

Tasha Gordon

What is wrong with me? How am I supposed to know Aaron Kaowski, the most popular boy in Tolier High School smiled at me. The problem isn't that he is popular, because I am popular too. He is white. Of course that shouldn't matter but it does. All I can keep thinking is Aaron smiles and my heart betrays me and starts to flip. Now you know a girl like me ain't got no business lookin at a white boy. My girls would trip, not to mention Damon probably try to kick his ass and mine. What can I say Tav Matthews is definitely the wrong color to be even thinking about Aaron Kaowski.

“Tav, girl do you hear me”, said Bee my best friend ever since she tried to bank me at the T (that's the park where ever one hangs out...except Aaron's people) few years back. I was so scared that day that I closed my eyes tightly and just began to wield on her. Everyone said I dropped her in the first punch so I was just swing at air the rest of the time. The strange thing about it is the very next day Bee walked up to me and said, “Girl I have much respect for you.” That was it we've been best friends ever since.

“Well girl, what ya goin do,” asked an irritated Bee.

Looking across the school yard Tav answered “What about ?”

“About Damon, girl!”

“Nothin it is over,” I said trying to act like I didn't care that Damon cheated on me with Tasha Gordon. Truth be told I cared. I didn't care about Damon, but because Tasha Gordon is always trying to play me. Holding her Baby Phat purse on her red and yellow b angled arm Bee looked at me like I lost my mind.

“Girl, we always say guys come a dime a dozen, but girl this is Damon.

Bee was right Damon Johnson wasn't the kind of brother that you just break up with. You certainly try to hold out and let him break up with you. And with that you hope he never will. First, the brother is

fine, not the kind of fine that you see in the mall. Okay, he is fine, get his number, and forget about him. Nah, Damon you can't wait to call. He never blends in the crowd. Damon licks his lips and you forget what he said. Pray he will kiss you. That is just his physical side. Besides been tall and oh so sexy chocolate. He always rocks the latest clothes, he is smart. He blows my mind. I mean the brother could work at NASA. I must admit I like a smart guy. It's a good look. I find myself attracted to them. I guess that is why I've been noticing Aaron lately, and paying less attention to Damon.

Besides Damon has been doing some real dumb stuff lately. Like he has been hanging with Terrance. Everyone knows Terrance sells drugs. Now this mess with Tasha takes the cake.

"Bee, I'm through with him." I said as I watched Aaron talking to the perky cheerleader Melanie.

Bee sipping on her soda, "Alright."

She looked over here again. I am not mistaken she is looking at me. Tav Matthews is looking at me, I can't believe it. She has never noticed me before, except when we sit beside each other in Homeroom. And she only says hello. She always smells good, some fruity fragrance. I need to stop she is Damon Johnson's girl, and he is a good enough guy. He seems to really love her. They make a cool couple.

"So Aaron wanna hang out tonight?" Melanie said

"Uh, hmm sure," Aaron replied absent mindedly as Tav and her friend walks by.

"Tav's holding up well," Melaine said as she followed Aaron's line of vision. Aaron looking away from Tav and looks at Melanie. "What do you mean?"

"Nothing tragic just that Damon cheated on her," Melaine smirks. "with Tasha Gordon.

As beautiful as Melaine is she could still be a vicious girl, that loves the downfall of anyone, thought Aaron. And Tasha Gordon has terrorized Tav for so long. Girls are so cruel at times.

"Did they break up?"

“Who?”

Rolling his eyes Aaron sighs, “ Tav and Damon.”

Melaine laughs, “I thought you didn't like gossip, Aaron.”

Please, please let them have broken up. I know it is mean but...What am I talking about Aaron what if they do break up. What does that have to do with you? Because I am going to take my chance, Aaron thought.

Aaron cocks his head and looks at Melaine. Melaine stops laughing.

Melaine's brow wrinkles, “I am not sure if they broke up or not.”

Melaine shrugs her petite shoulders and looks across the yard at Tav's group.

Gosh why can't I like her . Melaine is exactly what a guy like me is suppose to like and want. From her soft silky brown hair, beautiful blue eyes, and an awesome body. That is not certainly all she is she is one of the most popular girls in the school, comes from a well established family. Exactly what my family would approve of. All of this and she wants me. Heck she has liked me ever since freshman year, and she makes it clear everyday. The problem is ever since freshman year when this cocoa brown girl dressed in a mini skirt, a tight yellow t-shirt dropped her books in front of my locker. All I ever wanted was Tav Matthews, and there is no denying it. So here is my chance if they are broken up. I'm going for it. The homeroom bell rings and Aaron is off to find out if Tav is free.

“You alright, Aaron, “ Melanie called after him.

“Yeah, I gotta go.”

The homeroom bell rings again as Tav slips into a chair next to Aaron. Tav and Aaron glance at each

other and look away.

“Psst, Tav,” Damon sitting behind her leans up and whispers.

“We need to talk.”

The classroom door opens and Tasha Gordon, a pretty girl with short hair, tight fitting jeans walks in the room sucking on a lollipop. She smiles at Tav, and winks at Aaron.

“Hi, Tav,” she says.

“Hey, Damon I sure had a fun time...”

“Shut up, Tasha.” Damon snapped. “You know I was drunk.”

“Enough Damon. Sit down Tasha.” said the teacher

Tasha shrugged and sat down next to Damon.

