

The Ultimate Reunion Contest

Untitled

by Marcy Bassett-Kennedy

“She’s in the elevator on her way down. Be ready to catch the shot when she—” The elevator doors mercifully slammed shut drowning out the rest of what the producer barked into his radio.

Taylor Clarke punched the button for the first floor, leaned her back against the cold metal wall of the hotel elevator, and breathed a heavy sigh of relief. She had at least two minutes before she had to smile for the cameras again.

What the hell have I gotten myself into? Taylor wondered as she covered her face with her hands and banged her head gently against the wall. Despite all the efforts that she’d put into increasing her self-confidence, the prospect of seeing Griffin again brought all of her insecurities back, and she didn’t like it.

When the producer of the reality show *Reunited* first contacted her and said that Griffin Maxwell wanted to reunite with her on national television, she’d been too busy imagining the look on his face when he saw the *new* her to think about the consequences. Who’d have thought it would be so difficult to have all eyes—and camera lenses—on her, following her every move? Her stomach churned again at the thought. No matter how much she tried there were some things she’d never get used to.

Watching the floors numbers count down, Taylor’s heart hammered in her chest as if it was in too small a space. In the next few minutes she was going to see Griffin again after seven years. She drummed her red manicured fingernails on the handrail and tried to fight her mounting desire to flee. Apparently she wasn’t as ready for this as she’d imagined.

Get a grip. You have to keep it together. If anyone should be nervous it was Griffin. Frankly, given the way they’d left things she was shocked that he’d want to reunite at all, let alone on television in front of millions of viewers. Then again, Griffin never was one to do what was expected of him.

Taking a deep breath she fluffed her recently highlighted hair then adjusted her form-fitting red sweater to ensure that she wasn’t showing too much cleavage for television. She’d be damned if she was going to have the country thinking she was some poor jilted ex-girlfriend nervously waiting to see if her former beau wanted to take her back. She was a confident, successful woman; she needed to act the part.

Seven years she’d waited for this moment. She was ready. She could do this.

Three. Two. One. The elevator lurched to a stop on the first floor, and the doors slid open to reveal a mob of camera and lighting people all waiting for *her*. The producer had told her to try and act normal in front of the cameras, but how was that possible? Nothing about this situation was normal.

As she stepped out of the elevator and walked to the lobby with two cameras only a few feet in front of her, Taylor was suddenly very aware of every movement of her body. Every step she took in her three-inch heels seemed wobbly, unstable. Every swing of her arms seemed awkward, unnatural. She prayed that it was all in her head.

When she arrived in the lobby after a short and unnerving walk, she couldn't see Griffin amidst all of the crew and equipment. She tried unsuccessfully to peek around them. Then the group parted like the Red Sea, and she got her first glimpse of her first love.

The recent society page photos hadn't done him justice. Unfortunately he looked just as gorgeous as she remembered. The boyish good looks that had haunted her dreams were still there, but now they mingled with a new maturity that she found equally as appealing. His dark brown hair was shorter, less shaggy than the last time she saw him. And the sleek black suit he wore probably cost the equivalent of what he paid for his entire wardrobe when they'd been together.

But the one thing that hadn't changed was his eyes. They were still the same sparkling blue that, even after three years together, had never failed to cause her stomach to flip whenever they met hers.

And today was no exception.

"Taylor, you look... you look great. Wow."

As much as she'd looked forward to seeing his surprise, the shock in his voice was flattering and insulting all at the same time. She knew that she looked different, but had she really looked that horrible before?

Suddenly she was angry. So angry. Angry with herself for caring so much about what he thought of her new look. Angry with him for showing more interest in her looks today than he had the entire time they were together. And most of all, angry with him for leaving her and causing her so many years of heartache.

She couldn't stand to look at him. Diverting her eyes from his she spotted a glass of water on the table beside him. Without thinking Taylor reached down, snatched the glass, and threw the water directly into Griffin's face.

"That's for leaving me at the altar," she snapped.

The only sounds that followed were Griffin's sputtering and a small gasp from one of the crewmembers. He used the sleeve of his expensive suit jacket to wipe the water from his eyes. Once his arm no longer hid his face, Taylor could see a small smile tugging at the corners of his lips.

"I see you haven't lost your edge," he responded.

She detected a hint of laughter in his voice.

"That's right. And don't you forget it," she retorted. And with an exasperated huff and a quick glance to ensure that the cameras caught the whole exchange, Taylor spun on her heel and marched through the hotel entrance out into the warm August afternoon.

She'd finally gotten her revenge on Griffin Maxwell, and *damn* it felt good.

The End