

## Daredevil

Josie can barely breathe. She doesn't know what to say. All she knows is that her friend is holding up her right hand, and her ring finger sparkles. *Is that a real diamond?* Josie wonders.

Lily is the first to break the silence with a high-pitched gasp. "Oh my... Vic. This is so... wow." She spares tiny, quick glances to Josie, in the seat next to her. Josie doesn't meet her friend's eyes. She can't. She's too enamored by the rock that shines brightly in her line of vision.

Victoria smiles, and shrugs her shoulders. "Thank you, thank you. I know, it's a bit shocking that I'm the first one to settle down, but what can I say? It just happened." The two girls turn to Josie. One of them with a genuine curiosity of what's about to be said and the other with an expectation that something well-wishing and supportive will be said. Only Josie knows which is which.

"Wow... that's amazing. Drew proposed?" Josie forces a smile on her face, and tries to keep her tone of voice neutral. She can not let Victoria know what she's truly feeling.

"No, I did. But he said yes! I knew it was time, anyway. It was always meant to be." Victoria pushes strands of jet black hair behind her shoulders and admires her ring, not even attempting to hold eye contact with Josie. It's better this way. Now Victoria can't see past the forced smile, or confusion plastered in her eyes. It seemed that Victoria was marrying Josie's best friend, and Josie did not know how to react.

Josie slightly recovers. "That's great. I'm happy for you." Her eyes drop down to gaze at the large rock on her friend's finger. Josie admires the diamond; how it shines and sparkles under the fluorescence. It's beautiful. *It's a lie* Josie thinks to herself. It's a beautiful lie that Victoria is overjoyed to believe, but deep down Josie knows the truth. She knows that Drew doesn't love Victoria enough, at least not enough to marry her. But what could she do? Honesty might be the

best policy, but this was the real world. That rule might be the key to solving a missing cookie out of the cookie jar kind of mystery, but these were adults dealing with love, or a lack of it, and everyone knows what they say about love. It makes you crazy.

As the girls finished their “Girl’s Night!” dinner at the luxurious restaurant that Victoria paid for (naturally), Victoria couldn’t stop herself from slowly cracking the glass that Josie refuses to let shatter. All topics of the future came up. “Do you think it’s too early to ask Drew about baby names? He will be my husband after all.” “Where should we have it? I want it fancy, but not too pretentious.” “You guys *have* to help me pick out my dress, it’s a must.” “Honeymoon? I was thinking Turks and Caicos but I also *love* Aruba.” Josie couldn’t believe Drew said yes. On the other hand he probably accepted her proposal just to get her to shut up. But the idea of Drew marrying Victoria set Josie on fire more than she thought it would. Josie loved Drew, it’s practically written in stone. That wasn’t the issue. It was the fact that she knew she meant more to him. She knew that Drew didn’t love Victoria the way he loved her. So why did he say yes? Why was he pretending to want a future with her friend when they both know that’s far from what he really wants? The whole night was filled with these questions, and while Victoria couldn’t stop talking about her nuptials, Josie couldn’t stop thinking about how guilty she felt for knowing something that Victoria didn’t. Something about Victoria was that she never liked being in the dark, but Josie didn’t know how she could bring Victoria to the light without exposing herself. Now the guilt was eating away at Josie more than ever. What was she going to do?

Josie gave Victoria a hug before she left the restaurant. She squeezed her tight and told her how proud and happy she was for her. She didn’t mean any of it. She really tried to. Walking away, Josie examined the bright city lights. Josie loved the city. She grew up here. It’s where

most of her life happened. The important stuff. The things that made her Josie Nichols. Stepping down into the subway station, Josie recalls the days when she would ride the trains to school. Ever since she was little, subway stations were the only way she got from place to place. But it wasn't the station she was remembering. It was the people she traveled with. She can see it now, her and Drew running around the platform, playing tag dangerously, screaming and hollering or her and Lily traveling to the bookstore a couple of stops away from their neighborhoods. Josie can only think of one time Victoria took the train with her, but that was long ago. Recently it felt like Victoria and Josie were detaching themselves from each other. It's possibly the reason why Josie took so many liberties. But it wasn't fair to Victoria that she took a chance with Drew and thinks he's wholeheartedly taking that chance with her. No one deserves that kind of oblivion.