I can't believe this, Tasha Gordon has the nerve to speak to me. The whole school knows that Tasha played me. And dumb Damon let her and then has the nerve to want to talk. Everyone knows how Tasha has hated me. I don't even know exactly know why. It was probably about some guy. With Tasha is is always about a guy. When we were in the 8th grade we were some sort of friends. We lived two houses down from each other. We actually did some hanging out, nothing big. On Saturdays I would ride the bus to the Tolier's Mall. Tasha would sometimes be on the bus. So when we arrived at the mall we kinda hung out. I don't know what happen freshmen year it all went south with me and Tasha. I didn't care why because I just knew we were different. Tasha wants money, guys who have money, and guys to give her money. Which results in some type of drug dealer. I just wasn't into that so I never cared if she liked me or not. Tasha on the other hand she cared, and she cares a whole lot. She went out of her way to let me know she didn't like me. At Trolier High's ring dance last year, I had

on the flyest dress it was white silk, I know I was looking good. Damon's mouth dropped open.

“Wow, boo you look beautiful.” Damon had said.

Damon and I walked in the Milton's Hotel ballroom it was like everyone from Trolier High was staring at us. Even Aaron. Tav glanced at Aaron. Aaron stared at me that night. When I was slow dancing with Damon watched us. I didn't think nothing of it. I really didn't have a chance to think anything of it because after Damon was walking off the dance floor. Tasha kindly poured punch down the front of my dress. Of course she pretended she bumped into me. I saw straight through that act, I wanted to knock her out, but my mama made a comment that night that gave me pause. She said, “Tav, baby you not only look like a lady. You are one, remember that.”

It was like she knew something like that was going to happen.

“Psst, Tav,” Damon said. “Can we talk after class?”

Tav glanced over at Aaron and blue eyes met brown. Tav looked away.

“Nay, I don't have anything...”

“Yeah, we do.” Damon said a little too loud.

“Damon, is there a problem?” the teacher asked.

Damon sat back in his chair, glances at a smiling Tasha.

“Okay, everyone can break up in groups of two for study.” the teacher continue.

Damon stood up and looked down at me. He is so fine, but fine isn't enough anymore. We are moving in different directions. We've been together ever since freshman year, we are seniors now. I am not sure what happen, but I am not feelin him anymore. This thing with Tasha has made it easier for me to see. “Tav, come on,” Damon says as he extends his hand to her.

I looked at Damon, and if I had any doubts before right then I knew it was over. Shaking my head, “Aaron you want to partner?” I heard myself ask. I closed my eyes, as I heard the gasps of my classmates. That is the problem with popularity everyone wants to know your business. Damon walked out the classroom, and the sad thing about it I was glad. I was glad it was over. I felt a calm state come over me. I took a deep breath. My God I can breath. I really didn't think being with Damon was all that stifling, but come to think of it. It wasn't me. I'll always love Damon, but who I am with him isn't the real me. I looked over at Aaron and he smiled. I have a feeling I am about to find out who I truly am.

“That was dumb, Tav.” Tasha lean over her desk and laughed.” Don't worry I'll take care of him.”

“Really, you do that,” I responded.

“Yeah, I will...”

“Shut up Tasha.” Aaron interrupted. “You know he doesn't want you.”

“Quiet, everyone should be studying.” the teacher responded.

Why would I say that I don't care if Tav and Damon being together, thought Aaron. I do care. I don't want them together. I don't want Tav hurt or for that matter Damon. He is a good guy.

Aaron cocking his head to the side smiles.

“Your going to be alright, you know.” Aaron said.

“Yeah, I have the feeling that I will be, thanks.”

“Still wanna be partners?” he asked

I nodded. God those blue eyes are so intense. It is like he is looking into my very soul, and I can't hide. And his smile is so genuine. What am I doing? I can't like him, it isn't right and besides he is probably just being nice. His parents would probably die he brought a black girl home. Not to mention

my daddy would have a fit.

“What did you say?” I asked.

“I said I am not sure what to study since you have highest GPA in the whole class.”

I laughed. “You coming in second, huh.”

Aaron looked around the room at everyone in their own conversation. It seem like he was trying to decide what to say. This whole thing is weird, but nevertheless we are here.

“Tell me about yourself?” I blurted out.

She wants to know about me. I wonder what she would think if I told her I liked her since freshmen year.

“What do you want to know?”

Smiling Tav said, “ I assume you are going to school. Ivy League.”

Aaron nodded. “Touche, what an assumption.”

I shrugged. All the rich white kids from Trolier High went to some Ivy League school. Aaron fit the bill, he was rich, white, rich.

“Wha...What did you say?” I asked.

“The bell rang.” Aaron said as he got up. “I'll see you in French class.

I nodded. He stood there and looked at me for a minute. I was like what do I have something on my face and then it happen.

“Do you wanna hang out Friday night.” he asked.

I didn't know what to say. I probably should just say no. I just broke up with Damon, and seeing Aaron wasn't right. Well at least that is what my head is telling or is it. Here is Aaron looking at me as

if he knew my torment.

“I am not sure myself you know.” he said softly.

Putting his hands on my desk, he leans close to me. He is too close. Looking around I stood up quickly. I shouldn't of done that, he is too close.

“Let's just take it slow.” he whispered.

No. My stupid heart wasn't thinking about going slow. My heart was flipping in my chest. He smells so good, and he stepped closer.

