

Thin Ice

By : PurpleSky

(FINISHED) Sam depends on her relationship with best friend Doug, it's the only thing in her life that she hasn't managed to screw up. But when she meets his dad for the first time, and her feelings for Doug start to shift, things start to get very complicated.



Published on
Booksie

booksie.com/PurpleSky

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Chapter 1: 1

Doug sat on his desk chair, impatiently waiting for 8.00am to come around. He glanced at the clock. Three more minutes. She was always right on time but he stood up and crossed his room to the window anyway. He fixed his glasses so they sat right on his nose and ran his fingers through his bouncy brunette curls as if to somehow tame them. Then his heart skipped a beat as she rounded the corner to his street. He quickly turned and pretending to be looking at something on his shelving like he always did and then 'casually' glanced back out of the window.

Sam was just passing his house. She smiled up at him and waved, her tied back pony tail bouncing behind her as she jogged. Doug's eyes widened in mock surprise and he waved back before she turned and continued on her morning route.

Doug dropped back down onto his bed and waited for the fluttering in his heart to stop. He was completely smitten with that girl. Samantha Cole, or Sam as she would rather be called. He sighed and laid back down in his bed and stared up at his white ceiling. He had a late start at college today but he always woke up at 7.45am to catch Sam as she jogged past. In the back of his head, he knew it was a creepy thing to do but the rest of his brain got the better of him and he just couldn't help but check her out.

She looked amazing in her jogging gear. She looked amazing in everything, actually. Sam was a sort of punk chick, like what the singer P!nk might have looked like in her late teens. With her pierced eyebrow and tongue, her white-blond hair with streaks of black that tumbled down her back, and who could forget the tattoo that covered the whole of her back. Doug didn't usually like tattoos on women, or tattoos on anyone for that matter, but this was Sam, she could kill a puppy right in front of him and he'd still think she was the hottest thing he'd ever seen.

The tattoo was of roses that sprouted from her waistband and climbed all the way to her shoulder blades. There were three red roses coming from the thorns now, but Sam had told him she was going to have more added as she got older. Once, Doug had felt cheeky and asked Sam if the tattoo ran any lower than her waistband, to which she bit her lip with a wink and replied, 'that's for me to know and you to drive yourself crazy thinking about'. Doug laughed nervously as he blushed and then tried to busy himself with the zipper of his coat with his fumbling fingers. She had this way of turning him into a complete mess.

Not that Sam was flirty in the sense that she was leading Doug on, because she wasn't. They were good friends, always have been since highschool. Sam was a year older than Doug but they still managed to make their friendship work, it even survived after the transition from highschool to college. Neither Doug or Sam were good at making friends so this friendship meant a lot to them, and Doug wasn't going to let his feelings for Sam ruin that.

At 10.30am, Doug rolled out of bed for the second time, shoved a flannel shirt on over his grey t-shirt, grabbed his bag and headed downstairs. He ate breakfast alone, shoved his trainers on and left the house, eager to meet up with Sam before his first lesson started.

"Oh, hey, fancy seeing you here." Sam smiled when Doug appeared by her side to hold the door to the side entrance open for her. *Yeah, it was completely coincidental. It wasn't as if he was waiting for her or anything* ;

She had switched her sports bra and lycra sweatpants for a black, leather-look bralet that showed just enough of her midriff to drive boys crazy, a pair of baggy jeans that hung off her narrow hips and black Nike trainers. Several chains jingled around her neck and two big hoop earrings were dangling from her ears. Her hair was down and swooped over to one side, showing her dark roots. It was an outfit that shouldn't work together, but it did. It did because it was on Sam.

"Hey," Doug replied with his slightly croaky voice, shoving the strap of his bag further up his shoulder.

"Are we still on for tonight?"

"Of course." Doug grinned. "I love it when you make me look stupid."

Sam laughed. "You're not *stupid*. I'm just smarter."

Doug shrugged. "Can't argue with that."

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They slipped through another set of double doors and reached the stairs where they must part ways. Sam spun on her heel, making her long hair swoop over her shoulder. She blinked up at him with her deep brown eyes. "So, I'll drop by at seven like usual?"

Doug smiled. "Yeah. I'll see you then."

"Okay." She grinned back and gave him a little wave. "Bye."

He nodded and started to veer off. "Cya."

The college day could not have finished fast enough. Doug was practically watching the second hand on the clocks of his classroom's tick by, just waiting for another lesson to be over. Finally, 4.00 came by and Doug was out the door. He knew that Sam had already finished for the day and got a sinking feeling in his stomach at the thought. He knew everything about her. *Everything*. They've been friends for five years and his whole life revolved around her. It was a sad thought, but he wouldn't change it for the world. Well, actually, that was a lie. If he could have changed something, he would have changed her feelings for him and made them into the same feelings she had for him. But he must be thankful with what he has got.

Sam didn't have many friends. In fact, Doug was her only true friend. The others were just people she spoke to. And that thought always put a smile on his face.

Chapter 2: 2

Sam rang the bell beside Doug's door and he nearly tripped over himself as he ran down the stairs.

"Hey." She smiled at him as he opened the door.

"Hey." He smiled back and gestured her to come in.

She was wearing the same outfit as she had been at college but had thrown on a leather jacket over the top as there was a chill in the air. Hugged close to her chest were her Maths folders.

She walked into the dining room and set up everything like she usually did.

Sam was in her second year at college and had gotten an A on her AS level Maths so Doug had asked for her help to pass as he wasn't doing so great. Sam was more than happy to help and would stop by every Wednesday for an hour session with him.

Doug plonked himself on the chair beside her while she sieved through her folder to get the right sheet.

"So, today we're going to go back to all that sin, cos and tan stuff, okay?" she asked, grabbing a pencil from Doug's pencil case.

Doug nodded dumbly in response, just glad to be sat this close to her again. She always smelt fantastic.

She opened up her notepad and started copying down sums she had done last year, familiarising herself with them before she started helping Doug.

Sam was the whole package. Smart *and* sexy. And she loved to teach him too.

"Right okay." Sam tucked her knees up and rested the notebook on them. Doug twisted his chair and leaned over so he could see better. His head was practically at her shoulder and her long, wispy hair was tickling his cheeks. Sam looked completely oblivious to the closeness but inside, she was glad to be back in his dining room with Doug by her side. It was what she looked forward to most in the day, too.

They stayed like that, uninterrupted for forty minutes, before the front door banged open and a man walked in. Sam looked up and her eyebrows rose at the stranger. He was in his late thirties, looking very smart in a grey suit, with the same impossibly bright blue eyes as Doug.

"Sup, Doug," he said and squeezed Doug's shoulder. Doug winced at the contact but never took his eyes off the notebook.

"Alright," he replied, somewhat bitterly.

Sam's jaw dropped as well as her pen as her eyes followed the man into the kitchen, where he opened the fridge and grabbed a bottle of milk. He settled it on the counter and then went to the cupboard to grab a glass. Sam gulped as he poured the milk into the glass, her throat suddenly dry. That man was hot. Like *really* hot. With his short, cropped brown curls and chiselled jawline; her heart literally skipped a beat when their eyes met. He sent her a crooked smile and downed the glass. She chewed her lip, suddenly feeling warm between her thighs as she watched his Adam's apple bob up and down.

He placed the glass back onto the counter with a sigh and wiped his milk-moustache, never taking his eyes off Sam's. Then they shifted south. Sam's breath hitched as they slid to her cleavage. His eyes widened slightly and he smiled to himself before looking back at her straight in the eyes.

He turned, dropped the empty glass into the sink and left without another word.

"Who was *that*?" asked Sam after expelling a breath she had held in.

Doug sighed. "My dad."

Sam blinked at him, stupefied. He had still not looked up from the notebook on her lap.

"Your dad?"

"Yeah."

"Butâ€¦!" She shook her head, completely confused. "I didn't even know you had a dad. Well, I mean, I didn't know he was around. We've been friends for five years and I have *never* seen him before."

"Yeah, well, he's not around a lot." He relaxed back into his chair and ran his fingers through his bouncy curls, not looking at her in the eyes. "He's just got back from Germany for business. He was there for pretty much two years. And before that, he was in China."

"Wow." Sam frowned, thinking about her own dad issues. "That must've been tough."

He laughed bitterly. "Not really. I like it more when he's not around. The guy's a dick."

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She coughed on a gasp. "How is he a dick?"

"He had an affair with some woman in Germany. Mum found out. They had a big argument and nothing's really been the same since."

She furrowed her brows. "Then, why don't they get a divorce?"

Doug sighed. "Because they don't want me to grow up in a broken family. They say they're doing it for me but even I think it would be better if he just left us alone. Butâ 'mum's having none of it."

Sam fell silent as guilt ate away at her. She had bored Doug with all her problems she's had about never knowing her dad and he was always there to listen, how was this the first time she was hearing about his dad?

"So, sin, cos and tan?" Doug shifted back into the position he was in and peered into Sam's lap.

She shook her head and blinked hard, pulling herself out of a reverie and nodded. "Yeahâ 'yeah."

Chapter 3: 3

Sam relaxed back against the headboard of her bed and pressed her phone to her ear.

The receiver picked up and her heart pounded. "Hello?"

"Hey," she chirped. "It's Sam, is Doug there?"

"Samâ!" The male voice echoed thoughtfully. "Sam, the girl that was here yesterday?"

"Yeah."

"Oh, well, Doug's not in right now, he's at lacrosse practice."

"Oh, really?"

"Yeah. Surely you know that? He been going every Thursday at six for the past four years."

Sam chewed her lip with a smile. "Okay, you caught me. I didn't call to speak to Doug."

"Oh?" the male voice sounded intrigued.

"I wanted to talk to you. You're his dad, right?"

"Yeah, I'm Steven." He nodded.

"Steven," Sam echoed airily. The way his name rolled off her tongue made her thighs clench. Steven gulped in response, feeling rather strange himself.

"W-what did you want to talk to me about?" asked Steven, surprised at his own stutter. He leaned back against the kitchen counter when his heart started to beat a little faster.

"I wanted to let you know that I saw you staring at my tits yesterday."

Her frank approach made him splutter a gasp. Sam smiled down the phone and played with the string of her joggers.

Steven tried to collect himself. "Youâlyou did?"

"Oh yes. Did you like what you saw?"

Steven couldn't help but smile, knowing where this conversation was leading. "Yes. Yes I did."

