

Mia - Chapter 8: First Date

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It was almost dinner time when Mia got back to the apartment after Jesse dropped her off and brought in her luggage. Since he was working that night so they couldn't really get the opportunity to hang out, but it gave Mia the chance to unpack and get settled back in. Patrice was back already, but Norah and Kris weren't due to arrive until the following day. Mia felt a little apprehensive thinking about Norah's arrival. She was waiting to tell her in person her decision to try things out with Jesse. Still, she had about sixteen hours until the awkward moment was due to take place. Mia had just finished putting all her clothes away when she heard the front door of the apartment open. Assuming it was Patrice she decided to go down in a few minutes after she connected her laptop up on her desk and let it charge. Her ears perked up a little when she realised there were two voices coming from the living room and the male accent wasn't French. In-fact the voice was quite familiar. Pleasantly surprised, she decided to go downstairs to investigate. A smile crept over her face when she peeked downstairs and saw Jesse in his black university jacket and cap. Another inspection maybe? No, wait there's someone else here. A neon-purple haired, busty female came into view and it looked like she had luggage with her. Oh god, I forgot about the empty spare room! Mia realised that there was still space in their apartment for at least two other people to live there. She had at one point lived in the spare room when she and Norah weren't on speaking terms. Deciding to hold back a little Mia observed her new flatmate. Christ, she's a little loud. Wonder if it's just the excitement? Sounds like she has an accent but can't quite place it. Jesus – her boobs are huge! The newcomer seemed to be making a joke and Jesse just smiled rubbed the back of his neck nervously. Realising that was her cue, Mia walked down the stairs to introduce herself. She caught Jesse's eye and saw a look of relief on his face as she got closer to the living room. "Wow, you are pretty strong helping me carry all my stuff; you must work out," the stranger cooed while giving Jesse the once over. "All the boys I've met here are so cute, but you are the nicest so far." What the ... is she flirting with him? Jesse acted indifferent to the comment, but Mia noticed that he was trying to contain a grin. He managed to change the subject as Mia narrowed her eyes at the very forward girl standing in her living room. "Hilde, this is Mia," Jesse introduced. "She's one of your housemates. Mia – Hilde, your new housemate." Mia shook Hilde's hand and exchanged pleasantries while trying to suss the newbie out. Hilde was from Denmark and was there for the semester through a similar exchange programme to Mia. "I better get going and let you guys get acquainted. Lots of new faces arriving so I should head back," Jesse said looking towards the door. "I'll see you out," Hilde volunteered while thrusting out her

obviously large chest; Mia tried to hold back an irritated look. "It's no big deal," Jesse replied backing-up towards the door. "I'll see you guys around," were his parting words before grinning at Mia as he left. "Wow, that boy is hot!" Hilde exclaimed fanning herself with her hand. "So handsome...." "I heard a rumour he was gay," Mia interjected in an attempt to mark her territory. Fuck did I just say that? "Damn, all the best ones are. Are you sure? I'm usually quite good at noticing these things?" "Yeah, I maybe wouldn't say anything to him about it though. He might be a little sensitive about it," Mia added as to prevent any traces of the white lie coming back to her. She walked into the kitchen and went to the fridge hoping to find some water and hopefully not the remains of mouldy food the others might have left before the Christmas break. Peering inside, she gasped aloud and found her shelf filled with at least a dozen cans of soda with familiar blue, orange and silver design. There was a sticky note attached to one of them: Found these in a Scottish store when I was home. I'm pretty sure you mentioned Irn Bru to me before. Hope they make you feel a bit more at home this time. J x Mia felt her heart swell at the sentiment. It was the most thoughtful thing anyone in Boston had done for her in her whole time there. She slipped the note into her pocket and walked back into the living room with a can of Irn Bru in hand. Hilde looked as though she had already made herself comfortable as she lounged out on the sofa. "So Mia, how many more people live here and when are we having a party?"