“Say yes.” he whispered.

I nodded. He smiled a crook smile and left.

Oh, my God.

She smells so good, Aaron thought as he walked down the hallway. What was thinking to ask her out so soon. I was desperate. It came out of my mouth, and then I thought she was going to say no. So I pursued her like a wild cat after a prey. Smiling Aaron walked in his Chemistry class. I want Tav Matthews that is all that matters.

The rest of the week went by so fast. Aaron and I talked in homeroom and a little in French class. Other than that we seemed to go about our lives pretty much as usual. Except we both had Friday night in the back of minds. I wasn't completely preoccupied with Aaron and our date. I did notice that Damon hadn't been to school all week and that bothered me.

“You know that Damon been hanging out at the T with Terrance all week.” Bee said Friday at lunch.

“Really.” was all I could say I felt guilty a little, but I wasn't the cheater. Why do I fee guilty? Should I feel guilty, am I doing something wrong.

“Dang, girl you are really cold.” Bee said as she ate a cookie.

I am not cold. I have every right to go out with Aaron so I shouldn't feel guilty. A little nervous, not sure what to wear, but not guilty. Any other time I would talk to Bee about all of this, but I just have this feeling I should keep this to myself. It is not like I am ashamed or doing something wrong. It is just I don't know how she would react. Bee doesn't have one friend of a different race. She did say she had not one thing in common with flighty girls like Melanie. She needed people just like her. Not me, I always tried to be friends with all different types of people. I guess that is why I always participated in school functions. Every one knows me. Since I belong to five different unique clubs the glee club, the technology club, clubs that had a diverse set of people that I can learn from. Bee and my other girls always joked me about my clubs. "Girl, I don't know how you can do it being around those boogie people." they would say. So telling Bee about Aaron or much less our date tonight wouldn't be the thing.

"So Aaron we on tonight?" Melanie said as she sat her tray down beside Aaron's. I forgot I was to hang out with Melaine. I don't know why she continues to keep asking me. I seem to disappoint her because it never goes any further than hanging out. Never a hug, a kiss or even holding hands. I never pursue her, she always does the pursuing. Have I lead her on?

"Mel, I am sorry but something came up." I heard myself say. Hopefully she will leave it at that, I hate to lie. Why lie? Because I'll hurt her feelings I told myself, but I knew it was something else. A something else I'm not sure I wanted to face. All I knew for sure is I can't wait until tonight.

"Oh," Melaine said.

"A family thing," Aaron said as he shrugged his shoulders.

Melaine smiled and nodded.

"Next weekend my family is taking me to Princeton for a campus visit." she said. "You should come this will be a good time to meet the Dean."

It is funny how Melaine's family and even mine go through the formalities of being politically correct. It is ridiculous we both have known the Dean since we were infants it would seem. But we still pretend as if we will not be accepted into Princeton. Princeton, Princeton that is all I've ever heard ring through the walls of the Kaowski house. Never son we love you and whatever you do or where ever you go we will be proud. No I am expected to attend Princeton, become a lawyer then a judge like my dear daddy, and marry a princess like Melaine. Have two point three kids including a dog, and live in a monstrosity of a house on top of a hill. What is so sad about it is that I will not disappoint them, I never have. I guess that is why I continue to "hang out" with Melaine. So when Melaine suggested I go to Princeton to meet the Dean all I did was nod like a good puppy dog. It seemed that the wind picked up in that moment because as soon as I nodded Tav and her friends came around the corner. She was dressed in shorts, and a pink tank top, sunglasses perched on top of her head, and pristine white sneakers. I couldn't help but not to look her up and down she looked good. And she knew it.

"Hello." she said as she walked by.

No one noticed her smile or her sparkle in her eyes as she looked at me. I did.

"Melanie, I am not sure I'll be attending Princeton," I said as I watched Tav sit down at a table nearby.

"I'm keeping my options open.

I wore a navy halter top, dark blue jeans, and silver sparkling sandals. I know I looked good. Earlier in French class Aaron told me he will pick me up at 7:30 pm. At first I didn't want him to pick me up. I told him I meet him at the Trolier Mall. He looked at me, but thank God the teacher started class.

When class was over, he leaned over and his deep mellow voice whispered, "I'll be picking you up at 7:30, Tav." What could I say, with that demand I didn't want to argue. All I wanted to do is smile.

I was looking at myself for the fourteenth time when the doorbell rang.

"I'm here to pick up, Tav, Ms. Matthews," I heard Aaron say.

I could just imagine my mother's face. A boy other than Damon picking her baby up, and a white boy at that, I know my mama's waiting up tonight. It wouldn't surprise me if she said I couldn't go. I ran downstairs.

“Oh, Tav I didn't know you had a date.” mom said as she swung around to face me. Her back to Aaron her eyes was so big. I already know what that message was, you got a lot of explaining to do, Tav Matthews. And you better be glad your daddy isn't here, and by the way what happen to Damon. Yes, I could read my mother's message in one quick look.

“Yes, mama I didn't get a chance to tell you that I was going on date with Aaron.” I said as I went to stand by Aaron. I was trying to give him support just in case he looked nervous, but when I looked up at him. He was so calm, but he looked agitated. What is he so upset about?

“Ms. Matthews I am sorry that Tav didn't tell you about our date. That was rude of her.” Aaron said.

Who does he think he is?

