



Listed

A PORT CITY HIGH NOVEL

SHANNON
FREEMAN



LISTED

Prologue

*A*s Shane stared out of the plane's window, she basked in the thrill of a new experience. This trip was a pleasant surprise, one that Brandi had also been included in. The girls were accompanying Marisa on her journey to Los Angeles, California, for a meet and greet with the plastic surgeon who was going to remove the scarring from her face. In the fall there had been a dreadful car accident. A freshman twirler was killed, and Marisa had been thrown into a windshield.

Shane looked over at her two best friends. The girls were using Brandi's tablet and gossiping about their new relationships, which had started over Christmas break. Friender was the best way to catch up on all gossip during the holidays. They were so focused on Port City that they were missing the plane's landing in Los Angeles.

"Hey, put that thing away. We're touching down!" She faked a scream by opening her mouth wide, and she grabbed her two best friends. There was so much she wanted to see and do in Los Angeles.

"Shane, you have to see the girl Mattie's dating now. The boy has no standards. I can't believe I dated him for all those years," Brandi said, shaking her head.

"Really, B? We are landing in Los Angeles, baby. I want to hear nothing about those little kiddy relationships. I want to go to the Santa Monica Pier, Venice Beach, the Walk of Fame, eat good

sushi, get a spray tan, get waxed, and shop till I drop. That's all I can think about."

"Girl, that's enough." Brandi laughed at her friend's excitement. Shane's enthusiasm was contagious. Brandi looked out as the plane landed.

"Shopping!" Marisa almost yelled. "I'm so happy you came with me. What's a trip to L.A. without my girls? I need moral support. I'm kind of nervous. I've done photo shoots before, but my self-esteem was a lot better then. With my face still scarred, I feel ugly, ya know? I want to hide, and they want me to wear my scars with pride. It's nerve-racking."

"Ugly? You are so far from ugly," Shane scolded.

"You aren't even in the same zip code with ugly," Brandi said, showing them her tablet. "Now this is ugly. Woof." There was a picture of Matthew's new girlfriend. They all laughed.

Once the airplane parked at the gate,

the girls gathered their personal items and left, saying good-bye to the flight attendants as they walked toward the jetway. They were finally in Los Angeles!

“*Niñas*, be careful and stay together at all times,” Mrs. Maldonado told them. She had accompanied them on the trip, even though they insisted they didn’t need a chaperone. “No. You are crazy if you think you’re ready to go Los Angeles alone. It’s a huge city! I don’t even know if *I’m* ready for it,” Mrs. Maldonado had told them.

Near baggage claim, they were greeted by their limo driver. He was holding a sign that read Maldonado.

“I think that’s for us,” Brandi told them.

“What tipped you off, genius?” Shane asked.

“Don’t be snarky. Chill out,” Marisa scolded Shane.

The limo driver helped them with their luggage, and they loaded up to take the ride to the Beverly Hills Hotel. That’s

where Sculptique of Beverly Hills had them staying.

“Everything is so different here,” Shane said, in awe of the drive.

Each of them stayed glued to the limo’s windows as they watched the California scenery. Once they were in Beverly Hills, the view became more residential. The homes that lined the streets looked much different than the brick homes in Texas. The mega-mansions they could see looked to be Tuscan or Spanish. The yards were neatly manicured. Cool-weather flowers—English primroses, pansies, and Iceland poppies—were in bloom. The more expensive homes were tucked away behind gates. And the most expensive were up in the hills, on narrow canyon roads.

Even though it was December, Mother Nature had not been notified. It looked like a beautiful spring day, with people out jogging, walking their dogs, doing yoga, and dining alfresco.

“I’m never leaving,” Shane said as she got lost in the whole scene. When they arrived at the hotel, they were greeted by the scent of roses instead of the smells of the Port City refineries. They were worlds away from home, and it was eye-opening.

When they got to their suite, they unpacked and soaked in the luxury.