*** Later on, after Hilde had been shown the empty room and unpacked, Mia gave her a brief tour of the apartment and showed her where to meet the welcome group that would be taking place the next day. From the sounds of things Hilde had already made a few friends through various social networking sites and was planning to meet them over the weekend. The Danish girl was bursting with energy which had an exhausting effect on Mia. Patrice never came back to the apartment and a cheeky text from him confirmed Mia's suspicions that he had hooked up with someone within a few hours of getting back. It was getting late and after having something to eat, Mia realised she feigning sleep was hopeless. The flight and the time difference now had the better of her. Changing into her comfiest pair of PJs she slipped into her single bed and tried to relax. She had just rested her head on the pillow when loud techno music blared from the next room. Hilde – for fuck sake. Some of us aren't buzzing with adrenaline and need their fucking beauty sleep. Or sleep of any kind for that matter. Mia pulled a pillow over her head and hoped that her tiredness would win over the noise. She couldn't have been more wrong. It was only ten o'clock, she didn't want to go next door to complain and look like the moody housemate. Instead she just hooked her headphones into her phone and tried to block out the hideous synthesised sounds of Hilde's music with some rock & roll. After half an hour of competing with the noise pollution even Metallica on her headset couldn't drown out, Mia was ready to explode with frustration until she noticed she had received a text message. "Hey party animal, think u guys can keep it down? Some folks are jetlagged u knw. J x" She smiled reading the message from Jesse before replying back. Mia realised she wasn't the only resident that was disturbed by her flatmate's music. "Tell me about it, I was just attempting to get some sleep when that shit started. L " "I C. The newbie already making a gd 1 st impression? Just go ask her to turn it down. X" "No way! And look like a crabby housemate on her 1 st nite - no thanks. U do it!" "Hell no! u see the way she was looking at me earlier?! I thought she was gonna eat me alive!" "lmao, true but its ur

job! Please... I'll make it up to u xxx" "3 X's. Wow u must really mean it! Fine, I'm just about to clock out. I'll come over before I head home. See u in 5. J x P.S get ready for my serious face!" Holy shit, he's coming over and I'm in my fleecy PJs. Mia got up quickly and changed from her pyjamas into a slightly cuter pair of shorts and her blue Strathclyde University hoodie. She looked in the mirror and gave her cheeks a little pinch to bring some colour to her face but realised she already looked a little flushed. Hearing the knock at the door made her stomach leap and she ran down the stairs to get there before Hilde did. In her excitement she almost flung the door open. Jesse stood at the step with a stern look plastered on his face which made Mia giggle a little. "Miss Daly, we've had a few complaints about the noise coming from this apartment. Are you responsible for this horrendous music?" Jesse said with the most authority he could muster whilst trying to keep a straight face. Without warning the music stopped and they turned to see Hilde walk downstairs. She had a round figure which was evident from the extremely tight, low-cut dress she wore. It gave Jesse and Mia an eyeful of her G-cups. She also had on five inch heels and it was obvious to Mia that Hilde was having a hard time walking in them. "Hi Jesse," she said sweetly. "Why do we have the pleasure of your company again?" "Umm, I was just telling Mia here that you guys need to keep the noise down." "Okay, sure. I just turned it off. I'm heading out to a party tonight do you guys feel like coming?" she asked fixing her eyes on Jesse while she asked. "I'll pass this time. Feeling pretty tired you know?" Mia said. Hilde gave Mia a look to register that she noticed Mia was still there before turning her attention back. "Jesse what do think? Maybe after your shift finishes?" He shook his head aware that Mia was glaring at the new girl. "Sorry, got to get up early tomorrow to work out." "Oh well I guess a body like that needs to be looked after. Maybe another time then? See you later Jesse, and sorry about the noise." Hilde walked past the pair of them at the door and Mia noticed that she pretty much pressed her boobs into Jesse's chest as she walked out of the main door. Jesse smirked and Mia rolled her eyes at him as she took a step back from the porch. "So are you heading home?" Mia asked curiously, noticing that he was still holding the front door open. "I don't know Miss Daly. Are you inviting me in? I believe you owe me one," he answered teasingly. "Yes, but she switched the music off herself so I don't know if that should still count..." Mia noticed a slight look of disappointment on his face which made her melt. "But, I suppose I could thank you for the Irn Bru you got me..." Jesse smiled and closed the door behind him, hanging his jacket on the peg before following Mia into the living room. He gave her a glance over, enjoying the way her shorts sat just below the curve of her bottom. It was a view he had missed the past three weeks. "Can I get you anything to drink? I haven't been to the supermarket yet so just tea, milk or soda," she offered. "I'm fine. We could just hang out for a little bit..." Jesse sat down on the sofa and patted the space next to him. Mia joined him on the couch, consciously aware to keep a little bit of space between them. Since they had met there was always tension between them and before he broke up with his ex-girlfriend a few months ago there was nothing she could do about it. The situation was obviously quite different now but it still made Mia think of all the rules that usually come with dating. It was probably the first time she was with Jesse with each of them both aware that they had feelings for each other. Mia felt a little confused as to how she was supposed to act around him now. Their first date wasn't officially until