“Tav, knows better than to assume she is going out.” said my mother.

“You know what mama your right, I should of told you. Since I didn't I will stay home.

Yeah, playa get to step in. I ain't feelin ya. Get my message bro. I thought as I folded my arms across my chest. Aaron just smiled.

“Ms. Matthews could we at least go get something to eat and maybe hang out here.? Aaron asked.

Nay, my mama ain't goin for that you cocky punk.

“No, that will not be necessary you two can go on with your plans,” I heard my mother say.

“Mama...”

My mother held up her hand.

“Before you go hold on.” she said as she ran out of the room.

“What game are you playing at, Tav?”

Game.

“What game are you playing at, acting like you my man or somethin.” I said.

Aaron lean up against the doorway. He looked real sexy. Dark blue jeans, a black American Eagle t-shirt, and flip flops, definitely a white boy look. He still looked good. I looked up into his blue eyes, and he was smiling. He knew I liked what I see, punk.

“I am not going out with you.”

Grinning, Aaron walked closer, I back up. I can't stand it when he is that close.

“Yeah, we are going on this date.”

That is all he said. I didn't say anything either. I just stood there. I wish my mother would come back.

Silence. What is she doing? Please please don't embrass me, mom is all I could think of. Embrass me, heck I've been doing a good job of that myself.

“What's wrong, Tav?” Aaron laughed. “Nervous.”

She doesn't need to know that I am nervous too. I am little peeved at the fact she didn't bother to tell her mother about this date. Is she ashamed. I shouldn't be mad at her, I didn't tell my parents either. Am I ashamed? Heck, no look at her. Oh, we are definitely going out or staying in or something. Either way I am spending some time with her.

“You need a necklace with your outfit.” Tav's mom said as she came out the room, turn Tav around and placed the necklace around her neck.

I could feel mama's cool fingers close the clasp on the necklace. She stood back and smiled.

“Now you are ready.” Mama said as she took my hand. “Let me walk you both to the door.”

Aaron turn and walked before us. Mama was acting strange. Can't she tell I made a mistake and now don't want to go.

“Mama, I changed my mind I don't want to go.” I whispered.

“Go and have fun.” she said as she held my hand a little tighter. When we reached the door she pressed into my hand something. I didn't dare look down for I knew my mother and she didn't want Aaron to know what she gave me. So I stuck my hand in my purse to check for my keys, there was a paper wrapped around money. Leave it to mama to say go, if he acts stupid dismiss him all with a taxi number and money. When my mama went out with guys, her sisters would slip each other cash and a taxi number before each date. When I was 12, I told my mama it wasn't fair that no one slipped me a number or money. That is their way of taking care of each other. I looked at my mama she smiled.

“Have a good time.”

“Thank you. Ms Matthews, I'll have her back by 11pm.”

“11 pm,” I said.

Mama cocked her head to the side and said.

“I'm Ms. Jones. Tav carries her daddy's name.” Mama said.

Aaron nodded.

Mama watched Aaron and I walk to his car. It was obvious it was his car it fit him rich, sleek porsche and besides no one in my neighborhood drove a porsche. I almost laughed who drives a porsche. Rich white people do.

What was she thinking? Probably about my car. Who drives a car like this rich white people do? Yeah,

that is what she is thinking by the smirk on her face. She isn't impressed. Good I don't want her too. Her mother was surprised about her dating me, but not put off that is a good sign. It is way to quite. I know she isn't still mad.

“What are you thinking?”

Tav laughs, “Nothing , where are we going?”

“I thought we could eat first.”

She didn't say anything. She is determine to ruin this date. Why?

“Where?”she asked.

Aaron slowed the car down at the end of her block.

“ A place called MacDonalds, have you heard of it.”

Tav looked at him to see if he was joking. He wasn't joking.

“Are you serious?”

Aaron nodded.

I know he isn't going to take me to some MacDonalds. See I should of insisted not to go on this date. Cheap punk. What was I thinking that he was better than that. He probably thinks because I am black he is going to get some. I can't believe this. I outta whoop his lily white ass or find someone to do it.

Balling up her fist, Tav's small hand punched Aaron in the arm.

“Ouch, what did you do that for? “ Aaron severed the car.

“Take me home!”

“What is wrong with you?” Aaron said as he rub his arm. “You could of caused an accident.

“Take me home, now.”

Okay I admit this night wasn't at all what I anticipated. Aaron thought. I mean everything I say and do seems to offend her. I should take her home, she obviously doesn't want this to happen.

Pulling the car to the side of the road, Aaron cuts off the car and leans his head back on the leather seat.

So he's not taking me home. Fine, I'll walk. Tav reaches for the door. Click goes the lock to the car door.

“What are you doing? Open the door,” I tried to say calmly.

Why is she so scared? What does she think I am going to do? Who does she think I am?

Aaron turned to face her.

“Tav, what is going on?”

“You –you can't hold me against my will,” Tav said.”Unlock the door.”

Aaron leans his back against the leather seat and closes his eyes.

“You know I liked you since freshman year.” he sighed.

I just looked at him.

“Every since freshman year. I liked you from afar,” Aaron said. “ Don't you know how important this date is to me?”

Again I didn't know what to say. So I said nothing. I should of said something, but what can you say.

