

Chapter Nineteen

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Ruth Eden Glass

I had a nightmare as I slept. I dreamt I was standing at the top of a grand staircase, three babies in my arms; two girls and one boy. Abel, my beautiful boy, in the middle and my two daughters on either side of him.

A voice called my name, I looked up to see Drew walking up the stairs towards me. And then Abel was falling out my arms, tumbling down the stairs. I screamed – trying to catch him but dropping my daughters at the same time. All three babies are falling in slow motion. I pause, trying to work out who to save; Abel or my daughters.

I awake before the decision is made.

I was screaming and crying as I thrashed in the bed. Warm hands grabbed me, before Quinn pressed me into him – my head going into his neck as I cried. He ran his hand up and down my back, whispering sweet nothings to me, as I sobbed like a baby. By the time I had calmed down, there was a large wet patch on his shirt. He sat on the edge of my bed, looking beautiful but stressed.

"Sorry" I whispered, snorting as I wiped my nose.

"Nothing to be sorry for, darlin". He pressed a sweet kiss to my forehead as I tried to get a grip on myself.

"Bad dream" I muttered, trying to explain my embarrassing behaviour.

"Drew?"

"Sort of. But Abel and the girls were there and I...I guess I'm just terrified of losing the girls like I did with Abel".

"That's not going to happen, Ruth, I promise". He kissed me sweetly as I tried not to think about Drew. I opened my mouth to ask him how it had gone with my ex-husband, but shut my mouth again. If I didn't know about it, I was going to obsess about it, but if I did know it might hurt me even more. It was a damn paradox.

"So I was thinking that I'd like them both to have similar names" Quinn blurted out. I looked at him in confusion. "Our girls. I think it's cute when twins have similar names or start with the same letter. Like, Victoria and Veronica or Hannah and Hayley".

"How about Lily and Rose? Both flower names" I replied – knowing he was trying to distract me and I was letting him.

"Hmm I'm not a massive fan of Lily, but Rose is nice" he agreed. And, so, for a few minutes we chatted aimlessly about baby names; despite the fact we'd already decided on names months before. But, that was why I knew that Quinn was the person I wanted to spend the rest of my life with. Because, he knew exactly when I needed distracting and he knew exactly how to do it.

I reached up and cupped his cheek, shutting up his conversation. "I'm not going back to him, Quinn. Truthfully, I may have considered it a few months ago if I wasn't pregnant. Because the only one who'd be hurt was me. But, now, it wouldn't just be me. It would be you and the girls".

"And yourself, Ruth" Quinn frowned at me, looking a little annoyed at me. Quinn and I had never had an argument; I had no doubt that even if he just raised his voice to me I'd cry because I was such a basketcase. "Fuck that bastard, Ruth".

"Quinn" I groaned, not wanting to argue. But Quinn had anger in his eyes.

"No, Ruth, I'm not going to just ignore this. Forget me, forget the girls and forget Abel for the moment. You need to start being a little more selfish. Going back to Drew will only land you in another cycle of abuse. An abuser never changes their ways. It's a cycle of abuse, manipulation and false promises and abuse again. And you don't deserve that. You've broken the cycle already, because you deserve better".

I didn't cry. I was out of tears – for once in my damn life! Instead, I just looked down at my hands as I played with the edge of the comforter.

"I know you're right. But it's hard" I admitted, voice small.

Quinn cupped my cheek and brought my chin up to look at him. "I know it's hard, but you're the strongest person I know. If anyone can do it it's you, Ruth".

I kissed him briefly, "you're going to make an amazing father".

"I hope so" he smiled shyly, running a hand over my bloated stomach.

Quinn headed out, planning to call Devon to come collect Drew, while I made dinner with my mother. She sat at the breakfast bar, drinking a glass of wine, as I prepped a bowl of salad. "I didn't mean to eavesdrop earlier, but I heard you and Alpha Danvers talking" she said, taking me by surprise.

I chewed the inside of my cheek for a moment, concentrating on chopping up some carrots. I chose my next words carefully. "You can call him Quinn".

"Eden, please" she sighed. "I know we've had a bad few years, but I am still your mother. I hope you can still talk to me". She watched me as I continued to silently chop the carrots. "Eden, talk to me, please".

"Despite everything, I want to see him. Drew, I want to see him. I know it's stupid and silly. But he will always be my soulmate, no matter how I feel about Quinn he will never be my mate".

"He's better for you than Drew. Don't throw anymore happiness away for him".

"I know, I won't. But Drew and I le a lot unsaid and I need closure. I'm not sure I can ever truly move forward with Quinn until I confront my past".

"But you have moved on. You and Quinn are happy and you've got the twins on the way".

I shook my head, "it's not quite that black and white, Mom. Quinn and I had a fling and I got pregnant. I didn't make the conscious decision to move on and have a baby. And, yes, Quinn and I ended up getting together and, I truly think we could have a future, but I never actually moved on from Drew. I'm just not sure that ignoring him is the best thing for my mental health".

My mother was quiet for a moment, before nodding solemnly. "Perhaps you're right. I don't know what you feel, Eden. Only you know what is best for you. No one has ever been in your situation before so no one can give you any advice. If you think that facing Drew is what you need to do, then do it".

Quinn returned a few hours later, and Devon texted me to tell me that he was on his way to pick Drew up. We ate dinner together, but I was quiet so my mother and Quinn made extra effort to talk through the silence.

"I'm still feeling beat, so I'm going to head to bed early" I commented, as we loaded all the dishes into the dishwasher. My mother nodded, saying her goodnights, before disappearing into the lounge to give Quinn and I a moment.

"You good?" he questioned. I shrugged, eyes watering again, as he wrapped me up in a tight embrace. "Commander Devon is on his way, so he'll be gone by the morning".

My bottom lip trembled as I sniffed heavily. "I...I know you don't want me to see him, Quinn, but I think I have to".

He pulled away from quickly, "but earlier you said you wouldn't do that to me".

"I have to Quinn, please you have to understand. If you had the chance to have closure with your mate and--"

"Don't even start!" Quinn yelled, moving away from me. I'd never heard Quinn raise his voice, especially at me, so I instantly got upset. But, I tried to remain as calm as possible as he began to rage. "You don't get to compare our situations, Ruth! My mate was murdered and I didn't even find out her name. Your 'mate' – if we can even call him that – abused you and cheated on you and killed your baby. Those situations are incomparable".

"You're right, I'm sorry" I muttered so ly. "But I still have to see him, Quinn. I'm sorry, really I am, but I need closure. I have to or I might never be able to move on".

"But you've already moved on. Look at us. We're happy and we're having twins and we're living together...there is nothing more to move on to".

"Mentally. I have moved on physically but not mentally; I still think about Drew and obsess over him. He's my soulmate and I will never be able to truly move on but I can get closure from our marriage".

"You got closure when you signed the divorce papers!" he yelled. His dark eyes were glistening with tears. He was terrified he was going to lose me as he'd only just got me. He was just as broken as I was. I reached up and cupped his cheek, using my thumb to push away a single tear that fell from his eye. He quickly blinked back anymore tears before they could fall. And I knew as angry as he was at me, those tears were for that nameless girl over ten years ago as much as they were for me.

"I love you Quinn Danvers" I smiled sadly. "But I have to do this. For us".

"You don't" he cried out, grabbing my arms to keep me in place. "Ruth, please, you don't have to do this".

"Yes" I nodded so ly, "I do".

I gave him one last kiss on the cheek before heading out the house and towards Andrew Jones.