



*Get Ready for the Hottest Summer of Your Life!*

Jessica Tuttle glanced down at the cover of the June *Allure* as her parents' packed station wagon exited the Maine highway. The neon-pink headline had caught her attention at a gas station mini-mart somewhere along I-95, and although she wasn't in the habit of reading girly magazines, she'd had to pick this one up. Those nine tantalizing words summed up her entire goal for the next three months, as if the editors had magically read her mind. And even if the accompanying article suggested that the perfect summer hinged on collecting a wide range of tropical-colored eye shadows, it was still a very good sign.

"Mind if I take the scenic route, Jessi?" her father asked

from the driver's seat. "Let's see how much the town's changed."

She quickly rolled down her window as they reached Pebble Beach's Shore Boulevard, the salty ocean air sweeping into the car. The roadside forest had given way to cute shops and restaurants, and happy-looking tourists ambled up and down the wide sidewalks. Jessica excitedly craned her neck out the window and spotted the Lookout Diner and Ahoy Grill, two of the local landmarks that her older cousins had taken her to when she was a kid.

She drew a sharp breath as the ocean finally came into view. It had been three summers since she'd seen that beach, and now they were finally back. She'd practically grown up on this sandy shore, with her huge, extended family renting out the same three oceanfront cottages every summer since she could remember. But three years ago, one of the cottages had burned down in an electrical fire, putting an end to Jessica's favorite Tuttle tradition.

Since the fire, Jessica's parents had sent her to sports camps — first basketball, then swimming and softball. While she loved being surrounded by other athletes, summer had just felt so *wrong* anywhere else, especially with her big brothers, Jordan and Drew, working and her parents traveling. When the owner of the cottages had called in the spring to announce that the summer properties were

available again, all of her aunts and uncles had jumped at the chance to revive their summer tradition.

Her father pulled the car to a stop, and Jessica could hardly believe her eyes.

“Not bad, huh?” her mom asked, adjusting the brim of her sunhat to get a better view.

“Oh. My. God!” Jessica squealed as she tumbled out of the car.

The rustic cottages from her childhood were gone. In their place were three ultramodern, stark-white structures with enormous, glittering windows. Around the back, a massive deck overlooked the water, with white umbrellas casting shadows over teak lounge chairs and a long table. The three houses shared a lawn and a driveway that spread out in front of her like a massive stone welcome mat. Now *this* was a summer home.

There were a couple of cars in the driveway, which meant that some other family members had arrived and were settling in. Jessica’s mom unlocked the door to the one house that still looked empty.

As they carried their bags inside, Jessica took in the streamlined taupe couches and chairs scattered around the living room and the enormous plasma TV hanging over the granite fireplace.

“Love, love, *love!*” she shouted happily as she collapsed on a leather chaise. How could she *not* have an epic

summer living in a house that looked like it was flown in straight from Malibu? She only wished she could see her brothers' reactions to the new houses, but Jordan was working at a camp a few towns away, and Drew was driving his own car up from Ithaca. Depending on when he woke up that morning, he could show up anytime between later today and the end of August.

Jessica wandered out to the deck, pulling her tank top over her head and adjusting her navy-blue polka-dot bikini. The large grill and canvas lounge chairs were new, but the wide-open view of the ocean was reassuringly familiar. This was the place she'd been dreaming about. The place where her older cousins had so many adventures. As she looked down to the pier in the distance, memories came flooding back — going to the pier with her cousins for ice cream, listening to their crazy conversations. The older cousins would be the only thing missing from this summer. Wild Ella, who Jessica once thought was like a real-life Barbie doll, and sensitive Jamie, who used to read to Jessica for hours, were in college and doing cool-sounding summer programs. Sporty Beth and supersmart Kelsi had graduated and had moved to New York and Boston to start their careers.

Jessica turned and let the gusty wind whip her pale blonde hair away from her face. She smiled, recalling the girls' infectious laughter and whispered gossip — and

the countless boys who had hovered around them at all times. Wherever they were and whatever they did, they always seemed to be having the best times of their lives. She'd been so jealous when they'd slip out after family dinners. A few times she'd sat in her bedroom window and watched for them to come home, wishing that they'd take her along the next night.

