Party

Nick's alarm went off a half hour later. He kissed Kate's cheek, waking her as well.
"I gotta get ready for the party baby," he told her, climbing out of bed.
She stretched, sitting up and swinging her legs around to the floor.
"You don't have to get up. If you're tired you should rest."
Kate huffed sarcastically, "Yeah right. Like there's anyway Julie will let me not go to this party."
Nick smiled, he knew she was right. Julie would want to go but not alone.
"Well tell Julie to pace herself. It's going to be a long week."

While Nick took a shower, Kate ordered room service. By the time he was ready, the grilled chicken salads she ordered had been delivered to the room.
"You are so good to me," he said, kissing the top of her head before sitting across from her at the table.
"So, what's your night look like," she asked.
"Well, we have to be there to kick off the party at nine by performing at a stage on the beach, then we are free to do whatever for the rest of the night."
Kate nodded.
"Are you coming down?" he asked.
"Of course," she said, "I can't miss hearing you guys perform. Do you know what you'll be singing?"
"'I want it That Way', 'Everybody', 'I'll Never Break Your Heart' and of course 'Larger Than Life'."
Kate laughed, "All the mash up songs."
Nick thought about it.
"You're right. I never realized- well I guess it makes sense, they are our greatest hits."
"True," Kate agreed.

After Nick finished eating he brushed his teeth as Kate got in the shower.
"Baby, I gotta, go but I'll see you down there."
Kate poked her head out of the shower.
"Ok, but you better mingle with your fans."
He kissed her wet lips.
"I promise to be good."

Julie was in the hall about to knock on the door when Nick opened it to leave.
"She's in the shower," he said, motioning with his thumb over his shoulder.
"What?! I thought she'd be ready by now."
"Yeah, well we had a little nap." Nick said non-chalantly "Hey Jewels, don't push her to hard. I don't think she is feeling well."
Julie was offended. She would never do anything to hurt Kate. But even as she thought that she realized that there was nothing Kate wouldn't do for her if she asked.
"Of course. We'll probably just come hear the show and find some place to sit and people watch."

As Julie walked into the penthouse, she began to get concerned. Kate had seemed to feel fine earlier. Of course Kate wasn't really one to complain, her motto was 'cowgirl up and deal with it'. She'd have to keep an eye on Kate to make sure she didn't over do it this week.

Kate toweled off and wrapped in the fluffy white robe that the hotel provided.
She was surprised to find Julie going thru her suitcase.
"Hey girl," Julie said, "Any idea what you want to wear tonight?"
Kate sat down on the bed.
"No." She said, "I'm too fat for my regular clothes and my new stuff is for the cruise."
"Hon, you are not fat, you're pregnant. And you're not that big yet, anyway."
"Yeah, that's what I thought, too, till I started trying on clothes."

Julie shook her head. She laid out an outfit while Kate went to dry her hair.
Julie dressed Kate in her denim skirt and her white shirt that had blues, purple and greens streaked across it. The shoulders were open with a silver chain for the straps.
Julie rolled Kate's hair in hot rollers while Kate applied her make up.

When they were finished Kate stood in front of a full length mirror. She had to admit there was no way anyone was going to accuse her of being pregnant tonight. Her push up bra combined the flowing fabric of her shirt completely concealed her baby bump. She hugged Julie.

"Thanks, I was really starting to get depressed." She admitted.
"Well I'm glad that was all it was," Julie said relieved.
"What do you mean?" Kate asked, as they headed out the door.
"Nick is worried that you're not feeling well."
"Why would he think that?"
"I don't know. What happened when he came back?" Julie asked.
"I was asleep. He curled up with me till he had to get ready."
"Well, maybe he thought you didn't feel well because you were asleep."
"No, just tired. I didn't sleep worth crap last night."
"I didn't get much sleep, either, but what I got was ok."
"Lucky, I kept having nightmares about the cruise."
"Really? Like what?"
"Mostly of Nick finding someone else."
"Ugh, I hate those dreams."
"Me too."

As they walked out of the lobby towards the beach, they were unprepared for what they saw.
Girls by the thousands, scantily clad in bikinis as far as the eye could see.
When they reached the beach they kicked off their heels and walked thru the warm sand towards the stage.

