, I wore nothing but lingerie. No more baggy shirts to hide my folds, no more loose skirts to hide the cellulite in my thighs.

Just my breasts, my hips, and my curves, wrapped up with a bit of silk and lace.

*Let's see what he thinks of that.*

No one was looking at me as I began to undo my coat, heart pounding. No one paid attention to the fat new girl at school. No one but him.

I saw his eyes go wide as the top button of my coat loosened; my cleavage peeked out from the deep V of my lacy bodice.

He walked toward me, completely ignoring the girls vying for his attention, pushing and squeezing through the drunk and dancing crowd.

I undid my second button, common sense completely out the window as I abandoned myself to the reckless feeling in my chest. More of my lingerie was exposed, the silk hugging my body.

Before I could undo the third button, powerful hands grabbed mine. I looked up to find him staring down into my eyes, anger in every line of his stupidly handsome face, in the rigid cut of his jawline.

“What the *fuck* do you think you’re doing?” he asked. His eyes flashed down to my cleavage, lingering for a second too long before glaring at me.

That gave me courage. That, and an unjustified amount of alcohol.

“Proving you wrong.”

A FEW DAYS EARLIER

Addison

I’m here.

Addison, my cousin, was waiting for me inside the car. Her mahogany skin shone beautifully under the sunlight, and her curly brown hair was tamed in a high ponytail.

I tugged my top down a little, making sure my belly was covered. The flowy top I wore today was longer than usual, yet it didn’t hurt to check twice that it covered what it needed to cover.

“Hey,” Addison greeted when I sat down in the passenger’s seat.

“Hi.”

“So, are you excited? Today’s your first day!” she chirped and started the engine. “You’re going to be the new girl, Keily.”

I giggled, her good-morning vibes rubbing off on me. “You’re talking as if I’m in some teen show, where hot guys are going to jump at me and cheerleaders will claw me.”

“Hey! My girls won’t claw—they’ll punch.” Addison smirked.

“Oh, if that’s the case, remind me to clip my nails and take boxing lessons,” I joked back.

Our back-and-forth helped me calm my jittery nerves. Today was my first day at Jenkins High.

All eighteen years of my life had been spent in the suburbs of Remington, so moving here and starting my last year of high school in a completely new town was, to say the least, overwhelming.

Moving hadn’t really been in our plans, but when Mom’s company decided to open their new branch here, they asked her to be the project manager; refusing wasn’t an option.

Bradford was Mom’s hometown; she grew up here for a full twenty-one years of her life, so she fit right in.

Dad, on the other hand, wouldn’t have minded if you’d moved him to another corner of the world. He was a freelance software and website designer.

But me? I hadn’t wanted to leave the comfort of a familiar place, of familiar people—even if those people were quite mean. This move had been supposed to happen a year later when I moved to college, *not now*.

Over summer, I’d gotten almost two months to prepare and stroll around this town before starting at Jenkins. Addison, my mom’s brother’s daughter, had been a great tour guide and a really good friend (or cousin).

She’d even promised me rides to school since her house was only a few blocks away from mine. My theory was that she felt compelled to do so because I was her cousin.

Still, hitching a ride from my cousin was more appealing than shoving my body into the small seats of a bus and receiving condescending looks and jibes from other teenagers every morning.

I’d had my fair share of them in Remington.

“We’re here.” Addison honked, dispersing the crowd around the parking lot.

I looked at the big building standing high in front of us, a heavy feeling pressing down on my shoulders. My nerves returned with full force.

“Welcome to your new hellhole, missy,” my cousin teased. She got out, and I followed like a lost puppy (a very big puppy).

Once again, I pulled down my top, feeling uneasy walking right next to Addison.

My cousin was not only on the cheerleading team, but she was also in track—one of their best sprinters, according to her friends. It was no wonder she had a body that every woman craved.

She was lean, yet beautifully curvy and muscular, only a couple of inches shy of six feet. Dressed in skinny jeans and a crop top, giving only a hint of her sculpted belly, she looked as if she’d walked straight out of a fashion magazine.

I, on the other hand, barely reached her shoulders. I had a big belly, flabby arms, and tree-trunk-like legs.

My only assets worth considering were probably my breasts and hips. But sometimes, even they were a bother when shopping for clothes.

