

## *Open Your Arms to Change*

Kate was running a little bit late, so Steve had already ordered wine by the time she got to the Les Nomades French restaurant. He stood and pulled out a chair for her.

"If you didn't look so incredible," he said, "I might scold you for being late. I should always ask you to tart up."

"Well, the young professor in Brooks Brothers look makes you major eye candy," she said. "Although you're major eye candy no matter what you're wearing."

He poured some wine into her glass, enjoying the flirtation. "I'm almost afraid to ask, but how was your day?"

"Great. I talked to Chris about the book contract and he's going to talk directly with Kirk. He'll probably have something for me to sign within a day or two. Kirk loved the podcasting idea, and he's already got some communications grad students at school who can put it together. And as he described it, I saw definite ways to link the jewelry line to a podcast as well, so I conference-called in Danielle, and she is thrilled by crashing this new media to promote the new line. I think we're all excited about this adventure. You should take notes because this could be your next research paper."

"Are you assuming I'm going to stay in academia?" he asked, since they really hadn't yet discussed what they were going to do with their lives. Yet, with no plan even formulated, their futures were catapulting before them; Steve had hoped they could take a honeymoon trip to Greece before they launched into the next phase.

"You've got the credentials and the wardrobe, so you could," she scanned the menu. "Let's start with the pâtés, and I'd probably like the Tasmanian salmon. So, then I talked to Dex and faxed him some design ideas for clothing – t-shirts, sweatshirts, hats – around Lexi's movie, and while he liked them, he was sure there would be licensing issues before we could go into production."

"So, are you going to talk to Lexi or just let the lawyers handle it?"

"We'll see," she said with the obvious intention of not discussing their feud. "But I did talk to Jordan today. She's still in L.A. – seriously with Rob, I guess. So we chatted, and I pitched them an idea."

"Okay," Steve said with some trepidation. Kate seemed to be on an adrenaline high that kept her thinking furiously of new projects; she was creating things every day. He wondered if this somehow was fueled by her fight with Lexi.

"You know Rob has a degree from Stanford and had a computer firm for a while and he's really interested in music..."

"I get the feeling you've found a way to tie this all together," he said as he gestured to the waiter to order their dinner.

"The podcast gave me the idea. What if we created a way for musicians to get their music out to the public without having to cut deals with record companies or earning a degree in computer science? I mean, the

band Marillion kind of started the whole idea in the '90s, but we'd be looking to help unknown musicians get a start. So I pitched the idea of the Imagine Music Foundation which we could fund from the IM jewelry." She seemed very proud of the concept.

"So, Jordan's going to leave MacArthur and run this new foundation?"

"Well, no, she'd help us set up the guidelines and policies..."

"And Rob would actually run the foundation?"

"Pretty much. We talked about it, and he immediately got the whole podcast thing and is doing some research from his end. He knows much more about the computer stuff involved than I do."

"And you're comfortable about turning over the cash to a cab driver?" He knew his trust fund managers would be a lot more skeptical about the idea, but it was Kate's jewelry money and thus far, her investments had been good.

"Sure, I have a good feeling about him, and obviously Jordan does too."

"I'll trust your judgment," he said, "but maybe you should slow down a little."

"I can't," she said, taking a sip of her wine. "Everything is just spinning around me, and I don't have any brakes."

"Well, Kate, I think I said that you set the bar for us, and you're about to change the contest from high jump to a pole vault," Kirk said after she picked up her cell phone about a week after the first couple IM podcasts went out.

"I don't think I understand," she said, taking off her glasses.

"Your book has been selling pretty well right from the start..."

"Your reports have been telling me that." The term 'selling pretty well' was a bit of an understatement; Kirk was jubilant, because of the record-setting initial sales for the University press, and the success of their podcast advertising. "Does that qualify as pole vaulting?"

"Not quite, but getting a call from the television production company, because someone who saw the podcast and read the book thinks this would make a great series definitely qualifies."

"A television series based on IM-UR?" she said in disbelief.

"That's what he said. This is a little out of my ballpark," he said mixing his metaphors, "so I think we need a conference call with you, me and an attorney if you have one. Well, of course you have one, but you might want to see if he knows anything about this kind of deal."