The stage was similar to the one they used on their last tour, just smaller and no lifts.
Since Julie and Kate couldn't get close without being crushed, they decided to hang back and just listen.

A man came out on stage just after 9. He pumped up the crowd getting everyone ready for the show.

"How y'all doing tonight?" he asked. He was answered with screaming girls.
"How many of y'all are going on the boat with us tomorrow?"
He waited till it died down a little before he asked the next question.
"Who here likes the Backstreet Boys?"
The crowd went wild.
"You want um you got um. Here's AJ, Brian, Howie and Nick."

The guys came out singing. Julie and Kate enjoyed the show as much as the rest of the girls.
"Can you believe it was just 5 months ago that we saw them on tour for the first time?" Julie said to Kate.
"Yes." Kate said resting her hand on her tummy and blushing.
Both girls burst out laughing.

As the guys sang, the sun set and more lights came on, illuminating the stage. After they finished 'I Want it That Way' AJ started talking.
"As most of you know we just finished our summer tour."
The girls screamed.
Brian continued. "Well, we made some new friends on that tour and, well, we've really been missing them."
Howie continue. "And we thought, 'Hey why don't we invite them to our party'."
Julie and Kate exchanged a look.
"Couldn't be," Kate said.
Julie shrugged.

"Here they are! Jordan, Jon, Donnie, Danny and Joe." Nick said.

New Kids on the Block ran out on stage to join them. The 9 guys performed 'Step by Step', 'Cover Girl', 'Please Don't Go Girl' and 'All In My Head'. They closed the show with 'Don't Turn Out The Light'.

"Omg! Was that cool or what?" Julie exclaimed.
"Spectacular!" Kate agreed.
The girls walked back up to the hotel to get something cool to drink and find a place to sit down. They went to the bar and ordered virgin piña coladas and found a table for two near the pool to sit at.

They sat for quite a while sipping their drinks and watching people. They talked of the concert and about the upcoming cruise.

"Here you are." A masculine voice said behind Julie.
She tipped her head back surprised to find Donnie behind her.
"Oh hey! How are you?" She stood up giving him a hug.
"I'm good. Hey, Kate!"

"Hey, Donnie. How's my favorite Blue Blood?"
He laughed. "Busy as usual."
He walked around the table to hug Kate. She stood up wrapping her arms around his neck.
"Congratulations!" He whispered in her ear.
She blushed, pulling away, suddenly very conscious of her belly pressing against him.
"Is it that obvious?" She asked, tugging at her shirt.
"No, not at all. He told us."
"Oh, he is so busted!" Julie said. "He's not supposed to tell till after the cruise."
"Ah, we won't tell." Donnie said, waving off her concerns. "Come dance with me, Jewels!"
Donnie pulled her over to where people had made an impromptu dance floor between the tiered pools. He spun her around, very much like he had the last time they had danced together. Julie laughed as he took control.

“You’re wearing that red thing again,” he commented.
“It’s called a petticoat, and AJ likes it.”
“I do, too.”

Kate smiled, watching them walk away. Just then, Jordan walked up. He had seen Donnie talking to them but had hung back hoping to talk to Kate alone.
"Hi." He said resting his hands on the back of Julie's chair.
Kate looked over surprised.
"Jordan! Hi, how are you?" She stood again, hugging him.
They both sat down at the table.
"I hope that's virgin." he said, pointing to her drink.
She smiled, "I swear, he may as well put up a billboard announcing it."
"Na, he's just excited. Congratulations by the way."
"Thank you." Kate said, blushing.
"He's a very lucky man."
"No, I'm the lucky one. It's been a bit of a roller coaster but I think we're going to be ok."
"Well, if you change your mind you can always call me," he smiled.
Kate laughed.

They talked for a little bit, reminiscing about when they all met.
Jordan kissed her cheek and left to mingle. Kate sat at her table people watching. She was starting to get a headache from all the noise. Julie was having fun dancing with Donnie and Kate didn't want to spoil the fun so she wrote Julie a note on her napkin and tucked the edge under Julie's drink.