Wednesday so she didn't want to rush into anything. However, she knew herself that she would be a liar if she thought that she would prefer staying in on her own. A half an hour never killed anyone, right? Just hanging out in the living room together. Holy shit, he's just taken his cap off and all I want to do is mess up his hair. Must. Hold. Back. "So how do like your new housemate? She seems pretty friendly..." he joked, taking her out of her trance. Mia scowled at him playfully. "Oh she's lovely," she answered as she rolled her eyes. "Actually she's okay – to be fair we were all probably that excited when we first got here. She's just a little, what's the word I'm looking for...?" "Loud? Rowdy? Eager?" "Yes; all of those things! Can't wait until the others meet her though. It's going to be quite an eye-opener." "Well I'm sure the guys will make her feel welcome," he said referring to how flirty Hilde was. "So how was home? Did you have fun being with all your friends again?" "Yeah it was brilliant. I think we went out drinking a bit too much to be honest. Well me and Frankie did anyway. She was well and truly feeling the holiday hangovers." "Frankie is your ex-girlfriend right?" Jesse asked looking slightly tense. "She is. But she's also my best friend too. Is this making you uncomfortable?" she asked curiously trying to work out the change in his body language. He noticed her unease and quickly answered in reassurance. "No, not at all. Sorry, I guess I'm not used to being with girls that are still on good terms with their ex's. Just ignore me," he smiled and gave her knee a little squeeze. Mia looked down where his hand rested on her knee. The warmth of his hand on her skin was radiating up her body and a flush spread across her cheeks. She looked away quickly and hoped that he didn't notice her blush. "So does that make you the jealous type?" she asked as he lifted his hand back off her knee. Jesse smiled at her question and noticed the glow on her cheeks. Not wanting to let go he took her hand in his instead, stroking his thumb over her knuckle. "I'm not usually like this. Maybe it's just with you." Mia smiled back at him, tucking her free hand into her sweater pocket. She fidgeted with her fingers knowing that his hand on hers was causing her heart rate to increase. Then she remembered how she felt earlier that evening when Hilde flirted with him. "I think the feeling is mutual," she added hesitantly. "I kinda suggested to Hilde that I heard a rumour you were gay so she would back off a little. I don't know what came over me. Sorry." Jesse looked a little shocked but the burst into laughter straight away. He pulled Mia towards him into a hug as his laughter died down. Mia removed her hand from her pocket and placed both of them behind his back. Oh God that could have been so bad. I'm glad he has a sense of humour. "I'm not worried. She obviously didn't believe it by the way she nearly shoved her boobs in my face tonight." "You don't think I'm mental for getting that worked-up about it? It's not as though we have went on a date yet. I mean, we're not really anything yet." Jesse traced his fingers down Mia's chin and tilted her face so she looked up at him. He leaned over, his hazel eyes gazing into hers and placed a soft kiss on her lips. It was so tender, but mixed with the knee squeeze and the hand stroke it left Mia with a longing for more. "It's fine Mia," he said while tucking her hair behind her ear. "I already feel a little possessive about you. To be perfectly honest I kinda felt that way a while ago. Can you blame me? What's not to like about you Mia: you're stunning. And the best part is that you agreed to go out with me." Mia wrapped her hands around his neck and gave him a jubilant kiss. She felt no urge to restrain her feelings anymore. Her tongue was in his mouth flicking his and she ran her fingers through his hair. She licked her tongue over his top lip

which urged Jesse to lift her over his lap so that she was straddling him. Tilting Mia's head back, Jesse kissed softly along her jaw and down her neck. His lips and stubble against her neck felt like fire spreading through her skin. It wasn't until she felt his hands on her stomach under her sweater that she realised things had moved very quickly between them. She leaned back a little then placed her hands on top of his to prevent them moving any further north of her torso. Jesse rested his head against the back of the sofa and let out a resigned sigh aware that he should slow down with her. "Sorry Jess, I don't want to rush into anything or lead you on," she apologised with a small voice. "Hey, don't worry. Still got plenty of time right? Plus it's getting late; you should probably get some sleep in before Hilde wakes you up at four am." He leaned forward a little, giving her thighs a teasing squeeze and kissing her on the nose. She climbed off his lap and let him stand up, walking him out to the door. "So, still on for Wednesday right?" Jesse asked standing out on the first step. "Definitely," she answered biting her bottom lip in anticipation, her head becoming light thinking about it. "Great. I guess I'll catch you later then," he said as he stepped back up and kissed her cheek before finally walking down the path to sidewalk. *** The next day Mia and Patrice went to the store and prepared for the return of Kris and Norah who were arriving that night. Excitedly they overspent on beer, snacks and food that appeared would last until the end of the month. Since Patrice only got back to the apartment that morning following a dalliance at an admirer's apartment the day before, Mia had to introduce him to the new girl that was staying with them. Mia still hadn't made up her mind on her new flatmate; it was obvious the girl was trying her best to fit in with them. It was dinner time when the Norah and Kris got back and Mia had prepared her signature lasagne for supper. The new girl was introduced to the others and seemed to fit in well with everyone making everyone laugh with her tales from the night before. They also had a giggle when she told them how she nearly missed her connecting flight to Boston because she got carried away flirting with a waiter at the airport coffee shop. Hilde was boy-crazy which made her fit in well with girl-crazy Patrice. After supper the boys volunteered to clean up and Hilde was getting ready to meet up with new friends she met the night before so it gave Mia and Norah the opportunity to catch-up. The girls headed up to their shared bedroom and Mia sat on her bed as she watched Norah open up one of her suitcases and unpack. Fuck, so how do I start this conversation? Do I just come out with it or do I wait until she starts? "So I guess we should get this awkward moment over with," Norah said taking the words out of Mia's mouth. "I think that would be a good idea." Norah sat down on her bed facing Mia with an apprehensive look on her face. Mia felt like crumbling but she knew she just had to get it out. "Norah... I'm so glad you told me what was happening with you and why you were so angry. I really appreciate that you got in touch with me. I just want to forget about how horrible we were to each other the last couple of months. That said, I need to be honest with you –." "- You're going to give it a go with Jesse aren't you?" Norah interrupted. Mia was taken aback by Norah's correct guess. "How did you know?" "I kinda assumed it would go that way when I saw he changed his relationship status to 'single' on Facebook over the holidays. And I saw him on my way back to the apartment with a really goofy look on his face – which I've noticed you've had since I got back too." "I'm sorry Norah. I really didn't want to hurt your feelings. When you emailed me I was so confused and it made me think