That you liked him for just as long, but you didn't realize it. Or maybe I should say I am afraid of liking you, Aaron. We are from different worlds. Aaron rolled his head towards me and his blue eyes bore into me. It made feel uncomfortable, but I didn't want him to stop looking at me. His stare felt intense, hot as if I was going to melt. I want to melt. His hand gently touched my cheek. Kind of like those movies where the guy touches the girl's cheek. Aaron's touch was romantic for a split second, just like the movies and then it turned real...it was hot. “I didn't...” was all I got to say before Aaron

pulled me into his arms and kissed me. I've never been kissed like this, Damon, of course was a good, even an excellent kisser. But this was something different, Aaron's lips gently pulled me into some sort of tidal wave. Wave after wave washed over me. I didn't want it to stop. His strong arms pulled me across his chest and I was oblivious.

I knew it, Tav is special. Kissing her only confirmed it. All these years I wanted to know her like this. It is strange but I already know that I love her. It is fast, but I know it. I want her in my life, why didn't it happen sooner. I mean we will be graduating in a month, but here we are now. Tav pulled away from the kiss. I hope I didn't scare her. "We can go on our date, now." she said softly. I didn't scare her. I just grinned. She probably still thinks she is going to Macdonalds. This date and my time with Aaron is definitely worth finding out more. He is so intoxicating. So what the heck I'll go to MacDonalds...this time. Aaron pulled in front of the classy restaurant MacDollous. I never thought he was talking about this place, probably because I never been to this side of town. I just acted so stupid, he probably thinks I am ignorant, Tav thought as she read the sign. I watched her cute mouth whisper the word MacDollous. I could tell she was a little embarrassed by her assumption so to easy it I learned over and kissed her. I did it for two reasons one to let her know she has no need to be embarrassed and the other I just wanted to kiss her again. MacDollous is a place that a sistah like myself would be eating at, from the outside with its valet dressed in crimson vest, neatly pressed charcoal pants I knew it would be expensive. Who would of thought I would be here, but I am here looking like I am a superstar. I was wrong about Aaron, he doesn't think I am a happy meal date. He doesn't have to go this far to impress me, though. "Aaron, you know we don't have to eat here." Aaron cocks his head and looks at me like I have 3 heads. He didn't say anything, he just got out of the car. I took a big breath, and begin to open my door. Before I got out the door completely Aaron shuts the door. Maybe he decided we can go somewhere cheaper, I thought but then the door opens again. Aaron holds his hand out for me, I took it, and he pulls me gently from the car. "Where shall we eat at,

Miss Tav? I am hungry.” Aaron deep smooth voice whispered in my ear. She shrugged her shoulders. “Not here, this place is expensive and you probably need a reservation.” Aaron holding my hand lead me into the restaurant. “Well, you know that you were dead against MacDonalds. What other choices do we have?” He looked back at me and I couldn't help but laugh. I love the way he makes me feel. It is like we are just people nothing else matters. I am happy. I am glad he didn't take me home. Aaron was smiling and that made me smile. As we waited to be seated Aaron and I shyly looked at each other and continued to smile. He gently rubbed the the top of my hand with his fingers. My breath caught in my lungs, I couldn't breath. The corsair approached us I saw his smile fade a little as he looked at me. Being with Aaron, I almost forgot how some people could be. In that small second my smile faded. The man glanced at as as we held hands. I don't know why I did it but I slid my hand out of Aaron's. Aaron looked at me and then at the corsair. Aaron changed immediately from this sweet nice guy that I was falling for to a cold mean man. It was like I got a glimpse into how powerful and mean men could be by belittle the next man. Aaron looked down his nose at the man and said, “Yes, my girlfriend and I would like your best table, immediately.” Aaron turned smiled and took my hand. “Don't we darling?” he asked. People nearby turned and looked at us. The corsair smiled and kindly said, “But of course.” I knew he didn't mean it. Everyone was looking at us. How dare this man make Tav feel like she doesn't belong here and for that matter with me. Aaron thought as he lead Tav through the restaurant. You would of thought we would be further along in the world by now. It is not as if we are the only interracial couple dating. A watriess smiled as she brought us water. “What would you like?” she asked. Aaron still in a bad mood replied, “She can have anything she wants.” I looked at the watriess ,” I am sorry could you please give me a minute.” The waitress smiled and walked away. “Why are you apologizing to her?” Aaron asked.

“Because she deserved an apology and since you wasn't going to offer it. I did.”

Aaron didn't say anything, he just looked out the window. He never thought it through about what it

meant to date me. "Excuse me, can we get some service?" Aaron asked a passing busboy.

"What are you doing?" I asked.

Aaron looked at me. "Nothing. Order anything you like." he said.

I stared at him. "No, I don't think so," I said as I got up and walked out.

"Tav, what are you doing?" I heard Aaron say but I kept on going.

I think my mom would have been proud of me. I kept my head up and walked quietly passed the smirking crossair. Oh, don't get me wrong I wanted to stop and knock him out. Contrary to what the man believes I am a lady so I continue out the door. I waited by Aaron's car. It wasn't even three minutes before he emerged from the restaurant. "Is this date some type of joke to you." he said as he stalked to the car. He is beautiful when he is mad. "No, Aaron this isn't a joke. We are not sitting at a lunch counter, in a civil rights movement. I am proud of who am I." Aaron stared at me. He folded his arms across his chest and continued to stare at me. "What are you talking about?" he asked.

