

# The Green Eyed Monster

by Maura Trail

So this is what hate feels like. I glare at her, across the room standing there with him. Tall, blond, slender, perfect complexion, adorable smile, and bright eyes; and him and his lean athletic build, soft square jawline, charming smile, deep blue green eyes, dark curly hair, smooth olive complexion (exactly how I always imagined Sir Lancelot to look like... dreamy. Whatever, they look perfect together.

This isn't the way it was supposed to be. She is with MY Jeremy. She smirks at me knowingly, as if she is rubbing it in. She knows I'm competition, oh she knows. My blood boils with detestation and envy. To think I am not the jealous type. I wasn't anyways; I wasn't when it was just he and I. Jeez, I let him out of my sight for one weekend, okay five weeks, and everything we were, everything we had unravels. Enter the fair Hermia and Demetrius runs away. So what? That makes me Helena? I am made a fool.

It's bad enough being the fool. I can handle that? I know how to handle that with grace and poise. But, here and now? I feel like my heart has been ripped out of my chest and stomped on, or better yet like every bit of my insides are just crumbling to the floor in pieces. It's a wonder that I am still able to stand upright.

I make a dash for the drink table, grab a red wine, quickly down the glass, and ask for another. The bartender tells me to go easy. I tell him that it's impossible to go easy when your heart has just been trampled on.

"Are you sure you don't want a shot?" he asks sardonically or maybe it was suggestively. I miss the intonation because I'm preoccupied. I simply and politely thank him and say I'd stick to red

wine that night. I then find a spot directly across the room from them, so that I could let my wound fester a little more.

In this moment, I hate her. I hate her smile, her hair, her clothes, her laugh. I especially hate her infectious laugh. Its not one of those sickeningly girly ones, or a high pitched giggle, but its hearty and feminine at the same time. She is everything a man should fall for. She is absolutely horrid. How could he go for her? How could he bring her?

He knew I would be here tonight. He knows I know her. Why didn't he warn me when we talked about this party earlier in the week? A heads up would have been helpful. Then I wouldn't feel like I was getting smacked in the face by a line drive I didn't see coming; then I wouldn't feel the fool. Maybe that was his plan all along.

Unless he was completely oblivious, and that was debatable, I couldn't hide my shock from him when I walked into the party and saw her standing there with him. Did he know I hated her? No, he couldn't have known. I didn't even know it myself until just now. If he didn't know before, I suspect he knows now.

I make eye contact with him. I can tell he sees the pain in my eyes, he sees that he really hurt me. He looks away uncomfortably. I look at him in disbelief. I turn on my heel and walk to the other side of the room. I would have stomped, but I was trying to be somewhat classy in public.

The bartender catches my attention as I pass the bar again, asking if I want another. "Is it that painfully obvious?" I ask disappointed in myself.

"Yes," he says as he refills my glass and looks at me smugly, "And, if you need someone to take your mind off of him afterwards, I get

off at midnight.” He winks at me. “I’m Kevin. Just come find me.” Awesome, I have no idea whether I am just that good looking or have that air of desperation about me for a bartender to be hitting on me. I must look completely desperate. I smile and walk away.

I begin to stalking around the party, like a jungle cat circling her prey. My eyes remain fixed always on them. I imagine myself going up to her, tripping just in front of her and spilling my drink all over her. I thought of paying someone else to do that.

I imagine going up to her, throwing my drink in her face and smacking her across the cheekbone, across her perfect cheekbone. The slut. She'd deserve it.

I feel a tap on my shoulder. I jolt back to reality, dropping my drink in the process. I turn around looking at the mess I'd made and then the person who startled me. Brown slip on dress shoes, worn in blue jeans, blue and white striped dress shirt; I'd know that outfit anywhere. It was Alex, my supposed best friend. How could he not have *at least* warned me?

“Are you okay?” He asks sincerely concerned. I guess I couldn't find fault in him for checking in on me.

“Never better,” I say, shrugging my shoulders.

“Alright then, are you aware that all your glaring is beginning to scare the locals?” he jests, surely. I ponder for a moment. I guess I should tone it down a bit.

I look down again at my mess. Unfortunately it was a plastic cup, not glass. The shattering would have been gratifying. I'm glad I wore black shoes. They hide the red of the wine very well. I thank Alex, pat his shoulder, and find the bathroom to clean up. I feel his eyes on the back of my head wondering why the hell I thanked him;

it wasn't an appropriate response for the situation. I don't think I was capable of being appropriate in any sense of the concept. Who can be appropriate or rational when the love of her life shows up to a party with some little tramp?

There's a line. Of course there is always a line for the ladies room. She snakes her way in front of me at the last second. With all those nasty thoughts running through my head, I deserved it. She is still no less of a bitch. She gets to the bathroom and takes her sweet little time. What happened to being adults? I think she was doing this on purpose. I imagine grabbing her scrawny neck on her way out of the bathroom and wringing it. Maybe then she will get the point. Maybe going for the neck is a bit extreme; a nice friendly Indian burn will do the trick. Then again, that's just childish. Maybe I'll just trip her accid...

