

Chapter 15

It was a hot summer day in Sheffield, the city bathed in bright, relentless sunshine. The usually bustling streets quieter as people seek shade under trees or in cafes. The temperature was high, making the air feel thick and warm. Parks like Endcliffe and Graves have become popular spots these days, with locals enjoying picnics and leisurely strolls.

Theta waited in a shade by the side of the road for Yaz to pick her up. They were heading for the last ultrasound checkup before their holiday. Even a light summer dress she wore felt too much on her skin today and factor 50 she smeared on her face was practically melting away. They had had a heat wave for the past week, and she longed for good rain. As much as she enjoyed summer, being heavily pregnant these days didn't feel like much fun. She wasn't getting enough sleep, tossing and turning most nights trying to find a comfy position and her blood pressure spiking almost every second day made her feel like she was on a roller coaster ride most of the time. She checked her watch and huffed, taking one more sip of water. Yaz was late and she started worrying they would miss the appointment. Then she saw a police car approaching her and her eyes opened wide when she saw Yaz behind the wheel.

"Emergency transport ma'am" Yaz laughed winding down the window

"Blimey...Where's your car?" She laughed getting inside and put the carrier bag on the back seat

"I didn't have time to swap the cars. Boss said it was ok...I'm gonna have to get back anyway...C'mere you" she pulled her in for a kiss "Sorry I'm late...Did you wait for long?"

"About 10 minutes...Waaaaw...look at that" her eyes widened as she darted across the dashboard "Can we have lights and a siren?"

"Noooo" she burst out laughing

"Shame" she pouted "It'd be fun"

Yaz rolled her eyes laughing

"Oh, I got you lunch. It's in the back"

"What would I do without you?" Yaz smiled and stroke her knee gently

"Starve to death." she giggled

"I'm so exited"

"Me too...Oh, I gotta show you what I ordered today."

"What did you order?" She chuckled.

It didn't surprise her since Theta knew probably every single online store in existence with Japan being her favorite market. To Yaz's complete surprise she learned that Theta spoke fluent Japanese, which came as a shock when she saw her going through one of the online stores without using a translator. She was obsessed with home gadgets, and their apartment was filled with everything from a shoe drier, vegetable and fruit sonic cleaner to other numerous bits and pieces most of which Yaz just found amusing. So now she was intrigued by her latest purchase.

"It's totally amazing...I found a digital frame for the ultrasound recording that even displays a heartbeat"

"Are you for real?"

"Yeah...saw it on a TikTok shop. I ordered it"

Yaz laughed shaking her head "No way...that's so cool"

"I can't wait for it to arrive."

"Now you got me into it" she chuckled

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Theta was lying on the table holding Yaz's hand. They were both tense and eagerly waiting for the doctor to give them the news. So far, her pregnancy has gone well with some minor complications that they managed to handle, but each appointment still brought more anxiety.

"Your baby is doing really well. Everything seems to be fine."

Theta looked at Yaz with a relieved smile. Yaz exhaled the breath she had been holding for a while, squeezed her hand and kissed her forehead.

"And that worry you had about him not getting enough nutrition?" Yaz asked

"We have been monitoring it closely. But he does seem to be developing at a normal pace and catching up. So, there's nothing to worry about. If he continues in this rate, should be about 2.5 kg at birth which is perfectly normal size for a healthy baby"

"Oh goodie...We worried about that" Theta smiled relieved

"So, there's no danger? ... He is a healthy baby, right?" Yaz asked again just to reinsure herself

"Perfectly healthy" the doctor smiled "Well, we are done for today."

"Thaaank yooooou" Theta smiled cheerfully wiping her stomach

"Thank you so much. Have a nice day" Yaz said and helped Theta off the bed

"Have a nice holiday"

"We will" Theta said

When they were left alone in a room Yaz cupped her face and kissed her ever so gently as if she was made out of glass.

"Happy?" Theta gazed at her lovingly

"I'm fucking shaking. It's nerve racking I tell you" she giggled "Let's go...I'm taking you two for ice-cream"

"Both of us?" Theta chuckled

"Yap..." she bend down and spoke to her stomach "Hey you little fart...What flavor do you want?"

"Chocolate chip" Theta murmured

"Good choice...that's my boy. And you get to drive in a police car" she kissed her stomach and reached for Thetas hand

"Without lights and a siren" Theta pouted

Yaz rolled her eyes laughing and tugged her hand dragging her out like a sulking kid.

