

*"Did I keep you waiting?
I apologize
I will wait forever just to know you were mine
You know I love your hair
I love what you wear
You're exceptional
I can't wait for the rest of my life*

*This is it
I finally found someone
Someone to share my life
I finally found the one to be with every night
Cause whatever I do it's just got to be you
My life has just begun
I finally found someone"*
~ "I Finally Found Someone" Bryan Adams and Barbra Streisand

"OK Wildcats, great session, now off to your dorms. Lights out in 30." I said as my group went their own directions. I turned around and saw my dad, Rocky, standing there. "Hey Daddy, what brings you to the lodge?" I asked hugging him.

"I came to tell you the good news." He said.

"What news?" I asked.

"Well, two things actually, first of all I found a house here in Reefside and a place to open up Blue Dragon mark 3 so I'm staying in Reefside."

"Oh that's wonderful!" I cried.

"And the other thing is Aisha and I have decided we don't want to wait anymore. We're going to have a very small ceremony. We're getting married tomorrow."

My jaw dropped. "What?!"

"As of tomorrow Aisha will be your stepmother and as soon as the adoption papers come through Tamara will be your new sister." Daddy said.

I shook my head, "No! She will not be my sister! Not tomorrow, not ever! I'm so sick of sisters! Savannah isn't my sister, Arissa isn't my sister, and Tamara most definitely isn't my sister! You know who is my sister? Felicity, that's who, she's the only sister I've got!" I cried running off.

"Harley! Get back here!" he called after me.

I ignored him and kept going. I was furious. Where did my three parents get off throwing me sisters like this? I was just fine as an only child, then Felicity came along, and I admit, I was less than thrilled at first but now I couldn't imagine life without her. This was entirely different though. Savannah lied about being my sister, Tamara wasn't even related to me, and Arissa was trying to kill me. Would you accept them?

DJ

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I had just finished practicing at the track; I had to be ready to take Harley down. I was loading up my bike when Arissa walked up to me.

"What do you want?" I asked.

"What a greeting." She said, pretending to sound hurt.

"What did you expect Arissa? You turned me down twice when I asked you out."

"What if I changed my answer?"

"What's in it for you?"

“A small favor.”

“Thanks, but no thanks, I don’t do deal dates.”

“It’s nothing major, just curious about something...I really do want to go out with you.”

“I might end up regretting this, but what are you curious about?”

“Well, I heard about this old ninja myth, that there’s this thing called the Gem of Souls. It looks really pretty and I was just wondering if it existed and being as your parents were ninjas I thought they might know something about it, so maybe you could ask them, since ya know I don’t think any ninja would even talk to me. If you can tell me if it exists and where I can find it I’ll go out with you anytime, and maybe even throw in some perks as well.” Arissa said smirking.

I swallowed hard, Arissa just offered herself to me, “Let me see what I can do.”

“Great, I’ll meet you here tomorrow at lunch time...just one more thing...” she said as she kissed me passionately, “Just a reminder what you’ll be getting.”

I just stared at her as she walked away. She was so incredible.

Harley

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“I won’t accept her! I won’t!” I cried as I paced back and forth in the living room of my parents’ house.

“Harley, calm down.” Mom said.

“Yeah, this isn’t the end of the world. So what if Rocky is adopting Tamara?” Dad asked.

“She isn’t my sister!” I cried.

“She’s just as much your sister as Lindsey is your cousin. Remember, Blake is only my brother through adoption.” Dad said.

“That is totally different. You and Uncle Blake have a bond tighter than blood and Lindsey is my cousin. Tamara is not my sister, and it has nothing to do with blood because Arissa and Savannah aren’t my sisters either, just the little girl sleeping upstairs, that’s it.” I said continuing to pace.

“So then if it isn’t about blood why won’t you accept Tamara?” Mom asked.

“Because she’s purposely trying to horn in on my family.” I said.

“Rocky is about to be her family too sweetie.” Mom said.

“I don’t care! She had a dad and she lost him, Rocky is mine.” I said.

“But you have me.” Dad said.

“Yeah, and I have to share you with Arissa of all people!” I cried.

Dad sighed, “I know this isn’t easy to accept Har...”

“Easy? Try impossible!”

“Harley...”

“Don’t even Dad...just don’t even. I’m going to bed.” I said leaving their house and heading back to the dorm.

On my way back to the dorms I ran into Tamara.

“Watch where you’re going.” I said.

“Sorry...you ran into me anyway.” She said.

“I did not. You fully ran into me. Anyway what are you doing out here?”

“We ran out of bottled water so I went to get some from the kitchen in the lodge.”

“So now you’re stealing my water!”

“What? Harley? What is your problem?”

“You being a thief. You tried to steal my job with the Wildcats, you are trying to steal my dad, now you steal my water.”

