

Chapter 39

Yaz woke up early to the sound of some bird startling her as she forgot they were in tent. Her eyes were still half asleep, and her curls spread around the makeshift bed. She was now awake and couldn't go back to sleep, so she just laid there watching Clara sleeping on her belly, her face buried in a sleeping bag, and rosy cheeks peaking from the blonde curls, one arm draped lazily over Yaz's waist and the other tucked underneath her head. She ran her hand over Clara's back. Her skin was warm underneath her palm, there was tiny red indent on her arm from the sleeping bag pressing into her skin and Yaz leaned over kissing it. She didn't mean to, but it woke her up. She moaned sleepy rubbing her face into the fabric and flashed her drowsy smile.

"Morning" Yaz smiled dropping kisses down her back as Clara stretched with a yawn then rolled lazily on her back and opened her arms for Yaz "C'mere"

"Feeling better?" She settled cozy as Clara closed her arms around her kissing her forehead.

"Much" she replied with a sleepy smile and a short peck on her lips. Her face flushed and hazel eyes barely opened.

"Herd you get up last night."

"Just needed to clear my mind" she replied reaching for Yaz's curls, twirling them between her fingers.

"And...Is it clear?"

"Sort off" she chuckled "It's always in a mess."

"Needs cleaning?" She kissed her cheek, always hot and soft in the morning.

"Yeah...deep cleaning...haven't been done in centuries" she said with a yawn "...I'm hungry."

"Me too...What's a plan for today?"

"We eat, go for a walk...be lazy, cuddle, switch off all forms of communication to the outside world" she threaded her fingers through Yaz's hair and pressed her lips to the top of her head.

"I'd like that..." she giggled tucking her face in a crook of her neck inhaling the sweet scent of beeswax and honey and slipped her hand under the covers trailing her fingers over the curve of her hip.

"Maybe that's the answer Yaz, take the Tardis and go somewhere where nobody can find us."

"Now you say it ...after all this shit we've been through?"

"I had to get you to trust me, date me, marry me...it was a process, and it wasn't easy" she chuckled.

"You sound like a stalker" she burst out laughing.

"I was...sort of" she laughed and squeezed her arms around her "It was worth it though."

"I was" Yaz yawned sleepy "I love this...it's cozy."

"Aaaaa see" she grinned rolling her on her side and pulled the sleeping bag over their heads" didn't I say you're gonna love it Yaz" she smiled tapping her nose

"I must say, when I first met you, you didn't seem like the camping type"

"I'm full of surprises."

"No shit missy...." she chuckled "I'm sleepy."

"It's early...I could do with more sleep...and a snuggle."

"Snuggle and sleep sounds fantastic" she wiggled tucking herself deeper into her arms. It was steaming hot underneath the covers, but she didn't care. Clara was soft and warm, and the lack of oxygen was worth it. At least until she starts gasping for air.

....

The sound of something grazing against the tent woke her up and Yaz rolled oh her side tapping her hand over the bed. It was empty, which wasn't surprising. She stuck her face into the little pillow inhaling her wife's smell like a smitten teenager. She thought how some people would find her absolute obsession with Clara unhealthy, which one of her work colleagues was quick to point out at the very beginning of their relationship. But she couldn't care less. She never mentioned it to Clara, and now when she knew the truth it gave another layer to it all, made even more sense. Like her brain forgot but her heart was always missing her, always aware that something was ripped out of her. It comforted her in some strange way and made it easier to accept the bizarre situation she found herself in. She smiled stretching and rolled over the bed crawling on all fours and unzipped the tent peering outside. The air was still cold, and fog still hovered above the river. It was unusual but pleasant to roll straight out of the bed on to the wet grass. A massive head appeared from the corner and huffed into her cheek, and she flinched.

"Fucking hell..."

"Morning!" Clara chirped.

"A horse?"

