

NEVER ENOUGH by Nancy Fraser

EXCERPT

Montauk, Long Island
Saturday Morning

Amanda Thorne turned full circle in the three-story entryway, her sensible two-inch heels clicking against the expensive slate flooring. Sparing one last, longing glance at the great room to her right, she engaged the alarm, closed the door behind her, and dropped her keys in the realtor's lock box.

The past eight years of her life—the last vestige of her inheritance—gone.

Right on time, the taxi pulled into the long, winding driveway, stopping just inches from where she waited. The driver, a short, stocky man who reminded her of her maternal grandfather, took her single suitcase and placed it in the trunk.

"Where to, Miss?" he asked.

"LaGuardia, please. Domestic terminal."

He held the door open and waited for her to settle into the seat before slipping behind the steering wheel and shifting his weight to get comfy.

"Going to visit family?" he asked, casually starting up a conversation.

"No," she said softly. "I'm relocating."

He shot her a quick glance over his shoulder before pulling the car into gear and starting out across the inlaid brick drive. "You're moving away from Long Island?"

His question sent a sharp pain through her chest. After all, who in their right mind would leave Long Island, especially the beautiful area of Montauk?

It's not like you had a choice, now did you?

Amanda bit back an angry curse, willing her conscience back into its allotted corner of her mind. Suddenly remembering the man's question, she told him, "I'm taking a job out of state. As much as I'll miss parts of New York, I won't miss the winters."

"Ah," he said, chuckling. "You're relocating somewhere warm." He paused, then asked, "Were those your three moving vans I passed on the way from the highway?"

Three vans? Not hardly.

The single small load truck she'd hired had held everything she owned, save for what she'd packed for her trip. So, if there was a caravan of trucks, it wasn't hers.

"No, not mine," she acknowledged finally.

He turned the taxi onto the highway leading to the airport. "Good luck to you, wherever you're headed."

"Thank you."

Sliding her fingertips over the screen of her cell, Amanda pulled up her reservation-- the short vacation a gift from the real estate agent who'd benefited greatly from the sale of her home.

Diamond Key Resort, San Bella Island. An island paradise, or so the brochure claimed. All she wanted was time to recoup, a handful of days to reset her emotional clock and prepare herself for her new life.

A week alone... away from the cloying pity of her so-called friends and family.

With any luck, she'd come out of her short stay no worse for the wear.