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The heat wave lasted the whole week. Their apartment was like furness and they both walked around practically in their underwear. Theta in a bra with just a pair of pink question mark ruffle shorts and Yaz in her boxers and sports bra. Even Lola had a hard time coping, splattered on the kitchen tiles despite her new summer haircut. Yaz decided to make them cold smoothies while Theta was busy packing for their trip...

"Oi...how many boxers do you need?" Theta shouted from the bedroom

Yaz picked up the tall glasses filled with nice cold drink and headed to the bedroom "I don't know...It depends" she walked in and passed her a glass

"Uuuuu...that's nice...Depends on what?" She frowned

"Oh, I don't know" she slipped her arm around her and kissed her "How many will I ruin" she smirked into her lips

Theta burst out laughing pushing her away "Dirty mind"

"Just saying" Yaz giggled sitting on the edge of a bed "Holiday and all that...Doctor said it's safe"

Theta chuckled shaking her head folding the underwear.

"C'mere..." she reached for her hand and pulled her over pressing her lips to her stomach. "He's moving" she looked up smiling and ran her palm over the curve of her belly

"The whole evening. He's been kicking me like a little boxer" Theta smiled stroking her hair "I'm almost done...I thought we go for a walk"

"Yeah, why not...We could do with some air. It's so stuffy."

"I knooooow...I feel a bit dizzy, and my back really hurts."

"I'll finish it...C'mere...lie down with me." she put the drinks on the side table and tugged her hand. Theta lied down spooning herself against her with a sigh.

"What's wrong snuggle bug?" she kissed her shoulder and palmed her stomach

"Just tired...Suddenly I feel so sleepy. I think it's blood pressure again playing up on me."

"You're doing way too much baby. You should really slow down. Why don't you have a little kip. We can go out later" she hummed into her arm dropping small kisses onto her skin

"Mmmmm" Theta hummed drifting off and laced their fingers on her chest "Long summer"

"Whaaa?" She giggled, but there was no reply, so she laid down and closed her eyes.

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It was Yaz's last day at work and Thetas first day of vacation. She drove to her parents to drop off Lola before the trip. It was a beautiful sunny day and the heat had finally subsided after last night's heavy rain.

She turned towards the house and shuddered when she saw her aunt's car in the driveway.

"Fuck sake..." her stomach turned and she was sure even her baby turned inside of her "Why do you have to be here" she sighed and got out of the car and waited a short moment before reluctantly ringing the doorbell.

"Hi honey!" Ashley smiled from the door

"Why didn't you tell me she was coming?" She whispered nervously as her mother hugged her.

"Cause I didn't know she was coming"

"Fuck sake...I don't wanna see her"

"It's gonna be alright.... just ignore her"

"Yeah right, easier said than done"

She walked into the dining room with a cramp in her stomach. Her aunt was sitting at the table smoking one of those long cigarettes and the whole room was filled with smoke which made Theta feel sick.

"Can you stub that out now Theta is here." Ashley asked "It's not good for the baby"

"Nonsense...In my days everyone smoked" she reluctantly stubbed it out and got up

"Hiya" Theta said leaving her bag on the table

"Hi lovely. Look at her all plumped..." she walked over, and they hugged awkwardly "Did you come alone?"

"Yeah, Yaz is still working"

"Wanna drink something honey?" Ashley asked taking the ashtray from the table and walked over to open the door to the garden.

"Something cold...anything will do"

"Alright"

"Where's dad?"

"Working...He said sorry he couldn't make it"

"That's alright mum. I understand"

"So, you drove all by yourself here?" Her auntie said sitting back at the table

"Course I did"

"Doesn't she know how to drive?"

"Of course, she knows how to drive. She's at work...I just said so" she huffed sitting down

"And what does she do again...Waitresses in some night club isn't she?"

"Noooo... she does that sometimes to help her brother. She works for CID, she's a Detective Constable"

"Oh yes I remember now... Wasn't she PC or something like that?"

"She moved"

"Is it a better pay?"

"Little bit...But it makes her happy"

"So, you're paying for most of it then?"

She exhaled deeply "Nooo auntie I'm not paying for everything...We pay things together like we always have done"

"I can't see how that's possible. I mean you make 200 quid an hour and she makes, what....25 grand a year...if. But if you say so. Anyways I'm not interested in her...How are you? Haven't seen you in ages."

"Fine"

"When is a baby due?"

"End of August"

"Soon then. Ashley said you have some health issues?"

"Just blood pressure. But I'm monitoring it. It should be fine."

"It's your age...You should've had a baby a lot earlier you know."

