

AMARIS RICCI

ON THE OUTSIDE



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Amaris Ricci

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I sit here tapping away at my story, I realise how truly alone I am. Yes I have relatives and close friends but at the end of the day, when I go to bed, it's just me, my cell phone, my pillows and a mosquito.

I know he can never be mine not as long as 'she' is in the picture. I thought of killing her a few times but then how could I help him raise his children? How would I be able to sleep next to him knowing the pain I would have caused?

He respects her enough not to flaunt me in front of her face. When he sees me anywhere, he would always acknowledge me by my name and keep going.

One time I was strolling through the park and he was there with the children. The look on his face was a mixture of what he knew he should do and what he wanted to do. Against his better judgement, he waved and called me over and against mine, I went.

I swear time slowed down for us and it took me forever to reach them. His son, barely able to walk, broke free of him and grabbed my legs to keep from falling. He looked up at me and the smile he gave me tore my heart in fifty million different directions. I could not stop the tears, knowing that this child would never be mine to care for. Apparently he picked up on my grief and his smile turned to a frown.

I bent down and picked him up to soothe him and within minutes he was asleep on my chest. He felt good in my arms, still having that new baby smell. In that few minutes the man I had fallen so deeply in love with over the past few months, just sat there and watched as his son slept on my bosom. His daughter, having been out so many times with her father and seeing me with him, smiled sweetly and held out her hand for me to touch it. I did as I always do, twiddled my fingers with hers and blew her a kiss.

I had to get out of there. This was too much for me. I gently handed his son over to him and I practically ran out of there.

I knew he would try to contact me as soon as he got a free moment. Usually from the bathroom or when he took the garbage out.

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My cell phone rang and disturbed the silence of my bedroom. I looked at the number and I could not answer. He hung up and I knew what would follow. Sure enough a WhatsApp message beeped.

‘Baby are you okay? I know seeing us today was hard on you. We can try again if you want. I’m just about to take a shower and put the kids to bed, would you like me to come over?’

‘I’m sorry but I just want to be alone tonight. I will call you in the morning. Bye’

I switched off the phone for fear I would want to read his response and let him come over.

CHAPTER ONE

Day ONE

You see, I am 20 years younger than he is, when I met him he and his family had just moved to Barbados so he could set up his business. He was a recondition specialist. He bought cars from insurance companies and police auctions, fixed them up and sold them. He catered to the lower income earners as well as high society. I was at my insurance company having an assessment done of my car after my stupid brother had crashed it and the payout was not worth the trouble of getting it fixed. All the legal terms and jargon the agent was spouting made no sense to me and in my frustration, I was about to let him know where he could stuff the car.

“Why don’t you let me buy it and fix it up for you? Then we could agree on a monthly plan that suits your budget.”

I turned to locate the human being who possessed the voice that made my insides turn to jelly. Immediately my breath refused to flow into my lungs and I swear he heard my heart skip a few thousand beats.

“Hello, I guess that’s an alternative, do you have a card?”

He handed me his card and I took it and dropped it into my handbag.

The agent looked at both of us and decided it was in his best interest to speak.

“Uh Miss, I hope you understand if he buys your car we have no control over what it will cost you to get it back.”

“You are no help to me now at least he is offering me a solution, you can’t even give me a rental, and I’ve had to pay for one on my own. Forget it, I will take my chances with him.”

“You need to come in and sign some papers then, follow me.”

When the agent was out of earshot, the gentleman whispered to me,

“He is all bark and no bite, you can ask anyone inside for a recommendation if you like, I don’t mind. Call when you are ready to set up an appointment and we can hash out the details.”

“Thank you. I will.”

A few days later I got the courage to call. If I had known my life would take such a turn, I would have torn the card up and bought a brand new car.

“Hello is this Armaan?”

“Yes it is, how may I help you?”

“This is Fae, we met at CMA Insurance a few days ago, you offered to buy my Fortuner and fix it up.”

“Ah yes the beautiful lady with the temper, how could I forget?”

“Well I was mad as a hatter!”

Armaan laughed, his rich accent tugged at Fae’s libido.

“Come to my office and we can discuss getting you back on the road.”

“Where are you?”

“I am at the old Plantraac Building in Eagle Hall.”

“You must have moved in there recently, that was empty two weeks ago.”

“I fixed it up in secret, will you be coming today?”

“Yes I am five minutes away, I live next to the Police Station, I can walk over.”

“Great, see you in a few minutes. Follow the arrows to the sign that says Main Office.”

I felt my heart speed up as I approached the building, I figured I would keep it professional no matter how much I wanted to kiss those soft lips. I wanted to feel his hot mouth on my breast as he thrust himself inside me on his desk.

The blare of a horn brought me out of her daze and I jumped back onto the sidewalk.

“Shake it off Fae, shake it the hell off.” I muttered to myself.

As I was about to push the buzzer the door opened, so I stepped in and followed the arrows.

“Hello Fae, nice to see you again. Have a seat.”

Life is not fair, men should not look like this. Armaan was dressed in a light green polo shirt with his company brand on the front, and a pair of navy blue shorts. His muscles ripped as he went to sit in his chair. His legs looked like he worked them just as hard as the rest of him.

I absentmindedly licked my lips and felt my entire womb kick into high gear as if in preparation for something.

“I thought it was just me.”

“What?” I whispered.

“Something is sparking between us and I need to find out what is it before it dies.”

“Can we find out right now?” I heard myself say.

“Are you sure?”

“Positive.”

Armaan picked up his office phone and punched a number.

“I have an important meeting in a few minutes, please do not disturb me unless it is an emergency.”

He got up and walked past me to lock his door. I sat frozen in my seat, I knew this was wrong on all levels but a man this sexy, was at my finger tips and I wasn’t about to let him go.

When I felt him brush my plaits from my neck, I shuddered. What was I doing?

As if he heard my thoughts, he bent to my ear,

“Don’t get cold feet on me now, you want me just as much as I want you.”

He spun me around and pulled me up to his chest. He didn’t wait and when he kissed me I swore all the planets collided. He grabbed the back of my head moving his mouth from mine to kiss me on my neck, and he didn’t take long to get to my breasts, his impatience quite evident. He yanked my shirt over my head

and quickly unhooked my bra. My nipples puckered up at the drop in temperature.

“Made just for me, just for me.”

He licked one nipple, then the other and for the next few minutes he tortured me in this way, ignoring the movement in my hips, making me want more.

“Kiss me down there please.” I blurted out unexpectedly. What the hell?

“I cannot, I don’t know who you have been with.”

I slowly opened my eyes.

“No one Armaan, I have never been with anyone.”

“Impossible! You radiate beauty from your core, just look at you! We cannot do this, there is much to know about me before you give yourself to me.”

“No, I need to do this now or I will regret it, please.” I felt small in his arms, not insignificant but compared to him I didn’t take up much space.

“Why are you giving me such a precious gift?”

“Look at you.... you are perfect.”

“Thank you, so are you and now that I know, I cannot take you here in my office, you deserve better and I promise I will give you a night to remember, if you let me.”

I shook my head, understanding that this would not be the last I saw of this man. To my surprise though, he kissed my lips softly again and before I knew it, my skirt was up around my waist, my panties were draped neatly on the corner of his chair and I felt a hot tongue gently brush against my most private parts. I grabbed the desk or I would surely fall off.

“Oh!” I exclaimed softly.

I began to say things I would not remember. I wanted everything he had to give me in case he decided he didn’t want to ever see me again.

I couldn't believe this was happening to me and with a stranger. As my thoughts whirled in my head, my body was heating up. I felt as if someone had tied me up and held me over a roaring fire. Armaan's skillful tongue was drawing all the energy surging through me to where it met with my skin.

Somehow he knew. That critical moment when his motions would create a reaction in me so profound I would not be able to contain myself.

When my orgasm took over, Armaan raised himself up and in one swift stroke, took my virginity. I let go of the desk and covered my mouth for fear someone would hear me.

My eyes opened wide as the pain fled through me. Armaan was gripping my hips, his fingers digging into my skin. Restraining himself from moving. He was staring at me and for a moment I thought that for even a little bit, he loved me.

"Does it still hurt?"

I couldn't speak, so I just shook my head slowly. It was then he pulled back slightly only to surge forward again, filling me up in such a way that I knew I would want more of him and soon.

