

LILLIAN LUMLEY

*the
ones in*
BETWEEN

prologue

I was doomed from the start to have a precarious dating career. It all started when I began primary school in a beautiful heritage city in the south of England. I was not born here, though; I arrived into the world in Australia, but my British-born mother wanted to return to her country of origin with us before we could be tainted by the rough, more casual, Aussie way of life. She wished to acquaint us with the delicate English culture while my sister and I were still young, fresh, and could absorb the knowledge from our surroundings like a sponge. Off we went, the happy family, my sister and I armed with boxes of Lego, and my parents laden down with jars of Vegemite, to Australia's motherland. To most Australians, the English are seen as a well-bred, prim, and proper race. But do not be deceived by the posh royal accents, beautiful heritage buildings and love for tea and scones. Despite the fancy front, not all English people ride their polo ponies on weekends, bring out their best silverware for high tea with their families, or are besties with Kate Middleton. The hidden side of the English, the Geordie Shore side, is all too real – the tracksuit wearing gangs, the girls with their peroxide hair extensions and the pubs full of soccer watching lads who could drink any tough 'ocka' Aussie bloke under the table. So, there we were in England, where the troubles with boys started for me.

At the ripe old age of four, full of angelic innocence, my nursery school boyfriend, Thomas, told me that we should have sex. We were sitting next to each other at our low desks in the back of the classroom while our teacher walked around slowly, checking the progress of the

worksheets we were working on. I peered at him in confusion through my big blue eyes, but I did not have much time to contemplate what he was saying. To my horror, he proceeded to present his tiny, flaccid willy to me under the desk.

I squealed in shock. “Yuck, Thomas! What is that? Get it away from me!”

I jumped out of my chair in disgust as I backed away from this little pink thing splayed out in front of me. I had never seen a real-life penis before and I was quite sure I never wanted to see one again. Shocked beyond belief, with my dating future unknowingly scarred for life, I went on to fill my days with horse-riding lessons, ballet classes, and many afternoons under gloomy grey skies sucking on soggy biscuits dipped in steaming cups of Earl Grey tea. Until only two years later, we all boarded a flight back to where we belonged: the sunny land Down Under, where my dating career began in earnest.

chapter 1

HOW IT ALL BEGAN

The return to Australia was smooth and went without any hiccups. I had generously brought a fancy London-made Mason and Pearson hairbrush to gift to my friend Fran, which managed to cement our friendship for a lifetime. With our mums' persuasion, the teachers at our local primary school placed us into the same class, and Australia instantly felt like home again. Much to my parent's disbelief, the Aussie kids were more well behaved and subdued than their English counterparts. The most shocking thing I encountered was the constant stream of questions that came my way. Instead of asking me whether I rode a pet kangaroo along a dirt track to get to school like the kids in England did, they asked me to repeat words, because I sounded delightfully foreign to them. I was shy being the centre of attention, and more irritatingly, it took me twice as long to finish a sentence as I was constantly interrupted. I was determined to resurrect my long-lost Australian accent and before long; I had mastered the true-blue nasal Aussie twang by imagining my nose was blocked.

Naturally, with the former 'willy trauma' left well behind me, the emerging curiosity of boys began to get my friends and me into mischief. Each morning, we would concoct a list of boys we fancied for the day, and for what reasons – a sporting victory, a high score on a test or a brave gash on their leg could all work in their favour. One day, after scouring over my list, Fran turned to me with a mischievous grin, "I dare you to kiss Ben."

I gasped in horror, knowing that turning down a dare was unforgivable. We were sitting in Italian class as Signora Belotti walked around the classroom, checking our number learning progress.

“Uno, duo, tres,” I recited loudly as Signora eyed us suspiciously across the room. She was a large Italian woman, with an even larger behind, who was forever breaking up our fits of giggles, which were usually at her expense. When she leant over to check students’ work, her backside would loom invitingly in front of us. We would throw rolled up pieces of sticky tape at it, and whoever got the most pieces to stick would win. She began to pack up for the end of class, and seeing she was distracted, I felt the adrenaline rise in my blood. Ben was close by, minding his own business, and I hurtled myself in his direction.

“Ben!” I exclaimed.