"It can happen to anyone, regardless of the age."

"So, did you buy what you need for the baby?"

"Yeah, most of it. Still some bits and pieces left"

"Did you decide on the name yet?"

"Working on it"

"I hope it's not gonna be Muhammed"

"And what's wrong with that?"

"Leave her alone, will ya...Here we go...I made you a sandwich" Ashley put a tray on the table

"Thanks mum" she smiled

"I'm just asking. I'm her auntie, aren't I? I'm just worried about her. It's not easy to be a single mother without a man"

"I'm not a single mother and I don't need a man thank you very much. What the hell" she rolled her eyes

"Nothing to worry about. She's happy...Yaz still at work honey?"

"Yeah, afternoon shift this week. She can't wait for a holiday."

"It doesn't surprise me. She's been having a lot of night shifts"

"Do they pay extra for those?"

"No auntie they don't. It's a part of her job...you know...catching criminals."

"Well, they're not doing a good job, are they? More crime these days than ever before"

Ashley rolled her eyes "Or, so you're a crime expert now as well, are you? How the hell would you know? You don't get out except to that fancy club of yours and down to the green once a week."

"I do have a telly you know"

"Oh mum...look what I have?" Theta took a frame out of her bag and passed it to her mum "I got two, this one is for you and dad."

"OMG what's that?"

"It's awesome...look...It's a digital frame that displays the ultrasound recording." She explained cheerfully "I already downloaded it for you. All you need to do is press this button aaaand.... there's the baby."

"OMG is that a recording?" She jumped excited

"Yeah...Isn't it amazing...Look...If you press a sound button you can hear a heartbeat"

"Waaaw...the things they have today...Look at him. Oh, isn't he the cutest." She showed her sister

"Can't see much on that can you"

"What are you going on about. You can clearly see the baby" Ashley pointed

"It's our baby mum.... look you can see a little hand" Theta melted

"You mean your baby?" Her aunt remarked

"Excuse me?" Theta lifted her head

"It's your baby...You keep saying our...It's not hers is it."

"OUR BABY!" She exclaimed

"I hate to break it to you Theta, but this baby isn't hers. It's yours and whoever the donor is...Which just proves my point"

"What point?" Ashley jumped

"That it's unnatural Ashley...Whatever....you know" she waived her finger towards Theta
"...them two are.... It's against nature."

"Stop it. I won't hear none of that in this house." Ashley said and turned her concentration back to the frame

"I'm just saying how it is. You can't dispute nature."

"It's our baby, whether you like it or not."

"Don't be ridiculous Thata. You can convince yourself to whatever delusion you want, but if it were natural, you wouldn't need a man to have this baby.... Now, would you? Besides, do you even know who the father is? It can be a criminal or a drug addict for all you know."

"It's getting late, I'm going home" she got up and picked up her bag

"What about your sandwich?"

"Sorry mum. Lost my appetite" she kissed her cheek "Here's a charger. You have to plug it in like a phone. Have dad call me when he gets home."

"Look what you just done." She turned to her sister "Please don't go"

"I'm sorry mum"

"Oh, look...Now she's sulking.... I'm just stating facts Theta. You can't pretend this is normal. Someone should say something. You're just gonna confuse that poor child one day."

"I'm not sulking. I'm just refusing to sit here listening to you spewing all this vile about my family cause your narrow minded brain can't keep up."

"Theta!" Ashley jumped

"I'm leaving" she grabbed her bag from the table "I don't need this shit"

"Theta please." Her mum grabbed her arm stopping her "Can't you just zip it" she turned to her sister

"I can't believe you just spoke to me like that. Can you believe what she just said to me? And all over some Paki that twisted her head."

"What the fuck did you just say?" Theta turned around

"Goodness me...Where did you pick up that language. That's what you get when you hang around that council estate she comes from?"

"That's enough!" Theta shouted slamming her fist on the table. Then her chin wobbled, and she picked up her bag leaving the room.

"Thetaaaa wait! You can't drive like this. And you, shut your noise! I've had it up to here with your shit!" Ashley yelled "You're provoking her since she came here, what the hell is wrong with you. It's disgusting"

"Meee...Can't you see what's happening to your daughter. I told you Ashley...didn't I tell you nothing good is gonna come out it..."

"There's nothing wrong with my daughter and if you don't like it, you know where the bloody door is." She huffed and ran after Theta

"Fine....I'll just leave then" the woman got up and started picking up her stuff from the table.

Theta sat in the car crying her eyes out and dug through her bag looking for her phone.

