

## **A Human's Guide to Surviving Magical Mishaps by Kit Bryan Chapter 5**

### **Rule 5- Don't be embarrassed about dropping your phone. You're not clumsy, you just conducted a random gravity test and it still works!**

"Are you sure about this, sweetheart? Do you really want to be a guide for this fae? You realise this will mean he will be staying at our house with us?" dad reminds me. Ashton takes the chance to speak.

"I will make certain that no harm comes to her. Miss Fall will be perfectly safe," He informs him, earning another smile from me. My dad tries again, not ready to give up yet.

"Are you sure it's really appropriate though, Kat? You wouldn't want any strange stories to spread about you..." dad trails off. I shoot my father a stare that says 'really'.

"Don't be ridiculous, Dad; that's an incredibly old-fashioned view. Besides, you live there too, it's not like it's just me," Ashton listens to our conversation and seems very confused.

"Why would my presence be inappropriate?" he questions. My dad falls silent, probably trying to think of an answer that isn't super insulting. Ashton turns to me for an answer. I roll my eyes at my dad before responding.

"Dad was expressing his concern about having a strange man staying in close proximity to me; he can be rather overprotective of me," I explain. Ashton's expression darkens as he turns on my father.

"You mean to imply that I would behave dishonourably towards your daughter?" The words are a question, but his tone makes it clear that he is angry. My father pales but holds firm.

"With all due respect, Mr. Rallowend, but I know next to nothing about you. Forgive me if I am protective of my only daughter. What kind of father would I be if I wasn't concerned about her?" he argues. Ashton opens his mouth, intent on arguing back when I sigh and interrupt.

"This entire discussion is really a moot point. I have already made my decision, and as we have already concluded that I am, in fact, an adult, it is my choice. I have decided to trust Mr. Rallowend unless he gives me reason not to. So, Dad, unless you are planning to refuse him entry and force us to go stay in a hotel somewhere, he will be staying with us." Ashton looks smug, and my father glares at him. If looks could kill, Ashton would be six feet under, and my dad would be enjoying a picnic on his grave. There is a lingering silence which lasts several moments longer than I am comfortable with. I am about to break it when my dad's phone rings shrilly. He grabs the phone from his pocket and glances at the screen.

"It's work. Just a moment," he takes a few steps away from us and angles himself away from Ashton, me, and Mayor Simmons like that will somehow make it harder for us to eavesdrop on his conversation.

"If you'll excuse me." The Mayor takes a few steps away to make a phone call of his own leaving me with Ashton and the two quiet bodyguard guys hovering over us. I decide to basically ignore them. I note the tension gathering in my dad's shoulders. I knew it would not be good news, dad wasn't wrong when he said most of his calls are bad news. An occupational hazard I suppose.

My observations are interrupted by Ashton.

"What are they?" he asks. I consider for a moment before realising that he is referring to the phones.

"They're called phones. We use them to speak to people who are far away," I inform him, pulling my own phone with its turquoise case from my pocket and handing it to him. The curious fae takes it, holding it carefully like he expects it to attack him. He is also holding it upside down. I reach over, slip the device from his fingers, and flip it right side up. Ashton jumps and fumbles with the device when the motion makes the screen lit up. It asks for a password, and Ashton hands it back to me, squinting against the light again.

"Why would it need a password?" he questions.

"Phones can be expensive; a password deters some thieves. Lots of people also keep personal or sensitive information on their phones that they don't want easily accessible. Your phone number, which is a sequence of numbers used to identify and call a specific person's phone, is usually private information that you only share with select people in order to avoid being

pestered by strangers or people you don't like," I explain. Ashton seems fascinated.

"You said a phone can be expensive, how expensive?" he asks. I shrug.

"It depends on the type of phone. This one was about nine hundred dollars," I inform him. Ashton pauses.

"I am not sure of the value of your dollars. Perhaps you could tell me the comparative value of something that I would recognize?" he requests. This might be harder to explain than I thought.

"Sure, what should I compare it to?" I answer. I don't know what he might find familiar.

"Perhaps the value of a meal?" he suggests. I consider a moment.

"Well, it would depend on the type and quality of the meal. But for a relatively good quality meal that was prepared by a professional rather than by yourself at home, it would be maybe twenty-five dollars," I estimate. Ashton thinks over my explanation.

"So a phone, or at least this one, would be comparable in value to something similar to the evening meal for a month if you were to pay a professional?" he concludes. I nod.

"Yep, that sounds about right."

"And that is considered a large amount of money here?" he continues his questioning. I shrug.

"To some people. Mayor Simmons over there would likely barely notice the cost; he also probably has more than one phone. For me, it is a lot more significant since I earn a lot less money than he does. I work full-time hours, but this phone would probably cost... hmm, about a quarter of my monthly income. Maybe more. There is also an ongoing fee of about sixty dollars a month to maintain the connection that lets you contact other people," I try to explain the technicalities of owning a phone. Ashton nods. He seems completely fascinated by my explanations of things that I usually take for granted. It is kind of fun having his undivided attention.

"I understand." Ashton looks thoughtful and annoyingly attractive as he runs a hand through his dark hair. So fast it practically gives me whiplash, he swaps to a new topic.

"Your Mayor Simmons mentioned that your presence here is due to car trouble. What does that mean?" he asks. I sigh in annoyance.

"It means that my car stopped working. A car is what we use to get from place to place." I respond.

"A car is a type of animal or horse then?" Ashton states and I laugh.

"No, a car isn't a living thing. It is something built by humans." I point out Mayor Simmon's fancy black car which is parked a little way away and is still serving as a table for the lantern.

"We don't really ride horses here, except for maybe a few wealthy people who ride for fun or some farmers out in the country areas. Cars are even more expensive than phones but they really are necessary to get around. Although there is always the bus I suppose. A bus is like a car but dozens of people can ride it at once where most cars can only fit about five people at a time." I add. Ashton listens with wide eyes.