He began a slow rhythm that blew my mind. No matter how my girlfriends told their stories, this moment one belonged to me and only me. Armaan kept his eyes on me as if waiting for something and once again he knew. He began to read my body as if he were studying for an exam he knew he would pass. He reached for me and as his hand caressed my stomach, breasts, arms, legs, I felt his urgency. I had to close my eyes, his gaze was as intense as his strokes. He increased his pace and when I opened my eyes again, he was still staring, his eyes looking into my soul pulling at me to let go.

Then he began to speak in another language. It was foreign to me but it sounded so exotic, I didn't care. Then, I felt it and as the tingles grew stronger, Armaan pulled me up towards him and continued his feverish pace.

He whispered into my ear and the words dragged me to the edge and pushed me over.

"ہمیشہ کے لئے کی کان"

He later told me that it meant forever mine.

As my body returned to a somewhat normal state, Armaan had intertwined his fingers in mine.

He softly sucked on each one, sending spike of pleasure to my core.

“Are you okay? I couldn’t help myself, I just had to have you.”

I shook my head. I was still wrapped around him, my legs resting on his powerful hips and as he eased himself from me, he had to catch me from dribbling to a puddle on the floor.

“Let’s get you cleaned up. I think we got way ahead of ourselves.”

“Are you sorry?” I hung my head waiting for him to brush me off.

“Never, I wanted you when you were spouting epithets at Charles and now that I have had you, I can’t let you go. We need to talk and get things underway. Come.”

Armaan lead me to his private bathroom and as we took a shower together, the realization hit me that I was no longer a virgin, the blood on my legs confirmed that. I think I must have said something out loud because Armaan wrapped his arms around and what he said made me love him even more.

“Never feel ashamed of what we did, I am not going to disrespect you or leave you out of my life. I will cherish this moment until I die, so do not worry.”

I wanted to finish quickly and talk to him about my car but he had other ideas. As he was soaping my skin he felt the need to kiss me and that kiss lead to him pinning me up against the wall and making love to me again. Twice he took me and twice he didn’t reach his fulfilment.

I looked at him in confusion.

“Don’t worry, this time was just for you.”

How the hell does he do that? I guess further confusion was still written on my face.

“You wear your thoughts on your face Fae, I can read every one.”

We finally got dressed and we were back in his office. He picked up the fone again and punched a number.

“Hi John, what? Crap, okay, no ok. I am coming out to see the car in a minute, I have Fae with me. Ok great.”

Armaan ran his hand through his hair, still a bit wet from our shower.

“Something wrong?”

“Yes and no, we will talk later, I will show you the car and we will go from there.”

He got up and paused.

“How old are you Fae?”

“Twenty-five.”

“I’m old enough to be your father.” He looked a bit annoyed but when he saw my face his expression changed.

“Don’t worry, nothing has changed. Come.”

Armaan lead me outside to what he called his auto-lab. Every single tool used in the auto industry could be found in there. There were mechanical arms, hydraulic equipment, the works. The staff were dressed in navy green caps, coveralls and steel tip boots.

They guys smiled at me and nodded, the women on the other hand, looked at me as if they knew something and it was only then I realised Armaan had his hand in the small of my back. It felt so right that I didn’t know it was there. I tried my best to ease away from him but he noticed.

I tried walking easily I was so sore, and I am sure at least one person noticed.

“It’s none of their business Fae, pay no attention. Here we are.”

“This is my car?”

I couldn’t keep the look of surprise from my face. Parked in front of me was a Fortuner, same colour as mine.

“But you only bought this yesterday.”

Armaan laughed.

“This was already finished, when I saw yours, it was the perfect opportunity to get closer to you.”

“Any closer and your heart would beat inside my chest.” I whispered.

“I will have to agree, you like it? If not I can have the boys make any adjustments for you.”

“No it’s great, let’s go sign the papers. Can I take it home today?”

I looked up at Armaan when I realised he had not responded.

“Fae, after just now this my gift to you, you cannot possible think I would make you pay me for a vehicle.” His voice was low and I hoped only I could hear him.

“Can we talk about this in your office? Please?”

“As you wish.” “John, give it a wash and polish and bring her out front.”

“Got it boss.”

Armaan lead me back across the yard and it was then I realised why he had his office in that part of the property. The noise levels were consuming at times and he would need not only his privacy, but to be comfortable when he had meetings or deflowering screaming virgins before breakfast.

As he pushed the door to his office, I noticed Armaan straightened his shoulders. He stopped and turned to face me. Then he grabbed my hand and pulled me inside. Quickly locking the door he began tearing at my clothes.

“Armaan, stop please, wait!”

“I can’t, I’m sorry I can’t.”

Armaan got my panties down, spun me around and in no time he was inside me. I winced at the initial entry but I was so turned on for him it didn’t last. Neither did he. Within minutes he was shuddering and as he rested on my back, I could feel his chest pushing against me as he tried to calm his breathing.

“Jesus.” Armaan whispered onto my shoulder as he eased out of me once again.

“I want to take you home.”

“I can drive myself. You can see me later if you like.”

“Don’t deny me.”

“I’m not, what will your staff think?”

“It’s NONE of their business. Get dressed I am taking you home.”

“Okay.” I hung my head, I never felt so humiliated.

“Fae.” Armaan whispered.

I turned to look at him with tears in my eyes.

“May I take you home, please?”

I smiled at the look on his face. He knew how he made me feel and it was his version of an apology.

CHAPTER TWO

Armaan left me to clean up once again and he went to see about my car. I was putting my lip gloss back in my hand bag when the office door flew opened and this lovely lady stepped inside.

She took one look at me and decided I wasn't worth even a hello.

"Where is my husband?"

"Good morning to you too and who is your husband?"

"If you took a look at the photographs around you, you would know who my husband is. Now where is he?"

I looked in the direction of her glance and there it was plain as day, Armaan, the woman standing before me and two young children, one barely 3 months old, the other about 5.

I felt sick but not wanting to cause a scene, I straightened my back and took the high ground.

"Armaan is outside seeing after my car for delivery, I am waiting on him to sign the papers."

The woman without so much as a thank you, turned on her heel and left. I sank into the chair, I wanted to cry, scream, throw things but the only solution I could come to was that I had no claims to him, we just met and we had a good time. I will conclude my business and be done with him.

I sat twiddling my fingers and when the door pushed again, I was ready to do verbal battle. It was Armaan.

"What did she say to you?"

"She barged in demanding to see you, I told her where you were and why I was here. I need to go, can I come back and sign the papers later?"

He ran both hands through his hair. He walked to his desk, pulled out a form and handed it to me.

“Fill this out and I will have the car delivered in a few.”

“Okay.” I said as I took the sheet and turned away from him.

The door closed softly and I filled out the form and left.

“Is she your new whore Armaan? Is that why you wouldn’t take my calls?”

“Jayna, I am not interested in hearing your rants and raves and you are in no position to tell me what to do or who I can see. Your role in my life is to take care of the children and nothing else. Now make this the first and last time you come into my office for any reason other than the children, do I make myself clear?”

“NO! Why did you marry me if you don’t want to be around me? You pay attention to the children, you don’t touch me, hug or kiss me. Why Armaan?”

“I do not love you, I told you this before we got married. Why would you think because we have children I would automatically love you? You slept with my brother and had his child, I married you so she would have at least one stable parent in her life. I care nothing about you. The only reason I let you go through with our son is because I wanted a child of my own and we were already married. Now I have had enough of you so get out and I will see you when I get home.”

I took another shower when I got home, I think my brain was instructing my feet because I have no memory of walking to my house. I dried my skin and the soreness began to present itself. Armaan was average length but very thick and the way he used his skills made you feel as if he was way bigger. I scotched on the edge of the chair naked and opted for a robe and decided I would take a nap.

I stretched out across my bed and as I began to sleep, a loud knocking on the door woke me up.

“Coming!” I shouted.

I retied my robe and made my way to the door, when I opened it, there he was.

“We need to talk.”

He brushed past me and looked for a seat.

I was still standing at the door, mouth open.

“Either you talk to me or I will make love to you again.”

Those simple words, made me wet, just like that, I wanted him again, yes I did.

I turned to face him while closing the door.

“Would you like something to drink?”

“No, sit.”

I sat in the chair opposite him.

“I am sorry about today, things went too quickly and I have no one to blame but myself. I was careless with you and I apologise. I can give you my life story if you want.

