

Chapter 37

The massive clock on the wall of lecture hall struck twelve. Clara closed her folder and brought her lecture to the end eager to get back to the hotel. She walked up to the car and just threw all her stuff at the back seat. She stopped off at the florist picking up a small bouquet of pink roses and a box of Yaz's favorite chocolates on the way.

"Afternoon Doctor" lady at the reception smiled as she walked through the door.

"Afternoon Lara" she smiled back.

"Waaaw aren't those beautiful" the young woman said with a smile looking at the flowers Clara placed on the counter.

"Wonderful, aren't they? "

"Congratulations on your wedding...I just realized earlier when I saw the names on your reservation. If we knew we would upgrade your room."

"Awww...Thank you...how sweet of you. But seriously no need. You know I love that room.... wouldn't change it for anything. I was gonna ask you...could you please make a reservation for me at the restaurant for six. The usual table"

"Absolutely...no problem, Doctor"

"Thank you so much...Also...You know that really beautiful lemon cake they have...it's my wife's favorite. Is there any way I can sort of maybe...possibly get like a small version of it for tonight...you know those small ones you sometimes have...They are so cute."

"Yes" the young woman smiled "The mini version...I know they are so adorable...Give me a minute...let me check that for you."

"Thank you," Clara smiled and waited at the desk tapping her fingers on the marble top fidgeting nervously.

The woman returned shortly "They have one left and they reserved it for you madam."

"Aaa brilliant...Alright then...well have a nice day."

Clara walked into the room and dumped her stuff on a table with a sigh. She glanced towards the bed at Yaz who was fast asleep and pulled her braces off her shoulders then closed the thick curtains across the window. She followed to unbutton her shirt leaving it draping over her trousers and pulled her laptop out quickly switching it on. After spending some time checking through the information from the Tardis and

quickly answering Jack, she closed it down with a sigh and pulled out the little cube from her pocket, twirling it in her hand.

"What are you?" she said quietly "So annoying" she said putting it on the table and took the rest of her clothes off then slipped into bed wrapping herself around Yaz and kissed her bare shoulder.

"Heeeey" Yaz smiled sleepy and turned around "When did you come in?"

"Just now...Arrrrh...could crush you" she said squeezing her tight and kissing her cheek "Sleep baby."

"Mmmm" Yaz hummed with a smile and settled back on a pillow.

They both slept till late afternoon. It was their first peaceful sleep in a long time, and being really lethargic for a change was refreshing. It was the first time Yaz felt her mind quiet down and no underlying tension eating away at her, simply reveling in her wife's hands wrapped around her, blanketing her from the world and sheltering her from everything and everyone around her. It was something she sorely needed more than she was willing to acknowledge to herself. She had been awake for quite some time, watching shadows flicker on the wall as light filtered through the thick lining of the curtains and playing with Clara's hands on a pillow, studying every detail of them in an almost childlike way gave her comfort. She twirled her wedding ring and slowly stroked her fingertips across her lips, wondering how many times she had done this before and whether there was a reason she liked them so much.

"Hey" Clara whispered into her neck brushing her sleepy face against her shoulder.

Yaz turned in her arms and met her with a smile. "Heeey sleepy face" she brushed her knuckles over her cheek gently.

"Mmmmm" Clara hummed with closed eyes smiling "I needed that."

"You did...feeling better?"

"Mmmmmmm" she nodded slipping her arm around her "C'mere...I want you closer" she said opening her eyes and draped her leg over her "How about we get up and go for a nice walk to the Covered Market I keep wanting to take you there."

"Yeeeah...that sounds nice."

"We can have lunch there... I'll take you for a nice ice cream...Also...I got you something" she pointed lazily to the table.

"OMG...they are beautiful baby."

"And your favorite chocolates...but don't get up now...I need a cuddle" she grabbed her tight

"On a mission to spoil me?" Yaz smiled kissing the tip of her nose.

"Absolutely" she smiled "Just give me a minute to come around...I think one of my brains is still sleeping" she said closing her eyes again tracing lazy lines with her fingertips over Yaz's back

"And you're talking with the other one?" she giggled.

"Mmmmm...barely...they are trying to wake the other one...lots going on in there Yaz"

"Do they usually have a hard time communicating?"

"Sometimes..." she giggled pulling her in and kissed her giggling.

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Yaz was finishing plating her hair in the bathroom. She decided to wear one of her summer dresses as it was a hot August day.

"Ready?" Clara asked, stepping behind her, her running her hands the length of her waist.

Yaz looked at her reflection in the mirror. Clara's choice of navy blue trousers and braces paired with a short white sleeve blouse with little silver buttons was making her dizzy. "Seexy!"

Clara giggled grabbing the hairbrush over her shoulder pressing a quick kiss to her cheek.

"Right, I'm done" she said putting the brush back on the shelf.

"Me too" Yaz said grabbing her bag from the bed.

Clara reached for her hand in the elevator giving her small smile just before they walked out.

They walked for over an hour through the market stopping at every store. And trying different foods from cookies to home made ice cream. Yaz got stuck in a handmade organic soap store for over half an hour not able to decide which one she wants to buy, and Clara ended up buying a blanket for the house. As they walked through Clara's eyes caught a small store selling beautiful bird water fountains for the garden.

"Aaaaaa...look" she pointed tugging on Yaz's hand.