Sam's heart fluttered. "I thought you did." After a short silence, she cocked her head. "Is this conversation making you uncomfortable, Steven?"

Steven gulped and pulled at the crotch of his pants as they start to feel tight. *God, she sounded so sexy when she said his name.* "No, no. Not at all."

She laughed. "Are you enjoying this conversation, Steven?"

"Yes. Very much."

"Good. So am I." She brushed her hand down her chest, feeling her hard nipples through her bra. "You're making me very wet, Steven."

Steven panted. *How he gotten himself in this situation?*

Sam smiled. "Am I making you hard, Steven?"

He looked down and saw the noticeable bulge in his pants. "Yes."

She grinned and flipped over onto her front. "Tell me what you'd like to do to me, Steven."

His heart thudded and he looked to the open kitchen door. "IâI can't."

Sam frowned. "You can't? Are you not alone?"

"No."

Sam sighed. "Myrna's there? I thought she goes swimming on Thursdays?"

"She usually does," he replied, his heart sinking a little.

Sam inspected her nails. "Well, I'm bored of you now anyway. Cya."

"Wait!"

Her heart pounded and she grinned. "Yes?"

"Call again?"

She laughed, her heart fluttering at the desperation in his tone. "I'll be helping Doug with his Maths next week. You'll see me then," she said before hanging up.

Steven had opened his mouth to speak then flinched at the click of the receiver cutting off. He laughed to himself and placed the phone back on the stand.

Wow, she wasâsomething else.

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Sam made her own tea and ate it in front of the telly. Her mum wasn't home when she had come back from college which was normal so she didn't fret. After cleaning the plates, she stayed on her computer in her room until 10.00pm then went to bed.

Her eyes rolled open when she heard the thud of the front door opening and someone stumbling inside. She heard her mum's voice and a man's voice. Sam sighed and grabbed her iPod. She searched for the loudest heavy metal song she had and shoved her earphones in, knowing what was coming next. She squeezed her eyes shut and wished she was somewhere else, *anywhere* else.

She woke up again at 4.00am to silence, her iPod had died. She desperately needed the loo so she hopped out of bed and crossed the landing. While doing her business, she heard footsteps outside so she hurried herself and quickly pulled up her pyjama bottoms because she hadn't locked the door. Just as she was washing her hands, the door knob turned and the door opened.

A man stood in the doorway with nothing on but a tight pair of very revealing underpants. He looked in his early forties, with a grey stubble and dark, short hair. He blinked hard in the harsh light and kept blinking until the black spots disappeared from his vision. Then he paused, sizing Sam up stood there in a vest and checked pyjama pants.

"Mmmmâ" he grumbled with a satisfied smile and leaned against the door frame, crossing his arms across his chest.

Sam's lip curled with a sneer of disgust.

"Abby never told me she had a daughter," he said. Sam's skin crawled at the hungry look in his eyes.

"That's a surprise, seeing as though you must have had a very deep chat for all of thirty seconds before she dragged you back here," replied Sam, stepping closer.

The man laughed. "It's not my fault I have that effect on women. They just can't keep their hands off me."

Sam huffed and passed him. She paused for a moment, by his side. "And her name is Amy, by the way," she said before continuing.

He shrugged and shut the bathroom door behind him.

As Sam crossed the landing, she spotted the trail of clothes that led up to her mum's room. She smiled to herself and bent down by the man's pants on the top step. She sieved through the pockets and found his wallet and his mobile.

The landing was dark but the little plug-in nightlight that Sam used when she felt alone in the dark, empty house, was switched on, so she bent down in front of it and opened the wallet. There were a few credit cards, forty quid in notes and exactly what Sam was looking for. She grinned to herself, and took what she needed, before replacing the mobile and wallet and closing her bedroom door behind her.

Chapter 4: 4

The man who stayed the night stayed for breakfast too. While Sam's mum was getting ready for work, he helped himself to some toast. He sat down opposite Sam in the dining room and met a death stare.

"You need to leave," said Sam sharply.

He relaxed back into the chair, now fully dressed in a blue shirt and pants. The hangover had left deep creases under his eyes. "After I've eaten," he said and picked up his first piece of buttered toast.

"No. Now. You've got what you wanted. Now leave."

He smiled. "Not until I've eaten."

Sam arched an eyebrow. "Well then, maybe I'll make a phone call."

He laughed. "To who? The police?"

"No." She looked up at him over her bowl of cereal. "Your wife."

He paled. His dark eyes widened and he seemed to shrink a little. This made Sam smile. "Oh yeah, I'm sure she'd love to hear about what happened last night."

"H-how-"

"Do I know about her?" Sam cut in and swirled her spoon around her cereal leisurely. "I found your family photo in your wallet. Cute kids. I took her number from your phone so I'm not bluffing. You need to leave. Now."

He hurried to his feet and darted for the door. He paused in the hallway.

"Don't bother saying bye, she won't even remember you once you're gone," said Sam when she saw him hesitating. He gave her one last guilty look before leaving.

Sam stayed in on the weekend, catching up with her revision. From the look of Sam, you wouldn't take her for the type that cared about grades and getting a good job, she seemed more like the type of person you'd see in a mosh pit smoking weed. But Sam did care about her education, she felt that it was the only thing she was good at. And if she got good grades, she'd be able to go to a good university and leave this place behind her. Soon, she was back at college, meeting up with Doug whenever she could because he was the only person in her life that really cared about her. She enjoyed seeing the little twinkle in his eyes that he got whenever he looked at her. It was the only time she ever felt like a real person, and not a lost cause.

It was Wednesday again and Sam was right on time. Doug led her into his dining room where everything was already set out for them. Today, she wore a Guns N' Roses T-shirt, skinny grey jeans and military boots that were past the point of being 'worn out'. Doug was wearing an old man cardigan that Sam always loved to see him in because she knew he didn't even wear it ironically. He actually thought it looked good. It always made her smile.

He sniffed and pushed his glasses further up his nose and watched as Sam pulled out the sheets from her folder.

"Okay, we've still got some more of the Logarithm stuff to do," she said.

Doug sighed and slumped into his seat dramatically. "But they're so annoying."

Sam laughed. "I know, I hate them too but you have to learn them. Now, come on." She prodded him in the side with her elbow, making him squeal and curl in on himself. He then laughed and sat back up straight and attempted to tuck his messy curls behind his ears, which just immediately sprung back out.

Sam's heart skipped a beat when the door opened and Steven came into the room. Doug turned to see their company and mumbled something under his breath.

"Hey, you two," said Steven with his dazzling blue eyes stuck on Sam's.

"Hey, Mr. Gold," replied Sam and then suddenly felt awkward when Doug didn't respond.

Steven flashed her a knowing smile. "Please, call me Steven."

Sam chewed her bottom lip to hide her grin. "Okay I'll call Steven."

As she started tutoring Doug, Steven stayed in the kitchen. Sam could feel his eyes on her and her skin was prickling by the attention. But she was a little confused. Why was he hanging around? Did he actually expect her to carry on the flirting while Doug was sat right beside her? Doug was her best friend, and it was bad

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enough that she was actually thinking about doing something with his dad, but to actually showcase her desire in front of him? That was a step too far.

Luckily, after about ten minutes, Steven seemed to get the idea and left them to it.

"Hasn't seen me for years and now he's just hanging around like a hungry vulture," Doug murmured into his sleeve while he had his head on his folded arms, listening to Sam attempting to make Logarithms sound interesting.

Sam could feel herself blushing and gulped. "I'm sure he means well."

Doug laughed bitterly but said nothing else.

As Sam made her way to the front door, she passed Doug's mum in the hallway.

"Oh, lovely to see you again, Sam. And I can't tell you how grateful we are that you're helping Doug with his college work," she said with a cheerful grin. Doug cringed in the dining room doorway. "Are you sure you don't want paying?"

Sam shook her head. "Honestly it's fine." She turned to Doug and smiled. "It's not trouble at all. I actually look forward to it." Doug smiled to himself and felt his cheeks going red. Quickly, he turned so his bouncy curls hid his face.

"Awh." Myrna pressed her hand to her heart. "Isn't that sweet."

"Myrna!"

Myrna and Sam both looked up to see Steven hanging over the banister. "Are you going swimming tomorrow?"

Myrna furrowed her brows. "Yeah, why?"

"Oh, nothing," said Steven, glancing at Sam.

Sam gulped and squeezed her folder to her chest as he sent her a little smile and disappeared upstairs. *That was meant for me*, she thought. That was an invitation.

She blinked hard and looked back at Myrna. "Well, better be off."

"Alright." She nodded. "Bye."

"Bye," said Sam and looked to Doug. "Cya tomorrow, Doug."

"Yeah." Doug cleared his throat awkwardly and ran his hand through his hair. "Cya tomorrow."

Chapter 5: 5

Sam stood at Doug's door for a moment, suddenly feeling very apprehensive. Not about her skills at seduction, no, she was a very confident girl even though she wasn't really sure why, given her background. But she was apprehensive about doing all the things she was thinking about on the walk over with Doug's dad. Doug's friendship was all she cared about and yet here she was, stood, ready to quite possible damage it beyond repair.

As she stood, mulling over her options, the image of Steven's crystallising blue eyes seemed to flash in her mind and she quickly knocked on the door.

Seconds later, it opened and Steven was stood before her in a white shirt and charcoal pants. Sam had her locks tied up in a messy bun and was wearing a black vest, grey joggers and her black Nike trainers. She knew she didn't have to dress up for men to find her attractive, she had one of those bodies that looked good in anything.

Steven smiled and gestured for her to come in. "So, you got my not-so-subtle invite?"

She stepped in. "It was hard to miss."

Even though she had been in this house countless times before, it suddenly felt very different, probably because what her and Steven were about to do was running in the back of her mind.

"Can I ask you a question?" said Steven as he wandered into the dining room.

"Sure," said Sam, following him into the kitchen.

"How old are you?" He glanced back at her, almost fearfully.

She laughed. "Nineteen."

He nodded. "I thought so."

"Is that a problem?"

His blue eyes widened at her. "A *problem*? No, no it's not a problem at all."

"Good." Suddenly, she grabbed Steven by the shoulders, spun him around and pinned him against the fridge. He gasped and stared at her wide-eyed. "Let's get to it then." When she reached down and stroked his crotch, he gasped again and started to stutter.

"M-mine and Myrna's relationship, it's not working out. Something happened it's not been the same since. And I know you're my son's friend but, I mean look at you."