"I knooooow right...They came to see what's going on" she smiled tapping her palm on a animal's neck and popped apple in his mouth

"It's cold" she said unsure whether to get out or just roll back into the comfy warmth of their tent.

"Come on sleepy bear...get your bum moving...Let's have some food."

Yaz brushed her teeth behind the tent before walking to the front and zipped her fleece up. Morning was fresh and grass still damp from the dew. Heron was tapping through the water nearby, perhaps hunting for breakfast and horses were peacefully grazing nearby. The delicious smell of freshly fried eggs Clara was preparing over a small fire combined with the scent of the forest made Yaz even more hungry. She was even making tea in a little pot set on the stone over the fire. It was all new experience, and she could see how she used to enjoy this in her previous life.

"Pass me the plates darling" Clara said.

"I can't believe you even made toast and a tea."

"Nice ha?"

"I can get used to this" she giggled holding the plates.

"Told ya..."

"Aren't you worried about getting fined? I don't think we're allowed to even camp here let alone make fire" she laughed holding the plate.

"Aaaa....see those things there?" She pointed to four black metal sticks shoved in the ground around them "Nobody can see us Yaz."

"Whaaat? How?"

"Whell, credit to my beautiful Tardis those are distracting reflection shields. They create a dome like thingy around us that reflects the surroundings. Quite simple and yet very efficient...kinda like mirrors...just don't go naked outside the parameter" she winked.

"Are you fucking kidding me?"

"Noooo Yaz...can't see us...relax butterfly" she said popping food on her plate.

"Horses can"

"Animals can see things people can't Yaz...different eyes darling."

"When did you put that up?"

"Last night when you were changing to your jim-jams" she smiled cheeky.

"God...I'm starving."

"UVB"

"Ha?"

"UVB...one of the types of invisible ultraviolet rays that come from the sun, it elevates levels of ghrelin...the hunger hormone."

"Yeah, cause why the fuck would I know that" she shrugged.

"Well...You do now" Clara walked behind her and leaned over kissing the top of her head.

....

Walking through the forest was fun. Clara took pictures of birds and named them all of them to Yaz. Slowly she was now able to recognize them herself. They also stumbled on some mushrooms on the way. Yaz bend down to have a closer look, finding them fascinating.

"I never saw a wild mushroom before..." she said "Or have I?" She looked up at Clara who just smiled in response "Right...thought so...Can we eat those?"

"Well, you know what they say...all mushrooms are edible but some only once."

"That's dark" she laughed "Ok...is this one edible multiple time?"

"No" Clara laughed.

It started getting cloudy on the way back, as the evening drew closer it looked like it will rain. Yaz found herself being disappointed as she enjoyed a walk.

Clara seemed to have endless amounts of energy, running on sugar as usual, but Yaz was slowly getting tired. Although her leg wasn't hurting, she was getting out of breath. Sitting down doing practically nothing since the accident combined with tons of food, she was eating didn't help either. She felt herself being more out of shape than ever, but Clara was finally happy enjoying every second of the day. It'd been a while since she saw her in such a good mood, so rather than complaining she decided to go along with it.

Nevertheless, Clara couldn't miss her huffing and puffing and now felt guilty for having her walking for a whole day.

"We should stop Yaz...you're struggling."

"Little bit" she huffed.

"A lot by the sounds of it...you sound like a hedgehog."

"Sandwich?" Clara chirped settling herself on massive tree trunk "I'm a bit peckish"

"Me too...looks like it will rain."

Clara licked her finger and lifted it up in the air "Aaaarrhhh we got about 3 hours...Should give us enough time to get back."

"What if the tent leaks?"

"I shouldn't...but if it does, we get wet" she laughed passing her a sandwich

.....

"Babe...it's really leaking" said Yaz holding a plastic bag trying to prevent their stuff getting wet as rain and the wind pounded their tent.

"I know" Clara scrambled trying to find something better amongst all their stuff.

"I thought you said it can't leak?"

"Never said that Yaz...I said if it does, we'll get wet."