Nick had been keeping his distant from Kate but she was never out of eyesight. When he saw Kate leave, he casually strolled over to the table. He glanced at the note.

"Going to the beach."

Nick left the table and shook hands, gave hugs and signed autographs with the girls around, trying to make his way back to the beach.
Kate kicked off her shoes and walked out onto the sand. It was much quieter out here. She could

still hear the music from the party but it was subdued by the crash of the waves. The darkness was a relief to the ache behind her eyes.
She sat in the sand, watching the dark water.
"Kate?" Nick said.
She turned to see him walking alone across the sand.
"Hi."
"Are you ok?" he asked, concerned.
"Yeah."
"Why are you out here alone?" he said, sitting next to her.
"I just have a headache," Kate explained.
"Do you want me to get you some aspirin?"
She smiled at him, "Thank you but I have some Tylenol upstairs, I think it was just too loud over there."
"Welcome to a Backstreet Boys party."
She shook her head, "I don't know how you do it."
He shrugged," It's part of the job."
She leaned her head against his shoulder. He tipped his head over, resting it on hers.
"Honey, why don't you head upstairs? I don't want you to overdo it. I'll come up as soon as I can."
"It's your party. You should stay. I probably will go up to bed. I just need to find Julie and let her know."
"I can let her know." Nick told her.

He stood up brushing the sand of his pants, and then reached down to pull Kate up. She brushed the sand off of herself as they walked back towards the hotel.

"You look beautiful by the way," he said.
Kate blushed. She playfully pushed him away.
"Get back to your party before you give me away."
Nick grabbed her hand, pulling her into the shadows of the stage. He wrapped his arms around her kissing her passionately. Kate's fingers went into his hair as she pulled him down to her.
His hands slid down over her butt, squeezing her firm cheeks. He felt himself hardening against her.
Kate pulled back breaking their kiss. She was out of breath.
"I could take you right here, ya know?" he said, his hands cupping her butt, pulling her against him.
Kate laughed, "I'd rather not get arrested for indecent exposure, thank you."
"Well, maybe I should just take you upstairs right now and ravage you," he said leaning in to kiss her neck.
Kate leaned her head back as his lips moved to her collarbone. She let out a sigh of pleasure.

Suddenly she realized that if they were going to keep their relationship secret for the next 5 days they were going to have to stop this PDA.
"We have to stop," Kate told him.
Nick pouted.
"Don't look at me like that. I want you too but not here, not now."

Nick heaved a deep sigh.
"How much longer do you need to stay at the party?" Kate asked.
Nick checked his watch. It was just after midnight.
"I can probably slip out in about an hour."
"Ok, I think I can hang out till then. I'll go see if the front desk has some Tylenol, so I don't have to go all the way upstairs."
"Good. I wanna keep an eye on you. Can't have Jordan running off with my woman."
Kate blushed. She had no idea that Nick was watching her conversation with Jordan.
"You head out there first." Kate told him, "I'll slip up in a few minutes." Nick stole one last kiss before heading back up to the party. Kate walked around the other end of the stage and headed towards the hotel.

AJ looked through the crowd, trying to find Julie. She was not where he was expecting her. Memories of a night he never wanted to remember filled his head. Donnie was dancing with Julie, just as they had in Tulsa. Donnie even dipped her backwards, acting as if he was going to kiss her.

AJ moved with swiftness through the crowd. He didn't blame Donnie; there was just something about Julie that made people be drawn to her. She was a people person. She made friends everywhere she went. But his insecurities were creeping up. Before he had even made it close to the pool area, everything changed.

It appeared as though a thin, yet voluptuous woman in a little bikini had been trying to catch Donnie's eye to no avail. She had finally gotten frustrated and tried to get Julie out of the way. Donnie had been spinning Julie around and when the girl stepped up to them and Julie was caught off guard. The girl gave her a shove and being unable to see it coming, Julie fell backwards. They had been close enough to the pool that when Julie fell, she went back into the pool. Unfortunately they were right by the stairs leading to the pool.
Donnie pushed the girl off him that was now clinging to his neck and looked to where Julie had fallen. He saw red tinting the clear water. Girls around them crowded the area, trying to see what happened. No one had called for help yet. AJ couldn't get through the crowds. His heart was pounding in his chest. The more he pushed to get to her, the more it seemed the girls around him held him back, trying to catch his eye.