"Are those for the birds?"

She nodded with a grin across her face.

"Come ooon" Yaz giggled "Go knock yourself out."

She walked in excited, her eyes as big as saucers.

"I wanted this for a while Yaz...just haven't found the one I like" she said pulling her hand.

They were in the store for almost 45 minutes. Yaz laughed at her absolutely torturing the store owner with millions of questions. He was not impressed as she started rambling about the history of fountains, but Clara seemed to be completely oblivious to it.

"Did you know that the first example of a fountain was found in Mesopotamia? It dates from around 3000 BC."

"No..." he said shortly putting things back on the shelves.

"It consisted of a series of basins which made use of a natural spring" she continued as she was inspecting one of the fountains, she was interested in.

"Mmmm" the man nodded unimpressed.

"A similar system is found in Greek and Roman remains. Mechanically operated fountains became familiar during the 15th century in Italy...Did I tell you that Yaz?"

"You mentioned something about it when we were in Rome" Yaz giggled.

She continued for the next half hour in same time being indecisive about what she wants to buy driving the store owner crazy.

"This one" she finally said.

He hastily grabbed it from her hand and started wrapping it as quickly as he could.

"I love the blue glass stones on it" she said thrilled "it's gonna look really nice next to my Tardis."

"It will" Yaz couldn't stop laughing as she glanced towards the store owner and their eyes met.

She loved Clara to bits, but she was a quiet person's nightmare and Yaz felt a bit sorry for the guy as he looked as if she drained the last drop of blood out of him and he was ready to take a vacation after they left.

"Thank you so much" Clara said with a massive smile picking up the box from the counter "You were really helpful...I'll definitely come again."

He just nodded lethargically with "Please don't " written all over his face.

"Have a nice day" Yaz said with smile and gave him a sympathetic wave from the door.

"Happy?" she giggled as they left the store.

"Oh yeah...can't wait to put it up Yaz...I will have to connect the water through"

"Please call in the plumber"

"Nooo darling...seriously no need...I'm perfectly capable of doing it myself."

"Alright...if you say so."

"Let's get some food...I'm starving."

"Already? You just ate that pastry thing before we got the fountain."

"Oh, that was just a snack Yaz...I do fancy something proper...something really yummy...There's Lebanese restaurant...I love Lebanese...They have really delicious wraps and Paninis...I used to come here often."

"I never had Lebanese before."

"Oh, you're gonna love it Yaz"

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Clara was keen to make her happy by taking her to various locations and making jokes all the while. Making her forget about what's lurking in the back of her thoughts. She kept holding her hand and stroking her thumb on it as they walked around, as she always did to soothe her and kept giving her little smiles.

At times Yaz couldn't help but look into her eyes and have the peculiar sensation of staring at someone she didn't know as well as she thought she did. It was plaguing her on the inside, making her feel guilty for feeling the way she did towards her wife, someone she adored with every breath she took, yet for some inexplicable reason, she couldn't shake the feeling even though she desperately wanted to. She wished she could go back to how things were, but she was acutely aware there's no going back.

"Hey look" Clara pointed to the sky as they stood by the railing of the museum eating ice-cream "Air balloon."

"Ooooh OMG...I always wanted to fly in one of those."

"It's very peaceful out there."

"I'm scared of heights, but I would definitely deal with it for that."

She wasn't scared of heights before, not that Clara ever noticed or Yaz ever mentioned, but she wouldn't say anything anyway as she didn't want to upset her. She just stepped closer to her and quickly kissed her cheek with a smile.

"Love ya" she whispered in her ear.

"Love you too" Yaz turned with a big smile "Thank you."

"For what?" Clara asked, looking into the distance, finishing her ice cream.

"Beautiful day" she said glancing at her sideways

"Still not finished Yaz" she said smiling back at her and laced their fingers on the top of the metal railing then fell silent for a while. "It will go away with time you know," Clara suddenly said.

"What will?" she frowned confused.

"That feeling you have inside...being lost...I see it in your eyes. Nothing's changed butterfly...I'm still the same person."

Yaz fell silent, she felt a tear rolling down her face and she quickly wiped it.

"C'mere" Clara tugged on her hand placing her in front of herself. She laced their fingers and wrapped her arms around her resting her head on her shoulder.

"I thought you hated public displays of affection?" she giggled as her chin still wobbled.

"Sometimes situations call for me to make an exception" she smiled nudging her cheek with her nose.

"How did you know?"

"Old brains" she said kissing her shoulder gently "Also I was in a same situation myself" she said leaning her cheek against hers

"I'm so sorry...I hate this...I don't wanna hurt you."

"You're not going to..." she said brushing her lips over her cheek and placed a small kiss to it "I'm not going anywhere...not in million years Yaz. Nothing has changed butterfly, still me and you as we were a month ago."

"I feel like you're suddenly a mystery to me...it's so stupid like my mind is playing tricks on me" she craned her neck closing her eyes as tears rolled down her face.

"I was always a mystery" she giggled.

"You silly sod" Yaz laughed as Clara turned her around

"It's true" Clara smiled wiping her face gazing at her lovingly "You had no clue about the Tardis or that I glow."

