

Chapter 6

Kylie's POV

After a quick, and very winding, drive through the beautiful golf course, we reach the tall, stone fence that surrounds the entire club.

There is an oversized, wooden garage door ahead of us, and Dean stops a few feet from it.

It takes me a moment to realize that he is leaning out of the cart to press the buttons on a keypad attached to a discreet pole by the path. When Dean nishes, he leans back into the cart as the door starts to open in front of us.

"The code is 3289, in case you ever come on your own."

Ha. Yeah right.

That will never happen, but I nod in thanks any way.

Dean steers the cart through the opening, and I can feel my nerves growing the closer we get to our destination.

"Just around the corner here..."

We turn off the short, tree-lined road and nd ourselves in a picturesque town square.

Removing my hand from my lap, I place my palm on the seat between Dean and myself to lower my head so that I can look past him at all the old, but well-maintained buildings.

"Pretty, isn't it? One of the oldest terri-, um, I mean towns, around the area."

"What is it called?"

"Green Pines."

"Oh." Well, that makes sense.

He gives an unexpected sharp turn into a narrow driveway, and I lose my balance, falling, my hand trapped beneath me, chest rst against Dean's lap.

Oh god.

"I'm sorry!" I give a little groan of humiliation as I awkwardly struggle before pushing myself off from his lap, using his inner thigh as leverage under my hand.

His eyes appear strangely darker than usual as he averts them from my chest when I nally glance up at him apologetically, and with another inward groan, I tug my dress up when I realize it had dropped dangerously low from my little tumble, nearly exposing my entire chest.

Dean clears his throat and gives a tiny shrug, waving his hand as if to say, no big deal, and zips through a dark alley where we emerge into a parking lot that is already lined with several golf carts and motorcycles.

My stomach gives a lurch.

What am I doing here?

All I have accomplished so far is to be humiliated and uncomfortable.

I should have just stayed home.

It seems doubtful that I am making a good impression on Dean anyway. Since all that I seem to be able to do is humiliate myself over and over again.

"Here we are! You will love this place. It can get pretty rowdy though, but only sometimes." He gives me his ridiculously adorable grin with a wink, and that is when I realize that if he asked me too, I would go along with him anywhere just to see that grin.

Even though, I don't like the idea of 'rowdy'.

I mean, just how 'rowdy' are we talking?

I return his grin with a strained one of my own and start my struggle of getting out of the golf cart without ashing any passersby.

Dean comes around the cart and stands with his back towards me, tapping his foot to the music coming from the club, politely pretending like he isn't aware of my awkward exit.

Once out, I straighten up and spend a few moments adjusting my dress, cursing myself again for letting Staci talk me into wearing it.

Two men come around the corner from the alley and call out greetings to Dean before going into the building.

Dean lifts his hand towards them and looks back at me. "Ready?"

I take a deep breath.

Here we go.

He holds out his arm and I wrap my hands tightly around it, hoping he lets me cling onto him all night.

Both so that I can be near him, and so that I don't lose my balance in front of an entire club of beautiful people.

A huge, very broad-chested man with a gruffy looking beard and tattoos visible on what seems like all of his exposed skin, stands at the door with his arms crossed and glares down at me as we approach the door of the club.

I give him a timid smile.

He raises his eyebrow questioningly at Dean, who responds in a cheery voice. "Hey Zeb! This is Kylie, she is with me."

Dean slaps the man's huge arm with his left hand and gives him a friendly smile before giving me a tug forward.

That was brave of him.

I turn back as we walk past to make sure this Zeb giant isn't coming after us to return the slap...but he just turns his head to watch us open the door, his arms still crossed, a slightly puzzled look on his face.

Dean pushes me through the door, and I spin around to face a scene like I have never witnessed before, except maybe in the movies.

The music is loud, the lights are low, and the large room is packed with swaying bodies.

"Let's get a drink."

Dean's breath is against my neck as he bends low to speak and a shiver runs down my spine.

I let him guide me through the crowd, who all seem to know Dean and greet him with enthusiasm as we pass, but we don't stop until we reach the other side of the room.