The door opens with force, right into me before I could finish my thought. "Ow!" I shout.

"Oh sorry, I didn't see you there. Are you okay?" she says smugly feigning concern as she walks away. The "AY" in okay ended in a higher inflection, much like that of a valley girl. Stupid blonde's.

"I'm fine, its fine," I say gritting my teeth. What I really wanted to say was, "Oh really, I was standing right behind you in line. That's what a line is." Civilized I had to remind myself; maybe I misstepped too close to the door. Bitch, I was thinking to myself.

I clean myself up and grab another drink before I go back to my glaring. She's over there, rubbing my nose in the shitty fact that she's here with him. She is over there, moving in on my guy. Okay so he is technically not my guy, but we had something special and she pulled the rug out from under me. You just don't recover easily from that.

There she is laughing with my friends. Wait. Those are my friends, what am I doing over here? I walk over confidently. One of them asks where I've been all night, and gives a knowing glance to him. Alex is there, he nudges me and I glance at Jeremy. He knows our friend is implying that I've been avoiding them because of her. She's awful.

I join in the conversation. She tries to keep up with us but can't. This is what I needed all night. My words are my weapons as I wield a twisted and sharp discourse. She shuts up. The look on her face is priceless, like she doesn't know what to do when she can't win at everything. Not that there was anything to be won or lost, so to speak. She looks like a little lost puppy. That's what you get for messing with me. In my mind I had the whole 'head bob, finger snap' attitude going on that my roommate Katie always had. I really hope that was just in my head because that would just look silly. I wanted to stick my tongue out at her. Again, I had to remind myself *be civilized*.

There appears a glint in her eye. She smirks at me, slides her arm around him, and raises her eyebrows suggestively at me. Damn. Check and mate. The rage in my eyes grows. I am thankful the lights are dim. No one can see me blush, or the green shade of envy filling my every pore. Great, I probably match the color of my eyes. Talk about green-eyed monster, I had never taken that notion so literally. My even greener eyes will just stick out against my red hair, I am sure of it. I excuse myself, down my drink in one gulp, and walk away. Note to self: never chug red wine more than once in a night.

Air, I need air. I step outside, squat down and brace my back against a wall. Why did I like him in the first place? I try and focus on work and this is what happens, my arch nemesis moves in on my man. Why she was my arch nemesis, I don't really know. Figure of speech? Again I can't *really* call him my man either. I didn't really

have claim on him. It's just that it was pretty obvious we were something. Something, such an ambiguous term. Something is so noncommittal, something is so nothing. Fuck my life right now.

I wish I had a baseball and a glass wall in front of me. I'd throw it as hard as I could and shatter the wall. Watch the pieces crumble just like me.

Alex walks out to check on me. "I'm fine," I say. If you call having your heart ripped from your chest and trampled on by some troll of a girl, then yes, I am fine. He backs off and lets me be. Its official, I hate her.

After a cigarette and a pep talk from Alex, we walk back in. He tries to head me off as I head for another drink, but I beat him to it. That's when I see it, my window of opportunity. I eye Jeremy. Alone. Finally I walk over to him. He smiles at me. I feign a smile, fighting back tears.

I can't do this.

I move to walk away and he grabs me by the arm. "Sorry," he says softly. "Jess and I are getting out of here soon. I really only stayed so long because I wanted to see you." I had no words, and gave him a quizzical look. What's that supposed to mean? Did she know this? I really hope she did.

"Its been a while, we need to catch up soon," I say, smiling like the fact that he's there with her doesn't bother me.

"Yeah, sure," he agrees. We hug. The hug makes my heart sink a little more. A single tear escapes my eye. My lashes flutter preventing anymore from escaping. We let go. I take a step back, quickly wipe the tear, say it was nice seeing him, and walk away

before I actually break down. The last thing I want is for him to see me cry.

I don't pay attention to where I am walking or to whom, just away. Someone gets in my way, blocks my path, and spills their drink all over me in the process. My new dress ruined. Go figure.

I sigh, shake myself off and look at the other person. It's her. I hate her. At this point I lose it a little. Maybe more than a little, but, all I remember saying is "what's your problem? Lay off me, okay?" I think I said other things when she tried to retort. Alex steps in to separate us and calm me down, but mostly to make sure I don't get violent. I wasn't going to. Well, I don't think so anyways. She huffs off and finds Jeremy. From the looks of it to get him to leave.

He makes eye contact with me from across the room as they walk out together. He smiles at me and shrugs his shoulders in a playful way. He looks back once more and winks at me as if to dare me to make a move. Well, I can't very well go down with out a fight. He knows it. Does he?

Game on.

A half hour goes by, or at least it feels that long. I rush outside again and pull out my phone. I feel a tap on my shoulder and turn around; Alex is standing right behind me. Damn him.