“You’re being beyond ridiculous Harley.”

“Am I?”

“Yes, you are.”

“Whatever, just stay out of my way Tamara, cause if you don’t I will make you pay.”

Stacy

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“I don’t care, that is unacceptable.” I said into the phone.

“But, Ms. Fernandez, it was an innocent mistake.” The supervisor on the other end said.

“That ‘innocent mistake’ has cost this company thousands of dollars.”

“But ma’am...”

“But ma’am...” I mocked, “Just fire him, I don’t want any excuses.” I said hanging up the phone.

“Turning into your dear old dad?” Noah asked walking in.

“How long have you been standing there?” I asked.

“Long enough to tell you sounds just like Trent Fernandez, and I don’t mean that in a good way. You need to get out of here, it’s already almost midnight.”

“But I have work to do.”

“No buts, remember our deal.”

I sighed, “Fine, a deal’s a deal.”

Noah laughed and pulled me away from my desk and into his arms, “Let’s go back to your place and I’ll show you how good the deal can be.”

I giggled, “I think I like that idea.”

We went back to Fernandez Estates and had some quick dinner before going to the master suite. I wrapped my arms around Noah’s neck and kissed him. He lifted me up and carried me to the bed...needless to say it didn’t take long for me to forget about work.

After Noah and I finished our ‘fun’ I rested my head on his chest and he held me close.

“I really like spending time with you.” I said.

“I like it too...I worry about you sometimes Stace.” He said.

“Worry? About me? Why?”

“Because, you’ve fought for so long to be different from your father and I can see you following in his footsteps. You’re getting sucked in.”

“I am not. I’m doing what I have to until he’s released.”

“I hope that’s true, cause I would hate to see you end up like Trent.”

“I won’t...I’m smarter than that.”

Noah nodded, “Yeah, you are.” He said getting up.

“Noah, don’t go home. Will you stay here with me tonight?” I asked.

Noah looked at me then nodded, “Yeah, ok. I’d like that.” He said getting back in bed and pulling me back into his arms. I closed my eyes and started to dose off.

DJ

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I gave some thought to Arissa’s deal and decided to do what she wanted. I mean what could it hurt? I went to my parents for breakfast the next morning and sat down at the table with my dad.

“I have a question.” I said.

“What’s that?” Dad asked.

“Um...well when I was dating Harley she mentioned some ninja legend about something called the Gem of Souls. She never finished explaining what it was and I was just curious.” I said.

“The Gem of Souls is not just ninja folklore, it’s real. Harley should know that, her father holds one of the shards to it.” Dad said.

“Rocky?” I asked.

“No, Hunter. Hunter used the Gem to protect the first group of Ninja Storm Rangers once. In the process it shattered into...I believe 5 shards...anyway Cam threw 3 of the shards into the sea but Hunter hid two. He kept them hidden for awhile...eventually they needed them. After they were finished using the shards Hunter kept one of the shards and Cam took the other. It was kind of like a symbol of love between them. I think they each still have their part of the Gem...does that answer your question?” Dad asked.

I nodded, “Yeah...thanks.”

After breakfast I went to class. Noah and I had the same class and he walked in 10 minutes late...this was after he never

even came home last night. That wasn't like him at all, he was normally the responsible twin.

"Where were you?" I whispered.

"At Stacy's." he replied.

"All night?" I asked.

He nodded.

"I wonder what you were doing." I mumbled.

"Noah and Dustin, would you like us to stop and wait for you to finish?" the professor asked.

"Sorry sir." Noah said.

"And I prefer DJ sir, thanks." I said.

The professor just glared and continued.

After class I stopped Noah.

"So are you and Stacy serious?" I asked

"Yeah, I think it's getting that way." He said.

"Are you sure that's smart? I mean she's Aunt Kira's daughter."

"So? She's not Uncle Conner's."

I nodded. "Point...just be careful."

"Like you care. You've never cared before DeeJ, why start now?" Noah asked walking away.

I sighed and headed for the track to meet with Arisaa.

When I got there she was waiting.

"Hey you, did you find out what I wanted to know?" Arissa asked.

I nodded, "Yeah, well it turns out the Gem of Souls is real and it exists in 5 shards. 3 are in the sea and Hunter and Cam have the other two, one each."

"Oh really? Cool, thanks DJ, I owe you."

"Why is this so important?"

"It's not really, I'm just a gem stone collector and I was curious about the Gem of Souls." She said.

"Oh ok. Listen, you don't have to go out with me if you really don't want to."

"I do want to...I really do. Pick me up at Cyberspace, say 7?"

I nodded, "See you then."

Arisa

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This was too perfect. My father had one shard and Cam had the other. Getting Hunter's wouldn't be easy but I was fairly sure that I could get Cam's. From what I knew he had a son and men could be charmed...I also knew from Josh that this son Cam had was Harley's ex-boyfriend who screwed her over royally. A little shape shifting and that shard would be mine!