Chris Hale had to be thanking his lucky stars that Jordan had referred Kate to him. Based on the legal fees she had generated so far, Chris was well on his way to leveraging her business into a partnership with his

firm. Plus, Kate suspected he was intrigued by what she and Steve might come up with next; certainly, a television show based on what she considered to be a simple little book would be a new challenge for him.

"I'll call my attorney, and I'm sure there's someone at his firm with the appropriate experience. I'll ask him to set up a conference call with you and with Steve and me. Is any day better than another?"

If Steve had found it unbelievable that she could take his text messages and write a book, he would definitely think that taking that book and making a television series was just too surreal. Kate guessed that the television production company really just wanted to option the concept, not the actual text. She hoped so, or Steve might feel he was in the same position she had been in when Lexi's book got optioned.

She wondered how Lexi's movie was coming along, with or without a character based on her. She wondered how Lexi's life was coming along. The silence between them was deafening, and she missed talking with her friend. She didn't regret their last conversation, because she had tried to be honest, and she was tired of defending her decisions. She had said some ungracious – well, pretty rude – things, and she had certainly taken a couple bitch slaps at Lexi, particularly the challenge about Mike. While it may have been retaliatory, her ranting had been on target, and Kate was surprised that Lexi hadn't fought back yet. Maybe we have both changed too much to keep the friendship alive, she thought; that would be a tough reality to face.

Production was moving right along; their 90-day scheduling finishing over the next couple of days. They had saved the big reunion scene to be shot last to accommodate the big name stars who had so graciously agreed to reunite for Lexi's movie.

"Are you nervous hon?" Andrew looked at her in the bathroom mirror of the Beverly Hills cabana that had been their home for the last two weeks.

"I feel like I am meeting my idols. And the thought that they are playing Kate and me is astounding!"

"I can't believe you haven't talked to her yet."

Lexi put down her toothbrush and looked at him. "Well actually, we kind of tested the waters with texting each other yesterday."

"OH WOW! And then gee, maybe in study hall, you can pass each other notes. Please, Lexi, why can't you just call her?"

"Honestly. I'm not sure she would answer my call. But when they started to set up for the last shot yesterday, I texted her and wrote, "They're shooting the last scene – wish me luck."

"That was pretty inane. Did she write you back?"

"She wished me luck. I guess that's a start."

The studio's limo driver took them to the location of the last scene, a replica of the house that would belong to Lexi's character, Libby. The scene was set to portray a scene that had been shot six weeks ago, of Libby, cleaning up the kitchen table after an evening of dinner and wine with her girlfriends. As she is cleaning up, Catherine knocks at the door, after the two of them had not seen each other in six months. Their repartee is much like Lexi and Kate would have, not rehashing the past, but starting where they left off.

But given the nature of the reunion, and the power actresses playing them, a new scene was written so that they could sort out their friendship and move forward. Jaycee had done a marvelous job writing the gut wrenching emotions of sisterhood, without either character shedding a tear, yet getting to the heart of the matter. Kate would be proud.

Lexi and Andrew took their chairs near Jaycee to discuss a few last minute changes.

"Good morning, Lexi. Ready to wrap it up?"

Lexi looked at the actress who portrayed her over the last three months, having built a nice, yet professional relationship. "I gotta tell you Geena, I never thought my friendship of twenty years would be portrayed by Thelma and Louise."

"Relax, Lexi. Susan and I know what we're doing, and I think our style reflects your friendship with Kate. We'll do our best. We haven't gotten to work together since the last scene where we drove off a cliff. It's good being reunited with her – just like the two of you should do."

"Hey are you the famous author?" Susan Sarandon came from behind Geena Davis, wrapping her arms around her. "You must be Lexi." Susan reached out her hand, in a disarming fashion that won Lexi – and Andrew over immediately. "I can't tell you what a thrill it is to play someone ten years younger than I am, who's smart with some balls. Not too many of those roles around these days."

Lexi turned toward Jaycee, giving her full credit. "If it weren't for this gifted woman, there wouldn't have been a Catherine. I intended to write her out."

"Take some advice from two old ladies. Don't let the past get in the way of your future. And don't keep score. Right, Geena? I mean - Thelma?"

Geena smiled greatly at her much shorter counterpart. "Right, Louise. Excuse us, will you?" The two of giggled like schoolgirls, obviously ready for their playdate.

"Wait – before you go – can I take a picture of the three of us on my phone? I want to send it to Kate."