"Don't do it," he urges me and holds out his hand, requesting the silly thing. I think I give him a disgruntled look, I probably just made a stupid face, and hand him my phone.

I don't think I'm even able to make tangible words, just irritated and enraged noises as I stomp my feet like a three- year old child having a temper tantrum. The sane part of my persona knew I

needed to check myself. The bat-shit crazy part thought this was perfectly acceptable behavior. I imagine Sane body checking Crazy into a wall; but then if Sane did that, would it then be as crazy as Crazy? I have no idea.

I have no time to continue contemplating this thought because my foot quite suddenly gives way and snaps out from under me. *Fuck!* My shoe broke. As I begin to collapse Alex catches me, but can't save both me and my phone. It falls to the ground as Alex braces me. It bounces a few times before finally landing safely on the concrete. I would not have, I would have landed with a hard thud, a crushed ego, and bruised tailbone. I bend down to pick it up, Alex still supporting me. Only the case is scratched. Thank God I invested in the expensive, durable case. I wonder though if I should get the waterproof one instead.

"Alright, Mags, get off of me," Alex grunts.

Wait, how did I collapse into Alex? Oh yeah, Jeremy. Stupid Jeremy and that stupid blonde wench. I brood again and Alex just sighs and pushes me up. I stand awkwardly and look down at my shoe. These were my favorite shoes, I'd had them for five years and they never once failed me, until now. Stupid Jeremy, for ruining them. He ruins everything. Though, I guess, it's not entirely his fault I was childishly stomping around, not directly anyways. I can still blame him.

"Mags," Alex reasons with me, "You were M.I.A. for almost five weeks. What did you think was going to happen?" He has his hands on both my shoulders as if he is going to shake some sense into me. The sane part of me wishes he would.

"I thought he'd wait around for me," I pout.



"Were you ever actually dating?" He lets go of me. I think my pouting made him feel bad.

"We went out on dates!" I argue defensively. Technically we did go out on dates. They each ended with a kiss. Alex already knew we did though, he knew everything about both of us.

"Yes, but was it with any frequency?" I hated it when he had somewhat of a point. We *technically* dated but it was somewhat inconsistent because of my stupid work schedule. God I hate freelancing. That was a lie. I loved it. I loved being an associate producer. I loved making drama, creating drama; though, I perhaps sometimes it bleeds into my real life too much. No matter, I really only hated it when it screwed with my life.

"Yeah, for like three months, and then he met that stupid girl at my stupid party that I threw before I was going to have no life for five weeks." And, I don't think Alex knew that piece of information. Whoops.

"Wait, you know her?" He backhands my arm, reprimanding my behavior. I stumble backwards into the wall. Sometimes I feel like his kid sister. That describes our relationship really: brother and sister, both at times the kid.

"Kinda"

"What's kinda?"

"She works for my show in a completely different department that I accidentally invited to that party a few weeks ago because she just happened to be standing around in the kitchen with my friend when I was talking about it and I didn't want to be rude so I asked her if she wanted to come." I rushed through that explanation trying to not make it sound that bad. It was exactly as bad as it sounded.

It wasn't as bad as it sounded, no it was worse.

"Do you know how crazy you must have seemed to her?"

"Yeah," I manage to squeak out knowingly.

"You've known Jeremy for three years now, you know he dates around."

"Three years, five months, and four days to be exact," I say definitively. I know the day, it's actually the pass code to my phone. It was Alex's birthday party, Jeremy had just moved into town and in with Alex. They were best friends from childhood, which trumps my status as college and now New York best friend. I realize that thought about the passcode is completely, absurdly crazy, and I look down at my phone while proceeding to change the passcode to some other random four numbers.

Alex doesn't say anything to me, just watching me fiddling with my phone. He sees what I'm doing, he doesn't ask. I'm sure he's thankful he doesn't see me texting Jeremy, in which case he would have to take my phone and hold it hostage for a while. He just stands with his hands on his hips and giving me a disappointed and disapproving look. I already know what he's going to ask next. He is not going to approve of my answer.

Very slowly he asks, "How long have you been in love with him?"

I look down at the ground and very quietly muffle, "Three years, five months, three days and I suppose a few hours."

He raises his eyebrows, "What?"

"Three years, five months, three days and I suppose a few hours, okay!" I say spastically as I throw my hands up in the air, turn around and try to walk away. I catch myself as I almost fall. I forgot I broke my shoe.

"Dammit Mags!" He yells. "This is like Matt all over again, isn't it? Did you guys actually date at all, or did you just build that up in your head like you did with Matt? I mean I was in support of you two, but this is different."

I make a few objecting noises, but can't find any actual words. I must look like I am about to cry because Alex just hugs me and sighs. "Mags, I'm sorry. I know you guys actually dated. I just hate seeing you like this." I must look pathetic right now. "Come on, let's get our coats and go home."

