

# IT'S COMPLICATED

## 1

### Thirty

**“I’m thirty years old, and my last orgasm was eight years ago.”**

**Did I say that out loud? A shocking admission. Not the fact that it has been eight years, that’s basically the truth; it’s the fact that I have admitted it. First of all, nice girls don’t talk about things like that, and secondly they are taught to *never* acknowledge that they are *lacking* in that particular area. I don’t know why, we just are.**

**But as I lay in my birthday bubble bath, I could feel the champagne fuelled rant building inside of me and I slapped away at those big fluffy white bubbles. Ineffectual, but it felt good to slap at something anyway. In my head, like an inescapable, torturous loop, these thoughts kept churning. *This is all wrong; this is not my life. I had my life carefully mapped out; okay that’s a lie, I didn’t. But I was going somewhere; I mean I had planned on going somewhere, doing something with it. How could I have gotten so.....distracted? It’s my birthday, my thirtieth birthday no less. For the love of everything holy, and that includes my one and only pair of Manolo Blahniks, this is not the way things were supposed to play out.***

**“I am supposed to be celebrating this birthday surrounded by my fabulous friends, my picture perfect children and an adoring husband. I’m supposed to serve fresh homemade cookies, like the moms in commercials and effortlessly balance my successful career with ‘girl**

**time', whatever that is. I'm supposed to have finally figured all this shit out." I stared blankly at the tile.**

**Only I hadn't. I couldn't even decide which shit I was supposed to figure. I squeezed my eyes shut as tight as I could and growled. Blindly I reached around for my champagne bottle; the only thing that was going to get me through this was alcohol, and lots of it.**

**See, I don't have fabulous friends, well I have one fabulous friend but I couldn't let her see this; I was about to wallow in my misery like a pig wallows in his shit...actually I heard that pigs were rather clean animals. Off topic.....alcohol does that, I gave my own head a shake which might have been a bad idea as I instantly felt the room swim around me. I don't have picture perfect children; I don't have any children, Hell my boyfriend just walked out on me, I may never have any children....ever. After nearly ten years I have to add, he walked out after nearly ten years because that just makes it all the more horrible. He left me for a twenty year old HR girl. I hate HR.....**

**Which leaves me with my successful career. "Ha!" Opps, said that out loud again, but 'ha' anyway. I'm a bartender. Yes, a bartender. This gives me plenty of access to vast quantities of alcohol, which could actually prove dangerous in my current state of mind.**

**It's all messed up. Or was it me? Was I missing something? I mean besides the illusive orgasm? I was so confused. I raised the champagne bottle to my lips and finished it; I had no idea where I dropped my glass so I tossed the bottle too. I was going to be real mad at myself in the morning when I had to clean this all up, but at that particular moment I couldn't begin to count how many shits I didn't give.**

**"I'm thirty freaking years old today and I kind of feel.....duped. Question is who did the duping....the 'duper'... Is that even a word? Happy freaking birthday to me."**

**Blackness.**

**Morning came all too soon. I was awoken abruptly by the sound of a door slamming, I unhappily, although not surprisingly, found myself wrapped around the toilet. Apparently I had passed out there at some point during my birthday bubble bath. Beautiful, just one more thing to make me feel fan-freaking-thirty-tastic.**

**Pulling myself up I was instantly assaulted by a thousand tiny knives slamming in to my head....I didn't even bother with the whole 'I'm never drinking again' spiel; I stopped lying to myself years ago. Whimpering slightly I finally made it upright and splashed some cold water on my face. I stared at myself in the mirror. I looked awful. My dark blonde hair was standing on end, of course it was, I had slept on the bathroom floor, my eyes were red and swollen and my face had a green tinge to go along with the tile prints embedded on my cheek. Crap, crap and crap.**

**"Kris! I'm coming up!"**

**Crap and double crap again, my heart skipped a beat and began thumping ferociously in my chest. That was Danny, ex-boyfriend and rat bastard of the year. Maybe he remembered my birthday, maybe he felt sorry about missing it and came over to apologise? Why else would he be here so early? I mean, he hadn't officially moved out yet so obviously he still had keys but still..... Yesterday was my birthday, my thirtieth and he more than anyone in the world knows how freaked I have been about it. My mind instantly ran through every possible reason for him to be running up my stairs.**

