

CHAPTER TWO

'Ross is, like – OH MY GOD! – so shallow.'

Discuss.

Me and Oisinn skip our three o'clock, roysh, and we're in his gaff watching 'Countdown' and he tells me it's my turn to go to the fridge and get the beers, so I head out to the kitchen, roysh, and, HOLY FOCK! I'm like, 'What the ...' There's this, like, life-size statue of, I don't know, some dude with long hair, big fock-off wings and no mickey. I go back into Oisinn and I'm like, 'What the *fock* is that thing out there?' He goes, 'The bacon? You didn't throw it out, did you? It's only a week past its sell-by date,' and I'm like, 'I'm talking about that fucking statue. Looks like the one in the paper. The one that was stolen from the Classics Museum on Freshers' Day.' Oisinn just looks at me.

I'm like, 'Are you fucking *mad*? I can't believe it was you,' and he's like, '*Me*? Ross, do you remember Freshers' Day?' I'm there, 'I told you already, I was rat-orsed, pretty much the whole day is a blank.' He goes, '*You* stole it, Ross. This is *your* shit. You asked me could I mind it for you. And thanks for reminding me, you're going to have to take it with you. My old pair are starting to ask questions.'

I've a few fucking questions of my own. He goes, 'It's *Eros* apparently.' I'm like, '*Hello*? I need a little more information than that ...'

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He's there, 'Well, Fionn said he was the son of Aphrodite. Fired magic arrows at people's hearts and made them fall in love.' He doesn't even turn away from the television when he says this. He goes, 'Actually, I thought it was Cupid did that. Consonant, Carol.' I'm like, 'You know what I mean. When did I steal it? No, why? No, how?' He goes, 'Pretending you don't remember. Cute.' There's no fucking way I'm letting him pin this one on me. I'm like, 'I'm sorry, Oisinn. I didn't steal that thing. You're gonna have to prove it.' He turns around, roysh, calm as anything, and he goes, 'Ross, you were wearing the face off *Eros* in front of the UCD webcam as a dare. There was about thirty of us sitting in the computer lab watching you. I've actually got it on disk. And you mooning.'

I'm actually starting to feel faint. I sit down. I'm there, 'Is that the lot? I mean, did I do anything else that day?' He thinks for a bit and goes, 'Some ugly bird was looking for you in Finnegan's Break yesterday morning. Think you might have joined the Chess Society.' I'm there, 'I am SO never drinking again.' He goes, 'Fock me, Gyles, you're roysh, draughts does have eight letters ... I'll help you carry it out to the cor.'



I ask for a large latte, roysh, and the bird behind the counter, who's, like, French or some shit, she says they have no large, so I ask for a small instead and she goes, 'No small.' I'm like, 'What *have* you fucking got?' and she goes, 'Only *grande*, tall and short,' and at this stage, roysh, I'm so confused I don't know what the fock to ask for, so I head back to Melissa and ask her what she wants, roysh, and she just looks me up and down and goes, 'Will you *grow* up. This is fucking

serious,' and for a couple of seconds I think she's talking about the coffee, roysh, but when she stands up and, like, storms out of the place, I finally cop that she's actually talking about what happened at the Traffic Light Ball. Or should I say, afterwards.

I peg it after her, but she's already across the other side of the road, up by the Central Bank, and the lights are red, but I leg it across anyway and this orsehole in a blue Nissan Almera beeps me, so I just give him the finger. I catch up with her and touch her on the shoulder, roysh, but she just, like, spins around and goes, 'Nicole was SO right about you,' and I'm going, Who the fock is Nicole? to myself, of course, and she's there, 'You are *such* an orsehole. That's what she told me, Ross. And she was right.' I'm suddenly all, like, defensive now, I'm there, 'Hey, I said I'd meet you this morning and I did,' and she goes, 'You just want to make sure I go through with it.' I'm there, 'Not true, I wanted to be here with you. This is something you shouldn't have to go through on your own.' She goes, 'You are SO full of shit. You're just thinking about what your parents would say if they found out I was ...' I'm like, 'Bullshit. Anyway, you're not,' and she turns around and storts walking again, off through Temple Bar, and I, like, follow her from a safe distance.

There's a goy busking in the archway outside Abrakebabra, roysh, and it's like, 'Don't Look Back in Anger', and as we're waiting for the lights, roysh, I tell Melissa that that song has been SO ruined by every busker in town playing it, but she just ignores me, as she does when I ask her why they're building a new bridge next to the Ha'penny Bridge. She just, like, shakes her head, roysh, and I am SO tempted to point out

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that this is only, like, fifty percent my fault, that it takes two to tango, but I know it'll only make things worse if I do.

The place is next door to Pravda, and Melissa presses the button on the intercom, says she has an appointment and the next thing, roysh, there's a bird behind a desk asking her whether she's attended the clinic before, and Melissa looks her up and down and goes, 'Hordly!' Then we're sitting down in the waiting room and Melissa's filling out this, like, form and shit, which she gives to the nurse and then we just, like, sit there and wait. In total silence. I sort of look sideways at her a couple of times and I have to say, roysh, she's actually a bit better looking than I thought she was last night, a little bit like Charisma Carpenter, except with blonde hair. I only ended up with her because Christian wanted to be with her best friend, Stephanie, who actually does look a little bit like Natalie Portman, and he asked me to take a bullet for him, which, being the great mate that I am, I did. They're both, like, first year Orts.

Eventually, roysh, the doctor calls her into her office, and I'm not sure whether I'm supposed to, like, go in with her, but as I go to stand up Melissa tells me to stay outside and mind her stuff, which suits me fine. I'm sitting there, roysh, looking around and there's this bird sitting two seats down from me who I think I recognise from Annabel's, and she's a total nervous wreck, can't stop, like, fidgeting and shit.

All of a sudden, roysh, Melissa's phone starts beeping, so I grab it out of her bag and notice that she has a text message and it's from some bird called Gwen and it's like, **OMG**, which I presume means Oh My God, **RACHEL KISSED ROSS**, which I'm guessing is, like, a reference to 'Friends'. Two sad bitches, and we're talking **TOTALLY** here. I flick through her numbers, roysh, and notice that she knows four or five

chicks I've been with before. I still don't have a clue who this Nicole one is, and I think about writing down her number, roysh, but in the end I don't bother. I lash her phone back in her bag and stort flicking through a copy of *Now!* that the bird two seats down has just put back on the table. Says you can achieve the Liz Hurley look by using this gel, lactic acid or some shit, to increase the flow of blood to the lips, making them look fuller.

About ten minutes later, roysh, Melissa comes out and it's all, like, thank-you this and thank-you that to the doctor, but her face changes when she sees me and she just, like, heads straight for the door and I follow her down the stairs. We walk back towards Grafton Street and even though I have no real interest in seeing her again, I ask her what she's doing later and she goes, 'Leaning over the toilet and getting sick, I would imagine.' I ask her what she's bullshitting on about and she goes, 'Do you have *any* idea what I've just taken?' and I go, 'The morning-after pill,' and she just shakes her head and tells me I haven't got a clue.

She says she's going down for the Dorsh, roysh, and I tell her I'm going to get the 46A. And I don't know why, maybe because I feel sorry for her, I ask her whether I'll see her in college tomorrow and she tells me not to get my hopes up, that she's seeing someone.

The old man comes into my room and he's there, 'Ross, is there any reason why there's a Greek statue in the laundry room?' I just give him a filthy and go, 'You have SUCH a fucking attitude problem.'