He leaves me there braced against the wall while he makes his way back inside to grab our things. I'm not sure they would have let me back in anyways, because either I was too drunk or because of my current state. All I know is that I am eternally grateful that Alex lives with his girlfriend only two blocks from me. I am even more grateful that he no longer lives with Jeremy. I think I would be in hell if that were the case.

He returns a few moments later and hails a cab while I pull on my coat. His arm around me, he ushers me into the cab. For a moment I feel terrible for everything he puts up with from me, "Alex, thank you," I say, "and I'm sorry."

He starts laughing and I smack his arm. "Ow!" he says still laughing at me.

"Jeez! Im being serious for once, and all you do is laugh!"

"Well you, strong, independent you, all mopey over this," he begins to lose his words in his laughter. "Its really funny. You're lucky you're one of my favorite people in the world, otherwise I wouldn't put up with you." I sit up straight and cross my arms as I pretend to pout.

"Thanks, I guess." I say dryly and roll my eyes at him, I feel like I do that a lot. He laughs again and jokingly pinches my cheek. That makes me laugh and coming to my senses again I ask where Cassie was tonight.

"Oh, she's out of town right now for some big meeting, she'll be back Wednesday," he explains. I love, love, love him and Cassie; in general, but mostly because I can still be best friends with him and she's not concerned one bit. Not that she should have any reason to be. I should just stop thinking.

Alex gets us home. I hobble up the stairs and into my building, making sure to stop at the trash room to deposit my now broken shoes. I trudge up the three flights of stairs shoeless. I look at my phone, its only one am, Katie might still be up if she's home. Im not sure if I want to see her or not, but I guess I'll find out.

I fumble my keys into the top lock, but before I have a chance at the second, the door swings in.

"Hi friend," Katie says walking into the bathroom. "How was the party?"

"Miserable, Jeremy brought a girl," I grumbled as I set my pocket book down and take off my jacket. Pocketbook? Where did that term come from anyways? Its certainly no book, and usually just gives me back problems. True pockets don't do that. Who uses that term anymore? I'll tell you who, old ladies and spinsters.

"Who's Jeremy again?" Katie asks. I come back to my senses and give her a funny look. I'm sure if my head thinks it's a funny look, it's a thousand times worse than I think. What does she mean 'who's Jeremy'? Shes met him at least a dozen times or more.

"Alex's friend," I reply. Duh, I think to myself. I'm sad that expression went out of style.

"Oh yeah! I like him, nice kid. Why does it matter that he was there with someone?"

I scoff. "Only because I like him and *thought* he liked me too."

Through a mouth full of toothpaste I hear her mumble, "Oh he was the guys you were going on about a while back." She spits, "I thought he was out of the picture because you haven't been talking about him." She goes back to brushing.

I explain that I had been out of town, and busy at work, and haven't seen him in five or six weeks.

Still brushing, she gives a little laugh, "oh yeah." I love that girl to death, but damn she is spacey sometimes.

"I'm going to bed," I tell her, "but do you want to do brunch at Alex's tomorrow?"

She ponders for a moment, I can see the wheels in her head turning, "Does he know about this?"

"Not yet."

"Sure! I'm in," she says excitedly. I knew she'd be down; she's always down for brunch.

I tell her good night and as I creep into my room. I hear her ask where my shoes are. Too late, I'm already inside so I ignore the question and climb out my window onto the fire escape for a cigarette. In my head I am some princess standing out there waiting for my Prince Charming. That princess didn't live in New York. Maybe its more like Julia Roberts waiting for Richard Gere in *Pretty Woman*. I guess she didn't really wait for him; he just rode up in his white limo and scaled the fire escape.

I think if some guy broke into my ally way and scaled my fire escape, white horse or no white horse, I'd call the cops.

The embers from my cigarette glow as they fall to the ground, almost like fireflies on summer nights. God I miss fireflies.

I flick my cigarette away and climb back in, almost falling on my face in the process. That always happens. I should really quit smoking, but then what reason would I have for going out on my balcony? Just to look at the stars? Actually, the handful of stars I can see are comforting. I take a deep breath and close my window.

I climb into my bed and cuddle deeply into my blanket. After a night like this, I just want to feel safe. Slowly I drift off to sleep.

I fall out of bed, literally, at eight in the morning. So much for sleeping in. I was having some strange dream where I was involved in a struggle. One minute I am fighting off bad guys who are trying to accost me and the next I am in a pile of blankets on the floor. Thank goodness for the blankets, they broke my fall, sort of. Note to myself: sleep more towards the middle of the bed.

I don't know if I made a sound, all I know is that getting up my whole right side was sore. Maybe it's time to use that massage certificate I have been saving. My shoe last night, and now this. I

would almost swear the universe is telling me something, or trying to put me into the hospital.

I climb back into bed, but am so sore that I lay there a half hour and can't get comfortable. I give up, get out of bed, pop a muscle relaxant, and decide a hot shower might do me some good. On my way out the door, I grab my aromatherapy candle from the dresser. I don't really believe it necessarily helps, but it does help me relax.

