

Chapter 8

Midweek came quickly and they only had two days before camping to buy Theta boots and a jacket. Knowing from experience what shopping with her was like, Yaz hurried after work to meet before the stores closed. She checked out and went to the changing room.

"Hi" she greeted her friend Anna and went to her cabinet taking her vest off.

"OMG Yaz, what the hell happened?"

"I got smacked in a face by a pot."

"Jesus, are you alright? "

"Yeah, I'll be fine. Just a rough day. Sorry, I have to run, my girlfriend needs new boots for camping" she rolled some deodorant on her armpits and closed the cabinet.

"Alright babe, take care."

"You too" she grabbed her jacket and rushed out.

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Theta was already waiting in the car holding a cup of coffee for her.

"Hey babe"

"OMG! What the..."

"I'm fine" she leaned over to kiss her, but Theta put her hand on her chest holding her back.

"Baaaaby...what the hell who did that to you? Jesus that's right by your eye." She reached her hand out, but Yaz grabbed it.

"I'll be fine, it's nothing. Really, it looks worse than it is. Give us a kiss" she pressed her lips at hers, but Theta wasn't in the mood for kissing. She was mortified with a swollen bruise on the side of Yaz's face.

"What happened? You should go to the doctor."

"I got a pot in my head, it's fine. Nothing that frozen peas can't handle. Come on...let's go baby, we don't have much time."

Reluctantly Theta started the car. "I got you coffee. Just pull the window down if you're gonna smoke."

"Thank yooooou." She haply took her IQOS and the coffee as it was her first today.

"Yaz will you please tell me what the hell happened?"

"It was just two women who got into an argument over new fence in the garden. It got heated so I tried separating them and got a pot in my head. It wasn't on purpose she was just waving it around and I got in her way. It's funny really, cause they stopped arguing and got all concerned about me."

"Jesus darling" she ran her hand down Yaz's leg "That could've been your eye"

"Well, it wasn't. It'll be fine in a few days.

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"Where's your big toe?" Yaz probed the cap of the boot "And don't lie. I know you like them, but you can't put up with a pain."

"Honest...I swear on me nan they're really comfy. She giggled as Yaz pulled her up on her feet. "Let me see you walk."

"See, walking, walking, jumping" she shopped around giggling "I love them."

"Honest if you cry your feet hurt, I'll tell you to fuck off."

"Fair enough" she giggled leaning over, popping a kiss to her cheek.

"I'm not convinced" she rolled her eyes and took the shoe box "Come on...let's find a jacket."

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"I'm so excited..." she hooked her arm in hers hopping like on springs "I saw this reality, really cute thermos bottle with teddies..."

"Yeah, we'll get it" Yaz laughed "But we only have one hour, and you need a jacket."

"I can be fast."

"Yeah right" she laughed.

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"There, it's nice and windproof, waterproof as well." Yaz said

Theta stood in the middle of the store while Yaz zipped her up all the way to her chin and pulled the hood up.

"I love the color, and this rainbow stripe."

"It's not a rainbow it's a reflective tape." She laughed "You're such a kid sometimes."

"Only sometimes?" She giggled grabbing her braids and playing with them whilst Yaz was checking all the zippers and a velcro.

"It's a good jacket and it will keep you warm. There...like it?" She grabbed her shoulders turning her towards the mirror.

"Love it. It's very comfy. Big pockets. Can we go get that thermos bottle now?"

"Yes" she couldn't stop laughing.

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"That's really swollen now. We should go home and put some ice on that darling" Theta said as they walked through the garage.

"It does hurt."

"Of course it does. And your eye started to swell up as well baby. Let me see that" she tugged on her hand stopping her "Are you sure we don't need to go to the doctors?" She ran her fingertip gently over the swollen bit.

"I'm sure. Just ice."

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In the evening, they settled on the sofa watching a movie. Yaz snuggled her head down on her lap as Theta put ice on her bruise.

"I'm starting to get brain freeze" Yaz said moving the ice pack.

"Ok darling. Let me see...Looks a bit better. Your eye has gone down."

"At least I won't look like Sloth for Saturday" she laughed "C'mere" she tugged her hand as a sign for her to lie next to her.

"I won't feel like getting up" she giggled snuggling up.

"Me neither" she said draping her leg over her "I just need a cuddle."

"I get worried you know. It's freaking me out that someone can hurt you."

Theta brushed her thumb over her cheek gently and Yaz closed her eyes. She was sleepy and painkillers made her drowsy.

"Don't worry. People rarely get seriously hurt. This was just an accident. She didn't aim at me" she yawned then laughed as Lola got jealous and started pushing her way between them.

