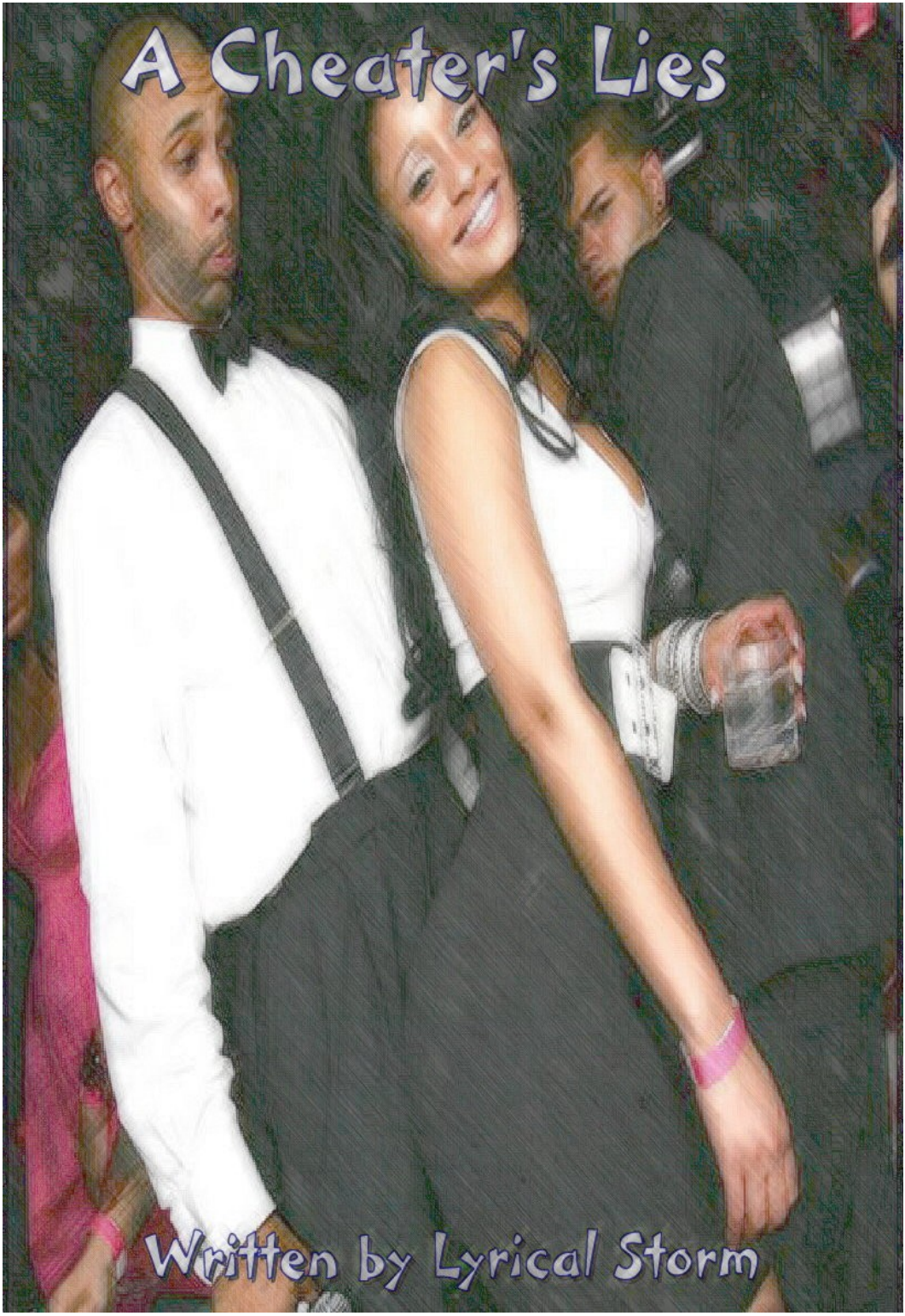


A Cheater's Lies



Written by Lyrical Storm

A CHEATER'S LIES

WRITTEN BY LYRICAL STORM

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CHAPTER 1

A Cheater's Lies

Knock, knock, knock, “Showtime in 30 minutes Shon” says Rollins. Black Shon takes a peep out at the arena, and he stares at the 28,000 fans in attendance from the side of the stage. His presence is unattainable because he's in a oversize hooded jacket. Hyped up and ready to perform Black Shon follows his normal routine of calling his wife. He lets her know he's thinking about her, that he loves her, and he can't wait until this tour is over. They had been planning to go some place romantic alone together. Black Shon has two methods of madness defining his lifestyle like many male musicians. First and foremost Black Shon is a loving husband to his newlywed wife, and he is one of the hottest hip-hop stars in the music industry of today. He only wants to do what he loves, and perform for fans while being the strong man his wife loves. Then there's the other side of Black Shon. More like a kid in a candy store caught up in the flashing lights of the music game. There is money, groupies, and reputations that accompany every show and after-party Black Shon performs. He has fulfilled his dream of getting to the BIG stage and has no regrets, but Black Shon often feels alone with his positive lookout on life and attitude in pursuing happiness. The only thing Black Shon knows on the road is his crew, and nobody in his tour crew is family or someone he knows more than a year. The only person Black Shon knew and felt a bond with at this time was his boss Shawne Rollins.

Not only was Rollins CEO of High Rolling Records, but he personally took responsibility of managing tours and executive production in all matters concerning the media. Although Black Shon felt he knew Rollins it wasn't because they had many common similarities, but more to the fact that High Rolling Records singled him to be the main attraction and focal point of their label. He knew Rollins work ethic was supremely frank. The perfect phrase to describe it would be, 'Go hard or go home.' Rollins liked to conduct business face to face in a very professional matter being of a 6 foot 3 inches, and 238 pound stature. Fairly vogue in style with an I'm a successful strong black man swagger was defined through his omnipotent voice. Rollins liked to see his projects blossom in front of his eyes, and that was one of the major reasons he took on the job of being tour manager. That and the fact he loved the nightlife like a first born cousin. He molded himself to it like a shadow, and he danced in the moonlight like no other CEO of a record label could or would even dare. He embraced the immoral luxuries of the business. The money, the women, and the partying all equaled media buzz to him in one form or another. Whether good or bad he'd make a come up off of it somehow to promote a new single, a new artist, or just maintain the prestige of

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the record label. Of course Black Shon was nothing close to that type of person in real life, but his boss surrounded him with it everyday with rarely a moment overlooked. More than anything it was business though. Knowing the demographics of Black Shon's core audience were college graduates and undergraduates Rollins played to their fantasies of having all the money, all the women, and power every person truly wants after getting their degree.

The problem Black Shon had with living this lifestyle came into play when the media blasted pictures and video footage of this ambiance. It was not only to his core supporting fans, but to the world so broadly that his wife and her friends could have a main focus of discussion in their little powwow sessions. Black Shon is in love with his wife, as well she is with him, but every tour he has done since being signed with the record label seems to bring about a change in their relationship. Black Shon's checked off a list of places he has wanted to go since like middle school. His wife's lifestyle in reality never really matched his dreams, after he chose music over his marketing studies in college. All of Black Shon's music comes from his life experiences and what he loves. None of the media blast show Black Shon doing anything that would be considered cheating by his wife, but he knows his wife's friends and how they can be. They can turn little dirt hill issues into historic Appalachian Mountains in their lives. He knows that his wife has turned to them many times to deal with his absence when he's on the road touring. Black Shon's wife and her close friends stayed in college, and finished with honors being rated high scholars unlike him. If Black Shon's other life was the fame and the touring, then his wife's other life would be her society with her girlfriends. Black Shon felt there was nothing like being with a smart educated black woman that knows how to run her own plans independently. But he pondered how all four of them were together as a power team. And that's what Black Shon had to deal with when the media blitz got ugly for him. Black Shon had a feeling that his boss was leaking some of the pictures that showed up on the tabloids, but being a marketing major in college he understood how things must go to stay in the peoples eye. The person who surely came out as the knave in those buzzers would be Big Griff.

The roster of artist on High Rolling Records was limited, but very potent with platinum selling artist like Black Shon and Big Griff. Rollins purposely did his own recruitment of his artist based on their performing ability and marketability. He never really considered a person's mindset in the sense of handling the fame monster. If so there would have been no way that Big Griff would have

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been signed to the label. Harold Griffin is his real name, but quiet as kept everyone who knows him calls him Big Griff. In gangster rap no one is ill as Big Griff. The Dallas Texas rapper is a survivor from the streets rapping about matters that people in the hood care about. Kinda like coming up and getting paper by whatever means necessary mostly. But Big Griff had a unique sense of pain and rage in his words and tone. Griff was a victim of Hurricane Katrina, and the sole survivor of his immediate family. He lost his first born son and baby mama in the catastrophe in midst of his career transitioning. With so much pain in his heart Big Griff has not been such a ladies man, but more of a hype man for the clubs with his hit singles. Somewhat gangster and comedic, but unique and HOT. His ringtones and digital marketability is what got him where he is today, and he's living it up. Big Griff is an huge man by size, but only around 5 feet 8 inches by height. He is built like an army tank, and has tattoos as camouflage all over his body. One colored tattoo of his 3 year old son on his right shoulder, and his baby mother's name in cursive on his left writing hand. His other tattoos are more like statements of his life, or words that define his character. One is a shackled bald eagle in the middle of his back, while another is an broken shackled angel holding a 9mm handgun on the left side of his chest. Below the tattoo on his back are the words 'GENERATIONS ENSLAVED' in Old English type, and on his stomach in the front are the words 'LIBERATE FREEDOM' tattooed in Rapscrip. Big Griff was the opening act on the tour for High Rolling Records, and performed 30 minute sets that would have every crowd in attendance rocking and electrified by the time Black Shon was due to perform on stage. Depending on the area and cities they performed some locally known artist might pay Rollins for the opening spot which gave them more exposure to the mainstream media. If an artist was hot and marketable then Rollins knew about them. He made it his business to be the premier record label of the streets while only representing the best the industry has to offer. He based his roster on five genres of music being Hip Hop, Rap, R&B, Soundtrack, and Music Production. Being a fairly new but dominant record label for 10 years was based off Rollins thought of marketing and talent scouting. He only needed one in demand artist in three of his genre fields, and would secure his label through soundtrack music and beat productions which gave his label the bulk of the money. At any point or time where he felt any of his starting artist were not up to his standards of dominance he had a replacement ready for them with many music producers eager to follow Rollins successful blueprint.