“No need, we won’t be seeing each other again. Did you bring my car?”

“It’s parked in the side street.”

“Great, let me give you a cheque for the agreed amount, wait we never discussed what it was.” I sighed loudly in frustration.

“Fae the car is yours, I mean what I said.”

“As payment for my virginity?”

“That was low.” He said, the hurt registering on his face.

“I know but imagine, standing in your office after making love with you twice and your wife with her bitchy attitude, trying to assess and degrade me without even knowing me. How low was that? The thing is I was so caught up with you I never saw the photographs of you with her so evidently she was right.”

Armaan sighed.

“She confronted me after you left.” He relayed the story of what they said to each other.

“I have made a mess of things, I never meant to lie to you, you are special to me now, more than ever. I don’t know how to make this up to you.”

“Leave me alone Armaan, this won’t end well for me. You have a wife and children, stay with them. You made your choice no matter what the situation is. I am not angry with you, I just don’t want to wake up and find myself waiting on you to leave her and while she gets the best of you, I get seconds. You will never leave her and I would never ask you to, so please, leave me alone.”

I was crying now and it seemed as if I had gotten through to him. I was wrong. Armaan got up from the sofa, walked over to me and pulled me from the chair.

“I can’t leave you, not ever.” Then he kissed me. I fought him at first but then the teasing of his tongue jarred my senses. I felt his hand wrap around my waist as the kiss went from sheer emotional frustration to frenzied passion.

I was tugging at his shirt, he pulled at the string holding my robe together and in a few seconds it was on the floor. Now as I stood naked before him, his eyes roamed over me, I wanted to cover up but he read my mind again.

“Don’t even think about covering up. I love looking at you. Where is your bedroom?”

“Two doors on the left behind you.”

He grabbed my hand and quickly pulled me. As we got to the door, he turned the knob and stepped in. He took a quick scan of my room and muttered.

“This will not do.” He let go of my hand and much to my surprise, Armaan lifted the mattress off the frame and put it on the floor. He took my hand and pulled me towards him. I was no longer in control, I was never in control it seemed.

He put me in the middle of the mattress facing my dressing table and spreading my legs he knelt behind me. I felt him caress between my legs, teasing me, showing me what was to come. He was a man with a plan and nothing I said or did would change his mind. I felt him move away and the mattress shifted a bit.

“Spread your legs further.”

I complied. Armaan lay down on his back and scooted up between my exposed thighs. When his tongue touched me, I gasped loudly. The sensation was different because of the position I was in I think. How would I know, this was all new to me. He rested his hands on my waist and pulled me down to him. I

couldn't take it and before you knew it, I was gripping the dresser trying not to scream.

I sagged but he didn't stop. He pulled me back onto his chest, rested my feet on either side of his head and started again.

This was unfair. I had no will power against this man. He was using my body like a tool in his shop and all I could do was accept the pleasure I was being given.

I collapsed backwards onto him, the air in my body no longer mine. Sweat was pouring off me and I was trembling beyond belief. Armaan was calm and he whispered to me throughout. I thought he was finished. I was wrong again.

He spun me around and I was now facing his feet. Unable to move on my own he scooted downwards and was once again between my legs and he began again. This time I fought for control, I needed to. So, while he concentrated on me, I focused on him. I bent over his torso and tasted just the tip of him. He froze for two seconds, then I felt his hand in the middle of my back pressing me down. My satisfaction came when he groaned. I had no idea what I was doing but he wasn't complaining. I tried my best not to let my teeth grate his skin and it happened once and he groaned louder. I was finding it hard concentrating on him, he was too good for me and once again my body shattered and I collapsed but Armaan lifted me off him and arranged me to sit on top of him still facing his feet. I wasn't sure what he wanted me to do but he held on to my hips and began to move me. I felt full, he was touching every part of me.

"Tell me you won't ever leave me."

"I can't tell you that." I choked out.

He pulled me down hard.

"Tell me."

"No!"

Armaan grabbed my hands and pulled them behind my back, he held them with one hand and sat up. In this position, he was deeper than ever. I couldn't move.

"Tell me Fae." He said in a low but tantalizing voice. He moved his hips, knowing how he was making me feel.

“I won’t leave you!” I said anything to satisfy him. I wasn’t scared but I wasn’t in any position to move away either.

He let go of my hands and hooked his under my knees, making me lean back against him and then he began a rigorous work out.

I felt limp, lifeless and thoroughly satisfied. Armaan was breathing heavily while running his hand over my hip. He had lifted me off him and now he was spooning me. I wanted to cry. Why did my first time have to be with someone like him? Why couldn’t he be a bastard and just walked away?

“I need to take a shower, join me.” It wasn’t a request, it was a command and even though I wished I had the mentality to tell him go to hell, I knew I couldn’t. We entered the bathroom and Armaan made love to me in the shower. As much as I enjoyed myself a thought nagged me. Would he go home and make love to his wife the same way? Does he even make love to her? Well yes dummy they have a new born son. I shook the thoughts away as the man in my shower positioned me for yet another steamy session.

I lay on the sofa staring up at this man who in less than 24 hours has turned my life upside down. Could I walk away from him? Do I want to?

Armaan was dressing to go either back to work or home. He didn’t look in the least bit tired, while I was ready to drop into a never-ending abyss of sleep. I yawned and I heard him talking to me.

“I do not make love to my wife, my son is the result of In-vitro, my daughter is actually my niece from my brother who my wife slept with a while before we got married and he died in car accident, I adopted her.”

“Yeah you told me some of that earlier. Right now I’m too tired to argue or question what you are saying.”

I was in awe. I swore he could see into my mind and it was getting annoying.

“How Armaan?”

“I always know what you are thinking, your body, mind and soul belong to me, never forget that. I will see you tomorrow. Have you thought about what you

want to do after you leave school?” I don’t remember telling him I was in school but he probably asked when he was inside me.

“School is almost finished and then I have to find a job to pay back my parents.”

“What would you like to do?”

“I’m specializing in pastries but I really want to open a sandwich bar.”

“I will make a space for you on the compound, get me a list of everything you need by the end of this week. When does school finish?”

“Six weeks.” I felt humiliated once again.

“How much is your loan from your parents?”

“Fifteen thousand no interest.”

“Come by my office tomorrow and I will give you a cheque.”

I sat up straight and put my palms out in protest. I shook my head, no way was I going to do this.

“Why do you need to make me feel so useless? All I can offer you is my body.”

“You have yet to understand what makes a man stay with a woman. She has to have the right attitude to suit his needs, sex is bonus. If I thought you were after my money, I would still have made love to you but many things I would refrain from doing. Do not let my attitude bother you Fae, this is who I am. Never feel that you are any less a woman because of what we have and the things I plan to do for you. There is no shame in me wanting you to have the best.” He pushed me back down on the bed and kissed me on my forehead.

“Tell me you understand.”

I nodded and drifted off to sleep.

The next day, I felt better than I had in a while. A knock on the door roused me out of my day dream. I should have known. Armaan was at the door, hot chocolate and bagels in hand.

“Good morning Fae.” He said as he walked past me. He put the breakfast down and sat in the chair at the table. He motioned for me to sit on his lap but while I intended to sit sideways, he made me straddle him.

“I have dreamt of nothing else but you last night. I want you now.”

I gave him a funny look and knowing him, my mind was clear as day. I wanted to say no.

“You can say no.”

“Can I?”

“No.”

I sighed and lifted my t-shirt over my head, it was still a bit dark out so no one could see into the house. Armaan unzipped himself and I fumbled to get him inside me. As I sat, he didn’t move. I tightened around him and he groaned.

“Oh Fae what did I do to deserve a woman like you?”

I leaned back and looked into his eyes. It was scary. I felt as if he and I were one body, one mind, one heart.

“All I ask is if you decide you don’t want me anymore just tell me. I won’t make a fuss.”

“There is no one to replace you, never doubt that.” With that he made love to me again. He got up, took a shower and left to go to work and all I could do was sleep.