“This is like living in a dream,” Marisa said, lying on the bed. “I thought my modeling career was over. I finally see what *abuelita* means when she says, ‘When life gives you lemons, make *limonada*.’ I just wish that Bethany could see this too. She would have loved it.”

“I have a feeling Bethany is seeing L.A. with us,” Shane said.

Marisa nodded in agreement. If it hadn’t been for Bethany’s mom, Marisa would still be in a dark place. She had fallen into a deep depression following the accident. She blamed herself for her young friend’s death. The new advertising

campaign for the plastic surgeon had given Marisa a new lease on life. She knew she had to mourn and move on. She had to live her life. Somewhere, there was a balance between grief and happiness.

“Now, let’s get out of here. We are too close to Rodeo Drive to be locked up in this hotel,” Shane told them.

They changed their clothes and hit the streets of Beverly Hills. When they arrived on Rodeo Drive, it was much more expensive than they had imagined.

“A thousand dollar tank top? I’m taking a picture of that,” Brandi said, pulling her phone out.

“Girl, stop looking country,” Shane said, making her put the phone away.

Brandi went back and snapped the picture anyway and sent it straight to Friender. The attention she got on the Internet let her know she wasn’t the only one appalled by the pricey items in the Beverly Hills shops.

Luckily, they located a boutique that was in their price range. Kind of. They splurged and bought spring clothes that were sure to be a hit at home. As they dined outside at one of the restaurants, they started chatting with their server. She seemed to know everything about Los Angeles.

Their server told them to go to Santee Alley to do some real shopping. She told them about the best sushi spots in L.A. Shane was adamant about getting real sushi while she was in California. She heard that the Westside had some of the best sushi outside of Japan, and she was determined to eat her way through the town's *omakase*. There was even a New Year's Eve party on the Santa Monica Pier that their server said not to miss. They wanted to see it all before returning to ho-hum Port City.

Marisa had to report for work early the next morning. So after they did some

more shopping, they decided to eat dinner and rent a movie.

At five thirty the next morning, a car picked them up and delivered them to Marisa's set. The cold California air chilled them to the bone. Shane and Brandi had never gone with Marisa to work. They were usually at school, so this was special.

When they arrived, Marisa went straight to hair and makeup, where the professionals worked their magic. They made Marisa look beautifully natural. They needed the scars to be visible, but they still wanted her beauty to shine. The shoot was one of the easiest Marisa had ever done.

The plastic surgeon, Dr. Neimann, took to her immediately. Marisa's story had struck a chord in him. He had lost his own daughter to a drunk driver when she was a teenager. When Marisa's agent called him for his opinion about the facial scars, he knew immediately that he wanted to take on Marisa's case gratis.

The doctor was a modest man with a funny sense of humor. Marisa felt comfortable with him. She felt she could trust him from the moment she was introduced. She was really happy when he made a connection with Brandi and Shane too. He took them out for lunch at his favorite restaurant, the Kosher Kitchen.

Mrs. Maldonado wasn't used to this type of cuisine, especially when their server brought out the "lamb pops." She wrinkled her nose and politely declined, stating that Bambi was not going anywhere near her plate. She was not an adventurous eater. She shied away from trying anything out of the ordinary, but the three girls welcomed everything different. They enjoyed their first kosher meal and all of the history that went along with it.

During lunch, Dr. Neimann explained every treatment Marisa would undergo, but only when she was ready. He wanted her back to her old self by senior year. They



Listed

A PORT CITY HIGH NOVEL

*Drama is always just
a day away ...*

Shane is so drawn to Coach Rob that she can't see she's being played. Marisa begins to feel like her old self. It's like a weight has been lifted. And Brandi still can't shake her bad luck with relationships. She's on a dating break, but will she brush off a great guy? All bets are off when the three girls are listed in a threatening note.



ISBN: 978-1-62250-773-3



9 781622 507733