"I've got a better idea. Give me that phone." Susan grabbed the phone from Lexi, searching the screen.

"What are you doing?"

"My kids finally taught me how to be technologically astute." She continued to look at Lexi's phone. "Ah, there it is." Susan punched a button, obviously making a call. "Hi, is this Kate Shaw? Well, this is Susan Sarandon, and I am standing here with your friend Lexi, and my friend Geena Davis. I think Lexi has

something to tell you." Susan handed the phone back to Lexi, putting her hands on her hips as she silently directed Lexi. "Go on. Tell her."

Geena Davis sat, smiling like a catbird at Lexi. "Go on, now. Do what she says. Or we don't do the scene, right, Louise?"

"Right, Thelma. Now talk." Lexi had no choice but to take the phone, a big gulp of air, and talk away.

*Hey.*

*Was that really Susan Sarandon?*

*Yeah. She's playing you in the movie. Geena Davis is playing Libby.*

*I thought I was written out of the movie?*

*You were, but now you're in the big finish. And we are the reason that Thelma and Louise are reuniting on screen. How cool is that?*

*Couldn't you get somebody younger?*

*Um. Well, I think they're perfect. You'll see.*

*OK...*

*How are you?*

Kate started to weep a little. *Not so good. There's a lot going on.*

*Do you want to tell me about it?*

*Yeah. Do you have a minute?*

Lexi waved to the two actresses, covering her phone and whispering. "Okay, you can leave now. Your job is done."

"Hot damn!"

The two actresses waved at Lexi as she stepped away to a quiet corner of the sound stage. Andrew smiled at Lexi, and blew her a kiss, mouthing the words "Good for you – I love you!"

*Okay. I can talk now. What's wrong?*

*Well, I...am...just busy.*

*I saw your book. Congrats. Really. Did I hear a rumor about a TV show?*

*Yeah.*

*And what else?*

*Steve surprised me yesterday. I don't know if I can take this.*

Lexi thought he might have had another affair, but side-stepped the question. *What happened?*

*A baaa, a baaa.. a BABY!*

*Are you pregnant???*

Kate snapped out of her impending crying jag. *For godsakes no! I'm too old to have a baby.*

*Then catch me up.*

*I came home from a business trip two days ago, and Steve was in the living room holding a baby. Apparently his psycho sister Stacey had a child three weeks ago, decided she couldn't handle it, had a nanny – who Steve had to pay, by the way -- fly to Chicago and knock on our door.*

*Oh my God! What are you going to do?*

*Steve wants to keep him. All of a sudden, Steve is lit up all over like I have never seen and is in love with this baby boy. He told me he wants to be his father – and me to be his mother.*

Lexi stood for a moment, taking it all in. Lexi tried to lighten the mood with a humorous tone. *Well, I guess I should have called sooner, huh?*

*I guess I could have too....*

*Let's just chalk it up to being stubborn. No more keeping score, okay?*

*And stay out of my marriage, okay?*

*Okay. So, I guess you're going to add "mother" to the rest of your titles?*

*Apparently. But I have no idea where to start.*

*Well, I guess you can skip all the pregnancy books and go straight to the parenting section.*

*I already did. I ordered five books this morning. And Steve opened up charge accounts at Bellini and FAO Schwartz.*

*Sounds like you're going through with this?*

*Oh Christ, I don't know. Wait – oh geez... it sounds like he's waking up – I can hear him on the baby monitor. I thought he would at least wait until Steve got back from his errands. He's pretty insistent on being a no nanny or boarding school kind of parent – all "hands on" he insists. What am I going to do?*

Lexi silently chuckled at the thought of Kate answering to a 3-week-old after coping with college students and the corporate elite for so long. *Kate – you will do fine. You'll be a great mother – just like you are great at everything else. And Steve will be – well, awesome. I'm sure he's always wanted a family.*

*He must have. He's a changed man. He actually changes diapers.*

*Then I guess he's a keeper, isn't he?*

*He always was, remember?*

*Yeah. Of course he was. Now go take care of the baby. Call me later.*

*Okay....Lexi?*

*Yeah?*

*Thanks, you know?*

*Wow, that really hurt, didn't it?*

*Shut up.*

*Goodbye.* Lexi closed her phone, with a smile on her face and heart. She knew Kate would figure this out, but it would be her biggest challenge yet. As she walked back to the soundstage, she sat in her chair next to Jaycee, Andrew having vacated for his 10 am latte.

