

# When I'm Gone: A Rosemary Beach Novel (The Rosemary Beach Series)

By Abbi Glines



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From #1 *New York Times* bestselling author Abbi Glines comes the next new adult novel in the Rosemary Beach series, in which we meet Mase, a Texas heartthrob first introduced in *Take a Chance* who comes to Rosemary Beach to stir things up.

I had an urge to fix all her problems. Which was stupid. She was doing fine without me. But something about those big eyes...

Mase Colt-Manning has always preferred his humble life as a Texas rancher to his birthright as the son of a legendary rock star. In fact, he rarely visits his father's rarefied world in Rosemary Beach, especially if it means bunking at his vile half-sister Nan's house—until one visit leads to a chance encounter with a young, gorgeous house maid who awakens him with her off-key but spirited imitation of a country music star...

Reese Ellis finally has her freedom. After escaping a lifetime of abuse from her parents and classmates for an undiagnosed learning disorder, she seizes the opportunity to be a house maid to some of the richest families in Rosemary Beach. But her job is in jeopardy when she causes an accident at the home of her most important client, Nan Dillon. When a hot, half-naked stranger with a cowboy's swagger comes to her rescue, she's intrigued—then afraid once he shows his own interest. Reese has never met a trustworthy man in her life. Will Mase be any different?

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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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Mase

Two years later

Fucking hell. What was that noise? I peeled my eyes open as sleep slowly faded from my brain and I registered what had woken me up.

A vacuum? And . . . singing? What the fuck?

I rubbed my eyes and groaned in frustration as the noise got louder. I was sure now that it was a vacuum. And it sounded like a really bad version of Miranda Lambert's "Gunpowder & Lead."

My phone said it was only eight. I had been asleep for two hours. After thirty hours straight with no sleep, I was being awakened by bad singing and a motherfucking vacuum?

As she sang the first two lines of the chorus, I winced. She was getting louder as she sang. And it was seriously off key. That was a good song she was butchering. Didn't the woman know that you didn't come into people's houses at eight in the fucking morning and sing at the top of your lungs?

I was never going to get back to sleep with this racket.

Nannette must have hired an idiot to clean her fucking house. But then, knowing Nannette, she was pissed because I was here and there was nothing she could do about it. She had probably paid the woman to screech outside my bedroom door. Nannette didn't own the house; our dad, Kiro, did. He'd told us that while Nannette was back in Paris, I could stay at the house and spend some time with our other sister, Harlow, who lived in Rosemary Beach with her husband, Grant, and their new baby.

This must have been the bitch's way of getting back at me for staying at her place.

Now she was singing the chorus over and over again at the top of her lungs. God, it was like waking to a nightmare. This woman so needed to shut up. I had to get some sleep before I went to visit Harlow and her family. She was so excited about me coming all the way from Texas. But this idiot was messing up my sleep very effectively.

I threw back the covers and stood up and headed for the door before I realized I was naked. My head was

pounding from lack of sleep, and I was getting angrier as I searched the room for the damn jeans I had taken off when I'd gotten here. My vision was blurry, and the dark curtains were closed. Fuck it. I reached for the sheet and wrapped it around my waist and went for the door.

I swung it open just as she started singing the opening lines to another song. Dammit. Not another song. This time, she was murdering "Cruise" by Florida Georgia Line.

I blinked and rubbed my eyes against the light, my vision still blurry. Shit, did the woman not see me standing here?

After a few seconds, I finally was able to open my eyes in a squint to see a round little ass wiggling as she bent over. My eyes slowly opened wide as I took in the longest damn legs I'd ever seen. And holy fucking hell, her ass. Was that a freckle under her left butt cheek?

She stood up, and her tiny waist only made her ass look better. She continued to shake her bottom as she sang off key. I winced as she hit a very high note. Damn, the girl couldn't sing.

Then she turned, and I hardly had a moment to appreciate the front view before she screamed and dropped the vacuum cleaner as she pulled her earbuds out of her ears. Big, round baby-blue eyes stared at me in horror as she opened and closed her mouth a few times as if she was trying to speak.

I took the moment of silence to check out her full pink lips and the perfect shape of her face. Her hair was pulled up in a bun, but it was the color of midnight. I wondered how long it was.

"I'm sorry," she managed to squeak out, and my eyes went back to hers. She was really something. There was an exotic quality about her. It was like God had picked all the best pieces and put them together to create her.

"I'm not," I replied. Not anymore. Who the hell needs sleep? Oh, yeah. I do.

"I didn't know, uh . . . I thought the place was still empty. I mean, I didn't know someone was staying here. There wasn't a car outside, and I rang the doorbell, but no one answered, so I used the code and came on in." She wasn't Southern. Maybe Midwestern. I just knew she wasn't from around here. She lacked the twang of the local accent. There was a softness to her voice.

"I flew in. Had a car drop me here," I said.

She nodded and then looked back down at her feet. "I'll be quiet. I can come back up and do this area later. I'll just go downstairs and start there today."

I nodded. "Thanks."

Her cheeks flushed as she let her gaze drop to my bare chest. Then she turned and hurried away, leaving the vacuum behind in her escape. I watched, enjoying the way her bottom bounced. Damn, I hoped she cleaned several times a week. Next time, I wouldn't be exhausted. Next time, I'd find out her name.

Once she was out of sight, I stepped back into the room and closed the door. A grin tugged at my lips when I thought about her face when she'd realized I was only wearing a sheet. How did Nan have a housecleaner who looked like that? The girl was gorgeous.

I lay back down and closed my eyes. The image of that freckle sitting right there under the plumpness came to mind. I really wanted to lick that freckle. Cutest fucking freckle I'd ever seen.

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