



By Abbi Glines



You Were Mine: A Rosemary Beach Novel (The Rosemary Beach Series Book 9) By Abbi Glines



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That was before he met Beth Lowry.

It was only supposed to be a summer fling. She was a sixteen-year-old trailer-park girl who served drinks to his friends at Kerrington Country Club. They didn't run in the same social circles. No one even knew they were friends, let alone lovers. Yet, for one summer, Bethy became his entire world.

But he couldn't give up on his plan. He needed to leave Rosemary Beach, but he vowed he would come back for her.

Problem was, by the time he came back—years later than promised—it was too late. His cousin, Jace, had already claimed the woman he loved...

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• Sales Rank: #43839 in eBooks • Published on: 2014-12-02 • Released on: 2014-12-02 Format: Kindle eBook



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Editorial Review

About the Author

Abbi Glines is the *New York Times*, *USA TODAY*, and *Wall Street Journal* bestselling author of the Rosemary Beach, Field Party, Sea Breeze, Vincent Boys, and Existence series. A devoted book lover, Abbi lives with her family in Alabama. She maintains a Twitter addiction at @AbbiGlines and can also be found at Facebook.com/AbbiGlinesAuthor and AbbiGlines.com.

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Tripp

Eight years ago

It wasn't just another summer. It was my last summer here in Rosemary Beach. I was already feeling the suffocating presence of my father and his plans for me. He was so sure I'd leave for Yale in the fall. I'd gotten in, thanks to his connections. He'd made me take a tour of the campus, and once I was in, he'd forced me to accept. "Nobody turns down Yale." It was all that ever came out of his mouth anymore. Yale this, Yale that. Goddamn Yale.

I wanted to be on my Harley. I wanted another fucking tattoo. I wanted to feel the wind in my hair and know I had nowhere I had to be. That life was free. I was free. Before this summer was over, I was going to ride off without a word. Leave behind the money and power that came with being a Newark and find my path. This wasn't my world. I would never fit in here.

"Hey, sweetie, I didn't see you walk in," London Winchester said as she slipped her arms around one of mine and held on. That was another reason I had to get the fuck out of here. London. My mother was already planning our wedding. Didn't matter that I'd broken up with her last month. London, her mother, and my mother all believed I was just going through a moody phase or something. My mother said it was OK if I needed to sow some wild oats this summer. London would be patient.

"Where's Rush?" I asked, glancing around the house full of people. If Rush Finlay was throwing parties again, then his mother and his younger sister, Nan, had to be out of town. Rush owned the place. His father was the drummer in the legendary rock band Slacker Demon. His mother and his sister benefited from all the money Rush had, thanks to his dad. Rush's mother had been a groupie once, and although Rush's dad, Dean Finlay, seemed to care about his kid, he didn't give a shit about Rush's mom. They had never married. Nan had another father, who was also out of the picture.

"Outside by the pool. Want me to take you to him?" she asked sweetly. That sweet tone was so fucking fake it was ridiculous. The girl was venomous. I'd seen her in action.

"I can find him," I replied, shaking her loose and walking away without a backward glance.

"Really? This is how you're going to be now? I won't wait around on you forever, Tripp Newark!" she called out after me.

"Good," I said calmly over my shoulder, then headed into the crowd, hoping to get some people and some distance between us. I'd been with her for two years. She'd been a really good fuck, and once I thought maybe she was it. But I could never actually say I was in love with her. This past year, I had realized I was simply tolerating her. I dreaded seeing her, and when I faced the facts, I realized I was keeping her around to make my parents happy. But I was done with that. No more keeping the parents happy. I was keeping me happy.

"Tripp!" Woods Kerrington called out from a circle of girls surrounding him. He was such a fucking Romeo. He made them all believe they had a chance.

Holding in a chuckle, I nodded my head in his direction. "What's up."

"Hopefully a lot of things real soon," he replied, and this time I laughed. "Jace is outside with Rush and Grant if you're looking for him."

"Thanks."

Jace was my younger cousin, and Woods was Jace's best friend. I'd had them both in my life for as long as I could remember.

Turning through the crowd, I headed for the back door.

"Stop it! I said no, Jonathon. I'm not interested."

I stopped in my tracks. That didn't sound good.

"I got you in here tonight, and I'm not getting any thanks for it?" The guy was angry and sounded like a prick.

The girl didn't respond right away. I moved toward their voices and stopped outside the kitchen. I recognized the Jonathon guy the girl was talking to. He was a tennis instructor at Kerrington Country Club, which was owned by Woods's family. He was also a notorious asshole and had fucked most of the cougars in town. If he was about to take advantage of this girl, then I was going to throw his ass out.

"I just . . . I didn't know . . . I want to leave." The way the girl's timid voice cracked told me she was scared.

"Fuck that, bitch. I don't care how damn hot your tits are. I'm not dealing with this shit. You can find the door by yourself," Jonathon snarled.

I took a step toward the door as Jonathon stalked through it. Stupid little fuck.

I shoved him back into the kitchen with one hard push. He was going to apologize for being a dickhead before I threw him out. I doubted Rush even knew he was here. Jonathon wasn't in our circle of friends. Some of the cougars he had slept with included a couple of our mothers. Not on our favorites list.

Getting his sorry ass to apologize would do him some good. Poor girl should have known better than to mess around with the help at the club. Maybe she'd learn a lesson after this.