Out of pity, or maybe responsibility, Josie removes her phone from her pocket and slides into her messages. *Congrats, I guess \*ring emoji\**. After hitting the send button, she immediately sees those three dots, indicating that somewhere Drew is typing back a response. What is he going to say? Eight words appear on the small brightly lit screen. *Are you going to let me do it?* Rolling her eyes, Josie shoves her phone into her pocket, refusing to participate in the banter she knows will come if she continues to indulge. Drew liked to banter, but he liked teasing Josie even better. The moment Josie ended things between them, Drew was frustrated. Humorlessly laughing, he told Josie that she has always been passive. Josie argued that she was being selfless, doing something for Victoria instead of herself. After recapping their entire history, beginning from highschool to now, Drew made it clear that Victoria has never been a friend to Josie, but Josie didn't feel that way. Meeting as highschool freshmen, scared and nervous to enter this part of their lives where everyone around them is telling them they're grown but they still feel like children, Victoria used to be the kind of friend that made you laugh for hours and bought you ice

cream when you cried. Then in Junior Year her parents got divorced and her mother started dating another hotshot bigtime money maker, and something about having money changed Victoria. Josie always thought Victoria never truly dealt with her feelings. Instead she bought purses and shoes and refused to heal her heart. Must be why it's so cold. Victoria's transformation came slowly, but surely. Josie remembers the three of them deciding which colleges to apply to. Josie and Victoria both coincidentally chose schools in Boston while Lily's top choice was all the way across the country. Victoria, possibly secretly hurt that someone she loved was leaving her again, told Lily that if she was going to actively pick a school that father from them than the moon was that she was selfish and shouldn't burden them with the costs of going to visit her. Lily and Josie were taken aback. Where did that hostility come from? This was eventually going to happen. Lily always talked about going to the West Coast for college. But Victoria's parents weren't divorced then, and Victoria wasn't insufferable to be friends with. Josie knows she should've cut ties with Victoria a long time ago. It's just that when you've seen the real, soft side to someone and they change, everyday you stay hoping that it will miraculously return. Out with the bitchy temperament and in with the smiles and thoughtfulness. Maybe that's why she told Drew that he should give Vic a chance. She was hoping someone would bring her best friend back.

The monotone announcement of the next arriving train pulls Josie out of her dissociation, and she stares straight ahead, waiting to board her train. As the doors open, Drew's last words of their argument come to the surface of her mind. "Let's see how long it takes for you to fight for me this time." It didn't come off as bitter or an ultimatum. It was light, sarcastic and playful. Drew was inviting Josie to play a game, and perhaps this time, he didn't want to win. He wanted her to.

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“ I don’t like how it flares, it would make me look like I’m Ariel or something. Next one.” Victoria dismisses Josie with a wave of her hand, sending her back to the dressing room.

Josie grits her teeth, attempting a grin. “ You know, Vic, you should, I don’t know, maybe try on the dresses that *you’re* planning on wearing?”

Lily nods along. “ Yeah, I mean I love playing dress up, but even this is excessive.” Victoria doesn’t speak. She doesn’t need to. All she does is give them “the look.” This is very familiar to Josie. As Victoria once put it, “ I give people this look when they ask me dumbass questions.” Of course only Victoria would classify a look that she deems she does so often, but there was no negotiation with this look. This is where Josie cuts her losses, again. She doesn’t apologize or acknowledge “the look.” Josie simply nods, turns around, and prepares to squeeze her body into the next available wedding gown.

As she struggles to unzip the one she has on, Josie replays the last hour on her mind. It begins with the girls arriving at the Bridal Shop, and Victoria complaining that they have to have such a mundane fitting experience. Victoria was supposed to hire a specific stylist, one who’s put clothes on the very backs of Beyonce and Rihanna, but unfortunately she was booked. Consequently, Victoria has to experience her gown fitting experience just like every other fiancé, much to her dismay. Except when does Victoria ever do things like everybody else? Victoria stepped in front of the mirror, decided she looked too fat to try dresses on, and “convinced” Josie to try them on for her. Of course she obliged. What are friends for? Josie takes the top of her dress and wiggles herself into it muttering and mumbling to herself as she struggles to fit herself into a “Victoria sized” dress.

After a couple minutes, Josie decides that she did the best she could and takes a few seconds to compose herself before entering the fiery pits of hell. A deep breath and Josie pushes the dressing room curtain to the side, and a large gasp escapes from her lips. Drew stands behind Victoria's chair, staring straight at Josie wearing a dress that he could see his fiancé sporting down the aisle. Josie is tongue tied. She buys her thinking time through stuttering and stammering. Eventually Josie is able to collect herself and all she can do is smile.

