

# The Best Friend Ever by Ina Disguise

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“Why are you doing this?” Kira was rooted to the spot, too frightened to fight back, trying to rationalise what was happening.

“You're stupid.” Leon ran from the computer towards her and headbutted her for the fourth time.

Kira reeled slightly, but was dimly aware that her enormous bones were considerably stronger than Leon. As he retreated to take another run at her, she tried edging towards the door. Given that the only alternative room was the kitchen, she did not particularly want to lead this episode in that direction. There were knives in there. Her head, bruised from the headbutting and scorched by the two pints of boiling water Leon had already thrown at her, was now quite painful, but she had no time to think about that. She tried packing the remains of her stuff into her bag, with a view to leaving.

“Stupid, stupid bitch.” Leon continued his tirade, blind with fury after Kira had left an apple core on his new Ikea sideboard.

“OK I think it is time for me to leave now.” Kira tried to sound as calm as possible. All she wanted to do was remove herself from the situation. Leon had gone crazy.

This was not entirely a surprise, given the amount of stress Leon had been put through. His family had made horrific accusations against him, to the point that his wife had left him some months before. Kira had done her best to be a good friend to him, in the absence of the ability to make the problem go away entirely. It wasn't even as if they were in love, particularly. He just didn't have anyone else. Now she was to be a punchbag, for some reason. Kira picked up her bag swept some of the blood out of her eye, and moved towards the door. Leon was breathing heavily, apparently not seeing a further opportunity to attack her. Hopefully he was tired.

Kira slowly edged towards the front door. She had no idea at this point how badly she was injured. She knew that she had accidentally put diesel in her car the night before, so it was stuck outside the house.

As she descended the stairs, she wiped her hand on the walls. Some brown stuff, presumably brains, she thought, was coming out of her browbone. She wiped it on the wall of the close as she went down. If she died before she made it home, she reasoned, some trace of her DNA would be left. She had better phone the AA to deal with the car.

She stopped at a hostel on the way down the road to ask to use the phone. They took one look at her and refused. She finally found a phone box a few streets away. She was feeling distinctly dizzy. She called the AA. Just as she had arranged for someone to come and pick her and the car up, she finally cracked.

“I, I'm burning.”

“What?” the AA assistant, sitting in her distant office was confused.

“The tea had no milk in it, I'm burning. My head, it's burning.”

“What happened?” the AA assistant was even more confused.

“Leon, he poured two pints of black tea and coffee over me.” Kira sounded as if this was normal behaviour. “It's burning.”

“OK.” The AA person sounded concerned. “I think you had better get yourself to a hospital. You can call us back about the car later.”

“Do you think so? I thought I should sort the car out first?” Kira was genuinely confused. She never mattered more than other things, particularly where money was concerned.

“Yes, get yourself to a hospital. I will put your call on the waiting list, don't worry.” The AA person sounded comforting. “I think you are probably in shock.”

“Yes, my head is sore.” Kira put the phone down and staggered out of the phone box into the road. She had been lucky to find one at all.

Some ten minutes later, a kindly taxi driver stopped and bundled her into the back of the taxi. “No charge.” He took her to the local A and E.

“An ex-nurse you say? He knew what he was doing. He was trying to destroy your face you know. If your browbone had shattered, you would have also had brain damage. You need to stay away from him.”

“Oh it isn't a domestic. I split up with him weeks ago. He just went mad. I think I must have made a mess.” Kira started to cry a little as she realised what a mess she must be, given the pain.

Patched up, Kira sorted the car out. It was to be taken to a garage outside Glasgow, and then she decided she would go to Oban until it healed up. She headed over to see Aldous.

“What on earth happened to you?” Aldous, usually impassive, looked faintly horrified.

“Leon. I have to leave town for a few days until it heals.” Kira rubbed her head.

“Leon is a cunt.”

“He is just stressed, you know, by the allegations. I got him the best lawyer in Scotland you know.” Kira was quite proud of that.

Aldous was open-mouthed. Kira was always stupidly kind, but this was ridiculous. “You should report that. Harry was great friends with David, but he reported him and it wasn't as bad as this.”

“If I do that, he will go straight to jail. I can't do that.”

“He doesn't deserve your concern.”

“Probably not, but right now I just have to hide this from mum, so I have to go.”

“I wouldn't be worried about your mum if I was you.”

Kira had lived in Oban ten years before. She had been recovering from a violent relationship back then, so for some reason it made sense to spend a few days there whilst the burns and wound on her face cleared up. Her first port of call when she got there was the family she had worked for.

“No, you can't come in. You will frighten the customers. Boyfriend did it, I take it?” Malkie, her former friend, stood across the door of the restaurant.

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