"Hey, Jaycee, I have a great re-write for the ending for you if you'll think it will work. Hear me out."

After hanging up the phone, Kate went into the extra bedroom, which would be converted into a nursery. She leaned down to pick up the whining baby from the Bellini crib, one of the few pieces of furniture that had been delivered thus far, and began to talk with him.

"Okay, here's the deal, I don't know much about babies, and your vocabulary skills are somewhat limited, so let's try to work together on this." She held him carefully as she walked around the room, rocking back and forth, frantically trying to emulate what she'd seen in movies. This is so "Baby Boom," she thought, and I am no Diane Keaton. But I can learn, she assured herself, because this is important to Steve, and therefore, important to our marriage.

Fortunately, the baby stopped crying, but she continued to carry him as she walked around the condo. "You don't seem to be wet which is good because I'm not good at the diaper changing thing," she said, reasoning with him. "And according to my chart, it's not time for any food, milk, whatever that stuff is in your bottle, and I've been told that M&Ms aren't a panacea for kids your age. You're probably just missing constant attention from Steve – welcome to my world – so maybe we can keep each other company."

She sat down in an armchair in the living room so they could look out the window. "I'm guessing you're a little young to want coffee, but this would be a great day to walk over to Starbucks and get a cappuccino, so I suppose we can just stay here."

She clicked the remote for the CD player, filling the room with Aerosmith's Stephen Tyler for a moment. "Let's save that a time when you're screaming too," she said, clicking the remote until she got to the CD of Vivaldi's 'Four Seasons.' "This is a good symphony to help you appreciate classical music. I first heard it at an outdoor concert in high school, with a freshman named Frank from my high school newspaper staff." She smiled at the memory.

"I was a senior, so even then, I was seeing younger men. Steve – your new father? -- is the only one who ever truly returned my affection. You'll like him, and he already adores you. It's pretty clear that he'll be a great dad, and I think he'll do everything for you. And I promise to do my best to be a good mother." She thought about that for a little while. "Granted, I never thought I wanted kids because I just couldn't picture myself being maternal. Shit – sorry, I'll have to learn to watch my language -- I had enough trouble taking care of a dog; his verbal skills were somewhat like yours. Much more dependent on tone of voice than on actual words, but we did manage to communicate somehow. I'm guessing you and I will do the same for a while. My psychic friend Lexi – you'll meet her soon, I imagine – believes we'll do fine."

"Maybe I can tell you a little bit about your dad," she said, lifting him to look into his blue eyes and shifting him to her other arm. "He's very smart. He studied science – I'm sure his parents hoped he'd be a doctor or an astronaut. He studied engineering, so he knows a lot of math. He studied business, and he figured out that he could really write too. He thinks very well, and he can be very logical, but he's not afraid to push logic aside and go strictly on his feelings. That's one of the reasons you're with us; it made little or no sense for Stacey – she's your biological mother -- to send you to us, and it didn't make complete sense for us keep you, but Steve – it'll take me a while to always call him your dad -- felt like we could offer the best possible option for your future. I trust him, so he's probably right."

"He's been right about his feelings a lot of times when I doubted the rationality of his choices. When he was a student – my student – he decided to throw caution to the wind and kiss me in my office. And he told me he had no regrets. That's a much longer story that you'll have to ask him about in a few years. He was willing to risk his academic life to go off to Chicago and California with me to do research for a paper that turned out really well in the end, even though we had some misadventures on our journey – ask him about his nosebleed on Michigan Avenue some day," she laughed. "One holiday, he took me to Paris and proposed on one knee, setting no guidelines, and not at all certain that I'd ever take him up on his offer. But obviously, I did, because we wanted to be together." Kate thought for a moment before continuing.

"Marrying me made the least sense of all the choices he's made. A young man as good-looking, smart, and wealthy as he is could probably have his pick of any number of beautiful young women. He speaks a couple different languages, he's traveled internationally, he has exquisite taste, and yet, he chose me."

Steve had come in quietly behind them, and after listening to her talk so genuinely to their soon-to-be son, he put his hands on her shoulders. "I chose a beautiful, smart, creative, loyal, and very caring woman who was willing to overlook my flaws and honor the commitment we made to each other. I can't think of a better woman to be his mom."