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Before Rollins became CEO of High Rolling Records he was a bank investor who lived in Brownsville, NY. His father was a corporate shareholder who helped him invest in promising real estate locations in New York and California. By the age of 25 Rollins was able to create a small fortune through stocks and real estate to fully pursue his 3 year old business of music production which at that time was just a small unknown name in the music industry. Rollins would soon have a team of hungry music producers working with him after his New York and California contacts helped support his efforts. He produced music for soundtracks and TV shows. Winning multiple music awards for production and making platinum soundtrack records solidified High Rolling Records as a successful record label, and had the music industry obsessed with working with Shawne Rollins and his production team. By the age of 29 Rollins decided to fully invest in his music business and become CEO of High Rolling records. Rollins was offered a deal to become a subsidiary of the premier record label corporation in New York. Knowing this would open up the big doors of the music industry Rollins accepted the deal and began liquidating the majority of his assets into the label making its worth close to 230 million dollars. Around this time Rollins signed Black Shon and Big Griff to the label and they began their platinum conquests. Rollins producing team loved working with both Black Shon and Big Griff. Black Shon's marketability was classic Hip Hop and became the jump-off for college kids and casual parties. Big Griff's jump-off was more new school with the music game changing. He was destined to be the face of ringtones for phones and mixtapes in urban nightclubs every week. Many of the producers were DJs following Rollins path to make it big so word got around quick about both artist through the internet record pools, radio station pools, and the social media websites. All the magazines, TV shows, and mainstream media flocked in at the same time as well with Rollins signing on as a subsidiary label franchise.

Within three weeks of dropping his first LP Black Shon went retail platinum, and he ended up going double platinum by the year's end. Big Griff followed suit going ringtone platinum with three of his four singles off his first album, and sold an even million retail units before the year's end. Black Shon would also take the hip-hop album of the year award in every award show that year. That helped claim his place as the hottest emcee. Big Griff claimed many awards himself taking home best rap single, best hip-hop video, BET viewers choice award, and best rap performance. The first tours Black Shon and Big Griff did were solo projects where both could

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perform as the feature artist having locals open up for them. This worked out great for Black Shon as he had a routine he followed that kept him grounded, but Big Griff wasn't able to keep schedules intact and actually had to reschedule close to a third of his shows. Due to personal issues and his lifestyle Big Griff became a heavy drinker of alcohol and a chronic weed smoker. Big Griff was a person that looked like he'd been locked up before or something, but in all truth his first time being detained by the police happened during his first tour at an afterparty. His convoy was pulled over in suspicion of illegal drugs and alcohol possession. That was just the beginning of Big Griff's run-ins with the police as throughout his tours he went back and forth to jail erratically. His charges were mostly for illegal possession of marijuana. Big Griff was able to finish his first tour with just a few dates changed throughout the process.

His second tour promoting his best selling 2nd LP came to an brusque halt after court charges were brought up on a shooting that involved his entourage and him at a afterparty of one of his tour stops. Rollins finally took a better stance in guiding Big Griff after the court ruled in Harold Griffin's favor to which he and his people were found innocent on all charges. That was when Rollins decided that both Black Shon and Big Griff should start touring together, and he thought they should both do an hour set. But he realized shortly after making this arrangement that the majority of Big Griff's crowd was not into Black Shon's music the same way. It was even noticeable through the crowd as Black Shon took the stage. The level of electricity would calm down dramatically and become more of a picture show. A chant of memorable lyrics that Black Shon's fans loved him for could be heard on most nights. Rollins approach to fix this problem was to shorten Big Griff's performance to 30 minutes every show, and have him do a full set at afterparties where all the club goers were sure to be anyway. At first Griff was at odds about his stage time being cut. Mostly to the fact that his style and his flow was in high demand. He felt he was suppose to close the show out anyway. But Rollins let Big Griff in on the marketing scheme he had for them. He would use YouTube and Big Griff's ringtones to capture the life Big Griff brings to the nightlife and the clubs. This also sunk Big Griff his first deal as a spokesman of a liquor company that gave him a easy 3.5 million annually. When it all came down to it Big Griff accepted it because he realized he would make the most money at the end of the night. So from that point on that's how High Rolling Records did their tours.

Big Griff was getting to his last few songs of his set as Black Shon was closing up his

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conversation with his wife. The roar from the crowd could be heard from Black Shon's cell phone as his wife heard him end their chat saying, "I love you too baby!" Black Shon goes back in and peeps at the crowd from the side of the stage. This time he stares more closely at Big Griff's performance. In his mind he's like, "Shit this dude is ill on stage!" Big Griff never stood in one spot while performing ever. He moved all around the stage so the stagehands just lit up the whole stage. In his last two songs Griff would take off his shirt, after he worked up a sweat, and get right up on the edge of the stage and throw his shirt out to the ladies. Showing off his glistening tattoos he was what every young club-head wanted to be young, black, rich, and famous. Whether it was music or another way of life Big Griff touched his fans and was just as big as Black Shon in every way. Big Griff would come up with a freestyle about the liquor he was a spokesman for before closing out his set. This was to get his fans to buy up all the liquor at the afterparty. He would grab the bottle of liquor and gulp a few drinks of it down before exiting the stage. Exactly a minute after his exit it was Black Shon's turn to rip the stage. All the lights would go black. Then all of a sudden the fans would chant Black Shon's name. Black Shon's voice would come from around the whole arena saying, "Yall ready!" And then a live video would start showing Shon's ritual before coming out. In a prayer circle with his stage hands and crew Shon would publicly pray saying, "Lord I thank you for my talent, I thank you for my life. I know nothing I perform tonight has anything to do with praising you and glorifying your name, but it does connect me to my fans and through that I know they are connected to you. I'm a vessel of your truth in this world, and I'm here to do your will. I pray that my talent can be proof of exactly that. In your heavenly name we pray, Amen." Right then Black Shon is in the middle of the stage as the lights cut back on and goes right into his long list of classic hits. There is like a monsoon of photographs taken by his fans soon as the lights cut back on. The DJ that cuts the tracks for Shon has a special mix for him every night he performs live so nothing is predictable, and every show is original. Black Shon has certain cuts where the crowd sings the hook and he gets them fired up by seeing which side is louder by tipping the microphone to them in the break of the beat. The strength of Black Shon's performance is his storytelling ability. Towards the end of every show he sets the stage for the fan's favorite cuts and debuts something he's working on currently that will blow the crowd away. Black Shon is just about to close out all his hits and perform his new single, when all of a sudden Rollins cuts in and brings a new act onto High Rolling Records. This caught Black Shon off guard, but Rollins knew

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this would be the best way to break her into the game. Black Shon's new single was a duet with a female singer, and Black Shon was expecting to close the show out performing it solo with a mix the DJ made earlier. Rollins stopped the show right after Shon's last cut and had the DJ stop mixing so he could make the announcement. Rollins fully enjoying the show and entertained profusely asked the crowd, "Yall enjoying the show tonight???? Yall want a little more right???? Well before Black Shon debuts his new single from his fifth album. I have to introduce the newest edition to our High Rolling Records dynasty. I mean yall should know her right? Her current R&B single is in the top 10 countdown on iTunes, and I'm sure after next week it will be #1 on the charts. Yall Atlanta people say she's the next Lauryn Hill! I don't know about that, but trust SHE IS HOT! Ladies and Gentlemen please welcome your hometown girl performing with Black Shon on his new single available on iTunes now Epic!" Now at this point of time Rollins grin was ear to ear as he handed his microphone to Epic, and faded from the middle of the stage to the side. The crowd truly was thrown into a frenzy as Epic took the middle of the stage. Wearing a black tight backless freakum dress that cut just above mid-thigh with 5 inch open toe heels. All eyes were on her as a spotlight hit her on the stage. Her silhouette was just astonishing as her thighs matched the curves and thickness of her backside. Her waist was slim, but perfectly equated to her bust that slightly jounced as she moved. Epic scantily tilted her head down for a few seconds then tilted it back with her microphone raised to her mouth and powerfully crooned the chorus. The DJ commenced the beat that was a acoustic guitar that broke down to drums and a bass guitar. Around that time Black Shon was really feeling the adjustment and took full advantage of the moment beginning to spit his first verse. The deep bass-line, the rhythmic drums, and soft feminine vocals lifted the entire assembly of music lovers in attendance. Many people were already out of their seats clapping and grooving to the beat as it broke back into the chorus. Epic began her crooning and became more than just a pretty face to her spectators. Black Shon came closer to Epic and created a vibe with her everyone present could feel. He added his hip-hop flare to her R&B vocals and Epic passionately harmonized with Black Shon's verses. Kind of like an argument on stage as they both got into it. By the third verse and chorus everyone was out of their seat. Epic stepped out of her spotlight and looked directly at Shon as she hunched over the mic she held. He glanced back and gave her an approving nod as he crept closer in a hip-hop strut. Epic improvised an ending of the song as it came to a close with high notes and a long note displaying her vocal

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capability. With Black Shon's patent closing he turned his microphone in the air and said, "Hip Hop! If you love it, if you breathe it, then let me hear you say HIP HOP!" Then every body on the High Rolling Records roster came back on the stage and said, "Hip Hop! If you love it, if you breathe it, then meet me at the club the afterparty. One more time let me hear you say.....HIP HOP! We love yall madd love my people."