The shower helped, so did the candle, and probably the muscle relaxant too. For a moment I forget that I was upset about something the night before.

By the time I am done, Katie is up and asks when we are going to brunch. She really just wanted to know two things:

1. How long she could stay in her pajamas.
2. If she had time to eat something or if it would spoil her appetite for brunch.

I told her 11:15, but that we had to stop by the grocery store and liquor store beforehand. The grocery store was on our way and we needed strawberries and whipped cream. The liquor store didn't open until eleven and mimosa was vital to brunch.

I guess I should let Alex know the plan. I walk to my room and get my phone, pull up his name and text him:

Me: Waffles?

Alex: Yeah sure, what time?

Me: 1115

Alex: mimosa?

Me: Yup. We need anything else?

Alex: Strawberries, Whipped Cream, and Bacon

Me: already on the list

Alex is simple really. In college he lived in the apartment upstairs from me, my roommates and I always did a Sunday morning

hangover waffle brunch: maple cinnamon waffles with strawberries and whipped cream, and mimosa. Sometimes we put bourbon directly into the waffle mix. Unfortunately the waffle iron was my roommate's and I did not get to keep it.

Once we were both in New York and established that we were still friends, Alex and I continued the tradition. He kept requesting waffles though neither of us had a waffle iron, so two years ago for his birthday I bought him one. He still has no idea how to use it, only Cassie and I do. He is useless.

He makes really good mimosa though and puts up with me when I am a mess, so I guess I can let it slide.

Katie and I lounge around for a couple hours with coffee. She snacks on some sugary cereal she always insists on buying, and we watch Saturday morning cartoons. Cartoons just aren't what they used to be and do not fulfill the Saturday morning urge to be lazy. It's a shame that reruns of Jersey Shore, or Real House Wives are more appealing than cartoons. What is the world coming to? I think for a moment that maybe mimosa would make them better. I really doubt it though.

I manage to put on real clothes, well leggings, a jean skirt, some old vintage tee, and a big comfy sweatshirt. This is as real as I get on a Sunday. Yes, technically its still coat weather, but Alex only lives a few blocks away, so I don't bother with a coat most of the time. My hair is a mess as per usual, so I just grab one of my utility caps. My laziness has forced me to acquire quite the collection of hats.

I waited by the door for Katie, she saunters out of her room still in her bright pink plaid Pajama pants as she pulls on her winter coat. Clearly she could not be bothered with clothes either. We probably



view Alex's a little too much like an extension of our own place. What do I care though; I'm the one making the waffles.

Katie grabs her satchel and skips to the door. "Ready!" she exclaims.

"Great!" I say, opening the door. "Do you want to grab the food, or the alcohol?"

We both walk out, she locks the door. "Alcohol, duh. I don't know my way around the grocery store." It was true, she didn't. She was hopeless in the kitchen. Most nights she ordered in, unless I was cooking in which case she had what I had. I never complained though, she helps pay for groceries.

I notice the rhythmic sound of Katie bounding down the stairs. It was almost childlike. I used to be that way; it's why we got along so well. Recently though I've been in a bad place. Stupid Jeremy.

We get outside and Katie starts off toward the Liquor store, while I wait for the little white man to tell me I can cross. I really don't like the idea of waiting for a man to tell me to go, but with traffic the way it is, better safe than sorry. Shit, the hand is already flashing, I really have to get this daydreaming thing in check.

It's a Sunday morning before church There is something comforting and yet overwhelming about grocery stores. All the choices, all the potential are exciting, so many yummy possibilities. Yet, as a single person, you are somewhat limited. I mean you don't want to buy too much because you don't want to waste, but you don't want to be stuck to a certain regime of food for the week.

I realize that all the while I'm thinking this, I was staring methodically at a carton of strawberries. People were starting to stare. People can be really fierce in grocery stores. This bunch

looked okay. I check out the price. Five dollars? sheesh. I'm no cheapskate, but five for a container of strawberries is ridiculous. I put them back, I'll just get them at the fruit stand on the way to meet Katie.

I head off in the direction of the whipped cream, then the bacon, and check out. The grocery store is really simple when you know what you're there for. I won't even get into the time we made our own whipped cream out of heavy cream and sugar. The store was out of whipped cream, it took Alex and Katie the entire time I made waffles

At the little fruit stand, I negotiate with the guy, five dollars for a thing of blueberries, strawberries, and raspberries. Much better deal!

Katie is walking out of the liquor store when I get there. She has 4four bottles. "Don't you think that's a bit much?" I ask her. Then again, I have been known to polish off a bottle each in a sitting.

"No way they were on sale, buy one get one. AND I got four punches on our frequent buyers card." Clearly you know what's important in our world: wine, lots and lots of wine.

"Alright then let's go," I urge as I start walking in Alex's direction.

We get to Alex's and I let us in as usual, I have a key and the doormen know my name. In hindsight he probably should not have given me one, as I already mentioned his place has become an extension of mine. I swear if you didn't know our relationship and didn't know he had a girlfriend, you would think we were dating.