of everything that happened. It's not that I'm not attracted to you -." "You just don't like me in that way – it's fine I get it," she sniffed wiping a tear that rolled down her cheek. Mia quickly got up and sat next to the beautiful blonde across from her, wrapping an arm around her shoulders. "Please don't be mad at me – I couldn't bare it again," Mia pleaded. "And if you want your space then I'll move back into the other room with Hilde." "Awww don't do that. I'll be fine. Plus, I was kinda preparing myself for this. I suppose I'll just keep looking," she said while forcing a laugh. "Look if there's anything – stuff you want to talk about, literally anything – just let me know. I don't want you to feel like you can't talk to me." "Thanks Mia." The girls gave each other a hug and they both wiped the tears that had been forming in the corner of their eyes. "Same goes for you too," Norah piped up. "If you want to ask me anything then go ahead. I won't lie and say I'm thrilled that you chose him, but I'm happy for you. To be fair, he seems like he really likes you. And you've been mad about him since day one." Mia nodded in agreement realising it had always been him since the first time they met. She closed her eyes and a little flutter of butterflies in her stomach stirred as she thought about their date. Jesse wasn't giving any details away yet so she was a little apprehensive. Norah got up from the bed and started on the next suitcase and Mia logged into her email account checking to see if there was anything new. They chatted about their holidays and their time back home as if everything were back to normal. That was until the sound of heavy synth and electro came blaring through the walls. "What the fuck is that?" Norah asked looking horrified. "Oh that's Hilde playing her music," Mia replied as though it was normal. "That's not fucking music – that's awful!" "Get used to it – we have another four months of that." "Oh God, kill me now!" *** To: Mia Daly From: Frankie Jones Date: 12/01/2011 (17:04 GMT) Subject: The big day is here! Hi Mia, Glad you settled back in ok. Sorry it took me so long to get back to you. That's one exam out of the way for just now. Really glad that's BioChem over – I hate that subject. I think I've answered enough to pass - fingers crossed. So... You're off on a date tonight I hear. Nice one babes – I'm really chuffed for you. Where is the lovely Jesse taking you? Drinks? Cinema? Dinner? Have you picked out an outfit? How are you doing your hair? God I wish I was there to see you before you go! What else has been happening there? Did you get on ok with Norah after you broke the news? Hope she is feeling alright and you guys are getting on. The new housemate sounds like a hoot! Can't wait to hear more about her. I'm sure she's just excited being away from home and everything. Write back asap, Frankie x _____ To: Frankie Jones From: Mia Daly Date: 12/01/2011 (12:12 EST) Subject: Re: The big day is here! – (FFS I'm not getting married) Frankie, God, that was like the Spanish Inquisition your last email so I'll try go over everything. Well done on BioChem – I know biology isn't exactly your forte, but a pass is a pass so I'll keep my fingers and toes crossed for you. "I wish I was there to see you before you go." What the hell Frankie – are u turning into my Mum? It's just a date. It's not like I haven't been on one before. The date: if you haven't checked the news recently the north-east has been hit with a blizzard. Airports shut down etc especially here in Boston and New York too. It's kinda put a dent in the plans but he's asked me to go round to his place tonight instead. Not much else has happened the last couple of days here. Classes have started back (amidst the bad weather) and I have a few assignments already – yey :-(Hilde's rave music has calmed down a bit but her boy-chasing hasn't. I spotted a random leaving her room

on Monday morning so looks like she's doing not bad in the getting laid stakes. Norah has been fine. I always knew she's good at acting as if things are ok, but I told her to tell me ANYTHING that's bothering her. I want her to be able to feel like she can still talk to me even if I am dating someone else. I've been trying not to talk too much about Jesse or the date just in case she doesn't want to know. It's hard though because I feel like I need to bite my tongue sometimes. I guess I can't complain; we have been getting on a lot better again. So looks like I covered all your questions, so I have some of my own: How is the Kevin situation? Have you asked him out yet? :-)