**He may be a rat bastard, but he was my rat bastard and I loved him. Quickly I looked down, I was wearing an over sized Metallica tee-shirt and long johns.....his. Not sexy, but there was no time to change; I could hear him clomping up the stairs so I madly brushed my hair and**

**teeth. I opened the door quickly, but not too quickly, I didn't want to risk falling down in front of him. That would be a dead giveaway.**

**"God Kriss, you look awful." He leaned in closer and sniffed, I felt the blood flood my cheeks. "Did you get sick? Are those my long johns?" He wrinkled his nose.**

**Now fully awake I realised that there was a lot of noise going on downstairs. And then it hit me. He's moving out, he's moving out right now and he could care less about my birthday. He could care less about me.**

**"You're moving out today?" I asked with more than a little hurt. He hadn't even bothered to talk to me about it, a head's up would have been nice. Softened the blow. "I didn't even know you had a place yet." This is all happening so quickly, I thought desperately, I only found out about her last week. Seriously, I can hardly even process any of this yet.**

**I closed my eyes, leaning against the doorframe and wished fervently that I would wake up, and this would all be some horrible dream. Kind of like when Pam woke up in Dallas, and that whole crappy season had just been her dream, and Bobby was alive and in the shower? Yes, I watch Dallas re-runs. Dynasty too, just saying.**

**"Yeah well I'm going to stay at Tina's for the time being." He said as he casually breezed by me in to the bedroom. *Our* bedroom. Tina was the baby HR girl that I wanted to fling my feces at. "I have everything I want from the main floor; I just need from the bedroom and bathroom."**

**Several unknown guys paraded up the stairs and burst in to the bedroom. *My* bedroom, nearly knocking me over in the process, might I add. Although, in my current state, that wouldn't take too much effort. My jaw dropped as they began stripping my bed.**

**“What are you doing? That’s my bed!” I squeaked in outrage, too hung-over to attempt stopping them.**

**“Come on Kriss, we bought it together, and I left you the table.” He shrugged and the boys began taking the mattress off. “And apparently you don’t use it anyway.” He added gesturing to my face prints.**

**“Yeah well it’s my bedding.” I mumbled completely embarrassed as I grabbed my blankets and sheets from the big burly guy closest to me, giving him my best scowl. He didn’t even notice.**

**I cradled my bedding close to me and did my best to stalk out of the room. I would not, could not let him see me cry.**

**They made good time with that bed, quickly taking it apart and down the stairs. I looked out the window, yup there it was; Danny’s new shiny sports car parked right in front of the moving truck. And there *she* was, the boyfriend stealing baby HR girl. Now I’m not an idiot, I know she wouldn’t be able to steal him if he didn’t want to be stolen, but I had to blame someone and she was a damn good target. Least she had enough sense not to come in the house; I might have really started flinging my feces at her. But I think that had less to do with her good sense and more to do with Danny’s better judgment; he knew me very well. And he should.**

**“Seriously, what’s it like dating someone who basically just started voting anyway?” I asked in my most innocent voice, irritated by the very sight of her. The sight of her...the very thought of her made me want to cut her out of my mind like a piece of construction paper, wad her in to a ball and spit her out of a pen. How very ‘thirty’ of me.**

**He sighed his best ‘oh so long suffering’ sigh before answering me. “Kriss, I don’t want to get in to this.”**

**“I’m just curious, I mean do you explain all of the big words to her.....or maybe you just tell her what she should do and-“ I started before he cut me off.**

**“I don’t have time for this.” He snapped.**

**“Of course you don’t. You’re a walking talking cliché, you know that right?” It was the best I had. I didn’t even know where to aim.**

**He spun around. “Kriss, I’m an engineer, you’re a waitress....think about it.” But sure knew where, he always had. “And those are my long johns.” He gestured with his hand.**

