

CASTING:

Disclaimer: None of these photos belong to me. I found them on Pinterest so the source link is provided.

I have a TON of deleted scenes from this book, so this is just an example of one I removed when I had, at one point, been showing more of the day Vanessa disappeared. In this version, Vanessa was drinking quite a bit, and I took that out of the storyline. If you haven't read the book, this might be a bit spoilery, so read at your own caution. Enjoy!

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FINN

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VANESSA

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LORELEI

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Vanessa - Deleted Scene From The Day She Disappeared

“Who’s ready to head to the river?” I said, hopping onto the kitchen counter to show off my long legs. I’d just bought a killer bikini, and I couldn’t wait to get out there and really show it off.

“I’ve been ready,” Finn said, barely glancing at my legs. Or my boobs, for that matter.

I frowned. He’d been acting strange for the past couple of weeks. Did he know?

I shook my head. There was no way he knew, but there was something else going on, and I couldn’t quite put my finger on it.

Six months ago, he wouldn’t have been able to take his eyes off me in a bikini like this. So, what was up with him now? Had he just lost interest?

“Who are we still waiting on?” I asked.

“Kenneth’s still upstairs, and Piper’s out by the pool. Where’s Kirin?”

“Last time I saw him, he was in Mom and Dad’s room like he owned the place,” I said. Kirin was the oldest one here, and that seemed to go to his head. He was driving me crazy, acting like he was the one in charge in the absence of adult supervision.

What a dork, but I loved him.

Besides, he was the coolest big brother a girl could have. He’d been the one who’d gotten us the booze, too, which was already going to my head after just a couple shots. I still wasn’t sure how he’d managed it, since he wasn’t twenty-one yet, but when I asked, he said he had connections. Whatever that meant.

I was tempted to do one more shot before we headed down to the dock, but since I nearly stumbled trying to walk back toward the fridge, I decided against it. There would be plenty of time to get smashed later, if we wanted.

Besides, the last thing I wanted to do was end up puking in the float like a loser as we made our way down the river. Yuck.

“A bit too much to drink, already, Ness?” Finn asked, raising a disapproving eyebrow.

I shrugged, trying to pretend I hadn’t just stumbled my way across the kitchen floor.

How many had I downed already, anyway? I thought it was just three, but maybe it had been four.

Or was it five?

No, definitely not five.

I think.

“I’m fine,” I said, throwing my arms around him to steady myself. “What about you? Aren’t you drinking?”

He physically removed my arms from his neck and backed away, bruising my pride more than anything. I was, after all, his half-naked hot girlfriend. He shouldn’t have been able to get enough of me, and yet here he was, acting like the sight of me disgusted him.

For a second, I felt the vodka threatening to come back up.

How much did he know? I’d been so careful.

“Nah,” he said. “I might have a few later, but I don’t feel like it right now.”

“Of course not,” I said. “You’re not feeling like much of anything these days, are you?”

I'd mumbled it so low, I didn't think he could hear me, but he wrapped his hand around my arm and looked me in the eyes.

"What's that supposed to mean?" he asked.

I shrugged. "Nothing. Just that you used to be a lot more interesting," I said. "Or maybe I'm the one who isn't interesting, anymore?"

I said it like a question, suddenly feeling like a child who wanted desperately to know what I'd done wrong.

Only, I knew exactly what I'd done wrong. I just hadn't realized he knew.

And what if he does? Will he tell?

"Don't be so dramatic, Ness," he said. "Not everything needs to turn into an argument, okay?"

"Who's arguing?" I asked, feeling the familiar tickle of anger in my throat. Lately, it seemed like all our conversations turned into fights.

"Just drop it, okay?" he said, turning back to grab a bottle of water out of the fridge. "I don't want to fight. Not this weekend."

"Fine," I said. "I never want to fight, you know? We never used to argue about anything."

I was about to ask him if he remembered when we were really happy and head over heels for each other at the beginning, but I suddenly realized he'd stopped listening to me.

He was still standing there, nodding like he was listening, but his eyes had landed on something he obviously found much more interesting.

Wishing I didn't care, I casually turned around to follow his gaze to the stairs, my mouth dropping open slightly as Lorelei stepped onto the last stair, her chestnut hair falling over her shoulders in light waves.

She wore a teal bikini I'd never seen before, and she looked amazing in it. In fact, I didn't think I'd ever seen her in a bikini before. At least not since we were kids. She wore a white, crochet coverup over it, but it didn't hide her curves.

I glanced from Finn to Lore, jealousy stabbing through me as they shared a look, followed by a very obvious non-look that said, hey I like you but I don't want anyone to know.

When the hell had this happened?

It was no secret to me that Lorelei had been crushing on Finn for as long as I could remember, but since when had Finn given a shit about her? Well, as more than friends, anyway?

I cleared my throat and stepped into his line of sight.

"Hi, Vanessa, remember? Your girlfriend? Or did something happen lately that I need to be aware of?"

Finn forced his eyes away from Lorelei and planted a look on his face that I was all-too-familiar with. It was a look that said, *stop being so dramatic*. It was one of his favorite looks lately, even when he was the one who'd done something wrong.

"What are you talking about?" he asked. "Of course you're still my girlfriend. What's going on with you lately? It's like you just want to start an argument."

And there it was. No matter what happened, it was always my fault.

But when I looked back at Lorelei, she was still staring at Finn, smiling. When she caught my eye, though, she quickly frowned and looked away.

She looked...guilty.

I shook my head, wondering how in the world I'd missed this little budding flirtation.

Except I knew exactly how I'd missed it. After all I'd been flirting with someone else, too, and so help me God if anyone in this room ever found out who.