"You embarrassed me in there, and I want to go home." Aaron tilt his head back and laughed. "You want to go home again. Alright, I'll take you home. Telll how did I embrassed you?"

My temper snapped. He honestly didn't get it.

"What did you think would happen on this date? Did you think that we wouldn't get looked at or that there would be no comments."

He stood there, ran his hand through his hair, and then unlocked my door. He then blocked the door so I couldn't get in the car. " I didn't think they would be so insulting as that little man in there."

"Well, they are . You did worse than he did. Now please take me home!"

"Of course, take you home. That is all you have talked about all night." Aaron said as he stepped out the way. I got in the car. Aaron was mad but he still was a gentleman. He held the door open and

waited until my skirt was neatly smoothed out across my legs. Then he gently shut the door. I sure could use to this. He didn't treat me at all like I was a thing. Maybe I was to hard on him.

I don't understand her at all. She should have been mad how that little man treated her, but she acted as if he kissed her rather than insulted her. She is really classy. What did you expect of her...to be ghetto. Damn. I am ashamed to admit that because I really do like her, Aaron thought as her pulled to a stop light. Looking out the window watched an old man, sitting on a cardboard box swinging a tattered belt. Glancing at the car, the old man and Tav made eye contact.

“What are you looking at?” said the man.

Turning and looked at Aaron who now glanced at the approaching man.

“Go,” Tav whispered.

“I can't run a red light.”

A tap at the passenger window, Tav jumped. The old man was looking in the window, and tapping his belt buckle on the window.

“You don't look at me.” the man said.” Don't you know that I will beat you with this belt.”

The man hit the window harder and Tav scooted over towards Aaron.

“Please go Aaron!”

“Why did you have to look at him?” Aaron asked as the old man swung his belt at the window.

Tav screamed and Aaron pushed on the gas, ran the stop light. Tav looked back to see the old man walking back to his box. She turned around and said nothing. Aaron said nothing. Then he burst out laughing. Tav looked at him.

“It is not funny, Aaron.” Tav said as she looked out the window. “ That is why you are taking me home.”

Aaron laughed even harder.

“Come on, don't you want to be beat with his belt.”

I couldn't believe it Aaron is laughing about a man wanting to beat me. When I was with Damon none of this would of happen. Damon would of dealt with the old man or would of sent someone to handle it, not because the man threatened me. It would have been because the man shattered Damon's car window. Aaron has a way more expensive car than Damon, and he doesn't care that his window is missing.

“Come on, you know you want to laugh.” Aaron laughed.

“It isn't funny. What if he did hit me?”

Aaron stopped laughing. He glanced at me and then at the road.

“I think I might have to kick his ass then.”

I laughed. I think he was serious but I laughed any way.

She laughed. I was serious but I am glad to hear that sound of light hearted happiness come from her.

I hate to think that our date would end up with her wanting to get away from me as soon as possible. I wouldn't of let her get hurt. In spite of it all I like her. Aaron pulled up in front of Tav's dark house.

Looking out the broken window, and back at Aaron.

“Thank you for bring me home.”

“I want to see you again, Tav.” Aaron said as he leaned his head on the the leather seat.

What could I say. I couldn't just let her get out of the car.

I looked straight ahead and spilled all I was feeling right there.

“I know the date was a bad one, but I want to see you again.”

“I don't...”

Aaron's head rolled over and stared at Tav. She bite her lower lip. It was sexy. It seemed everything she did was sexy.

“I want to see you every night until we have a good date.” he whispered as his fingers touched Tav's bottom lip. “Then I want to see you even after that.”

Tav said nothing. The moment was intoxicating, as Aaron leaned over and gently kissed her.

“Say you will see me tomorrow.”

Aaron kissed me. I couldn't breath, not that he was choking or smothering me. He thrilled me. I found myself nodding when he asked me again if he could see me tomorrow. I couldn't even remember how I was standing in front of my door, but here I was. An hour past, and I am still sitting on my front porch engrossed in Aaron's kisses and touches.

Breaking away from our umpteenth kiss, I barely found the words to say.

“I really should go in.”

Aaron's hand slowly traveled down the side of my neck.

“It is Friday night, we don't have school,” he whispered.

“No I gotta go.”

Aaron sighed. He leaned over and kissed me again.

“So I'll see you later today, right.” he asked.

“I thought we were going out tomorrow night?” Tav asked.

Aaron smiled, as he stood up. He stuck out his hand and waited for me to take it.

“I can't wait for tonight. I need to see you tomorrow.” he said as he pulled me into a hug. “ And I need

to see you again tonight.”

I—I have this thing with my girl...”

“Blow it off.” he whispered as he kissed my ear.

I knew I would blow it off so all I did was nod.

Aaron lounging on a water raft in his family's pool barely noticed when his father splashed in the pool next to him.

“It must have been some date, last night.” Aaron's father said as he swam up next to Aaron. Aaron didn't say anything. “Aaron, what happen to your car window?”

“Oh, a man hit it with his belt.”

“I hope Melaine was okay.”

“Melanie wan't in the car.” Aaron said as he slipped into the water.

“Oh, I thought you had a date last night.”

Aaron swam over to the edge of the pool, and bounced there.

“Yeah, but it wasn't Melaine.”

“Oh, I thought...”

Aaron walked out the pool. His father looking after him.

“Hey, do you mind if I bring a friend over today?”