**“Are you fucking serious? You want me to take them off....right now?”**

**Impatiently he snapped his fingers. I took a close look in to his eyes and I was crushed to see absolutely nothing there. Not anymore. How could it possibly have come to this? It was unfathomable that this could have happened to us.....what would I do without him? Who would I be? How could I be?**

**Numbly I pulled them off and handed the long johns to him. Without a word he grabbed them and turned his back on me as he left the room.**

**“Bartender, I’m a bartender.” I managed before the tears escaped my careful control and made their way down my cheek.**

**I stood there in my over sized Metallica shirt until I was certain he was gone. Slowly I made my way down the stairs to survey what was left of my life.**

**The place was in shambles, not unlike myself. As I gazed at the remnants of my life with Danny I realised that not only was I going to have to reconstruct my home, I was going to have to reconstruct myself.**

**I am thirty years old; I’m starting over.**

## **2**

**So I took a vacation from work, role reversal, this time / was the one doing the drinking. And drink I did. I got so good at the wine drinking, that all of the cashiers at the local wine market knew me by name...they started suggesting new wines for me daily. I tried them all. I made pyramids with my empty bottles. Seriously, I did.**

**I sat at home on my computer, staring at my Facebook, constantly changing from 'in a relationship' to 'single' and back again. I toasted each choice. Finally I settled on something I could feel right about.**

**'It's Complicated.' I liked that, I toasted it too. Several times.**

**And then it happened.**

**It started innocently enough, a tiny meow as I trudged back to my car with my latest quarry from the wine market. I looked down, and noticed the cutest little tabby cat sitting pitifully on the curb. I reached out towards her and she shivered, but bravely stood still as my hand carefully stroked her nose. She was so tiny and wet and skinny, on impulse I scooped her up and held her closely to my chest. Someone had abandoned her, just like someone had abandoned me, I promised her she would never be alone again. Instantly I knew we were kindred spirits and I headed towards the grocery store for cat food.**

**That was Imelda. Pax was a huge black tom cat that accidentally got stuck in my garage, I kept him too. Then came Jinx, Orion and Tabitha.**

**My house was full. I spent a few days drinking wine, eating ice cream and pizza, and lying about with my cats. I didn't wear any makeup, I didn't comb my hair...I didn't even bother putting pants on. It was wonderful.**

**And then the doorbell rang.**

**I tried to ignore it like any woman in my state would, but whomever it was on the other side of the door was just as determined as me...perhaps even more so. Cursing under my breath, I slowly disentangled myself from my cats and tied my robe around me. Arranging my face in to my best mean tempered scowl, I threw the door open.**

**Shit balls. Busted. It was Amanda.**

**Amanda has been my best friend since grade school, I have no idea why, we are complete opposites.**

**Amanda, is beautiful, tall, dark haired and can only be described as sultry. Sensuous...sexy...all the really cool 'S' words, they all work for her. She always looks immaculate, smells like an angel, and is an incredibly successful real-estate agent. She drives a great car, and wears real jewelry. She is also a serial dater. That is her only flaw, and she doesn't consider it a flaw, so I guess she really is perfect.**

**I, on the other hand, am not beautiful. My hair is okay...but only if I wash it every day, I love cargo pants and tank tops, over sized concert T's, and I live on tips. I am on the absolute opposite end of perfect, and I know it. I used to be happy.**

**She swept in to my home, extra large coffees and doughnuts in hand and surveyed the damage. I had a kitchen table and six beautiful chairs, I had a bookcase and an end table that currently supported my television. I had piled a bunch of pillows on the carpet in front of the television, where me and my cats snuggled as we watched daytime**

**drama. I followed her gaze and noticed the faint outlines on the walls where the pictures Danny and I had picked out, used to hang. I guess I should have washed the walls, it was a little morbid, like ghosts on the wall.**

**“Drink this.” She whispered in her sexy, throaty voice, as she handed me a steaming cup of coffee.**

**I took it, because as much as I love wine, and believe me, I love wine; I would do anything for a fresh cup of dark Columbian coffee from our favorite coffee shop.**