I woke up around 10 and got ready to go to class. The breakfast was still on the table, I put them in the microwave and took my shower. I grabbed them on the way out. I was hungry to the nines. I hopped into my car and for the first time in my life I felt loved by a man. Not the mushy I want to spend the rest of my life loved, but someone who was willing to provide the things I could not do for myself, a man who appreciated me as I am with all my insecurities about relationships. Not to mention a man who made love to me as if I was the only woman he ever had on this earth. Granted, I had it in my head that Armaan would never be my husband but at least I had a small piece of him, which I would

forever cherish. I pulled up at the school and chatted with a few of my friends, then made my way to class. Just as class was beginning, Armaan messaged me to have a wonderful class and to call him when I came out. Community College was a tough place but if you studied and did your research, it wasn't half bad.

I sailed through my class and that was the last one, my exams would begin next week and I had everything covered. I will tell you a secret, I was a straight A student, always have been. Never got into any trouble at school, not a fight, homework always handed in. I was the perfect child. I passed Common Entrance with the top marks not only at my school but in the entire island. My parents sacrificed everything to make sure I had every opportunity available to me. When I finished secondary school, I decided I wanted to study Tourism & Hospitality Management. My parents agreed and when I was accepted, my father sold his car and bought me the Fortuner. I think I cried for a week. I made up my mind I would take them wherever they needed to go and funny enough, they enjoyed taking the bus together. They only ask me to get them when they had heavy items.

Half way through my first term, my brother and I kept getting into arguments because of his noise. He would turn his radio up loud when I wanted to study. My mother decided it was time to make some changes, she went to her credit union and asked for a small loan. She came home beaming one evening and when we sat down to dinner she made the announcement.

"Fae honey, I know things have been a bit rough with all of in the house so I got you a small place so Federico wouldn't bother you anymore."

"You're kicking me out?" I was in disbelief.

"No, I'm giving you the space you need. You have been cooped up with us for too long."

"Where is the house? Not far from here I hope, I need to see you often."

"It's in Eagle Hall next to the police Station."

"Gran's old house?"

“Yep, I got a loan to fix it up and you can move in as soon as you like. I didn’t have any money left for new furniture so you will have to get some second hand ones for now.”

“Oh mom, thank you. When I start to work, I will pay you back, I promise.”

“Yes you will, that money is for your brother’s college. Now, let’s finish dinner and help you start packing.”

I moved into my semi-new home and got settled. My degree would take two years, I would study business management, marketing, human resources and then accounting, that would bring me to at least age 25 and I could open my business and make further plans for my future. I did odd jobs in between and tried to save as much money as possible.

I called Armaan while walking across the car park and the sound of his voice made me block out the entire world. I sat in my car talking to him for about fifteen minutes then he told me he had to go. I drove home singing loudly. I wanted to cook him dinner but then I remembered I didn’t have anything. So I took a detour to the supermarket. I picked up items to make a cheese pasta with vegetables and the crust for a cheesecake.

I finished both dinner and dessert and I was going through some accounts for a few clients and there was a knock at the door. I got up to look and what do I see? A truck, loaded with quite a few items on it.

“Fae Alleyne?”

“That’s me.”

“Sign here please.”

I signed without looking.

“Where would you like these?”

“Like what? I didn’t order anything?”

The poor guy looked at the other signature on the sheet and indicated it to me.

“I should have known. Okay show me which is mine so I can tell you where to put them.”

“Um, all of it. Washing machine, queen bed, stove, fridge, here take a look.” He handed me the sheet.

“Oh my god! I have nowhere to put these things!”

“Let me take a look if you don’t mind. Oh wait, I have a note in my file, give me a second.” He took out another sheet of paper.

“Ah this makes sense now, wrong address, these things are to go in the house next door to yours.”

“I don’t understand, if they belong to me, why are they going next door?”

“Um I think you better call Mr. Ellis.”

I nodded and took out my cell phone and as I was about to dial, it started ringing.

“Did you get the stuff?”

“There is a mix up Armaan I.....”

“I bought the house next door, move into it.”

“WHAT?”

“Don’t argue with me, do as I say, the one you are in is not big enough and your things are old. Do as I say. The house is unlocked I will bring the keys for you tonight.” He hung up.

I looked at the phone, then to the delivery guy and pointed to the house next door.

I went up to the house and it’s only when I got near I realised my name was on the mailbox. When did that get there?

I walked up to the front door and opened it. The house smelt as if it had just been cleaned.

I wandered in cautiously and I resigned myself that the thought that Armaan will do whatever he pleases and I will just go along. Why waste time arguing?

It took the guys about 4 hours to get everything off the truck and into my new home. Apparently Armaan paid them to move me out of my old one. I told them come back the next day if they could as they looked tired. They agreed and said they would be back around 6am the next morning before outside got too hot.

Armaan showed up around 7 and I asked if he was hungry.

“For that lovely body of yours yes.”

“I made you dinner.” I said softly.

“After, I need you now. Oh here are the keys, let’s go lock up.”

We walked through the house, talked about the rooms and what else was needed. We sat cuddled on the sofa and Armaan once again threw me for a loop.

“You can get whatever else you need, I will give you a credit card.”

I went silent. What would people think?

“You, need to stop worrying about people Fae.”

“Armaan, can you please tell me how you know exactly what I am thinking. You never miss!”

“Maybe I am that in tune with you. Think nothing of it. Back to you. The card has a hundred thousand dollar limit. I don’t care how much you spend I will pay the bill each month. I am putting you on my cell phone plan as well, oh and whenever you need groceries, use this card. I have an account here and the bill will come to me.”

I stepped back.

“You have done this before.”

“Is that what’s bothering you?”

“Do you do this with all of your women?”

“My past is no concern of yours. I am with you and that is all you should fill your head with. “

“I have no past, you know you were my first, I am not accustomed to this Armaan.”

His frustration with me showed momentarily. Then he pulled me onto his lap and surrounded me with his arms, chin resting on the top of my head.

“Fae, I cannot explain how you make me feel. You think this is one sided because I have not shouted from the rooftops about my feelings. Let me be as honest as I can. I have only loved one woman in my life before you. We grew up together and got married when I was 25, she was 22. Two years later she and our unborn child died in a drive by shooting. I promised myself I would never feel that way about another woman again. This is why my wife is always so angry. You came along and all those memories and old feelings literally blew the barriers around my heart to pieces. I find myself day dreaming about you. Always wanting to touch you, just to remind me that you are real. In time this will all make sense. Now how about that dinner you promised me.”

We ate and made love again. When I awoke he was gone. I turned over and went back to sleep.

I got up around 5, took a shower and waited for the guys to show up and move the last of the stuff, so I could clean.

I began packing up the little things, and moving them over so the only things left were the bigger items which would be going to the children’s home that Armaan sponsored. We hardly talked but the little bits of info were coming out slowly. By the time the sun had gone down I had finished most of the moving and I needed to, shower, eat and relax. I was in the kitchen of my new home and I felt someone watching me. I spun around and there he was, propped up against the door jam.

“I love you when you are sweaty.”

“Do you love me at all?” I turned away quickly not wanting to see his face. I felt him walk up behind me and place his hands on my hips.

“Would you believe me if I said yes?”

“No, you see me as someone you can control, I hate that. I have a mind of my own and I like to use it.”

He dropped his arms from my hips and his warmth was gone.

“I do not expect you to understand me Fae, I do not expect you to automatically trust me and I hope in time those things will come naturally. I will tell you things about my life when I can. However, do not question my feelings for you. I am not the kind of man who dwells on thoughts. We discussed this last night. I grow tired of it. I can love you without ever having met you because love for a person is not written in stone, it has free will and when you realise this, you will never doubt me again.”

“I’m so afraid Armaan, you seem to take over whether you are with me or not and I appreciate all the things you are doing but it would be nice if you just ask me what I want especially when it’s important to me.”

“I understand and I will try to do better. Right now I want you again, will you let me?”

“I need a shower, I’ve been...” He never let me finish. He spun me around and kissed me so hard I felt his teeth bite into my bottom lip.

I loved the rush I always got when he kissed me. I quickly gave in and began to run my hands through his thick hair, pulling him into me. When he began to pull my pants off. I protested.

“Please Armaan, let me shower.” Pushing against his shoulders gently.

He looked at me and spoke softly.

“I am not a child, sweat does not bother me.”

“I need to shower. I don’t feel comfortable being like this with you.”

He let me go and went to the kitchen to find something to drink. I ran to the bathroom, stripped and took a quick shower, I didn’t have much hair so I washed from head down. When I got back to the kitchen Armaan was not there.

“I’m in here.” He was in my bedroom.

When I got there he was laying on the bed playing with himself and he was as hard as a rock. I licked my lips and wondered if I could help him.