First I had to figure out where the Thunder Ninja Academy was. I was pretty sure that's where Cam and his family were. That wouldn't be hard though. I just needed to pay a visit to my dear old Dad...maybe scope out the other shard while I was at it.

I went to the Academy and peaked in the window of Hunter's house. It was lunch time and Felicity was attempting to eat some cereal while Michelle grabbed Hunter's hands and made him dance with her in the kitchen. He pulled her close and they kissed, then Felicity started throwing cereal at them. They laughed and Hunter kissed Felicity's head while Michelle cleaned up the cereal Felicity had gotten all over the kitchen and herself. I sighed.

Michelle really did seem to love Hunter and her daughters...she seemed to really care about the fate of the Earth and Saturn. How could she be all that and a cold blooded killer?

My focus went back to Hunter. He was leaving the house. Michelle was staying behind with Felicity. I ran over to Hunter.

“Hey.” I said.

“Arisa...what do you want? Should I be watching Michelle and Harley?” he asked.

“No, this isn’t a ploy to kidnap them...I just want to talk...get to know you better...I know you were a ninja right? At the Thunder Ninja Academy?”

“Yeah.”

“Did you just study ninja skills or did you go to high school?”

“I went to high school?”

“Really? Where at?”

“Thousand Oaks High.”

“Really? You lived in Thousand Oaks, California?” I asked.

“Yeah, well being as that’s where the Academy is it was the logical choice.”

Bingo. “Wow...so did you enjoy school?”

“It was ok. I preferred Ninja training. I really don’t have time for this Arissa. I have a lot of work to do. Graduation is coming up which means extra paperwork.”

I nodded, “Oh of course. I’m sorry...I’ll see you later.” I turned to leave.

“Hey...wait.”

I turned back around, “What?”

“I love you Arissa...I really do.”

I stared at him, wide-eyed, and watched him walk away.

Great, as if I wasn’t wishy-washy enough...

I decided to put off my trip to Thousand Oaks till tomorrow...I really needed time to think...and to get ready for my date, which Aunt Aria could not find out about.

On my way to find a place where Aunt Aria wouldn’t find me I ran into DJ again.

“You stalking me or something?” I teased.

“I think it’s fate.” He joked.

“Maybe...”

“Since you’re here you wanna get lunch?”

“Sure. Why not?”

“OK, how about Reefside Café?”

“Ok, let’s go.” I said walking off with him.

Harley

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“Harley, please, I really want you at my wedding.” Dad (Rocky) begged.

“No. You’ll have Tamara there, you won’t need me.” I said.

“You’re being silly Har...of course I need you there, you’re my daughter.”

“So is Tamara now.”

He sighed, “I have to go get Adam and Mina from the airport, please reconsider, I’ll be back soon.”

I watched him leave and I went to go find Josh. He was in the lodge.

“Har? What’s the matter sweetie?” he asked hugging me.

“I don’t want my father to get married.” I said hugging him back. I felt so safe in his arms.

“You don’t want him to get married or you don’t want him to adopt Tamara?”

“I...I guess I don’t want him to adopt Tamara.”

“Don’t you want your father to be happy?”

“Of course.”

“Well, it looks like Aisha makes him happy.”

“And he does deserve that after what Mom and Dad did to him.”

“Huh...oh right...I’ll never get used to you having two dads...anyway, I think you should go to the wedding and show your support for your father.”

I sighed, "I hate it when you're right...will you at least go with me?"

"Of course." He said kissing me.

"No PDAs in the lodge!" April called from the Wildcats' lunch table.

I laughed, "It's like having kids."

"No kidding, you want to go get lunch elsewhere?" Josh asked.

I nodded, "Sounds good. Hey Wildcats! I'll be back!"

"Don't do anything I wouldn't do!" Chris called.

"And that would be what exactly?" Derek asked.

"Nothing." Tiffany giggled.

I rolled my eyes and Josh and I headed for town.

"So, Cyberspace?" Josh asked.

"No." I said.

"Why? Because of Savannah? She's our sister, like it or not...oh man does that sound weird...our sister..."

I cringed, this was a reminder Mom slept with Josh's dad. "Ick, that does sound weird...but it's ok, don't call her our sister cause she isn't my sister, she's your sister if you choose to accept her but not mine."

"You guys share a mom Har, she's your sister."

"She disowned my mom."

"Actually your mom disowned her if you wanna get technical."

"Don't start with me Josh. Savannah isn't my sister, that's all there is to it. Geez, next you'll be telling me that Arissa is my sister."

"She is."

"No she isn't."

"Ok fine, I'm not gonna argue with you. If not Cyberspace then where?"

"Reefside Café is fine." I said.