“ Hey Jo,” Drew smiles, the one that sends shivers down Josie's spine. “ Nice dress.” All Josie can do is nod, and she curses to herself for not thinking of a snarky response. He did catch her off guard after all.

“ What is my amazing soon-to-be husband doing here? You know it's bad luck to see the bride in her wedding dress.” Victoria drags out the word “amazing” to once again emphasize the fact that Drew is two months away from being her husband.

“I decided to book my fitting for the same day. Aren't you happy to see me?”

Victoria blushes. “ Oh yeah, of course. How sweet of you. Well, go get fitted. We need to look perfect in our wedding photos.” She shoos him away with both hands, and Drew slowly starts to exit the room like an intern who is being thrown out of the meeting room after providing all the big dogs in power suits with their morning sustenance. As he begins to leave, he shoots Josie a look. Josie knows that look, and she knows what it means. The pot is about to be stirred.

“ Now Jo, unzip this one. If it already doesn't suit your body type it will *definitely* not suit mine.” Josie makes her way to the dressing room biting her tongue, when a voice slips through the cracks.

“ I think the dress looks beautiful.” Instantly all heads swivel to the source. Drew stands awkwardly, and Josie is trying to decipher the look on his face. Adoration? Admiration?

Lily shrugs. “ Yeah, I mean I think it looks good. Maybe you should try it on, Vic.”

Victoria shakes her head in annoyance. “ No. I don’t like it. Josie, take it off.”

Drew presses his fiancée. “ Why don’t you let her decide?” Drew, Lily and Victoria all look at Josie. All their eyes on her feels like a spotlight, and she’s burning under the pressure.

“ Jo?” Drew’s eyes connect with Josie’s. She gives Drew a “stop” look, telling him to back down. Why was he pressing this? He calls her name again, pushing her once more, encouraging her to stop dipping her toes in the pool and dive in.

“ Josie,” Victoria says, with more force now.

She looks between the two, feeling like she’s a child and her parents are asking her who does more around the house.

“ I’m gonna go take this off.” Josie says quickly.

Hurrying into the fitting room, Josie is thankful she is alone. She falls to the floor, giving herself time to catch her breath. She feels like she just ran a marathon, and to her she’s still running. How much longer can she do this? How much longer until she cracks?

Outside, Victoria rolls her eyes, and pushes Drew out of the room. As she escorts him out, her footsteps, once loud and proud, become faint. Lily’s eyes follow her friend and her fiancée, watching them exit. Once the sound of their feet are non-existent, Lily perks up and rushes to Josie’s side in the fitting room. Josie, startled, looks at Lily with confusion.

“ Jesus Lily. What’s wrong with you?” Josie says, calming her breathing.

Lily shushes her friend. “ Whispers, Jo. Now what was that?”

More confusion. “ What was what?”

“ When you told me that you and Drew talked about those two years you agreed to go your separate ways.”

Josie's eyes go wide. She remembers saying that to Lily. She remembers calling her the day after she and Drew had their argument about Josie breaking things off. Even now Josie can picture herself desperately banging her thumbs on her phone screen's keyboard, trying to contact her friend to tell her about "the worst thing ever." All because she was doing it for Victoria. Josie and Drew had decided to rekindle a flame that was starting to light during their time as highschoolers during Josie's time at Law School. They both collectively believe it to be the best two years of their lives. Josie still believes it to be so, but it was all in secret. Josie, afraid to tell Victoria that she was dating her best-friend's ex, decided to tell Lily, and for two years Josie only had one person to go to for relationship advice and rants. But Victoria was depressed. Apparently living two years as a single woman without Drew made her realize how worthless her life was, and Josie, being the nice, sweet girl she is allowed Victoria to crawl inside of her mind and convince her to end her time with Drew, even though her heart was screaming at her, begging her not to do it. Josie hated herself for betraying her friend. Albeit, Victoria wasn't the best of them, but no one deserves to be betrayed by someone they hold in high esteem. At least Josie hoped Victoria held her in high esteem.

Josie clears her throat. "Yeah, we did say that. But that wasn't anything romantic, he was just sticking up for me." Walking away, she throws the fitting room curtains to the right of her, and they swish with the force of being pushed.

