

GUILT

By Lila Whelan

28 Plays Later – Challenge 25

- A Oh for god's sake, are you kidding me? Are you really doing this to me now, after everything we've worked on?
- B Let me explain
- A Don't! For gods sake don't, I don't want to hear it – I already know what you're going to say! Look. I know I'm not perfect. I know I've mucked things up once or twice, but I'm trying my absolute best! Every single thing I'm doing is for the good of the project and I'm sorry, no I am truly sorry that sometimes I get things wrong. I wish, I wish I could tell you with 100 per cent certainty that this is going to happen, then this, then that, then everything...but I can't – cos I don't know!
- B If you would just
- A I'm all alone here! I don't know what the rules are, there aren't any guidelines, I'm making it up as I go along and yes, sorry, you happen to be the person that is getting in the way of those learning curve mistakes. But really, what have I done that is so wrong?
- B What about Tom?
- A God damn it! That...that fucking guy. No, I'm not swearing at you. Sorry. It's just. Look, he knows more about this world than me
- B Is he on our team?
- A No, no but
- B He's not on our team, he's not working on this project, he's not got anything to do with all this yet for some reason he has your ear – you listen to him more than you do to me!
- A I know and
- B Have you any idea how that makes me feel? It's rude, it's disrespectful, it's infuriating to be second guessed all the time and to hear 'Oh, I'm sorry, I knew we agreed on this together, but Tom said we should do this so I'm going to change our previously signed off plans and drop everything to do what he says. Oh and we're doing this together tomorrow without you'
- A I know. Look, I'm sorry. I really, honestly, swear to god am sorry about Tom. I know I crossed a line with that whole situation last week. I panicked, I didn't handle it well. Tom introduced me to Rachel and she was only available that day and I had to make an executive decision right there and then and it was late and I knew you weren't free so I. I just made the decision.
- B You didn't even ask me. You don't know, I might have been able to get out of my plans. But you didn't ask, you just told me. It's humiliating.

A You're right. You're right. I'm an idiot. I fucked up. I should have asked you. I have no excuse. I'm sorry. I've felt sick with guilt about the whole thing. I didn't know how to say sorry, because I didn't want to make it an even bigger deal than it was in my mind by admitting out loud how much I messed up. So I didn't say sorry, and now we're in this mess. But look, me and Tom. It's over. His involvement. It's done.

B Have you told him?

A Well, no. Not exactly.

B Then how do I know that you won't go running back to him at the first sign of any trouble?

A Because. Because I'm promising you I won't.

B I don't believe you.

A Tom's always going to be in my life. I'm always going to ask his advice – but not on this. I've been trying to figure this whole project out by myself and he's sometimes been there for me when I can't get hold of you.

B You can't wait a couple of days?

A Sometimes no. Things crop up and I need to make a decision. I don't like to hang around. That's one of my strengths as well as one of my weaknesses.

B Great.

A Please. You made it clear to me what level of involvement you want in the project. And that's absolutely fine – I totally understand. But it leaves me with a knowledge gap. So rather than wing it or make it up, I ask for help from someone who's been through it before, someone who I trust.

B Right.

A Don't break up with me.

B I'm not breaking up with you.

A I know. But that's what it feels like.

B You're putting me into a really uncomfortable decision.

A You don't owe me anything, but I'm asking for a second chance. We've come so far, we've done some great work – when we're knees deep in the project, fully, actively engaged it looks and sounds and feels great - when we're both playing to our strengths, and our roles are clearly defined. It's just the other background stuff that is a bit, er, sticky at the moment. But if you can be patient with me, if you can give me a bit of time, a bit of leeway, then I'll try and make it up to you. I need you. This project won't work without you.

B I don't know

A Will you think about it?

B OK.

A Thank you. Thank you.