The High Rolling Records team shut the arena down in full effect as the stage faded to black. Rollins immediately called his three artist to the back of the stage as the crowd dejected and moved to the exits. Very pleased with the new addition Black Shon asked, "Damn boss where you get her from?" Rollins replied, "Shannon and Harold I would like you two to meet Angela Gables. She will be our songstress from now on." Epic still star-struck from blazing the stage with Black Shon couldn't help but laugh when she realized his real name as well Big Griff's. Her giggles made their heads turn her direction which made her fluster and say, "I would never think your real name was Shannon, or yours was Harold!" Black Shon wanted to say something flattering, but didn't want Epic to get the wrong idea. But Big Griff immediately had something to say. He responded by saying, "Well sweetheart whether Angela or Epic you something breath taking. I'm surprised somebody ain't changed your last name by now" Epic didn't take Big Griff's flattery more deeply than her feeling of being in the presence of the hottest Hip Hop acts ever. Epic just smiled and said, "Thank you handsome.....opps I mean Griff." Rollins trying to keep things professional and timely said, "Well well well looks likes our musical family is finally complete. I expect you guys to look after each other in the same manner you would your family because that's what we are. We're all around the same age, and there's not too much difference in our lifestyles at this point. We're all talented, on top of our game, and destine to become legends in music. The performance lineup will be changing with our new edition, but we will get into that later. Right now everyone needs to get changed for the afterparty. For tonight Shon I will need you to hold down V.I.P. and mingle with the fans. Griff you and Epic will share the stage tonight. Don't worry about time because the club don't close until 5 a.m. We'll be gone way before that. We will need to take a few publicity photos for Epic in the club and welcome her properly to the label in her hometown. We should be out of there around 2:00 a.m. tops for sure.

Shon and Griff your next tour stop will go as planned, but I'm taking Epic back to NYC for a production meeting to help her break out some hot R&B singles for tour. My tour assistant will fill

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in for me in my absence. Well people the show is over. Now it's time for the afterparty. I'll meet you in the limo in 15 minutes.”

Everyone went into their dressing rooms to get ready for the afterparty, but Epic had to change in a woman's bathroom because she had not been appointed a dressing room before the show. She only changed into white tights that she placed under her dress. She coordinated her outfit with diamond earrings and a diamond studded bracelet. Black Shon changed into his normal club formalwear which was a hoody and baggy jeans. His jacket and jeans were black and white Coogi with some fresh Jordans that matched his outfit. The only jewelry Shon liked to wear was a iced timepiece and his platinum ring. No chains or anything like that. Since Big Griff was performing again. He went all out, and still was one of the first to be ready to go. Big Griff wore a custom white T-shirt, and a heavy diamond draped chain. His pants were New York style Sean John, and his boots were blue Timberlands with white trim. Black Shon was the last to get into the limousine as they set off to attend the afterparty. The club was about 20 minutes away from the arena, but Rollins informed the driver to circle around the strip until he contacted the manager of the club. Rollins gave word to the drivers and security where to go after getting word that everything was setup for their arrival. The nightclub was quite a huge complex, and comparable to three buildings in whole. It was packed with people who came to the show, and a few that just wanted to go out to a jumping party. The High Rolling Records convoy was always deep with normally three body guards for Black Shon and Big Griff a piece. This night with Rollins accompanying them to the nightclub with Epic they looked like the security for the night club. They were around 13 deep in three limousines. The bodyguards were all dressed in company logo jeans and muscle shirts along with jackets bearing the High Rolling Records logo. They also wore a badged rope necklace bearing the logo with their name imprinted below. They arrived at the club exactly around 11:35 p.m. Through the back entrance incogitable. Arrangements were made so that V.I.P. was restricted to only ladies and the record label. Rollins and Big Griff planned the stage to be packed with ladies holding up the liquor brand Big Griff was a spokesman for while he performed the rest of his performance at the nightclub. Every woman who got into V.I.P. was welcome to join Big Griff on stage for his last two songs of that night. It was planned that Epic would perform her local hits that everyone knew, and close the night out with her single that was on iTunes since she was locally known. Rollins knew the stage shots of Big Griff performing would be hot and perfect for

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website advertising on YouTube and social media sites like Global Grind. He had informed all the media outlets about the afterparty and gave his personal contacts V.I.P. passes to personally cover the event for photographs and live footage. Epic would be able to capitalize through this as well, but more locally than mainstream for now. Black Shon started to sit back to relax for Big Griff's performance and realized how flooded V.I.P. was with women. The reserved area could hold at least 100 people or more, and the ratio of women to men had to be like 10 to 2. Before he knew it there was a slew of fine women holding up Griff's liquor living it up in V.I.P. Black Shon gestured to one of his bodyguards and whispered, "Yo don't something seem a little off here tonight? There's a ton of hot women all up in our V.I.P. area. It's normally just us and the media reporters asking questions and stuff?" The bodyguard eyeing Black Shon's wedding ring smirked and said, "Well I guess that means you can handle yourself tonight right? I mean there's only gorgeous, soft, and half-drunk women to rub against you in this spot tonight." Hey I'm gonna take a closer look at the women and make sure nobody got like a shank they trying to use tonight. You know just to be on the safe side." Black Shon got what his bodyguard was hinting at as he watched him squeeze through a crowd of thick hipped women that were rushing over to take a seat next to him. Around this time the media contacts that Rollins invited were already situated for Big Griff's performance and were able to get a glimpse of Black Shon surrounded in V.I.P. with several tipsy women. Black Shon is a man, and every man has hormones. Black Shon has certain traits in women that turn him on, and others that turn him completely off. He's the type of man who reconnaissance could admire beauty like every man, but if a woman's mind was dizzy he would become entirely dreadful of carrying on with their rapport. The women that rushed the sofa Black Shon occupied were buttaheads. Meaning they were beautiful body wise, but nothing worth getting to know upstairs. Mixing that with alcohol made the situation even worse because a simple conversation with them became misunderstood dialect. Black Shon wasn't an uppity superstar, and he loved his fans opinion on his music. He welcomed them to sit down and parley. He knew that meeting him and taking a few pictures with their camera phones would be a moment they would savor. Although he received slurred feedback to every question he asked the ladies Black Shon enjoyed himself. At this time one of Rollins media contacts were able to snap a very juicy expose' of Black Shon sitting at the club in such a way that the women in the picture looked trampy. It exposed an up-skirt shot of two women seated with Shon before they noticed the photographer snapping

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photos from across the way.

The club owner cued the DJ to fade out into a mix to quiet the crowd as he came to the stage with Rollins. Making sure all his media contacts were in place Rollins grabbed the mic and began to speak. "ATL what's popping with ya! Yall ready for round two! Tonight not only is Big Griff gonna blaze the mic, but your hometown girl Epic is going to do a set as well. If yall ready for that then let me hear you say YEAH. With no further delay welcome High Rolling Records own Big Griff!" In a quick burst Big Griff rumbled into the stage in a rough staggering motion staring at the crowd. There was a moment of silence as he stared until the DJ played his hottest club classic that got the whole place jumping. Big Griff began his normal routine of rocking the crowd, and proceeded with the plan him and Rollins put together with all the ladies in V.I.P. Big Griff wrapped up his performance, and introduced Epic to the stage in his lavish freestyle skills. Around the time Epic was performing he explained to Black Shon what all the women in V.I.P. were for. Epic performed about six songs ending the night with her iTunes hit. She also was able to attain great press coverage by local media sources, and through Rollins media contacts. The High Rolling Records team closed out the night with much success, and left on their scheduled time just around 2:00 a.m. Black Shon and Big Griff took off with the assistant tour manager for their next tour stop, while Rollins and Epic got something to eat while getting ready for the flight back to NYC.