"Well, we are."

"Can't help it being torn."

"How did it got torn in a first place?"

"Not sure...This could work" she pulled out a thermos bottle.

"What good will that do babe? You can't piss in it without it overflowing."

"Don't know Yaz, I never pissed in a thermos bottle before..."

"Seriously babe...what are we gonna do?" She panicked as the bag was getting filled.

"Give me a minute Yaz I need to think..."

"Well think fast...Didn't a tent come with a repair kit? I remember seeing something."

"Aaaa!!!" She snapped her fingers "Clever Yaz..." she grabbed a tent bag and found it "Arrrh...no glue...Seriously? What's the point"

"Well, that's fucked up."

"...Oh...oh...I remember."

"What? I suggest you hurry up" she looked as the bag was now so full she was having trouble holding it

Clara pulled out the emergency kit box and took out the glue."

"You brought a super glue?"

"Yeah...it's like a surgical glue Yaz...you know, if you get hurt or something..." she said as she was wiping the place dry as much as she could and then squeezed glue around the tare then put the patch over it "Should work..." she wrinkled her nose.

"I hope so..."

"Here give me that bag Yaz" she grabbed the bag and opened the tent. Wind blew inside as she quickly dumped the water out and closed the tent. "Blimey...it's really chucking it down."

"My god...I hope this doesn't last all night."

"I won't...it's just a summer storm...it should pass soon."

"Weeeell" Yaz glued herself on her back and wrapped her arms around her waist "We could snuggle and watch a movie on your laptop?"

"We could" Clara smiled and turned her head stealing a kiss from her.

"I kinda like this"

"You didn't twenty-five minutes ago" she raised her eyebrows.

"Well, I do now" she said getting the laptop out of Clara's bag and the little cube rolled out onto the sleeping bag.

"A...a...! Don't you dare!" Clara jumped, picking it up and putting it back in a safe place.

"There's something about it that makes cringe" Yaz said "Not sure what."

"Well let's not find out Yaz...Come on...find something to watch."

The rain slowed down and now it was just pattering lightly on the tent. Clara was dozing off with Yaz snuggled on her back. The slow movements of Yaz's fingertips lazily tracing her stomach made her sleepy. They were warm and soft against her skin. Her heavy half-open eyes struggled to follow the film. Her mind finally calmed down and her thoughts less chaotic, if only for a little while, it was still a welcome change from her daily worries. The occasional long kiss that pressed against the hollow of her neck would bring a smile to her face and she would move just a little closer, snuggling tighter against the woman behind her. Even after almost a year, she still had a dying need for every touch, no matter how small, it was never insignificant in her mind, constantly reminding her that she was no longer alone.

....

They woke up early and began packing. The weather was worsening by the hour which made a decision to leave easier. Walking back though seemed to have taken ages for some reason. Yaz asked something about the smell of the rain and then Clara started talking about petrichor and didn't shut her mouth all the way to the car. She didn't mind it but found it hard to concentrate as she began to struggle towards the end and was grateful when she finally saw the car in the distance.

On the way back they stopped off at Murphy's supermarket to get some food for the rest of the week. As usual it took only ten minutes for Yaz to lose Clara between the aisles, stocking up on everything sugar related whilst Yaz was getting the actual real food. Her reception came back, and she realized she had

several missed calls and a few messages from her mother, so she decided to use the time to call her whilst walking around the store.

"Hey mum"

"Heeey, what happened to you two? You got me worried."

"Sooorry, I didn't know I won't have any reception; we just came back now...well, we're food shopping."

"As long as you're fine, I hate not being able to get you on a phone.... Soo...how was it?"

"Actually, fucking fantastic..."

"Really? You alright Yaz?"

She laughed "Yeeeeeah...I was fishing, can you believe it? Me fishing"

"And she loved it" Clara yelled over her shoulder into the phone making her jump.

"Oh, hi honey..."