"Excuse me missy" Theta giggled.

"I don't think she gives a fuck babe. It's a family hug" she laughed as Lola made herself comfortable then started sharing kisses wagging her tail making them both laugh. "I don't want your kisses." Yaz laughed fighting her off until she finally calmed down sniffing her sore eye.

"She knows you're feeling poorly" Theta said.

"I knooooow.... she's adorable" she yawned draping arm around the dog and Theta drifting away.

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"Morning" Yaz dragged her feet to the kitchen still half asleep.

It was 6am on a Saturday morning. They were leaving early to make the most of the weekend ahead of them. But her soul was still outside her body at the moment, unlike Thetas who had been up since five making sandwiches.

"Wanna sandwich?" She smiled haply as Yaz kissed her.

"Mmmm. Thanks babe" she yawned and sat at the table. "We mustn't forget raincoat for Lola. Just in case. You never know."

"It's packed and her towel and those fold up feeding bowls and her food. You did put tick ampula on her?"

"Yeah. Two days ago. I'll pack her brush. She's probably gonna be full of all kinds of shit by the evening. Leaves, twigs..."

"Actually, good thinking. It didn't even cross my mind. Your phone kept pinging by the way. I hope that's not your work."

"It better not be or I'll go mental" she got up to have a look

"It's alright..." she yelled from the bedroom "It's Malik and Andrea. She's just asking if we have a mosquito lamp."

"And do we?"

"Yap. Andrea lost hers last time, then she forgot to buy it cause she forgot she lost it. She gets like that. It's just Andrea" she laughed.

"Sounds like me" Theta laughed.

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"Alright...let's go" Yaz closed the boot and sat at the wheel "You sure you want me to drive?"

"Yeah, I just wanna chill" she laughed.

"Thanks babe, how thoughtful"

"You're welcome. Who is she kidding, she loves to drive this car" She said to Lola "No you can't go to my lap darling, not safe"

Ten minutes into the trip Thetas phone rang. It was her mum.

"Hi mum"

"Hi Ashley"

"Hey girls"

"You're up early" Yaz said.

"Can't sleep when you're on a road. You will call me when you arrive?"

"Sure mum. Yaz's parents already called as well. We do know how to drive you know"

"I know you do, not so sure about the others darling."

"Ok, see your point."

"You did put ampulla on Lola?"

"Yap. Yaz did it a few days ago. She's really gonna enjoy this."

"She will. Ok hun, have a nice time and call me."

"We will, bye Ashley"

"Bye mum"

Yaz parked at a petrol station which was their meeting point. Her friends were already there. Eating early morning sandwiches on a bonnet of a car and having a cup of coffee. Yaz beeped as she parked nearly making Jack spill his coffee.

"Hiya! " Theta waived from the car

"Morning" Joyce waived "Oh waaw look at her with her hiking gear"

"I know right. I love it" she smiled getting out of the car

"Morning"

"Yaz babe, finally." Billy hugged her "OMG what's with your face?"

"I got hit by a pot"

"That bad in a relationship already" Andrea laughed.

"Well, she can have a gob" Jack said and Yaz showed him a middle finger.

"Anyways...Theta, Billy, Andrea. And please don't shock her the first day"

"Don't know what you're talking about. We're the nicest people" Billy took her hand kissed her knuckles "Nice to meet you."

"OMG man, now you're seriously milking it" Jack burst out laughing.

"Nice to meet you too " Theta laughed.

"Hi, Andrea, his girlfriend and his not that nice don't fall for it"

"Hi Andrea....I'll bare that in mind."

"Nice jacket I love the rainbows."

"Seeee....told you it's rainbows" Theta pointed finger at Yaz.

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After a relatively short trip they got to the nature park and were given short instructions about safety and what's allowed and not allowed, including instructions on how to safely use fire pits and barbecues.

"What are you doing?" Yaz turned to Theta confused.

"Writing it down"

Yaz burst out laughing.

"Whaaa? Well, you may know all this, but I don't. Don't wanna look like stupid blonde in front of your mates."

"You can't even if you tried." She giggled kissing her temple and left her to it.

They picked up their stuff and rented tents heading towards their pitch.

"Right kids, off we go" Bill said "Stick to the path, don't feed the wildlife and if you feel the ground shaking keep very very still."

"Why's that?" Theta asked Andrea

"It might be a T-rex." Everyone said and laughed.

"He does this every time someone new joins the group" Andrea said "Ignore him...he's been watching way too many movies."

"I have a practical question" Theta asked "where do we pee?"