Yaz giggled "Nooo I didn't...you cheeky fucker kept everything quiet"

"Well then...what's changed? It's exiting actually...how many people get to fall in love all over again and feel butterflies in their stomach or have that first kiss again Yaz"

"They don't"

"But we do" Clara smiled cupping her face between her palms "Isn't that amazing? We get to have it all over again...and get married properly this time around...it's brilliant" she smiled.

Yaz sighed deeply running her fingers up and down her braces and fixing the collar of her shirt "I really fucking love you...Even though you're a pathological liar."

"I absolutely adore you," Clara smiled tightening her arms around her waist leaning over.

"Are you seriously gonna..." she giggled but Clara cut her off with a kiss. Yaz brought her hand to the nape of her neck as her lips parted.

"Waaaaw...never thought I get this" she smiled resting her head on hers

"Exception to the rule" she smiled from the corner of her lips "Come...let's go...there's something else I wanna show you."

"We should really leave all this stuff in a hotel" she laughed looking on the floor at the pile of shopping bags and the box with Clara's bird fountain.

"Yeah...we should, shouldn't we?" she scrunched her face then giggled.

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Clara was already dressed for dinner and sat at the table. She was playing with her phone as Yaz was getting dressed. She looked up as Yaz was happily chatting away with her about all the locations they'd been to earlier on, and was delighted to see her smiling again, though there was still grief behind her eyes every time she looked at her. But knowing they were strong enough to face it together was all she needed at this point.

"Hey...come here" Clara said.

"Can you close my dress baby?" walking over and turned her back.

Clara closed the zipper and tugged her hand into her lap. "Look what I just booked" she said showing her the phone.

"Whaaaa...are you fucking serious? Balloon?"

"Oh yeah..."

"OMG" she jumped and squeezed her face between her palms kissing her exited.

"Are you sure you can deal with highest?"

"Yes, yes...I'll deal with it...Are we going tomorrow?"

"Yap" Clara giggled.

"OMFG I'm going on a balloon ride" she wrapped her arms around Clara's shoulders "Thaaaaank youuuu"

"You're not gonna thank me tomorrow when you see how high it is" she laughed "You ready?"

"I am"

"Come on...let's go then."

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"Where are you taking me?" Yaz asked smiling as they got into the elevator.

"You'll see," Clara winked at her and kissed her knuckles.

"You're like super romantic.... what's going on?"

"Nothing Yaz...nothing's going on...Just thought I make you smile again" she said kissing her knuckles and tugged her hand as doors opened up.

She led her pass the reception desk and smiled to the woman behind the counter.

"Good evening, madam" the man at the entrance of the restaurant said as they walked in

"Evening, we have a table reservation" Clara said.

"Oh yes...Nice to see you again Doctor, madam" he turned to Yaz

"Nice to see you too Thomas" Clara said.

"Hello" Yaz smiled.

"Congratulations ladies, I heard the news, how wonderful" Thomas said as he was walking them towards their table.

"Awww thank you so much" Clara smiled.

"Thank you" Yaz smiled haply and glanced at Clara.

"Here we go ladies, would you like something to drink."

"Some juice as usual for me" Clara said "Yaz darling?"

"Same thank you."

"Wonderful, here's the menu."

"Thank youuuu" Yaz smiled as he left "Waaaw...this feels like our first date night here"

Clara winked at her across the table opening the menu "They have some nice chicken in a dill sauce Yaz"

'Uuu do they?"

"Mmm...on second page and gnocchi...your favorite"

"Sold" she smiled closing the menu.

"Well, that was easy" Clara giggled "I have no idea what to have...I had so much food today...maybe something lighter...I'll just have some grilled chicken with vegetables for a change" she closed the menu.

Thomas came with drinks and took their order and as he left Clara took a glass from the table and leaned into her chair "Looking forward to the balloon tomorrow."

"Oh yeah" she looked at her with a massive grin "Might scream though."

"Blimey Yaz" she laughed "On a second thought maybe I should've taken you somewhere else"

"Nooooo!!!...Don't you dare cancelling that...we are going even if you have to tie me to it"

"I'm getting worried now I must admit...So are you going to my lecture tomorrow?" She grinned haply.

"Yes, I am"

"Goodie" Clara wiggled happily in her chair "So nice to see you smile again" she said reaching over the table for her hand and hooked her finger to hers

"I'm getting there.... I have so many questions"

"Just take one day at the time darling...you can ask me anything any time you want"

"One thing I wanna know is why did you ever take me back to what's technically past? Why not just leave me at that time?"

"It's complicated Yaz...we were together for 10 years but for your family only a few months have passed. So, no I didn't take you to the past. Its just that time for us moved differently from your family's time here"

"Oh...I see...I didn't think about it that way. Did they know you? They did, didn't they?"

Clara pursed her lips and leaned back into her chair. She was staring randomly at the bottle of juice on the table.

"It's alright baby...I had some time to think about all of this...I'm not upset...I'm really not...Pleaseeee tell me?"

"They did yes" she looked up "I'm so sorry" she scrunched her face "I couldn't risk it...I had no choice Yaz your family agreed to it...it was the only way I could keep you all safe...if anyone found out..and you not having any memories...it would be a mess"

"Can you bring them back? The memories"

"Nooooo butterfly...I can't" she nodded

Yaz sighed, it was a hard thing to swallow but deep down she knew what the answers would be and made peace with them a while ago. It was a time which in many ways was lost, living only in Clara's memories and she was painfully aware of it.

