

We, The Nighthawks
Chapter One

“So how did your date with Heather go?”

“Come on, Hailey. You don’t wanna talk about that, right?”

“You said you still wanted to be friends, Conner. Friends can talk to each other about their love lives. So did you mean it, or was that just letting me down gently?”

It had definitely been the former. In fact, while he was out running a few pre-Christmas errands for his mom, stopping by Hailey McManus’s house had been on his To Do list as “let Hailey down” followed by a sad face. Which he’d further amended by giving it a tear drop. Still, he might not be especially experienced with girls, but he knew that there was no “gently” in telling them flat out you were letting them down gently.

“Well, OK. It went great, actually. We had a really nice time.”

Hailey rolled her eyes and threw one of her bed’s numerous stuffed animals at him, bouncing off his chest to land among the dirty clothes piled around the room. “Oh good grief, you don’t have to be coy about it. Details, Conner! I promise, I’m not gonna freak out. Yeah, I was upset at first, but really, I’m over it.”

Conner had serious doubts about this claim. For one, what he’d done to her had been objectively thoughtless, bordering on cruel. They both knew she’d been crushing on him for a long while, that he was the first guy she’d ever slept with, that their breakup mid-semester had been devastating for her. Then, right before finals, after humiliating himself by fainting in the midst of asking out Heather Blake, he’d decided to throw in the towel and told Hailey he wanted to give it another shot. Why not? She might get on his nerves sometimes, but she definitely wouldn’t complain, and even if he was using her a bit, she’d have been perfectly happy to be used. Only then, later that same day, Heather turned around and agreed to go out with him, and in the chaos, he’d completely stood up Hailey, forgetting about it until the following day.

He’d texted her to apologize, but the response had been monosyllabic. Clearly that hadn’t cut it, and he owed her more than that, so here he was. It was the first Sunday of winter break; he’d wanted to bite the bullet on this. But instead of getting all weepy on him, she’d been nothing but smiles and sunshine, even somehow managed to talk him back into her bedroom. With Hailey’s mom and her brother Doug home, he wasn’t worried she’d try any awkward hanky panky.

Not much, anyway. Conner had noticed she’d closed her bedroom door behind them.

“Uh, all right. Sure. Not a lot to tell. I took her to Il Parata – you know it?”

“Oh wow, yeah, I *love* that place.”

“Me too. My stepsister suggested it, and she was totally right. I had the chicken marsala, and Heather ordered the shrimp alfredo.” He wasn’t sure what to say. “Breadsticks. Their breadsticks are insanely good. Have you tried them?”

“Uh huh, right, so you had food, good. So, then... did you...?” She arched an eyebrow.

“Oh. Yeah. So then, we, um, went to the Frostop and got dessert. I thought it was kinda weird getting ice cream in December, but she—”

“Get to the good part! Did you get anywhere with her or what?”

In spite of the awkwardness of the situation, he couldn't keep a grin from his face – and Hailey saw it immediately. “You did! You so did! I remember your ‘I got lucky’ face, Conner, and that is SO it!”

“It is not!”

“It is!” She hopped up to her feet and gave him a playful shove. “Come on, tell me everything! Did it get serious?”

“A gentleman doesn't kiss and tell, Hailey. No way.” To say nothing of how totally weird it would be discussing it with his ex-girlfriend.

“So you're saying there was kissing?” she teased, making smoochy noises and giggling. “And don't try to pretend you're gentleman, Conner.”

“I so am!”

“I think you were standing right on that very spot when you gave me a facial and told me I was ‘one hell of a cocksucker,’ as I recall.”

His cheeks colored. “Hey, you were the one who started the dirty talk. I was only playing along!”

She patted his bicep reassuringly, though he couldn't help stepping back, worried that one touch could become several. “I'm not making an accusation. I *liked* that you weren't a gentleman. So tell me already. Were her boobs as amazing as everyone says? I only ever saw them in freshman gym class, and that was like two or three cup sizes ago for her.”

“They were... good.” He stopped himself too late. He should *not* be talking about this with her! But he hadn't had a chance to tell anyone yet, and it was impossible not to brag. First off, she'd driven him crazy all through dinner with this incredibly snug sweater, clinging to her breasts so tightly it distended the wool in between them. Then, far better still, they'd made out in the back of his car at MacArthur Park, and she'd taken her shirt off again and let him suck on those glorious wonders for most of an hour. Neither of them had actually taken off any pants, so he'd gone home with balls bluer than he might've liked, but no matter. He'd *made out* with *Heather Blake*. He'd been fantasizing about that for years.

“Good? The living legend didn't live up to the hype, eh?”

“Living legend?”