**Pax, fatty that he is, missed his jump and crashed in to my orderly stack of empty wine bottles, just as I took my first sip. Amanda took a sudden step backwards in her impossibly high heels.**

**“That’s Pax. I have cats now.” I nodded as I informed my uncommonly quiet friend, who was staring at me in the most uncomfortable way.**

**Amanda took a deep breath and handed me the box of doughnuts. Immediately Orion and Jinx jumped up to investigate.**

**“I haven’t arrived a moment too soon!” She declared, squinting at me. “You look horrible.”**

**“Thanks.” I replied with more than just an edge of sarcasm. “Cause that’s exactly what I need to hear right now.” I bit in to a delicious and fresh, chocolate doughnut.**

**I knew I looked horrible, what with my unwashed hair in a screwy bun on my head, my floppy socks and cat hair robe, I didn’t need her reminding me. Suddenly I wanted the wine again, I let me eyes wander around the room in search of an un-empty bottle.**

**“Sweetie,” She began cautiously, which was completely out of character for Amanda. “Where did all of these cats come from?” She gestured vaguely at my kitties.**

**I bit my lip. I knew how it looked, I could just imagine what she was thinking.**

**“Well, Imelda was starving, Pax—he’s the big, black fatty, he got stuck in my garage. I don’t know how I ended up with Orion and Jinx, but Tabitha needs me—she’s pregnant.” It seemed all perfectly reasonable to me. I tried to smile brightly, but it felt strange on my face, foreign.**

**Amanda gave me the saddest look. “Oh Sweetie, I am so sorry.” She embraced me tightly, again...out of character. “I should have been here sooner, it’s far worse than I had thought.”**

**I struggled out of her embrace, I didn’t want to get cat hair all over her impressive black suit.**

**“Amanda, I am fine. I am happy.” I assured her, draining my coffee. I had to admit, the coffee had been just what I needed.**

**Amanda just made these clucking noises under her breath as she paced around my empty living room. I took the opportunity to devour another doughnut.**

**“Sit down, will you? You’re freaking me out.” I pointed to the bed of pillows on the floor, my mouth full of honey dipped.**

**Amanda shook her head. “You are becoming the ‘Cat Lady’. And we all know what happens to ‘Crazy Cat Ladies’.” She announced dramatically, her carefully outlined eyes wide and horrified.**

**Instantly I was irritated, Crazy Cat Lady, indeed. Seriously. Come to think of it, who labeled Cat Ladies crazy? Huh? Maybe everyone else was crazy. Maybe Cat Ladies were cool. I was beginning to think becoming a Cat Lady didn’t sound so bad after all. It sounded safe.**

**“I’m not a Crazy Cat Lady.” I indignantly sniffed anyway, as Jinx sailed through the air and landed at my feet. Absently I leaned down and stroked his back, taking pride in his tractor like purr.**

**“You haven’t been to work, you are filling your house with cats, not to mention your hair! What more is there?” Amanda countered with a shrug.**

**“I took vacation time and I am filling my house with love. You leave my hair out of it!” Self consciously I reached back and attempted to smooth my frazzled bun.**

**“Where did they come from?” She asked dubiously again, as she pointed to my cats, which were milling about the living room in curiosity..**

**“Around. They were just there...abandoned, alone...unloved....” I stopped, as I realised that not only was I describing my cats, I was describing myself.**

**And just like that, I broke. I began sobbing, great heaving sobs, tears rolling off my face in torrents. Amanda sat down beside me and wrapped her arm around my shoulder, murmuring comfortingly at me. And that is what I love about Amanda, she didn’t get me fired up, all women empowerment style, she didn’t add one of her own stories so I wouldn’t feel all alone, and best of all, she didn’t try to fix me. She just let me cry it out, and believe me, there is nothing like a good cry when you need it.**

**When I finally stopped shuddering. She brought me a warm cloth and let me wipe my face clean.**

**“Can I sue him for pain and suffering?” I asked, only half joking.**

**“Humiliation?” I added as I remembered the long john fiasco.**

**“.....weight gain?”**

**My perfectly beautiful friend laughed. “Honey, if that were possible I would be a millionaire.”**

**And I was just about to call bullshit, since Amanda would never let any of this happen to her and her curves were, and have always been**