Mia xo _____ To: Mia Daly From: Frankie Jones Date: 12/01/2011 (17:29 GMT) Subject: YOUARE SPENDING THE NIGHT AT HIS PLACE? Well that puts a change in the direction of this date, doesn't it? I suppose you guys can throw away most of the conventions since you have stayed over at his before, eh? I hope you are well prepared for a romantic night in with Mr ? (I actually can't remember his second name now). Make sure you wear some of that nice new underwear you got in the sales here ;-)

Oh and remember to be safe – you are still on the pill right? Plus there are all those condoms I sent you when you first went there. Goodness, I'm so excited for you!!! F xo P.S. Kevin – em, let's not get into that right now. ---_____ To: Frankie Jones From: Mia Daly Date: 12/01/2011 (12:48 EST) Subject: Re: YOU ARE SPENDING THE NIGHT AT HIS PLACE? (Wtf Frankie) Jesus Franke, I nearly fell of my seat there. I didn't say anything about spending the night I his. We'll probably just going to hang out, eat dinner and chat. I'm not about to hop in the sack with him! Plus I want to make a proper go at this. Yes, I know I'm only here for another four months but there's no rush is there? I don't exactly want to give it up on the first date with him. Yes I am still on the pill if you must know. It's really helping with my breakouts. (Slightly irritated) Mia x P.S. Jesse's surname is Romanos. --_____ To: Mia Daly From: Frankie Jones Date: 12/01/2011 (18.01 GMT) Subject: Re: Re: YOUARE SPENDING THE NIGHT AT HIS PLACE? (Wtf Frankie) Romanos – you didn't tell me he was Hispanic. Starting to go weak at the knees now. (Mia Romanos has a nice ring to it.) Btw, no need to get so huffy about what I said. You “want to make a proper go at this,” do I need to remind you that WE didn't exactly hold back for a date? I remember we didn't even have a first date before we had sex. Are you implying what we had wasn't ‘proper’? Also, even if you did have sex with him tonight it doesn't make you a slag. Forget what I said about conventions – if you like him (and you want to have sex) then just do it. I won't judge you and no one else will. Or is convention the real issue here? Do you have some fear as to doing the deed with a man? Frankie xo P.S. Be slightly irritated? I'm just putting it out there. _____ To: Frankie Jones From: Mia Daly Date: 12/01/2011 (13.13 EST) Subject: Re: Re: Re: YOU ARE SPENDING THE NIGHT AT HIS PLACE? (Wtf Frankie) Forget what I said about it being proper. WE may have not dated before we had sex but what we had was real. I'm sorry I made it sound like it wasn't. To tell you the truth, you guessed right. I am quite nervous about the whole sex thing. I don't want to be bad at it. I just think that if I hold off for a bit and spend time with him then I'll be able to work it out. I don't want him to feel that he has to do all the leg work. God, I just feel a bit inadequate. Mia xo P.S. He's not fucking Hispanic. Romanos is Greek you muppet! --_____ To: Mia Daly From: Frankie Jones Date: 12/01/2011 (18.21 GMT) Subject: Chin-up! Right you, don't get down in the dumps – just forget about it just now. When the time is right everything will be fine. Feeling

inadequate? – don't be. You might not have had sex with a man before but there's not that much difference. (Well actually there is one BIG difference (small in some cases)). From the sounds of things he doesn't seem as though he will force you to do anything you don't want, and if he does then I'll fucking come over there and kill him!! Just go to his, have fun and chill out. I'm sure you will have a good time regardless of whether you have sex or not. You can tell me all about it later and I might let you know about the Kevin situation too. Good luck tonight, Frankie xxx _____

To: Frankie Jones
From: Mia Daly Date: 12/01/2011 (13.25 EST) Subject: Re:Chin-up! Thank you Frankie. I needed that. Speak to you soon, M xoxoxo ***