Sam studied him. And in that silence, he was able to study her. This was the closest they had ever been to one another.

Sam was sensational. Not your typical beauty queen but she just oozed sexiness. A dusting of freckles covered the tops of her cheek, and her thin, lupine nose went so perfectly with her chocolate eyes. The smudged, grey eye make-up gave her the rough, I-don't-give-a-fuck look which made Steven's throat go dry.

She squinted up at him. "Are you honestly trying to justify what we're about to do?"

He gulped and shrugged.

She laughed. "Well, if you're worried you're going to get the world's worst dad title, don't worry, it's already been taken by mine." The backs of her eyes burned and the ache that never quiet went away pulsed rapidly in her chest. "My dad left my mum when she found out she was pregnant. I never even knew him. And now my mum hates me because she blames me for being alone." Steven gulped and suddenly felt very awkward. But then Sam laughed and the intensity of the moment wore off. "So, now that we're done sharing sob stories, how about you let me carry on doing my thing?"

"O-okay." Steven nodded.

Sam smiled back and unzipped his pants. Before Steven knew it, she was on her knees before him, yanking his boxers down. He let out a shaky gasp when Sam's warm hand wrapped around his hard shaft. *This girl really was something else.*

She smiled up at him with a twinkle in her eyes and kissed the head of his cock before taking it in her mouth. His hips bucked and he tangled his fingers into her hair. The way he tugged at her hair made the familiar fluttering start in Sam's stomach and she started sucking him with more vigour. She started to moan deep in the back of her throat, making the vibrations shoot right through Steven. He stiffened against the fridge and

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held onto her hair tighter as the ball of her tongue piercing rubbed against him. *Is this why she had that done?* he thought.

She stroked his thighs and squeezed his ass as she licked and sucked. He started to make hollow groans in the back of his throat which was making Sam wet so she worked on him faster and cupped his balls to make his cum quicker. She smiled around him as she felt his grow harder before his cum shot to the back of her throat. She continued to suck and squeeze his balls until he turned limp and dropped out of her mouth.

She wiped her lips and stood up with a self-satisfied smile on her face.

Steven just blinked at her, caught between shocked and amazed.

She grabbed him by his collar and pushed herself up onto her tiptoes. Steven puckered his lips, expecting a kiss, but instead, she laughed lightly and whispered against his lips, "Now it's your turn."

Before Steven had time to react she let go of him and was crossing the room. She spun and rested against the counter, facing him. She kicked off her trainers and pulled down her joggers.

Steven gulped hard, his eyes widening as he took in her simple black girl boxers and her pale, toned legs.

She stepped out of her joggers and kicked them aside with her trainers then crooked her finger to him, signalling for him to come closer. He did, as if caught under a spell.

He stood before her, awaiting instructions. *Seriously, how did he get into the situation? He was being dominated by a nineteen year old!*

Next, she pulled off her top and threw it aside.

Steven's heart sped up as his eyes licked up every inch of the girl stood in her underwear in the middle of his kitchen.

Sam smiled when his blue orbs stuck to her cleavage. *He's definitely a boob man*, she thought. "If my bra is restricting your view, feel free to remove it."

And, with his slightly sweating palms, he did just that, popping open her bra clasp from behind. She helped him with the straps and he threw it to the floor with the rest of her clothes.

Sam's breasts weren't large, a steady 34B and seemed in proportion to his slim yet toned physique. But what Steven liked the most about them was there pertness and the little pink -hard- nipples that topped them like cherry drops.

She flattened down his collar with a soft smile, making his wide eyes shoot back to hers.

"Take my panties off," she stated and Steven instantly felt himself growing hard again.

He hooked his thumbs over the waistband of her boxers and started to tug them down, keeping his eyes trained on hers as if fearful to accidentally do something wrong. When he pushed them as far down as he could without bending, he started to panic a little. Sam smiled and he relaxed, bending down to continue. As he lowered himself past Sam's chest, he paused briefly when his nose brushed against her breast and she sucked in a gasp. But still fearing to somehow anger her and draw this to a sudden, disappointing close, he bent down lower, pushing her panties past her knees and smiled to himself when he looked down. The small strip of dark hair was evidence that his initial thought was right, she wasn't a natural blonde. Just as he was standing up, Sam grabbed his curls and forced him to stay put. "Stay down there."

Steven sucked in a breath, hard already. He didn't need any more verbal instructions and got right to work. He parted her lower lips with his fingers and licked up her wet slit, which rewarded him with a sexy, shaky moan from Sam. She loosened her grip on his hair and started running her fingers through his curls, pressing him closer and then letting go when the pressure got too much and her body shook with pleasure. The sounds Sam was making made Steven smile. He was always proud of what he could do to women. Myrna was like this at the startâ before she got boring. Steven found that it was only logical to seek women who actually wanted to sleep with him, rather than almost begging Myrna for at least a quickie while Doug was out. But even their quickies weren't much. Always military and Myrna never got off on them. She just lay there until it was over. Steven even had to think of other women to get himself up. And after she found out about his affair, even the disappointing quickies ceased to exist.

But Sam was different. Sam loved the attention he was giving her juicy, wet pussy. He pushed two fingers inside her and she almost crumbled. Her knees gave out and she sank down onto his hand before gripping the edge of the counter and stabilizing herself. Steven watched, his eyes shifted from his disappearing fingers to her flushed face. Sam chewed her lips with a sultry smile whenever those gorgeous blues were sent her way. He

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started to suck her clit while still pumping his fingers. Sam's moans hitched and she started to grind against him. She grabbed his hair again and forced him closer to her.

Sam sensed she was teetering on the edge. The contortions in her stomach grew and her legs started to spasm. She forced herself to let go of his hair but he was still sucking and licking. He pulled his fingers out and used them to part her lips as he closed his eyes and started eating her out with even more vigour.

Myrna wasn't into foreplay. This was the first time Steven had gone down on a woman since the fling in Germany. And he was loving it just as much as Sam was.

"Steven. Stop. I'm close. Fuck me," Sam panted but the pleasure was too much. Her hands went back to the counter. She dug the heels of her palms into the granite and closed her eyes to the ceiling, still rocking against his face. "Stevenâ stopâ !"

He moved his mouth away just long enough to say, "not until I've tasted you," before claiming her pussy with his tongue once more.

Sam gave in. She draped her leg over his shoulder and pinned him to her. Her shaking fingers returned to his hair as she circled her hips against his tongue.

"Yesâ yesâ yesâ !" she panted with her head tipped back.

Her orgasm hit her. Hard. She curled into him as it wracked through her body. She gripped his curls so tight it made Steven wince. Her heel dug into the centre of his back and her body curled forwards, over him. Steven stayed there, slowing his tongue as her flavour of her arousal painted it.

When her pleasure began to ebb away, Sam's grip on Steven loosened. She unfurled herself and dropped her leg, replacing her foot on the floor. She tried to stand but her body wasn't ready let so instead, she leaned against the counter. Steven knelt in front of her, sucking his fingers and licking his lips. He smiled when he caught her eyes, watching him.

She grabbed his collar and pulled him to his feet. He wobbled towards her with a laugh. She stared into his eyes, stroking the soft skin behind his ears with her thumbs. Steven stayed silent but not even her unreadable expression could wipe the smile off his face.

If this was it. If this was over. He'd be happy.

Suddenly, she gasped as if finding her breath again. "Steven."

His cock twitched in his pants at her cool yet domineering tone. "Yes?" he asked after clearing his throat.

"I told you to fuck me."

Chapter 6: 6

Steven's gasp of surprise was muffled by Sam's tongue. He gripped her hips as she clutched onto his back and deepened the kiss. Steven's hands smoothed over her slender body as Sam's nails clawed at his back as if trying to shred his shirt off him. The kiss was hungry and primal, their bodies writhing together as they collected their breath in panting gasps.

Her hands then slipped down his front to his crotch. Expertly, she pushed his pants and boxers to his knees. She broke the kiss and flicked his nose with hers with a smile. "I want you to fuck me in my ass, okay?" Steven's eyes bugged. "O-okay."

She grinned and spun round.

Steven swallowed a gasp. It was the first time he'd seen the tattoo that covered her entire back. He wasn't a fan of tattoos, like his son, and part of him thought that it ruined her otherwise perfect body. But there was something unusually hot about the way the roots of the roses ebbed away over the curve of her ass. She bucked against him and he smoothed his hands over the feline curve of her back, to which she moaned contently.

It was a little daunting to him that she wanted anal. He had only done it once before with Myrna back when they were in their honeymoon period and they were both eager to explore each other's bodies. Steven had suggested it to her and she pulled a face but gave it a go anyway. Bad idea. Myrna said it hurt too much and when Steven told her it was because she wasn't relaxed, he accidentally started an argument that lasted the rest of the night. He knew he was right, of course. Because that was Myrna. Frigid.

That's why he never tried anal when he had that little fling in Germany, the thought stirred up too many bad memories. He remembered the tears streaming down Myrna's face and the ugly argument that came after them.

But now Sam was asking for it. Meaning she enjoyed it. There was no room for bad memories now.

Sam wiggled her ass against Steven's upright cock which made his body jerk and his mind snap back to the present.

Steven tentatively slipped a finger into her ass and smiled at how easily it went in. He had gotten her so wet that her juices had ran down the crack of her ass. But just to be safe, he sank balls deep into her pussy first to lube himself before stretching her back entrance.

He did this with a slight wince, expecting her to cry and make the horrible sounds Myrna did that night. But she didn't. Instead, her head lolled back and she pushed herself back against him so he'd fill her faster.

Steven's face was lit with a smile of relief as he gripped her hips and started to thrust into her. Moan after moan spilled out of Sam's mouth as he rocked against him.

"Yes. Steven."

He circled his hand around her neck and pulled her back so her back smack against his chest. He put his lips to her ear as he continued to pound into her tight little ass.

"Say my name again," he whisper in a husky tone that made Sam's knees go weak.

"Stevenâ!" she moaned back and then continued to moan every time he hit her in just the right spot.

She gripped the back of his head and angled her face so her forehead rested against his jaw. The hand on her neck slid to her breast and he cupped it tightly to support himself as he quickened his pace and drilled into her deeper.

While all this was happening, there was a glorious fog inside Steven's head. *Was this some sort of intense dream? How could this actually be happening? Is he actually pounding a naked, nineteen year old in the ass in his kitchen? Not possible. Seriouslyâ this can't be possible. Surely he's going to wake up at any moment with sticky sheets?*

The thoughts suddenly dispersed as the pleasure took over and he could feel his balls tightening, ready to burst.