"Here we go ladies" Thomas smiled bringing the food

"Oh...that's lovely" Clara said "thank you"

"Thank you so much" Yaz smiled at him

"Enjoy yourselves"

When he left, a smile drained from Clara's face again and she reached for the cutlery.

"I'm not upset with you" Yaz said quietly brushing her fingers over Clara's knuckles. "I didn't want to upset you"

"Oh Yaz...you're not upsetting me.... My actions are catching up with me Yaz and I have to accept it"

"I don't know what decisions I would make in your place Clara. You did what you thought was the right thing at the time" she stroke her fingers gently over her hand and Clara laced them with hers

"I'm sorry..."

"Don't...I don't blame you...You didn't hurt me, Clara. How many times will I say this...it wasn't you who did this to me...to us. And you have your own pain to deal with...If you suddenly didn't remember me, I would fucking die...I can't imagine what that feels like and what you went through"

Clara just gazed at her with glossy eyes

"Come on...food is getting cold...Love ya"

"Love you too" she whispered closing her fingers around hers biting on her bottom lip

"Come on charmer...you're set to charm the pants off me today let's have a nice date"

"That was a plan...didn't think I'll be talking about this tonight"

"I'm sorry...you know my timing's always shit"

"It's impeccable Yaz" she smiled

"I know" she laughed

"Was it always?"

"Yees" she giggled "This does look really nice"

"It is...mmmm...that's yummy..here try" she passed the fork across the table

"Mmmm... good choice...So tomorrow's lecture starts at 10 then I thought we go to that store you desperately wanna see and then we go for a balloon ride...then we can have some lunch and slowly go back home"

"Mmmm...I need to pack us my god....I only have one day you know"

"I'll help you darling."

"I'm so exited."

"You are?"

"Yeeees..."

Clara looked up at her, smiling happy.

"Did Jack come back to you?"

"Yes...I just got his message today. He's fine but still no progress...it's so annoying. He did find out they are gathering some parts around and we are now certain that they are building some sort of a machine...something...but we still don't know what."

"How will you know?"

"He did send me information about those parts that were ordered, and Tardis is working on it"

"Can Tardis say...dunno put parts together and see what machine they are making?"

"Absolutely darling..."

"Well at least something"

"As long as she knows what parts are for...which for now we can't figure out"

"Oh...so she can't then" she laughed

"Even Tardis must be able to do a scan darling"

"Yes, I remember you showed me that part. I do want to continue learning when we come back from the trip"

"You do?" Clara looked up at her surprised.

"Yeaaaah I really do...I just need all this to settle in my mind...I just need some more time"

"Cause I really wanna teach you Yaz...I'm sure you could remember...it's all inside you...But I told you...only if you want to not because of me" she said with tearing eyes

"Don't cry...I wanna know everything...I don't wanna feel like this anymore like a fucking lobotomized idiot...Like you said today...let's do it all over again"

"Alright darling...let's do it all over again" she brushed her finger over her hand with a smile

"Come on...tell me where you will take me in Ireland? "

"Loads to see Yaz...Ireland is beautiful specially where we're going. There's Ring of Kerry, the Ring of Beara and the Wild Atlantic Way, Molly Gallivan's Cottage and Traditional Farm...has a lovely gift shop"

"What's the name of the place again?"

"Kenmare" Clara laughed.

"Sorry...you know me and the names of the places.... I do love the cottage though"

"It has sheep though."

"What's wrong with sheep?"

"I don't trust them."

"Whaaaa?" Yaz burst out laughing.

"If you saw the Woolly Rebellion of 2211 neither would you Yaz...always plotting"

"Fuck off...you're making this up" she pissed herself laughing.

"I'm not" she said seriously.

"Excuse me madam" Thomas came to the table.

"Oh, hello Thomas...do you trust sheep?"

"Not sure ma'am...I'm rather scared of domestic animals."

"Aaaa...smart man...keep away from sheep Thomas."

"Will do madam" he laughed "I was wondering about the...you know?"

"Oh yes...definitely...you can bring it"

"Very well ma'am "

"What's he talking about?" Yaz asked still laughing about the sheep.

"You'll see" she smiled.

She looked at Yaz's eyes opened wide as she peaked over her shoulder.

"OMG...nooo way...My lemon cake I keep missing"

"Yees...I figured 5 times was way too much"

"It was...I was starting to get seriously upset" she pouted her lips then smiled widely and clapped her hands excited as they put the cake on the table.

"Here we go ladies..." Thomas smiled.

"And I get the whole cake...waaaaw"

"She's trying to eat this thing forever but each time we come they sell out," Clara explained.

"We usually don't have them for the weekends. This was an exception only because we had a wedding here, so they made extra."

"Thank you so much for saving one for me Thomas. I do appreciate it"

"My pleasure, well do enjoy ladies and call me if you need anything else"

"Thank you so much" Yaz smiled "Clara...you do know it's not my birthday, right?"

"Yes of course I do Yaz...your birthday is in September."

"So why are there candles on a cake?" she laughed.

