

Prologue

Every since I was a little girl, I had the tendency to fall for jocky guys that didn't change in college. I always claimed that I didn't have a type, but something about jocks always caught my eye, maybe it was the height difference. I was particularly drawn to the Carmelo Anthony's as opposed to the Reggie Bush's of the world. Not that there was anything wrong with football, but there was something about that basketball that swept me off my feet. Problem was that once it got me off my feet I always went for the dunk and failed miserably. So, I made a vow to myself to leave the dunks and layups to the pros. I was tired of the symptoms I suffered because of my addiction to the ball. Sadly, I realized that I could not truly give it up during the last couple of months of my senior year when I saw him. My addiction struck again and I was knocked down off my feet once again. This time I saw no way of picking myself back up again.

"Basketball, you win. I obviously can't escape you, so I will give in to my addiction and take the plunge. I will entertain this infatuation I have with you."

Chapter One

[April of 2011]

I had been looking at colleges since like the fifth grade and finally it was almost time to decide on one. I had been waiting for this day my entire life. It was my senior year of high school and I had it narrowed down to two choices, Virginia Union and Norfolk State University. Both of these schools had positives and negatives, and I had been accepted into both of them. Since I was having a hard time deciding I decided to attend one more visit to both schools. Lately, Virginia Union had been sending me information about their Honors and Scholars Day, it also mention that there was to be an overnight afterwards, so I figured why not? That's the perfect way to see how students interact with one another when the lights go off.

When I arrived at Virginia Union I was greeted by my host Amari Branch and her friend Devante Hall. They were very nice and tried very hard to make me feel welcomed.

"Hey I'm Amari and this is Devante and I'm your host for the evening." She said with a big smile and Devante waved.

"I'm Brooklyn." I said kind of nervous.

"Nice to meet you. Come on let's go drop your bags off in my room." Amari said as her and Devante grabbed all of my bags leaving my hands free.

After we dropped my bags off in Amari's room, they took me on a tour of the campus, like I hadn't done that five hundred times already. During the tour, Amari and Devante had me laughing the whole time, which diminished my nervousness and helped me loosen up. Our tour ended in the student center at the pool table where Amari and Devante started a game.

"So, is there anything in particular that you would like to do tonight while you're here?" Amari asked while waiting for Devante to break.

"I mean I've always been curious as to how a college party is." I said remembering all the stories my cousins told me during their short visits home. The alcohol. The weed. The music. The dancing. The

boys. The whole thing intoxicated me and I wanted to be part of that atmosphere, not that I drank or smoke. But I could dig the music, dancing, and definitely the boys.

“Hm...that could be arranged.” Amari said after knocking one of Devante’s balls in.

“Really?” I said extremely enthused.

“Yeah. But...” Amari said watching Devante take a shot.

“But what?” I asked wondering why Devante was aiming at Amari’s ball.

“But everyone’s at the men’s basketball game right now, so the parties won’t be until later on tonight.” Devante said after missing his shot.

“Basketball game...?” I said as my heart slowed down and my head went over my many failed “dunk” attempts.

“Yep.” Amari said missing her shot. “They’re playing right now over there in the convocation center.” I looked over to where she indicated and I felt the familiar pull that occurs when my basketball addiction kicks in. I walked over to the gym door and knowing I’d regret it I looked in the window and saw him. Mhmm...I loved a man with big feet, but big feet plus great taste in shoes were nice too. I was a sneaker head on the low, and his sneakers were speaking to me. His feet were sporting a customized pair of Kobe VIs with yellow on the outsole and lining and an all-black branding. He had muscular calves and despite his baggy shorts I could tell that he had the thick thighs and tight butt to match. Too bad I couldn’t determine whether he was working with a monster or not, but if the saying held true those big feet and hands might be telling me something. Let me focus before I go jump his bones and get my own slam dunk, his arms were well defined and I could just imagine how they’d feel when he lifted me up in the air and...come on Brooklyn focus, you’re a virgin and virgins shouldn’t have those types of thoughts. Anyways, even though he was sitting down I could clearly tell he was over 6th feet which was definitely my type since it went well with my 5 ft 4 inches. The icing on the cake was his low cut hair and brown milk chocolate skin tone. I just wanted to take a big ass bite. He was the most amazing thing I’ve ever seen. I had to back away before I went in there and made a fool of myself, but I was glued to my spot. My breathing slowed and my pulse quickened, and the moisture between my legs grew. I needed to get my mind off this asap.