"Oh...there's toilets darling. I'll show you" Yaz said

"I'm a bit hungry " Joyce said

"You just ate in a car?" Jack said

"Well, I'm hungry again. Besides you ate my second sandwich"

"I think you can let your dog off the lead here Theta" Andrea said

"I'm not sure, I get worried I'll lose her. She's still a baby"

"Oh, then maybe not. I was just thinking she might have fun running around"

"Give her here" Yaz took the lead "Lola, wanna run?"

"You're not serious?" Theta laughed

"Yap, besides I'm still stiff from driving...Come on...let's go" she tugged on the lead and ran off with her

"OMG" Theta laughed "She's gonna be knackered."

"So, how do you like it so far?" Joyce caught up with the girls

"I love it" Theta smiled "I don't think I did anything like this since I was a kid. The nature is beautiful."

"Stunning isn't it. It's a drag going back to work on Monday though."

"It's getting hotter" Andrea said taking her jacket off."

"Actually, not a bad idea" Theta took hers off as well.

"What do you do for living Theta?"

"I'm a lawyer, you"

"Cool. I work for a medical recruitment company. Nurses"

"My bestie is a nurse. If she ever needs a new job now, I know where to send her. What's he doing?" She frowned confused seeing Billy on the ground digging through some bushes.

"He's a biologist. He always finds some spider or some bugs. He's like a kid in that. Hey! What did you find?"

"Look...isn't it cute."

"Is that a praying mantis?" Theta asked.

"Yeah, wanna hold it?"

"It won't bite me?"

"Not unless you squish it. Here give me your hand. Also, this is a boy. They're not as aggressive as girls."

"Yeah, they are smart" Joyce said "they get sex and then get rid of men" she laughed.

"Well, that makes me feel useful" Jack remarked.

Theta laughed "He's cute."

"I'm seriously hungry now. Where's the pitch?" Joyce whined.

"Down there" Jack said "I think Khan is already there by now."

"I lost my girlfriend and my dog" Theta laughed.

"There they are" Andrea pointed.

Yaz sat on the rocks near the barbecue throwing a ball to Lola.

"OMG she's off her lead!"

"She's fine, chill out." Yaz giggled "She's glued to me so much she doesn't even wanna walk without me."

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"That's very cozy " Theta said as they set up the tent and all the sleeping bags inside.

Lola was already making herself comfortable as well. Their pitch was close enough to the others from the group but far enough to give them privacy.

"Just make sure you zip it up every time you go in and out. We don't want bugs inside. C'mere" she pulled her hand rolling her on the sleeping bags.

"There's people outside" she whispered laughing as Yaz hovered over her.

"Well, you're just gonna have to kiss me quietly then" she giggled dropping tiny kisses to her lips "Like it?"

"Love it...But I'll have to pee"

"Me too. I'll show you. There are nice toilets but no shower. So, we will have to improvise."

"This is so beautiful, and very romantic" she went mushy brushing her fingers at the back of Yaz's neck.

"I'm glad you like it. For me this is the perfect getaway. It's where I forget about my work and really chill out."

"I love it."

"Come on snuggle bug. Let's pee and we'll make some food."

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After making delicious sausages and mashed potatoes on an open fire, they decided to take a walk. The grounds spread across 10 acres of private woodland which was all fenced off, so Theta relaxed letting Lola run around off leash. Billy collected insects along the way, and Jack photographed the local birdlife. What Theta found out was his hobby. Letting the boys do their thing, the girls slowly walked in front and chatted.

"My birthday is coming up in June" Theta said "I'm not sure what I will do but I'd love you all to come."

"That's nice of you. We'd love to." Andrea said, "Mine isn't till October and Yaz yours is in November, isn't it?"

"Yap, last year I didn't do anything really. Might do it this year though."

"The older I get the more I'm not really bothered" Joyce said.

"That's true actually" Theta agreed "I used to make such a big deal out of it and now I'm dreading each year being added on top the other."

"Someone roll the clock back." Andrea said
"Yaz, you're the youngest, right."

"I think so, I'm 32 now"

"Baby" Andrea laughed

"And you Theta, if you don't mind me asking?"

"41...no spring chicken as my mum would say."

"Shit...mum...I forgot to call her" Yaz jumped

"OMG Yaz, I'm surprised she didn't call you already"

"She'll kill me" she said taking her phone out.

"Hey mum" she frowned expecting fire on the other side

"Well nice you remembered."

"Sorry...everything is fine don't worry. We just set up all the tents and had some food"

"Is Theta alright?"

"Yeah, she loves it" she smiled glancing over at her

"It's lovely" Theta shouted into the phone

"Alright, I'm not gonna keep you. Go have some fun. And just call me when you get back"

"We will. Bye mum"

"Hey, you two...sit there" Joyce pointed to the big rock by the side of the path "Let me take a nice picture of you."