"Why not...It's a cake...I thought it be more fun"

Yaz laughed shaking her head "You silly sod"

"Go on blow them...make a wish"

"OMG...this does feel like a birthday cake...C'mere...let's bow them out together" she said getting up

"Alright " Clara accepted it thrilled and got up straight away rushing around the table

"Gotta be fast they're seriously melting" Yaz giggled "This is crazy"

"Ready...on five" Clara laughed "4, 3, 2, 1"

"Weeeeeee...!" Yaz jumped giggling "Happy birthday" she laughed placing a quick kiss to Clara's lips

"Happy birthday butterfly" she laughed

They chatted away till late until they were the only ones left in the restaurant. Yaz saw the lights being switched off at the bar and waiters cleaning up the last tables.

"We should go you know...we have a habit of staying in restaurants until they sweep us out" she smiled

"We do don't we.... Fancy a walk?"

"Yeaaaah" she smiled.

"Let's go" Clara nodded and got up

It was a warm night with a full moon shining in a dark sky. They walked slowly through the empty streets, only the odd couple passing them by.

"You're very quiet suddenly...you alright baby?" Yaz asked worriedly as Clara didn't say a word for the past 20 minutes.

"Yeaaaah...sorry" Clara smiled and draped her arm over her shoulder "I just drifted away for a moment."

"And to what place does the Time Lord drift away?" she smiled at her slipping her arm around her waist and leaning on her shoulder.

"Depends I suppose...no different than you...I just have more memories darling...like that smell of Immortelle"

"The what baby?"

"It's a Mediterranean plant darling, we just passed it fifteen minutes ago"

"Did we?"

"Mmmm" she nodded with a smile and kissed her temple "It smells really beautiful. It reminded me of an old friend from Rome I met in 180 CE"

"Waaaw...what was his name?"

"Aulus Cassia"

"Tell me about him? What do you remember?"

"He was a baker.... I met him when he was 25 years old. He took over the family business after his father got ill. Such a wonderful man"

"How did you meet?"

"His best friend was getting married. We met at the wedding"

"Why is this plant reminding you of him?"

"Aaaa...it was his mother's favorite Yaz, she kept it in a pot right by the entrance of their home. It smelled so beautiful."

"Why are you so sad when you talk about him? What happened?"

"One day I came for a visit and his sister started crying as soon as she saw me at the door. He died that year, three months before I came. He was only 30 Yaz"

"OMG...from what?"

"Dunno...I assume pneumonia by what they said to me"

"I'm sorry" she said kissing her shoulder.

"Life was brutall then Yaz...still is...People died of all sorts of stuff that is so easily treated in your time" she fell silent for a moment then spoke again "...I was never good in that...loosing people. Death scars me Yaz. The fragility of human life"

"I think it scares most people we just have to accept it"

"Oh, waaaw listen" Clara stopped for a moment. The voice of a lady singing some slow blues could be herd from a local wine bar

"That's cool" Yaz smiled perking her ears

Clara suddenly spun her around giggling "Care for a dance?" she said circling her arm around her waist.

"Can't say no to that" Yaz giggled as they slowly moved with a music in the middle of an empty street.

"You're being quite romantic tonight." Yaz murmured this while twirling her hair behind her neck between her fingers.

"I'm giving it my best Yaz"

"I can see" she giggled kissing her lips "It's ok we're alone" she whispered into her lips and before she finished her sentence some lady passed by them. She tucked her face into Clara's neck laughing.

"Impeccable timing as always" Clara laughed kissing the side of her head

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Yaz was still half asleep on the way to the university, but she made an effort in getting up. Fresh morning air was brushing against her cheeks as they walked down the street. Clara was chirping all the way clearly thrilled with Yaz joining her today. They grabbed breakfast on the way sitting in restaurant not far from the university. Yaz was struggling with brioche, she was more into her coffee than any food unlike Clara

who was packing up the full size breakfast with fried egg and baked beans finishing with spreading some butter on a toast. Just looking at her made Yaz's stomach churn in an uncomfortable way.

"Dear god where do you put it all" Yaz laughed.

"It's really nice...want some?" She passed the fork over the table.

"Noooo..." she waived her hands "All yours babe."

"You really should eat more Yaz...you're gonna starve to death by the time we have lunch."

"I'm too tired."

"Sleepy"

"Says a woman who fell asleep at the wheel" she laughed.

"Only one time" she pointed at her with a fork.

"One too many" Yaz laughed shaking her head.

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Yaz was relieved that Clara's lecture was history as she found her physics lectures extremely hard to follow. But History of Tudors and War of the Roses was an interesting topic and as usual Clara made it fun to follow.

"As a young man, he was fit and healthy and quite a cheerful fella. But by the time of his death, the King weighed close to 400 pounds...He had leg ulcers, muscle weakness, and, according to some accounts, a significant personality shift in middle age towards more paranoia, anxiety, depression and mental deterioration."

"You mean he became a psycho wife killer?" one of the students said.

"Nooo...you have to look at the historical characters in a concept of the time they lived in" Clara said "You can't just take someone out of their timeline and judge their behavior by your standards. Having an heir to the throne in his time was of crucial importance. By not being able to provide one his whole persona would be questioned, including his ability to be a king...The future of the monarchy being at stake also made a country a target for invasion. We may or may not like it but moral standards were very different than today. An alien from some other part of the universe may find humans today very primitive you know" she said smug "Besides Anne Boleyn was framed. Her intellectual superiority as a female and her influence on a king was considered dangerous. Shame...she was a smart lady, very much fun to be around."

As the lecture came to finish suddenly one of the students climbed up to Clara with a gift.