Lily follows Josie out while shooting her a sarcastic look. "Jo, he was looking at you like you were the one he was marrying."

Josie stops in her tracks and throws her hands in the air. "Well maybe I'm the one he *really* wants to marry, and this whole thing is just a game to get me to hurt my friend." She immediately covers her mouth. Lily begs Josie to spill what she knows, but Josie doesn't budge.



Josie might've told Lily that she ended things with Drew, but she didn't tell her what Drew said in response. She will not stand in the way of Victoria. Lily continues to hit her friend, encouraging her to reveal whatever she keeps hidden when Victoria appears. She heads straight for a dress that she rejected on the couch, and holds it up to her friends.

“ I thought you didn't like that one. It would make you look like Ariel.” Josie says.

Victoria shrugs, slyly. “ Then I guess Ariel's about to look sexy as hell.” She looks Josie right in the eyes, with confidence and a hint of “Try me, bitch.” One would say Victoria is smelling what's right under her nose, and she's ready for the challenge. One thing about Victoria is that when it comes to a fight, she'll know exactly how to win.

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As Josie gets ready for the celebratory dinner party Victoria “begged” Josie to get her parents to throw her, she thinks about how there was a time that she would've already had a party planned for her, without her having to guilt trip Josie. One of the problems with Josie was that she was comfortable waiting for Victoria to be herself again. That is, she was comfortable before Victoria started going after the person she liked. Drew and Josie always had that “thing.” Everyone could see it, and everyone noticed it, and for some reason, Victoria's direct response was to get in between that. It all started at a party in their Junior year of highschool. Drew and Josie had been talking the whole night, and for the first time realized what everyone around them had been telling them. Josie, as shy as she was, was ready to go for it, until Victoria pulled her aside and told her that she actually really liked Drew. Josie was reluctant, but Victoria always fought for something she wanted. Josie just wasn't prepared for a fight from her best friend. Drew and Victoria ended up dating until Sophomore year of college, until they suddenly broke up. It was unexpected, and soon after Josie and Drew started talking, and spending time together.

It took Josie some time to finally do what she's been wanting to do since she met him, but she went for it. Until Victoria came to snatch it away again.

Josie throws a sundress on her bed, grunting. Forty minutes and she still hasn't decided what to wear. This isn't supposed to be hard. What do you wear for your friend's wedding party when you're in love with them but they're engaged to someone else, but they actually want to be with you, they're just waiting for you to stand up and say it? She settles on the black cocktail dress she wore for Commencement. As she puts it on, she places her hands on the fabric, pressing it tight to her skin, smoothing it out over her body, but something's wrong. She turns around and rolls her eyes. She forgot this dress had a zipper. She reaches behind her, grabs the small piece of metal, and drives her fingers up her spine, wincing in the mirror. Before she can finish, her door opens, and she stops, dropping her hands. Josie stands in the middle of her room, wide-eyed, looking at Drew through the mirror. Both are stopped in their tracks. One surprised, the other pleasantly surprised.

"Sorry, I-I guess I should've knocked. Forgot we're not kids anymore." Drew awkwardly chuckles, referencing the many times he would open her door as a child whenever he and his parents were invited to the Nichols home.

Josie shrugs. "It's okay. You've never knocked before. Old habits die hard." The two stay quiet, but it's not an awkward quiet. It's a settling quiet. The kind of quiet where there is so much energy but no words to describe it.

"Anyway, I came to get you. Your mom is freaking out downstairs. She ran out of some seasoning and was mad that I came early because she doesn't want me to see her fail, or something. She left to go to the store." Josie smiles. She remembers how much her mom loved

cooking for Drew and his family. Ever since their first playdate as children where Josie's parents met Drew's parents, Josie knew that that was going to be a bond that would last forever.

“ I'll be out in a sec. I just have to zip this up.” Josie reaches for the zipper again, straining her muscles, but no luck. Why would they make women's clothing so hard to put on?

“ Let me,” Drew says, not waiting for an answer. Typical. He walks over to her, placing one hand on her left hip. Josie holds her breath, waiting for the zip up to happen, not wanting this moment to end. Helping her with her dress, his fingers brush the bones along her spine, and Josie tries her best not to shiver. When she hears the last shwoop of the zipper being zipped, she expects to be separated from Drew, but he stands his ground. A second passes, and he brings his lips to her right ear.

“ I didn't expect you to play the game this long.” He whispers.