“Huh?” he peered quizzically at the sight of me running towards him. Before he could react, I pushed him onto the floor. He was a large boy, and I was astonished at my own strength, but I had no time to consider this. I hastily glanced over to see if Signora Belotti had noticed, but she had not, even though the entire class looked on dumbfounded.

“Charlotte, get off me!” Ben wheezed as he lay sprawled on the floor in shock underneath me. I was sitting firmly on his chest, legs splayed over each side of him. As quick as a flash, I bent my neck down and kissed him in the vicinity of his lips, and with the dare complete, I jumped off.

“Thanks!” I said quickly as I ran puffing back to Fran. We fell into fits of laughter just in time to see Signora storming over and glaring at us. But the bell sounded and we ran out of the classroom with our books in hand before we had a chance to find out whether she saw the scenario unfold or not.

“Ciao, Signora Belotti!” we chimed in unison. It was home time for us all and she had more important things to attend to than reprimanding us, such as removing the strangely placed sticky tape from her big behind.

chapter 2

FIRST LOVE

Hair colour: Brown, tinged with ginger.

Eye colour: Brown.

Height: On the short side.

Weight: Thick and muscly.

Origin: Australian/New Zealander.

Personality type: The rebellious kid.

The years went by in a happy whirlwind of mischievous games, and before I knew it, I had entered the next chapter of my life – secondary school.

Secondary school began in an overwhelming stream of friendships, parties, and sport, mixed in with a tiny bit of study. In such a large cohort, there were so many new faces to learn, and new friendship groups that were fleeting and ever changing while we learnt about each other, and more importantly learnt about ourselves in this new world. This week's drama could completely shatter an entire network of friendship groups at the drop of a hat. It was fast-paced and confusing, and if you did not keep up, you were left behind. Because of this, it was not surprising I did not notice Samuel until my third year of high school, when I saw him leaning casually against the wire fence of the outdoor basketball courts. He had a carefree air about him with his top button rebelliously undone, his tie loose around his neck, and his shirt tight enough to see

his impressive muscles bulging from underneath. He would have been given a detention on the spot if the teacher had spotted his recklessly put together school uniform, and that made him all the more exciting. I nudged my best friend at the time, Eleanor, who was walking beside me and asked her, “Who is that guy?” I wanted to get to know him.

“As if you don’t know! It’s Samuel Macintyre,” she scoffed.

“Samuel Macintyre? No way! I thought he was a quiet, chubby kid? Friends with that other guy, Jeremy?”

“Yeah, well, he shaved his head a few months ago, dropped the puppy fat from all that rugby he plays, and apparently he’s hot now. The boys have started getting all buddy-buddy with him, too. He actually looks pretty cute just kicking back. Anyway, who cares? He’s still Samuel Macintyre.” She flicked her hair over her shoulder, signifying she was bored with the conversation, and turned her attention to some of her more favourable beaus, puffing and sweating amidst their basketball game.

“Look how good Dave and Josh look these days,” I nodded in agreement with her, but I kept my eyes on Samuel. He must have felt my gaze on him and he squinted through the glaring sun to look in my direction. I lowered my head and batted my eyelashes at him, holding my gaze long enough to be flirty. Then, I turned back to Eleanor and laughed loudly at whatever she was talking about. I stole a quick glance back in his direction and he was still looking this way.

“That should do it,” I thought happily, “it should only be a day or two before he asks for my number,” and walked away, wondering how I had missed out on this eye candy for so long.

It had been over a week since I spotted Samuel, but he had still not approached me. Luckily, we had a mutual friend and I cornered him after class. “James! What a boring class! Mr Riley can go on and on, can’t he?” I sniffed and dramatically fake yawned.

“Gosh, I know right! I almost fell asleep when he started talking about the importance of the mitochondria for half an hour.”

I laughed and mocked his dreary voice. “*The almighty powerhouse of the cell, there is no other organelle quite like it,*” James smiled back, and we

started to walk towards the locker block, books weighing down our arms.

“So, are you getting excited for your party? It’s just over a week away now,” he asked.

“Yes, I am! Although I still have a few things left to organise, and I have no idea what I’m going to wear! I was actually going to ask you a favour.”

He chuckled and rolled his eyes. “Don’t worry, I’ve got the alcohol situation under control, and your mum won’t suspect a thing – she loves me.”

I smiled. “Oh, I know that, but it was actually about something else.”

He raised his eyebrows in response.

“You’re friends with that guy, Samuel, right?” I asked.