Mia looked at her watch; it was almost seven o'clock and Jesse was to come and get her. Since the weekend, the weather had changed dramatically and the snowfall was incredible. Some of the classes got cancelled due to a lot of lecturers getting snowed in and most of the students were resigned to their apartments. Everyone in 4F was in tonight so Mia couldn't avoid the big reveal that she would be going out with Jesse that night. Norah tried the best she could to stay happy for Mia; she even offered her assistance to help pick out something to wear. However, due to the poor weather and practicality, skinny jeans and a pretty cream blouse seemed like the sensible option. Hilde was also a little confused about the date until she realised Mia had lied about Jesse being gay in order to keep him to herself. There was no hard feelings though, they ended up having a laugh about it. Standing in the bathroom, Mia took a last look at herself in the mirror. Her long dark brown tresses now sat generously past her shoulders; she was glad her mother and Frankie talked her out of getting them cut short now, realising she suited her hair long. A buzz coming from the front door signalled that Jesse had arrived. Mia quickly applied some coconut and almond balm to her lips before trying not to run down the stairs. Her four flatmates were gathered in the living room watching the TV. Mia could hear Kris and Patrice chatting to Jesse as they waited for her to come downstairs. Trying to walk as gracefully as she could, even though her knees felt as though they were weak, she managed to get to the bottom floor without a hitch. Mia could feel four pairs of eyes on her as Jesse approached her. He leaned down giving her a hug and a kiss on the cheek. Her face felt hot and she was unable to hold back the blush that was spreading quickly. "You look amazing, Mia," Jesse complimented, not bothered that they had an audience. "Thank you," she answered a little embarrassed, tucking her hair behind her ear. "I'll just grab my coat and boots then we can go." She walked out to the small hallway and slipped into a pair of black knee high boots and put on her weather-proof jacket. The blizzard had calmed a little but she knew that there was at least two feet of snow outside. Wrapping her scarf round her neck and slipping on her gloves she walked back into the living area. "You ready?" she asked looking at Jesse, eagerly wanting to get away from her flatmates stares. "Yeah, all set. See you guys later," he said politely to everyone. "Hey Jesse," called Patrice. "Remember, she has to be back by twelve and make sure you look after her," he said jokingly with a fatherly voice. "Okay, Pops," Jesse replied with a smile as Mia wanted to die with embarrassment. Mia rushed out of the door quickly and before anybody said anything else. Jesse followed suit as he tried to catch up with her. The snow on the ground was very thick and she could see that the paths had just recently been shovelled, making their walk to his apartment a little easier. Jesse took her hand as they chatted easily about their afternoon and caught up on what each other

did since Saturday night. The conversation was light and made Mia forget about her teasing flatmates. They arrived at Jesse's front door and he led her through the door. "Jesse," Mia said sniffing. "Is something burning?" "Fuck!" He ran over to the kitchen and opened the oven door. Black smoke slowly began to fill the small apartment. Jesse quickly closed the door back over and switched off the oven. Tossing a dishtowel at Mia he called out instructions. "Wave that in front of the fire alarm so it doesn't set off!" Stifling a laugh, she quickly did as instructed as he opened the living room window and switched on the extractor fan. The smoke slowly started to dissipate and he relaxed, seeing that the fire alarm held back. "I'm guessing that's dinner ruined?" Mia chuckled looking at Jesse's disappointed face. "I'm such an idiot. I meant to switch it off when I came to get you, but I must have forgot. I'm sorry." "It's okay," she reassured, charmed that he went to the effort of cooking. "At least we spared hundreds of students from having to huddle out in the snow because of the fire alarm. That would have made you really popular." Jesse ran his hand over his face and sighed, feeling slightly defeated. He took off his jacket and Mia followed suit, watching his shoulders slump a little as he thought out his next move. There was something endearing to Mia about how that almost, overly confident boy she met months ago seemed to be making such an effort to impress her. The fact that he was a soccer player - and extremely handsome - would be impressive enough for most girls. Mia placed her hands on his arms and looked up at his face. "Are you hungry?" she asked. Jesse looked back at her slightly puzzled. "Yeah but I don't really have much food left." "Well let me have a look at what you do have." Mia walked over to the fridge and had a look in. There was a pack of eggs, some salad, yoghurt, water, cheese, beer, soda and milk. "How about I make us an omelette?" "Mia, you don't have to. I'm supposed to be doing this," he objected. "We were also supposed to be going out but the weather put a stop to that. Plus you can make it up to me by taking me somewhere extra nice when this snow clears, deal?" He nodded and smiled, completely in awe of the charming Scottish girl in his kitchen. He went about getting rid of the charred food from the oven and setting out cutlery and plates on the little breakfast bar. Jesse watched as Mia looked completely at ease in his kitchen, it was obvious that she wasn't the completely uptight girl he thought she was back in August. He knew Mia raised the bar compared to all the other girls he dated in the past. Dinner was ready and Mia had prepared cheese omelettes with a side salad. Jesse looked down at his plate impressed with Mia's culinary skills. "Wow Mia, this is good," he praised while enjoying the last minute meal. "Thanks. What were you making us?" Jesse cringed, thinking about the burned food. "It was supposed to be a kind of Italian chicken casserole." Mia sat back looking impressed before Jesse let out a secret. "To be honest all I did was put it in the oven. It was actually Mark that prepared it. I'm a terrible cook.... obviously..." Mia grinned at him, charmed by his honesty. "So you can't cook anything?" "Hey, I know how to heat things up in the microwave and I can make a pretty mean sandwich," he defended. "I'm just not good at cooking from scratch." "Well the trick is to start with a couple of simple meals and then build on that. I could show you sometime..." "That's so kind of you. I'm sure I could benefit from your tuition. We could trade off too...but what could I teach you?" he asked suggestively. Mia's mind raced to the conversation she had with him a few months back; Jesse was well aware of some of the experience she lacked. She tried to push the thought out of her head