"Alright " Theta agreed haply.

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"It's a bit creepy at night" Theta said washing her hands.

Yaz kept her company going to the toilet as the walk through the dark woods alone with only a torch wasn't appealing to her at all.

"It does a bit" she laughed.

"How did you do that when you were alone here?"

"I just did it I suppose. Not like I'll go knocking on my mate's tents in the middle of the night" Yaz said as they stepped out of the cabin. Theta suddenly grabbed her wrist as they were about to go down the steps.

"Yaz" she tugged on her hand frantically seeing a man standing in the dark with his back to them.

"Wtf?" Yaz whispered "Is he pissing against that tree?"

"Can we just get out of here please?"

"Excuse me sir, there's toilets here" Yaz yelled.

"Why did you do that?" She whined pulling on her hand completely freaked out, but the man turned around slowly, his face still in a dark. Yaz stared to worry at this point trying to shine the torch in his face, but he was too far. Thetas legs were going slowly, and she gripped Yaz's wrist so hard she was stopping her circulation.

"Sir, I'm police officer. Can you please come out in the light. This isn't funny."

Suddenly the man started running towards them making creepy noises and Theta screamed from the bottom of her soul.

"Billy you stupid fuck" Yaz yelled "It's alright, he's just being an idiot " she said to Theta who nearly collapsed on the floor.

"What the hell" Theta sighed relieved.

"Sorry...." he laughed like crazy "I'm a police officer" he laughed.

"Fuck off" Yaz punched his shoulder.

"Sorry hun" he said to Theta who was still catching her breath "I had to piss, and I heard you inside...It was too tempting."

"I think I have to pee again." She laughed "You scared the shit out of me."

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They all made some dinner together and played cards for a while until everyone started flagging.

"It's getting late" Andrea said "She's sleeping" she pointed at Theta leaning on Yaz's shoulder. She was half asleep being lulled by the crackling of fire.

"It's the mulled wine that got her" Yaz chuckled stroking her neck "She did quite well all things considered. She's up since five all exited like a kid."

"Awww bless. She enjoyed it though." Billy said.

Lola was curled up by the fire on her blanket. Also sleeping. She had an exciting day and, in the end, just plonked down exhausted.

"I could do this for a week," Jack said. He enjoyed looking at the stars from his tree hammock.

"We should really do this more often" Billy said.

"I know right. Why don't we?" Yaz frowned.

"Cause we're idiots" Andrea laughed throwing a twig in a fire "You know what we should do. Take a cabin for Christmas."

"Yeah, let's do that" Yaz's eyes opened wide "That would be so much fun. And she would love that."

"Alright gang...is it a deal then?" Joyce asked.

"Count me in," Jack said.

"Us two definitely" Billy said.

"Alright people.... let's go to bed." Andrea got up "We need to put the fire out."

"I'll do that" Jack got up.

"Theta darling...wake up honey."

"Mmmm?" She opened her eyes sleepy.

"Morning sunshine" Andrea smiled.

"Hi, sorry...It's the fresh air and that wine."

"That's alright honey. We're all here to chill out" Joyce said.

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"Can we wash?" Theta asked as they walked back to the tent.

"Yeah" Yaz laughed "I'll show you the system " she giggled "Not sure you're gonna like it though.

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"So, take the water bottle and go into the toilet and just wash yourself with a small towel then put the pajamas on straight away. I'll be in front of the cubicle."

"Alright " Theta laughed "That's very camping style."

"The water is still a bit warm from the fire just be fast. I'll brush my teeth whiles you do that. "

"Ok" she giggled.

It was all a new experience, but she enjoyed it completely. Back in the tent Theta brushed Lola. Their tent was glowing in the dark like a little green bubble light bulb. And Lola barked a few times hearing noise from outside. Then all three of them snuggled up in the bed.

"This is very cozy" Theta said rubbing their noses together.

"Very cozy" Yaz smiled slipping her arm around her.

"Don't get too romantic on me. There are people outside and I'm already flushed" she giggled.

"Are you? " she slipped her hand into the top of her pajamas trailing her fingers down her spine

"Yees tinker...." she smiled dropping a kiss to her lips then fell silent for a short moment "I'm so happy with you."

"Don't...you're getting me mushy. I'm so happy with you, you've got no idea"

"Do you think that's it? Do you think we'll stay together...like forever?"

"I plan to...I hope you do?"

"Definitely." She smiled, bringing her hand at the back of her neck and pulling her into a kiss.

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