Today, I was wearing a flowy top—to hide my flab—and black leggings.

Even though I considered these to be my best casual clothes, next to Addison, I felt underdressed—*also very out of shape*.

*Look at her; she’s gorgeous!*

“You got your schedule, map, and locker code, right?” she asked as we reached the stairs leading to the open doors of *the hellhole*.

“Yeah, I got them on Saturday. You don’t have to babysit me, no matter what my mom told you.” We entered the hallways, and immediately, I was surrounded by the familiar bustle of high school.

Addison pouted. “Keily, I’m not with you because your mom or my dad told me to. I really like spending time with you. I officially consider you more of a friend than a cousin.”

That made me feel guilty for my jibe.

“I’m sorry. I just don’t want to trouble you. You’re already giving me a ride to school. I don’t want to be a burden.”

“What are friends for if not to be burdens?” Addison quipped, making me smile.

*She is perfect.*

“When you say it like that, I can see your point,” I replied.

“Speaking of *burdens*, let me introduce you to some.” She started walking toward a group of girls—all of them skinny, pretty, and tall. One look, and anyone could tell I didn’t belong in that crowd.

I mentally reprimanded myself for my thoughts and choked down those gnawing insecurities. Instead, with an excited smile, I followed Addison.

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“How’s everybody’s first day going?” our teacher asked. This was today’s third class.

A collective groan was the response with some answers of “Boring” and “Fine.” Obviously, these students didn’t share his enthusiasm.

“Is it in the student code of conduct to always be this angsty?” He sighed and began writing on the board. *Joseph Crones*.

“To any new students here”—his gaze lingered on me for a tad longer—“I’m Joseph Crones. You can call me Mr. Crones.”

I nodded when he looked at me again. *Am I the only new one in this class?*

“Since it’s our first day of English, why don’t we—” He was cut off when the classroom door opened.

A boy walked in and handed a slip to Mr. Crones. I couldn’t help but study his features. He was tall, easily over six feet, and built like an athlete.

By the bulging muscles of his arms, you could easily figure out that the rest of his physique was just as sturdy and muscular.

His eyes fell on me, and I realized I was checking him out. I immediately looked down, my face becoming flushed. I hated how easily my face showed my embarrassment.

“Mr. Haynes, tell the coach to either let you go early or keep you at the field with him,” Mr. Crones reprimanded *Haynes*.

“Tell him yourself,” I heard Haynes mutter as the sound of footsteps got louder. Our teacher didn’t hear him, or if he had, he decided to ignore him.

My head was still down, so when a pair of Nike shoes appeared near me, my brows furrowed, and I instinctively looked up. A couple of desks around the class were still free, but Haynes was getting comfortable at the desk just beside mine.

*Just my luck. Oh God...*

I knew I was overreacting, but the guy had just caught me checking him out. It was embarrassing. If I looked anything like Addison, I would not have been freaking out this much.

But I was me, a fat girl, and we did not have the right to go after beautiful men like him.

“As I was saying,” Mr. Crones continued, “it’s our first day, so I’m giving you all an assignment that you have to submit by the end of this semester. Sound good?” He gave a sweet smile.

Another collective groan was the reply.

“Very good.” He wanted us to write a five-thousand-word thesis or essay on any of the works of Shakespeare.

Meanwhile, today’s class focused on how the politics and culture of the Elizabethan period impacted said playwright.

Honestly, I was excited about the assignment. I liked literature; it was fun.

But even though I tried to focus on Mr. Crones’s words, my mind kept drifting to the gorgeous boy sitting next to me. Now that he was close, I caught the fresh musk of his deodorant.

*God, he smells amazing too.*

Throughout the hour, he glanced at me when he thought I wouldn't notice. I kept thinking he was going to sneak in a whispered jab or slip me a rude note. But he didn't.

So, I bit my lip, trying my best to ignore him until the bell rang. Finally, I capped my pens and closed my notebook.

But before I could pack it away, a hand landed on my notebook, anchoring it to the desk. I looked up in surprise, following the toned forearm to the desk next to mine.

Strands of his dark-brown locks were falling onto Haynes's forehead, which somehow made him look dangerously handsome. There was a calculating yet taunting look in his pitch-black eyes.

"Hey," he said.