Swimming to the edge of the pool, Aaron's father resurfaces. Aaron reaches for a towel and dries off.

Wrapping the towel around his neck, he holds onto the edges.

“Well?”

“Who is she?” Aaron's dad asks as he gets out of the pool.

“You don't know her but she is really nice.

Sighing Aaron's father grabs a nearby towel, and begins to dry off. I hate it when he is like this Aaron thought. Acting like he cares about my well being. It is election year. Enough said.

“You know that we need to know who she is. Aaron's father says as he flops down in a lawn chair.

“And it would be nice to know where you were last night. That you got your window busted out.”

“Don't worry dad it isn't some scandal that will come against your precious campaign. Can she or can't she come over?” Aaron's father said nothing for awhile, just sits there and stares. He makes a quick nod. “Fine, I gotta go.” Aaron says as he walks off. Aaron's father watches him go, sighing he closes his eyes. Aaron looks back at him. I don't know why I didn't tell him about Tav. My family prides themselves in being liberal, but there is so much hypocritical shit floating in my family pool. I just don't know. All I know is I want Tav, and I know that whether my family likes or not. I am dating Tav.

The small cell phone's ring knocks Tav out of a deep sleep. The tiny hand reaches for the phone, and the phone disappears under the blanket.

“Hello.”

“Girl, you sound like...”

“What do you want, Bee?” Tav interrupted.

“Dang, girl you ain't gotta be like that.”

Pushing herself into a sitting position, Tav adjust the phone, “Girl, I am sorry I was sleep that is all. What's up?”

“Well I hope you are wide awake because we gotta a lot to do before tonight.”

“Tonight.” Tav said as she climb out the bed.

“Yeah, tonight, the concert M.C. Chill will be there.

I forgot, getting wrapped in Aaron and I forgot about my favorite rapper the The Chill. If I blow it off I know that Bree is going to ask big questions.

“About the concert, Bee?”

“Girl, I think that my black boots will look good with my skirt I brought.”

Bee, love MC Chill as much as I do, but I think she is more interested in how she will look than the actually concert. I probably should go ahead and introduce Bee to the idea that I am seeing Aaron. I am not sure how she will take it but she is my girl she should stand by no matter. Well at least I think so.

“Bee, I am bring someone to the concert.”

The silence was awkward it has been me and Bee for so long. Yeah we got friends we hang with but when we are on the town it me and Bee.

“That's cool, bring whoever just as they don't get in my way with MC Chill. I don't care.” Bee said.

“For real.” I found myself saying.

“Yeah, girl I'll meet you at your house at 7 pm so we can catch the train into the city.”

Bee hung up, and I am feeling like a coward. Bee was cool with me bring someone to the concert. She probably thinking it is one of our girls. There is no question that she is going to flip out when she sees Aaron. Well, there is nothing to it I like him. She is going to have to get over it.

The doorbell rang at exactly 11o'clock on the dot. Aaron is nothing but prompt. His deep melodic voice traveled through the house to my bedroom. It felt like a cool breeze kissed my neck. I slipped on my halt top sundress, a pair of open toe sandals, and stumbled out of my room. A cool collected Tav

walked down the stairs and frozen on the step. He looked good. He wore blue shorts, and blue green polo shirt, black sunglasses perched on top of his glossy blonde hair. He is so self assured.

“So you two are going out again.” my mother said as she lean in the kitchen doorway. “Where are we going today?” Aaron looked over to me and smiled. “I thought that we would hang out over at my parents house today.” Is he serious. I glanced at my mother's smirk on her face. “I—I didn't know we were going to your house.” Aaron just smiled. “Well, don't let me keep you,” my mother said as she walked over and kissed me on the cheek. “I have a good time.” Why was my mom so accepting of this, did she think that I was just having a faze or something. We definitely need to talk. Aaron opened the door, and I walked to the door as if I was going to the death chamber. I suddenly didn't want be Tav any more. She is nervous, I wouldn't blame her if she turned and run. I certainly would if I had to meet the famous Judge Kawaoski,, his porcelain wife Eleanor, and their Princeton graduate uppity children. Knowing Tav she will cope and she will do it with class. Once Aaron closed the house door behind him, he reached for Tav. She is nervous. Aaron's hand gently slid down Tav's bare arm, and clasp her small hand. “Don't be afraid.” he whispered.

“Afraid. I am not afraid.” I put on my hardest voice. His eyes narrowed as if he didn't believe my claim. So I walked to his car and waited as he followed. Watching him walk towards me with cool calm easy. I looked around, everyone in the neighborhood was out. After all it was daylight. They watched him my friends, neighbors, and Damon's friends. They saw him come into my house, they him hold my hand, and now they see him opening the car door for me. All of this, Aaron acts as if he doesn't care to be with me. To be seen with me by my friends, neighbors...even Damon's friends.

“Aaron you know that Damon friends saw us.” I said as he turned the car on and drove off.

Aaron said nothing for a while. Say something. “Yeah, I know. I guess I will be hearing from Damon soon.” he said as he slowed the car to a stop light. His aloofness was to much for me.

“Do you think they saw us kissing?” Aaron asked.

Oh, my god I didn't think of that. Everyone problem already knows, but if everyone knows then Bee would of said something to me or would she. I shortly forgot about what Bee, Damon or anyone in my neighborhood thought when Aaron's car drove past all that was known to me. He drove me into his world—a world of people walking dogs, power walking, and perfect lawns. I glanced at Aaron he seemed just like his calm self.