and tease him a little. “Well, I’ve always had a little trouble trying to grasp the offside rule.” “Not exactly what I was thinking but I suppose I could help you out there,” he smiled at her deflection of the taunt. After they both finished he picked up their plates and stacked them in the sink. Taking her hand, Jesse led her into the living room area. Mia perched on the edge of the sofa and looked on as he switched on the stereo. While he scrolled through the playlists on his iPod Mia was able to thoroughly gaze at him. She noticed that his tanned pallor had faded slightly over the winter, just like her own. However, the rest of his appearance still managed to set her heart racing. He sported a black v-necked sweater over a grey tee along with loose jeans that sat perfectly on his waist. The way he was angled over the stereo raised his sweater a little up his back to reveal the waistband of his boxer briefs. Mia looked away quickly in case he turned to see her ogling him. Her head resting in her hand, Mia quickly sat up when she heard one of the world’s most iconic opening intros. Looking up at Jesse she was stunned to see him smiling jokingly as he mouthed along with the lyrics. ‘ I’ve been really tryin', baby Tryin' to hold back this feeling for so long And if you feel like I feel, baby Then, c'mon, oh, c'mon Let's get it on...’ “What the fuck?” Mia laughed hysterically before Jesse quit joking around and changed the song. It was still Marvin Gaye, but the duet with Tammi Terrell was slightly less un-nerving and more appropriate. “Sorry, I couldn’t help it” Jesse said. He stood in front of her and held out his hand, gesturing for her to stand up. Mia looked up at him slightly confused. “Mia Daly, can I have this dance?” Still looking slightly stunned she took his hand and nervously swallowed as they stood in the vacant space between the TV and the couch. Jesse wrapped his arm left arm around his waist and took her hand with the other. Mia placed her free hand on his shoulder and shook her head in amazement as he moved around with her gracefully. “I never realised when I decided to go on a date with you how smooth you are. Marvin Gaye and dancing; would I be wrong in thinking that you are trying to get into my knickers Mr Romanos?” He chuckled and spun her under his arm. “I think that is a very accurate assumption, Miss Daly. Damn, I can’t believe you saw right through me.” “Well, what’s the expression ‘never trust a man who can dance’? So...Is this the how you would usually impress the ladies on a date?” “Hmmm, probably not on the first date but I couldn’t exactly take you where I wanted to with the blizzard. I’m not complaining though.” Jesse bent his head down so that he could kiss Mia’s head. He inhaled and looked down at her face. “God Mia, you smell amazing,” Mia actually remembered that she forgot to spray perfume before she left her apartment. Hmm, must be the shampoo – thank you Herbal Essences, she thought to herself. He smells pretty good too; shower gel, aftershave and talcum powder, I think. She could feel Jesse stop moving as the song changed. He let go of her hand and stroked her cheek before cupping her face. With his arm around her back, he pulled her closer to his body. She swallowed anxiously, as he stared into her chocolate brown eyes. Mia looked downwards, always the first to break eye contact. Jesse turned her head a little and swept her long hair back so his lips were beside her ear. “Why do you always look away when I look at you?” he whispered gently kissing her earlobe. Mia closed her eyes tight and felt a shiver right down her spine. Oh God, he’s really trying to make me melt. Jesse continued to kiss along her neck and down her throat. Mia held onto his upper arms for support unable to think properly let alone communicate. “Mia?” he teased kissing the other side of her neck

knowing that it was affecting her concentration. "Umm, I don't know... I think the way you look at me sometimes..." "Yes?" "It's kind of...intense. It makes me uneasy...its...overwhelming."