“Don't pretend you don't know full well what I'm talking about. Every in school raves about that girl's chest. Except, apparently, the guy who just got firsthand experience with it. Makes sense, I suppose. You know, I think she's actually the same size as me?”

“The hell she is!” Again, Conner spoke without thinking. It was easy to forget that Hailey McManus, the girl known throughout Northside High as Hefty Hailey, didn't see the same girl he saw when he looked at her. To her, she was the pudgy, pasty frizzy-haired girl she'd seen in the mirror her whole life. Conner alone knew that, thanks to TIOS – This Is Our Story, the

school's seemingly magical eponymous yearbook software – she'd switched bodies with Hayleigh McKnight. Hayleigh was the reason Hailey had needed her alliterative nickname. Hottie Hayleigh was one of the best-looking girls in school. Or had been, before TIOS, not that anyone but Conner was aware.

Though, per his present outburst, Hayleigh (now Hailey) was a C cup – nowhere near the mountain peaks on Heather's chest.

Hailey waved away his protest. "Well, we haven't swapped bras or anything, obviously, but yeah. Skinny girls with big boobs just look bigger is all."

"She's not skinny."

"She's skinnier than me," Hailey said. Also untrue. Heather had a cute bit of baby fat on her; Hailey's new body was quite lean.

"Either way. The date went well."

Hailey plainly wasn't letting him off that easily. "So did you just play with her tits, or did she actually do anything for you?"

Conner's jaw hung open. "Hailey!"

"What? Just curious if she's the princess I pegged her for or if she knows how to use her cunt to get you off."

"Come on, don't..."

"So she didn't."

"Not that it's any of your business, but no, she didn't. And that's fine."

"Did you even try to get her to...?"

He frowned. "No. Not too hard, anyway." She'd moved his hand from the front of her pants to the back, and he'd left it at that.

"Poor baby. Want me to take care of it? I've missed your cock so bad, Conner. I would be so good to you." She took a step towards him. He didn't know at what point she'd gotten so confident, but this was a far cry from the timid, desperate Hailey he'd first fooled around with last fall.

"Hailey, no. We're friends now. That's all. You can't say things like that!" Conner back-pedaled until he hit the door, Hailey following him all the way, not stopping until her chest was pressed against him. "And I'm dating Heather now!"

"That sounded like an afterthought," she said, grinning with perfect, dazzling teeth. "Heather doesn't have to know. And I promise, I'll be so fucking friendly to you. If she won't take care of you, you deserve a little release."

"I... No, I shouldn't...do, um, that..." Damn, she was sexy.

She took his hands, and, met with no resistance, placed them on her boobs. "You don't have to do anything, Conner. I'll do everything."

"I... I..."

Heather's words echoed back to him, that soon they'd be going their separate ways, that relationships were temporary, that it couldn't become anything serious...

Oh, fuck it. He leaned forward. And at that precise moment, the door opened up right into his butt. “Oh! Sorry, kids,” came Hailey’s mom’s voice. “Hailey, I just need to get your laundry, all right pumpkin? I’ll be in and out.”

He stumbled out of the way of the door, and Hailey stepped backward. “I was actually just going,” he said as she came in, laundry basket in hand.

“Oh, that’s too bad. Those roads are real slick, Conner. You drive careful, OK?”

“I won’t. And hey, Merry Christmas.”

“So, how’d the second date go, dude?”

Conner inched as far away from Owen as he could manage, squirming into the farthest corner of the couch. “It... you know. It was...” He risked a glance to his left. “I’m sorry, but could you two not do while I’m over here?”

“Do what?” Angelica asked, hungrily nuzzling her cheeks into Owen’s crotch.

“*That*, Ang. You’re practically...”

“Motorboating my balls?” Owen supplied. “I know. Hot, right?”

“Not for me!” He looked away again. “She’s my sister, man.”

“Stepsister, actually. Totally legal. What a difference a suffix makes, right?”

“Prefix,” the stepsiblings corrected in unison. Angelica continued, speaking directly into Owen’s groin. “And legal or not, don’t touch me. Be grateful I’m even letting you come over here, Goner.”

“Grateful. For *you* letting *me* come over to *my* best friend’s house.”

“Yeah. I’m supposed to be collecting on my Christmas present right now, but instead, no, I’m holding back and letting you two have your gossip hour.”

“This is holding back?” he asked, looking over and immediately away at the sight of her licking the front of his sweatpants. He supposed it probably was, though. TIOS was nothing if not hamfisted when it came to imposing the editor-in-chief’s notation. And when Owen had convinced him to write that she couldn’t get enough of his dick... Angelica’s social circle now consisted of Owen and his friends Dick and the Harry twins. She didn’t seem to mind, though. Somehow. It was the only balm for Conner’s guilty conscience over turning his stepsister into his friend’s personal sex toy, to say nothing of having accidentally re-enrolled her in high school despite having graduated two years earlier.