Sam's hand clamped over his on her breast and hip and clutched them as she came, squeezing his fingers together almost painfully as she moaned with pleasure down his ear. Then Steven's body jerked and his orgasm took over him, shooting his seed inside her. He expelled a final, panting breath and they both stayed

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still, clinging onto one another as their orgasms subsided.

Sam's legs were trembling as she tried to catch her breath. Steven rested his forehead on her shoulder and closed his eyes as he felt himself shrinking. He pulled back a little and let himself slip out of her.

Sam let go of his hands and grabbed the counter top as he leaned away from her and parted her ass cheeks. He pressed his finger tip into the glob of cum that had forced its way out of her crinkled hole. When he lifted his hand, she turned to face him with her mouth already open and a sultry look in her deep brown eyes. He smiled and placed his finger on her tongue. She clamped her lips down on his finger and swirled her tongue around it. His mouth gaped and a shallow breath left him as the sensations of her tongue made him tingle all over. She opened her mouth and he retracted his finger.

Steven zipped himself back up and inspected his creased up shirt with a frown as Sam studied her own naked body. Her clothes were scattered all over the tiled floor but before she could redress, she needed to do something about her thighs that were covered in her juice.

"You got a towel?" she asked, looking back up at Steven.

He nodded and grabbed one from under the sink. He tossed it to her and watched as she cleaned herself off with the towel they use to dry the dishes.

"You might wanna wash that," she said, handing it back to him. She bent down to collect her underwear then turned back to him. "Or not, your choice." She winked.

Steven's fingers curled up in the towel and he held it to his chest. He could smell her arousal on it. Maybe he might not wash it.

After Sam was fully dressed again, she passed Steven and began heading for the door.

"Hey, wait!" Steven called after her.

She spun on her heel with a smile. "Yes?"

His words caught in his mouth. "Erhh..errâ when will I see you again?"

"I tutor Doug every Wednesday, remember?" She smiled and continued on her way.

"Yes, I know. But I meanâ like this," he said, tailing her.

Sam sighed. "I don't know. I'll keep you posted. Okay?"

Steven's heart sank but he nodded anyway.

"Okay." She smiled and opened the front door. "Look, this was fun. You did good." She patted him on the shoulder with a smile as if he was a kid that just ate all his greens.

And then she was gone.

Steven shut the door behind him and leaned against it with a frown, the feeling that he had been completely used eating away at him.

Chapter 7: 7

"Are you doing anything this weekend?" asked Sam's mum over the Chinese take-out food. It was her day to cook.

Sam sighed, keeping her eyes on the telly. "I'll probably try to finish my painting."

Her mum shook her head pitifully. "You should go out. Meet people."

"I don't feel like it."

"You need some more friends, Sam."

"No I don't. I have a friend."

Her mum's jaw clenched at her daughter's refusal to cooperate. "You need more than one friend."

Sam scowled at her. "Who are you to dictate how many friends I need?" Her heart pounded and her palms went clammy at the thought of attempting to make new friends. More people to ruin and disappoint. But after what had happened yesterday, maybe she did need to start looking. It was only a matter of time before Doug left her too.

"I'm your mother, I worry."

Sam scoffed and mumbled, "You've got a funny way of showing it." Just as her mum opened her mouth to retort, Sam raised her voice. "And anyway, *you* don't have any friends."

"I don't have time for friends," her mum replied in that accusing tone of hers. "I have to look after you."

Sam rolled her eyes and looked back at the telly. "You always make time for one night stands though, don't you?"

Sam couldn't see the anger blazing in her mother's eyes but she could sense it, hot against her cheek. "How dare you!"

Sam sneered and continued eating.

"I do everything I can for you and this is how you talk to me?! How dare you judge me when you do exactly the same."

To this, Sam looked back to her mum. Her mum laughed evilly. "Yeah, you think I haven't noticed you coming back in the dead of night? I know the walk of shame when I see it."

Sam arched an eyebrow. "I wonder why."

Her mum gasped. "You can't talk to me like that, Sam. I am your mother!"

"Then start acting like one instead of a cheap whore!"

Sam could see in her mum's eyes that she wanted to slap her. Her nostrils flared and her muscles tightened. Sam stiffened against the sofa, ready for the impact. But instead, her plate went flying across the room, spilling Chinese food along the floor in a wave like a blood splatter.

They both sat frozen on the sofa, staring into each other's eyes. Her mum brought her shaking hand back to her side and let out a steadying breath.

"You remember why I am like this before you judge me. I am like this because of *you*, Sam. Your dad left me because of *you*. I am alone because of *you*."

Sam could feel tears burning in the backs of her eyes. She didn't know why she wanted to cry and she hated herself for the feeling. It wasn't something she hadn't heard before but the words still hit her like a punch in the heart.

Slowly and carefully, Sam got to her feet and weaved around the fold out table in front of her. Her mum's eyes stayed stuck to hers as she rounded the sofa. Finally, Sam sneered and said, "sorry for existing," before leaving her mum alone in the living room.

Her mum went out Saturday and Sunday night, Sam didn't ask where but charged her iPod to block out the inevitable moaning and banging coming from the room next door.

But she came back alone both nights, drunk out of her wits. On Sunday, she didn't even make it to her bedroom and passed out in the hallway.

As she had planned, Sam stayed in her room in her paint-spattered clothes, adding the finishing touches to the painting for her art project. Sam loved art, creating things out of nothing. She could turn ugly things into

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something beautiful. Many of her works were dark and ominous. A street at night, a looming presence in an empty room. But no matter how eerie and unnerving her work was, no one could say that they weren't magnificent.

Sam thought her work represented her. Or maybe she hoped it did. She had a void inside her. A dark, empty space that made her feel as if she weren't quite real, as if she were a shadow in the distance of one of her paintings. But maybe there was someone out there who still found her beautiful.

Like every morning at 8.00am, Doug was waiting by his window for Sam to jog by. It was a tradition, he couldn't stop now.

Again, he pretended to busy himself in his room when he spotted her rounding the corner of his street and then looked up, as if surprised to see her. Sam smiled and waved and caught his wave before looking back ahead. They never talked about this morning ritual but Doug thought with slight embarrassment that she must know that he did it on purpose, that he made sure he was by his window just in time to spot her. His heart fluttered at the thought that maybe Sam timed things so that she'd be under his window at exactly that time too, to see him. He shook off the idea with a goofy smile and continued to get ready for college.

"Right, I'm going!" Doug called up the stairs as he shrugged his rucksack on his back.

"Okay, sweetie, have a good day!" his mum replied.

"Hey!" his dad leaned over the banister.

Doug's lip curled with contempt at his voice but looked up. "What?"

"You should ask your friend, the girl that helps you with your Maths, to dinner sometime."

Doug gave him a funny look. "Erhhâ 'why?"

His dad shrugged with a smile that didn't look right on his face. "You don't have many friends, right? It'd be good for you to spend a little more time with her."

Doug rolled his eyes and headed for the door, mumbling, "I love how you sugar coat things, dad. I've done pretty well without you for the last few years but *thanks for the advice.*"

Chapter 8: 8

It was Wednesday again and Sam knocked on Doug's door, feeling a little uneasy when the memory of the last time she was there washed over her.

The door swung open, startling her out of her reverie.

"Hey." Doug gleamed and gestured her inside.

"Hey." She smiled and stepped inside, her heavy boots clunking against the laminate floor. She was wearing the same clothes she had had on in college. Her hair was tied up in a messy bun and a red bandana was wrapped around her head like a headband. An oversized man's black and grey check shirt hung, miss-buttoned, down over her knees and was splattered with paint and black leggings covered her legs. Doug was wearing a black Marvel Avengers t-shirt, a grey jacket and baggy jeans.

She sat down at the table and searched her file for the right worksheets as Doug got himself comfortable beside her.

About ten minutes after they started, Steven strolled into the room, making Doug roll his eyes and groan. Steven acted like he hadn't noticed and smiled at Sam.

"Oh, hello again," he said cheerily.

"Hi, Mr Gold," Sam replied simply before continuing with Doug's work.

This took Steven by surprise. He stood by the door, unsure of what to do. He knew she wasn't going to be obviously flirty with him but he at least thought she'd throw him a cheeky wink. But all she was giving him was the cold shoulder.

Had he done something wrong?

Was he supposed to call her?

He cleared his throat and said, "You two have fun," before going the way he came.

Doug placed his chin on his folded arms on the table and watched as Sam continued with their work on Logarithms. His eyes soon started to wander up Sam's arm and to her face. She grinned down at the page, feeling his magnified, brilliant blue eyes on her but continued working.

His eyebrows furrowed and he straightened. "What's that?" He touched the grey stick that was tucked behind her ear. She looked at him curiously and pulled it out. She laughed when she realised what he was referring to.

"Oh, it's my graphite stick. I had Art last. Must have forgotten it was there."

"Oh," said Doug then noticed the mischievous look dancing in her dark eyes. "What?"

"Come here." He swallowed a gasp when he grabbed his chin and pulled her towards him. She ran the graphite stick above his top lip to create a grey moustache. She smiled at her work. "Congratulations!"

Doug's eyebrows furrowed. "What?" he asked in a strained voice through his squished lips.

Sam grinned. "You've finally hit puberty!"

She laughed, making Doug smile. In the heat of the moment, she kissed him hard on the lips. Doug froze in surprise. He expected her to break away from him quickly but she didn't. She stayed there, their lips pressed against each other's.

Sam had meant for it only to be a quick peck, it was supposed to be like when an artist kisses a painting that they are particularly fond of. A way of making it their own. But the rush that ran through her body, setting every cell inside her alight the moment their lips touched, made her never want to pull away. She hadn't expected herself to react like that. This was Doug, her best friend for five years. She had never had a sexual thought about him in her life and now she was doing all she could to refrain from prising his lips apart and deepening the kiss with her tongue.

But this was wrong.

What was happening?

Doug was her only friend, she couldn't risk scaring him away. So, against her will, she finally broke from him. Doug looked star-struck, staring into her eyes with wide, unblinking eyes through his round glasses that were now slightly askew.

She let go of his chin and laughed awkwardly as she tried to wipe away the graphite moustache off the top of his lips. Some of the graphite had smudged onto the top of her lip. It was evidence for Doug that that kiss did

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actually happen.