"We all heard you got married Doctor...congrats" the young woman smiled passing her a present "Really?" Clara blinked surprised "That's so thoughtful...thank you so much."

The girl was followed by many more students leaving her flowers and presents.

"Yaz darling come here" she waived cheerfully.

Yaz absolutely hated each time she did that. She felt like putting a paper bag over her head, but she couldn't really refuse so she climbed the stage awkwardly smiling. Clara introduced her to each student with so much pride and enthusiasm it was cute, but it resulted in Yaz just nodding her head and repeating "thank you" to everyone. She was happy for Clara who was absolutely beaming with a massive smile examining each present happy as pig in the mud. Yaz on the other hand was relieved when the last student left looking at the desk packet out with flowers and presents.

"OMG...what are we gonna do with all of this?" Yaz laughed "We're gonna have to take that back to the hotel."

"Hmmm...I think you might be right Yaz..."

"So nice of them though"

"Very nice...I never got flowers in my last regeneration."

"That's because you were a man silly" she laughed.

"Or maybe cause I was too grumpy"

"We need a bag...how are we gonna carry all of this"

"I do have something...Come with me"

Clara took her to the small room which looked like a place where professors would meet up as it had a relatively big table in the center surrounded by loads of chairs. Walls were covered in bookselves floor to ceiling with some cupboards at the bottom through which Clara was digging for something. She pulled out a bug IKEA bag out

"Aaaaa...knew it will come in handy one day"

"You have an IKEA bag here?" Yaz laughed.

"You never know what you might need it for Yaz...see now it came in handy"

"I didn't know you shop in IKEA" she laughed

"Of course, I do...I actually got some really good storage boxes for Tardis when I did the last clean up"

"You have IKEA stuff in Tardis?" Yaz burst out laughing.

"What's so funny about that Yaz...I needed it for my Christmas decorations."

"OMG" she couldn't stop laughing.

"I don't understand what's so funny Yaz" she looked at her completely confused.

"You really don't get it do you? It's a fucking time traveling machine babe and you have something so fucking mundane as IKEA storage boxes on it"

"And that garlic press everyone keeps going on about. It's really good"

"Fuck me babe" Yaz screamed down the hallway

"I really hate when you say that Yaz..." Clara shook her head but her laughter was contagious, and Clara started laughing as they walked back to the lecture hall.

"Our room is gonna be like the florist" Yaz laughed as they put the last present in a bag.

"It is a bit overwhelming I must admit" Clara looked at poor Yaz barely managing to hold all the flowers in her hands and started laughing "On a second thought maybe we should give them to the hotel...where are we gonna put all those" she said putting the bag on her shoulder.

"I think that's a fantastic idea" Yaz said struggling.

They left all the stuff and headed back out rushing as now they were running late for the balloon ride. As they got to the park and Yaz saw the sheer size of it with only a small basket at the very end she started questioning her decision to get on board. But it was too late as Clara was chirping next to her pulling her hand excited. She kept thinking about all the different scenarios of how things could go badly wrong and remembered the documentary about the Hindenburg disaster she watched about a year ago. She could swear this anxiety was a new thing since her brain got fried as she couldn't imagine herself being like this and traveling with Clara across the universe encountering all kinds of stuff.

They left everything in a hotel and rushed back out, as they were now running late for the balloon ride. When they arrived at the park and Yaz saw the overwhelming immensity of it, with only a small basket at the very end, she began to reconsider her decision to board. But it was too late since Clara was chirping next to her, yanking her hand excited like a kid. She started thinking about all the numerous ways things could go wrong and remembered watching a documentary about the Hindenburg tragedy about a year ago. She could swear this worry was a new thing since her brain had been fried since she couldn't fathom herself being like this and journeying across the universe with Clara. But then again this wasn't the Tardis. It was literally a massive balloon with a tiny basket dangling from the bunch of roses and she could feel her hands getting sweaty and her heart beating fast, but she wasn't going to chicken out. She was going to put her teeth together and go through it even if it was the last thing she ever did in her life. She stood near Clara who was chatting away with a tour guide clenching on her hand as though it was an anchor keeping her grounded.

"You alright butterfly? You look a bit pale Yaz?"

"I'm fine...everything is fine...I'm fine...we're fine...we're gonna be fine" she said practically frantic.

Clara laughed "We can stay if you want?"

"Nooooo!" she almost screamed out

"Alright..." she smiled "It's perfectly safe Yaz...at least 90%...50 for sure"

"Well, that's reassuring."

"Statistically Yaz despite the inherent risks, the activity is relatively safe. Only 1% of hot air balloon accidents result in a fatality."

"Let's hope we are not that 1% then."

Yaz grasped and gripped the side of the basket like her life depended on it as they boarded. They gradually rose higher and higher, and she felt compelled to move away from the edge and curl up on the floor. But the view drew her in, so she overcame her apprehension and kept looking. Clara stood behind her, encircling her as if to guarantee she would catch her if she fell. Even though Yaz knew it was a silly concept, she was relieved to sense her presence there. Clara felt her quivering hand beneath hers and thought her nervous smiles were cute as her eyelashes fluttered in the breeze and her wide brown eyes peered at her hesitantly but excitedly.

"You alright darling?" Clara asked, resting her head on her shoulder.

"I guess so...I am when you stand there"

"Look you can see the university and the hotel and look the park"

"It's so beautiful my god" she smiled.

