

Chapter Three

Within moments we were surrounded. Not only were there excited onlookers, but also casino employees were there to secure the situation. As I scanned the crowd I couldn't help but notice Nick was there. And by his side with Jeff Timmons.

Natalie had just won \$10,000. We both agreed it was definitely time to quit gambling. But now we were both unbelievably excited and full of energy. When Natalie followed the casino employee to the banker, they gave her the option to get cash back, or to have a check written by the casino. She opted to do a little bit of both. It would be nice to have the extra money to spend all on our mini vacation, but she didn't want to have that much cash on her with no bank in town. She took \$3000 in cash, and the rest in the check. We quickly ran up to our hotel room to leave the cash and check in hotel room in the little safe the hotel provided.

Natalie decided we definitely had to go dancing and celebrate. So we freshened up our make up and headed down to the bar that was playing dance music.

As we stood at the bar sipping on our amaretto sours, Natalie noticed that there were some girls going up to the DJ, it looked like they were making requests. She glanced over at me, a devilish grin on her face. She left me standing at the bar and shuffled quickly to the DJ booth.

I hadn't had a chance to tell her yet whom I had seen at the casino. I didn't want to spoil her night. The smile on her face was just too beautiful and I didn't want to take it away. When she came back to me I knew exactly what she had requested. Normally I would've been overjoyed to hear our song play, but tonight I really did not want to hear "Pour Some Sugar on Me."

I finished my drink quickly, and turned order another one. I hadn't even had a chance to tell the bartender what I wanted when I felt his presence beside me. I let out an exasperated sigh and turned to look at him.

"What part of, I'm not interested, did you not understand?"

Look on his face that he was taken aback. Apparently he wasn't used to rejection. But I had no interest in giving him any of my attention, after what he did so many years before.

"Wow," he said. "I'm not sure what I did to piss you off, but whatever it is I'm really sorry."

Even though he sounded genuinely sincere, I turn my back to him to face Natalie, hoping at this point she had seen who was beside me. But she was too busy watching a good-looking guy on the dance floor.

I was completely shocked when the song ended and our song began to play. DJs never played a request that fast. Natalie squealed and grabbed my hand pulling me towards the dance floor. Nick wanted to know what he done to piss me off? I was going to give him his answer.

"Have you picked your guy yet?" Natalie asked me.

"Oh yeah," I replied.

When we were in our 50s style clothing, we toned down the sexuality of our dance. It was still sexy, just a little more tasteful. As I began to dance, I looked directly at Nick. It only took Nick a few moments to realize we were the same girls from years before. Who else did a dance like ours? I tried not to laugh as the expression on his face changed to shock and recognition.

As I move seductively, I tried not to break eye contact with him. But I couldn't help it as I saw someone walk up next to him, my favorite New Kid on the Block, Joey McIntyre. My heart

caught in my throat. My eyes left Nick, to be locked on Joe. His eyes matched mine. I smiled at him, feeling my cheeks flush red. Natalie was staring at her guy and hadn't seen the drama unfolding before me. The two guys watched me as they carried on a conversation.

The song ended and Natalie leaned in close to talk to me as the next song began. It was The Electric Slide, so we didn't leave the dance floor. The spaces quickly filled up as we all synced together in the dance. Nick and Joe were momentarily forgotten as I laughed beside Natalie. We did a spin on part of the dance. About half way through the song, I spun a little too quickly and lost my balance.

Luckily, the guy dancing beside me caught me. Much to my surprise, it was the man of my dreams. Joe smiled at me, his bright blue eyes locked with mine.

"Careful," he said just loud enough for me to hear him over the music. My heart was pounding in my chest. I didn't want the song to end, but when it did, I knew I needed a drink. I wanted to stay right beside Joe, but I seemed to have lost all my courage. His arm slipped around my waist as I took the step down from the dance floor.

"Don't want you to fall," he whispered in my ear. I turned to look at him, our lips so close to each other.

"Thank you," I replied.

"Where are you off to?"

"I was going to get a drink."

"Mind if I join you?" he asked. I glanced over my shoulder to see Natalie chatting with the cute guy she had been watching earlier. "I would love it if you joined me."

As we got to the bar, Nick was only in the back of my mind. I did see him over Joe's shoulder but I ignored him as I turned and leaned against the counter to wait for the bartender.

Joe put his right arm on the bar and turned to face me. He smiled as I ordered a Vesper.

"A Vesper?" Joe inquired.

"Yeah. Do you know what it is?"

"No, but I'm intrigued." He turned to the bartender and watched as my drink was made. He then asked for one himself. "I like a girl that can appreciate a good martini."

I smiled as the bartender handed me my drink. I took a sip of the very strong yet refreshing beverage. As Joe received his, he faced me, holding his martini up as if for a toast. I raised mine and our glasses clinked.

"To an amazing weekend and new friends," he said before sipping his drink. I nodded and partook of my own.

Joe led me to a table close to the dance floor. I was grateful because I felt like I had abandoned Natalie, who was still on the dance floor. But as I looked for her, I saw her happily wrapped in the guy's arms, a huge smile on her face. Joe brought my attention back to him.

"So, are you here to see 98 Degrees?" He asked. I almost choked on my drink.

"Excuse me?"

"Well, Nick said he knew you, so I assumed..." He didn't finish his statement.

"No," I said sweetly. "I'm not here for them. I came to see you," I stumbled over my words. "I mean, New Kids." His smile broadened.

"You know, I haven't gotten your name yet."

"Oh! It's Adrianna."

"Adrianna? It's beautiful. Well, Adrianna, would you like to dance?"

A new song had started and it was one I knew. "Rock This Town" by Stray Cats. It was one you could swing dance to. And that was exactly what Joe had in mind.

He was such a good dancer. I didn't have to think, I just let him lead. I was so grateful I wore bike shorts under my dress, because he had me spinning so fast that my red skirt and black petticoat felt like they were up to my waist. And when he flipped me, it was incredible. He moved us like we had been dancing together for years. As the song ended, we headed back to our table. I picked up my drink and took a gulp, which I quickly regretted; I forgot how strong it was. I glanced over to the bar as I realized something.

"I need some water, please excuse me," I said, getting up quickly.

"Please, let me get it for you," he replied, also standing.

"It's ok. I need to check on my friend as well. She's standing at the bar alone." He just nodded. I felt his eyes on me as I walked away.

Natalie looked like she was almost in tears. I instantly felt like a bad friend. I had been in my own world and hadn't seen what had happened to her. I waited in silence as she ordered a drink, paid for it, then proceeded to drink the entire thing in three gulps. I couldn't take it anymore.

"Hey, what happened?" I asked her.

"Why do I always pick guys that are douchbags?" I didn't get a chance to answer her because someone else spoke.

"We're not all douchbags. I promise."

We both turned to see Jeff Timmons leaning up against the bar. "Nick told me you were here. It's been a while, hasn't it?" He smiled kindly at us, but Natalie was in no mood.

"Yes, men are! And you're at the top of the list! Thanks for making me feel like a worthless pile of shit for years. I really appreciate it!" Natalie grabbed my arm, pulling me away from the totally shocked Jeff.

I walked away with her, but she headed for the door. I glanced over my shoulder to see Joe still at the table, texting on his phone. I hated to just walk away from him, but Natalie needed me. We had just gotten to the door when I slowed down.

"I have to go say goodbye before we leave. I can't leave him hanging," I almost whispered to her.

"Who?" she inquired. I looked back at the table, but he was gone.