"What the fuck?" he shouted, and then his eyes widened when he realized who I was. My dad sat on the

board at the Kerrington Club, and I could have Jonathon fired with one word. He knew it.

"That's what I was wondering, Jonathon. What the fuck? What the fuck are you doing at Finlay's house, and why the fuck are you treating your date so badly? She too young for you? I know you prefer the over-forty crowd," I said, taunting him. I wanted him gone. Just one wrong move, and that was all I needed to make sure he lost his job without feeling a shred of remorse.

"I didn't . . . I mean, I was invited. I got an invite. This is just a girl whose aunt works at the club. She's not anybody."

Glancing over at the girl in question, I recognized her right away from her big brown eyes. She was Darla's niece, Bethy. I'd seen her before. Hell, it was hard to miss her. Jonathon was right about her tits. They were noticeable. But her sweet face and innocent look had kept me from moving in on that. Besides, Darla was scary as hell. She handled hiring the employees at the club, and she'd been there forever.

"Bethy, right?" I asked her.

Her big eyes got even bigger before she nodded.

"This guy's a douchebag, sweetheart. You shouldn't trust him. Be careful who you let take you out."

"You know her?" Jonathon asked incredulously, as if she were too beneath me to notice.

Stupid shit was getting on my last nerve. I turned my attention back to him. "Yeah. I know her aunt. The woman who hired your sorry ass. I wonder how she'd feel if she knew how poorly you were treating her niece?"

Jonathon's fear was obvious. He had a good gig at the club, and he didn't want to lose it.

"Leave. Don't ever come back. Finlay finds out about this, he'll do more than give you a warning. He'll beat your sorry ass. He likes Darla. We all do. Stay the fuck away from her niece."

Jonathon turned his attention to Bethy. The furious gleam in his eyes was directed at her. She shrank farther back, putting more distance between them until her back was pressed to the wall. Dickhead was getting off on scaring her.

Stepping between the two of them, I glared at Jonathon. "Leave. Now."

I could tell it was taking everything he had to keep his mouth shut, but he did. I watched as he muttered a curse and turned to leave the kitchen.

"Make sure you don't stop until you're off this property," I called out after him.

When he was gone, I turned back to Bethy. She was wringing her hands and looking nervous. I'd gotten rid of the prick. Why was she upset now?

"You good now?" I asked her.

She bit her bottom lip, then shrugged. "I, um, don't know."

She didn't know? I couldn't keep from grinning. She was pretty damn cute. But she was young. "Why don't you know?" I asked. I enjoyed the way she talked. Her voice was husky but sweet.

She let out a small sigh and dropped her gaze to the floor. "He was my ride. I don't live close by."

As if I would let her get back into the car with that fucker. He had to be four years older than her. He was older than me. "I'll give you a ride. I'm safe. Jonathon isn't. Besides, he's way too old for you. Dude would go to jail if he touched you."

She lifted her eyes back up to look at me. "I'm almost seventeen," she said, as if that were legal, although she was a little older than I expected. She was so expressive. I liked that. She didn't try to bat her eyelashes or pucker her lips to look sexy. She was real. How long had it been since I'd been with a girl who was real? But then, she was young, and she'd been raised in a very different world from mine.

"Yeah, sweetheart. But he's almost twenty. He shouldn't have gone anywhere near you."

She looked deflated, then nodded. Surely she hadn't wanted to stay with him? Fuck that, what was Darla teaching this girl?

"I'm sorry I ran him off, but he wasn't treating you right."

Those eyes went wide again, and a dimple appeared in her cheek. "Oh, don't apologize for that. He wanted me to go back to a bedroom and uh . . ." She trailed off. She didn't need to explain. I was pretty sure of what he wanted to do back in a bedroom with her.

"Come on. Let's get you home," I said, nodding toward the door. You Were Mine

Prologue

Tripp

Everyone has that defining moment in life. That one choice you have to make. I had my moment, and it has haunted me ever since. In those defining moments, you either pave a road to happiness or you regret every step from then on. For me, I don't know which road would have been the best, because between my two choices, neither of them included her.

I was young and so fucking scared. Scared of being forced by my parents to be someone I didn't want to be. Scared of making the wrong choice. Scared of leaving her. But mostly, I was scared of losing her.

She was my regret. Leaving her changed me. The moment I climbed onto my bike and drove out of Rosemary Beach, Florida, I left true joy behind. I'd only had that summer with her, three months that altered me forever. But what I would never be able to forgive myself for was that they had changed her just as much. She was beyond broken now. I couldn't reach her.

Seeing her in pain broke my soul. Losing my cousin Jace had caused deep pain in both of us, something I never wanted to relive. He would forever be in my heart. I'd never forget his laugh and the easy way he loved and lived his life. He didn't live in the world of fear I inhabited. He chose his path, and he walked it. He was the better man. And I had been able to stand back and let him have her. She deserved the better man.

Now he was gone, and both of our worlds were thrown off-balance. Because I couldn't stand back anymore. No one was protecting her. No one was holding her, but she wouldn't fucking let me near her. She wasn't going to let me fix the past. I'd severed any hope of that when I'd driven away and left her with no other choice but to be with Jace.

If only I could embrace the emptiness and accept it. But I couldn't. Not when I saw her lost, beautiful face. She needed me as much as I needed her. Our story wasn't over. It would never be over. If I had to stay here and watch over her, even though she wouldn't let me get near her, I would. For the rest of my motherfucking life. I'd stay right here. Making sure my Bethy was OK.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Aimee Nguyen:

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