

# SWING INTO MURDER

by Vanessa M. Knight

## EXCERPT

As darkness covered the Vegas Valley, Harper sat in her car looking at the Byrnes' house that doubled as a club. Just staring. The 5,000 square foot house lit up like a virginal Christmas tree. White lights strategically pointed at windows and trees. It was beautiful.

She was a little early. Which gave her time to think. And thinking was bad. Thinking reminded her of the last night Brad and she had stopped into the house. Madeline and Paul had come with them that night. A couples' date. They'd sat in the house as soft rock played over the speakers.

She'd held hands with Brad as they'd laughed. "Nutmeg." He'd whispered her nickname. The one he'd called her because she was a little nutty and sweet. It had been a great night with friends. And a few hours later, he'd been gone. Maybe if she'd known it would be the last time they'd be there, she would've done something different. Taken a picture. Listened longer.

But she hadn't. She'd treated it like any other night.

And now he was gone. She couldn't go back. Not to that night. And not to that house. The house currently sitting in front of her.

Lights danced in the windows of the two-floor mansion nestled in the hills of Lake Las Vegas. She'd parked her car along the street. The driveway was already filled with cars.

The detective would be here any minute. Any minute she'd have to walk in, but she didn't want to. She didn't want to face the past. She wanted to face her flat screen with a pint of Ben and Jerry's and pretend today didn't exist—just pretend none of this was happening. But life never worked that way.