

## Chapter Six – Part 2

“It would be so nice if **SOMETHING**  
made sense for a change . . .”



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**SWEARING** he had heard J-Hopes feet pounding behind him in hot pursuit, RapMonster flew down the long empty third floor hallway, (earbuds in listening to the sounds of his own rap). Eyes darting from side-to-side, he looked frantically for an appropriate spot to duck in and hide.

One would think a hotel would be a hotbed of hiding places, but so far, he had come up empty. Stopping momentarily to catch his breath, he leaned against the wall, examining the last two doors on the left. One seemed to be a room, the other (with no room number) possibly some sort of a closet. That could be the answer. Tugging out the earbuds, leaving them dangling about his neck, he took off for the back wall, taking long aggressive strides. The quiet sounds of a woman’s voice rapping could be heard the closer he got to his goal.

*Aigooo, it sounded like Alex. She had managed to beat him all the way to the top floor and was already hiding. What a coincidence. They could hide together. No telling how long it would take J-Hope to realize where everyone was at. It was a big place.*

Satisfied he had made the right choice, he hauled the door open hopping inside the small dark utility closet, (anxious to have another opportunity to talk with his new found friend).

Glancing back as the door slammed shut behind him, ‘Destruction’ took over . . . The bucket at his feet got the better of him, and unable to control his momentum, felt himself falling forward . . .

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**ABBY** twiddled her fingers in relative boredom. She knew she’d been in the dark, smelly, linen closet for at least five minutes. Staring into the screen of her cell phone, she wished she could text Andrea to find out where she had ended up. *Of course, J-Hope would have to be the damned SEEKER. That left her without a partner.* Wanting to just give up and make her way back to the room, she doubted any of them would even miss her.

In the close quarters, she gave in to the dimness around her, beginning to recite one of Alex’s catchy raps they had made up together in the car on the way to Chicago. Over and over she whispered it until without realizing her voice was projecting loudly, she started to move her entire body and actually imitate her friends crumping stance, arms shooting out in front of her wildly.

*Why didn’t they think she was any fun? Just because she didn’t do Alice games. They were adults for God’s sake. The Alice games were stupid. Well maybe Alice wasn’t . . . but bossy Andrea was.*

Stopping suddenly, she thought she heard footsteps outside the door. *OH shit! She was being too loud. It was probably J-Hope. He had found her out. And, THAT was the reason she didn’t play. Her head was always elsewhere, and she couldn’t focus. Well, so what? How bad could it be to follow him around the hotel looking for the other players? At least she wouldn’t be alone.*

Holding her breath, she stood still as a statue, waiting for the crack in the door when he opened it.

#### WHAT HAPPENED NEXT . . . WAS TOTALLY UNEXPECTED

The door flung open, and a tall blonde-headed, RapMonster flew through the lit opening, eyes peeled on the hallway behind him (as if fearful he was being watched). One foot in and one out, as if in slow motion, he smashed into the large mop bucket, sending it skating in one direction, and he the other. Hurtling across the tiny room, he smashed directly into Abby’s unsuspecting body.

Pinning her to the rack of sheets and towels, he threw his hands up against the metal shelving bars attempting to keep from squeezing her too tightly and possibly breaking a rib.

But . . . it was too late. Chest-to-chest, nose-to-nose, and lip-to-lip they landed.

ANDREA HAD JUST BEEN KISSED . . .

*OH GOD. OH GOD.*



Ripping her lips away, without making a sound, she peeled herself out from under his strong arms and muscular form, headed to the door and the empty hall. The game . . . she just couldn't play anymore.

As if choking, she lurched out into the light, gasping for breath. Sprinting away she could hear the sound of her feet hitting the carpet one leap at a time, coupled with the pounding of her heart. It was awesome . . . HOLY SHIT, it was MORE than awesome . . .

Slipping down the wall, RapMon watched the bottom of Abby's feet as they disappeared into the open doorway. *What the hell had just happened? Did he really freaking kiss her?* Putting one finger to his stinging lips he smiled. *HOT DAMN.*

Trying to clear his spinning head he closed his eyes figuring he could wait out J-Hope's inevitable arrival. But, as luck would have it . . . the eerie voices began to sing-song around him again.



'Snug as a bug in a rug' . . . 'Maybe they're trying to hide their collection of men's boxers in here' . . . and finally, 'SUMRE, we need the box!'.  
  
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**IF** it was one thing J-Hope loved it was a less than traditional game of Hide and Seek. And no matter what his members thought, he was pretty damned good at any version thereof. Figuring he would stay on the bottom floor and let the predictable RapMon have his way up top, he meandered quickly from the gift shop, past the restrooms, on over toward the Golf Shop.

There weren't any good places in the gift shop, and he knew Andrea and Suga wouldn't take up residence in one of the restrooms, so his next option was the small inconspicuous golf store.

Waltzing through the open door, the seasonal golfing center was void of customers, with one lone young man, leaning against the register, chewing a wad of gum, and scanning his cell phone in boredom.