Apart from the hum of the machine pumping air, it was very serene and hypnotic. Except on a plane, she had never been this high up. Even still, she didn't feel entirely at ease. But this was absolutely exceptional, and she was glad she went in the end. She couldn't help but feel a little proud of herself for overcoming her phobia.

The ride wasn't long and soon they were descending to the ground. Back to where they started from. As they stepped on the grass Yaz hung herself on Clara's shoulders giggling

"I did it...I fucking did it!" She yelled exited

"I'm very proud of you" Clara kissed her temple draping her arm over her shoulder.

"It was soo cool...I love it"

"Told ya..."

"I keep thinking of Hindenburg" she giggled

"Goodness Yaz...Hindenburg was filled with more than seven million cubic feet of hydrogen, it carried a heavy load of diesel fuel, and some kind of ignition converted all that into an inferno.... Very, very

different than air balloon darling. See the upper part of the envelope is filled with helium, a lighter-than-air gas, which provides additional buoyancy."

"Right...so can't get inflamed then?"

"Noo darling" Clara laughed and kissed her temple "Let's go and eat something, you must be starving by now."

"I am... I swear I heard my stomach a minute ago"

"Oh... I wondered what that was" Clara giggled and poked her tummy with a finger.

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By the time they came back to the hotel it was almost six in the evening. For Clara it meant driving back till quite late, so they started packing straight away.

"What do you think this thing is?" Yaz asked, picking up the small cube from the table.

"Dunno Yaz...it's driving me nuts. I can't open it or make it work or scan it...I'm losing my mind over it to be honest.... Maybe I should throw it into the wall like the other thing" Clara said putting the last of her clothes into the suitcase.

"Is this normal though?" Yaz twirled it in her hand looking at bright orange lines appearing on the surface of it randomly as she was turning each side.

"Is what normal Yaz?" Clara lifted her head confused.

"What are those?" she pointed to the symbols glowing brightly.

"Wooooooooow...Shoot" Clara yelled knocking it out of her hand. The little cube rolled on the floor. Clara ran across the room swiping the sonic over it.

"Why did you get so freaked out about it?"

Clara exhaled irritated "I hate this thing" she freaked out shaking her sonic in the air frantically "Aaaarrh! What in the name of the Tardis"

"Alright...chill out...want me to pick it up again?"

"Nooo!" she held her hand up towards Yaz "No Yaz I don't.... I don't know why it reacted to you that way" she got up and scanned over Yaz "Nothing out of the ordinary...Though your iron is really low Yaz...I'll give you something for that when we come back. No wonder you're feeling tired."

"It didn't hurt me.. look if it helps babe let me hold it for a fucking second"

"No Yaz...you're not I'm sorry. I don't care how important this thing is I'm not using you as a lab rat" she picked it up from the floor and popped it in her computer bag

The ride back home was pleasant as the sun began to sink towards the horizon. There was no traffic, so Clara could sit back behind the wheel listening to the radio. She gazed at the gorgeous pink skies and smiled as she saw some horses grazing calmly on a field. What happened at the hotel kept flashing through her mind, and she pushed it to the back of her mind at least until she arrives to her Tardis. She looked at Yaz who was sleeping and stroked her knuckles across her cheek, as if assuring herself that everything would be ok in the end, as one worry kept being replaced by another in her mind, she wondered if it was all planned to make her go insane and slowly lose her mind. Was it all some sick game with no end, and she was flawlessly playing it, doing precisely what they wanted her to do.

It was already night when they finally arrived back home. Clara spread herself across the bed watching Yaz methodically separating their clothes and organizing it for their trip. She found it strangely relaxing watching her do it. Taking special kind of joy out of simple day to day stuff which made her feel as human as she ever felt before. Enjoying the normality and calmness of this life in comparison to her own for so many years. She playfully rotated herself on a bed looking at Yaz upside-down trying to catch the edge of her t-shirt each time she passed next to her making her giggle and purposely move away.

"Oi...C'mere" Clara frowned complaining and managed to grab her

"I need to pack us" Yaz giggled bending down kissing her quickly "Needy"

"Which one?" she stood by the wardrobe holding two shirts

"Left"

"That's right what you just pointed."

"Your Left"

"This one?"

"Mmmm...or right...both?"

"I suppose we can take both if you want.... Tux?"

"Neah...not planning on taking you for a date."

"Fine then" she turned towards the wardrobe "Not planning on having sex with you then"

"Oi... that was a joke!"

"Panic ha?" Yaz smirked cheeky looking over her shoulder and threw tux on a bed "You need new braces for this."

"I had that for a while you know" Clara said getting up "I'm a bit peckish...wanna a sandwich?"

"Yes definitely...and would you pleaseeee make me a coco?" she said rubbing her nose over Clara's.

"Mmmm....course I will"

"Thanks babe" she said with a small kiss and tapped her bum as she turned around making her smile haply

As Clara left the room Yaz went to get one more suitcase from the other room. She popped it on the bed and moved Clara's laptop bag. A small cube rolled out of it on the floor. She looked at it with hesitation for a moment then turned her eyes towards the door.

Clara was digging through the fridge not able to decide between peanut butter and honey and decided in the end to slap both on toast when her phone rang. She pushed the door shut with her foot and popped it all on a counter.