*And now it's my turn.* Jessica smiled to herself. *I mean, our turn.*

Her cousin Greer from New York City and Uncle Mike's new stepdaughter, Lara, were going to be her summer roommates. Jessica didn't know Greer that well, since her parents rarely came to family functions, and she'd only met Lara at Uncle Mike's wedding last year. But Jessica already knew the three of them were going to rule Pebble Beach — which definitely meant meeting some Pebble Beach boys.

And, then, there they were.

Like out of a cheesy Kate Hudson movie, two deeply tanned, gorgeous boys stepped out from the shaded aisle between houses, both wearing shorts and no shirts, looking like they belonged in an Abercrombie catalog. Both guys had the same longish wavy brown hair with ends that had turned golden from the sun. When they saw her, they set down the Jet Ski they'd been lugging between them.

"Hey," said the slightly taller one. He looked about seventeen. "You must be one of the renters. I'm Liam."

Jessica nodded, already feeling shy.

“Connor,” the younger-looking one said with a friendly smile. “Our dad owns the property. We’re just moving this Jet Ski out of the garage.”

“I’m Jessi — uh, Jessica,” she corrected impulsively. Time to let her little-girl nickname die a quick death. She took a tiny, nervous step away, twisting a long strand of blonde hair around her finger.

“How do you like your new place?” Liam asked, grinning up at her. His confident smile made him even hotter, if that was possible. She was officially entranced.

“I love it,” she replied honestly.

Connor spoke up. “We helped build them — the houses.”

Liam swiftly punched his younger brother in the arm. “You helped what?” he asked sarcastically. “As I recall, all you helped with was calling for break time.”

Connor shrugged gamely. “Yeah, well, unlike you, I’m still young. I need my rest.” Connor dodged as Liam punched at him again and missed. “In your face!” Connor hooted while striking a dorky victory pose. Jessica couldn’t help laughing, though Liam just shook his head, evidently used to his brother’s goofiness. Connor turned back to Jessica. “If you ever need anything . . . I mean — with the house, let us know.”

“Thanks, I will. I can’t believe how much I missed this place.” Jessica smiled at a familiar poplar tree in the far left corner of the yard. She let a seagull flying toward the horizon distract her from the boys’ undeniable hotness. It gave her a chance to get her racing heart back under control.

Liam cleared his throat. “Do you have big plans for the summer?” he asked.

“Actually, I need to train for fall lacrosse tryouts.” Jessica gestured at her gym bag, which her father had left near the deck doors. “I’m trying to make varsity, but it’s been four years since a sophomore’s done it.”

Connor brightened. “We should practice together. I’ve got an old stick in the garage.”

“Really? That’d be great! I was just going to try it alone, but having someone around is so much better.” She paused, glancing out at the grassy yard. “The lawn isn’t huge, but it’s big enough for passing around,” Jessica offered, then realized that probably sounded rude. “Oops, I mean — it’s not small. At all. I —”

Connor shook his head ruefully. “I’ll overlook that insult to our family’s pride and joy. I’m free tomorrow, if —”

Liam cut in deftly. “So what are you up to tonight?”

Jessica turned to him, and shrugged. “Not sure. Anything going on?”

“Bonfire,” Liam mentioned, nodding toward the beach. “You should come by.”

*The summer kickoff!* “Okay,” Jessica said, trying to hide her excitement. She’d been in Pebble Beach for less than ten minutes and she’d already met two cute guys and gotten an invite to the first party of the summer.

“Great. I’ll look for you.” Liam smiled steadily at her, his hair falling into his hazel eyes. With his sun-bleached hair and lean swimmer’s body, it was like he’d walked straight out of her daydream.

Heat rose from Jessica’s chest and up to her face. She broke away from his stare and looked down at her toenails. The clear polish was starting to chip.

As the boys picked up the Jet Ski and carried it through the gate and onto the beach, Jessica looked up and watched them. She thought of the copy of *Allure* and grinned. The hottest summer of her life had officially begun.