Sam had kissed him.

She cleared her throat and looked back down at the work. "Anyway, back to work," she said.

Doug blinked for the first time and looked down at the sums, still too shocked to speak.

If he thought he obsessed about Sam too much already, he was in trouble now.

Sam kept her eyes on the notebook in front of her for the rest of the hour, unable to look at Doug. But she could feel his eyes on her all the time, and it was unnerving. What was he thinking? Had she actually ruined everything like she knew she would? She'd stepped over the boundaries of friendship and there was no going back.

Sam had only ever kissed Doug on the cheek once and that was on her last day of highschool when she was leaving him to go to college. But that was just a farewell kiss. And it wasn't on the lips.

She had just made things very awkward with the only person she felt comfortable around. She guessed that it was only a matter of time until she did something wrong. Why did she have to start having feelings for him after what she had done with his dad?

Sam had just ruined something before it even began, even for her that was an achievement.

"Right, that's it for today," she said, slamming the notebook closed. She found a sheet of questions similar to the ones she had gone through and passed it to Doug, avoiding his eyes. "Do these for next week and I'll mark them."

"Okay," he replied and took it.

A silence fell over the room as she packed all her stuff away. He followed her out into the hallway and opened the front door for her. She smiled her thanks but still didn't look at his face in fear that she'd blush.

"I'll see you tomorrow at college?" Doug asked almost hopefully.

She nodded. "Sure, cya."

"Bye."

He closed the door behind her and she let out a heavy breath of relief, thankful to be out of his company for the first time ever.

Was this what it was going to be like from now on? Avoiding eye contact and counting down the minutes until she could get away from him? Because if it was, she wouldn't be able to handle it.

Maybe it was time for her to book another appointment at the tattoo studio.

Chapter 9: 9

~~ Doug was a small kid, he didn't have his growth spurt until he was fifteen which made his high school years very difficult indeed. His Harry Potter glasses and wild mop of curls didn't help matters either. One day, in year 9, Doug was waiting in line for the canteen minding his own business, when two year 11 boys sneaked into the queue in front of him. Doug tried to swallow his anger and stay calm but on some days, he was really sick and tired of being ignored, and so he shoved into them.

Bad move.

The two year 11's turned around to face him. Doug gulped and looked behind him, hoping someone else would look guilty. But a group of girls stood behind him, too caught up in a conversation to notice his pleading eyes.

One of the guys was Danny Ryan. Doug always seemed to get in his way through no fault of his own. He guessed today it was his fault. Danny grabbed him by his coat while his mate, Aaron Meade, ripped his rucksack off his back.

Doug trembled, too afraid to ask for his rucksack back as they threw it between each other. Doug ran back and forth between them, jumping as high as he could to retrieve his bag but he was too small to reach.

Danny and Aaron were laughing at him. The line of students behind them were laughing at him. Doug felt like whatever he did in life, wherever he went, someone was always laughing at him.

"Hey!"

A shout made everyone shut up. Danny clutched onto the rucksack in his hands and turned to where it had come from.

Doug blinked up at the girl at the doors of the canteen and his heart pounded. He had seen her before walking around school, always on her own but she never seemed to care. She was a year older than him and always found herself in trouble. That was all he knew.

Her hair was bleached almost white and she had diamond studs running down the curve of her right ear. Her eyes were heavily made up with black make-up and her lips were blood red. She often got warned for extravagant make-up and was always forced to remove it. Doug guessed that the teachers hadn't caught her today or had just given up telling her to take it off.

"What?" called Danny.

Her pale face cracked into a grin and she jumped down the stairs. "Gimme the bag." Danny looked at Aaron. The girl laughed and stuck out her hand. "Give me the bag."

Aaron shrugged and Danny passed it to her. She took it with a smile. Doug gulped with wide-eyes, readying himself for another round of piggy in the middle.

But that didn't happen.

Instead, the girl grabbed the rucksack by the strap and swung it round in a circle, smacking both Danny and Aaron right in their jaws.

Everyone cringed back, even Doug, knowing what was in the bag. His woodwork.

Danny and Aaron stumbled back, clutching their faces.

"Hey!" A teacher came running out of the canteen. The girl quickly handed the rucksack back to Doug with a wink before the teacher grabbed hold of her blazer. "You okay, squirt?" she asked. He just nodded, unable to speak.

"Next time, pick on someone your own size, nobheads!" she called to Danny and Aaron who now had tears streaming down their faces from the pain.

"Enough!" shouted the teacher as he pulled her away from the scene.

Doug kept seeing the girl around school and he really wanted to thank her for what she did, but he was too afraid. Being as shy as he was, speaking to anyone he didn't know was daunting. But there was something about this girl that made it even more terrifying. She was incredibly intimidating.

The days dragged into weeks and he still hadn't plucked up the courage to talk to her and so he decided to give up completely.

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She had another idea.

One day, when Doug was sat alone on a wall at break time, he felt a shadow loom over him and someone sat beside him. He turned and his stomach flipped. It was her.

She gazed ahead, biting into an apple, before looking to him. She stretched out her hand to him. "I'm Sam."
"Erhhâ !" He took her hand. "H-hi, I'm Doug."

She smiled. "Nice to meet you, Doug. Sorry for calling you squirt."

He laughed. "No problem. Th-thank you, for what you did that day."

She squinted into the sun and bit her apple. "It was nothing." She looked back to him. Her deep brown eyes reminded him of chocolate. "Wanna be friends?"

Doug almost choked on air. "Errhâ !yeahâ !sure."

She grinned and swung her legs. "Great."

And that was it. From then on, they were inseparable.

Doug had no idea why she had chosen him to be friends with. She was soâ !cool and he wasâ !well, a bit of a nerd. With his Harry Potter glasses, afro-like hair and raincoat that his mum had promised he'd grow into.

Sam could have chosen anyone and she had settled for him.

Little did Doug know that she hadn't settled for him at all. And the reason she wanted to be his friend was because he looked as vulnerable and frightened of the world on the outside as she did on the inside. They were like two wounded birds. They needed each other to survive.

The time-bomb had started ticking the moment she introduced herself to Doug. Sam was a self-saboteur.

Always had been and always will be. Whatever chance at happiness she had, she always found a way to crush it. And, unfortunately for Doug, her relationship with him was going to get too good for her to handle and one day, they'll be a trigger and it would all be over. She'd press that big red self-destruct button.

Chapter 10: 10

Sam's mobile rang by her side. She didn't recognise the number but answered it anyway.

"Hello?" she said, dropping her magazine on her bed.

"Hi, Sam?"

"Who's this?"

"Steven," the voice replied and after a moment of silence, added, "Doug's dad."

"I know who you are, what do you want?"

Steven was clearly surprised by her sharp tone, he laughed awkwardly down the phone. "I was just wondering ifâ maybe you'd like to come round again sometime. Y'know, just you and me?"

"How did you get this number?" she asked as if he hadn't spoken.

"I found it on Doug's phone."

Sam sighed. "Goodbye, Steven."

"Wait!"

She sighed again and started flicking through her magazine. "What?"

"You didn't answer me. Do you want to come round again?"

"No," she replied, her mind more focused on the style section.

"Why not?"

"Because we both got what we wanted, now it's time to move on. You're my best friend's dad, it was a mistake."

"Butâ it was good, right?" he asked hopefully.

"Yes. Now, I'm hanging up." And before Steven could say any more, that's exactly what she did.

She threw her phone onto the floor and her magazine with it. She was utterly confused. Her head was all over the place.

Why had she kissed Doug?

It just felt right in the moment, it didn't seem like a big deal.

But it was a big deal. It was a big deal because it actually felt great. She got all tingly just thinking about it.

Could it be possible that Sam had feelings for Doug?

It was ridiculous. Doug was nothing like the guys that Sam usually went for. They usually skipped college, had tattooed sleeves and rode motorbikes. Doug was the complete opposite of that. He had asked for her help when he wasn't getting the desired grade in Maths. He wore old grandpa cardigans and didn't have a favourite colour in fear that he would upset the other colours.

But is that why she liked him?

The relationships with all those other guys never lasted. In fact, it was a stretch to actually call them relationships. They usually lasted less than a week before they both would get bored and moved on.

And Sam had been friends with Doug for five years.

Yes, *friends*.

He was her only friend. And if she attempted to be more and end up freaking him out, she would lose everything.

She chewed her bottom lip and curled up into a ball on her bed. How was she supposed to move on from this?

There weren't many comic book stores in the UK, apparently it was more of an American thing. So when one opened up a year ago in the local shopping centre, Doug found himself there almost every week. That was where he actually had decent conversations with someone that wasn't Sam. There was a guy who came into the shop every now and again. He and Doug had a little moment when they both reached for the same The Amazing Spider-man comic book. Doug let him take it, being the kind-hearted soul that he was, and in return, he made a friend. Well, Doug wasn't sure if he could call him a friend seeing as though he didn't even know his name. They had spoken too many times without him knowing it that it seemed stupid to ask. So Doug just

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called him Socks because he always wore shorts and brightly coloured socks.

But Socks wasn't in the shop today, which Doug was thankful for. He needed some time alone and the comic book store was the perfect place. There was never more than five people in there at a time. Doug feared that it might close down soon so he made the most of it. So in the peaceful solitude, he thought about what had just occurred less than an hour ago.

Sam had *kissed* him.

Sam. The girl of his dreams. Had kissed *him*.

And it was a strong kiss too, Doug thought with a smile. But what did it mean? Was Doug just looking too deeply into things? Did he want Sam to like him so much that he was kidding himself?

He sighed and picked up an Iron Man comic book. If only he were like Tony Stark, a billionaire ladies' man.

He could get any girl he wanted with a click of his fingers. *What a way to live*, he laughed to himself and ducked, averting his eyes when the man behind the counter gave him a funny look.

But Doug didn't want all the girls to fall at his feet, to swoon in his presence and beg him to take them to bed.

He just wanted Sam to love him the way he loved her.

Chapter 11: 11

Sam noticed Doug waiting for her on a bench by the side entrance to college. He smiled when he noticed her but then frowned and hunched up awkwardly. Sam's heartbeat started drumming hard and fast as the distance between them lessened. He bounced to his feet when she stopped in front of him. He gulped so hard she heard it and when their eyes met, he quickly flicked his away.

"You weren't there this morning," she said accusingly.

He furrowed his brows and looked back to her. "What?"