He laughed. “I might be. I hear all you girls have noticed him now that he’s such a sexy badass.”

“Ha-ha, I don’t like him or anything. I was just wondering whether you wanted to invite him as your plus one? You know, as a favour to him, and well, to celebrate him getting popular, or whatever.”

“Celebrate him becoming popular? You crack me up, Charlotte. But I’ll see what I can do.” He winked at me and turned to walk in the direction of his locker. I knew James would find a way to bring him and I smiled with anticipation.

The night of my party arrived. I had planned my outfit a few days before, eventually settling on my favourite short black skirt and a pale blue halter top, which made my eyes pop. Eleanor and I got ready together, glamming ourselves up, and she straightened my hair while I sipped on a raspberry vodka Cruiser. I was too distracted to concentrate on what she was saying.

“So, we will be training at least three times a week on the water, and three sessions in the gym, but with other optional sessions as well. I’ll be attending them all because I want to be as fit as I can be, so I get into the firsts next year,” she was talking about her newfound passion in the rowing squad. “My sister says you need to go to as many as you can, so they know you’re dedicated. You need to be as dedicated as you are fit, or they won’t pick you.” I smiled and nodded. I had also reluctantly started

rowing, but my passion dwindled next to Eleanor's as I found getting up at five each morning to row on the smelly Yarra River in the dark an exhausting and pointless exercise. I kept it up though because it was keeping me incredibly fit and in great shape for summer.

"I don't really care what crew I'm in," I shrugged.

Eleanor looked at me, shocked. "Surely you want to be in my crew. We can't be split up! Promise me you'll come to all the training sessions, or they won't pick you!" I sighed and nodded in agreement as she persevered to make sure I would commit to the cause, but I was barely listening. I kept thinking about Samuel.

I was gossiping heatedly with a group of friends when I saw James arrive.

"James!" I exclaimed. He beamed at me as he came closer and pulled out a few bottles of alcohol from his backpack.

"Woo, we made it!" he whistled. He loved being the centre of attention, and everyone rushed over to claim some of his liquid goods. Behind him, Samuel was standing casually with his hands in his pockets.

"Hey Samuel! You came!" I exclaimed, a little too enthusiastically.

"Yeah, hi," he said, looking embarrassed, "uh, thanks for inviting me, it looks fun," and he went off to mingle with some of the guys he knew from class. I sidled off, bubbling with excitement, to get them some cups and mixers.

Eleanor and I were dancing along to our favourite pop songs with a renewed optimism.

"Samuel came!" I squealed.

"It's Samuel Macintyre, as if he has anything better to do on his weekends," she scoffed.

I sighed. Eleanor could not understand why I liked someone she deemed a loser and she rolled her eyes as I made a beeline towards him.

"Hey," I said.

"Hey," he replied.

"Having fun?"

“Yeah, thanks.”

“Cool.”

“So, I hear you’re going to do rowing too,” he took the conversation to the next level. I was surprised he knew anything about me, but I guess we were both friends with James.

“Yeah, apparently,” I sighed.

“You never know, it could be some fun. And hey, I’ll be there,” he grinned cheekily at me.

“Oh, is that right?” I asked coolly. Eleanor should have used this as her persuasion tool to commit me to rowing.

“Yeah, my rugby coach is keen for me to do it because he thinks it will get me fit for the season.”

“You already look pretty fit.” I blushed at my accidental flirt.

“Do I?” A grin reached the corner of his mouth.

“Oh, um not that I’ve really noticed, but yeah I guess so,” I replied clumsily.

“Well, I’m glad you think so,” he smiled, and without any warning, he planted his lips sloppily on mine. I stood for a moment, shocked, before I could move my lips and attempt to kiss him back. They say when you have your first real kiss, you feel dizzy, see stars, and become lost in a magical whirl of desire. I was giddily happy, but the dizziness was caused by the two raspberry vodka Cruisers. We persevered through the teeth-knocking and unpleasant slobbering until our lips finally began to move in sync as the party was coming to an end. Samuel held my hand and quietly asked, “So, does this mean we are girlfriend and boyfriend?”

“I guess it does,” I giggled. It made perfect sense – we didn’t even know the terms “seeing each other”, “friends with benefits”, “just dating” or “open relationships”, let alone the concept of them. We liked each other and that was all we knew. Our naïve innocence made it so simple, so pure, and was a gentle entry into the world of dating.