A beautiful lady who looks seven feet tall in her heels, looks down at me from the bar when Dean pushes me beside her.

Her sleek, dark hair falls in a blunt cut around her shoulders and her red lipstick looks stunning over her wide mouth that is currently pursing as she looks at me, a look of disdain evident on her face.

"Who are you?" Her voice is haughty as her eyes narrow.

"Cindy!"

Dean laughs behind me, and Cindy's entire face and posture magically transforms when he speaks.

Her face relaxes into a wide smile, showing all of her perfectly straight and very white teeth, and she plops her drink on the counter to spread her arms wide in invitation to Dean.

"Dean! You made it! I have missed you the last couple of weeks! Where have you been?"

Dean gives her a tight, but brief hug, my hands falling to my sides in disappointment as he does so.

"Oh, I just took a little trip."

She grips tightly onto his upper arms and leans back to look into his face.

"Home, I hope?" She tilts her head.

He ignores the question and steps back, grabbing my wrist to pull me against him. "This is Kylie. She is the new tennis instructor at the club."

Her eyes narrow slightly at Dean before she reluctantly lowers them to look at me.

"Hi." Her voice sounds bored, completely disinterested, and she turns to pick up her drink.

"Well, Dean, come nd me on the dance oor later. We need to catch up."

She winks at him and pushes past me, making me give a dangerous wobble on my heels before righting myself.

Dean squeezes into the now empty spot beside the bar and pulls me into the tight space with him, our legs touching as he leans over to signal a bartender.

He gives an order and looks down at me. "Cindy and I grew up together, in the same...town. Almost like family."

"Oh."

I hesitate. I almost say, 'she seems nice', but that would just be a blatant lie.

Almost as if reading my mind, Dean gives a bark of a laugh and takes our drinks from the counter and holds one out to me.

"She takes some time to warm up to new people, but she really is loyal once she likes you."

I give him a tight-lipped smile of disbelief and accept the pink hued drink from him that has a cherry on top and then scan the room around us.

It's the same here as at the country club. Everyone is all freaking tall and beautiful, even in my ridiculously high heels, everyone is at least a foot taller than me, some might even be two.

Absently, I grab the straw and bring it to my lips to take a sip.

Oooh, That's tasty, almost like juice. Is this even alcoholic?

I take another, longer sip.

"Easy. That'll catch up to you quick."

Dean seems to have been watching me and I feel my cheeks burn as I lower my drink.

Now what?

Again, Dean reads my thoughts. "Let's move. I can introduce you to some people."

Nodding, I let him lead me through the crowd once more, this time by holding onto my hand, which is making me feel hot all over my body.

We make it to the center of the room when small, claw-like hands grasp my arm and tug.

Dean's hand grips tighter as I lean backwards from the tug and my drink sloshes onto the oor beside me.

"There you are! What took you so long?"

Staci's big, smokey eyes look accusingly into mine, but it's Dean who answers for me., "My bad, Staci, I was late getting back from a lesson."

He places his hand on his chest and makes a guilty face.

She rolls her eyes with a snarl and shakes her head disapprovingly before giving me the up and down with her eyes.

"Well, the dress and heels look great on you. Here." She turns her body to stand by me and hooks her arm into mine. "Let me ll you in on who's who around here."

"Dean was-"

She cuts me off and waves her hand dismissively at Dean to shoo him away.

"You can meet up with him later."

I look up at Dean beside me, who shrugs in a 'what can you do' kind of way before leaning close again, his lips close to my ear, "I will come rescue you soon."

He stands up straight and disappears through the crowd as Staci tugs me forward.

I exhale as we move and wonder how 'soon' Dean will come back for me.

Like, two minutes? Ten? Ugh...how about now because I already miss him.

I turn to look at Staci, who watched Dean leave too. Then she turns back and gives me a stern look.

"Uh uh, Kylie." She shakes her head in way. "We don't date the staff, especially Dean. He has no ambition whatsoever, and he is way too much of a player. Don't get any ideas."

I stare back at her in disbelief, but she starts dragging me through the crowd.