CHAPTER 2

Chapter 2 - Tonya's World

“Blood, shit, and sheets,” Tonya thought to herself while placing new sheets on a patient's bed. The elderly patient she was assisting had a bladder problem. He was losing control over his detrusor muscle and his external sphincter. This repeatedly made him urinate on himself. Tonya would have about three patients that had similar problems that would need new sheets almost twice a day. Tonya didn't think her professional career would be on such a basic level at the age of 26. Tonya was one of the highest academic scholars in her class as well her field in nursing. She received all of her certifications before finishing her senior year at the University of Illinois, but wasn't able to fulfill her dream of entering into the field using her advanced practice nurse abilities. Tonya was originally from Pasadena California, and decided to move to Chicago to get the real E.R. and Grey's Anatomy feeling first hand. In the career she has passion for Tonya found herself working on a certified nurse practitioner 's level rather than one to her educated standards. Wanting to stay located in Chicago where her husband lived was very important to her, but it created a problem far as advancing her career to the next level. The hospital Tonya worked at had her at the very bottom of the promotion chain even though she had the highest skill levels to be an advanced practice nurse. Tonya wanted one of the nursing positions in an anesthetist, but due to seniority many nurses who worked there before she did had an edge on her. Tonya was close to 7 years behind all the other certified nurses in the building to achieving her dream job. Just to keep working as a nurse in the hospital Tonya had to work basic nursing jobs that LPNs would have to do. These occupations required no advanced training in medicine or other practices that Tonya knew. Tonya was just about to make rounds on her other patients after changing the sheets on the bed. She receives a page from one of her girlfriends on line six. It was her friend Nikki. She asked Tonya about meeting up for lunch at around 1:30 p.m. Nikki stated it was of urgent must tell, which meant it was some type of gossip she wanted Tonya to know about before anyone else in their clique knew. Tonya agreed saying, “OK Nikki 1:35 is good. Let's meet at Lito's in Lincoln Park.”

Tonya starts to make her way to her next patient who is recovering from chemotherapy. The female patient found the cancer cells early enough to go under the knife, but decided to undergo chemotherapy treatment because of the low percentage of getting all the cancer through one surgery. She was scared of having to come back and go through any more surgeries. She watched her cousin go through two leukemia surgeries and a chemotherapy session before she was cured

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from spreading breast cancer. Tonya was scheduled to give the patient a CBC test to fully evaluate her side effects of the chemotherapy. Looking under the weather, but talkative as normal the patient was happy to see Tonya. Seeing that her food was barely eaten Tonya asked the patient if she was feeling any side effects since the chemotherapy treatment. The patient replied, "I feel a little nauseous, but that's common right?" Tonya said, "Yep that's a common side effect right after treatment. You might experience some hair loss, vomiting, and irritable bowels as well. Sweetie I'll have to test your blood to make sure there are no side effects from the treatment." Reaching out her left arm Tonya wraps a band around the patients arm and sterilizes a spot on her arm where the needle will be inserted. Tonya begins to stick the patient and the vial begins to fill with blood. Tonya gives the patient a gauze to hold over the prick after filling the vial, and then labels it with the patients name. Tonya lets the patient know this test will inform the doctor about her red blood cells and white blood cells in case changes may have occurred following treatment. So into her work and informative Tonya actually tells the patient too much information stating, "In the case you have a low red blood cell count called Anemia, a low white blood cell count which is called neutropenia, or a low platelet count referred to as thrombocytopenia. These are blood related side effects to chemotherapy treatment." Many nurses and doctors use an expansive vocabulary of words foreign to patients and the norm in the medical world of communication. This was something Tonya loved to exploit on all her friends that were not informed on the medical doctrine level. Tonya was off to take the vial to be tested as the patient gave her an aloof stare concerning her perplexed reasons for drawing her blood. It was around the time for Tonya to take her lunch break as she completed her rounds on her patients. Thinking about what Nikki wanted to inform her about was pondering her mind as time struck closer to 1:35 p.m.

Nikki Sanders was one of Tonya's closer friends that graduated with her at the University of Illinois. Nikki's major was in graphic design with a minor in business, but she made the bulk of her money in hairstyling as an owner of a independent salon. Nikki's first love was hairstyling as she used it to help pay for college tuition. She ended up living off campus to run her home based business after making the right connections with steady clientele before graduating. Nikki was able to build her own salon after getting a loan, and finding the right location to work in. The full detail salon not only focused on hair, but nails, facials, and pedicures. She was in charge of eight hairstylers and three manicurist in her charismatic uptown Chicago salon. Nikki only charged her

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stylist 25 percent to hold their chairs with each chair bringing in 35,000 or more annually. Along with a graphic design business that brought her in over 41,000 every year Nikki made an easy 110,000 salary every year. Nikki was very well connected due to Chicago being her hometown, and her Greek sorority alumni of Alpha Kappa Alphas. She had intelligence in about everything going on in fashion, entertainment, and music. Out of all Tonya's friends Nikki was the most outgoing. Truly the life of the party kind of girl, and a people's person. Nikki and Tonya's relationship grew even closer when Shannon decided to become a hip-hop musician. Tonya barely knew anything about the music industry, and Nikki's whole concept of trends and styles revolved around the entertainment world. This made Tonya value Nikki's opinion more in group discussions with all her friends about issues concerning Shannon. Most of the time when Nikki had gossip to tell it was something about the business, and sometimes even about Shannon. Nikki's workday consisted mostly of marketing both her graphic design position along with her hairstyling business. In most cases she could apply both in marketing strategies that would package a unique deal from her competitors. Using discounts for clubs in flyer designs, and discounts for hairstyles before major in town concerts were just a few ways Nikki made sure her businesses were advertised in the public eye. Taking further steps to gain more power in her industry Nikki was making plans to host a local hair and talent show. With plans of having some hip-hop heavyweights in attendance she knew the showcase would be a great success.

Nikki was the first to arrive at the restaurant being on a more free-spirited schedule. She took it on herself to get a table for both of them. Before Tonya could give Nikki a call to make sure she was there Nikki spotted her and began to wave. There were about 12 people dining in the diminutively cozy restaurant as Tonya took the seat neighboring her friend. Nikki made herself at home booting up her laptop while starting up their conversation. She implied, "Leave it to you to pick a high class fast food joint for lunch." Nikki being more reserved to cuisines and light pasta meals quickly recognized all the dishes here were deep fried. Tonya replied, "Well it's better than your Asian cuisines with leaves and soup! For 8 bucks I wanna get my money's worth. I eat here here all the time trust me it's good food. So what's so urgent? I can tell it's brewing inside of you?" Nikki takes a glance at the menu and finds something she feels is very low calorie and says, "Well to be honest I have a few things on my mind so I'll get right to the big stuff. I'm planning on doing a fashion and talent show for Chicago!" Not something Tonya is really captivated in, but a little

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intrigued by she says, "Really girl! When you plan on doing it? You know I'll be there." Nikki says, "If everything comes out as planned it should be in two months. I have the models for the hair show, I have DJs for both segments of the show, and I have a complex rented out for the event. All I need now are some local musicians, and maybe some BIG name hip-hop acts to really pack the house. I know it's a lot to ask, but maybe when you get a chance could you run the idea by Black Shon?" Tonya with a playful smirk says, "Well if you asking me to do business with ya the least you could do is pay for lunch. Naw really Nikki I don't even get into any of Shannon's business like that. When he is out touring I know it is something he wants to do. I mean it has been that way since our college days. I will surely talk to him about it though." Nikki expecting Tonya to say such replied, "Well that's all I'm really looking for anyway. I mean the showcase is not until two months from now. I believe Black Shon's tour will be coming around our area around then as well. I'm just hoping maybe he can squeeze some time in for it." Tonya seemly astounded replied, "Wow I didn't know you followed his tour like that. That's sounds like it just might work out." With a snappy chagrin Nikki said, "Well that brings up the next thing I wanted to tell you about. There's this website called Thisis50.com, and there's a picture of Black Shon from his latest show and afterparty. It's not that flattering to your marriage with him. Now he's not doing anything wrong at all! It is just a scummy media picture that I wanted you to know about before someone else told you in a different way. I brought my laptop so you could see it. Of course I wasn't there, but trust me I know how the media is, and he was just relaxing and got caught up for the media's gain." Feeling both irate and insecure Tonya in exclamation says, "OK..OK JUST...LET ME SEE THE PICTURE." Nikki turns her laptop facing toward both of them and types in the website. She scrolls down to the article, and clicks on the picture where Shannon is surrounded by four women drinking liquor. Clicking on the picture brings up around six more pictures with a headline stating **BLACK SHON PREFERS GROUP SEX**. One picture is with the women all over Shannon taking cell phone pictures with him. Another picture is a up-skirt shot of two women, four in total, closely snugged against Shannon where their panties are viewable. The next picture shows a group of women dancing with Shannon in the V.I.P. area with his bodyguards present. They are grinding with some of the women. The fourth picture shows some fans grabbing Shannon's hands and rubbing against him improperly as he tries to walk away. The fifth picture shows a group shot of High Rolling Records at the concert, and the sixth picture shows a similar picture of the group at