Josie scoffs. “ I'm not playing a game. You're the one who said yes.”

“ I told you exactly why I said yes.”

With slight anger, Josie removes herself from Drew, turns around and looks up at him. “ No, you didn't. This isn't funny anymore. I told you to stick it out with Vic because she was hurting and all she wanted was to have you back. I didn't expect her to propose, but you could have said no. Instead, you said yes just to get me to hurt one of my best friends and I *won't* be a part of your scheme.”

“ Oh, no. Of course not. Instead you're gonna let me marry someone I don't love instead of someone that I do. You're not going to fight for what you really want for someone who treats you like garbage.”

“ How many times do I have to say it, Drew? Yes, I love you and yes those two years of us saying 'screw it' and getting together was great. But Vic was hurting through all of it. I didn't

feel like a good person dating her ex-boyfriend who she actually really loved in secret, so I told you to get back with her, and you did. I didn't know she'd propose, but you also didn't have to accept. Why did you say yes?" Drew waits before answering. Josie looks at him in anticipation.

"I wanted you to fight for me." Silence. It's like the world stopped. Everything is in pause and Josie is the only one who can move. She wondered why Drew would stick it out this long. She never intended for him to marry Victoria, but she felt like a traitor when Victoria called her a couple months ago, asking to speak with her. Josie and Drew had been dating for two years at this point, almost the entirety of her years at Law School. The only reason they decided to be in a relationship is because Victoria had broken things off between her and Drew some time before Josie decided to throw her morals out the window and be with the guy she's been dreaming of. It was all secret of course. Josie was too scared to tell Victoria that she was dating her ex-boyfriend. But Josie was going to tell Victoria the day she contacted her. Josie was anxious the entire day. She practiced her words over and over. In the end she never got a chance to say them. Victoria gave Josie a whole story about being depressed without Drew, and as their time went on, Josie began to feel guilty. So guilty, she called Drew after, and told him that he needed to get back together with Victoria, at least for a little while. There were arguments and tears, but Josie thought she was doing what was best for her friend. She just didn't expect to be hurting so much inside. She also didn't expect Victoria to propose, and didn't think Drew would ever say yes. But he did. And now Josie knows why.

"This isn't an experiment, and I'm not a lab rat. We're humans with emotions, Drew. Vic may be unbearable, but she doesn't deserve this. I'm not going to hurt her."

"Well, it's too late for that."

Josie freezes. She knows that voice. She's been afraid of that voice, and now that voice is here, staring Josie straight in the face. Josie can't decipher the look on her face. Anger, mixed with surprise and a hint of "I knew it." Victoria stands by Josie's childhood bedroom door, rolls her eyes, and stomps away. Instinctively, Josie follows her friend, running away from Drew, away from her realizations, and running to her friend.

"Victoria, wait. Please!" Josie exclaims. Victoria continues to separate herself from Josie until she runs into a familiar body. Lily, startled, stops Victoria from hurrying out of the door, holding her arms.

"What the hell is going on?" Lily asks. Victoria nods towards Josie, as if saying "Why don't you ask her?" Josie, sighing, looks between her two friends, unsure how to proceed. On the one hand, she was just caught in a moment with her best friend's fiancée, while on the other hand, her other best friend wouldn't be surprised that she was caught. Desperate to find a solution, Josie stands in front of her friends, searching her brain for any answer. To make matters worse, the sound of hard footsteps is heard by Josie. *Oh God* Josie thinks to herself. Just what she needs.

"I think we have some things to explain," Drew says, standing next to Josie, in front of Victoria and Lily.

Josie shakes her head. "I-I don't think so. Everything is fine, my best friends are getting married, we're all here to celebrate."

Victoria scoffs. "Oh *please*, Jo. Enough with the innocent puppy act. I heard everything. You've been fucking Drew behind my back and pretending to be my friend the entire time. Don't be scared. Own it. You made your bed, now you have to rot in hell." No words escape Josie's lips. There's nothing she can say, and even if she could miraculously find the right words, it wouldn't matter. She got caught, and by that time, it was too late to apologize. But Josie being

Josie tries to anyway. Victoria dismisses all of it of course. Josie begs Victoria to hear her out, giving her a spiel on how long they've been friends, and everything they've been through.

Victoria ignores it all.

“ You are an awful friend, and I don't think we will *ever* be the same. I have to go,” Victoria steps away from her friends and towards the door, looking back slightly, noticing the lack of response from Lily. Something about that didn't sit right. “ Lil, we should go. Josie's a traitor and doesn't deserve to be our friend.”

