

Excerpt #2: (longer excerpt)

“I’m assigned to the Kentuckians, not to one player.” Brooks sat up straighter in her chair. Hard gaze or not, these two were not going to derail her assignment. With the veritable all-access pass she had with the team, she could create real buzz. Maybe land a spot at the network sports desk or maybe even in the booth during games. “I can’t report on the other players if I’m all the way in—” she looked from man to man.

“Hyde Park,” Jonas said, reluctantly. The neighborhood was a ten-minute drive from the training camp facility. Not so far away she couldn’t report on what was going on, but something was off about this request.

“And several team staffers will be on hand, talking to the boys about nutrition and proper training as well as the sport fundamentals,” Earl added. “Think of it as a team training camp, but with an emphasis on kids, not professional athletes.”

With the right angle, this could be something the network would be interested in. There were several initiatives the league was involved in to get kids more active, and this camp sounded like a way to bridge league and team programs. But it could just as easily be covered by the local affiliate. They didn’t need her, and she did need an interview with Jonas. “Why me?”

Earl studied her for a long moment, which was odd because Jonas seemed to be making a point of not looking at her. Not even a sideways glance. His chocolate-brown eyes were focused on the corner wall seam as if something magical might appear at any moment. Weird. He’d had no problem giving her a hard time in the locker room yesterday. He might not like her reporter side, but he liked other parts of her. After yesterday’s locker room incident, Brooks knew where she stood on the personal like-o-meter of Jonas Nash.

The thought sent a shiver of excitement up her spine.

She wouldn’t do anything with the knowledge; she’d stopped dating jocks in high school. But it was still nice to be noticed by a man like Jonas.

“The interview.”

Brooks’s breath caught in her throat. “I get the interview when you get the coverage for the charity camp.”

“It’s not a charity, these kids deserve better than pot-holed streets disguised as

basketball courts or football fields.” Finally, Jonas joined the conversation, although he still wasn’t looking directly at her. Instead, those deep, deep eyes were fixed on something just above Brooks’s head.

“Again, not my assignment. I’m the beat reporter assigned to report on your team, not your charity work.”

Jonas clenched his jaw. “You can report on the charity work or you can deal with a locker room full of men who won’t give you the time of day through early February,” he said. “Assuming we’re playing for the championship.”

“You can’t shut me out.”

“Oh, you can walk that fine ass into the lockers any time. Finding someone who will talk to you, that’s a whole other subject.”