“Does your parents know that I am coming.” I had to ask.

He glanced at me. The sleek black bmw drove up to a beautifully adoren gate. Aaron pressed a button in his car and the gate slid open. “This morning my dad knows that you were coming.” Aaron drove the car up to the large pristine white house. It look more like a Hollywood mansion that you see of f of Entertainment Tonight. I really didn't think those homes for real since I never seen one, but here I am in front of a massive. “I am sure that my mother Eleanor has risen out of stupor long enough to know that you are coming. Which means everyone is waiting your arrival.”

“Funny.” I said

“No, I am not joking.” Aaron said as he parked the car.

So they, meaning his very rich family is waiting to meet me, Tav Mathews. Aaron drops this major bomb on me, and what does he do. Slip out the car so I don't even have a chance to rebuttal his reply or tell to take me home.

“Don't worry my family can be self consumed so they will probably say hello and leave us alone.” Aaron said as he opened the car door, took my hand, and gently pulled me out the car. All I could think of was how I looked. I probably should not of wore this halter top dress, it is all wrong to meet a Senator and his family. I could kill Aaron. I adjusted my dress, took a deep breath, and lifted my eyes to a huge house. Glancing at Aaron, my eyes collided with his.

“You look great. Now come on.”

Opening the massive door, Aaron pulled me into Rome. Well I guess my version of Rome, the house was elegant. Tasteful pieces of art was sprinkled throughout the foyer. There wasn't a sound as Aaron lead me through the house.

“Do you actually live in this house?”

He nodded and then asked, “Why?”

“It is like walking through a museum.”

“What if I told you my father isn't a Senator, but a man who robs museums.”

I know what he is doing by telling that whack joke. I adore him even more for trying to make me more comfortable, so I laughed. He grinned and pulled me into a large living room. My laugh died in my throat, as my eyes layed upon the very very upper crust elite of Trolier. All high society eyes were on me. Dang, I shouldn't of wore this dress. It was like they were an elegant portait, Aaron's family stood around the room as if they were statues. All them dressed if they were on a presidential campaign. Aaron pulled me in the room. Please I don't want to go.

“Ah, family please meet the lovely Tav Mathews.” Aaron's voice radiated with a proud air. I glanced at him, he stood tall, self assured that this was going to work. So I braced myself, stood taller, and smiled.

No one moved or said anything. It seemed that everything stood still, even the crystal clock on the mantel over the fireplace. Then a nice looking older version of Aaron forward. He had grayish temples, dressed in khaki shorts, black polo shirt, and light brown loafers with no socks.

“Hello, Tav it is nice to meet you.” the man said as he glanced at Aaron. “I am Aaron's dad.”

“It is nice to meet you Senator Kawoski.”

Senator Kawoski smiled. I don't know if I surprised him or what but when I open my mouth I shocked him. Probably because he thought was going to talk all ghetto or something. Damn I shouldn't wore

this dress.

“Please call me Oliver...” Mr. Kawoski didn't say anything for a minute it would seem. He just stood there smiling at Aaron and me. Aaron pulled me away from his father, towards a woman that look like a collectors doll. Her whiteish blond here was pulled back into a tight ponytail. She wore a pale yellow polo shirt, and white pants. I quickly glanced around the room, they all wore polo shirts. It was like it was a secret society or something.

“And this lovely lady sitting over here is my mother Eleanor.”

“It is a pleasure to meet you, dear” Eleanor put her tiny alabaster hand.

It looked so small and fragile, I was afraid that I would crack her hand, but I took her hand and shook it. Carefully.

“It is nice to meet you.” I spoke softly as if I would damage this small delicate woman.

“It is a pleasure.” the woman smile genuinely.

The room was suddenly quiet it seemed no one knew what to say. Why did it have to be like this... there is nothing different about me...just my skin. They would probably welcome me with open arms if I was white. But here we are I am not white, and they are not black.

“So Tav, you go to school with Aaron.” Mr. Kawoski said as he took a deep drink from his crystal glass. I nodded. “Yes, dad Tav and I go to school together actually we attend mostly all of the same classes. I don't know why I did it, but I felt like I needed to defend her. Although my family said nothing out of the way to her. I saw it in their eyes, the way my father held the crystal glass, and my mother sat demurely on the chaise. I knew that they did not approve. Oh, they would not say anything out of the way. For if we are nothing else the Kawoski's are politically and literally correct. He is doing it again, acting as we are in the civil rights movement. Why does he want to date me, but can't accept that people will not be so willing in our dating. “Tav is the head of our class.” I heard Aaron

say as I watched him stare down his father. “Ahem that is wonderful, Tav. Do you plan to attend school?” the small voice of Aaron's mother seemed to break into the battle of wills that was going on between Aaron and his father. They both looked at Eleanor and then at me. “Yes, I am planning to attend Spellman College in the fall.” Eleanor smiled. “Yes, a wonderful school. Excellent choice.” I smiled back. “Well, Paul let Aaron and Tav go and enjoy themselves.” Eleanor said as she got up from the chair, and smiled at her son. “Aaron lunch will be served at 1. Tav, it is nice to meet you. Please make yourself at home.”

Amazing I thought I was making waves with Eleanor, then boom the dismiss was so suddenly. I think even Aaron was shocked by his mother abrupt manner. What