“Brooklyn?” I heard Devante call.

“Yep.” I answered quickly moving from the door.

“Why do you look so confused?” He asked.

“Um...I know I’m not extremely 100% hip to the rules of pool, but why are ya’ll aiming at each other’s balls?” I asked as I walked back to the table and I caught Devante knocking Amari’s ball in just in time, because I needed a quick diversion to what was really on my mind.

“Oh, it’s our version of pool. I want her to win and she wants me to win.” Devante said smiling at Amari and she smiled back.

“Oh cool.” I said still not totally getting the point of it.

“You want to play?” Amari asked after knocking the eight ball in and losing the game.

“No thanks. I don’t really know how to play.” I said, mind still drifting back to the guy on the bench.

“Come on it’s easy. We’ll show you.” Amari said putting her stick in my hand. “Now hold it like you’re going to shoot.” I took aim at the white ball ready to break, but Amari stopped me. “Why are you holding it so awkwardly? Here, try it like this. Now doesn’t that feel better?”

“Yeah it does actually.” I said as I hit the white ball and knocked two stripped balls in.

“Looks like I’m solids, and I thought you didn’t know how to play, Miss Hustler.” Devante said shaking his head at me.

“I don’t know how to play. It’s just luck.” I said aiming at another ball and knocking it in.
[30 mins later]

“Ok, you’ve beaten me five times and Amari four times. Are you sure you never played before, because there ain’t that much luck in the world.” Devante said looking at me.

“Well, my family is full of pool sharks, so I guess I got some of that in me too.” I said with a shrug.

“Genetics. Wow that’s crazy.” Amari said smiling and shaking her head. Suddenly, the gym doors started to open and happy fans started walking out while cheering. “Looks like the game’s over.”

“And it also looks like we won. I guess you’ll get your party soon.” Devante said sitting down beside Amari. I had forgot all about going to a party, my mind had been on that basketball player for the last thirty minutes. Speaking of him, I opened my mouth to respond but I was stopped when I saw him walking pass. He was fine even up close.

“Hey Shaquor, good game.” Said some broad in some tight red shorts, a white tank top, and wedges. A little dressy for a game don’t you think?

“Thanks” he said and his thick lips parted to show thirty-two perfectly white teeth. The word rolled off his tongue like milk and honey, so smooth and sweet. That was the first time I heard his speak and I definitely longed to listen to him more. I along with the girl was too preoccupied by staring at him, so I was surprised when a girl spoke up beside him.

“Um...hello, do you not see me standing right here?” said a skinny light brown skinned girl with a small rounded butt. She had on some Levi jeans with a school spirit shirt, and some black strappy flat sandals. Her hair was cut short and she sported a pair of stylish glasses that did not hide her plain jane brown eyes. She was average looking to say the least.

“No, I didn’t.” the first girl said dismissively.

“Well, now you do so bye.” She said with venom in her voice. The girl walked away and cast one last look at the guy before she disappeared out of my vision. “Who was she?”

“Noone, calm down Jonnae.” He said bending down to tie his shoes. He still had on his uniform and the way his butt looked when he bent down to tie his shoes made me miss the tight shorts from back in the day, but it also confirmed my previous assumption about his butt. The girl was still pouting

when he stood back up and he was about to speak but he paused when he locked eyes with me. I wanted to look away, but I couldn't. He sized me up for a minute then winked at me, my breath stopped, and then he put his arm around her, and said, "let's go babe."

