

Prologue

Monica

August, 2012

“I can’t believe you dragged me out tonight.”

“Why not? This is the last night before our classes start, so of course I’m going to have some fun.”

I glared at my friend, Cassandra Morris, and sighed. Figured she would, considering she never cared about school anyway. She was just attending college to get away from her parents.

I sighed; I had been away from my family for a week now, and I was already homesick. If I was feeling like this now, I probably wouldn't even survive the semester. When I applied to Shaw, I only did so because it was an hour away from home, just in case I wanted to leave and go to a school in Houston. But I made up my mind to actually enjoy the time I had here, so I planned to; I hoped.

Cassandra looked at me. “Stop being a Debbie Downer. You’re going to have fun tonight. You might even meet a fine man to talk to.”

“I doubt it.” I sighed.

Since I’d known her, I realized that men were Cassandra’s weakness. She never cared about anything else. I hope I don’t fall into that trap. I’ve been boyfriend-free for the past three months, mainly because of what happened with the guy I’d been seeing, Jason Hardaway. I still can’t believe he had been cheating on me with my friend’s cousin. He’d been seeing the both of us for months. And to think, I wanted to be friends with her. Well, that ship has sailed.

“I have been thinking, though. I’m giving myself this semester to stay in school; if I don’t like it, I’ll leave to travel the world.”

I shook my head at Cassandra. “Are you serious?”

“Yeah, why not. We only live once, so we might as well enjoy the time we have. You know I’m not the school type. I barely passed high school, so why would I want to continue with college?”

“Do your parents know?”

“No, but they’ll know once they receive the credit card statement for the tickets I purchase.”

I rolled my eyes. This girl is hopeless.

She pulled into a parking spot at the club, and we got out of the car. I looked around; getting a little excited at the idea I was at a club near the college town. Maybe Cassandra was right; I might actually meet someone tonight.

After the bouncer checked our IDs, we were inside. The place was packed as I tried to get through a couple who were slow grinding on each other. I turned up my nose. With the way they were moving, they might as well just take their clothes off and have sex on the dance floor.

Cassandra smiled. “Now, I don’t know why you’re making that face. You’re not that innocent, Monica.”

“I think there are some things that should be left in the bedroom.”

“If you insist.”

I looked over near the bar and saw a couple of guys talking. I continued staring at one, and he was now looking directly at me. Cassandra looked over at him and smiled.

“Hmm, he’s fine. Go talk to him.”

“I don’t think so.”

“Please, girl. Go have some fun, because I’m definitely about to,” she said, while looking at one of his friends. She went over to the bar, leaving me alone. I sighed, went over to a table and sat down. I moved my head to the beat, wishing I was out on the floor, dancing with someone.

“Looks like you’re enjoying this song.”

I looked up and saw the same guy I’d been gawking at earlier. My heart started to beat faster at the sight of him. Damn, he’s gorgeous! His hazel eyes stared directly into mine, while his chocolate brown skin glowed under the club lights. I was already imagining his strong arms around me, his lips touching my skin, and his medium-built frame moving against my body, which already had me soaking wet.

“Yeah. This is one of my favorite songs.”

“Cool. I see your friend is already talking to one of my friends.”

“Yeah; Cassandra doesn’t waste anytime with anything. If she sees something she wants, she goes for it.”

“Are you saying you’re not like that?”

“I am with certain things.”

“What if I say I’m the same way?”

I glanced at him and smiled. “Are you saying you’re doing that now?”

“Most definitely. I’m Donnell,” he said, extending his hand to me.

“Monica,” I replied, accepting his handshake.

“I have to say, you are beautiful.”

“Thank you.”

“You want to dance?”

I nodded as I put my hand in his and went out onto the floor. Hopefully, I’ll be able to talk to him more after our dance; like Cassandra said, I have to live in the moment, and that’s exactly what I was doing.

After we were on the dance floor for almost an hour, it was time for me to take a break. We went over to the bar and sat down. While he ordered a beer, I declined, figuring I didn’t need any type of drink from a man. If I wanted to do anything, it would be on my judgment and not anyone else’s.

“Are you enjoying yourself?”

“Definitely. Thanks for hanging out with me, especially since my friend ditched me.”

“No problem; I enjoyed spending time with you.”

I smiled when he touched my shoulder. A tingle rushed through me as he glanced into my eyes.

“You want to get out of here? Maybe we could find somewhere to talk.”

I sighed. I knew where this was heading.

“I don’t think so.”

“Why not? If you think I only want to sleep with you, then you’re wrong; even though that thought has crossed my mind several times.”

“I’m sure. Listen, Donnell, I think you’re a great guy, but I barely know you, so I won’t be going anywhere with you. In fact, I need to find Cassandra.”

He nodded, while I pulled out my phone. I noticed there was a text from her. I guess I didn’t get it since I was dancing. I sighed and put my phone back into my clutch.

“What’s wrong?”

“Evidently, Cassandra wanted to bone your friend, so she left with him. She was my ride to the dorm.”

Donnell drank the rest of his beer. “So how do you feel about going somewhere?”

I sighed. “Sure.”

He smiled, tipped the bartender, and took my hand.

“Let’s enjoy the rest of our evening.”

I smiled as we left the club, not knowing what to expect with the rest of the evening with Donnell Patterson...

August, 2014

I woke up, staring at the ceiling, wondering why I would dream about Donnell. I stared over at my boyfriend, Zack Hall, who was sleeping soundly. Nothing could wake him up. I touched his smooth, coffee brown skin, and smiled. Zack is any girl’s dream. Not only is he super sweet and intelligent, he is extremely sexy. In the time we had been together, he’d done things to my body that I still couldn’t believe. He’s just perfect in every way. But if he’s so perfect, why was I thinking about Donnell?

After we left the club that night, Donnell and I returned to his dorm room and we talked and hung out. One thing did lead to another, and we ended up having sex. At that time, I would have never slept with a man within hours of meeting him, but that night, I felt safe with Donnell. But now, I realized that maybe sleeping with him on the first night was a curse, because honestly, our relationship was doomed from the start.

I tried to snuggle closer to Zack, hoping he would wake up. I needed to feel his arms around me. He slowly opened his eyes and smiled.

“Are you trying to get closer to me?”

“Am I that obvious?”

“Yeah, but I don’t mind. Come here.”

I smiled and snuggled into his arms. He folded them around me and gently squeezed me.

“How lucky am I to have you in my life?”

I looked at Zack and smiled. "I should be saying that about you."

He kissed me on the forehead, and I lay my head on his chest. Now, I didn't have to think about Donnell anymore. He may have been the one to make me feel safe then, but now, I had Zack. And I hope that's something I'd never want to change.