“Yes you can.”

“Impossible.”

Armaan laughed softly and held out his hand. I walked over to him and lay down on top of him. He caressed my back and lulled me into a relaxed mode.

“Can I tell you a secret?”

I lifted my head to look onto his eyes. All I saw was love.

“Sure.” I wondered what he could want to tell me.

“Nothing to be scared about don’t worry.”

“Oh God. You need to stop doing that!”

“I’m falling in love with you Fae.” He whispered.

“You can’t be. I’m a nobody and you have everything, a successful business, a family. I’m just nobody, a passing thing until you find someone younger.”

Armaan’s face took on a kind of sad expression.

“I’m sorry you feel you are nothing to me but someplace to cool my libido.

“I wouldn’t know how to keep a man like you for very long. I am sure I will mess things up by becoming jealous, or needing too much attention, or if I really need money and I get the courage to ask and you say no and I throw a tantrum.”

“First of all, you don’t need to find a way to keep me, you already have me. Secondly, there is no one you need to be jealous of, now or ever. Thirdly, I would never refuse you money because I know you are not the type to indulge in frivolity. I will get the business up and running so you will not feel dependent on me. I will still give you what I think you need.”

“...and all you need from me is sex whenever you want it.” I mumbled.

“Fae. I have said before, you mean more to me than just sex. Don’t I treat you well? Have I ever just had sex with you and left without a word or not call to see how you are? Don’t I message you every chance I get?”

“I know, Armaan I know but what kind of life is this for me? When I need someone at night you can’t be here. When I want to go out on a date, it can’t be you and my male friends are far and few. How long do I have to wait until you release me so I can have a life with someone else?”

Armaan sighed as if he was weighing what I said.

“You are such a sweet girl and I know it is unfair of me to demand so much of you but all I ask is that if you find someone, tell me and I will do my best not to interfere.”

“I guess that’s all I can ask for. Now, make love to me please.”

Over the next few weeks, Armaan spent every free minute he had with me. School was finished and my graduation was a few nights away.

“I would like to invite you to my graduation.” I whispered as I lay cuddled in my lover’s arms.

“Are you sure? Your parents will ask questions.

“They know I’ve been seeing someone but I never told them who.”

“I would be honoured.”

With that he drifted off to sleep.

Around 11:30 I felt him untangle from me and go into the shower. The bathroom was big enough for my things and his. He always took a shower before he went home. He had installed a solar heater so we could take showers at any time in the morning. I got up stretched and followed him. I stood and watched as he stepped in, turn the water on and grabbed the soap. I loved to look at his body. He was everything I could ever hope for in a man. I still struggled with the fact that he was married and even after I met his wife and everything he told me, he began to grow on me. I looked forward to spending time with him, in our own little world. He loved me didn’t he?

“You know I love you Fae. Are you having doubts again?”

I looked at him funny. It was really beginning to annoy me the way he always knows what I'm thinking, like he could see my thoughts in the air or something.

"I have to go now, you won't see me for a few days, I want to spend the weekend with the children."

I turned away my face, didn't want him to see the tears forming in my eyes.

"Don't cry Fae, this is not an issue."

"For you maybe, I'm always on the outside, you and I have nothing to share. Oh, go home Armaan."

He stood at my bedroom door and stared at my back. I could feel his anger building up inside him.

"I won't go through this with you again. I am taking this weekend to spend time with my children, only them. My wife is not included."

"She's not?"

"I do not spend time with her."

".....but you married her Armaan, you must have felt something for her."

"I feel nothing and honestly the only woman I have loved to the point where I don't know what I was doing before, is you since my first wife. I don't fall in love or change my life around for anyone but my children and all it took was you shouting at an insurance agent. I love you and only you, yes my children come first but my wife is of no importance to me other than to care for the children in my absence."

"Okay, sorry for being so jealous."

"It is fine as long as it does not consume you. Now I will leave you, we will talk later."

I fell asleep soon after I heard his vehicle pull away. I swear everytime he made love to me he sapped all of my energy.

When I woke up, I decided to go for a walk in the park after I took my parents for their groceries. As I pulled up to the drive way, my heart dipped. There was Armaan pushing his daughter on a swing. I was about to put the car in reverse when he looked up and saw me. He motioned for me to come over.

I parked the car and made my way over. He slowed the swing and as his daughter got out, she eyed me for a few seconds, and then she stuck out her fingers. I twiddled them with mine and smiled. She withdrew them and stood by her father's side. She was a pretty child with dimples on each cheek, she had Armaan's hair colour but her eyes were a shocking green. I looked at the baby in the stroller and every single maternal instinct in me came to life. I wanted to hold him so badly.

"You can hold him if you like, he is a peaceful child."

He did it again.

"It's okay, I have to go."

Armaan ignored me and took his son up and placed him in my arms.

"Oh gosh, he is so sweet." I said softly.

"Daddy, I like her, she doesn't make him cry like Jayna does."

I froze and glanced down at the little girl, searching for some malice in her expression. She was smiling at me as if I was her savior.

"I have to go, I will talk to you later." I handed Armaan his son and turned to leave.

"We are going for ice cream would you like to come?" I turned to face the little voice.

"You have to tell me your name first."

"My name is Carleigh, what's yours?"

"My name is Fae."

"Fae, short for fairy. You look like a fairy, pretty and peaceful. Right daddy?"

"Most definitely. Will you join us for ice cream?"

“Okay.”

“You can follow us in your car.” He pushed the stroller, while Carleigh took my hand in her and skipped next to me.

“Daddy can I ride with Fae? I promise I will be a good girl.”

This child will be my undoing.

“Yes but only if she agrees.”

“Its fine, she can sit in the back.”

“Okay.”

Armaan settled his son into the car seat and I strapped his daughter into the back seat of my car. We got in and drove away. I followed Armaan to the ice cream parlour and we got the children out and went inside. As we ordered, people were staring at us. I glanced in the floor to ceiling mirrors and I realised how we appeared. Like a family.

I shouldn't be doing this, these children are not mine. I am only setting myself up for more heartache than what's already coming.

Armaan realised I was staring at something and when he followed my gaze he smiled.

“I love the way we fit together Fae.”

Just then Carleigh squealed.

“Daddy, Fae looks like she is our mummy!”

Everyone in the room stopped and stared even more. Armaan laughed so wonderfully, the rest of the people started laughing with him.

I figured I may as well join in.

We ordered ice cream and Carleigh volunteered me to feed Carlos. All in all we had a wonderful evening.

Carleigh fell asleep in my arms. Armaan put a sleeping Carlos in his seat and when he started to take Carleigh from me, the words she muttered brought me to tears.

“Will you be my mummy Fairy Fae?”

Armaan stepped back in shock. I gently put her in his arms and I got out of there.

Around 11:30 my cell phone rang, I reached over and took it up.

“Hi.” I said softly.

“Are you okay my love?”

“Yes I am actually. You have two beautiful children.”

“You could have one or two if you wanted.” He whispered into the phone.

“Don’t Armaan, I don’t want to raise my child alone or take away from the two you have. I am not ready anyway, I want to build up my business, pay back my parents and when I am 30 I can think about starting a family. Which brings me to something I wanted to talk to you about. We need to use protection. You know you were my first but I don’t know who you are with besides me, no wait let me speak. I need you to do this for me, please.”

Armaan gave me one of his I can’t believe you just said that to me looks over the phone.

“I understand Fae and I will do as you wish.”

Over the next few months Armaan and I spent every moment together. Funny enough the majority of the time we spent outdoors involved his children.

One sunny day he picked me up and drove us to Bathsheba. He took Carlos from the seat and helped Carleigh unbuckle hers. While they attached themselves to my arms and hand, their father unpacked the car and took the things down to a nearby bench. As we sat down I felt a warmth come over me. This is what I wanted, a man who loved me and children to prove it. And all of a sudden it was as if Carlos read my thoughts.

“Mama.”

I have heard women tell of the feeling they get when their baby says that for the first time. This was no different. Immediately the warmth spread throughout my body and spilled over from my eyes.

I held on to Carlos as if my life depended on it. What I didn't realise was that Armaan and Carleigh were smiling at me with so much love, I felt it in my bones.

The rest of the day went beautifully, the children got to bathe in the sun, play in the sand and then get some much needed sleep. All day Armaan touched me when he could, kissed me when he felt like and whispered what he wanted to do to me as soon as we were alone.