His place is only on the second floor, it's a relief with all the stuff we have with us. I ring his bell, too lazy to pull out the key again.

"In a minute Mags!" I hear him yell, immediately followed by a few thuds. He likely ran into something on his way to the door, leading me to believe he was still in bed. He should know by now that we just turn up out of the blue. The lock clicks and the door opens. "What good is you having a key if you can't use it on this door?"

I look at him and shrug, then hold up the bags, "We brought food!"

Katie pipes in, "And lots of champagne!" She nudges me. "Go in, these guys are heavy."

Alex steps aside ushering us into the apartment. I put the bags on the counter and walk over to the couch to take off my sweatshirt and drop my bag. "Jeez Alex, your place is like a sauna."

He says something about the whole system being broken and over working. If my apartment were still this warm, I would have every window open. This is too hot for comfort. I am suddenly happy that I decided not to dress wintery. Katie has made herself quite useful prepping the first batch of mimosa. Alcohol is her specialty, and she makes her mimosa with a couple shots of raspberry liquor that we keep stocked at Alex's for just such an occasion. The raspberries I bought will be a nice touch. Today is going to be a good day.

I walk back into the kitchen and unload my bags. Alex is already getting out the waffle iron and other necessary ingredients. I grab a bowl to start the batter and tell him to start cutting strawberries. Katie serves us both a drink and brunch officially commences.

The prep process goes something like this. I make the batter and do everything that actually requires skill in the kitchen. Katie makes sure our glasses are filled at all times. I try to get her to help out, but that is useless. She always defers her responsibilities to someone else, usually Alex. I want to teach her how to cook, but she is quite the opposite of domestic, and sometimes civilized. Alex, once he takes care of cutting fruit for toppings, fries up the bacon. The first batch never fails to be crispy and burnt. The next couple are perfect, and the final batch, usually just as we finish the first batch of mimosa, is again crispy and burnt. Fortunately I like crispy. I supervise the waffle making. Today I decided to make strawberry waffles. I like adding fruit. Then, to keep myself occupied in between, I make a syrupy strawberry topping to compliment. My grandmother taught me all her kitchen secrets when she was still alive.

Wow, Katie made these things really strong today, I am already feeling a little buzz going on. "Nice Mimosas Katie. What did you put in them today?"

"Um, I added a bit of rum today as well. Great, right? I read about it online."

"Delicious, a bit strong but delicious. How about we leave the rum out of the next batch?"

"Where's the fun in that? Oh! What movie are we going to watch with brunch today?"

"Movie? " Hmm I hadn't thought about that. We always watch some silly movie and turn it into a drinking game. Classy right?

"What's on TV today? There is always something good on Sunday afternoon."

Katie checks the TV listings, but there's nothing too appealing. "I guess we could checkout what's on Netflix, or raid Alex's movie collection. Oh Alex you have Ghostbuster's right?"

"Yeah I have that, or back to the future, or Princess Bride or anything Mel Brooks."

"Those are all perfect! Do you have Robin Hood men in tights? I haven't seen that movie in forever and its perfect for drinking!"

"Nope don't have that one. Spaceballs?"

"Done! I'll get it ready." Like I said, Katie's specialty is drinking.

Katie does that as Alex is prepping the coffee table with the bacon, the strawberry topping I made, the berries, the whipped cream, plates, and napkins. I had to remind him about silverware. I always have to remind him about silverware.

Once all is finished I bring the waffles out and join Alex on the couch, Katie makes sure our drinks are full, and preps the second batch so that we will have plenty for the movie. As she does this, she dictates the rules of the drinking game to Alex.

We always have to have the rules written down otherwise we forget when to remind each other to drink, not that that's a bad thing, Katie just deems it blasphemy. Katie puts the next batch in the fridge and joins us, Alex turns on the movie, and I serve the waffles. Let the games begin.

Ah the delicious taste of waffles on Sunday. There is nothing quite like it.

Halfway through the movie we are sufficiently stuffed and drunk. Spaceballs was a bad idea, or maybe it was the rum in the mimosa.

It was what it was. At this point we had completely forgotten the rules of the game and were just bullshitting.

I start to get that sleepy, post brunch nap feeling, so I get up to get myself a glass of water and check the level of mimosa left. We are still not finished the second batch, either we are losing our touch or the mimosas were that strong. Neither would surprise me. I decide its probably a good idea to get water for all of us.

Walking back into the living room, I hear Katie asking Alex what happened to me last night. Alex proceeds to detail his side of the story. Oh dear, that is never a good thing. I dole out waters and take my seat on the couch.

“Maggie, I thought you were over that whole Jeremy thing,” Katie says, sipping her mimosa. She is now sitting cross legged on the floor, close to the table so she can drink from a straw with little effort. Her laziness amazes me sometimes. “You told me months ago that it was going no where and that you were done with it.”

