



PCH

*Deported*

A PORT CITY HIGH NOVEL

SHANNON  
FREEMAN



DEPORTED

# *Prologue*

*I*t had been an amazing summer—barbeques, swimming, vacations. Who could ask for more? When the flyers were circulated that the first annual Back-to-School Blowout was being thrown by Port City officials, everyone was super-excited. Marisa, Shane, and Brandi had been preparing for two weeks for the Hawaiian-themed party. They ordered the cutest flowered outfits online and made their own grass skirts. They each found leis that complimented their clothes perfectly.

Now they were at Mari's house getting ready for the event.

"I am not ready to see everybody," Brandi announced. It had only been a couple of months since Brandi had been abducted by Steven, a demented childhood friend. In his mind, he thought he was saving her from her family and friends. But he hurt her more than they ever could. She was still trying to heal and move beyond the terror.

"You are going to be fine," Marisa said as her reflection met Brandi's in the tall mirror. "Plus look at all of the support you have. It won't just be me and Shane. Trent and Ashton will be with us too. You know they have your back." They had only met Trent and Ashton last semester. Marisa had fallen in love with Trent, but Trent and Ashton had become like brothers to Brandi. They had helped rescue her from Steven and had remained supportive throughout the summer, taking her to

cheerleading practice and calling to check in.

“Girl, quit trippin’,” Shane said as she came out of the restroom. She had pulled her hair into a bun on top of her head. Her bangs framed her golden sun-kissed face.

“I feel self conscious, like I shouldn’t be showing so much skin. I don’t want to bring attention to myself. I’m going to let the knot out of this shirt,” Brandi decided.

“You will do no such thing,” Shane said. “Show off all that chocolate honey. You look good.” And she did. The contrast of the Hawaiian colors on Brandi’s dark skin made her look like an African queen.

“Argh, I don’t know. I should have gotten the other dress like Mari’s.”

“Girl, I’m about to tie this one in a knot on the side too. I have to show a little leg,” Marisa said.

“That’s more than a little leg. You’re almost six feet tall, woman. That’s a whole lotta leg,” Shane said, laughing.

“That’s why Trent loves me. He needs all this woman by his side. Hey, he’s texting me. They’re outside. Mama, we are leaving!” she yelled.

“*Mi hija*, let me get a picture before you go.”

“Mama, Trent is outside.”

“Well, tell Trent to come inside,” Mrs. Maldonado said. Marisa had really been on her mother about learning to speak English. She had been in classes all summer, and it was finally helping. She was so proud of her.

“He can’t tonight, Mama. We have tickets for the first barge ride, so we have to be on time. Just get us girls. We’ll take pictures for you when we get there.”

“Now you know I’ll get my photography on, Mrs. M,” Shane said.

“Okay, okay, *uno foto*,” Mrs. Maldonado said, snapping their picture. They each gave her a kiss on the cheek and ran to meet Trent and Ashton.

When they got outside, they were shocked. "Is this the Hummer SUT?" Shane asked Trent.

"The girl knows her vehicles," Ashton said, jumping in the back to let Marisa sit up front with Trent.

"Yes, sir. They don't even make these anymore. Where did you find this, Trent?" she asked.

"My parents got it for me. I'm leaving for college next year, so it's an early graduation present."

"Don't remind me," Marisa said, giving him a kiss.

"Oh, get a room already," Shane said playfully.

"No, those purity rings are stopping any room action," Ashton said, laughing at his friend. The girls all wore the purity rings that Shane's sister, Robin, had given them when she found out that she was pregnant. She didn't want them to make the same mistakes that she had made.

“Heeeey,” Brandi and Shane said simultaneously, punching Ashton in the arm.

“You should be happy you’re with girls who are pure.”

“Yeah, lucky us,” Ashton said sarcastically, getting another punch from the girls. “Ow! Next time, I’m hitting back.”

As they pulled up to the seawall, Trent rolled the top back on the Hummer. They took their place in line with the other juniors and seniors who wanted to flaunt their new vehicles. Everybody had their music blasting. Texas rap could be heard everywhere. Young Dub and anybody else signed with Third Coast Records blared through various sound systems.

“Yo, I’m standing up! Let’s see what’s popping,” Shane said excitedly.

“Trade seats with me, Ashton. I wanna be by my girls.” Ashton and Marisa jumped out of the truck so that the girls could be together in the back.

Standing up in that huge Hummer let them tower over everyone. They could see the whole party from one end of the seawall to the other. The boats and barges had been pulled to the docks and decorated with lights. Each boat had its own party. Some of them even went out for a brief cruise along the port. You could feel the energy of the crowd; it was electric.

Trent and Ashton hung out of the car windows as various girls strolled along the seawall. The girls hollered their names like they were stars. Well, in Port City they were stars. Their basketball skills had earned them some fame. Trent was impressed that Marisa never got jealous when girls threw themselves at him. She was so confident, and that was attractive to him.

“Ooh, I wanna go to that party,” Shane said. “The people are wearing masks and everything.”

“I’ll pass,” Brandi said abruptly.



“Stop being like that, B. Loosen up,” Shane said, nudging her.

“I have to be able to see people’s faces. I’ll always think that everybody is Steven. Never mind, I can tell I can’t make you understand.”

“Hey, don’t worry about Steven. I’ll take care of that fool,” Ashton said, kissing his muscles.

“Seriously, I’m tired of seeing your muscles or lack thereof,” Shane said, teasing him. “Put those little twigs away.”

“Sure you are. Just like I’m tired of looking at your beautiful face,” Ashton said, making Shane blush. He was a hopeless flirt.

They decided to head straight to the food carts along the seawall and load up on barbeque, roasted corn, funnel cakes, and frosty fresh-squeezed lemonade before going to their ship. Their party boat was set to sail in thirty minutes, enough time to eat, drink, and get on the boat.

As soon as they pulled away from the dock, the DJ started to spin Young Dub's newest song, "BALLIN ... But I Don't Play." They went straight to the dance floor and never left for the entire boat ride.

The next boat that they chose was super fun. The theme was murder-mystery. The banner on the side of the boat read "Who dun it?" Brandi solved the mystery in record time and won a backpack full of school supplies.

By two a.m. they had seen all of their friends, the basketball team, and even some of their teachers out having a good time. They called it a night. The traffic was horrible leaving the seawall, but they finally made it out of the tangle of cars and onto the highway. By the time they arrived at Marisa's house, the girls were exhausted and ready for bed.

"Well ... last weekend before we go back to school," Trent said.

"Right," they said, getting out of the car.