On our way back home, he decided to tell me something I so longed to hear. He glanced back at the sleeping children and took a deep breath.

"My son called you mama today and I don't think you understand what that means to me. From the day I met you, I knew you would be an important part of my life and my son just confirmed it. I told you before I am not the falling in love mushy type but for some reason, you have managed to change that in me. I made up my mind, I am filing for divorce and taking the children. When that is finalized, I will buy a new house and then if you will have me, I will propose, you will say yes and we raise the children together and if you want more we can do that too. Carleigh does not refer to her mother as anything but her name, she has never shown any kind of affection for her and yet a few months with you and she allows me to know that she wants you to be her mother. So, in light of everything I have told you, what do you think?"

"Yes."

Armaan said nothing else for the rest of the drive. He kissed me as he walked me to my door and quickly went back to take home the children. It was around 5 in the evening and I knew they would sleep until morning. I also knew Armaan would come back to spend some time with me again.

As I took my shower, I thought about how happy I was and the cause of it. I slipped under the covers and sleep took me.

When I woke up the next morning I was suddenly aware that the love of my life did not come over as I expected.

I couldn't call him at that hour he would still be at home. So I got up and tried to decide what I would do. I decided I would rent out Gran's house and use the money to pay back my mother. Then I realised I still had the cheque for 30g. That man oh gosh, he would give me his blood if I asked him to. He purchased all the equipment from the list I gave him and I went shopping for the supplies. He introduced me to his graphic designer and marketing agent and we worked on getting the business up and running.

I opened in two weeks, everyone on his staff placed their orders early and I am sure he had something to do with it. He put me at the front of the property near the entrance so I could be seen from the road which was always busy. I would open at 6 for his early staff and close at 3. I would eventually do deliveries for offices in the immediate area. He hired extra security just for me. He also made sure that my office was connected to his and we know why.

The rest of the day went smoothly and strangely enough. Armaan didn't call, or message me. It bothered me so much that I needed to find out if he was okay.

I took my cell from my desk and speed dialed his number.

"What do you want?" It was Jayna.

"May I speak to Armaan please?"

"He is at the hospital with *our* daughter, you are no help to him, just leave us alone!" She hung up.

My heart sank, I silently hoped that whatever Carleigh was going through would be over soon but what really hurt was that he didn't tell me. I shook that off, packed a bag and left home for the hospital. When I got to the A and E, I asked for Carleigh Ellis and surprisingly when the nurse asked if I was her mother and I said yes. She buzzed the door and I went inside. I searched for Armaan and

there he was in the asthma bay with Carleigh in his lap and Carlos in his car seat fast asleep. She was wearing a nebulizer mask and breathing deeply. Armaan looked up and saw me and the smile on his face was torn. I walked over, sat next to him and when Carleigh opened her eyes, she held out her fingers for our ritual then fell asleep.

“What happened?”

“Jayna.”

“Sorry I asked. Is there anything I can do?”

“Marry me soon, I don’t think I can handle being in the same place as her for much longer. Carleigh told Jayna she was a bad mother and that her daddy has a nice girlfriend and she wants her to be her mother. Now I can understand how Jayna must have felt but she had no right to hit my child. Carleigh had an instant attack and for the first time since I married her, I wanted to strangle her. I grabbed my daughter and brought her here. Wait how did you know I was here?”

“You hadn’t contacted me las night and all day and I got worried so I called your cell and Jayna answered.” I hung my head slightly.

“Let me guess, she was her usual self.”

I nodded.

“Forget her, she is pissed because I told her I will be marrying you.”

“She has every right to be angry at me, I feel like I am taking everything from her.”

“Listen to me, do not let what we have be the base for any sympathy towards that witch. She has had lovers within months after Carleigh was born and the mistake she made was that she allowed Carleigh to witness one of her affairs when she was 4. She walked into her mother’s bedroom and she screamed because Jayna was tied to the bed on her stomach and the man was whipping her. I care **nothing** for that woman do you understand? Nothing!”

“Okay calm down honey, how long do you think they will keep her here?”

“As soon as her chest has cleared. You go home and get some sleep, you have to prep for tomorrow as well.”

“Not a chance, have you eaten?”

“No, I rushed out of the house with Carleigh in my arms and the car keys. I don’t even have any money on me.”

Fae leaned over, opened her bag and took out a silver flask and a brown paper bag with her logo on it.

“This is why I love you so much, you think of me all the time.”

“I have enough for all of us. I will close the bar tomorrow, I think people will understand.”

“No you won’t, you have been running it on your own, I think we will hire some staff and you can take the day off with me.”

Carleigh moved on her father’s lap, I think she smelled the sandwich he was eating.

“Daddy can I have some?”

“Sure pumpkin but you have to open your eyes to eat and your favourite sandwich person is here.”

“Carleigh.”

“Hey sweetie, come on open those lovely eyes and have a sandwich and some juice. Are you feeling any better?”

“A little bit, my jaw still hurts some though. Can you feed me?” She lifted the plastic mask from her face.

“Anything for you.” I took out a sandwich and pulled a piece off and put it in her open mouth.

“God I love you Fae, I can’t wait to have children with you.” Armaan leaned over and whispered into my ear.

I smiled and just kept feeding Carleigh. When she was full I ate the rest and handed her a small bottle of Soursop drink.

Just then a Doctor came over and checked the nebuliser.

“Okay Carleigh, I need you to breath for me so I can listen to your chest.”

Carleigh opened up her sweater pulled up her shirt half way as the nurse warmed the stethoscope with her breath. She listened to Carleigh breathe and then she let her pull her shirt down.

“You sound much better, I think a good night’s rest and no school for a couple of days should do the trick. You can leave when you are ready. You have the papers to take to the police? I was going to call them tonight but I need you to have a clear head when you make that report.”

“Yes I do, I know, thanks Doc.” Armaan replied.

Armaan asked me to pack up Carleigh’s things while he picked up Carlos. I took her hand and we made our way outside. A cool breeze hit us but she was still feeling a bit cold so I pulled my sweater off and put it around her.

“Thank you mama.” She whispered.

“Oh dear.”

“It’s what I want, you make papa happy can’t you see that? Jayna hates us, she never wanted us and I am not even sure Carlos is my real brother.”

“What?” Armaan’s raised voice was heard from behind us.

“I’m sorry papa, I didn’t know how to tell you.”

“It’s not your fault honey, come let’s get your and your brother home.”

“I will talk to you tomorrow Armaan. Hope you feel much better Carleigh.” I turned to go and once again the little voice demanded her attention.

“Can we spend the night at your house?”

“I...”

“I promise we won’t break anything and I will clean up after myself.”

I looked at Armaan begging him not to do this to me.

“I think we will stay at a hotel tonight pumpkin.”

“Okay papa.” Carleigh hung her head in defeat.

“No, you can stay with me, we can stay up late and watch a movie, if that’s okay with your father.”

“Sounds good to me. You go on ahead, I will get the children’s things sorted out and see you in about half hour.” He kissed my forehead, saw me to my car and we drove out together. I stopped off at the gas station to get some juice, milk, snacks, fruit and a few baby things. Then I went home, and prepared the bedroom for the children. It was still a bit early in the evening so I took a shower and dressed in a pair of shorts and a halter top.

I was looking forward to having the children in my home. It felt right. I wouldn’t get to spend any intimate time with Armaan but one night wouldn’t kill me.

Just then my cell rang.

“Hello my love, would you like me to bring anything for you? I have the children with me and we are on our way.”

“I have everything we need, you would have to take them out of the car to buy anything, just get here soon.”

“A few more minutes and I’ll be there.”

About ten minutes later I heard his SUV pull up and doors opening and closing. I rushed to the side door and opened for them.

As I promised, we stayed up late, watched a movie and ate popcorn. Carlos got a bath, had his tea and I put him in the bedroom and stacked the pillows around him. Carleigh fell asleep half way through the movie. He father picked her up and put her next to her brother.

When he came back to me, I could see it in his eyes what he wanted and as usual, I gave in without even being asked.

“I love you Fae, I will try to be quiet.”

“We don’t have to Armaan, the children might wake up. I don’t want them to see us.”

“You would forego a night with me just because they are here with us?”

“Yes.”

“What will happen when we get married?”