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the afterparty. Not happy about the pictures on the website Tonya says, "Well this is what he does every night he gets off the phone with me then huh? So this was yesterday right? How did these photos get up on this website already? Is there anyway to take them down? Yeah I can't wait to hear what his ass got to say about this tonight." Wanting for Tonya to see it in a different light Nikki pointed out obvious moods and feelings Shannon displayed in the pictures. "Ok wait a minute Tonya! I think you tripping girl. It ain't like he was humping and groping these girls! Look at the pictures. You can tell he was just being friendly with his fans. Look at them taking cell phone pictures with him. Then look at the first picture when he's dancing with them. He just moving to the music and partying. Girl he ain't even trying to take it there! That next picture is him trying to get out of there. He knew things weren't right up in there. Look at his face. He seems pretty pissed off at his bodyguards," said Nikki. Still very hot about everything she just took in Tonya slightly agrees saying, "Yeah I hear you, but he should be able to handle shit like this by now. This is his fourth year of going on tour. Why he still got dumb ass photos like this popping up if he ain't messing around?" Nikki chose a different way to calm down the matter after seeing her plan slowly backfire. She began to give her insight just as lunch was being brought to the table. She started by smelling the food and making compliments saying, "Whew! Girl this food sure does smell great. Ha ha ha maybe I was a tad bit wrong about it. Now see I think you riled up about nothing. Even if he been touring for over four years every photographer wants that BIG photo shot. One photo that can be worth 25,000 thousand or more exposing a superstar in false light. They gonna post it in every magazine, and every online social media site there is. If I truly felt he was cheating on you then I would have only told you about that news. Now he's a good husband to you! Something a girl like me is still looking for these days. To think anything else than how cynical the media is would be nonsense. I came here to celebrate only good news, and that was suppose to be the upcoming showcase I have planned. I know you trust each other, and if you're still concerned about his tour behavior this showcase would be a perfect chance to see how he acts when he is on tour. If he's at his hometown you know he's going to put on one of his hottest shows. Maybe that's something yall can talk about. Just ease into it, and see if he's down with it." Listening to her friend Tonya takes a bite out of her sandwich and slightly nods in agreement with Nikki. Tonya empties her mouth by swallowing then says, "Maybe its the food talking, but you making sense. And yes I do trust my baby so lets just talk about something else." Feeling she said

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everything she had to say in the best manner she could Nikki replied, "Well I've said what I'm up to. What's going on your way girl? How's work going?" With her mouth full of food Tonya holds up her ring finger, implying just a second and answers, "Girl same old same old. Blood, shit, and sheets." They both nod their heads in disbelief and laughed about it. Tonya says, "The only thing good about the situation is I'm able to work with other local hospitals sometimes. I have a few connections from programs I enrolled in before becoming a nurse that look out for me. I wish they would have informed me about the economy of the medical field though. I'm wondering if I'll ever get to use the practices I've learned." Nikki replies, "Have you ever tried to get into Darrin's hospital. I'm sure he could pull some strings, and get you to work as his anesthetist? Ronda hates all them young bitches around him in that hospital. You know how she be tripping." Tonya already knew about the hospital, but pretended to be thinking about what Nikki was saying. Tonya says, "Well that's not a bad idea, but I'm not even sure which hospital that is. Are you sure that there's an opening for anesthetist? I would think Dr. Campbell would only want to work with physician assistants." Nikki confused with the order ship of medical positions said, "Well that's something I really don't know anything about, nor do I feel I should. I just felt you might want to look into it." Tonya stared back at Nikki with her eyes widen and verbally thanked her.

Nikki was just learning the full history between Tonya, Ronda, and Darrin at that time. Tonya and Ronda were roommates back in their college days for three years. Both Tonya and Ronda competed for everything before Darrin even came into the picture. It all started their freshman year at a weekend welcome party on the campus. Tonya was the first to move in, and when Ronda came to move in she didn't like her side of the room. This was just the start as tough breaks would encounter both of them unintentionally at the beginning. Later a free student luncheon was thrown where Ronda was picked as team leader of a jello mold relay race. She had a chance to pick Tonya for her green jello team, but picked a guy instead. Tonya's red jello team placed her to anchor the race as the male captain of their team would start. The red team held the lead going into the second leg, but was overtaken by the guy Ronda picked for the green team. Drawing a close tie into the last leg both Ronda and Tonya received their jello molds at the same time. Running a shuttle obstacle course made both of them stop in mid stride and start running again several times before rounding into their last turn. Both of them were very careful not to drop the jello molds as they came to the final wire. In a straight-ahead race Tonya just edged out Ronda to win the race. This

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became a tradition of revelry between the two although it was just a playful game. Realizing they had different majors they still competed in grades and frivolous things like clothes, hairstyles, and men. Ronda and Tonya were both petite. Both around 5 feet and 6 inches. Both were caramel skin complexioned. And both of them had a lot of men chasing them. If anything Ronda had a few more curvy features, but really not by much. If Tonya wanted, and often did, she could fit into any outfit Ronda had in her closet. Tonya could also attract exactly the same or even more men that Ronda would. Tonya had a very strong face especially her cheek bones. She could get away with way more styles than Ronda could. Her hair was black and long. Ronda's hair came down just above her shoulders and was light brown with very little kinks.

One weekend Ronda was helping Tonya study a memorization sheet of medical words and definitions when they both decided to take a break. Ronda suggested they take a tiny break at the mall or catch a movie. Tonya thought the movies would be too long of a break and distract her memory. So she agreed to going to the mall. They knew Wicker Park had the best stores so they caught the #50 and strolled the Milwaukee avenue strip. Not buying anything too extravagant, but basically window shopping the two found excitement. They found ideas for outfits they were planning on getting, and then they headed to a gourmet grocery store for something to snack on. Ronda loved to cook. She would have the whole floor of the dormitory smelling like flavorful food every weekend. Whether it was just pasta or an Italian recipe she knew her way in and out of the kitchen. The ladies had a craving for a chicken & rice dish, and went searching throughout the store to find the ingredients. Ronda being nosy started checking out the men in the store. Tonya started to check the men out as well, but Ronda paid closer attention to what kind of food they were purchasing. One guy that Tonya was starring at looked familiar to her. She knew she must have run into him before at some kind of medical forum or something. Who ever he was she didn't know him good enough to call by name, but Ronda quickly peeped how hard Tonya was eying him. Ronda thought he was cute, but made it a point to meet him after she noticed crab legs and french bread in his grocery hand cart. Quickly getting what they needed from the store the ladies met in line while keeping him in sight. They lined up right behind him in a moderate checkout lane. Making their conversation slightly heard to those around them. Tonya was the first to speak saying, "Girl this chicken & rice meal should hit the spot. Since you the master chef I'll let you cook. I got you on the dishes though. I just don't want to forget this medical terminology crammed

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in my head.” Going straight in for the kill Ronda decides to stroke his ego by commenting on his supposed dinner, as Tonya was verbally pronouncing her studies trying to make a connection. Ronda with her loud commanding mouth says, “What this crap? Girl I don't even want this no more. I'm in a Umm...crab leg and french bread kinda mood. Maybe with a salad though. I hate a man that act like he ain't never heard of veggies before.” Clearly hearing the two sexy feminine voices behind him the fairly tall man turned toward them. He spun his body sideways towards the magazine stand to check out his harassers. Glancing in a side view through his eyes he peeps the two caramel skinned women and decides to advance his game. Tilting off-balanced on his left leg to where he can look into Ronda's hand cart he replied, “Gotta love a woman that can cook. But that sho ain't enough meat for a guy like me. Even pre-meds gotta have a good meal to concentrate.” Surprising both ladies with his status he continued saying, “Well I certainly can't eat all these crab legs myself, and I would love to see exactly how advanced your cooking skills are. Why don't we get together and have a old fashion dinner and a movie? I'm assuming you two are college students right? Do you mind if I ask what year yall are? By the way my name is Darrin Campbell first year premedical student.” Ronda taking higher ground on the conversation replied, “Well Darrin I'm a freshman at the University of Illinois studying business for human resource management. I'm originally from Ann Arbor, Michigan.....” Tonya realizing she is losing ground says, “Well I'm a Cali girl from Pasadena. We both are freshman, and roommates at UIC. I'm studying advanced nursing going for APN. So what practices are you into?” Nodding in approval Darrin says, “Well I'm going for doctor of medicine. I wouldn't feel comfortable doing anything else. So what made you want to get into the medical field Tonya?” She replied, “I always had a dream to come to Chicago and save lives like I watched on E.R. and Grey's Anatomy. It is truly amazing how the human body works you know. I just wanna make an impact in saving lives.” Darrin begins to checkout his purchases. He nods his head in agreement with Tonya saying, “That's what gets me into it. Knowing how the human body works. Not just our bodies though. I'm into it all. There are so many creations in this world. I know we can preserve life for every living thing on this earth.” Ronda began to set their items on the conveyor belt as Darrin grabbed his bagged groceries. She interrupted their conversation with a personal question to Darrin asking, “So you live close around here or something? You wouldn't be looking for a medical school around here would ya?” Darrin replied, “Well actually I'm a Chi-town native. I grew up in the east

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Garfield park area. I did pretty well on my MCAT so I was granted a annual stipend along with free tuition to further my practice in becoming a MD.”