Dean is a player?

My heart sinks a little.

I mean, obviously, I didn't think anything would actually happen between the two of us, but he didn't seem like a player to me, he seemed nice...

Staci's low whisper interrupts my thoughts. "See that young man over there, the one with the Auburn hair and a lady under each arm? That is Mr. Casen. He is fairly new to the club, quite handsome, don't you think?"

"Um..." I almost blurt out that everyone here is good looking, but I just nod as she turns her narrowed eyes at me.

"Is he a new interest for you?"

I think of Mr. Van Kerr, who Staci has had her sights on before, and can't help but compare. This man is handsome, but he has nothing on the dark-haired Mr. Van Kerr, even if he does frighten me a little.

"Oh, nooo. No no. We don't go for the men like Mr. Casen either. We want the men who aren't always surrounded by women, because we want more than just one night." She holds up her hand and wiggles her ngers pointedly at me before abruptly turning the other way to point out another club member.

"I am just trying to help you understand, Kylie."

She gives me another pointed look and I nod, even though I really don't understand at all.

I am just here to work and escape my old life. I don't need to snag a man or get a ring, or whatever it is that Staci is obsessed with.

In fact, the more I listen to Staci, the more I think I should just stay away from the men around here all together.

Staci gives me a hard jab in the side with her elbow and I nearly drop my cup as I turn to look at her.

She gestures towards a somber looking man standing by the wall, holding a drink. "That is Mr. Kinston's assistant, or bodyguard...or whatever."

She turns her body to face me instead of him, carefully glancing over her shoulder at him.

"Don't be so obvious!" She hisses as I lean around her to get a better look. She looks slightly ustered as she pushes her hair out of her eyes, "I met him today when I was making sure the house was ready for his arrival."

I bring my cup up for a drink and try to sneak another peek at the man, in his early twenties, who looks bored.

"Who is Mr. Kinston?"

The question makes Staci's eyes go wide in frustration.

"Kylie! Pay attention! I told you, Mr. Kinston is the really important client that is arriving today, or he was supposed to be anyway. I couldn't get any information out of..." She bites her lips and jerks her head behind her to the man who is now lifting the cup up to take a drink.

"I have never met him before, so I was trying to get a little information out of his assistant."

I grin as I look at her while she ushes.

"How did that go?"

She smooths her dress and shrugs. "Well, I will just have to wait until I meet him to nd anything out apparently."

I glance at the man again and I swear he gives me the tiniest of winks before Staci grabs my arm and pulls me in the opposite direction.

"Anyway, you have to let me know who you want. But just remember, Mr. Van Kerr..."

"Staci, I don't want anyone. And you don't have to keep reminding me of Mr.-"

"Ah!" Staci lets out a squeal as a woman dancing with a man beside her lifts her leg up and around her partner, kicking a horried Staci's drink in the process, so that it sloshes down her dress.

She brie y closes her eyes as if trying to compose herself, then enunciates every word she says slowly, "This was brand new!"

She glares at the couple who didn't even bother to acknowledge her, let alone apologize, and holds out her glass to me.

"I have to go clean up." And she leaves me alone, in the middle of the dance oor, holding onto a drink in each hand.

"I leave you for ve minutes and you start double sting?"

A huge rush of relief spreads through me as I eagerly twirl around to see Dean behind me, but that feeling is immediately replaced with disappointment when I see his arm around Cindy, who gives me a sneer.

"One is Staci's." I reply lamely, but Dean isn't listening.

He is too distracted by Cindy snaking her hand around his neck and pulling him towards her to whisper something in his ear that makes him grin and place his hands on her waist where they start dancing seductively to the music.

I feel rooted to the spot, not able to look away.

Even though I just said that I wasn't interested in anyone, a little jab of pain seems to be growing inside of me as I watch Dean holding onto Cindy.

Cindy whispers something else to Dean and he glances at me. "I'll grab a drink with you in just a few minutes, okay?"

"Okay."

I turn around at the obvious dismissal and push through the crowd, feeling slightly light-headed.

Air.

I need air.