"Overwhelming?" Jesse asked grinning. "I didn't realise I had that effect on you Mia." "Stop messing with me," she groaned as he sucked her earlobe. "I'm sorry," he laughed. "Sometimes you just make it so easy." He straightened his face and leaned in for a proper kiss. Mia opened her mouth slightly allowing him to slide his tongue in her mouth. She squeezed her hands on his arms as the kiss became deeper. Jesse's hands slipped lower down her waist to her curvy behind. Mia could feel both their breathing growing heavier and Jesse guided her to the sofa. She could feel the sofa behind her knees, breaking their kiss she sat down and laid back across it. Jesse followed by sitting between her legs. She pulled him closer, wrapping her arms around his neck. Using her fingers she slowly stroked his lips. Jesse couldn't keep from looking at her pretty face as she studied his. Mia leaned in and took his bottom lip between her teeth before sucking on it softly. Jesse moaned and using his weight pressed Mia down into the couch. She ran her fingers through his hair as he kissed along her jaw and stroked her thighs. His hands reached higher up her waist and slipped under her flimsy blouse. Her skin tingled under his rough hands and she noticed her breaths turned into panting. Jesse's thumb caressed along the line the top of her bra created against her breasts. God this is moving a lot quicker than I thought, but I don't want this stop. What if it's not so bad? He makes it feel right. Her train of thought was interrupted when he kissed her lips again, flicking his tongue against hers. His hand slipped into the cup of her bra and he could feel her nipple harden between his thumb and index finger. Mia moaned out and felt her panties get damp from Jesse's touches. Fuck conventions - this feels too good. "Mia, just tell me if you want me to stop, okay?" he said hoarsely. Unable to string a reply together, Mia nodded in understanding. Jesse's hand began to roam back down her body to her waist. He rested his hand at the button of her jeans. Seeing no sign of hesitation he unbuttoned her jeans and slipped his hand in. Mia squeezed her eyes tight as his fingers slipped under the elastic of her panties. Jesse's hand became still instantly and Mia peered through half opened eyes wondering why he stilled. "Holy shit," he groaned. Mia noticed a trace of amazement in his voice. "Fuck, you're shaved..." "Is that a problem?" "Hell no! Just unexpected. Oh my god, you are so fucking sexy Mia!" His hand began to move again and his fingers began to explore further down, stroking the smooth skin at her mound. Mia licked her lips as Jesse pressed his fingers between the folds of her wet pussy. He began running his fingers up and down her slit. The pair of them were so turned on that they almost didn't notice the phone ring. "Are you going to answer that?" Mia panted. "Nah, I'll call back later," he groaned still stroking her and kissing her neck. But the ringing didn't stop. "Shit," Jesse cursed, taking his hand out of Mia's knickers. He sat up and reached for the phone. Turning to face her, he licked his fingers that had just seconds before been fondling her slit. She gawped at him as he tasted her before answering the phone. "Hello...Yeah, what is it?...Fuck off man...I'm a bit busy right now...is there no one else?...I've already done sixteen hours this week...c'mon man...shit, alright...give me fifteen minutes alright?...bye." "I'm guessing you have to go to work?" Mia asked disappointed. "Yeah, the power is out on one of the blocks of apartments. They don't think it's the weather since everyone else is fine but if we don't work out what it is soon then we need to relocate

folk. This sucks. I'm so sorry..." "It's ok. We can always arrange something for another day. What are your plans this weekend?" "I'm working..." "Oh...Well this does suck then." They both looked at each other and laughed; the frustration very apparent to both of them. Mia zipped up her jeans and fixed her blouse before getting up. They threw on their coats and stepped back out into the cold after switching everything off in the apartment. Holding hands they walked in a comfortable silence back to Mia's apartment. They lingered outside in the cold as they reached her front door. "So first date; was it as good as you hoped?" Jesse asked holding Mia close. "Better actually." "Nice. Well the food was delicious, as well as other things..." Eyes wide at his comment, Mia gave him a playful slap on the arm for his remark. "Watch it you or I'll bury you out here in the snow." "Okay. I'll stop now. So you want to go out/stay in with me again sometime?" "Yes; whenever you can find a space in your busy schedule for me," she jested. "Chill out, I'll sort something out. I promise. You know it's not exactly wonderful that I have to go to work with a semi." Mia laughed hysterically as he cringed then kissed him deeply just to wind him up a little more. "You are pure evil Mia Daly." "Sorry, sometimes you make it so easy," she quoted before walking up to her door. "Night Jesse." "Night Mia, remember to change those panties before you go to bed now." Scowling she picked up a handful of snow and flung it right at him. It landed perfectly centre on his chest. Mia saw him bend down to aim one at her but she managed to get her keys in the lock and get through the door before he could throw. She heard felt her phone vibrate through her jacket pocket and looked at the message that had come through. 'That was a lucky shot. You won't be able to get away so quick the next time I see you. J x' Chuckling she quickly replied back. 'Whatever. Bring it on! M xoxo'