

Chapter One

Long before there were texts, tweets, friend requests, or, for that matter, unlimited social networks, there was good old fashion “hanging-out.” We had no need for such things as instant messaging, or elaborate check-ins to let others know where we were. Nope, if we wanted to let others know what mayhem we were experiencing, or conjuring, we had to use the dial-up landline to tell our story. A proven method for generations, it was how we common folk reached out to family and friends.

Parties, furthermore, were of the paper invitation kind, or word-of-mouth; or, perhaps, the occasional flier. Flyers were a virtual guarantee that your party would become known as legendary. They were, however, used sparingly and only if you were sure your party could handle dozens of wanted and unwanted guests. And, of course, we had more than a few of those over the years. In general, people got together, listened to music, told tales, and had a few laughs, with or without spiked punch.

Flyer or not, the most legendary of these parties seemed to happen on, or near, Halloween. And this one promised to be the most legendary of all. All I had to do was take my younger siblings trick-or-treating and then I was free to party with Destiny.

Destiny was a Cuban immigrant who ended up in California, from Cuba, via Florida. I first laid eyes on her in my Intro to Spanish class. Why she had to take beginning Spanish, I never did figure out. But she could speak better Spanish than anyone at the school, including the teachers, and with much more eloquence. She sat two seats up and across the aisle, so I could easily keep an eye on her at all times, particularly when she wore short skirts. And though she didn’t seem too freaked out, I’m pretty sure she knew I was always checking her out. At least she never let on, sparing my embarrassment.

For obvious reasons, Destiny was the teacher's pet. She was often called upon to share her Spanish stories, as she could write entire paragraphs before the rest of us figured out a sentence. As I look back, I'm not sure I learned very much from my Spanish lessons, but, for some reason, it was the only class I never missed. I treasured the moments when Destiny would read her stories. I could get away with gawking at her without seeming super-creepy. It gave me plenty of opportunity to carefully inspect her curves, which, in my opinion, were, by far, the best in the school. Destiny had olive skin, and a beautiful face that was highlighted by dark, bedroom-eyes—set above full cheeks. Topping off the exotic ensemble were dark-red, very kissable lips. Her beautiful face, sitting atop her curvy body, was framed by long, thick, curly-black hair. And when she read her stories, I was mesmerized, though I had no idea what the heck she was saying. But who cared, it always sounded great to me. And I'm pretty sure I didn't hear very much of it anyway, since I was too busy answering the whispered question, "What more could one ask for?"