Alex drinks the rest of his mimosa, “You know Mags, her declarations when it comes to men are never absolute.” Katie finishes hers, drinks down her water and hops up to get a refill.

“Thanks Alex.” I take another sip of my drink, I'm going to need it.

“Seriously, I think you like the thrill of the chase. Like that Brandon guy you were seeing. You were all into him at first, and then when he was interested in you back you ran away.”

Katie walks back in, tops off all our drinks, and places a new batch of Mimosa on the table. “Or the attention. I think she sometimes likes the attention. Why did you like that guy anyways?”

I defend myself admirably, I think. I mean Jeremy is a great guy, really sweet when he wants to be. He is quirky, and we have a lot of the same interests. He is really hot. He has a great job. Um, I am stumbling over my thoughts, this is not a good thing. The Mimosa has gone to my head.

Katie gets up, walks to the Alex's bar, and returns with a shot that she hands directly to me. "Take this no questions asked."

I try to object, but she just shushes me. I take the shot.

I wince at the shot. "God, what was that for?"

I'm not sure if this is what happened, or if I remember it this way because of the alcohol, but Katie sits down next to me, takes one of my hands, and says "Mags, I think you need an intervention. A Jeremy intervention."

"An intervention? Seriously? I'm not an alcoholic!"

Alex interjects, "But you did admit last night that you had a problem."

"I accidentally said I was in love with the guy."

"And he is clearly not in love with you, which is a problem. I think Katie is right. You need an intervention."

I huff; the afternoon suddenly took a turn for the worse.

Alex and Katie go back and forth for an hour or so detailing the many, many reasons Jeremy is no good for me. The time is a little fuzzy, what I know for certain is that the movie is long over, we have fully finished the third mimosa batch, and I cannot object to anything they say anymore.

"Fine guys, maybe you're right." I slur as I get up to get myself more water. Walking back in I ask, "but how do I do it?"

"Oh! Isn't there a twelve step program or something?" Katie asks excitedly. Lovely to hear her so excited about this.

"Um, Katie, that's AA that has a twelve step program—"

Alex interjects before I can continue, "Actually, that might not be a bad idea. Obviously we will have to adapt it a little for you, but something like this could work."

"Do you still have the ginormous notepad we use for Pictionary?" Katie is way too excited about this. Alex is as well because he gets up, walks out of the room and comes back with the notepad, an easel, and multi colored markers.

"So, this intervention is becoming an art project for you two?"

"No, but we have to make sure this is documented because after all the mimosas, I don't think any of us will remember this tomorrow." Katie had a valid point.

We spend the rest of the afternoon coming up with a detailed plan to help me get over Jeremy and move on. The details of the project are a little hazy, a lot of words were said, and they made sense as they were being said, but I don't really remember what was said. I spent a lot of time daydreaming in between other thoughts of mine and their twelve-step program for me. I'm not going to lie, the thought to have them both murdered and their bodies disposed of did cross my mind. That was a mere fleeting thought, though; I'd miss them too much, and I doubt I'd be able to cover my tracks so well.



The next thing I distinctly remember, Katie and I are stumbling home. There is still some light in the sky, so it has to be before seven. We get home, and I pass out on the couch.

Around one in the morning, I wake up, groggily and try not to think of how awful tomorrow is going to be. I walk to the kitchen and make myself a glass of water, which I promptly drink and refill. I walk to the bathroom, splash water on my face, come back out, grab the glass of water, and walk into my room. I am on autopilot now, I guess. The thoughts that cross my mind involve packing my bag for the morning, which I do, and then change into pajamas, and climb into bed. Just as I am about to fall asleep, I pop up from my pillow and hop out of bed to take a pain killer. It's probably a smart move for the morning.

I wake up Monday morning and go through my usual routine. It seems somewhat lackluster after the emotional extremities of the weekend. Okay, they weren't really extremities but at the time they certainly seemed so. Surprisingly I am not hung-over, that painkiller worked wonders.

Actually I try to dress up a little, I always do on Mondays as I insist on starting the week off right. Today it was just to make me feel better about myself. It wasn't working. Instead I settled on my favorite pair of skinny jeans, oversized wool sweater, and black boots. Nice I thought, simple yet classic and no one ever expected you to dress properly at the end of winter when Mother Nature seems like she's going through menopause. Throw on a nice necklace and I look like a pop star from the eighties. No, wait my top would have to be a little bit brighter for that.

I look in the mirror; my hair's a mess. Advantage of curly hair, it can be a mess and still look good. Disadvantage, my once well kempt red bob was now somewhere between short and long, and

had a mind of its own. There was no taming it. I really need to do something about this, not now though I could not be bothered.

Note to self: schedule an appointment to kempt my unkempt rats nest of a hairstyle. No wonder Jeremy ...