"Hi!" she answered haply and put Nadjia on a loudspeaker while spreading a thick layer of peanut butter on a toast.

"Hey honey, I'm calling Yaz but she's not answering me?"

"That's odd...she's upstairs packing I'm just making some sandwiches. Is everything alright?"

"Yeah, I just wanted to hear from you both you leave. When is your flight?"

"10:30...not much time to prepare but Yaz won't let me help her out she's got her own packing system."

"Oh...liables"

"Yes" Clara laughed "Should I tell her to call you back?"

"No hun it's alright...Just call me from the airport."

"Will do"

"Alright...well have a wonderful time."

"Oh, we definitely will. I haven't been there in few decades I can't wait"

Nadjia laughed already used to Clara's silly talk "Bye honey."

"Bye"

Took a tray with food heading to the bedroom.

"I didn't know what you want so just put a bit of everything inside.....Yaaaaaa" her eyes opened wide as she walked inside

"I didn't do anything I swear" she looked at her scared holding cube on her open palm which was now open like a flower with spread opened petals.

"Which part of DON'T TOUCH wasn't clear Yaz?" Clara raised her voice quickly resting a tray on the bed and wiping her sonic out

"I didn't. .it fell on a floor" she was trying to justify herself as Clara was carefully taking it out of her hand shooting a look back at her pursing her lips

"I'm sorry...!"

"When I said don't touch Yaz I didn't mean oh look...what does that button do? Maybe if I push it and see what happens..." as soon as Clara took it in her hand and was about to scan it, it immediately closed up again

"Aaaaaaaaaaaaa.....nooooooo...why would you do that? Noooo.....no open...open you stinking peace of aaarhhhh"

"Shit!" Yaz said

"I can't believe this...can you believe this?" she twirled it in her hand trying desperately to force open "Aaaarrrhhh"

Clara used all her strength trying to get it open, but she couldn't.

"I'll hold it again" Yaz said.

"YASMIN!" she pointed a finger at her

"Alright alright I'm just saying," she watched her for a while desperately trying to open it "Wtf babe...you do know that repeating the same action over and over again with a same result is a definition of insanity."

"Thank you, but I don't need your psychoanalysis at the moment" Clara cut her off still trying to open the cube

"Fine...well since your the genius here I'll just fucking leave you to it.... good luck Einstein" she turned her back to her grabbing clothes out of the wardrobe throwing them on a bed

"Why won't you open? Why do you have to be so stubborn? And why am I talking to it?" she glanced at Yaz and suddenly her stomach dropped as now she was calmer, she realized she hurt her.

"Yaz" she said gently.

"What?" Yaz replied cutting throwing a pair of her jeans on the bed avoiding eye contact

Clara reached with her hand turning her around "Hey...I'm sorry"

"You really have a temper Clara...What the hell?"

"I don't...well I do but not all the time...It's not that...I just.... I'm scared Yaz...I'm being careful"

"You can be careful without being a dick about it"

"Whaaaa...Yasmin Khan!!!" she jumped offensive as her words almost gave her whiplash. Her eyes opened up so much it was comical.

"Sigma missy" she waived her wedding ring in front of her face

"Oh yes.... Yasmin Sigma!....Did you just call me..."

"Yes" she she burst out laughing "Dick" she repeated laughing.

Clara put her hand over her mouth "In a name of Gallifrey nobody ever called me that"

"Well, you deserve it" she laughed moving her hand away "Fine I took it off the floor...sorry...it was too tempting...And don't tell me you wouldn't."

"I would but..."

"Seeee...."

"But that's me Yaz...Nothing can happen to me"

"Yes it can...you're not indestructible Clara...." she shook her head with a huff "You can't put me under a glass bell babe..."

Clara sighed. Deep down she knew she couldn't, but it didn't mean she wasn't going to try.

"You can't baby..." she stroke her cheek gently.

Clara took her hand and kissed her knuckles "Pleaseeee Yaz...just....don't touch stuff like that."

"Ok...I won't. It fell on a floor, and you were downstairs. I didn't think it was a big deal...I get it...it was stupid."

"Yaz...listen" Clara wrapped her hand around the side of her neck "I can't risk you getting hurt again. This isn't about trust...you do understand that? ...What if it did something to you?"

"I get it...I do"

"Do you Yaz? Do you really?"

"I do.... I do...I'm sorry"

"I'm sorry I yelled at you"

"Psycho" she laughed "You really know how to lose your shit don't you? There's me thinking my Clara is so cute and fluffy and gentle...like fuck then I get a pocket size rottweiler.... Should've realized it the first day I saw you with that guy"

Clara laughed slumping her face onto her shoulder "I wanna make it very clear that I'm only tolerating you calling me all these names cause I missed ya"

"I thought you liked my potty mouth?" she laughed.

"It has it's charms I won't deny it, but I draw the line at being called a certain part of the anatomy Yaz" she laughed.

"Sorry I was mad at you..." she purred rubbing her nose against her cheek.

"Please don't call me that again."

"Promise...I'm sorry" she raised her hand wiggling her pinkney

"Pinkney promise?" Clara raised her hand.

"Pinkney promise" she kissed her tenderly while connecting her finger to hers "What are we gonna do about that?" she pointed to the cube on the bed.

"Dunno...but I'm sure I'll have a plan by the time I eat that sandwich" she giggled.

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