Chapter 12 Could I? Should I? Would I?

"Oh, you have got to be fucking kidding me," Emily said aloud, drawing the duvet away from Roxanne's body.

Roxanne's eyes narrowed at her best friend and flat mate. She placed the half-eaten burger down on the saucer that sat at her feet and turned to Emily again.

"What is it this time?" Roxanne groaned, sad that she had been interrupted from eating the one thing that cured her minor depression; hamburger and so much cheese.

"Don't tell me you intend to spend the rest of the day eating burger and watching..." Emily's eyes drifted to the laptop screen in front of Roxanne. She scoffed and tore her eyes away from it. "... what's that? Real Housewives of Atlanta?"

"It reminds me that people have more tragedy going on in their lives than I do," Roxanne murmured sadly, pouting as she did so.

Emily's eyes softened at her friend's expression. The annoyance in her stare dissolved into concern and unconditional love as she climbed into the bed beside Roxanne.

Emily looked over at her best friend. Her brown hair was tied up today her head in a messy bun, she was in oversized red pyjamas and had cheese and mayonnaise smeared all over her lips and at the tip of her nose. Simply put, her best friend reeked of pity.

Emily stretched her hand to Roxanne's and smiled sadly.

"What's going on baby?"

Roxanne sighed and turned to the laptop.

"I got rejected, again," Roxanne said. Referring to the secretary job she had tried to get at a microfinance bank.

"... They said something about my level of education not meeting the requirements. You know, I actually thought that after the wedding, I would get closure and be able to finally find the strength I need to get back on track. But all I've gotten since then are rejection emails and memories of him ..." Realizing just what she had said last, Roxanne bit her lower lip; her eyes locked with Emily's now amused ones. She felt heat rise to her cheek as she looked away.

"Him? Bitch, did you just say him?" Emily asked, a knowing smirk on her face. Roxanne didn't answer.

"Now, I don't suppose you're talking about that handsome stranger with the British accent from Rayla's wedding day..."

Roxanne's eyes fell on Emily.

"Who else?"

Emily couldn't help the laughter that erupted from her throat on hearing her best friend's confession.

"Girl, are you serious?! He definitely did a number on you huh? You're telling me that he stroked that pussy so good he's been in your head for two days?!"

Flustered, Roxanne flung a pillow to her best friend's face.

"Stop!"

"Bitch what?!" Emily laughed back.

"I have just been wondering what would have happened if I stayed longer, you know? What if I didn't run out like that? Would we have had breakfast

together? Talked about ourselves to each other? I know it's crazy, cause I just had my heart shattered and my trust and love taken advantage of. But I can't just stop thinking about him, he's been on my mind and I'm really wishing I didn't run the way I did." Roxanne found herself pouring out her heart to her best friend. It was why she loved Emily so much, she was easy to talk to.

Emily's eyes softened. She could understand her best friend's pain, but she couldn't help the witty reply that escaped her lips.

"Yep. He certainly stroked that pussy too good."

"I'm serious!" Roxanne shot back, chuckling.

"I know, I know, I'm sorry." Emily stopped to laugh.

"If you found him that attractive, why did you run?" Emily asked, after her laughter died down.

Roxanne appeared thoughtful for a while, before shaking her head.

"It was hopeless. He probably thought I was a wretched crazy woman that needed saving from herself. I didn't want to see him wake up in the morning and ask me out of his room. He was completely out of my league." In as much as she tried to mask it with a shrug, there was a hint of pain in Roxanne's eyes that caused Emily to move closer to her and kiss her cheek.

"I might have to agree with you on that one. I mean, did you see his Rolex? Shit could have been about a hundred thousand dollars, least!"

"I know right?!" Roxanne answered. Her eyes slowly lit up in a smiled, Emily had the power to do that to her.

Their moment was interrupted by the sound of Roxanne's ringing tone.

"Please God, let it be the publishing company I reached out to yesterday," Roxanne called out, reaching for the phone across the laptop. "Amen!" Emily replied.

When Roxanne got hold of her phone and brought it to her face so she could see the caller ID, her hope dwindled and she frowned. "It's my mum," she said in annoyance, turning to Emily.

The dark-haired woman smiled at her best friend.

"Pick it up."

"Really?"

Emily nodded silently. Roxanne rolled her eyes and clicked the answer icon.

"Hello," she said, pressing the phone to her ears. With every passing second, Roxanne's eyes widened and fear overtook the anger in her eyes. When the call ended, she turned to Emily, shock and fear still evident in her gaze.

"Is everything okay?" Emily asked, confused.

Roxanne's gaze fell to her laptop as she quickly jumped out of bed.

"I have to get to Saint Patrick's hospital and now!"

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You killed my baby!

Roxanne ran past the hospital doors, looking twice as crazy as the crazy jeans she was putting on.

Frantic, she rushed to the reception table. A black lady in red looked up at her. Roxanne forced herself to steady her breath before speaking.

"I'm Roxanne..." she paused.

"Roxanne Harvey, my sister... My sister Rayla Harvey... Sorry, Rayla Rivers was rushed in here this morning... Complications with..." She was struggling to breathe and talk at the same time.

The lady continued to stare at her, trying to piece her words together.

"Roxy!" Roxanne heard her mother's familiar high pitched voice call out to her.

Immediately, she turned to the direction of the voice. Sarah stood there in tears, her arms folded across her chest. Roxanne abandoned her introduction with the woman at the reception and rushed to her mother. Sarah broke down crying in her daughter's arms.

"Mum, what's going on?" Roxanne asked, looking over her mother's shoulder for more of their family members, before her eyes rested on her mother's face.

