

JAKOB & FREYA

THE WORST THING

They're moving on Saturday, and this week they're spending all of their evenings trying to get the last of their stuff packed up. Jakob's over at her place right now, it's hot, he's sitting on the kitchen floor in his boxer shorts, sweating. He wraps a drinking glass in a sheet of newspaper and nestles it in a box with the others. Freya is standing at the sink in her bra and jeans, working through a stack of dirty dishes. She scours a filthy plate with enormous vigor.

Jakob tapes up the box and sits there on the floor, his face blank. Contemplating something. He suddenly frowns.

—It still kind of bugs me, Jakob says.

Freya doesn't turn around. —What's that, she says. It is not quite phrased as a question.

—This thing with Fletcher.

He can hear her sigh. —I thought you two made up, she said.

—Yeah, Jakob says, —yeah, we did. But there was something about the *way* it happened—like, I apologized to him, right? But he didn't apologize to *me*. That seems fucked up. I mean, I'm not the person who did anything *wrong*.

She turns around and points at him with the dish brush. —I keep *telling* you, she says. —It was *me* who kissed *him*. And I've apologized to you like *twenty times*.

—Yeah, I know, but—

—I just think that's all the apologies you're going to *get*, she says. She goes back to the dishes in the sink. —And I just think that by this point you should just be ready to, you know, suck up and *deal* about it. She scrubs harder, trying to get some bits of caked-on egg to come off of the plate she's working on. —It was *one kiss*, she says. And then, almost a mutter: —It's not like that's *the worst thing I've ever done* in this relationship.

—What do you mean? Jakob says.

—What? Freya says.

—The worst thing you've done.

Freya turns off the water, shakes her head, looks back over her shoulder, annoyed.

—What are you *talking* about? she says.

—You just said that kissing Fletcher wasn't the worst thing you ever did in this relationship. And I'm just wondering, then—what was?

—What? Freya says. —Nothing.

—What do you mean, *nothing*? You must have had *something* in mind.

—No, Freya says. —I just—I just meant it as a *figure of speech*, you know?

—No, Jakob says. —No. I never heard that one.

—Jesus, Freya says. —What's with you?

—It's just—it's just that if you'd *done* anything *worse* I'd want to know.

—Like I'd *tell* you, Freya says, —the way you've been acting.

—What's *that* supposed to mean?

—This thing with Fletcher was *one kiss*, Freya says, —and you've been riding me about it for like *eight months*. So if I *had* done anything worse you think I would tell you? So that you could ride me about *that* for however long?

—So have you? Jakob asks.

—Have I what?

—Done anything worse.

—Jesus, Jakob, Freya says, —could you just *drop it*? I love you. I'm fucking moving in with you in *four days*. What the fuck more do you need to know?

—I just want to know that you haven't slept with anybody else, he says.

—I *haven't*, she says. —There. Happy?

—Yes, Jakob says, although he isn't.

—Good, she says. —Then get the fuck out of my face about it.