



High School High

A PORT CITY HIGH NOVEL

SHANNON
FREEMAN



HIGH SCHOOL HIGH

Prologue

Here we are, standing on the threshold of forever,” Shane said to her friends as she gazed at the building where they would spend the next four years of their lives.

“Gosh, Shane, you are so dramatic,” responded Marisa.

“But that’s what you love about me, Mari.” Shane smiled.

Marisa, Brandi, and Shane never took their eyes off the ominous building in front of them, Port City High. It was the only high school in the small Texas town of Port City, a place that would not appear

on the map if the oil refineries had not made it their home. It was the first day of school for the three best friends, and they just stood there, soaking in the moment. “Well, ladies, this is it,” Brandi announced. The girls couldn’t hide their excitement, but they were also pretty nervous. They were on a high school high and loving it.

“Port City High won’t know what hit ’em,” Shane said while twirling her pencil. The girls were on top of the world. They had met earlier at Marisa’s house to get ready for their big day. They lived blocks apart in a quiet neighborhood, where middle class families enjoyed a simple life. The homes were large and had once belonged to the wealthiest residents of Port City, who had moved on to larger cities when the economy slowed. The former estates made perfect homes for growing families.

Traditionally, the girls would meet up to put the finishing touches on their

school uniforms. Their school colors this year were sky blue, silver, and white, so the girls each chose a color the night before and rocked it with their khakis.

Marisa Maldonado wore a white top to compliment her beautiful brown skin. Her hair was dark and curly, but she straightened it when the humid Texas weather permitted. Over the summer Marisa had grown very tall, which was perfect for her. She knew many girls who hated being tall; but she wanted to be a model one day, so the taller, the better.

Shane Foster wore a sky blue uniform shirt that fit her just snug enough to show how flawlessly she was shaped. She loved light colors. Her skin was only a few shades darker than Marisa's, even though Marisa was Hispanic and she was mixed. Shane had the kind of beauty that allowed her to wear barely any makeup. When she went places, people seemed drawn to her. They would ask, "Do you know how beautiful

you are?" She knew that others found her extremely attractive. She never allowed herself to get a big head, though, which only made her more appealing.

Brandi Haywood was African American and had the curves to prove it. Many people said that she was the prettiest chocolate girl at school. Brandi chose to wear silver to contrast with her dark skin, making it bling like platinum. Brandi's style and walk were her greatest assets. Her head was always held high, and she looked confident in any situation.

The girls each added their own swag to stand out in the masses. In middle school other girls would try to compete with them but just wound up hating instead. Now they had new land to conquer: high school.

"I guess we should find out where we are supposed to be," announced Brandi as the three of them strolled to the door.

When they entered, they were greeted by Mrs. Monroe. "O-M-G! Mrs. Monroe, what are you doing here?" asked Shane. Mrs. Monroe was the girls' favorite English teacher in middle school.

"The district moved me to Port City High. I'm the new speech and journalism teacher. So you have to put up with me for four more years. The ninth graders are meeting in the cafeteria, so follow the green line down the hall. You can't miss it. And, ladies?"

"Yes, Mrs. Monroe?"

"Have a great time at your new school."

"Thank you, Mrs. Monroe," the girls responded.

They followed the green line. When they walked in the cafeteria, it was already packed with ninth graders. "This should be interesting," Shane said.

"Let's just find a seat," Brandi remarked. The girls located three seats and quickly sat down.

As soon as they were seated, the principal, Mrs. Montgomery, began to address their class. She gave them directions for the day and dismissed them to their homerooms, where they would receive class schedules. The three friends each had a different homeroom. They looked at the numbers on the doors to get a clue as to where to go. Once they had a direction in mind, they wished each other luck and separated down the busy hallway of ninth graders frantically searching for their own homerooms.



CHAPTER 1

Brandi

Brandi was still looking for her home-room when she heard someone calling her name. She turned around and was greeted by the captain of the cheerleading squad, Alexandria Solis. “Hey, lady! You look lost,” Alex said. Alex’s dark black hair made her look exotic. She had a look that other girls envied, and she knew how to flaunt it.

“Yeah, well, this school is huge and confusing. What are you doing over here in the ninth-grade wing?” Brandi asked.

“Had to come find my freshmen cheer girls and make sure y’all were taken care of. Have you seen Adrian or Melody anywhere?”

“Nope, you are the first one I’ve seen from the squad so far. There were so many people in the cafeteria.”

“Maybe they found their way already. Let’s find out where you have to be.”

“Good idea! I am looking for ten-A.”

To Brandi’s surprise, Alex pointed to the door they were standing in front of and both girls laughed. Alex patted Brandi on the back and said, “Well, I’ll see you at practice. Meet us at the girls’ gym at three forty-five and don’t be late. Now you do know your way to the gym, right?” she asked playfully.

“Ha-ha,” Brandi said sarcastically. “Now *that* I can find!” she yelled as Alex disappeared down the hallway.

Brandi was one of the last people in class. *Why am I always so late? Well, it’s the perfect opportunity to make an entrance,*

at least that's what Shane always says, she thought. Her mind was racing. I hope I don't have a wedgie ... I didn't get to check my teeth ... I should have gone to the restroom ... Where can I sit? ... Who should I sit by? ... Oh, just make a decision, Brandi! She finally located a chair near the front of the class but not in the front row.

Just as she sat down, she thought about Matthew and wondered how he was fairing in high school. Matthew Kincade was Brandi's ex-boyfriend from junior high. She couldn't stand that she was thinking of him after what he had done to her this summer while she was away at cheerleading camp. She had invested so much of herself in their relationship, and he threw it all away. He wasn't even worth her anger. *Boo on you, Matthew*, she thought.

The rest of the day was typical for any first day of school: super boring. The only thing Brandi looked forward to was seeing the other cheerleaders at practice that

afternoon. She may not have known her way around campus, but she could have located the gym with her eyes closed. Two-a-days had kicked her butt for a month before school started. It seemed like all her summer had consisted of was practice, practice, practice ... prepare for camp, prepare for the first pep rally, prepare for the first game. She loved every minute of it. It took her mind off of her home life. Brandi's parents had been arguing for forever now, and cheerleading was her escape.

As soon as Brandi entered the gym, she headed straight to the locker room. Once all the girls were done putting on their practice outfits, they started the one-mile run around the school. Brandi was chatting with Christina Hall during their run. She was a sophomore and Brandi's closest friend on the squad. Brandi had been Christina's roommate during cheerleading camp at a time when Christina could really