She put her free hand to take his. "If we can offer nothing else," she said, "we can offer a home filled with love."

"We have some decisions to make," Kate said after they'd fed the baby and put him back in his crib. "Some pretty big decisions."

"I get the feeling you're talking about more than what color we paint the nursery." He poured two glasses of wine.

"A name, number one. It would be good to give him a name since Stacey couldn't even manage that."

"I suppose Baby Boy Mac would be inappropriate? Do you have any ideas?"

"In a perfectly selfish way, I think Shaw would be a good first name. Unless you want him to be Stevens Hamilton MacMillan II?"

"No, I like Shaw. How about Philip for his middle name? It was my great-grandfather's name."

"Shaw Philip MacMillan. I like that. If -- when -- we file for adoption, is there going to be any challenge?"

"Not from Stacey, not from my mother, probably not from whoever the father might be, although I'm sure a financial settlement could be reached with him, if need be. Call your lawyer tomorrow and offer him a new challenge -- get the birth certificate fixed and the adoption paperwork filed. Has his firm made him a partner yet?"

"Shortly after the TV series deal came through."

"Good. He deserved it after everything we put him through." He sipped his wine. "Any other big decisions?"

"We might decide what we're going to do with our lives, aside from raising Shaw, you know, like jobs, and where we want to live."

"I would think you have enough projects to keep you busy for quite awhile, and I wouldn't be surprised if you get more opportunities after Lexi's film comes out. Have you heard anything from her, by the way?"

"Today, actually. Susan Sarandon made her call..."

"Susan Sarandon, the actress?"

"Uh huh, she's playing me in some final scene they're working on. And Geena Davis is Lexi."

"That's very 'Thelma and Louise.' So is your buddy Brad Pitt going to be invited to the film opening to complete a cast reunion?"

"He may be invited because of the two actresses, but I really have no idea -- and he's hardly my buddy. I only met him once when we did the photo op for People at the Kat House, and I turned over the check. I'm sure he was more focused on the \$5 million than on me."

"I'm glad you talked to Lexi. I know you missed having her in your life," Steve said, almost looking relieved. "Did you tell her about Shaw?"

"Uh huh. She thinks I'll do fine, and incidentally, she thinks you'll be an awesome father. I told her you changed diapers, which in her book, makes you a keeper." While he rolled his eyes at Lexi's evaluation criteria, Kate tried to refocus. "You're dodging the question of what we should do with our lives."

"I think we should do whatever feels right at the time. We have homes in Florida, in Boston, in Chicago, in Paris, on the Riviera and a condo in Aspen we've never even visited. Between us, we have seven college degrees. We have choices, and I don't think that we need to lock down a decision right now."

"Steve, there are going to be changes..."

"Of course there are going to be changes. I know that, but as long as we're together, I think we can handle them. Any doubts?"

"It's hard to doubt choices you haven't made yet, but I have a general policy of not regretting anything; it's a waste of energy."

"You don't regret me?"

"Of course not."

"You don't regret Shaw?"

"Not at all. Thus far, we've done pretty well together, even though he's not a great conversationalist yet, but you might want to check back with me in oh, twenty or thirty years."

"And the nominees for best screenwriter are..."

Lexi's stomach did a flip flop as she saw the clip of Geena and Susan, as Libby and Catherine, repairing their friendship while sitting on a curb outside Lexi's staged home.

*If they only knew that there was no script, just two friends talking.*

Lexi vividly remembered the last day of shooting, where Kate's phone call about Shaw's abrupt entry into her life had set her world on edge. After that call, she pulled Jaycee aside, wondering if there was any way that Geena and Susan could shoot a new ending in the tight timeframe they had to devote to the movie.

"Jaycee, the real Catherine just had a baby unexpectedly enter her life. I think it would be a great movie ending to have the two going back to their roots, discussing their hopes and fears of a new life – a baby – while they sit on the curb where it all began. What do you think?"

Jaycee stepped back, thinking for a moment. "It's perfect."

"But what about a script?"

"They won't need one – or want one. Let's go talk to them."

Jaycee and Lexi spent a few moments updating the two gifted actresses on the new plot twist. Lexi looked sincerely at them and asked, "I'd be honored if the two of you would take the best friendship I ever had – and give it a new chapter."

