



Sliding Into Home

By Kendra Wilkinson, Jon Warech

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The former *The Girls Next Door* favorite and the current star of the E! hit series *Kendra* bares all in this funny, fresh, fish-out-of-water memoir that captures the spirit of one of the most beloved *Playboy* cover models in history.

KENDRA BARES ALL

Fans of the E! smash hit series *The Girls Next Door* fell in love with sporty Playboy beauty Kendra Wilkinson's care-free spirit, infectious laugh, and down-to-earth nature. Now that she's moved out of the world's most famous bachelor pad and into her own delightfully chaotic world on *Kendra* as wife to NFL star Hank Baskett and mother to their newborn son, we've watched her hilarious antics as she adjusts to domestic life. But how much do we really know about the fun-loving star? In this humorous and optimistic, sometimes heartbreaking, but always unfailingly honest memoir, Kendra reveals the highs and lows of her extraordinary journey.

She wasn't always the quintessential girl next door. Before she was a reality television superstar, Hugh Hefner's girlfriend, or one of the most popular Playboy cover models ever, Kendra was an athletic tomboy whose father walked out on her family when she was a little girl. She grew into a rebellious teenager with a serious drug habit before she quit cold turkey and beat the odds to graduate from a high school that almost didn't give her a second (or third, or fourth) chance.

Following her rocky teenage years, an out-of-the-blue phone call from Hugh Hefner changed everything. Kendra dishes candidly about life in the Playboy Mansion: the sex, the parties, the show, and even her relationships with her *Girls Next Door* costars—Hef, Holly, and Bridget. She tells the true story about how she and Hank met and built a relationship in secret while she was still Hef's girlfriend and a public face of Playboy. Finally, she reflects on the slew of unexpected changes in the short space of a year that have brought her sliding into home from Playboy party girl to wife and mother with a blooming Hollywood career. If you think you've seen all of Kendra, think again. She's only warming up. . . .

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Editorial Review

About the Author

Kendra Wilkinson is the star of the hit reality television show *Kendra* on E! She rose to fame in five seasons on *The Girls Next Door*, living in the Playboy Mansion as one of magazine mogul Hugh Hefner's girlfriends. Originally from San Diego, she lives in Los Angeles.

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CHAPTER 1

A Tale of Two Kendras

“So you’ll be naked?”

“Well, I’ll be painted,” I corrected Zack, my live-in boyfriend.

“What does that mean?”

“I don’t know, but I’m sure it will be fine.”

I wasn’t sure spending an evening as a painted girl at Hugh Hefner’s seventy-eighth birthday party would actually be fine, but I was hoping it would turn out to be. At the very least, I would make a couple hundred dollars, meet some cool people, and get a chance to check out the Playboy Mansion. How could I turn that down?

And besides, it was Zack who had initiated the whole thing. He’d taken me to the car show where a photographer had said he wanted to set up a photo shoot with me, and at the time Zack was all for it. So it seemed totally logical that when the photographer posted the photos on One Model Place—a sort of MySpace for models—if any work came from it, Zack would support me.

Well, the photographer posted the photos, and that same day a guy named Mark called from *Playboy* and asked about me.

The truth is, I wasn’t exactly sure what the Playboy Mansion was—or who Hugh Hefner was, for that matter. I knew about the bunny; I had an uncle who worked at the Playboy Club in Atlantic City, and he would send my brother and me T-shirts and sweatshirts with the bunny on them when we were kids. I’d wear them to school and all the kids would tease me and say *Playboy* was gross, but I thought it was cool.

Beyond that, I didn’t know much about *Playboy*. But I knew enough to know that getting a phone call from someone who worked there could be the beginning of something big.

Mark’s first call wasn’t guaranteed to lead to anything. He mentioned that he was looking for girls to work at Hef’s upcoming birthday party. I figured *Playboy* had a lot of models to choose from for the party, and it was a long shot. But a couple of days later Mark called back.

“Mr. Hefner saw a photo of you and wants to call you personally,” he told me. “I gave him your number, so expect a call.”

I was stunned. “What are you talking about? Expect a call? Why?” I was weirded out by the whole thing. Why would he want to call me?

“Listen,” Mark said. “He only likes girls in college, so tell him you go to college.”

I said okay and hung up, confused.

The next day I was in the shower when the phone rang. I hopped out and saw that the call was from a 310 number. That’s L.A. I was eighteen years old and lived in San Diego. Who did I know in L.A.?

“Hello?” I answered.

“Hello, is this Kendra?”

“Who is this?”

“This is Hugh Hefner.”

“Yeah, right,” I said, thinking it was a prank call. “Shut the fuck up.”

It wasn’t a prank.

“I look forward to seeing you at my birthday,” he said. “Also, I’d like you to consider being my girlfriend.”

Still dripping wet from the shower, I stood there in shock. I didn’t know how to respond. After all, I had just told Hugh Hefner to shut the fuck up. That probably wasn’t the reaction he’d expected. I brushed off the girlfriend thing, since I had no idea what that even meant. When I finally collected my thoughts, I told him I would see him at his birthday party.

Just as I was wrapping up the conversation, Zack walked into the bathroom to find out who I was talking to. After I filled him in, he was as shocked as I was, and clearly a little worried.

“I want to drive you up there,” he said protectively.

When the big day arrived, I was kind of nervous. During the car ride Zack questioned me about how I was going to handle being invited to be Hef’s girlfriend, but I didn’t have an answer for him. Even though I googled Hef after we spoke on the phone, I couldn’t really imagine what it might mean to be his girlfriend.