It was not long before Sam’s family had invited me to their sacred Sundays. As Sam had fully entered his rebellious phase, much to his

parents' despair, he had stopped attending church with them. I had only ever been to church in the guise of school chapel, so I figured it could not be too different to the short ceremonies, where the chaplain would talk about love, life, and the importance of sacrifice.

"How bad could it be?" I said to Sam.

"You have no idea," he eyed me.

Even though I was mostly going in support of Sam, I was curious about this church, which he had told me a little bit about. Sam's cousins were also members of the small Christian sect, and Rachel was the first cousin I met. She was lovely, and funny and like Sam – a little rebellious and cheeky. However, she was a sinner in the eyes of her family because she did not believe in their extraordinarily strict rules and restrictions, and as a modern-day curious young woman, she began to push these extraordinarily tight boundaries. Her parents were extremists, and Rachel and her brother were not allowed to watch mainstream television or radio and were only permitted to listen or watch the very few select Christian religious stations. And, amongst other behaviours, showing too much skin was strictly forbidden.

"What happens if your parents find out you've been watching normal television? Or listen to a radio station with rock music on it? Or read a romantic novel?" I asked curiously.

"I make sure I don't get caught. You'd be surprised at how stealthy you can be when you put your mind to it," she laughed.

Sam, Rachel and I sat next to each other on the creaky wooden chairs, ready for the service to begin. To my surprise, the church service was nothing like I'd experienced at school. There was no chaplain who stood up and talked about the afterlife, or the origin of Christianity, and we certainly weren't privy to a "religious" episode of the Simpsons, which we were occasionally rewarded with when the chaplain was especially busy. This ceremony was completely unusual and a shiver run down my spine as I sat waiting for prayer to begin. Instead, someone in the crowd began to make a low, monotone noise, which was in between chanting and singing. There was a slow rhythm to it and it reminded me of a heavy

wind blowing through my ears. Goosebumps raised along my skin and my hair stood on end as more and more people joined in. Before long, everyone in the room was moaning and swaying together in a trance with their eyes shut. I looked around in panic, unsure of what to do, hoping that it would end soon.

I could see Sam looking at me out of the corner of his eye, with a twitch at the corner of his mouth, but he never returned my piercing gaze that asked, “What the hell have you brought me to?”

After half an hour, the chanting was still going. In some moments, it would get higher and shriller, and then it became softer and deeper, and the pace would slow, the voices all moving together. I held onto Sam’s hand tightly, hoping the moaning would levitate me back home. Eventually, as the hour turned, the chanting subsided, and the ceremony concluded as people segregated into groups. As soon as we were alone outside, Sam burst into laughter.

“I’m so sorry I didn’t warn you, but I couldn’t risk not seeing the look on your face,” he kept laughing and Rachel joined in too.

“Oh my god, what the hell was that?” I hissed.

“I told you our church isn’t mainstream; we do things a little differently,” he replied.

“Sam, that is no church. Your parents belong to a cult!”

“Well, at least now you know why I don’t want to come here.”

I nodded in agreement, and much to his parent’s dismay, I had no intention of accompanying them there ever again. In fact, I happily supported Samuel to rebel against them when it came to church.

We became sickeningly inseparable, passionately consumed in a love that is only familiar to hormonal teenagers. We had already planned our wedding, where we wanted to live together one day, and the names of our future children. We spent a large portion of our school days together, and as much time afterwards as we physically could. I would proudly watch Samuel play rugby, but mostly so I could watch his lean muscles ripple as he ran and jumped after the ball. If we spent every hour of every

day together, it still was not enough. Everything was new; everything was exciting. Our friends had started dabbling in sex, but it still was something we had not considered yet.

One day, Sam and I were cuddled up on the couch, his big arms wrapped around me, when he turned me over to face him. “Charlotte, I think we should have sex.”

Not surprisingly, the first thing that jumped to mind was the traumatic experience I had with my prep boyfriend, Thomas. Of course, I had thought about sex with Sam before – we had heated make-out sessions whenever we found ourselves alone – but losing my virginity was a big moment and I had a lot to consider.

“Sam, I’m not ready yet,” I told him.

“I get it, Char, but we’ve been together for a year already, isn’t that enough time?” he questioned like any hormonal teenage boy would.