**perfect, when she said something that peaked my curiosity...just a little bit.**

**“Have no fear, I your magnificent Amanda, have it all worked out for you.”**

**And so she had. Enter Daisy.**

**Amanda decided that I needed a roommate, something I was loathe to commit too. To be honest, I have never really had a wide circle of women friends; aside from Amanda, everyone else is merely an acquaintance. Usually I feel like I’m missing some vital pages from the girlfriends manual, I get so lost, so I wasn’t exactly keen on opening my house and sharing my life with another unknown woman. But, on account of Amanda’s glowing reference...I agreed to meet her. That and the fact that Amanda scares me sometimes.**

**And Amanda knows exactly how to steamroll a floppy person like me.**

**Apparently this ‘Daisy’ was on her way back from Europe, on the heels of a romance gone bad. I could just imagine what kind of drama queen *she* would be, there was no way we were going to get along. Anyone who travels around Europe, finding and losing love along the beaches of Madrid or wherever, well we weren’t the type of girls that would have anything much to talk about. I was expecting a statuesque supermodel, like Amanda herself, to come striding through imperiously. So in no way was I prepared for the tiny, curly haired strawberry blonde, in a bright red jacket, that came bounding down the escalator towards us. Did I mention cute? She was very cute. I hate cute.**

**Her eyes were wide and innocent, and her sweet little voice was going off a mile a minute. I had to concentrate, really hard, to keep up. I**

leaned in, a look of amazement must have crossed my face because I felt my jaw drop at the sheer speed of her words.

**“Oh my goodness, you wouldn’t believe my flight! It was amazing, except for the all the turbulence, but I didn’t get sick—so it was okay, there was this super cute steward or flight attendant, whatever they’re called, anyway he was really smoldering on this dark, mysterious Mediterranean way and—there he is now!”** She waved frantically at an intensely attractive man.

Okay, she had good taste, I would give her that much. He was delicious. He continued looking completely edible as an equally delicious gentleman enveloped him in an amorous embrace. They did look good together, I cast a sidelong look at Daisy.

**“Well, at least I know why he didn’t ask for my number.”** She decided happily. **“You must be Kriss.”** And then she reached over and hugged me. I was shocked, and maybe a little appalled, I wasn’t much of a hugger and I didn’t know her. I gingerly patted her shoulders back, hiding my grimace, she was just so full of energy, she kind of scared me. **“We are going to have so much fun together!”** She declared with a nod.

Hmmm, I decided to put her to the test.

**“Do you like cats?”** I asked innocently. Amanda bit her perfectly red lip, in an attempt to stifle a laugh.

**“Sure.”** The curly-sue chirped. **“Cats are great.”**

**“Good.”** I replied smoothly, confident in the fact that she would take one look at my ‘pride’ and run screaming all the way back to San Jamardo, or wherever. Good riddance, cute little curly sue on speed.

**But, that is how the whirlwind, that is Daisy, entered my house...and my life.**

# 3

**Curly Sue, AKA Daisy, did in fact like cats, and what is more...cats liked her. I sighed heavily as I realised that my original plan to send her packing wasn't going to work out quite as planned, and I was way to chicken to go about it openly.**

**She happily moved herself in to the guest room, Pax moved in with her.**

**Within the space of a week, I learned three very important things about Daisy. The first was that she loved to cook and clean, and she was really, really good at both. The second, was that she was actually pretty good at just about anything, she could rotate my tires, fix my computer and hem my pants, just to name a few things. And lastly, and perhaps most importantly, Daisy was a consummate Star Wars fan. Daisy had a way to relate anything, and I mean *anything* back to a specific situation that almost always involved Han Solo or Luke Skywalker, or Vader... She called them the Holy Trilogies. I kid you not. But I think she was a serious geek, cause I saw 'The Lord of the Rings' trilogy, and seasons upon seasons of Star Trek, ranging from the original series, Next Generation,...Voyager. I think I even saw comics. Not joking. But since she made really good lasagna and brownies, I didn't say anything.**