“Right now I am just the girlfriend. When I become the wife they will still be my responsibility and we will have to setup the house so they don’t ever walk in on us.”

“Okay my love, let me just lay inside you until we fall asleep then.”

“Mmm”, was all I could manage.

The next week, Armaan visit his Attorney and began the proceedings to divorce Jayna. I don’t know who he spoke to for a favour but they were ready within a week.

Much to my annoyance, Jayna refused to sign the papers. She threatened to tell the court about our affair and even though Armaan didn’t care what she did to him, he didn’t want the children to be in and out of a court battle. So, he gave in and stayed with her.

I told him in no uncertain terms would I put up with it for much longer, I needed to get on with my life.

“You have to let me go Armaan, this is not fair to me. What am I supposed to do? Wait until both children are 18?”

“Please Fae, don’t do this, the children and I need you in our lives!”

“Clearly that isn’t important enough for you to find a way out of that marriage. She knows as long as you feel the children are in danger you will stay. Well I

won't, this is over for us. Can you please leave? You can work out how much money you spent on me so I can pay it back." I knew that would hurt him.

Armaan stepped back.

"Yesterday I deposited half a million dollars into your personal account. It was for you to plan our wedding. Consider it a parting gift. Good bye Fae." I thought he would have begged again but the remark about the money did something to him that I could never take back. I cried for weeks and then one day, I woke up feeling lightheaded. I made breakfast and after taking a few bites, I had to sprint to the bathroom.

I spent the day in bed after I called my manager and asked him to run the deli for the day. I thought about everything up to that day and I had no regrets, I was loved by a wonderful man in a bad situation, I met two of the most wonderful children and my business was blooming.

More weeks passed and I decided to pick myself up off the floor and try to get on without Armaan. I never spent any of the money in my account, I didn't earn it.

It was hard being in the same building with him every day, he would pass by the deli on his way to his office and he would glance in my direction and give me a nod, I would always mimic his response.

One day my world was shattered. Outside of seeing him at work, we had no contact.

I was serving a regular customer and making small talk about expanding the menus to accommodate international recipes and as I turned to go back into my office, they walked in. I looked around and all the waiters were already serving other customers, so obviously I had to go.

When I walked up to the table to take their order, he took it in stride.

"Hello Fae, how are you doing?"

“I am well Armaan, and yourself?”

“I am great as well, you remember my wife, Jayna.”

“Yes I do. Hello Mrs. Ellis, may I take your order now?” I refused to let her see how hurt I was, she would not know why but she would chalk it up to mere jealousy on my part. I wanted to scream, HOW DARE YO DO THIS TO ME?

Jayna placed her order with venom in her voice and when Armaan spoke, everything we shared came flooding back to me.

“I will have my usual thanks.”

I took their order and passed it on to the kitchen. I lost our baby that night, I didn’t even know I was pregnant. Of all the insisting that we use protection, I lost my head every time he touched me. I think I wanted to have his child somewhere in the back of my mind. I sat in my office watching them on the security screens and such a rage took over me, and as quickly as it came, it went. I spent the next few hours, dealing with accounts, supplies, and employee documents and when I was driving home, I began to cry. I couldn’t handle it anymore. All the months of hiding, sneaking phone calls, driving for hours just to spend a day together and rush back in time to pick up his children from nursery. Birthdays, spent rushed because he had to get back home. Me sleeping alone because he would not be able to find a plausible reason.

I didn’t see her. She was in the middle of the zebra crossing and it’s only when I heard her scream I managed to swerve away from her. The car crashed into a pole and the steering wheel slammed into my stomach. When I woke up, Armaan was standing next to the bed with my parents and my brother.

“It’s about time. Do you know where you are?”

“Hospital. What happened?”

“You swerved off an old lady and crashed into a pole.” Her father said.

“Is she okay?”

“Yes I am.” The voice came from behind her family.

“I’m sorry, I didn’t see you, I should have been paying attention. Are you sure you aren’t hurt?”

“I am just fine dear, just a bit shaken up but your family has taken good care of me, I just came to see how you were doing. I will go now, I left my number, call and let me know how are doing.”

“Thank you.”

“Fae honey.”

“Don’t call me that.”

“I think we should let them talk.”

“Don’t leave me with him please!”

Ignoring her words, her family left her alone with Armaan.

“I don’t want to hear.”

“Fae. I need to tell you something.”

“What that you love me but you can’t leave your wife because your son is too young? Heard that for too long, tell someone else.”

Fae heard a sound and looked up. Armaan was crying. This was new. He never lets his guard down, ever.

I softened up a bit.

“What is so bad that’s making you cry?”

“You lost the baby.”

“I what?”

“You were just a month but the impact was too much.”

“I was pregnant?”

“Yes honey.”

I did not realise the awful sound I heard was my own voice. All I remember was a nurse and doctor sticking something into my arm and Armaan holding me in his arms. Then sleep took me.

Armaanre-filed for divorce and Jayna countered by filing for full custody of the children. I know Armaan would never leave her with them alone for too long so the thought of her being solely responsible for them made his blood boil.

I knew Armaan had something up his sleeve, he refused to hire an attorney to represent him in court and when he asked for permission to bring the children into the courtroom, Jayna protested until she was blue in the face. The judge found it rather strange but he allowed it.

“Your honour, sometimes adults need to pay attention to the things children say and do. I would like to state for the record that I have not coerced my children in any way, they have very strong personalities and they know who love them.”

Armaan held out his hand to me and put me to sit in a chair directly in front of the judge’s bench. He asked Jayna to do the same. He walked to the far side of the court and then nodded to the officer standing by the door. When the door opened, Carleigh strolled in with Carlos in her arms. She took her time and when she saw her mother and I it seemed as if she knew what she had to do. When she got to me, she stuck out her hand, I twiddled her fingers and Carlos turned to see who touched his sister.

“Mama”.

Carleigh moved away and handed Carlos to Jayna and he immediately began to scream and reach for me.

Jayna grabbed him and held him tightly. I cringed to hear him cry, although I knew his father was making a point.

“Jayna put him down please.” It was Armaan.

“He is MY son. Your whore will NOT have him!”

Carlos screamed louder, trying his best to get away. Armaan walked over to them and gently took Carlos and handed him to me. He immediately stopped and rested his head on my shoulder.

“Your honour, this is the kind of thing that happens on a daily basis. She makes the children cry for no reason at all. Fae has been more of a mother to them and it comes naturally. She cares for them deeply and I know she will continue. I know this will hurt her for people to know this but she lost our baby a few months ago. We had broken up because Jayna had threatened to drag the children through court, so rather than do what was right I took the easy route. The love Fae has for my children has never faltered and I love her with all my heart. I cannot allow my children to grow up with a woman who clearly has no interest in raising them in a healthy environment. If she wants to see them I have no problem but if I am to act in their best interest, I beg you to give me full custody of them.”

The judge dismissed Jayna and I to our seats and called Armaan into his chambers.

“Armaan, I have known you since you were a child, I know the kind of man you are today. The first time you filed I was glad because I also know what kind of person Jayna is and she does not know what I know about her. I also did some digging on Fae, where did you find her? She is a wonderful person and everyone I have spoken has vouched for her and nothing but pleasantries.”

“She was yelling at an insurance agent who clearly knew nothing about making sure the client got the best service, then she came to me for a car. I am the only man she has ever had but I feel like I took over her life and ruined it by letting my issues affect her. I need this divorce judge, I will go mad if I have to spend one more day attached to Jayna.”

“I need to tell you something, so take a seat.”

Armaan sat down and waited.

“Carlos may not be your son. The woman who gave birth to Carlos in the hospital was not your wife either. Think back, Jayna called you from home and told you she was in labour, the next time you saw her he had already been born.”

“Yes, by the time I got there, he was in the nursery in the incubator. I didn’t bother to see Jayna, I just wanted to see my son. How did she pull this off?”

“She has a twin sister, Jayna can’t have children, both Carleigh and Carlos belong to Jana and I have reason to believe that Jayna paid her sister quite a lot of money to give her the two children. As Jana grew in pregnancy she switched with Jayna. There is a slight possibility that he may be yours considering, I doubt it but you can have him tested.”

“No I don’t care, I want those children, I legally adopted Carleigh and Carlos was born while Jayna was married to me and he has my last name.”

“Are you sure?”

“Yes I am and I want to have children with Fae, losing this baby tore her apart.”