Looking at the ladies and remembering they were freshman Darrin offered to give them a ride back to the campus. The ladies agreed as Ronda grabbed their bagged items. Walking out of the store Darrin chirped his Chevy impala, and walked the ladies to his ride. With a sly smile on his face he said, “Well I guess this ride confirms our dinner and a movie date right? I mean it ain't like yall can run from me. I'll be straight up about it. I just wanna treat you ladies to a great evening some weekend of your choice. I'll call some of my friends over so it doesn't seem too personal. You know just more of a chance for us to get to know each other.” Both Tonya and Ronda agreed to the date whispering in each other's ear, as they jostled for shotgun. Then Tonya responds to him by saying, “Well I see you're not gonna let up about this date, but we have a slight problem. A date is meant for two, and sometimes four in a double date. So who number you gunning for tonight?” Ronda whispered shotgun before Tonya did so Darrin unknowingly opened the front passenger door for her first, and then the rear right rear door for Tonya. Still fishing for more information about the women Darrin responded saying, “Wow put me right on the spot huh?” Ronda said, “Well a good woman values a man that can make a wise decision. You know you only get one chance with a woman like me.” Tonya added her input saying, “You know what you're attracted to, and what type of woman you plan on building a relationship with by now. I'm just letting you know I'm not the type to be placed in one of your little black player books. That's all I'm saying.” Both Ronda and Tonya stare at Darrin while he's driving them back bringing their competitive revelry to an all new high. Darrin decides to stall by saying, “I'll give my answer when I have dropped you ladies off back on campus.” Both ladies nod their head and agree as the music from Darrin's car stereo overtakes the silence of conversation. Everyone starts grooving to *U Know What's Up* by Donnell Jones, as Darrin gets close to the entrance of the university. Not knowing where to go Darrin asked for directions to the ladies dormitory. Wanting to be dropped off at the entrance Ronda says, “That's OK we can walk from here.” Tonya agrees thinking it would be best if Darrin didn't know there exact place of residence. Before giving either of them a chance to demand a choice Darrin asked if he could holla at Ronda alone as the ladies were settled to depart. Tonya quite shocked that Darrin preferred Ronda over her said, “Wow really! OK if that's what you really want. It was nice meeting you Mr. Campbell.” Tonya quickly exits out the car and

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walks away. She waits for Ronda a few feet away from Darrin's car. Darrin finds his cell phone and gives his number to Ronda. Then Ronda immediately calls him back on her cell phone so he has her number as well. Darrin says, "Whenever you have time on any weekend please give me a call. I'd cherish the chance to create the moment you have envisioned. I don't wanna create static between you and your roomy though. Let her know she is still welcome to accompany us. I have a few other guy friends that would really be into her." Ronda replied, "Oh don't worry about her! Tonya got all kind of men pursuing her. That girl is a feminine mack. Now about this giving you a call thing. Why can't you give me a call?" Darrin answered saying, "I just want to make sure you really want to make this night happen, and it is not just a game to you. I'm not a man that demands a lot, but my time is important. If you call me and allow me to setup the date then I know it's something you really want to happen and you're not just going with something I'm pushing your way. I'll be the first to call after the first date from that point on. If you don't mind I would prefer it that way. It's kinda important to me." Ronda agrees and says, "Well I never thought about it in that way. Trust me though Darrin I am worth your time." Ronda says goodnight to Darrin. She grabs her grocery bag and exits the car. Before completely taking off Darrin calls out to Ronda asking, "Hey Ronda what's your last name?" Ronda replies, "Well Mr. Campbell my last name is Harper." Darrin says, "Well Ronda Harper goodnight to ya. Make sure you give me a call. Don't let these crab legs go bad on a brotha." Ronda waves goodbye, and trots over to Tonya with a triumphant smile on her face.

That was the first time either of them competed for just one man, and it came to be more than just a conquer over Tonya for Ronda. Around two weeks later Ronda and Darrin finally went on a date. Ronda didn't trust Darrin enough to go to his house on their first date. So instead they went out to Red Lobster. They slowly started to connect, and around a month after their first date Ronda and Darrin became a couple. Darrin would eventually be asked by Ronda why he chose her over Tonya when she knew Tonya was in the exact field of study that he was in. Darrin told Ronda that he found it very annoying to have a personal relationship with someone where he worked. Also that he thought many of the nurses in the medical field were sleazy. Many of the ones he worked with were all over the doctors and physicians that made six figures. He informed her of how quick they would sleep with them. Tonya was Ronda's best friend. Every once in a while Tonya would ask how things were going between them, and Ronda would tell her. Ronda would even inform

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Tonya about Darrin's advancements into medical school, and how close he was to his internship. This would make Tonya wonder about why Darrin chose Ronda over her until one day she blurted out. Tonya said to Ronda, "Girl I still don't know what he saw in you and not me." Ronda expressed how Darrin felt about nurses, or at least his prejudgments of them to Tonya. This made Tonya think about Darrin in a whole different way, and after Ronda told Darrin that Tonya was a feminine mack his meetings with Tonya reflected those predetermined notions. These false conceptions created a small boundary in connecting them as medical allies throughout their time of knowing each other. Nikki wouldn't know about their misconceptions until later on.

CHAPTER 3

A Cheater's Lies

Tonya was the oddball of her immediate friends. She was the only one in the medical field while Ronda, Nikki, and Keisha were in some kind of business or marketing program. Her imagination was very creative, and she often daydreamed about her life. She would vision how she liked things to be. It was her focus to acing her classes and getting medical certifications earlier than most nurses her age. Her hobbies besides studying her practices were learning about medical malpractice cases, and watching all her favorite medical TV series. One day her sophomore year Tonya's friends Nikki and Keisha planned to take her out for an all girls night at a nightclub. Ronda mostly spent her weekends with Darrin so it was up to her friends to get Tonya out to the club with them. Nikki and Keisha loved going out to the club. They were the girls every man wanted to step to, but when the ladies had a night out for just them no one could get any play. If Nikki was the life of the party then Keisha was the best dancer of the quartet. Keisha Washington is her full name. Born and raised from St. Louis, Missouri she majored in accounting wanting to be a financial accountant after graduating. Mostly going out to the club to flirt and enjoy the nightlife Nikki and Keisha would always wear something tight and form fitting on their desirable frames. Tonya called them the ebony fluff girls. Every man within their range that could attain a gaze would surely catch a stiff one. The casual outfits the two wore would be eye candy to most men, but on club nights they would exalt their complete sexiness. The ladies came by Tonya's room hours before planning to go out because they knew she would need to be talked into going out. Tonya in no way was shy or unappealing, but quite the opposite in most mens' eyes. She just felt out of place when comparing her dance abilities to theirs. Being sex teasers at the club both Nikki and Keisha were not strangers to grinding and shaking it up on the floor. Tonya was more of a move to the beat and keep her distance girl. That or a wall flower most nights when going out. Nikki came by in a red tube top and tight black leather pants. Her tube top was short enough to expose her well toned belly, and she wore a strapless bra to support her sizable boobs. More in a mingling mood she was wearing red pumps with a mid length heel. She loved to wear red because it brought radiance to her high yellow tint. Keisha was in the mood to dance the night away. Joining Nikki on a strapless apparel theme Keisha wore a purple Cassidy tube dress. The trim of the dress fell right below her knees. Her dress epitomized carnality squeezing her supple dark brown skin. By far Keisha had a butt that was the murmured envy of her friends, and her dress draped her body in a way to reflect it. Keisha wore some black sling-back pumps with an wedge

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heel meant for footwork. Both Keisha and Nikki had their hair done. Nikki did everyone's hair, and she had Keisha's shoulder length jet black hair straight down and curled in at the ends. Nikki's auburn hair was zig-zagged parted in the front, and bumped up in the back. Her hair was spiral curled at the ends as well. Nikki brought her hair supplies and hair crimps to style Tonya's hair. She felt if she styled Tonya's hair into something nice she might want to go out with them.

Keisha knocked on the door in a hip-hop beat giving Tonya a hint of who was at the door. Happy to see her friends Tonya invited them in and pulled up some chairs for them. Quickly noticing Nikki's hair equipment Tonya starts playing with her hair and says, "Yeah girl it's about time I do something with this mess. I was just about to see when you might have time to hook my hair up." Nikki replied, "Well you lucky because today is that day. I'm thinking you would look right crimped and laid?" Tonya said, "That sounds great for me. So what's the occasion of why we all looking splendid today? By the look of things it looks like yall going clubbing tonight." Keisha sees Tonya scope her up and down and says, "Well girl it's better than watching reruns of TV shows. Don't you get enough of this stuff as homework to drain your mind off it?" Tonya says, "Well well if it ain't little Ms. mathematician trying to tell me what I'm obsessed with. How about I stick with my drama shows, and you boggle your mind on fixing the accounting mistakes Enron made. Anyway who said I didn't want to go out with yall this time. But yall a little underdressed though. This is Chicago. The windy city!" Nikki put on her styling apron and replied, "Well we won't be standing on the wall all night like you so we'll be fine once we get in there." Taking a seat as Nikki started to comb and style a part into her hair Tonya says, "I'm not a wallflower. I just be checking the scene for them hotties. Yall will dance with anythang! I can't have no busted looking guy all up on this right here. And what kind of real man do you meet at the club anyway? Most of them drunk and just looking for some coochie." Nikki started to grease and style Tonya's hair and said, "Girl we know that! We just going out to have some fun. Ain't nothing wrong with flirting with some guys in a club. You ain't gonna find what you looking for just standing there. You gotta draw every man's attention in the joint to get what you looking for. Putting her two cents in the mix Keisha said, "Plus you never know when you gonna find them horse dick brothas on the floor!" Tonya and Nikki started laughing aloud, and Keisha replied, "Shit them playas see all this ass and rush the floor. Them brothas know if they ain't packing they better sit they ass on the side and watch. What yall laughing about? Ms. Keisha likes em BIG cuz I got a lot to handle. You