“I don’t know, I’ll think about it.” I snuggled into him. It did make sense; we had been together for a long time, we were madly in love, but I needed to be sure. I became preoccupied by the decision and began thorough research. I began googling, but it was not the anatomical dilemma that I needed to be informed of – that was what sex ed classes at school were for. I wanted to know how it would feel, and mostly, how I would feel as a woman afterwards. Each month, I would buy the latest teen magazines and indulge in any advice they gave. They were usually more about kissing and flirting, which I had become well versed in, and I needed something more explicit. I would sneak a look at my sister’s *Cosmopolitan* and *Cleo* magazines, and head straight for the “Sealed Section”, which would unfailingly be about sex, and everything that comes with it. So, after a few months had passed of incessant research, I decided it was time.

“Sam, I think I’m ready to have sex,” I announced.

“Oh cool, Charlotte! Are you sure?” he peered at me, not believing his luck.

“Yeah, I am,” I smiled up at him.

Giggling with excitement, we went to the chemist to purchase

condoms. We stood perplexed in the aisle, staring at the wide range of colourful choices, sizes and flavours.

“I love you, Char,” Sam smiled widely at me.

“I love you too, Sam.”

Like a teenage dream come true, Sam was spending most weekends at mine. My place was a safe haven away from his ultra-religious parents, who had long given up on trying to stop him from staying over. And as we had entered senior school, my mum gave way to a more relaxed parenting style. It was pure bliss to begin with, but the reality of spending every free moment with each other surfaced. Before long, we were constantly bickering like a married couple, fuelled with the extra element of teenage hormones.

“Sam, why is your smelly rugby uniform on the bed?” I yelled.

“Because I had rugby and then I went to have a shower, so that’s where I took them off,” he yelled back.

“Yeah, but why can’t you put them in the laundry basket like a normal person?” I continued.

“Char, calm down. I’ll move them later.”

“What about the mud all over the sheets?”

“I’ll vacuum off the mud!”

“I don’t understand what is so hard about putting them in the laundry basket when you take them off? I’ve asked you so many times! You don’t even care what I say!” I started to cry.

“Charlotte, of course I care, calm down!” he walked towards me, but I was fuming. I was holding a steaming cup of tea in my hands, and without thinking, I threw it all over him.

“Ouch! Oh my god! What the hell is wrong with you? That is boiling, you psycho!” his voice was angry, but his face looked hurt.

“That’s what you get for being such an arse!” I slammed the door in his face, but a surge of guilt ran through me. I always overreacted. We had been fighting non-stop for months and months, and we were on the brink of breaking up. Not only had I thrown hot tea on Sam, but I had

also slapped him on numerous occasions for flirting with girls or telling me I should not eat so much. He did deserve it most of the time, in my opinion, but instead of slapping him across his smug face, I should have just had a conversation with him. He had been acting strangely for the past few weeks. He was quiet, reserved, and moody, and whilst we were constantly fighting, it was unlike him to be withdrawn from me. Agonisingly, I had convinced myself he was cheating on me. When he was asleep at night, I would frantically scroll through his messages, but I never found anything out of the ordinary.

“He must be deleting all the messages,” I thought to myself as I lay in bed next to him, listening to his laboured breath. I waited until he was cooking me dinner one night to confront him about it.

“Spaghetti bolognese, your favourite, seasoned with extra love,” I giggled happily as he served me. It was almost like the old days. We had been enjoying a steady flow of banter while he cooked, and my heart swelled.

“Mm, it smells delicious,” I took a dramatic sniff in.

“Thanks! I hope it tastes as good as it smells. Parmesan?” he sprinkled some cheese over my pasta before I could answer.

“You know me too well,” I grinned.

“I miss this,” he said to me.

“Me too.” We talked through dinner about nothing and everything. I had almost forgotten about the jealousy and fighting over the last few months; I was content.

“Let’s never fight again. It’s so dumb.”

“It is,” I agreed, “just like you.” I poked my tongue out at him.

“Ha, you’re one to talk!” he laughed, but then became serious. “There is something I’ve been wanting to talk to you about though, Char.”

“Oh no,” I thought, “he’s going to tell me that he’s been cheating.”

My veins turned to ice, but all I said to him was, “Oh, is everything okay?”