“Okay, follow my lead and this will go your way without anyone suspecting what we know. Go back out and take a seat.”

“Armaan Ellis you are asking this court to award you full custody of Carleigh and Carlos Ellis is this correct?”

“Yes your honour.”

“Your records show that you are financially capable of taking care of them but I question your relationship with Fae Alleyne. You are having an affair and you expect this court to allow you to assume full care of these two children. Do you plan to marry Ms. Alleyne?”

“Your honour, this may sound absurd, unorthodox and somewhat immoral. I do not love Jayna, I only married her to give Carleigh a stable home, she and I were engaged and she slept with my brother who is now deceased. I wanted another child and since I had no desire to touch her, we agreed to invitro and that’s how we had Carlos. Jayna does not love the children, she tolerates them to extort money from me. Fae on the other hand loves them unconditionally and they love

her, I am not ashamed to be involved with her no matter what the circumstances. As soon as I am divorced we will be married and the children will have everything they need in a mother and I in a wife.”

“Mrs. Ellis, do you have anything to add?”

As if on cue Jayna began to cry.

“Your honour, I love my children and I would do anything to see them happy. Armaan was unfaithful to me, he neglects me to spend time with her, he takes her everywhere and he refuses to be seen with me. Now he wants to take my children. I gave him 6 years of my life, how could he do this to me?”

More tears.

“Mrs. Ellis while I understand how you must feel, the display by the children in this court earlier tells a different version of your story and we need to make things right for the sake of the children.”

The judge pulled out a sheet of paper and motioned for Jayna to approach his bench. He pushed the button on the microphone to turn it off. When Jayna reached him he held out the paper for her to see.

Immediately her face changed and the judge was willing her to say something so he could throw her in jail for contempt. He looked her in her eyes and spoke.

“You have two choices, either be charged with child endangerment, fraud, theft and anything else I can think of, or you let the children go, accept a lump sum of money and move out of the country tomorrow.”

“You can’t do this!” She whispered.

“Yes I can, the bailiff has a warrant for your arrest if you fight Armaan for custody, your call, now get away from me.”

Jayna glared at Fae as she went back to her seat.

“It is the finding of this court that full custody be awarded to Armaan Ellis with strict visitation to Jayna Ellis if she wants it. Mr. Ellis you are required to pay Mrs. Ellis the amount of half million dollars. The marital home is to be sold and Mrs. Ellis is to be paid one quarter of the sale value. She will receive no monthly payments after this settlement. Are we in agreement?”

“Yes your honour.” Armaan replied.

“No.”

The judge smiled and looked at Armaan.

“Excuse me?”

“He is not getting my children!”

“Are you sure you want to take this road?”

“I’m not afraid of any of you, those children are MINE.”

“No they aren’t.”

A voice from the back of the courtroom cause people to turn to the source.

Jayna spun around and clearly she was not only surprised but angry.

The judge glances behind Jayna and much to his delight, Jana the twin sister is walking towards him.

“Your honour may I please approach?”

“Objection, we were not notified of this witness.” Yelled Jayna’s attorney.

“Overruled. Approach.”

“Hello your honour. I think you know why I am here, you can’t let my sister have my children. She doesn’t love them. She paid me 250 thousand to have those two children. I still have the cash, she didn’t want Armaan to find out what she did. I never wanted children and I don’t want any now, so I will sign whatever documents need to be signed. I know he will continue to take good care of them. Just please I beg you don’t let her have them.”

“Take a seat.”

“It is the finding of this court that Jayna Ellis has no biological hold over Carleigh or Carlos Ellis. She paid her twin sister twice to be impregnated and give birth. In lieu of this, I grant Armaan Ellis full custody of the afore-mentioned children and if

he chooses, supervised visitation is the only option as I do believe Mrs. Ellis does not have the best interest of the children at heart. Case dismissed.

Jayna began to scream at everyone.

“If you EVER leave them alone I will take them from you, do you hear me?”

I stood up, grabbed the children and was making my way to the big wooden doors. Just then, I heard a gunshot. For those first few seconds I shielded the children and shoved them behind a bench. I dared not let them go. People were running about, shouting, trying to get outside.

I could not see Armaan so I peeked my head over the back of the bench. My heart lodged itself in my throat. The man I loved was laying on the floor, blood coming from his chest. I wanted to go to him but the children were screaming in my ears and gripped me tighter. If I let them go and go to their father they would see.

“Carleigh honey, you gottabe a big girl for me today. I am going to take you and your brother outside for Auntie Jana, she will look after you for a few minutes okay?”

Carleigh nodded and quickly ushered the children outside.

She spotted Jana and motioned to her.

“I know we have never met but I really need your help. I have to go to Armaan, I can’t let the children see him like that, can you sit with them out here for a few minutes, I will come get them as soon as I can.”

“Sure.” Was all Jana said.

I felt a coldness wash over me and brushed it off seeing the satiation inside the courtroom had reached a bad ending.

I ran back inside and when I got to Armaan, two EMT’s were tending to him and funny enough, he didn’t look shot to me at all.

“I couldn’t tell you what was going on but I knew Jayna was up to something. I pretended I didn’t know what the judge was talking about. The person inside the courtroom today was Jana not Jayna, the real Jayna is currently taking the children away from the courthouse. Don’t worry, she won’t get far.”

The marshals had Jana and Jayna in custody.

“I’m confused Armaan.” I said quietly as we sat in his car on the way home.

“It’s simple. Sometimes a twin cannot be told a part unless they have some distinguishing feature. The woman I married has a very tiny mole behind her left ear. When Jana walked past me in court, there was no mole. I figured it out quickly. Jayna wanted to take the children and offer them for ransom. The judge told me quite a bit so I had to put things in place quickly. I have been granted my divorce and the papers will be available for signing in two weeks. The children are already legally mine so no worries there and now my love you and I can get married.”

I started crying and a soft voice in the back seat tugged at my heart strings when she spoke.

“Have you changed your mind about us mama?”

“Oh honey, I could never change my mind about you, I love you always remember that. I guess it’s been a lot to handle but I am glad it’s over now and we can finally be happy.”

As we arrived at my house, I took Carlos from his seat and Armaan lifted a sleeping Carlleigh from hers. We put them to bed and went to the kitchen.

All the stress of the day was resting on my shoulders and with one kiss Armaan took it all away.

“Fae, I love you more than I have ever loved a woman in my life, will you marry me?”

When he pulled the ring from his pocket, it took my breath away.

“Yes, Yes I will.”

2 years later

“Mama, are we gonna have a brother or sister?”

“I have no clue pumpkin, I just want a healthy baby.

“Okay, I guess that’s a good thing. Where’s dad?”

“He took your brother to the park. Would you like to help me with dinner?”

“Sure.”

“Okay go into the refrigerator and take out the four plastic containers you see, put them on the table. Go to the pantry and bring the pasta sauce, a tin of corn and the seasoning on the third shelf from the top and a tin of mushrooms.”

Carleigh got everything and together we prepared dinner for the family.

Around 3 in the morning Armaan felt a hand running all over his body.

“I’m asleep.”

“Well wake up, I need you.”

2 hours later

“Armaan.”

“MMMMMMmmmm, again?”

“Uh huh.”

Four hours later

“Honey, I need water I’m really thirsty.”

“Be right back.”

I was 8 months pregnant and constantly craving the touch of my husband. He was the gentlest person on this earth and he belonged to me. When he appeared in the doorway, the smile on his face told me how much he loved me, so in return I gave him the most precious thing I could ever give him.

“Honey, my water broke.”

The Ellis house went into full ‘the baby is coming mode’. I was breathing nicely and as the contractions came, Carleigh talked me through them, she was so helpful.

As I delivered our son, I forgot the pain, nothing in this world could have prepared me for the emotions I felt when I held him for the first time.

“Hey Daddy’s here.” I said with tears flowing down my face.

As Armaan held his son in his hands, I knew what was racing through his mind. Although he loved his children this was the first child conceived naturally and with love between both parents. He feltwhole.

Carlisle Ellis was the fifth member of the household and as we grew in love and happiness, everything was just right.

I gave my wonderful husband two more children and each time we were happier than the last. This is what love is supposed to be and the day I said I Do, was the day I was no longer looking on from the outside.

Oh before I forget, I googled the meaning of my husband’s first name... It means Desire, wish or yearning. *giggle*

The End

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