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know what they say. If it ain't heavy and on beat make him take a seat! If it ain't long and hung gotta leave him strung.” Paying close detail to Tonya's hair Nikki replied, “Girl you know you right! Only if they worthy will they get these digits. You know I like em 6 foot or taller. Yall can have the small fries.” Tonya asked, “So if you meet a guy who's taller than you, like 5 foot 10, and everything is on point, body, face, mind, and money. You telling me you won't give em the digits?” Nikki said, “Umm close but no deal. A girl gotta know what she likes. I love a man I can stare up to. It's such a turnoff to be with someone shorter or eye level to me. I just can't do it. Just imagine when I got my 5 inch heels on. It just won't look right.” Both Keisha and Tonya thought Nikki was way too picky about finding her ideal 6 foot dream. Neither of them made a debate to argue Nikki's stance, but they both verbally admitted she is wrong in thinking like that. Nikki began to style the back of Tonya's hair and asked her, “Ok so what kind of men are you attracted to?” Tonya said, “I'm not really picky, but I would prefer someone with a college education. Someone with a realistic plan in life that actually has the drive to fulfill it. And definitely a romantic guy. Someone who listens to what I tell them, and then responds to it without me being too expressive about it.” Keisha was not feeling either of these dreamy fantasies and said, “OK were freshman in college, and got all our lives to look for mister right. I think yall need to just live it up and consummate sex with a mix of men. Get a short one, get a tall one, and hell why not try a little bit of it all. Just well you know don't pick them all out the same terrain. Make sure they all swang'n and worth being a notch on the list. If men can do it why can't we? This is a new age now. It's ok for women to know about it, and not have to wonder. If a man loves you it doesn't matter. No matter who you are everybody got a past. That's just how I see it. That hopeless romantic crap ain't of true value right now. It's just gonna leave you hurt.” Tonya takes in everything Keisha vented out and replied, “So you don't think what Ronda and Darrin got is anything special? You honestly believe that they will breakup soon?” Keisha said, “I'm not wishing for it, but I think they will. This is her first big relationship while being in college. What's the chances of that working out? Although he is like 5 years older than her I don't think they have enough in common to stay together for more than three years.” Nikki disagreed saying, “I think they will. She already acting like him and stuff! Listening to the same music as him, eating the same kind of food he does, and all the time they spend together. That's that good love. It's like they are in their own world. When was the last time we all hung out, and had a girls night out with just the four of us?” Tonya replied, “Yeah you right. It has

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been a while since all four of us been out together. But I can't ever remember seeing her this happy before either. She lights up when she thinks about him.” Keisha feeling ousted replied, “Well I could be wrong. You know there is someone for everybody. Like tonight for instance none of us have anyone special like that. So we gonna go out and make it happen tonight. It is all about timing. We not ready for something deep like that right now. Maybe in time, but not right now. We'll have to find that person in our lives that's on the same level as us when we connect.”

Nikki was styling the last side of Tonya's hair when she said, “Girl you and your mannish qualities. To each her own I guess. I know one thing. We the hottest P.Y.Ts. on campus, our hair is laid, and the night is ours for the taking. Tonya do you have any idea what you gonna wear? Girl please stay with our strapless theme.” Tonya thought about her wardrobe along with Ronda's, and decided that her backless halter dress would be the perfect outfit for their night out. Tonya sparingly wore it because she didn't own the right backless bra for the outfit. It was a turquoise dress that came right above her knees, and the top of the dress tied around her neck. She had some black leather go-go boots that she planned to wear with it. They were 5 inch high heel boots with a very seductive luminance about them. Being nonchalant Tonya said, “Well I think I got this dress that might be a good look for tonight.” Bored with nothing to do Keisha asked, “Where is it? Let me see if it's right for tonight.” Tonya informed Keisha to look in the closet on her side of the room and look for the blueish-green dress hanging in the back of the closet towards the right. Keisha saw a blue-green halter dress, and pulled it out the closet. Looking at the dress playing analyzer Keisha said, “Girl this dress is perfect. I never seen you wear this before. What other kind of stuff you got up in here? I might just have to slip into this myself one day.” Tonya looking at Keisha sternly said, “Well you can ride up to the strip a get one just like it. I think this one is just a wee too small for ya. Especially in the hip and thigh region. You know how you be stretching people clothes out.” Keisha replied, “Now I ain't never borrowed a fit from you. How you gonna say something like that?” Nikki butted in and said, “Well she might have got that impression after I told her and Ronda about how you been stretching out my tights and stuff. You need to get your own tights to workout in. I use mine for relaxation. Yo big ass can't squeeze into everything girl!” Keisha said, “Oh so you been talking about me behind my back? I swear that only happened like twice.” Finishing the last bit of Tonya's hair Nikki replied, “Well we talked about this before when we were roommates so don't even take it there. I'm just saying you need to own up to it. I'm not

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your size, and I don't think Tonya is either. I'm mean you yourself always bragging about what you working with. We can't match all that chocolate thickness you got going on. Hey no harm no foul right girl?" Keisha proving thick-skinned to their remarks laughed and said, "Yep I got them non skinny girl genes. I get it from my mama." Tonya took Nikki's hand mirror and went into the bathroom to check out her hair. Viewing her hair smoothly laid down and crimped to the side of her head she was pleased. Keisha asked Nikki what club they were going to while Tonya was in the bathroom. Nikki knew that Keisha strictly wanted to dance, but she wanted Tonya to feel comfortable as well. Very audibly Nikki said, "I think we should hit up the Sky Bar first. Then once that club dies down we head over to the Copa Lounge before we call it a night." Both nightclubs were in the Lincoln Park area. The Sky Bar played mixed hip-hop and top 40 music. And the Copa Lounge played hip-hop and rock music. Tonya started to get dressed putting her dress and boots on. Both Nikki and Keisha took turns in the bathroom mirror making sure that everything was on point. By the time everyone was ready it was about 20 minutes before 11:00 p.m. Tonya's dress fit her body snugly. She tied the top of the dress very taut because she didn't wear a bra. The satin dress pressed out the imprint of her breast to where her nipples were debouched. Her go-go boots came nearly calf high exposing only her knees and very little leg. Knowing her nipples were showing Tonya grabbed her light leather jacket. The ladies left Tonya's dormitory and scampered over to Nikki's car remotely away. Nikki parked close to the university, but not on the college grounds since she became a commuter. Slightly chilled Nikki and Keisha arrived at the car a few steps before Tonya. Both Nikki and Keisha jackets were in the front seats as the ladies got inside the car. Checking out the crowd at the club the ladies circled around the entrance before finding the closest parking place. The club didn't have a huge parking lot, and the line to the first club was medial as the ladies arrived. Wanting to go in without their jackets Nikki and Keisha waited close to ten more minutes before getting in line. The ladies waited in line for about 8 more minutes before getting to the front of the line. Nikki, Keisha, and Tonya were only 20 years old and still unable to attend some 21 and over clubs like this one. But Nikki being a hometown girl knew three of the bouncers working at the club. On the weekends they would arrange things to where the ladies got in without a hassle when they worked the door. Nikki still being a pledge of Alpha Kappa Alpha knew most of the clubs where her sorority had connecting ties as well. Nikki greeted her friend working security vocally, and then embraced him with a hug.

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Excitingly the bouncer inspected the ladies and ushered the women into the club. The top-flight club was very appealing and spacious to its many inhabitants. Very rich in glow through disco balls and stage lights the ladies made their way to the packed dance floor. The majority of the crowd was mixed with an array of Caucasians, Asians, Latins, and blacks. More men started to rush the floor as the ladies started to mingle through it. Keisha became viewable from the upper floor, and many of the black men started to gaze in the ladies direction. The club separated the bar clearly away from the dance floor so it was easy to dance, drink, or conversate without distraction. The ladies grouped together near the rear wall of the dance floor and started grooving to the music. The dance music began to change into hip hop club music as more attention drew into the ladies direction. Around that time a trio of black guys approached the ladies on the dance floor. Making eye contact with the ladies they moved in closer to dance. Keisha stared right back at them and began a two-step to see who would dance with her. Nikki followed suit, but felt no attraction to any of the guys because they were not 6 feet. Tonya stayed in place and began to rock in rhythm as she placed her hands in the air. All three guys approached the women and started dancing. Keisha's partner began to match steps with her moving in closer to where he could mold his hands to her hips. Nikki placed her hands around her partner's shoulders facing him and continued the two-step with him without getting too close. And Tonya danced with her partner repeating a back and forth shuffle. The DJ mixed into a grinding hip hop song while they were dancing that changed the mood. Keisha got into position and placed her leg between her dance partner's legs and begun to pop and grind with him. Still on beat with the mix she felt the bulge of his penis against her inner thigh. Her dance partner moved his hands to her backside gaining more control in following Keisha's movements. Stepping to the beat Keisha stepped back as he stepped forward. Her dance partner thrust and held her as she began to pop and grind in a sexual rhythm. Nikki's dance partner began to move in closer, and Nikki turned around and began to pop her booty on him. He wrapped his hands around her hips and began to grind to her rhythm. Moving in a forth and back motion Nikki got her dance partner erected to where his penis was pressed firmly against her ass. He would grind and thrust on her as she popped back on him with her butt. Tonya didn't want to take it to the next level that Nikki and Keisha were dancing on. She kept her distance from her dance partner, and right after the DJ switched the song she went to get something to drink at the bar. Mixing into something more top 40 like both Nikki and Keisha