A lump swelled in her throat. "When I jogged past this morning. You weren't there."

"Oh...you noticed?"

Her features sharpened. "Of course I noticed." He just watched her for a moment. Then she sighed. "Look, if this is about the kissâ I'm sorry if I scared you."

He laughed with disbelief. "*Scared* me?"

"Wellâ yeah."

He laughed again, but this time with humour. "You didn't scare me, Sam." Then he shifted from foot to foot, digging his hands deeper into his grandpa cardigan. "I like itâ !" Sam's heart flipped and her eyes grew wide. "That's why I wasn't there at the window. I thought it'd be awkward for you. Because, well, you looked scared after you kissed me. And then you wouldn't even look at me."

"I wasn't scared, Doug. I was shocked."

"Why?"

She chewed her lip with a smile. "Because I liked it, too."

A goofy smile lifted on Doug's lips, brightening his whole face. Sam couldn't help but laugh. "Youâ you liked it?"

She nodded. "And then I felt stupid because I thought it would ruin our relationship. And then I was angry because I thought I had messed it up-" Suddenly, Doug grabbed her arm and yanked her forwards. Their foreheads collided and Doug cursed under his breath.

"Ow!" Sam pushed back, rubbing her head. "What the hell?"

Doug's cheeks flushed. "Sorry. Sorry. I was trying to do that thing in the movies when the guy grab the girl in midsentence and kisses her when she starts rambling."

"I was rambling?" Sam arched an eyebrow.

This made him blush even more. "No. No. I meanâ that's not what I meant I-" Then Sam grabbed his arm and successfully managed to muffle out the rest of his sentence with her lips. His tensed up body relaxed and melted against her. She curled her fingers into his sleeves and parted his lips with her tongue. Doug wanted to pinch himself. Was he dreaming? Was this actually happening? Sam's lips broke from his with a gasp before she continued kissing him even more passionately, knotting her hands into his curls. Doug's arms wrapped around her, pulling her closer to him as their tongue brushed past each other's. That spark was definitely there, in both of them, exploding like fireworks . Strong and intense and magical and too good to end.

But when the heat between them started making Sam's need for him burn white hot, she suddenly remembered that they were in public and she forced herself to pull away. Doug stumbled forwards, his eyes shut and jaw slacked. He quickly found his footing and blinked hard as if escaping a dream. He fixed his glasses, cleared his throat and looked around at the students passing.

"How was that for you?" Sam asked, still trying for catch her breath. Her body was humming with adrenaline.

Doug gulped. "That wasâ that wasâ good."

She smiled. "Yeahâ yeah it was."

"So, what does that meanâ for us?" He looked back to her.

She chewed her lip. "I don't want to move too fast because I can't lose you, Doug. I'd rather have you as a friend than nothing at all."

He nodded. "I agree." *She can't lose me?* He tried to contain his grin.

She let out a steadying breath. "So, I don't want to call you my boyfriend or anything until we are certain that we can take our relationship to the next level."

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"Okay. So how do we do that?"

"When do you have the house to yourself? My mum's timetable is all over the place. Even she doesn't know where she is half of the time."

"I'm at lacrosse tonightâbut my mum and dad are out tomorrow."

"Okay." Sam nodded affirmatively. "How about I come over tomorrow and we canâsee how we feel about each other gettingâintimate?" She winced at the last word and Doug's eyes bugged. Suddenly, he felt very warm. So warm in fact that he was sweating. "Is that okay with you?"

He nodded. "Yes. That sounds good."

She smiled. "Okay then. Let's get to class."

For the rest of the day, whenever Sam and Doug were together, they didn't talk about the arrangement. It was always the massive elephant in the room but it didn't make them feel awkward or nervous or scaredâin fact, Sam was surprised that she was actually rather *excited*. She had never really seen Doug in a sexual way before but she'd be lying if she said she didn't find him attractive. It was those eyes. Those stark, almost luminous, wonderful blue eyes like two swirling pools. But she knew that other girls didn't see him the way she did, because he wasn't a show off. Doug always kept his head down, avoided crowds and was shy around people he didn't know. She guessed it was because of his bullying in high school.

But now, Sam didn't only find Doug attractive, she was also attracted to him. When they were kissing, she actually had to stop herself from attempting to rip his shirt off. She wanted him badly, so badly she wasn't sure she'd be able to make it to Friday night. And the way Doug started looking at her didn't help. It was if he had let his guard down, now knowing that he didn't have to look at her as just a friend anymore. Now there was lust in his eyes, desire, need for her. The way those blue orbs occasionally slipped from her eyes and trailed down her neck, to her neck, to her chest, to her legs, it was making Sam squirm when butterflies knocked about inside her stomach.

"Wow, Sam, that's some really lovely work."

Sam jerked up from her stool and looked over her shoulder to her art teacher peering over her. Sam laughed awkwardly and tucked a strand of loose hair behind her ear.

"Yeah?"

Her teacher smiled. "Yeah, look's beautiful. It's not like your other work though. There's so muchâhope and wonder in it. I like how you've used light to contrast with the darkness. Well done."

Sam looked back at her canvas and her eyebrows rose. It didn't look like her other work. She hadn't really noticedâshe just painted, absorbed in her own thoughts. But her teacher was right, it was different. The way the two dark silhouettes huddled in the corner stared out at the light at the end of the tunnel. Longing for hope. Seeking hope. Finding hope?

"Thank you." Sam smiled and dipped her paintbrush in the white paint.

Her teacher patted her on the back and said, "Keep it up," before walking over to another student.

Sam added more white to the light on her painting and mumbled to herself, "Let's just see how tomorrow goes."

Chapter 12: 12

Doug nearly tripped over his own feet as he flew down the stairs to open the door. He'd spent the last hour pacing up and down his bedroom, giving himself pep talks and spraying his armpits with deodorant. He was very nervous. And how could he not be? He was about to get *intimate* with the girl of his dreams!

He paused behind the door for a moment and collected himself before answering. Sam stood on his doorstep wearing the outfit he had seen her in at college. An oversized black knitted jumper, tartan skinny jeans and creepers. Her black and blonde hair was tied up in a messy bun on top of her head and her eye make-up was smoky and heart-stoppingly sexy.

She chewed her red lips and cocked her pierced eyebrow. "So, it's time."

Doug laughed nervously and stepped aside to allow her access. "Come in." She did, brushing her shoulder against his chest as she made her way into the hall. The touch instantly made Doug's body tingle all over and he let out a steady breath.

Sam's brown eyes lifted to the stairs. "Your bedroom?"

He just nodded, closing the door. She smiled to herself, sensing his nervousness and mentally noting that she'd have to take the reins tonight.

Sam had been in Doug's room countless times, they used to study in there but would always get distracted by his comic books or his computer or something else. That's when they moved to the dining room. She smiled as she scanned the large square room. A big double bed sat in the middle, a computer desk on the far wall and shelves upon shelves of comic books and collectors figurines. Most of them boxed to keep their value. Sam used to always tease him that she'd open one when he wasn't looking. It wasn't a joke Doug was particularly fond of.

She jumped when the door shut behind her and turned to see Doug making his way over to her tentatively. He was wearing a plaid shirt, opened over a The Flash t-shirt and his usual baggy jeans which Sam was hoping she could make him chuck out and replace them with a pair a little more fitting. There was a great ass hiding underneath them, she just knew it. And soon she'd be finding out. Her heart flipped at the thought and she quickly looked into his eyes after realising she's been staring at his crotch as her inner monologue rambled on. Doug carefully perched himself at the foot of his bed and peered up at her, those big blue eyes wide and slightly fearful. Sam tried to show him the warmest smile she could as she settled beside him. She placed a hand on his thigh and he tensed, staring down at it.

"Doug."

His eyes shot to her.

"If I'm moving too fast, just say. Okay? Just tell me to stop."

He nodded but he knew there was no way in hell he's utter that word. Even if she went all Christian Grey on his ass and pulled out a load of whips and chains, he's be happy to take it.

But she didn't do that, of course. Instead, she lightly touched his cheek and angled his face to hers. She pressed her forehead against his, brushing their lips together.

Doug's heart was drumming so hard he thought she might be able to hear it. But she didn't, she was too focused on their lips. The way the softest of touches felt like she'd set herself on fire. She wanted to jump him, bite him, suck him, fuck him. But she didn't. Not yet. She didn't want to scare him and damage their relationship. She needed to take it slow.

She dipped her head and pressed her lips flush against his. She laughed when he held back a moan. The hand on his cheek slipped to behind his head and she pushed her tongue into his mouth. He gladly accepted it and deepened the kiss. And the kiss started to get more passionate and frivolous, his glasses kept knocking against Sam nose so she broke away from him and took them off. "Can you see without them?" she asked.

Still a little dazed, he nodded. "Yeah, I just need them for long distance."

She smiled and placed them at the edge of his desk. "Good job we're close then."

Too close, Doug thought and gulped. Too close. He could feel himself hardening in his jeans and all they had done up to now was kiss.

Sam noticed the worry in his eyes. "Are you okay?"

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He glanced down at the hand on his thigh and nodded but his voice broke, "Yeah, I'm fine."
She smiled and pushed her fingers through his curls before leaning back into him. "Good."
They resumed their kissing and everything felt good. It felt right, as if they'd been doing this the whole time. As if they *should* have been doing this the whole time.

But then Sam's hand on his thigh started to wander and soon she had popped open the button of his jeans. They were still kissing but his eyes were open, panicked as he felt himself growing even harder. She tugged down his fly with an effort and slipped her hand under, stroking his shaft over his briefs.

Holy crap, this is happening, screamed Doug inside his head. *This is actually happening. Oh my God. Sam has her hand on my dick. Sam has her hand on my dick. Sam has her hand on my dick!*

He jerked forwards and grabbed her around her waist for stability as she started to stroke him, rubbing the heel of her palm over the head of his cock that was already leaking pre-cum.

Focus on the kiss. It'll all be fine. Just focus on the kiss. If you shoot I will kill you, I swear. She's just strokingâ 'it's fine. Her hand hasn't even touched you yet. It's fine.

But he couldn't focus on the kiss, not while the girl of his dreams was rubbing his-
"Holy fuck!" he gasped, shuddering as he came in his briefs.