“You have no idea,” she murmured, sighing breathily.

“Dare I even ask what her present was?”

“All access pass to my dick for the rest of break.” Owen grinned arrogantly, scratching the back of Angelica’s head. If she minded being handled like a housecat, she didn’t say. “And she’s not gonna hold back from unwrapping much longer, so come on. Dish. How’d it go?”

“Pretty well, I think. She definitely looked amazing. Wore this blue shirt I’ve seen her wear to school, but man. Two fewer buttons.”

“What a difference two buttons make, eh?” Angelica giggled. “Especially on a pair of sweater cows like *those*.”

“I thought you didn’t like the term ‘sweater cows,’” Owen grouched.

“For mine, yeah. Mine are sweater puppies, and they’re even more adorable. Right?” She looked up, and despite the fact that Owen could open his fly and make her drool like a different set of puppies, he almost flinched back at the hard look there.

“Right,” the boys said in unison. Owen continued, giving an appreciative grope of Angelica’s boobs. “So anyway, she’s lookin’ hot, and...? Finally make it past second?”

“You know, for normal couples, there’s more to a date than just fooling around. For your information, we—” He made the mistake of looking over again. “Dammit, Angelica! Do you have any idea how distracting that is?”

She shrugged, taking another long lick up Owen’s now exposed shaft. “What? I was being quiet about it.”

“Can you not wait half a freaking hour so he and I can talk in peace?”

“Half an hour? Better be one hell of a story,” Owen grumbled.

“You bitch an awful lot for a guy who, I dunno, *made me this way*,” she snapped. Another slow lick, the smile immediately returning to her face.

“Can you at least, I dunno...” Conner looked around. He quickly spotted the throw blanket on the back of the couch and jerked it out from behind his friend, then draped it over his stepsister’s head. “Ugh. There.”

“Did you just drape a blanket over my head like I’m a friggin’ cmmfmmddmm... mmm...”

Her protests were cut off by Owen gripping her head and planting it on his cock. “Don’t talk with your mouth full, babe.”

The lump under the blanket wriggled in his lap. She wasn’t trying to be quiet any more, but the blanket helped. “I still can’t believe she lets you do that.”

“Praise be to TIOS, man. Speaking of, you plant any other seeds of truthiness in Heather yet? Maybe tell her science has proved that sucking dick twice a day can double your IQ?”

Conner grimaced, but then laughed in spite of himself. One more TIOS-related accident. His efforts to record a sweet moment, in which Heather defended his word over that jerk Jordan Lyons’, had caused her to apparently believe every word he said as true. Conner hadn’t pressed it, both out of feeling awkward abusing her trust and because he didn’t want to see the limits of it. Hadn’t pressed except, that is, for the time he told her she’d agreed to go out with him, and that she was really attracted to him, and liked to have her boobs notice. She liked him, though, so it was a victimless crime. Wasn’t it?

Still, he wasn’t about to try to turn her into another Angelica. He actually cared about Heather. That she was so beautiful was simply a bonus. “No, I didn’t. I’ve spent the last month learning to watch what I say around her precisely to avoid doing something to fuck up her head.”

“I was actually more talking about fucking her head. Sans the up.” His eyes squeezed shut. “Oh wow. Keep doing that, Ang.”

Conner tried to ignore that. “Anyway, no, she didn’t... do that. We actually didn’t even make out this time, except for a kiss at the end. Not every date has to end in getting off for it to be a success.”

A muffled voice came from beneath the blanket. “You tried to though, right?”

He frowned. “I... am working on my game.”

“Translation: the barbarian was thwarted at the moat.” Her laugh continued as her mouth resumed its more pressing work.

“Sorry, man. Was she just tired, or...?”

Conner frowned. “Not everyone is ruled by their libidos. It’s not a big deal if she wasn’t interested in that this one time. We’ve already made out, like, two other times.”

“Yeah, totally,” Owen agreed.

“I’m serious! It was nothing. And she said I could call her again sometime soon and set up another date. So there.”

Angelica once more stopped playing with her Christmas present long enough to chime in. “Wait, she told you to ask her out again, or you suggested it, and she said OK?”

He thought back on it. “The second one, I guess. Why, is that bad?”

“No, it’s probably fine,” she replied in her least convincing tone that wasn’t sarcasm.

“Keep on at it.” With that, she immediately took her own advice, and the muted slurping resumed.

“It was no big deal,” Conner insisted. “Really, things went fine.”

Owen nodded. “No, yeah, it sounds like it. You guys make such a good couple and all, and stuff. You, uh, you know, bringing her over for New Year’s?”