"Hello Yaz's mum...We had a great time...Yaz caught a fish."

"I'm glad you're having fun...the weather is absolutely horrible here."

"It's getting worse here as well" Yaz said.

"Oh, your father needs Clara for a moment I'm gonna pass him on to you...Enjoy yourselves girls, love ya"

"Love you too mum."

"Bye" Clara waived into the phone making Yaz giggle.

"Hello girls" Hakim chirped into the phone "Having a good time?"

"Hey dad, yeah...the best...the cabin and the park and everything is so beautiful."

"That's good...enjoy it whilst you can."

"I'll pass you to Clara I just remembered I didn't get myself shampoo."

She left them to it and walked over to the other end of the store. After a few minutes of wandering around she finally found the shelf with all the hair products. She took her time knowing for a fact that when Clara gets into any kind of discussion with her dad it won't end soon. As she stood in front of the shelf, she noticed someone behind her and assuming she was in a way, stepped backwards.

"Oh, so sorry...I'm blocking the whole section here" she smiled to the women next to her.

Suddenly the woman grabbed her forearm and leaned into her ear "Time is of the essence."

"Excuse me?" she asked shocked.

"Give this to the Doctor" she quickly shoved a small scrunched up piece of paper into her hand.

"Whaaa...who are...." and before Yaz could react, the women left, leaving her confused and scared.

She looked around for Clara but couldn't see her, then slowly, carefully opened the paper. Her heart was beating like a drum. The small note, written in an almost perfect old-fashioned script that people don't use anymore, simply contained a bunch of numbers and what at first glance looked like mathematical equations.

"What's that Yaz?" Clara almost made her soul leave her body leaning over her shoulder.

"Fuck mmmm..." Clara quickly covered her mouth.

"Will you STOP saying that" she looked around embarrassed.

"Sorry" she moved her hand away "What do you expect creeping up on me like that."

"I do not creep around...anyway...what's that?"

Yaz rolled her eyes giving up on the argument "Dunno...some women just shoved it in my hand saying it's for you..."

"Say again" she grabbed the paper from her "Who? Where is she?" Clara looked around.

"I don't know...I've never seen her before she gave it to me and left."

"What did she look like?" She continued to ask and pulled the paper out of her pocket scanning the paper.

"Small old biddy, silver hair...you know...typical granny...What is it?"

"Not sure Yaz...give me a second" she looked at the paper mumbling "350...9 2 6
0...oh...ooooh....51.518370"

"Are you kidding me...did you just calculate all of that?"

"Not yet Yaz but I will in a minute.... Aaaa...-0.107350" she jumped off the floor making Yaz jump again.

"Will you stop doing that! ...Giving me a bloody heart attack."

"Sorry Yaz.... 1271865....hmmm...wonder what that could be."

"I wonder what any of it is...I can't believe you just calculated that."

"Of course I did...I think, but I'm not sure...could be...maybe...I wonder if its..."

"What?"

"I mean it could be a location Yaz....not sure...Come on...let's go home."

"Maybe their location?"

"I doubt it Yaz, that would be too easy...can't make it that easy after five decades...I mean that would seriously make my ectospleen hurt."

Yaz laughed and reached for her hand "Your ectospleen?"

"It can really hurt...or tickle, it depends on a situation really."

"Silly..." she laughed.

"I'm serious...I mean could you imagine after all this time someone just giving me the location...Neah...I'm sure it's something else..." she scrunched the paper into her pocket and grabbed the trolley "Did the woman say anything else Yaz?"

"Something about time...oh arrh....time is of the essence" she frowned

"Right..."

"I was kinda hoping to have a nice time here." She looked at her in desperation.

"it's gonna be alright." she leaned over kissing her temple "I promise I'll leave it until we come back...How's that?"

"You know you won't...don't make me promises you can't keep."