"Jonah called us this morning. He said Rayla woke up screaming and he had to rush her to the hospital. The doctors..." She broke down again.

"I don't even know what they are saying," she continued, crying.

Roxanne felt her heart soften. Maybe she hated Rayla, but she certainly didn't want anything to happen to her or her child.

"Where is everyone?" Roxanne asked, patting her mother gently.

"Rayla's room. You want to go see her?"

Roxanne smiled sadly, before nodding affirmatively. Sarah's eyes lit up as she pulled away from her daughter to direct her.

When Roxanne stepped into the room and saw Rayla lying in the hospital bed with tears in her eyes and holding on to Jonah, who looked equally

frustrated and in pain, Roxanne's heart softened once more. Tony looked up at his younger twin daughter and his eyes lit up.

"Roxy!" he called out.

Everyone's attention turned to her immediately. Once again, Roxanne had that urge to disappear, but she had to be here for her sister, even though she wished she didn't have to. The child didn't deserve anything that was happening to it.

"Are you okay Rayla?" she asked, ignoring all the stares and walking straight to Rayla.

"I'm in so much pain Roxy. It hurts so much!" Rayla continued to cry. Her teary eyes were fixed on Roxanne's sad ones.

"Please Roxy, please help me. I don't want to lose my baby, I love my baby so much, I don't want to lose it. Please, I'm so sorry for everything, I don't want to lose my baby..."

Roxanne opened her mouth to speak, but the doctor who walked in spoke first.

"We have to attend to her now. Please step outside and wait."

Roxanne stayed silent and turned in the direction of the doctor. She moved away from Rayla's stare and walked behind her mother and father.

From the corner of her eye, she saw Jonah approach the doctor.

"Can I stay in and wait? She's my wife, I need to be with her."

"Mr. Rivers, please, it's better you step outside. We would make sure your wife and child are alright. There are slim chances, but we would do all that's medically possible," the doctor replied. Something in his voice told Roxanne he had seen situations like this too many times, there was nothing sympathetic about the way he spoke.

The horrors of the medical profession, she thought. One had to get used to seeing the absolute worst every day.

The door was shut behind Jonah, the curtains were covered as well. Now, all they could do was wait.

Roxanne sat on the metal bench in the hospital corridor, in front of her sister's room, beside her parents. Her eyes watched Jonah keenly as he continued to pace from one end of the corridor to another.

For a moment, Roxanne wondered if he was so worried because of the baby or because of Rayla. She wondered if he would have been so worried or more worried had it been her in the ward and not Rayla.

She bit her lower lip in anger. How could she think of such a thing now? When her sister was in such a critical condition? Had anger and bitterness turned her cold and narcissistic?

Seconds turned to minutes, minutes grew to hours as they waited. It was exactly three hours later that the doctors and the nurses stepped out of the room.

On sighting them, Jonah rushed to the front of the doctor. Tony and Sarah followed closely behind. Roxanne couldn't find it in her to stand up, not after what she had just thought about. "Doctor, how...how is she?" Jonah asked.

The man took off his nose mask and handed it to one of the three nurses behind him, giving them a signal to go ahead of him.

"I'm very sorry Mr. Rivers, we lost the baby. However, your wife is alive and sound, she is currently unconscious, but would be awake in no less than three hours."

From where she sat, Roxanne watched the words slip out of the doctor's lips with so much ease. Like he was not just announcing the death of a child. He spoke about Rayla being alive like it was meant to console the

family. She watched him walk away as Jonah fall to his knees beside her parents.

Tony and Sarah brought Jonah to his feet as they walked into Rayla's room. Roxanne sat still where she was.

Unsure of what to feel and what to do.

When she found the courage to rise up, she did so and walked into the room.

Rayla was awake now. It seemed Jonah and her parents had given her the news because she was crying uncontrollably. Jonah was by her side, trying to pacify her, but she would have none of it.

Tony and Sarah stood away from the couple, and Roxanne made her way to stand beside them after she closed the door.

All of a sudden, Rayla's frustrated and teary eyes rose up to meet Roxanne's. Her stare was deadly, filled with anger and hate.

It all happened so fast.

Before anyone could make sense of what was happening, Rayla picked up a small vase on the drawer by her bed, and flung it at Roxanne.

Roxanne saw white, before she felt her forehead split into two. The pain that seized her head was unbearable. Both hands flew to her head as she bent down. Blood was all over her palms when she looked at them.

She was dumbstruck, she couldn't speak.

"It's all your fault you bloody bitch! You wanted my baby dead! You used your jealousy and your envy to kill my baby! What had I ever done to you?! How is it my fault that I was better at everything than you?! How is it my fault that I fucked Jonah better than you! You took your anger out on my baby! My poor baby!"

Words, words, and more words. Roxanne couldn't hear her anymore, but she could tell that Rayla was still screaming at the top of her voice.

In pain, she looked around, hoping her parents would help her, come to her aid, or even call the doctor.

Instead, they rushed to Rayla's side and held her. She could tell they were trying to pacify her. Jonah had a dead look in his eyes when Roxanne looked up at him.

"Please Roxanne! Leave here! Leave now!" Sarah cried out in tears.

Roxanne still stood there, in pain and in shock.

This was wrong, all wrong.

"You heard your mother Roxanne, get out. Rayla doesn't need to see you now," Tony cried out again.

No one cared that she was bleeding, no one cared that she could die from all the blood she was losing. Leave, they said. She would leave and never come back.

With her hands pressed to her head, she staggered out of the room without another word.