"Theta wait!!" Ashley ran up to the car and opened the door "Theta honey...please come back inside. I can't let you drive in this state."

"No" she wiped her face and took her phone out with a shaking hand

"She's leaving."

"Good"

"Pleaseeee honey. This isn't good for you or the baby. You mustn't get upset like this. She's not worth it ...Fuck her"

Theta chuckled through tears. Her mother rarely used this kind of language.

"Come on" she reached out her hand "I can't remember what you said about that frame. I need you to explain again"

"Yeah right" she wiped her tears smiling little "Telling me porkies?" She looked up and saw her auntie getting in the car.

"See...she's leaving. Probably won't see her for few months"

Her aunt reversed the car and stepped on the gas pedal so hard the tires made the gravel fly around.

"Come on hun...Let's go back into the house."

"I could do with that sandwich" she pouted

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"Here, have some tea. It'll help you to calm down." Ashley put a cup in front of her "Honey..."

"Don't..."

"Don't what...?"

"Defend her"

"I wasn't going to."

Theta looked up with bloodshot eyes squeezing the mug in her hand.

"I know this is hard, but you getting so upset isn't gonna change how she feels about this"

"I knooooow. I don't expect her to mum. I just lost it, that's all. Why can't she just leave me alone."

She reached for her hand across the table and squeezed it tightly "Coz her narrow minded brain can't keep up"

Theta chuckled "I shouldn't have said that"

"Oh yes you should've. That was the best bit. C'mere" she got up walking around the table and Theta closed her arms around her "I think she's definitely gonna leave you alone after this"

Theta giggled "I hope so"

"I love you."

"Love you too"

They sat in the kitchen waiting for Yaz. Ashley worried about her driving back and called her to pick her up after work. It was late, almost nine in the evening when the cab finally pulled up in front of the house and Ashley went to open the door.

"Hi honey"

"Is she alright?" Yaz asked with panic in her eyes

"She is now. She got pretty upset. I gave her some Melissa tea to calm her down. I'm sorry, my sister is a piece of shit."

"No need to apologize, I have some of those from my side of the family as well"

As she walked into the kitchen Theta got up straight away flying into her arms.

"Hey snuggle bug" she kissed the top of her head closing her arms around her "You alright?"

"I am now" she hummed squeezing her tight

"Are you hungry?" Ashley asked "Sit down. I made some nice pasta"

"Thank you, but we should be heading home"

"Noo" Theta looked up at her "I'm fine love, honest. Please eat something"

"You sure?" She cupped her face

"Yeah..." she nodded "Come on...have some food. I know you're starving"

"I am actually" she chuckled dropping a small kiss to the tip of her nose and Ashley smiled lovingly.

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By the time they got home that evening it was really late. Both exhausted from a long day they decided to go to bed straight away. Yaz rolled the suitcases into the hallway, ready for the morning and returned to the bedroom.

"At least it's not hot tonight" Theta said leaving her cream on the side table and went into bed "Hopefully I'll get some sleep."

"Everything is in front of the door"

"We mustn't forget toiletries in the morning"

"We won't" Yaz took off her shirt and lifted the sheet slipping into bed. Theta snuggled up to her resting her head on her chest. "You alright?"

"Mmmm..." she hummed

"Wanna talk about it?" She kissed the top of her head and ran lazy lines down her back

"I'll be alright. She just pressed my buttons. I never spoke to her like that in my life. I don't think I ever spoke to anyone like that to be honest. Not very nice...But she just wouldn't stop, and I exploded"

"What did you say to her?"

"That she's narrow minded...and practically told her to shut the fuck up"

"Bloody hell. Didn't know you had it in you" she giggled

"Neither did I" she laughed lifting her head asking for a comforting kiss

"Wanna tell me what she said?"

"Not really...Loads of stuff I don't wanna repeat..." she rubbed her face into her chest "She was just gross and condescending. I don't care what her opinion is, I just don't wanna listen to it and she wouldn't shut up. So, I just snapped. I think it's my hormones as well" she giggled

Yaz tangled her fingers in her hair, seeping blonde strands through her fingers and pressed a long kiss to her head. "I love you..." she murmured into her hair

"Love you too" she looked up at her pouting her lips. Yaz tucked her hair behind her ear and pulled her into a gentle kiss

"You should sleep, you had a long day, and we need to get up early"

"I knooooow. I can't wait to get to Brighton" she smiled

"Me too" she reached over to the side table and switched off the light then closed her arms around Theta holding her tight.

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