She sat in the passenger seat, staring out the window at random people going about their ordinary lives. Nothing in her life was ordinary anymore, but she remembered the time when it was. When only a few months ago things were simpler. When they would be making dinner together and snuggle in front of the TV every night. When Clara was just a goofy adorable professor who captured her heart. When she knew who she was no matter how screwed up she was. She could deal with aliens and time ships, but she wasn't sure how much longer she could put up with this. Was it selfish, or just a desperate need for normalcy, to spend time with a woman she adored without fearing of losing her each minute of every day. She went silent for a long time and Clara glanced at her softly, her hand reaching for her leg stroking it gently.

"I love you"

"Love you too" Yaz turned with sad smile.

Clara moved her hand and reached into her pocket. "Here" she passed her a note "You keep it...alright?"

"What?"

"Does that make you feel better?"

"Babe..." she sighed deeply "It's not that..."

"Then what...Tell me...I wanna know...something is bothering you? Talk to me darling" she stroke the side of her cheek gently then focused back on the road "Please."

"It's everything...this and the cubes and riddles and people breaking into our home, strangers chasing me around the Tardis and trying to kill you...I can't..." she took a deep breath "Is this ever gonna stop Clara?"

She reached for her hand and kissed her knuckles.

"I'm scared...I'm scared out of my mind of losing you"

"You won't...nobody is losing anybody...not again" she swirled the car by the side of the road and stopped. Yaz went silent and wiped a tear which ran down her face and Clara's hearts bled seeing her like that. She opened the door and walked around the car as Yaz watched her confused.

"C'mere" she reached for her hand pulling her out of the car then pulled her in wrapping arms around her waist.

"I'm a wimp...I'm sorry."

"Don't say that" she said softly trying to catch her eyes as they kept looking down between them "Hey" A finger underneath her chin razed her gaze gently "Look at me Yasmin."

"Mmmmm?" She sighed deeply ashamed of how she felt but unable to suppress it

"It will stop...I promise."

"You can't promise that...you and I know that...Should I be enjoying this? ...Cause I'm confused baby...is this supposed to be exiting?...Did I enjoy in this kind of life...am I so different now...boring and wimpy and..."

"Hey, hey" she cupped her face between her palms. Yaz's fingers clenching the waistband of her trousers. "It's alright Yaz....you're not supposed to like this...or enjoy it...there's nothing normal about this"

"I hate this...I hate it with a passion and I'm sorry if that makes me different then who I was."

"Yaz...do you seriously think that I expect you to enjoy in this? ...Seriously?"

"But before I was...I don't know...getting a kick out of it all and now I'm so petrified...it's pathetic"

Clara chuckled and kissed the top of her nose "Oh Yaz....things change darling, people change, life changes and that's what's so beautiful about it. You may like something now and get fed up with it tomorrow or it gets too much or too hard and sometimes you need to put yourself first and be kind to

yourself...and that's ok...It's how its supposed to be...sometimes things change, and we want something different."

"And what if what you want is different...what if you just get fed up and leave me one day?"

"Not happening"

"Yeaaaah....you say that now."

"Well..." she lowered her arms down wrapping them tight around her "This absolutely brilliant woman once told me that when you're married, you're supposed to deal with problems together...be a team...So you see.... not happening...cause you and I...we're a team"

"I see that spark Clara...I saw it in your eyes the moment your fingers touched that lever."

"That spark you see is about wanting to show you the beauty of the universe Yaz, not its ugliest side..." she wrapped her fingers around the side of her neck "It's about taking you to see the stars.... oh, and they are beautiful Yaz"

"I'd like that" she smiled.

"And I will show you all of them, but only if you want it."

"I do...I just don't wanna lose you" she brought her hand up and tucked hair behind her ear "I wanted this for so long baby...I can't lose it."

"So did I..."

She laid her palm on Clara's cheek, and she leaned into the touch with a softest smile then turned kissing it gently "Let's go home...make some pancakes...watch a movie."

"I'd like that" she smiled "I'm keeping that note."

"Ok" she chuckled.

....