After some chills, tears, and a sampling of chocolate from the food service table, everyone was ready to go.

Lexi leaned into Andrew. "Now I REALLY feel like I'm in a movie. I can't wait to see what they do next."

It didn't take long for the two actresses to finish the scene in the kitchen and move to a real lot – outdoors – where they could re-create the curb outside of Libby's home. Lexi watched the chemistry between the two actresses, with an obvious amount of history between the two of them, portray a reconciliation, fears of impending motherhood, and the ties of a supportive friendship. They didn't need a script – they'd already lived the life and knew how to talk about it.

The two scenes only took a few takes, mostly due to lighting changes, before it was all over. Lexi's heart overflowed as she felt a sense of completion of her work, and a new chapter in her friendship, manifest in front of her. She thanked everyone profusely, knowing Jaycee, Susan, Geena, and the rest of Madison Street had done an outstanding job in bringing her work to life.

"And the winner is...JAYCEE CRUE FOR 'MIDDLE AGED GIRLS IN LOVE!'"

Jaycee leapt to her feet, giving Lexi a jubilant hug before rushing to the podium to accept her well-deserved reward. It was a perfect ending to a night where Geena and Susan also took home awards for portraying Libby and Catherine – or Lexi and Kate – a truly surreal experience for everyone.

"I'd like to thank Madison Street for making this all possible...and Geena and Susan – AMAZING WORK – I'd love to work with you again. Mom and Dad – of course – you were always there for me and I can't thank you enough. And Vicki, Jen, Roni – you're the best sister-friends I could have. But it wouldn't have been possible without the amazing work that Lexi Michaels Cameron did creating these characters. May curbsits live forever!"

Andrew hugged Lexi as she cried and laughed at Jaycee's remarks. A cameraman stationed in the aisle next to her to give an up close and personal shot of her runny mascara and slightly disheveled hair. She knew that Kate would make sure she never lived down her red carpet image.

The rest of the night, and following early morning hours, were a blur of flashbulbs, parties, congratulations, and offers for more work. Andrew did a great job of interceding, knowing his wife did not have her full faculties about her in this hyperactive environment. She said her goodbyes to all of Madison Street chums and headed out to the limo that would take them back to the Beverly Hills Hilton, the place where she and Kate's friendship went askew many months ago. Lexi, too excited to sleep, stepped into shorts and a t-shirt and headed out to the pool with Andrew and her cell phone. If she remembered correctly, Kate was in Boston, Shaw in tow, at a marketing seminar where she was keynote speaker. Bad timing, or Kate would have been with her at the Oscars. She speed dialed Kate's number, knowing the 3-hour time difference would mean it was 7am on the east coast, and she'd catch Kate just in time before a breakfast of hard pastries and hotel coffee.

*Hey.*

*Did you see me?*

*Nice hair. Did you do it with your eyes closed or what?*

*No, I had this ornate half up-do thing happening, and every time people hugged me, it slid it out of position. I did feel like I was dressed up for prom.*

*Only better. No People magazine interviews at your Hoosier prom I'm guessing.*

*No limos either. I think I went in a Dodge Dart . Did you see the awards?*

*Steve had to wake me up near the end. We take turns sleeping when Shaw sleeps – he is such a light sleeper. I blame his psycho birth mother's genetics.*

*So how is the motherhood thing coming?*

*Oddly enough, it is very rewarding. He's a cute kid, gaining vocabulary, and freaks me out when he emulates what I do and say. Nothing like having a barely one year old saying "Oh Shit!" as his first words.*

*And you were expecting him to say "cappuccino" or "Gucci"?*

*I will teach him yet.*

*I have no doubt.*

*So how was it? Everything you imagined?*

*Well, the day started with me....*

Andrew sat back, observing his wife's intimate conversation with her best friend, sharing a history that he would never know. He'd gotten to know women a bit better through Lexi – and Kate, Jaycee, Geena, Susan and the rest of the movie going public showing how tightly knit women can be, and how that sometimes those bonds can be confining and need to be re-woven. He knew Lexi would be fine, now that she had him, but mostly her friends, supporting her and what she did.

Lexi glanced up at Andrew as he rose from his pool chair to head back to their room. She'd join him soon, when she was ready to be a wife again. But now she needed a long distance curbsit – with the one person who saw her faults, flaws, misgivings – and loved her anyhow.