After a two-hour drive, Zack and I arrived at the gates of the Playboy Mansion in Bel Air. We buzzed security, who let us inside, and Zack pulled the car right up to the side entrance of the Mansion.

“Be good,” he said as I opened the car door.

“Whatever,” I mumbled back, barely even paying attention to him.

It was hard to focus once I got a good look at the Mansion. I was amazed at what I saw. Everything was so big and beautiful, and like nothing I had ever seen before. After all, I was a Hollywood virgin. Not *that* kind of virgin but, you know, still a little naive.

I got out of the car and was immediately escorted to the gym by security. I rushed by other girls and a handful of workers, and once inside the gym, Mark, who was the talent scout and body painter, told me to take off my clothes.

“Where’s Hugh Hefner?” I asked as I stripped down.

“He never comes down here,” Mark told me.

That sucks! I thought. I wanted to meet him and find out what he was all about.

Mark and his wife started painting me and putting rhinestones all over my body. It was all very weird. Then they moved away from my boobs and focused on my hair and makeup. I caught a glimpse of myself in the mirror. It was my first time ever having my hair and makeup done professionally, and I thought I looked like a drag queen.

Just as they were finishing making me a naked she-man, Hef—breaking his usual rule of staying out of the painted girls’ room—came inside. He introduced himself and gave me a hug.

My heart was racing. “I’ve never met a celebrity before in my life,” I said. “You are the first. This is the coolest thing.”

It really was.

Hef laughed and we talked a little bit about the night. He told me not to be nervous and invited me to stop by his table. The conversation was short and sweet. He was very charming; he had a powerful way about him, and I liked it.

“I’ll see you upstairs,” he said with a smile before disappearing into the night.

For those few minutes with him I forgot that I looked like a clown. A naked clown. I felt special. After all, the staff probably went through thousands of photos to find about ten painted girls, and out of those ten, Hef singled me out. The man who had created this whole world chose *me*. That felt really good.

At the party I served Jell-O shots to celebrities like Jack Nicholson, Pauly Shore, Donovan McNabb, Fred Durst, and Brooke Burke. I was starstruck, but I didn’t act like it. I simply went up to Brooke Burke, gave her a Jell-O shot, and politely told her that I loved her. I was cool like that.

The night ended up being a lot of fun. Being practically naked was not a big deal for me, and after a while I forgot that I didn’t like my hair and makeup.

Then Mark came up to me and told me to bring some Jell-O shots to Hef’s table.

“Are you sure?” I asked nervously after glancing at Hef’s table, which was packed with beautiful women.

As I inched my way toward the group, Hef and I locked eyes. I smiled. He was with his girlfriends, including Holly and Bridget—who I didn’t know at the time—and a bunch of Barbie look-alikes, but he kept looking at me. I offered them shots and hung around the table the rest of the night. Maybe I was paranoid, but I thought the girls were giving me dirty looks the whole time, and with my eyes I tried to tell them *I ain’t trying to steal your man*, but I wasn’t quite sure if the message was received.

The whole evening, Hef and I kept staring at each other. It wasn't a physical attraction for me, but he was just so cool. The way he acted and the things he said were unlike anything I had seen or heard before.

At the end of the night Hef came up to me, gave me a key, and asked me to stay the night. I couldn't—mainly because Zack was sitting outside the Mansion in his car, but beyond that, I felt that being there that night was a job, and I wanted to keep it that way. Clock in. Clock out.

I gave him the key back but told him I would see him again soon.

"Will you be my girlfriend?" he asked again before I left.

Staring into his eyes, I didn't see a man four times my age with ten times more girlfriends than most. Even though I hardly knew him yet, I saw a sweet man who made me feel really good about myself—a true gentleman. It was weird but in my heart, I felt like he was someone I could possibly trust.

"So, will you?"

There was only one thing I could say: "Um, okay."

That night my life changed. I had no idea what I was getting myself into, but something just felt right about it. Hef didn't offer me money or tell me he was going to make me a star. He didn't say anything, because truthfully that wasn't the deal. He wasn't trying to offer me anything other than him (and maybe a pretty cool home).

I liked what I saw at the Mansion and, more important, I liked what I saw in Hef. He was a good guy with good intentions, and in a short period of time I was able to understand that about him, so I was willing to take a risk and uproot my entire life.

I don't know if many girls would do that on a whim. Such an offer would scare some girls, and others might look at Hef and see dollar signs and jump at the chance to do whatever he said. I didn't care about that at all. Looking into Hef's eyes I knew there was nothing to fear, and mansion or no mansion, I was drawn to him in a way that I had never been drawn to a man before.

I couldn't put my finger on it, but something about that night felt so right. A new life was definitely beginning, and I was not going to stop it from happening.

As you probably know, I became Hef's girlfriend, moved into the Mansion full-time, and a year later began filming the hit show *The Girls Next Door*.

I was labeled the sporty party girl of the bunch, and while I didn't like being labeled, I certainly had a good time living up to the character the producers wanted me to play.

Life has really worked out for me. Maybe it was luck or maybe fate, but I'm pretty blessed to be in the situation I'm in today.

While the show may have opened the door to a charmed life and eventually helped me discover what I really wanted, the reality is, it didn't come easy. I wasn't just sitting around deciding which family business to take over when I got that call from Hef. I didn't just trade in one perfect life for another. It's been an uphill battle, and while life is great—almost perfect, even—right now, before I can talk about the best of times, I need to

tell you about the worst . . .

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