"So, does the team go to the parties?" I asked casually finally coming back to reality now that he was out of my sight. I wanted him, but Jonnae was going to be a problem. I could always look without touching.

"Did you really just ask that?" Devante said laughing.

"What you mean by that?" I asked slightly confused as to what was so funny.

"Nothing. It's just the team is the party. Most people here won't party unless the team is partying." Devante said shaking his head at the thought.

"Oh wow. Really? That's stupid. Give me some music and I can party by myself." I said being one hundred percent honest. I loved dancing.

"That's good to know. We need more people like you at this school." Devante said with a smile. I could tell that he was a sweet guy, so I knew it was sincere.

"Yeah. Too bad this isn't my first choice school." I said.

"What?" Devante said looking at me kind of upset.

"Her first choice is Norfolk State." Amari said looking just as upset as Devante.

"No, you have to come here." Devante said grabbing me by the shoulders. "This is the best school in the state of Virginia, besides we're here and we're cool."

"Aw, yeah, ya'll are, but I'll think about it. I promise" I said sincerely.

"Make sure you really do, Brooklyn. You click with us, and most people don't." Amari said standing beside me. I hugged them both. They were the sweetest.

[Two hours later....]

I was dressed and ready to go party. I had on a black v-neck with a pair of dark blue shorts. I paired it with my black DCs, some silver hoops, and an assortment of bracelets. My hair was pulled up into a high pony because I was going to kill it on the dance floor. Amari wasn't the partying type and Devante didn't want to leave her, so I went out with her friends, Ashton and Kelsey. They were party girls, yet they still loved their books also. My type of friends. Ashton was dressed in some black leggings with a blue crop top and blue sandals, while Kelsey was the dressiest one out of us. She wore a black pencil skirt with a silky green top, with black wedges.

I followed them on the long walk from their dorm to the location of the party. It wouldn't have been so bad had it not been raining, but what can you do, nature has a mind of its own. Once we got to the party it was in full swing and hella packed. We even had to wait in a line before we got in. That's how you know it's a good party. Eventually we got in and my jacket was completely soaked. I started to

second-guess my outfit choice, because I was a little cold. I backed up to let more people in and I mistook a very tall guy for the wall.

“So, you just going to put your wet jacket on me?” said a very deep voice behind me.

“Oh sorry.” I said quickly moving forward and almost knocking a girl over.

“Watch it.” She said moving away before I could decide between hitting her or apologizing.

“You good shawty.” He said and after I removed my jacket he grabbed me by my waist and pulled me into him. “So, you gonna just stand there or are you gonna dance for me?”

“I’m in high school, so I’m sure that would be extremely inappropriate.” I said thinking of a quick excuse and easing out of his grasp.

“I’m in high school too. Next?” He said smiling down at me and pulling me back.

“Then why are you here and why are you so big?” I asked rolling my eyes.

“I’m a football recruit. I’m trying to get a scholarship for it. Plus, the men in my family are all big.” He said smiling at me. That’s exactly when I thought I had caught him in a lie. I purposely disregarded the comment about his family.

“But they don’t give out football scholarships here. They’re only division two.” I said shaking my head at him for lying to me.

“I never said I was getting one here. I’m a recruit at another local school. I have friends who go here though.” He said. Damn, looks like I put my foot in my mouth, because his story was definitely starting to check out. “You thought I was lying to you didn’t you?”

“Yeah. A little. I’m Brooklyn.” I said holding out my hand.

“Terrance. Nice to meet you.” He said shaking my hand while his other hand still remained on my waist.

“Nice to meet you too. Where are you from?” I asked not ok with the fact that this boy’s hands were on my waist.

“I’m from Atlanta.” He said with a smile and I noticed a small dimple.

“Really? That’s interesting. What made you come all the way to VA?” I asked really shocked that someone from Georgia would want to move to the 804.

“I mean I heard good things about the teams down here and most of them are offering me a starting position. Most of the schools I have applied to in Georgia have red-shirted me, because not only does my family produce guys like me but so does my state.” he said looking directly into my eyes.

