

I rush into the bathroom, sopping wet and dirty with the stench of the marsh. *Why couldn't I have overturned the kayak in anyone else's back yard? Of course, the glass fortress on the point would turn out to be his. Carter Murray is a total jerk.* I writhe out of my suctioned clothes and drop them to the floor. I turn around, place both hands on the sink counter, and look directly in the mirror. *Just clean up, borrow a T-shirt and some boxers and get the hell out of here. If he says anything stupid, just ignore him.* I turn around to face the shower and look for a towel, but there aren't any. *Shit. Who doesn't keep towels in their bathroom?* I notice an oxford shirt hanging from a hook on the door. Snatching it, I pull it on, buttoning it half way down. I crack the door and poke my head out. "Carter?"

He doesn't reply. *Good, he's gone back outside.* I skulk across the marble floor, approaching what looks like a closet door. I hear the sliding glass door open in back of me. I look down at my bare thighs. I can feel the ocean breeze nip me from behind. *Oh God!* I scurry toward the front door. *Bad idea!* I slide into a right face and spot a gigantic leather recliner. I dash for cover. I make it there just in time.

"Kenna? I thought you were... Hey, is that my shirt?" He moves toward the recliner, rounding it to get a better look.

"No. It's on me. Not you." I scamper around to the other side of the throne, hiding myself. As he gets closer, I slip hastily into the recliner seat, hoping that will solve my exposure problem. Sitting up straight, a serious look on my face, I tug the shirt down. He rounds the recliner and stands directly in front of me. He smiles as if he's just acquired a new possession.

"That *is* my shirt. And now you're sitting in *my* chair."

I smile coyly. *Typical guy.* "Well, I can't find one of *your* towels."

"That's because they're in *my* closet." He walks to a glass wall, slides it open, and returns with a neatly folded, fluffy white towel, holding it out to me. *Like I would have ever found it in there.*

I grasp it with both hands. He places a hand on top of mine. A tingling sensation rushes through me. I'm caught off guard. *There shouldn't be any tingles.* But I don't flinch. At least, I don't think I do. Without moving my hand, I look up and reply. "Thank you." Hoping the tingles go away, I concentrate on his smug smile. But it just coaxes a grin. I look away. A flash of heat stings my face.

"Maybe now you can get your dirty butt off my recliner?"

"It's not as dirty as your mouth," I snap, wrapping the towel around my waist. I stand, shoot him a glare, and trot back to the bathroom, closing the door behind me.

Warm water streams from the shower, cleansing my skin and washing the blades of river grass from my hair. Steam saturates the entire bathroom. I dry off and wrap the towel around myself. I step from the stall and move to the sink counter, staring at myself in the clouded mirror.

From behind, I feel a tug on the towel. Surprised, I look into the fogged mirror and see Carter's face.

"Hey, what are...?" I feel another tug at the towel. "That's my towel."

Through the condensation on the silver glass, I make out a fuzzy smirk. "No, it's not. *Everything* in this house is mine." With a flick of his wrist, I'm suddenly facing him. His hand grazes my cheek and, before I can realize what's happening, his lips lock into mine. My eyes close at contact. Warmth cascades down my spine. My mouth instinctively opens to receive him; his tongue passionately caresses mine. His kiss is commanding, but not rough. My body melts into its power. His arm bends around my waist and pulls me into him. A few steps sideways, and I'm no longer leaning against the sink. I'm flush with the bathroom wall. The coolness shocks my bare shoulders, but feels exhilarating against the heat that rages through my skin. His body presses into mine as his hands move from my face to my shoulders. His touch sizzles and I let go, my head tilts backward, and I arch toward him. I feel his hands glide over me, and the towel falls to the floor. His mouth is on my breast. I'm suddenly wet again, not just from the perspiration that beads on my skin. His tongue finds my belly, tracing a glorious line down. My lips part. Then my mouth opens and I let out a delighted whimper. My hand grasps his hair and tugs slightly as his tongue dances between my lips. In a moment, I lose all control, surrendering to a roaring wave.

Then, he stands and kisses me. I taste myself in him. It's salty and spicy, and my tongue goes wild. I spin him around, trying to get the upper hand. But as soon as I'm in control, he robs it back from me. He pushes me through the bathroom doorway and into the bedroom.