My phone goes off, I check the time. Ugh, I was supposed to leave ten minutes ago. I toss my travel make up bag in my purse and hurry out of my room. I'll just do my make up on the train. Putting on my coat, I double back into my room to grab my glasses. They will hide the fact that I want nothing to do with doing my eye makeup on the train. There is nothing worse than hitting a bump and dragging your eyeliner across your face, well except for stabbing yourself in the eye.

I rush out the door and hurry to the train. Of course, there is a crowded station with a line to go through the turnstile. I really don't understand how everyone forgets how to swipe their card at the same time. The platform is packed. I guess everyone is running late today, or maybe I am always running early.

The first train that comes, I literally have to force myself into a sea of commuters. This is one of those times that I am glad I am not a sardine, yet I feel like one today. There was no sense in holding on to any railing. I was not moving anywhere nor was I going to be able to do my make up.

When I get off the train I make my way to A Cup, this little coffee shop I always go to when I am either tired of working at my desk, or when I get into the area too early and don't want to be the first one in the office. Have you ever been that person? It's daunting, unless I had a lot to accomplish and needed the peace and quiet. For quiet, I usually just stayed late.

“Jose, can I borrow the bathroom key?” I ask pleadingly. Jose is this older Hispanic man, reminds me of my dad if my dad was Hispanic and motivated enough to start his own coffee shop. He looked at me like I was crazy. He didn't usually give out the key during rush hour, it was a small space and encouraged too much traffic.

I give him the saddest puppy dog face I can muster. He sighs, hands me the key, and gives me a look as if to say don't make a habit of this Maggie. “Thank you so, so much. I swear I will be two minutes.”

“What are you having today?”

“Just black coffee is great.” I didn't really want coffee, but I felt obliged at that point to succumb to the temptation. I run in, make myself presentable as quickly as possible and attempt to pin my hair. No use. I walk back out, he hands me my coffee, and I pay him over the line of people. Royal treatment, I love it; then again I feel like I'm one of the few who come in here who has somehow broken through his thick outer skin. Another reason he reminds me of my dad a little.

I take a deep breath, add a bit of milk to my coffee, walk out the door, and start down the street. Across the way some man has jumped out of his car and is yelling at some poor pedestrian. I feel sorry for the man, both of them really. Yay Mondays.

I look back ahead just in time to see it happening, too late to stop. It was one of those moments where you see everything in slow motion but can do nothing to stop it. I collide with some guy on the street. My coffee goes everywhere, mostly into my jacket and scarf, small thanks to winter's added layers. I let out a slightly frustrated laugh as I try and shake some of the wetness off.

"I'm so sorry," the man is saying, frazzled to me ask I assess the damage. He sounds as if he's not really quite sure what just happened.

"No really, it's alright," I reply exasperated. I'm in a bit of a haze from the whole morning already. I just want to get to work and get the day over with. I check my bag. Dry. Just my scarf and coat were afflicted. Coffee cup half full still in my hand, oh dear the rest must have gotten on him.

I examine the man from cup level upwards. He's in a suit. Shit. He's mumbling something about it being his fault, and offers to buy me another cup.

"No really," I say. "It's fine. My scarf got the brunt of it and I didn't really need the coffee this morning anyways. Oh, but your suit. I'm sorry." I look up at him as I'm apologizing. Oh, he's cute. Dark slightly unkempt hair, bluish brown eyes, kind looking face, nice smile, well fitting suit; maybe I was too quick to decline another cup.

"No really, its okay. I should pay more attention to where I'm walking and less to morning emails." He smiles at me. I want to melt.

We stand there for a second. Two coffee soaked strangers on a New York City street corner. I'm sure it's not as uncommon an affair as it seems in the moment. "I'm sure all those silly cat videos coworkers send around are quite enticing, much more so than actual work."

Did I really just imply he was watching cat videos when he ran in to me? What was I thinking?

He laughed. Did I really just make him laugh? Not bad.

“Well with you on the street, I should really head for higher ground before the rest of this cup ends up on anyone else.” I say, with a smile as I take a few steps towards my destination.

“Yes, you're probably safer that way. Maybe I'll run into you again.”

I turn slightly towards him, “ Hopefully then under drier pretenses. Have a good day.” As I turn back around, I start to think I should have given him my number or something as he implied seeing me again. But, before I could get too far into that thought some other hurried passerby catches my shoulder and I spill the rest of my coffee again on my jacket. My scarf is thoroughly soaked.

I catch his eye, he stifles a laugh, and my heart sinks a little. “Maybe it is you I should have been watching out for?” He takes a step towards me, “Please, let me help you.”

I just give him one of those awkward slightly embarrassed smiles. “No, really it's okay. Coffee is supposed to wake you up, right? I don't think this was the intended method, but it certainly worked today. I'm fine, thank you. Have a lovely day.”

“You too.”

As I turn away, he is still standing there looking at me. Maybe its best I didn't give him my name.

I walk as quickly as I possibly can to my office. My coworkers looked as if they wanted to ask what happened to me, I give them a look of don't ask and carefully hung up my jacket and scarf. Hopefully they would be dry by the end of the day.