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stopped dancing with their partners as well. The guys chose to offer the ladies drinks and a chance to chat. Nikki didn't drink because she was the driver, but Keisha agreed to the drink. Meeting at the bar Keisha and her dance partner saw Tonya drinking a California Car Bomb. Tonya's dance partner was still on the dance floor mingling with other ladies. Nikki and her dance partner started chatting on the side of the dance floor. Nikki was able to find out he was a media arts major at the Illinois Institute of Arts. Never knowing when she might need a connection in that field Nikki took his number when he asked for hers. Keisha introduced herself to her dance partner and started to drink the dry martini he got for her. He downed an incredible hulk while informing her that he and his friends all attended the Illinois Institute of Arts. Not looking for any romantic connection, but just flirting with him, she drank the rest of her drink. Licking her tongue around the tooth picked olive while staring at him she asked, "Are you ready for round two?" He nodded his head in agreement, and followed her lead to the dance floor. Nikki came over to the bar where Tonya was and asked, "Hey girl how's everything going? So you weren't feeling that guy either? I admit mine was a cutey, but you know my type. They all were too short for me." Tonya replied, "Well for two songs he was cool until he tried to get his grind on. I'm not gonna do that without knowing a little more about him." Understanding Tonya's mind-set Nikki knew that this club wasn't the right fit for her. Nikki replied, "Well I know what you're talking about. I'm sure the next club is more your style. Girl it don't even got a dance floor, but it stay packed on the weekends. You'll find what you looking for there. It's better we came here first so Keisha can do her thang. In about an hour she'll be light headed and wore out from all that paso doble. Let's get out here and turn some more heads girl." Feeling in a graceful mood Tonya and Nikki made their way back to the dance floor. They viewed Keisha was still dancing with her new friend as they got deeper into the crowd. By this time she was backing it up on him. Keisha loved to get a guy trapped against the wall when she was working on him. She could push him off balance with her pulsating booty and make him look befuddled. For Keisha the club was foreplay in any type of relationship she encountered. She got to know what her lover was working with and how attractive he found her. She was able to find out if he had rhythm in bed by how majestic his dance patterns were. And she flirted not only with her body, but with whispered words and taunts. She thought this determined how long he could keep it up when having sex. Keisha loved it when a man grabbed her ass when grinding with her. Even though she wanted to work every man she danced with to her it was more attractive for a

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man to take control and prove he knows what he's doing. Tonight was a typical club night out for Keisha. She would find a suitable dance partner within her standards and groove with them for the majority of the night. Just to make sure he wasn't crazy or an extreme jealous type she would also routinely break their link to flirt with other men. Most nights all she did was flirt. If and when she decided to give a man her number then it could be assured that Keisha wanted more than just a few hours in the dance hall. Comparing Keisha's sexual appetite to her friends would make her seem like a whore. But in all truth Keisha was no more promiscuous than the average college girl her age. She very much respected herself, and no man she had a relationship with ever felt a reason to treat her less than the strong independent woman she was. Her hormones just may have been a little more dramatic than her friends. Tonya, Nikki, and Ronda all believed in choosing the right man for whatever their lifestyle was at that time. They craved men that could make love to their mind before giving a man access to their body.

Nikki and Tonya were headed to where Keisha was. By the time they got there Keisha had already begun thrusting her dance friend into the wall with her butt. Getting all the attention she desired Keisha saw her girlfriends and rejoined with them on the dance floor. The ladies danced together, but did not invade each other's space. Mainly they danced to look hot and sexy for the most attention in the club. Different guys approached them and attempted to dance with them, but every time a guy didn't get the point the ladies kept them at bay by circling into each other. Celebrating the rest of the night they all truly felt happy to be hanging out together. It was their self proclaimed ladies night. The ladies set out to chill at the next planned club around 12:45 a.m. after partying in the first club for a bit. Making their way off the dance floor and to the front exit the women were stopped by some more guys. It was a group of six sports players. They looked like football players because they were average height and very husky. The cutest one stepped at Nikki and asked if he could buy her a drink. His pickup line was weak, but he was actually fine enough to get away with it. Both Keisha and Tonya thought he was on point, but they just kept walking because they knew what Nikki was about say. Sure enough he didn't compare to Nikki's 6 foot dream, and the ladies made their way out of the club. The next club was less than 10 minutes away. It also had very limited parking space. Nikki loved the fact weekends had free parking on the streets where the meters were. She normally never parked on metered streets unless there was

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something very important she had to take care of. Parking close as she could to the next club the ladies got out of the car and headed into the club. The club was more of a social party. There was no entrance fee, and mostly the people that came here only wanted to drink and hang out. It was just enough room to dance, but there was no dance floor. The main attraction of this club was the big screen TVs, the DJs, and the drinks. The DJ was playing some unfamiliar rock music as the ladies walked up to the bar. The ladies took a seat at the bar and began to order drinks. Both Keisha and Tonya tried on a strawberry margarita. Keisha requested a lemon slice in hers while Tonya preferred the strawberry. Nikki began to scope out the club looking for anyone her type. There were a few guys that matched her caliber, but none to stir her girlfriends attention to. One of her business colleagues came into view as she scanned through the club. Eying her as well he came over to greet both Nikki and Keisha. Nikki saw him advancing their way and informed the ladies. Both Nikki and Keisha unknowingly shared a few classes with him. Keisha was in an accounting class with him that year, and Nikki was in a math class with him. Nikki felt he might be sweet on her because she found him staring at her several times in class. He would always try and group with her for studying sessions although he really didn't need to. He wasn't Nikki's type, but even she found him to be cute for being under 6 foot. He was around 5 foot 10 inches with a sculptured 215 pound build. A brown skin complexion with a light fade and trimmed goatee. His voice held bass generally, but it became rich in baritone when he spit game. Speaking in a deep voice he said hello to Nikki and then Keisha. He noticed Tonya instantly, but played off his fancy to her. Just staring at her for a few seconds he grabbed his chin and asked, "Yall goin introduce me to ya friend here?" Nikki felt surprised not realizing Keisha knew him responded saying, "Shannon this is our friend Tonya. Tonya this is Shannon." Both Nikki and Keisha looked at each other in a informative way gesturing the question how did they know him? Shannon got a little closer to Tonya as Nikki and Keisha got together and started whispering about stuff. Being very observant of her actions Shannon asked Tonya, "So how's your strawberry margarita? Looks like a nice drink." Noticing his corona in his left hand Tonya replied, "Its great just the way I like it. I'm sure it's better than that corona you holding." Shannon replied, "Well I like my patron in a shot glass, but it's a little late to be drinking that. I'm rolling solo tonight, and I wanna make it home in one piece. So are you a business major or minor like your friends? I never seen you around campus before?" Shannon took the seat next to Tonya that Nikki occupied as Tonya replied,

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“Actually I'm in the field of nursing. I'm going for APN. What is your business major?” Shannon answered, “I'm going for marketing pursuing a marketing management position. So do you go out a lot? You know to clubs and stuff? I have to say you're quite breathtaking if I may say so”

Hearing Shannon spit game at Tonya made Keisha butt in. Then Keisha said, “Ok this our ladies night out. We can't have you disturbing this vibe we got going on without a good reason. I'm sure you checked out how fly we all look tonight. So goin and tell us who got the best outfit on.”

Shannon asked them, “Ok can yall take criticism well?” Feeling confident Keisha replied, “We all deserve some praise tonight, but say what's on your mind.” Being humorous to Keisha's comments Shannon made a boastful guffaw and said, “Good because it ain't you!” Keisha replied, “See why you gotta make a joke about everything!” Nikki feeling she could get the answer out of him seductively asked, “Ok now for real Shannon tell us who are you more attracted to tonight? It's something we all would like to know, and I personally want to know what turns you on.” Shannon replied, “Ok with all jokes aside all you ladies are fine tonight. If there were three of me then I'd be trying to get with each of you tonight.” Feeling the conversation turn into a competition Tonya replied, “Ok say it's you and two of your homeboys that have met up with us tonight. With no holds barred who would you personally step to. Keep in mind that you can only holla at one of us, and you automatically lose the chance to have anything with either of the other girls but friendship. Who would be your choice?” Shannon replied, “Ok so Keisha wants me to judge on appearance. Nikki wants me to judge on attraction. And you want me to judge on chemistry. First off Tonya has her jacket on so I can't get a full analysis of all your outfits. Secondly to be honest I have a thing for light-skinned women so that makes me bias. And finally I hardly know anything about none of yall.” Tonya took off her jacket and laid it over her the bar-stool. She folded her arms over her chest before turning around to face Shannon to hide her exposure. Keisha crossed her legs and popped her butt out to persuade him otherwise. And with winning confidence Nikki said, “Well with all that said who is your choice?” Shannon replied, “I'm so into unpredictability. Of the three traits mentioned without chemistry nothing can happen. I have no knowledge about the medical field, and I do kinda got a thing about a woman in uniform. Whether being just a what if situation or this current moment at hand. I would like the chance to get to know you on a personal level Ms. Tonya. Assuming you cool with that I'd like to get your number and give you a ring sometime.” At this time Shannon focused all his attention on Tonya while Nikki and Keisha

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gave them a little space. Nikki pointed out some 6 foot guys she saw earlier on the other side of the bar. Shannon brought out his blackberry and asked for Tonya's last name as her girls went to mingle with the other guys. Tonya reached for her cell and said, "Well my last name is Harris. What's yours?" Shannon said, "My last name is Davis." Exchanging numbers with each other the two began to talk for a hour about matters that enriched their friendship to another level. Nikki informed Tonya to wrap it up as it was beginning to run past 2:00 a.m. Shannon walked the women to Nikki's car and told Tonya he would call her later so they could go out together.

CHAPTER 4