Sam's lips pressed together, trying to contain a laugh as his now soaked boxers stuck to her hand. Doug's face turned tomato red and he shuffled back on the bed, making Sam pull out her hand. "I'm so sorry. I'm so sorry. I didn't mean it. I just couldn't-"

"It's fine," she laughed good naturedly and wiped her hand on a tissue from her pocket. "If anything, it's a compliment."

He just watched her sheepishly.

"I can still keep going if you'd like? Or do you want to call it a night?"

His eyes widened. "No, don't go. We can keep going. I'm sure it'll pop up again soon."

She laughed and stood up in front of him. "Okay, well, I'm going to have to get you out of those pants then."

He grinned up at her. "You first."

She arched her eyebrow with a smirk. "Oh wow, hello Mr. Confidence, where did you come from?"

He laughed, blushing a little. "I was hoping it'd negate what just happened."

She smiled. "It's already forgotten." And without wasting another moment, Sam tugged her jumper over her head. Doug sucked in a breath at the sight of her simple black bra. She threw her jumper on the floor and started on her zipper. Doug watched, amazed at how comfortable she was with herself while he was still stalling, fearing the thought of being naked in front of Sam. She pushed her jeans down with an effort and tugged them off along with her creepers and socks so she stood in front of him in just her underwear.

Doug smiled at her cute Wonder Woman boxers and felt a little less self-conscious about his Aquaman briefs. She crawled onto the bed and Doug watched as she made her way to the pillow on all fours with her ass in the air. His eyes widened at the tattoo covering her back. He hadn't seen it fully before. The last time he saw her this naked was when she was fifteen and they went swimming together. She hadn't had her tattoo then. But her boxers were still hiding the mystery that has been taunting him for years. Does the tattoo really travel further? She spun around, resting her back on the headboard, tucked her knees up and crooked a beckoning finger. Doug gulped, his eyes shining at her. But as he turned, placing his knees on the foot of the bed, he could feel the butterflies of nerves knocking inside his stomach transform into flurries of anticipation. His dreams were about to come true, after all.

Chapter 13: 13

~~ Doug was knelt between Sam's tucked up knees. She pushed herself up and kissed him, slipping her hands under his t-shirt. He cupped her jaw, kissing her back. She smiled and breathed against his lips, "Now it's your turn."

Before Doug could protest, she was yanking up his t-shirt. Fear sent his heart racing as she tugged it over his head. Her fingers splayed out over his chest. The feeling of her hands on him was indescribable but it didn't knock away the fear of disappointing her.

Doug wasn't as toned as he wished he was. Looking at all the superheroes like Thor and Captain America with their impossibly rugged, muscle-laced bodies, put any guy to shame. But Sam didn't mind. She wore a soft smile as she stroked the slight indentations of his abs. Then her fingers slipped down to his happy trail and he tensed.

Sensing his nerves, Sam pulled back and figured that he'd be more at ease if she were the one to lose all her clothes first. She dipped her hand into her the left cup of her bra and pulled out a small square foil wrapper. She smiled up at Doug and said, "For later," as she leaned over and placed the condom on his bedside table. Doug's eyes bugged.

She popped open her bra clasp and slipped her arms through the straps before tossing it onto the floor. Doug's breath caught in his throat. Sam smiled up at him, showing off her bare chest without a care in the world. Her confidence was making Doug even more nervous.

She wrapped her arms around his neck and pulled him closer as she kissed him. His fingers curled into the duvet but then Sam grabbed them and pressed his palms to her breasts. Doug's eyes widened and he gasped against her lips. But then he squeezed them slightly and made Sam giggle. Suddenly, he felt at ease. Yes, this was Sam, the girl of his dreams and of course he was terrified of disappointing her. But this was also Sam, his best friend. The girl that stuck up for him when he was teased at school. The girl who sat by his bed and kept him company when he got seriously injured from lacrosse. She was the girl he didn't need to impress because she'd seen him at his worst.

Sam's hands slipped from his and Doug felt her begin to wriggle underneath him. Still kissing her, he angled his face so he could see what she was doing. Pulling down her boxers. His heart crashed against his chest so fast he actually thought it might explode. She managed to push them down to her thighs before her positioning became too awkward. This was time for Doug to look cool and confident. He broke the kiss and pulled back from her, trying not to focus on her naked pussy too much in fear it would completely screw up his lusty eyes and sexy smirk. Sam watched, biting her lip as he hooked his fingers under her boxers and began tugging them the rest of the way down her legs. He flicked them off her feet, sending them flying across the room and onto his desk.

Now she was completely naked, whereas Doug was still safely tucked away in his jeans. But he was rock hard again now and they were starting to feel uncomfortable. When he looked down and finally let himself see what he had uncovered, his cock twitched in his restricting briefs. Sam closed her legs and sat up at his wide-eyed expression.

"Are you okay? Do you want us to slow down?" she asked. The honest concern in her voice calmed him down a little and he showed her a smile.

"No, no, I'm fine. It's justâ 'we've been friends for so longâ 'and now I'm seeing you naked."

She giggled and crossed her arms over her breasts. "But it's not weird, right?"

"God no. It's veryâ 'erhâ 'it's nice."

She laughed and shifted her body so she was kneeling in front of him. Her hands reached for his open fly. "So, you're okay with taking this further?"

He nodded rapidly, making his curls bounce up and down. "You?"

She grinned and pressed her lips heavily against his. "God yes."

The desperation in her tone sure got his motor running. She was desperate for him. She yanked down his jeans and briefs and finally freed him. Quickly, Doug cupped her face in his hands and started kissing her passionately while lowering her down on the bed. She parted her thighs and he leaned down so they were

Thin Ice

chest to chest. She could feel his hard cock resting on stomach.

She moaned into her mouth, grinding against him in a futile bid for some sort of friction. She was so horny she couldn't take it any longer. She need him. *Now*.

With an effort, she pushed him off her and flung her arm out to grab the condom. She tore the wrapper with her teeth and looked down between their bodies. Doug tensed when he knew she was looking. She said nothing as she rolled her condom down his shaft but inside, she felt a crater sized hole in her heart. He wasn't as big as his dad. She didn't care about that. What sickened her was the fact that she was able to make that comparison.

What was she *doing*?

Quickly, she snapped back to attention and hoped that Doug hadn't noticed her little moment. He hadn't. He was too aware that Sam had her hand wrapped around his cock. Feeling like there was no point trying to hide anymore, Doug pushed himself out of his jeans and briefs and kicked them off the bed.

Now they were both naked. Together. And the weird thing wasâ it didn't feel weird. It felt *right*.

Sam rested her head back down on the pillow, cupping a hand behind his head and resting the other on his shoulder as Doug shifted his weight back over her.

"Doug."

Doug gulped and his blue eyes flashed up at her, alight with panic. "Yeah?"

"Are you a virgin?"

He laughed awkwardly. "What? No. Why? Why would you ask that? Would it be a problem if I was?"

She shook her head, fearing she'd offended him. "No. No. Not at all. I justâ I just thought that you should lose your virginity to someone special, y'know? You deserve that. I threw mine away like last week's garbage and I totally regret it."

He smiled and traced the side of her face with his fingertips. "You are special, Sam."

She huffed a laugh and looked away. "Seriously, I'm *not*."

Silence fell between them and Sam looked back to him cautiously. He was smiling down at her like she was the only person in the world that mattered. "You are to me."

Suddenly, Sam felt very awkward and uncomfortable, knowing she didn't deserve to be looked at that way.

Quickly, she changed the subject. "So, who did you lose it to?"

"A girl on one of the Duke of Edinburgh trips."

"Oh? What was her name?"

He showed her a coy smile. "Why? Jealous?"

She laughed. "No. I'm just interested."

"Okay, her name was Natashaâ Potts."

"Natasha Potts?" Sam arched an eyebrow.

He nodded. "Yeah. Natasha Potts."

She smiled up at him. "Okay."

He cleared his throat. "Okay."

He kissed her softly on the lips before grabbing his cock and pushing it inside her slick entrance. Sam arched her back and closed her eyes, moaning contently as they connected. He held himself over her, pressing his hands into the pillow beside her head as he started thrusting.

Sam furrowed her brows as he started moving in and out of her in jerky, stiff motions as if he were doing press ups over her. The impact wasn't doing much for her. He needed to get his hips involved so she figured she'd help him out and try to guide him. She grabbed his hips and circled hers against his, attempting to loosen him up and make him join in. He was watching what he was doing, focusing too much on him sinking into her and making the whole thing seem more mechanical than sexual.

She grabbed his jaw and forced him to look up at her but that made him lose his rhythm all together and he paused buried deep inside her. She kissed him passionately, making their upper halves roll together. He was a good kisser. An excellent kisser. If only their lower halves could sync up just as well.

She grabbed his tight little ass and started guiding him into her, trying to force him to dip and use his hips to grind but he just didn't understand what she was trying to do.

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He was moaning though so he was clearly enjoying himself. Sam suddenly felt very guilty that she wasn't moaning too so she joined in, wrapping her thighs tightly around his middle and thrashing her head around. She must have been a good actress because Doug suddenly jerked and stiffened over her. A shaky gasp escaped him and he emptied himself into the condom. As he reached his climax, she pretended to also reach hers and clung onto him, raking her nails down his back.

Doug lay on top of her, his curls stuck to his forehead with sweat, panting down her ear. He pressed his lips to her ear and whispered, "I love you, Sam."

Chapter 14: 14

Doug rolled off Sam when her breath hitched. She jerked up into a sitting position and spun her leg so they hung off the edge of the bed. "No, no, no, no, no," she mumbled to herself, holding her head in her hands. This was the first time the whole of Sam's back tattoo was exposed to him, yet it was the last thing on Doug's mind.

"Sam? What's wrong?" he asked, worry making his voice come out shaky.

Sam shook her head and started collecting her clothes that were scattered across the room. "This was a bad idea."

Doug's heart sank as he watched her dashing around his room and shoving on her clothes. "What? No. No it wasn't. What's going on?"

She was crying now, wiping her nose and eyes. "I'm a horrible person, Doug. I don't deserve your love."

He let out a laugh. "Don't be silly. You're far from horrible."

She shook her head, her blonde and black hair hiding her face. "You don't know me, Doug. You think you do but you don't. I ruin things for myself time and time again, which I'm okay with." She sighed and looked away with him. His blood ran cold as he saw the tears running down her cheeks and the guilt in her eyes. "It's when people get caught in the crossfire when I can't stand myself."

He got up off the bed and shoved his briefs on. When he tried to approach her, she shielded herself from him with her arms. "What are you talking about? I know you and I know I love you."