“Oh true. That’s probably a good reason, but I don’t really know much about football. I’m a basketball girl myself.” I said hoping he would get the hint and take his hand off my hips.

“Oh true. So, what about that dance?” he said smiling at me.

“What dance?” I asked looking at him suspiciously.

“I mean now that we got all the formalities and excuses out of the way, are you gon throw it back or what?” he asked looking at me like stop acting dumb.

“I don’t throw anything back sorry.” I said folding my arms across my chest.

“Word. Well, what about the digits?” he asked finally letting my waist go.

I seriously contemplated what he asked. I mean he was really cute and very tall, and I loved tall boys. But he played football not basketball. I guess he could always be a back-up plan if I never got my dream guy. “Sure. Give me your phone.” I said as I put my number in his phone, call my phone, and handed it back to him.

“Thanks. See you around cutie.” He said as he walked towards the front of the party. As he did Kelsey and Ashton walked over to me.

“Are you ready to go?” Ashton said clearly looking uncomfortable.

“Sure. I don’t see who I was looking for anyway.” I said pouting.

“And who were you looking for?” Kelsey asked smiling at me.

“Oh no one in particular.” I said trying to get her off my case. “Let’s go.”

We were walking out the door and down the path when we saw a commotion to our left. I saw that Jonnae girl from earlier, she looked angry and she was with him.

“Who was that girl and I’m not going to ask you again?” Jonnae yelled.

“She was nobody.” He said cool as a cucumber.

“Then why were you dancing with her?”

“Because it was just a dance and you need to lower your voice.”

“Oh, am I embarrassing you now?”

“No, you’re embarrassing yourself. Now stop it.”

“Don’t tell me what to do.”

“And why not? You do it to me all the time.”

“Whatever, I’m tired of your groupies.”

“Look, I’m not about to argue with you. I’m tired. I don’t want to do this anymore.”

“Ok, fine. We’ll talk later. Ill call you when I get back to my room.” She said and she turned to walk away.

He grabbed her arm and turned her to face him. “No, that’s not what I mean. I don’t want to do us anymore.”

“You’re breaking up with me?” she said in a lower tone than previously. By this time Kelsey, Ashton and I had stopped to observe the show. Jonnae was heated and upset all at once, while he looked unfazed. I secretly was enjoying how these events were unfolding, but Kelsey and Ashton didn’t seem to be too happy about it.

“Yeah, I think it’s best if...” he cut off when he saw there was a small audience lingering around, and then he locked eyes with me and finished his sentence. “we see other people.” This was the second time that he made me stop breathing, but I didn’t have time to focus on it or what happened because the girls were ready to move.

“Let’s get out of here. This might get ugly.” Ashton said grabbing my arm and pulling me away.

“Excuse me...” I heard him say behind me and I turned and saw him walking in my direction. It was as though he was trying to stop me, but the girls were moving too fast and too many people were getting in his way. I’d never know whether he was trying to talk to me or not.

I went home that night with a big decision to make, Norfolk State or Virginia Union.

[Two weeks later]

I had been putting off the decision making for a while and it was finally to the point where I couldn’t put it off anymore. I had to send in my answers in two days, so I figure it was finally time for me to sit down and weigh out my options. So, let’s start with Norfolk State.

Pros: Historically black university, lots of friends there, they carry my major, they have a wide variety of extracurricular activities

Cons: the location, it’s a rather large school, I still haven’t received my financial aid information, Now, Virginia Union

Pros: that cute basketball player who’d been on my mind and who’s single, it’s a nicer campus compared to NSU, everyone seems extremely friendly, they have my major, nice selection of extracurricular activities, I know how much financial aid I’m receiving and they are being extremely generous

Cons: there are none

Guess the decision was easier than I thought. Virginia Union here I come. Now I have never been one to hope for the destruction of a relationship, but there was something about that guy. Now that he was single I had my chance to find out if I ever got the balls to truly make a move.