Waving at him in greeting he made his way toward the dressing room in the back. *Surely, they would have to be there, if they'd came here at all.*

Whistling softly, he spotted the heavy curtain directly above the floor. Grinning he bent over slightly, expecting to see two pairs of feet, but oddly . . . finding nothing.

"Humpf," he sniffed shrugging his shoulders questionably knowing he didn't dare fling the curtain open in case someone else was using it. Anything was possible. Shoving his hands in his pockets in disappointment he turned around, making his way toward the clerk.

"HELLO." Greeting the young clerk, his smile returned broadly. "Did one or maybe two . . ." he asked, lifting two fingers in the air, "people come in here a while ago?"

Grinning back, the young man clucked his tongue softly. "Tsk, Tsk, Tsk. I'm not supposed to tell. Butttt . . ." One finger pointed at the curtained room he lifted his head agreeably. "Yep. In there."

"Ahhhh, gamshabinada. Thank you." Bowing graciously his excitement level rising at finding them so quickly, J-Hope turned on his heel heading back to the dressing area again. *This would be record time for a place as large as the hotel. Once he claimed them, he would have two more to help him track down the rest. This Alice game was fun, and right now, he held all the cards.*

Sneaking quietly up to the tiny room, his tennis shoes barely crunched against the concrete floor as he bent at the waist again, attempting to see under the curtain. Still not spotting anyone, he stood up straighter attempting to figure out where they could be.

WHAT HAPPENED NEXT . . . WAS TOTALLY UNEXPECTED

Alex, jumped up on the small corner seat, hanging onto the clothes hook for balance as she stood on tiptoe attempting to see out over the black curtain rod.



*It had to be J-Hope. If she was really quiet, he wouldn't find her. But, maybe she WANTED to be found. Maybe she WANTED to follow him around gathering up the other hidden members. Abby obviously didn't WANT him.*

The quieter she got, the louder his ragged breathing could be heard on the other side of the partition.

J-Hope, discouraged that the clerk had probably not been paying attention when they had snuck by him and back out the small store, turned to leave when the curtains parted, and a pair of female hands snatched the side of his shirt, dragging him forcefully into the small opening.

As his eyes blurred in the whirlwind of motion, they landed on a familiar figure, whose face and lips came in contact with his so rapidly he thought she was about to head-butt him back out the curtained doorway.

J-HOPE HAD JUST BEEN KISSED . . .

With her hands scrunched on either side of his shirt, Alex, eyes wide open to see the expression on his gorgeous face, smashed her mouth to his passionately, sliding around each plump lip as if taking a lazy walk on a summer day. Feeling the burning electricity float out the top of her head, she shivered as he leaned in wrapping his arms about her shoulders tightly.

*Idol kissing! Idol kissing! Her friends back home would never believe it. She wasn't the romantic one . . . that was Andrea. Nor the skittish one . . . that would be Abby. She was the pragmatic one. But, if it was one thing she was . . . it was determined. And, she was determined to kiss this man!*

“GAME OVER,” she squealed loudly.

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**IT** was midway through the second day of the raging snowstorm. The wind howled about the corners of the Whyte sister's farmhouse, and the flakes came down even larger than before. Inside, a cozy fire crackled and roared, as the 'games' continued into the afternoon.

V, stretched slowly handing his completed coloring paper to a stern but smiling Sundae. With Sumre following obediently, she dropped it into the box behind her commenting on the bold colors and personalized signature.

“Very artistic Hatter,” Complimenting him, she tapped his arm lightly with one end of the long ruler. “Last time you focused on black and white. I’m impressed.”

Throwing a glance toward Sumre he grinned. *YAY. She was impressed.* Raising his eyebrows excitedly he tried not to let his mind wander toward the other rooms behind him, but after his little visit to the other floors his curiosity got the better of him.

Leaning back on his heels, he yawned stretching again, his eyes drawn to the large ominous dollhouse that had flickered brightly in the darkness of the blackout the night before.

Remembering the dolls had been randomly positioned, sitting and laying in various rooms between the three floors, he stared at it wondering what it’s significance to the girls was (other than a play thing).

### **WHAT HAPPENED NEXT . . . WAS TOTALLY UNEXPECTED**

The dolls had been moved. Again. An odd chill ran up and down his spine remembering the female doll that had ungraciously thunk’d him atop the head from the second-floor landing. Now, each of the three male dolls, had been paired with a female counterpart.

One pair (arm-in-arm) in a small room on the third floor, seemed to be kissing. Two more, seated against the tiny refrigerator on the main floor, (heads awkwardly twisted) kissed as well. And lastly, against the wall of a clothes closet on the second floor, the final couple, little plastic lips pressed together seemed to be experiencing the exact same fate as the others. Apparently, the kissing bug had hit the dollhouse!

*BUT, WHAT IN THE WORLD DID IT MEAN?*

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