She shook her head again and spun to the wall when looking at him became too difficult. "You wouldn't love me if you knew what I've done."

"We've been best friends for five years. I know what you've done."

She bit down on her knuckles to try and simmer her shaking. "There's things I haven't even told you."

"Then tell me now."

"I can't."

"Why not?"

"Because you'll hate me and I don't think I could handle that."

"I could never hate you, Sam."

"Yes you could. And you would. This was what we had. It was too good for me anyway. It was stupid for me to think I could actually be happy."

"Sam, I love you. And I thought this was working."

She shook her head. "Things could never work between us, Doug. I was fooling myself. You deserve better."

"Stop it." Doug's voice was so sharp it made Sam jump. "Just *stop it*. I love you and I want to be with you.

Even if it is just as a friend. I don't care about your deep, dark secrets, Sam. I just want you."

She began to turn slowly. Doug's heart was in his mouth as she faced him. She was hugging her jumper around herself, her fingers tightly twisted into the sleeves. Her eyes were swollen and red with tears. Her lips were quivering. The sight took Doug's breath away. He had never seen her look so vulnerable. As if the whole world had crashed around her.

Sam watched Doug for a moment, taking in every detail of him. His wild, curling mane, his dazzling blue eyes, his lightly toned stomach. She wanted him too. So much. But he deserved someone better.

So, sucking in a breath, she looked at him flush in the eyes and tried to contain her trembling as she said, "I fucked your dad."

Everything seemed to happen in slow motion. Sam could almost see the words hitting Doug like a bullet. He staggered backwards and slumped down onto her bed, looking spent. He stared down at his carpet, eyelids flickering with the burn of tears. "You had sex with my dad?"

She nodded, feeling disgusted with herself. She just wanted to crawl into a hole and die. "It was impulsive and stupid and wrong and I hate myself."

Doug stared at the floor for a moment, letting Sam stew in her own guilt. Finally, unable to look at her, he said, "Get out."

"Doug." She tried to approach him but he bounced to his feet.

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Sam cowered back as he stood before her, towering over her with a look of pure rage. He jabbed his finger to the door. "I said *get out!*"

Too afraid to anger him even more, she did as he said, collecting her creepers as she made her way to the door. She ran down his stairs, slipped on her shoes and shut the front door behind her.

She collapsed on his front step and bawled her heart out. She was crying so much she actually couldn't stand. Shaking and convulsing, she stayed there for a good few minutes before her legs started to feel less like jelly and she was able to clamber to her feet.

People gave her a wide berth, shooting her confused looks as she made her way home. She hugged herself tightly, crying and mumbling about how much a bitch she had been as she walked down the streets. An old woman stopped her and asked if she was okay. Sam said "no," and kept walking without looking back.

It felt as if her whole world had shattered around her like glass. Doug was her whole world. And the worst thing about it was that it was all her fault. Like it always was. She hated herself for crying, for pitying herself. She deserved this empty void inside her. She deserved Doug's anger. She had been selfish all those years ago when she reeled Doug into her life. She should have left him well alone. But she was so desperate to have someone there for her. No matter what the cost.

This was the cost.

She pushed her front door open and almost fell into the hallway.

"Sam?" her mum's voice travelled from the kitchen. Sam didn't reply and made her way up the stairs. Her mum found her. "Sam?"

Sam turned and looked down at the petite woman in the hallway. Her mother was only thirty-eight but she had crows-feet and her shoulders were always slouched with fatigue. When she would go out, she would cake herself in make-up and do up her thin blonde hair to attempt to look youthful again. But it was no use. Sam had stolen those years from her.

Her mum's eyes widened at Sam's puffy red face. "Sam, what's wrong?"

She set her jaw and swallowed back a sob. "Everything. So, y'know, nothing new." She carried on up the stairs. When her mum reached from the bannister, Sam said without even looking back, "don't bother following me."

She slammed her bedroom door behind her and flopped onto her unmade bed. Her duvet was cold and crisp, she curled herself into it until she was wrapped up in a claustrophobic cocoon that she never wanted to leave.

Chapter 15: 15

There was a knock at Sam's bedroom door.

"What?!" she snapped from her bedside. She was curled up against her wall now, squashed between her bedside table and wardrobe.

"Sam, it's Monday. Are you going to college?" her mum asked.

"No. I don't feel well."

"You've hardly left your room all weekend."

"That's because *I don't feel well!*" she hissed.

"Okay, okay," said her mum from the other side of the door. "No need to jump down my throat. Well, seeing as though you're staying home, you could make yourself useful and so the food shopping."

Sam ground her teeth. "If I'm not well enough to go to college, I am not well enough to go shopping!"

"It was just a suggestion because, y'know, I could really do with the help!"

"Whatever," Sam sneered.

She listened for her mum to leave before she unlocked her door and ventured out of her room to grab a packet of crisps when her stomach began to growl for attention. She went back up into her room and jammed herself back into the tight little space. She hoped it would somehow make her feel safe, which didn't really make sense because the only thing that would cause her any harm was herself. With that in mind, she spotted a pair of scissors on her dressing table. Her eyebrow arched, intrigued, but then she squeezed her eyes shut and shook her head before grabbing her mobile from her bedside table. The tattoo studio she always went to was saved in her contacts. She called them and held her phone to her ear.

"Hello, four-one-oh tattoo studio," said the woman on the other end.

"Hi, my name is Samantha Cole, I was wondering if you had any appointments free any time soon?" she asked.

"What sort of tattoo do you have in mind?"

"An extension on the one on my back. Just another rose."

"Okay wellâ 'we don't have any free appointments for another three weeks."

"Three weeks?" Sam echoed.

"Yes, I'm sorry. Would you like to book in?"

"Erhhâ !" Sam's heart sank. "No thanks, that's too far away."

"Okay, I'm sorry about that."

"It's fine, bye."

"Bye." She hung up and threw her mobile across the room. She needed her tattoo done now. She needed to distract herself from her emotional pain with physical pain. But she'd never cut herself. She cared about her image too much to form unnecessary scars on her body. But having a tattoo was different. The pain created something beautiful. Well, beautiful in her eyes, she knew not everyone would agree.

And that was why her back tattoo was so big. She had a lot of emotional pain to cover up. Her tattoo was her mask, her armour, her shield.

An hour later she was growing hungry again but she didn't have the energy to get up, she just stayed sat there in a heap. She knew she couldn't hide in her room forever. At some point she would have to go back to college. She'd have to face Doug and she'd stand there as he hurled abuse at her because she deserved it. But for now, she was hiding.

Her head pricked up at the sound of the front door opening. Footsteps creaked downstairs. It was only 2.00pm, her mum didn't get home from work until 5.30. Sam wrapped her arms around her tucked up knees and listening with a thumping heart as the footsteps became louder, coming up the stairs.

"Mum? Is that you?" she called. No answer.

She stood up and was ready to cross the room when the footsteps stopped. She froze. "Hello?"

"Sam?"

Her blood ran cold at the croaky voice, and she sucked in a gasp.

Thin Ice

"Sam, it's me, Doug. Can I come in?"

"Doug..?"

"Can I come in?"

She yanked back the lock and stepped back. The door opened and there stood Doug on her landing, his hands plunged into his baggy jeans pockets and his magnified eyes peering at her. Sam didn't know what to say.

Why was he here?

"You didn't go to college?" he asked.

She shook her head.

"Neither did I."

Tears were already burning the backs of her eyes just by looking at him. He looked so drained. "What are you doing here, Doug?"

"Can I come in?"

She nodded and he strode in. She backed up and sat down on the edge of her bed. He stood in the centre of the room, looking down at her.

"What you didâ was disgusting."

She bit the inside of her lip and looked down. "I know."

"I wanted to hate you. God, I really wanted to hate you." He sighed heavily. "But I just can't, Sam."

Hope sparked inside her and she looked up at him. He ran his fingers through his hair and dropped down onto the bed beside her. "I haven't told my dad I know. I just can't. It would just make it even more real. I hate *him*. And I know I should hate you too but, this weekend has been horrible. We've never gone a day without speaking to each other."

Sam stayed silent, fearing that she'd say the wrong thing.

"I meant it when I said I love you," he said, almost sounding ashamed. He wasn't looking at her, he was more focused on a loose bit of thread on his jeans. He tugged at it and twirled it. "I know nothing could ever happen between us. I know you don't feel the same way and what you did can't be undone. But I don't want to lose you." He looked up into her eyes. His bright blue eyes glistened with tears. Sam's heart swelled so much it threatened to burst out of her chest. "Can we still be friends? I don't know what I'll do without you. You are all I have."

Tears fell down her cheeks as she nodded frantically and threw herself at him, her arms circling him. "Of course! Oh my God, Doug, you don't know how happy I am to hear you say that."

He squeezed her back with relief. They held onto each other for a long moment before Sam withdrew herself. Doug smiled weakly at her then looked down at her carpet. "This relationship we've got, it's not healthy though."

"What?" she asked.

"We can't be each other's everything. We need some new people in our lives."

Sam furrowed her brows. "What are you saying?"

He let out a heavy sigh and looked up at her. "*What I'm saying* isâ I need to stop being so socially awkward and you need to get yourself a boyfriend. A real, long-term boyfriend."

Sam snorted. "Me? A boyfriend? Doug, if you haven't already noticed, I am not girlfriend material. Hell, I don't even think I've ever been on an actual date."

"Well, that's why we're going to help each other. You can help me find some new friends and I'll help you become girlfriend material."

She arched her eyebrow doubtfully. "Doug, we are both as bad as each other. No offence, but I don't think you can help me. And I definitely can't help you."

"Well not with attitude you're not."

Sam laughed and elbowed him. "Seriously, we're both lost causes."

He smiled and wrapped his arm around her. "I'm sure we can work something out."

The End

Thin Ice

So, this is the end of 'Thin Ice' but I am currently working on the sequel, 'Treading Water' which I'll start uploading in about a week so if you want me to keep you updated, just let me know :)

I've worked out a sequel to 'Hooked', called 'Pandemonium' which I have just started writing. I wasn't planning on it having a sequel but it seemed like people enjoyed reading it and I really enjoyed writing it. I've missed Rose, haha. So I might upload it the same time as 'Treading Water' and just alternate between the two but I'll just see how it goes :P I don't want to rush writing it.

Anywaaayyy, thank you so much for reading and commenting

Toodles xxxx

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