“Well yes, actually. Do you remember that American guy who came to watch our rugby final a few weeks back?”

I remembered that game clearly. Sam was wearing his tight rugby uniform and I could see every one of his muscles rippling as he ran, dived, jumped and skidded through the mud around the field. He looked so good. He had been nervous before the game; he had barely spoken the night before. A huge crowd had turned up. Apparently, it was the biggest turnout ever. He was the captain of the Firsts and they were playing their arch enemies, another one of the private schools in the area. It was his last chance to defeat them before he left school and after a tough game, they had left victorious. Sam had won Most Valuable Player and we spent the weekend celebrating with the rugby team, plus their friends and family.

“What, that wanky guy who made a speech and presented the trophy? The one from one of those elite universities?” I relaxed a little bit. He just wanted to talk about sport.

“Yeah, that’s the one,” he said excitedly.

“Okay, what about him?” I was still picturing Sam in his uniform, covered in mud, his hair all ruffled and I smiled dreamily at him.

“Well, it turns out he was actually scouting around the top Australian school rugby leagues to see whether anyone was good enough to play college American football.”

“Okay?” I said, getting bored with the conversation. What was his point?

“And, well, my coach said that he approached him, and he thinks I have the required skills and potential to translate to American football.”

I stared at him, and he continued, “Um, so, he’s offered me a scholarship to one of the top colleges in the States, on the condition that I continue to perform at a high standard academically for the rest of our final year at school.”

“Sorry, he’s what?” I was so shocked.

“He’s offered me a scholarship. He sees potential in me, Charlotte. And even if I don’t make it professionally, it would be such a great opportunity for my career to study at an elite international university, anyway.”

“That’s, um, that’s great, Sam. That’s really cool. So, what are you

going to do? Have you spoken to your parents?”

“Yeah, I talked to Mum and Dad, and they are really supportive. Dad has just expanded his business to the United States anyway, so he thinks I could potentially oversee that division one day.”

“Oh, wow.”

“And we all had a meeting with the coach, and the American guy, and he’s given me a draft of the contract to look over. I have two weeks to decide. Apparently, there’s a lot of paperwork involved. So, obviously, I wanted to talk it over with you first. But I reckon we could do it, Char. You’ll come with me, won’t you?”

“Come with you? Sam, all my preferences are for universities here. I don’t think I’m ready to upheave my life yet.”

“You could enrol in the same university and we could live together on campus. It would be perfect! Your parents would support you; I know they would.”

I hesitated. “College fees in the States are ridiculously high, and probably even more for international students. If it was my dream, then yes, my parents would support me, but Sam, I don’t think I want to live in America.”

“What are you saying, Char? That you don’t want to come with me?”

“Sam, you only just told me that you were thinking of moving, but no, I don’t think I do. How could you expect me to just leave everyone here, to follow you when I don’t even know if I could get into the same university doing what I want to do?”

“We could find a way, Char. You know we could,” he pleaded.

“The courses here all come under student loans, so I wouldn’t even need to pay the fees until I start working. College degrees in America are all paid upfront, that’s a huge ask for my parents.”

“But I know they would.”

“Maybe.” Tears were welling up in my eyes. This could not be happening. “Sorry, I was just not expecting this. I thought you were cheating on me because you’ve been acting so weird lately. But it’s just as bad. You’re leaving me, anyway.”

“Cheating on you? How could you think that? You know I’d never do that to you. I love you.”

“I know, you were just acting so strangely, but now I know why. Sam, I don’t want you to go, but it would be so dumb of you not to accept this. I really don’t think I can come, though. I’m sorry.”

“Char, don’t say that. We can find a way.”

“No really, Sam, I don’t think I’m ready to move countries just yet. Maybe one day, but not now.”

Sam held my hands in his; he was crying too now. Neither of us said anything and I felt like I was going to be sick. He whispered my name softly and walked over to me, hugging me tightly. Without it being spoken, we knew this was the end. We could not stay together, knowing he would be leaving me in a few months’ time. I was so proud of him, but I also despised him for abandoning me; I hated him, but I loved him with just as much intensity. My heart felt like it was being sliced in two and I shook with the pain of it. They say your first love is the hardest to forget. But even then, if I had known what was coming: the debilitating heartbreak; the many tears I had yet to shed; the love; the hope and all the ones in between, I knew I would do it again, simply because of how it would end.