We went into Reefside Café and guess who was sitting inside looking all cozy and cute. Arissa and DJ.

"What the hell? Why can't I escape these sisters!" I cried.

"I thought they weren't your sister." Josh said.

I glared, "Don't start with me."

"Sorry. You want to go somewhere else?"

"No, I want to go give your cousin a piece of my mind." I said marching over to their table, "DJ, what in the hell? After what Arissa did to Josh how can you sit here and play footsies with her?"

"Arissa is a good person, she's just misunderstood." DJ said.

"Yeah, and a shark is a vegetarian. Give me a break. She's tried to kill me God knows how many times, she played with Josh's head, she pretended to be me, she's trying to kill my mother...how can you date her?"

"Get off it Harley, you have no right to tell me anything, you dumped me, remember? Josh, will you please control your girlfriend?"

"Control me? I'll show you control."

"Har, come on babe, let's just go." Josh said pulling me away.

"Fine. But when she tries to kill you don't come crying to me." I said taking off. I hated that smug look on Arissa's face.

"Let's go Josh."

We ended up getting fast food and eating on the way to the chapel.

"Are you ok?" Josh asked.

"Fine." I mumbled. I saw my father and some of his friends were already there.

"You're going in right?" Josh asked.

I nodded, "Yeah, yeah, I'm going."

Josh helped me out of the car and we went inside. Dad was right, this was a small wedding. Uncle Tommy, Uncle Jason, Aunt Kim, Aunt Kat, Adam, Mina, Tamara, and Mom were the only ones there.

"Mom?" I asked.

"Sweetie, I'm glad you decided to come." She said.

"What are you doing here" I asked.

“Well, once upon a time Aisha was one of my best friends and believe it or not I do still care about your father and I want him to be happy.”

“Where’s Dad...the one you’re married to?” I asked.

“At the Academy. He had too much paperwork to do.” Mom said.

I nodded, I knew he was really busy with pending graduations.

“You should go find your father.” Josh said.

I nodded, “Ok.”

I went and found him talking to the preacher.

“Hi Daddy.” I said softly.

“Harley. I’m so glad you’re here.” He said hugging me.

I started crying as he hugged me, “I just want you to be happy Daddy, I really do...I just...I don’t want to lose you.”

“You’ll never lose me sweetheart...we’ve been through too much together. You’ll always be my Princess.”

I started crying more at the use of my nickname. “I love you Daddy.”

“I love you too Princess.”

I finally let go of him, “OK, well I think there’s a wedding that being held up here.”

Adam took the roll of the best man and Aunt Kim was the maid of honor, all the other guests sat down and watched the wedding. It was your basic wedding, but they had written their own vows.

“Aisha, we’ve known each other for so long and yet somehow I managed to over look what a truly amazing woman you were. I let myself be blinded by a feeling I only thought was true love. You are who I’m truly meant to be with, who I’ve always been meant to be with. I love you baby and I am so happy to finally be able to stand here with you. I promise you my love and loyalty forever.” Dad said.

I looked at home, that had to sting some. I mean, “blinded by a feeling I only thought was true love”? Damn.

“Rocky, I did have true love once before and when I lost it never thought I could love again. You reopened my heart. You showed me that there is still some good in the world and that love can happen more than once. You took me and my daughter in during our darkest time and accepted us as your family and I will never be able to thank you enough for that. You’re everything to me, my best friend, my love...everything. I pledge to be true and love you until the day I die.” Aisha said.

They got pronounced man and wife and that was that. Everyone did the big hug and congratulations thing. Even Mom hugged Daddy. Aisha walked up to me.

I took a deep breath, “Congratulations Aisha, welcome to the family.”

“Thank you Harley.” She said hugging me.

“Be good to him.”

“Of course...I hear congratulations are also in order for you, you and Josh finally got together.”

I smiled, “Why does everyone keep saying finally? Did everyone know we were meant to be together except me?”

“Actually baby, yeah.” Josh said kissing my cheek, “Congratulations Aisha.” He said hugging her.

“Thank you Josh.” She said, then she went to greet other guests.

“I’m proud of you sweetie.” Josh said hugging me.

“Thanks...maybe this will be the end of my sisters popping up out of nowhere.” I said.

“So you’re ready to accept Tamara as you sister?”

“Oh not a chance. Nothing’s changed, except I got a pretty decent step mom.”

“Two dads, a mother, and a step mom...you have one messed up family Har.”

“No kidding...Rocky would technically be my step father, except he’s been my father since I was born so that kinda makes Hunter my step father, but he’s my blood father...you’re right, my family is confusing.”

“Hey, the McKnights are not exactly simple.”

“Maybe that’s why we fit together so well. We’re both from screwed up families.”

Josh laughed and we headed for the car. “Maybe so.”