Donnie jumped in the pool, his white button up shirt clinging to his rock hard chest. He scooped Julie up, and placed her on the side of the pool. Blood was slowly pooling under her head. Donnie couldn't get her to respond and leaned down to see if she was breathing. He could not feel air coming from her nose. He tilted her head back and placed his lips to hers, blowing a breath of life into her.

AJ was finally able to break through the crowd as Donnie was breathing into her. He ran to Julie's side, uncaring if anyone put two and two together. Donnie leaned down and breathed into her again. AJ grabbed her hand and looked up to the crowd, screaming for someone to go get help.

As Donnie breathed a third time, Julie began choking and coughing up water. He helped her sit up a little. Her hand went to the back of her head. When she felt the sticky fluid, she brought her hand back in front to see the deep red staining her hand.

“Where is the bitch that pushed me,” she said, her voice weak.
“That’s my girl,” AJ said quietly to her.

Nick saw the commotion as he walked up around the building towards the pool. His paced increased as he got closer. He made it to the opposite end of the pool. He could see Donnie, soaking wet, kneeling over someone. As he tried to get closer he saw the red petticoat and pulled out his phone.

Kate made her way into the front desk. The lady there was very nice. "Hi. I'm staying in penthouse 5 and I was wondering if you had some Tylenol."
"Of course, ma'am. Let me get you some."
As the lady walked off Kate's phone vibrated. She pulled it out of her pocket. It was Nick calling. She smiled.
"I'm just getting some Tylenol, I'll be out in a minute," she said answering the phone.
"Kate, it's Julie. She's hurt." He said seriously.
Kate's heart began pounding.
"Where is she?"
"The Pool."
Kate dropped her shoes and phone, running out the back door of the lobby. She saw the crowd gathered around the pool. As she heard the ambulance approaching, she ran as fast as she could to the pool.
She couldn't get close to the end where Julie was. She began pushing people aside to get to the pool. She was halfway down the length of the pool and could see no way to get closer to Julie. She jumped into the cold water and swam to the edge of the pool.
Kate pulled herself out on the side of the pool. Julie's head was resting in AJ's lap. Donnie was still kneeling next to her. Kate moved to Julie's other side leaning over her to hug her.
"Jewels! Are you ok? What happened?"
"I'm ok." Julie coughed, expelling a little more water.
The paramedics appeared, pushing Kate back out of the way. It was then that Kate realized Nick had pushed his way thru and was right behind her.
Security had begun to move the crowd back to give the paramedics room to work. Nick pulled Kate a few steps back out of the way. Donnie moved to stand beside them.
"What happened?" Nick asked Donnie.
"One of the other girls pushed her in the pool to get to me. Unfortunately she hit her head on the step."
"You pulled her out?" Nick asked.
"Yeah, I was the closest."
"Thank you," Kate said, her eyes never leaving Julie.
"Of course."

The paramedics loaded Julie up on the gurney and wheeled her off. Kate followed her, leaving Nick without a word.

"Any idea who the girl was that did it?" Nick asked Donnie.
Donnie looked back over his shoulder.
"Yep, Earl grabbed her." He said pointing out his bodyguard holding a girl by the wrist. Nick couldn’t see her face, just the back of her head. She looked like any other fan.

Kate followed the Julie to the ambulance stopping in the lobby to grab her phone and shoes while they loaded Julie.
"I'm sorry miss, but you'll have to meet her at the hospital." The paramedic said.
"Like hell I do. That's my sister and I'm going with her," Kate said stubbornly.
"I still don't see why I have to go," Julie protested.
"Jewels," Kate said firmly, "You're going to get checked out. Alex would kick my butt if he found out I didn't take you."
Julie smiled at Kate, realizing Kate was letting her know AJ would insist if he could be here to do it. Part of her understood why he couldn't, but the other wanted him there more than anything.