He shook his head. “I invited her, but she’s going to a party.”

“Jayce Deacon’s thing?”

Conner frowned at the talking blanket. “How’d you know?”

“I’m hot, she’s hot. We get invited to the same places.” More slurping.

“So, you’re gonna ditch us for the cool kids table, huh,” Owen said. Though he didn’t say it like he’d mind. Right now, it wasn’t hard to see why the notion of being left alone with Angelica had its appeal.

“No, I’ll still be here. What, you think I wanna spend New Year’s Eve with those jerks? Especially after that whole... episode.” He didn’t like to even use the word “fainting” any more. Lord, it had been humiliating.

“But she invited you, right?” Owen asked.

His friend considered. “Hmm. I’m not sure she technically did—”

“Oh, Goner...” said the blanket.

“—but I think only because I didn’t show any interest. Like, she could tell I wouldn’t wanna go. I mean, she’s got her life and I’ve got mine, right?”

Owen nodded slowly. “Right. Yeah, probably better that way, man.”

Conner’s eyes narrowed, but he couldn’t tell if Owen was placating him or simply too distracted by the wet thing on his dick to pay attention. His cheeks were definitely beginning to match his red hair in hue. “Anyway, the date went fine, and I’m going to leave before this gets any weirder.”

“Oh thank god,” Angelica cried, throwing the blanket away.

To his credit, Conner only stared at her for a moment before averting his gaze.

“Angelica! How the hell did you take your clothes off under there!”

“I had plenty of room.”

“That is not a very big blanket.”

“I’m flexible. And motivated.”

“You’re something, all right.” His eyes betrayed him with another glance.

She planted her hands on her hips, legs shoulder-width apart, tits and pussy on full display. “Get your eyeful? Happy now? Now I thought someone said something about you leaving.”

“I am.” He started up the steps, hastening as he could still hear them.

“Mind if this barbarian crosses your moat, Ang?”

“I’m so fucking wet, you’re gonna need a fucking canoe. Now get that thing in me.”

Conner slammed the door behind him. Sheesh. Those two were practically animals. He was actually glad that he and Heather weren’t so wild. They were taking it slow, and that was going to be better, in the long run.

Shannon heard the front door open and close. Her husband was sound asleep on the recliner. That was common enough as to be practically expected, but what she hadn't expected was to hear the door so soon. She'd been making cookies. (Oatmeal raisin, Conner's favorite.) She figured it might give her a good pretext to chat him up about this new girl he was seeing, and might help cheer him up a little. She could tell her boy had been dreading the return to school, and even if she didn't know why, she wanted to do her best to cheer him up, like a mother should.

"Angelica, is that you?" she called. Angelica's dad had no trouble napping through disruption, so she didn't bother holding back. Though having her come back so early would be surprising, too. Frankly, she was a bit concerned at all the time her stepdaughter spent out and about with her friends, but at twenty-one years old, it really wasn't her place to tell her when and how to spend her time. Even if she was still in high school.

"It's me, mom," came Conner's voice. It sounded smaller than it should, and her motherly instincts kicked in immediately. She hustled over to the landing, where her son was sitting on a step, slowly taking a shoe off. When she arrived in front of him, though, she could see that though he looked so handsome in his new outfit he'd gotten with the gift card his stepdad had given him for Christmas, his face was despondent.

"What's going on, sweetheart? You're home early."

"Yeah," was all he said.

She wracked her brain to think why he'd be back so soon. Her son was a catch, and if he'd waited longer than she had to start dating, it was only because he was very involved in his studies and activities, while she'd been a pretty young girl raised in a household with expectations of motherhood right out of high school. If not sooner.

"What happened? Was she not feeling well, or—"

"Nothing. We just... ended early." He sniffled.

Shannon sat down next to her son and put an arm around him. "Do you wanna talk about it?"

The tender touch of his mother was all it took to break through the dam, and the tears starting flowing. Hard. It was one of those whiny-growly ugly-cry kinds of flows. There were words, almost none of which she could understand, except for the more drawn out...

"She broke up with me!" And then immediately started bawling, and she immediately started mothering. Conner didn't notice his stepdad rounding the corner, looking puzzled at this bizarre noise – protracted enough to wake even him – but Shannon shooed him away, and with a shrug, he shuffled down to their bedroom to get away from this discomfiting outburst.

"Come on, sweetheart. I'll make you some cookies. We'll talk."

Numbly, her son let her herd him up to the kitchen and into his usual chair, right in front of the groove he'd worn in it trying to saw into the table with a butter knife when he was three. He was still crying when the first pan came out. She spatulaed a few onto a plate and poured him a tall glass of milk.

“So,” Shannon said softly, squeezing her son’s hand. “Tell me the story.”