Lily stands her ground, nervously. “ Vic, I don't think it's fair to cast Josie out like this. I mean, ever since the beginning you knew that Josie and Drew liked each other, and you still pursued him, and the only reason Drew got into a relationship with you is because Josie made it *so* clear that she wasn't going to stand in the way. And I know that you guys were together for a while but you knew that it wasn't real. And technically, you broke up with Drew when they got together. And Josie, being the person she is, called things off when you told her you weren't over Drew, even after knowing that the reason you guys broke up in the first place was *because* Drew told you he had feelings for Jo. So maybe we should just all calm down, and talk this out.” Lily takes a breath, attempting to reset after her ramble. Looking around, instead of seeing her friends coming together, she realizes she may have done more to keep them apart. Lily doesn't know what Victoria heard from Josie, but apparently it was not anything that she just revealed. Similarly, it seems Josie wasn't aware of a critical piece of information either. Lily looks between Victoria and Josie, both staring at each other in disbelief. Lily exposed it all. While the three friends have a staring contest, internally wondering who is going to speak first, Drew, on the outside, can finally understand the dynamic of the trio, something he's wondered since the day he met them. It was always Jo and Vic, and Lily was sentenced to watch them. Lily became

the observer, and when she was needed she was there, helping her friends while simultaneously putting all the pieces together. Someday the puzzle had to be completed, and it looks like today was that day.

For the first time, Josie speaks first. “ You knew Drew had feelings for me. You knew and you gave me some bs sob story about how you still loved him. You...you manipulated me,” Lily isn’t the only one putting pieces together. All this time Josie thought she was doing Victoria a kindness, when she was actually doing exactly what she wanted. What angers Josie even more is the fact that she never saw it coming. All this time she thought she was doing what she had to to help her friend. Jose was waiting, hoping for the Victoria she knew at fourteen to shine through. At this moment, Josie can finally see that this Victoria is never coming back.

“ You know what? You’re right. We can never be the same, but that is *no* fault of mine. I thought I was hurting you, when this whole time, you were playing me like a toy. You wanted me to feel that way. I can’t even believe I made myself unhappy for you.”

All Victoria can do is scoff. “ Don’t act like you didn’t do anything wrong. You dated the guy that I love even when you knew I still loved him. That’s still something, Jo. That’s still being a traitor.” Guilt rises inside of Josie. She wasn’t completely innocent. She did have a part to play-*NO*. Josie puts a stop to these thoughts. *She will not do this to me anymore.*

“ You know what, Vic? I don’t really give a shit,” Josie takes a few steps backwards, standing next to Drew, and taking his hand in hers. “ I love Drew, and you will never get in the way of that. I don’t care how you feel about it. So you can take your lies, your manipulations and your stupid-ass ring out of my house. And Vic? I really hope that you cry about it.”

In one swivel action, Victoria, refusing to show any emotion, removes her ring from her finger, and throws it on the ground. Refusing to let anyone see her emotions, she stomps away

from Drew, Lily and Josie, opening the door, and letting it slam behind her. Lily, possibly out of some moral obligation, follows Victoria out. Josie knows she probably should follow them, but she really doesn't want to. She stands her ground, not allowing her old moral obligations to shine through. A few minutes pass by and the door opens again, revealing the couple's parents. Josie's mother, with a plastic bag full of cans walks into her house, confused.

“ ¿*Qué te pasa*, Josephine? I thought we were having a party?”

Josie shrugs. “ Yeah, I don't think that's happening tonight, or ever.”

Her mother huffs in frustration. “ But I already bought all of these seasonings. What am I supposed to do now?” Josie averts her eyes, sorry to disappoint her mother, unsure of what to do.

“ Actually, Mrs. Nichols, you came just in time,” Drew steps away from Josie and into the middle of the room. Lowering himself to the floor, his fingers make a swift movement to pick something up, and Josie's breath hitches. What is going to do?

Drew looks at Josie. “ I was just about to ask your daughter a question.” Walking in front of her, Josie knows what might come next, but she waits to see it happen. She waits to watch Drew drop down to one knee. Her hands immediately cover her mouth and she can barely breathe.

“ Josephine Nichols,” Drew looks up at Josie, and she looks down at him, already knowing her answer before the question is finished. *Yes*. “ Will you marry me?”